

# LIFE SUPPORT

ADVANCING THE  
GLOBAL AGENDA  
FOR FINANCING  
& ACTION ON  
ROAD SAFETY

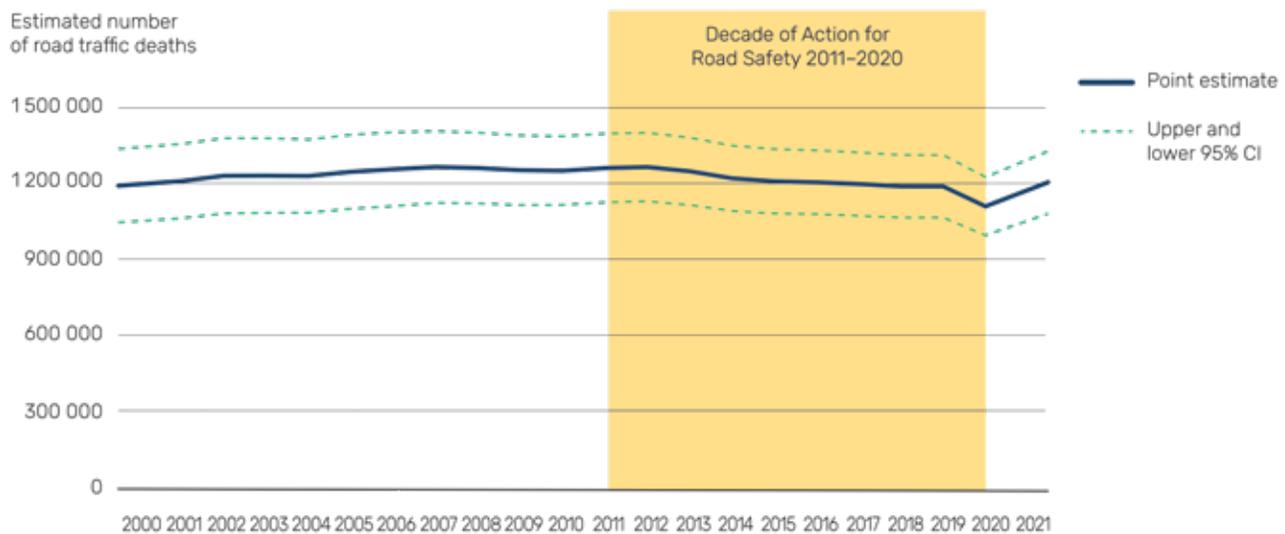


# FLATLINING: THE NEED TO MOBILISE COMMITMENT

Entering the final years of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 2nd Decade of Action for Road Safety, progress to save lives on the world's roads needs to be significantly accelerated. In far too many countries, road traffic injury is at epidemic levels and growing.

Globally we are flatlining – countries that are able to mobilise resources and commitment are able to make some progress. But against a backdrop of rapid development, increasing motorisation, and the fast pace of urbanisation many countries are struggling to cope with the rising toll of road deaths and injuries.

**FIGURE 1: WHO ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ROAD TRAFFIC FATALITIES, 2001-2021**



Source: World Health Organization Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023

Urgent action is needed, but progress cannot be made without a step-change in financing. For well over a decade, 'safe system' solutions to prevent road traffic injury have been well known and available.

**But without accessible funding streams, life saving measures cannot be put in place.**

## STEP-CHANGE IN FINANCING

- Increase the levels of finance
- Raise Government demand & provide capacity
- Scale-up effective solutions
- Integrate funding streams for road safety, sustainable transportation and climate.

## DOUBLE OR QUIT - INCREASING THE LEVELS OF FINANCING

While globally, the level of financing for road safety has not achieved the impact needed to address the full scale of the crisis, there have been some signs of progress. A key question is how can progress be accelerated, and how can financing be mobilised towards greater results at-scale that are urgently needed in the next few years?

Ambitious road safety programmes have been financed in recent years. India has launched a five-year programme to reduce road traffic fatalities by 30% across 14 states which contribute to the majority of road fatalities in the country. Half of the \$1billion financing is provided by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank with the Government of India matching the funding. Neighbouring Bangladesh has

a \$358m World Bank financed programme to reduce fatal crashes by 30% by 2027. This focuses on two major highways which account for a large proportion of the country's road traffic injury burden.

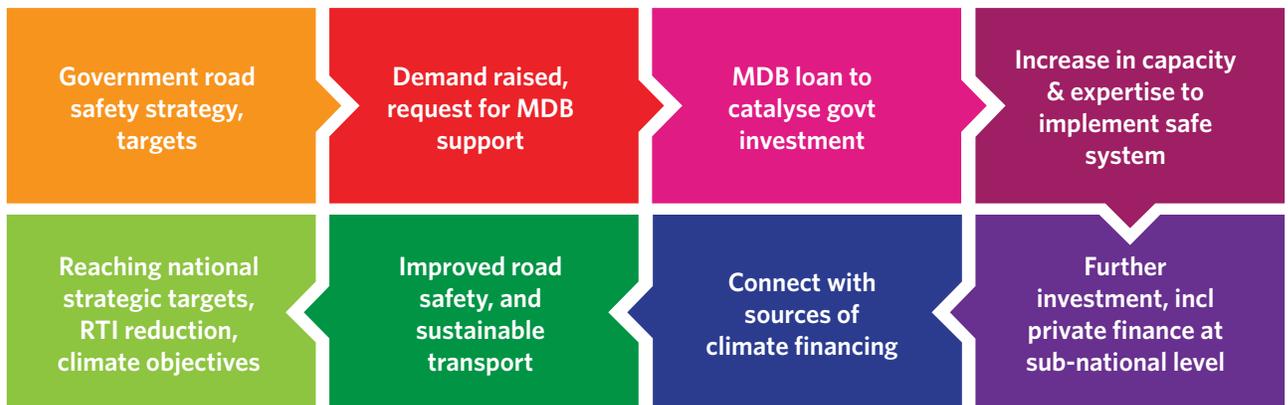
These programmes indicate that **financing at scale to address road traffic injury is possible**. Indeed the group of 10 Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) collaborating on road safety have recognised that increased financing on road safety is needed.

Current levels of dedicated catalytic financing for road safety across these MDBs is estimated at just over \$700m a year. For other countries to join India and Bangladesh in working towards more ambitious road safety targets over the next five years **a minimum doubling of MDB catalytic road safety financing would be required**.

## FOLLOW THE MONEY - RAISING GOVERNMENT DEMAND

Governments should be encouraged to request increased funding that can catalyse national action and deliver results. This is a process that can and should combine agendas on safety, sustainability and climate,

and one which also leverages the private sector. A platform, more effectively linking Governments, the range of MDBs that have been focusing on road safety, and sources of external expertise that can deliver the priorities for safe and sustainable transport is needed to ensure that the pathway to results becomes much more widely adopted.



## THE AGENDA - FINANCING PRIORITIES FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET:

1

Design for safety. Protecting vulnerable road users, safe school journeys embedded into roads projects.

2

Target high risk roads. Remedial action on roads with high levels of road traffic injury (RTI).

3

Addressing in national plans and financing priorities motorcycle/2 wheeler safety - a rapidly growing concern in many LMICs.

4

Improved coordination between climate, transportation, urban development financing for health and environmental outcomes - and in this respect, a particular focus on active mobility.



There are many areas that can be focused on, but to make significant progress over the next five years, a set of core priorities for the allocation of financing must be identified for urgent action leading to rapid scale-up and results:

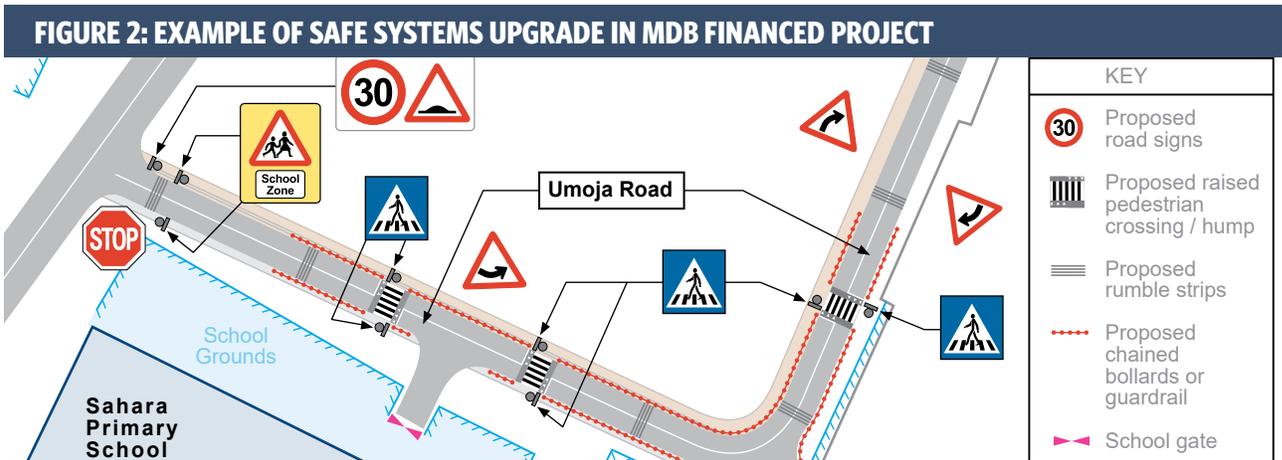
**NOT BY ACCIDENT, BY DESIGN: ENSURE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS INCLUDE EFFECTIVE MEASURES FOR PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ROAD USERS AT THE OUTSET**

There are strong examples of effective road safety being implemented at the start of road and transportation projects. In several Sub-Saharan African countries Governments and their MDB partners are designing for

safety at the outset of projects. Often there is a gap in capacity and expertise which much be addressed.

In Tanzania for example, the Amend NGO has provided expertise on safe system measures to protect vulnerable road users, with a focus particularly on school area road safety. Working closely with Tanzania’s roads agencies, in World Bank financed projects with Amend assistance, road safety measures have been incorporated in infrastructure designs, addressing the capacity gap.

The result is improved road safety for vulnerable road users. Rather than the exception, this approach should be the norm across road infrastructure projects.



Source: Tanzania Strategic Cities Project, Safe Schools Africa Prospectus

**TARGETING HIGHEST RISK:**

In a context of inevitable budgetary pressures, targeting the highest risk roads for initial large-scale impact is an effective strategy. In all world regions, road assessments using the iRAP methodology have provided a focus for action, ensuring a basis

for countermeasures to be implemented raising the level of safety. Fundamental to India’s road safety programme for example are road safety assessments identifying high-risk corridors for urgent action. Budgets can be allocated and prioritised to specific areas of the road network, and on countermeasures with the highest rate of return in terms of lives saved.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> See iRAP Safety Insights Explorer (<https://irap.org/safety-insights-explorer>) - for the business case for 3 star minimum Safety to save over 450,000 lives a year with a BCR of 7.6, in response to an estimated global annual RTI cost of \$2.2 trillion.

## CONNECTING FINANCE FOR CLIMATE AND ROAD SAFETY:

While there is recognition of the importance of addressing transportation in meeting climate targets, financing for sustainable transportation needs to be increased. Far higher levels of investment in low carbon and mass transit are needed to reach climate targets.<sup>2</sup> There are significant financing needs, short and longer term investment required in order to shift to active, low carbon mobility.<sup>3</sup>

Particularly given the context of rapid urbanisation, active mobility will need to play a key role, and here, safety is critical. Yet investment in infrastructure for safe walking and cycling is often lacking. According to analysis from the World Bank, there are very high rates of return on investment in active mobility projects. One major project with MDB financing in Peru for example had road safety, health and productivity benefits outweighing costs by a factor of 19:1. Active travel can and should play a key role in climate strategies. As PATH has outlined, there is potential for active travel to account for 75% of urban journeys, with zero and ultra-low carbon alternatives to motorised transport significantly reducing the 50

billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> projected to be emitted by urban transport in the next 30 years.<sup>4</sup>

However, the shift to active transport cannot take place without safety. Each day over 1,000 pedestrians and cyclists are killed on the world's roads with tens of thousands more, seriously injured. And the cost to the global economy runs into hundreds of billions of dollars each year. Aside from the broad health and economic rationale for ensuring and investing in safety, there is an equity and social justice imperative: walking and cycling are mobility choices available to everyone regardless of age, physical capabilities and income. Disabled people can also benefit, as improved, safe and accessible cycle paths and sidewalks are ideal infrastructure for wheelchairs and other mobility supports.

A new focus on financing and capacity building for active mobility worldwide is needed. As outlined by global experts including WRI and the Transport Decarbonisation Alliance, a dedicated global funding mechanism to catalyse the planning, design, operations and promotion of active mobility and create a pipeline of projects would be an important step. The aim would be to enable governments and cities worldwide to scale-up active mobility. A focus on safe-system road safety should be at the centre of this package.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> SLOCAT Climate Finance as the Engine for More Low-Carbon Transport

([https://slocat.net/wp-content/uploads/legacy/u10/policy\\_brief\\_executive\\_summary.pdf](https://slocat.net/wp-content/uploads/legacy/u10/policy_brief_executive_summary.pdf))

<sup>3</sup> On investment needed in low carbon mobility globally and the benefits (<https://tcc-gsr.com/financing/>)

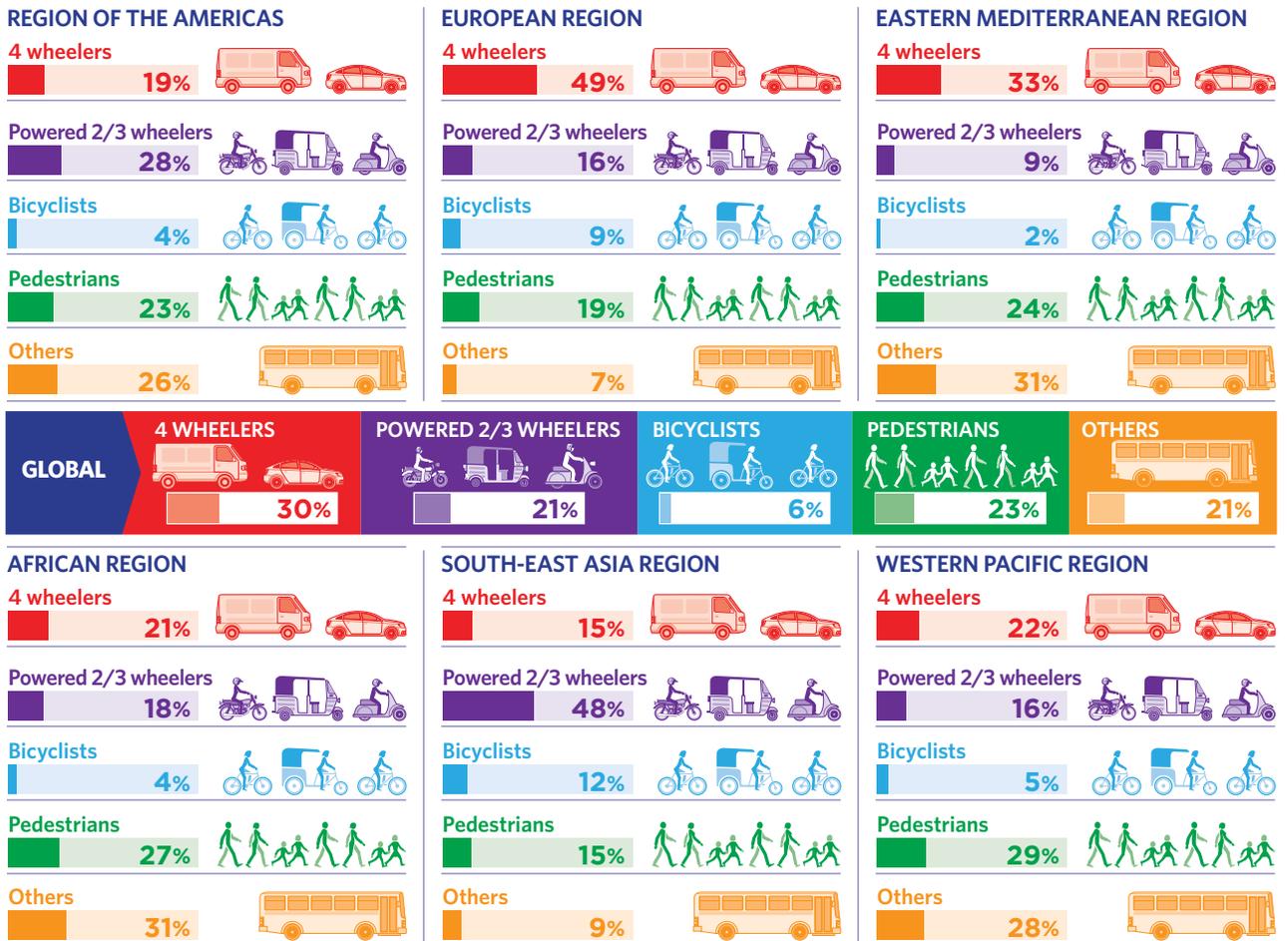
<sup>4</sup> PATH Make Way for Walking and Cycling (<https://walk21.com/path-report-make-way-for-walking-and-cycling/>)

<sup>5</sup> A \$100m capacity building fund has been proposed but a larger fund would be needed to support policy and catalyse infrastructure investment

(<https://tda-mobility.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Media-Advisory-TDA-Washington-AM-Capacity-Building.pdf>)



**FIGURE 3: VULNERABLE ROAD USERS ARE A HIGH PROPORTION OF TOTAL ROAD TRAFFIC FATALITIES**



Source: World Health Organization Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023

**A PLATFORM FOR ACTION:**

The Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Marrakech in 2025 should establish a platform for organisations providing safe system expertise, together with Governments and financing institutions, particularly the MDBs, to identify priority projects for collaboration and delivery. An accessible compendium of projects could be launched, highlighting opportunities and demand for new financing. This should also include low carbon transportation projects and particularly active mobility initiatives which require safety to be effectively integrated.





Photo credits: AP; Edward Echwalu, Amend; NACTO; Share the Road; Richard Stanley.



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