



Potential for implementation of Safe Systems principles in African countries: Recommendations based on a systematic comparison of six countries

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Background

According to WHO estimates, 1.35 million deaths occur in traffic each year (WHO, 2018). The low- and middle-income countries are the main location of traffic safety problems globally, standing for 93% of traffic fatalities, a share which is completely out of proportion if accounted for their populations and vehicle fleets (Academic Expert Group, 2020). Traffic fatality rate (per population) in Africa is the worst among all world regions and is 3 times as much as in Europe (4 times in comparison to EU-countries). There has been a constant growth in African traffic fatalities and the number is expected to increase by another 68% over the next decade if nothing is done. Such prognoses may look pessimistic, but ‘resistance is not futile’. The experience of many countries shows that the trend can be broken, and positive dynamics achieved within relatively short time if road safety gets proper attention and is treated in a systematic way. The expertise and experiences of the countries that are best-performers in road safety are highly relevant for African countries. Despite the cultural differences, the risk factors, countermeasures and, most importantly, the principles for organising and prioritising road safety work (Safe System approach) are quite universal and work everywhere. This knowledge is readily available, yet it is crucial to achieve a critical mass of local experts and professionals who could utilise it in an efficient way, adjust it to the African context and make sure that Safe System thinking reaches all levels of road safety work and involved stakeholders. The present study is part of the AfroSAFE project, which aims to make a leap in this direction.

Aim

The present deliverable provides a case comparison of African countries (Tanzania, Ghana, Zambia) with three EU countries with record of excellence in traffic safety and practicing Safe Systems principles (Norway and Netherlands & Sweden).

The aims of the present study are to:

- 1) Develop overviews of the road safety situation (accidents types and trends) and road safety challenges in each case country.



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- 2) Describe for each case country, the existing (formal and informal) system for road safety management: organisation of actors involved, strategies and plans governing the road safety work.
- 3) Examine the alignment with safe system principles in the road safety management systems in each country.
- 4) Provide a comparison of how Safe system countries address their road safety challenges compared with the African case countries.
- 5) Develop recommendations as to how the African countries can learn from the Safe System countries in their road safety management.

Thus, the study provides a comparative analysis of: i) Road safety situation and challenges, and ii) How these are addressed in the RS-management system in each country, with a special focus on vulnerable road users: pedestrian, cyclists and other VRUs.

Method or methodological issues

The study is based on qualitative interviews with key people within the national road safety management systems within each of the participating countries, and systematic analyses of key road safety documents, e.g. road safety plans, national transport plans.