

The Red Cross Red Crescent calls on Parliamentarians to strengthen road safety laws and policies

More than 3000 people die each day due to road crashes. It leads to approximately 1.3 million people dying each year, with another 50 million injured. More than ninety per cent of road traffic deaths occur in low-and middle income countries, yet they own only 40 per cent of the world's motor vehicles. Road crash injury is a humanitarian crisis that needs to be addressed.

The following brief provides information on what the Red Cross Red Crescent is doing to promote road safety, and identifies ways that Parliamentarians and National Societies can work together to tackle the crisis.



Credit: Rob Few / IFRC



Credit: Timor-Leste Red Cross Society

Road Safety and the Red Cross Red Crescent:

- › In the 1998 World Disasters Report, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) was one of the first organizations to highlight the catastrophic number of traffic deaths and injuries worldwide, and the dramatic consequences they have on people and livelihoods.
- › The importance of road safety is recognized in the IFRC's Strategy 2020, which identifies "enabling healthy and safe living" as a Red Cross Red Crescent strategic aim.
- › National Societies are recognized as key partners in the March 2010 UN Resolution on Road Safety, which guides the Decade of Action for Road Safety from 2011 to 2020.
- › In November 2011 at the IFRC General Assembly, 187 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies officially endorsed a global agreement that recognized road safety as a humanitarian crisis.
- › At the 2011 International Conference, 32 governments and National Societies signed a road safety pledge outlining their joint commitment to address road safety.

Road safety and the auxiliary status

- › National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities, have a humanitarian imperative to address road safety.
- › Road safety is part of the Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian mandate to serve the most vulnerable. National Societies support public authorities by implementing road safety interventions to protect road users from road crash and injury.
- › National Societies can leverage their auxiliary status and the "specific and distinctive partnership" with public authorities, to advocate for improved road-safety legislation and policies to protect road users.

Road safety and humanitarian diplomacy

- › The Red Cross Red Crescent seeks to persuade and influence decision-makers to improve road safety laws and policies to protect road users. The Red Cross Red Crescent believes weak road safety legislation creates unnecessary risk and vulnerabilities for road users, leading to greater potential for road traffic crashes and injuries.
- › The Red Cross Red Crescent employs various strategies to achieve its humanitarian diplomacy aims such as conducting confidential diplomacy, presenting road safety evidence, participating and contributing to legislative bodies and processes, and raising the profile of road safety through media.
- › National Societies engage with their respective governments in constructive dialogue, providing solution-focused and evidenced-based positions to encourage improvements in road safety legislation and initiatives.

What can you do as a parliamentarian to support your National Society in road safety?

- › Support the enactment and enforcement of comprehensive road safety laws, policies, and standards
- › Ensure the judiciary supports the laws and administers appropriate and fair penalties
- › Ensure adequate funding and continuous support for the road safety authorities and traffic police
- › Sign and implement the Red Cross Red Crescent Road Safety Pledge
- › Grant the National Society access to relevant road safety bodies or authorities
- › Call on the National Society to assist the government in strengthening road-safety legislation and policies through participation on panels, boards and in an advisory capacity on matters related to road safety.
- › Become a policy champion for road safety and work with your National Society to promote the issue within Parliament
- › Collaborate with National Society leaders to speak about the importance of road safety in the media
- › Be responsive to requests for meetings and discussions on road safety issues when requested by the Red Cross Red Crescent



Credit: Vietnam Red Cross Society

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