



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2019

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Eighty-second session

Geneva, 25–28 February 2020

Item 4 (h) of the provisional agenda

Strategic questions of a horizontal policy or regulatory nature:

Road safety

The Inland Transport Committee and Road Safety — Status of the United Nations Road Safety Fund

Note by the secretariat of the United Nations Road Safety Fund*

Summary

The United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) was established in April 2018 and aims to help low- and middle-income countries put in place effective national road safety systems to:

- Substantially curb the number of fatalities and injuries from road crashes and
- Reduce economic losses resulting from them.

The vision of the Fund is to build a world where roads are safe for every road user, everywhere.

Its mission is to finance — and leverage further funding for — high-impact projects based on established and internationally recognized best practices that increase road safety and minimize and eventually eliminate road crash trauma for all road users.

UNRSF secretariat has been established and is now operational.

The Committee may wish to:

- **provide comments** on the activities of UNRSF and
- **provide guidance** on further activities of UNRSF in fundraising and project financing.

* This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) was officially launched in April 2018 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 70/260. The Fund aims to help low- and middle-income countries put in place effective national road safety systems in order to (a) substantially curb the number of fatalities and injuries from road crashes, and (b) reduce economic losses resulting from them. UNRSF grants strengthen national and local capacity to manage and improve road safety by providing funding and technical expertise.

2. As a unique financing instrument, bringing together concerned United Nations organizations under one umbrella, and supported by governments, private sector, academia and civil society, the Fund supports concrete actions helping to achieve the road safety-related targets (target 3.6 and target 11.2) of the Sustainable Development Goals.¹

3. The ten participating United Nations organizations of the Fund include: the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and World Health Organization (WHO).

4. The vision of UNRSF is to build a world where roads are safe for every road user, everywhere. Its mission is to finance — and leverage further funding for — high-impact projects based on established and internationally recognized best practices that increase road safety and minimize road crashes for all road users.

5. The Fund seeks to use its funding in a catalytic way, leveraging its unique position as a United Nations fund to trigger further domestic and international investments, thus ensuring an impact far beyond its own grants. Together and over time, the projects financed by the Fund can help save millions of lives.

6. Relying on the convening power and technical expertise of the United Nations organizations, the Fund can strengthen collaborative efforts in helping improve road safety across the globe by:

- Gathering knowledge on different aspects of road safety in ongoing projects and initiatives through its links with various United Nations organizations, governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private sector and academia
- Identifying gaps and linking priorities to achieve synergies and maximize impact
- Ensuring complementarity and avoiding duplication of global road safety initiatives
- Coordinating priorities for road safety efforts under a comprehensive framework plan
- Enhancing partnership by bringing together all major stakeholders
- Leveraging financing support and pooling resources

¹ Target 3.6 aims to halve, by 2020, the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents;

Target 11.2 aims to provide, by 2030, access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons

- Ensuring oversight and accountability.

7. Guided by the safe system principles embedded in its Global Framework Plan of Action for Road Safety, the Fund will ensure effective and coordinated investment in what works best and has tangible impacts on road safety.

II. The structure and founding documents

8. The governance structure of UNRSF is composed of an Advisory Board, a Steering Committee, a secretariat and an administrative agent.

9. The Advisory Board provides strategic direction to the Fund, including advice on criteria for proposals, monitoring and evaluation and priorities for funding projects. The broad membership of the Board ensures that the strategic guidance provided to the Steering Committee reflects a large consensus among the various stakeholders. The World Bank, as the host of the Global Road Safety Facility, is a member of the Advisory Board to ensure coordination and coherence between funding mechanisms.

10. The Steering Committee has direct oversight of the Fund and the authority to make decisions such as the approval of projects for funding in line with the strategic direction provided by the Advisory Board.

11. The Fund's secretariat has been established and is now operational. Hosted at ECE in Geneva, the secretariat provides substantive, operational and logistical support to the Advisory Board and the Steering Committee. It is responsible for fund mobilization, organizing calls for project applications, and monitoring and reporting on the Fund's programmatic and operational performance.

12. The Administrative Agent of UNRSF is the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office based in New York. It is responsible for the maintenance of the Fund's account, the receipt of donor contributions, the disbursement of funds and the provision of periodic consolidated reports.

13. The founding documents of the Fund are the Terms of Reference, Funding Criteria and Priorities, Fundraising Strategy and Policy, Global Framework Plan of Action for Road Safety, and Rules of Procedure of the Advisory Board and the Steering Committee respectively.²

III. The Global Framework Plan of Action for Road Safety

14. The Global Framework Plan of Action is one of the founding documents of the Fund. It also serves as the basis for funding criteria and priorities for the Fund's activities. With its detailed action-oriented five pillars for road safety (road safety management, safe user, safe vehicle, safe road, and effective post-crash response), the Global Framework is a benchmark document for establishing the functioning national road safety systems with support of the United Nations road safety conventions/agreement administered by ECE.

15. It underlines the joint responsibility of all actors involved in design, construction, use, maintenance and improvements of roads and vehicles, as well as in the organization of post-crash response, to finally ensure the highest road safety performance.

16. The Global Framework Plan of Action stresses that the safety system provides the necessary holistic approach for road safety, but that it would not work if separated from the regulatory basis without which the system responsibilities for safety performance of the

² See the UNRSF website at www.unece.org/unrsf/home.html.

different actors could not be established. The development of national systems based on the commonly agreed international regulatory framework leads to a creation of comprehensive and harmonized national road safety systems.

IV. The Pilot Projects

17. In November 2018, the Steering Committee of UNRSF approved five pilot projects, implemented in eight countries across four regions worth nearly USD 1 million. The pilot projects address key components of national safety systems:

- Safe road — enforcement — Scaling safe street designs in Ethiopia
- Post-crash response — enforcement — Improving road traffic fatality data in Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal
- Safe user — legislation — Strengthening legal frameworks for road safety in Egypt and Pakistan
- Safe user — enforcement — Strengthening speed management in the Philippines
- Safe user — education — Capacity-development on child responsive urban planning and sustainable urban transport in Paraguay, the Philippines and South Africa

18. All pilot projects are currently well into the implementation phase with emerging positive results.

V. The first Call for Project Proposals

19. In October 2019 UNRSF opened its first formal call for proposals. The 2019 Call for Proposals closed on 4 December 2019 and was expected to disburse USD 4 million to approved projects aimed at reducing road traffic fatalities early 2020. Priority will be given to individual country and multi-country projects that have immediate and tangible impact on the reduction of road fatalities.

20. Eligible projects should respond to one or more of three priorities, guided by the Fund's Global Framework Plan of Action for Road Safety:

- **Priority 1:** Technical assistance to identify missing elements in existing national road safety system(s), or in preparation of an action plan for establishing such systems.
- **Priority 2:** Technical assistance to implement specific actions for improving and completing national road safety system(s) in accordance with an existing or to-be-developed national action plan.
- **Priority 3:** Technical assistance to help improve overall road safety management in the national road safety system(s).

21. Government endorsement of projects is strongly recommended. To capitalize on synergies to achieve impact on the ground, partnerships are encouraged with other organizations, multilateral development banks, and road safety NGOs. Leveraging additional resources through co-financing to implement or sustain activities is also strongly encouraged.

22. Only the participating United Nations organizations of UNRSF are eligible to apply directly to the call. Entities interested in responding to the call should reach out directly to the

focal points of the participating United Nations organizations, which are listed on the Fund's website.³

23. To help participating United Nations organizations and other potential partners prepare their project submissions, the UNRSF secretariat organized a briefing session on the 2019 Call for Proposals on 25 October 2019 at in Geneva. The briefing session focused on the Global Framework Plan of Action and the Priorities and Criteria for Funding Projects, that provide basic criteria for project evaluation. It also introduced and clarified the requirements on the documentation.

24. A workshop on UNRSF 2019 Call for Proposals was organized for permanent missions under the auspices of the Geneva Friends of Road Safety Network on 5 November 2019 by the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety and the Office of the European Union to the United Nations in Geneva.

VI. Fundraising activities

25. UNRSF has so far attracted almost USD 20 million in pledges from 12 donors from the public and private sectors. Public sector donors are Cyprus, France, Hungary, Monaco, Russian Federation, Slovakia and European Commission. Private sector donors include FIA Foundation, Global Giving on behalf of 3M, Michelin Corporate Foundation, Pirelli & C.SpA. and Total Foundation.

26. Given the need to promote and raise additional funding, in September 2019 the Fund's Advisory Board adopted the Branding and Messaging Framework, as well as a new logo and shorter name — the United Nations Road Safety Fund. The framework, new logo and name allow the Fund to take on a brand identity that is engaging, easily understood and that spreads a sense of enthusiasm and invites joint ownership and engagement in the Fund's purpose and vision. The new brand identity and messaging framework also ensure that all UNRSF partners speak clearly and with one voice to potential donors.

27. The fundraising activities have so far been built around the advocacy efforts and activities of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety and the Executive Secretary of ECE. These efforts and activities are planned in coordination with the Fund's secretariat and all Fund partners. They are based on the Fund's Fundraising Strategy and Policy. The secretariat has also drafted a donor cultivation plan and calendar that will help solidify the support of current donors and attract new ones. In addition, the secretariat has met with several potential donors to discuss the modalities of their contributions in line with the Fund's Terms of Reference and due diligence requirements.

VII. Next steps

28. In the coming period, UNRSF will receive and review submissions to its first formal call for proposals. The approved projects will be announced at the Third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Stockholm on 19–20 February 2020 to build momentum for renewed commitment by governments to engage and invest in road safety as the new Decade of Action for Road Safety will arrive in 2020. The conference could be an opportunity to seek support among member States to host a road safety pledging conference.

³ See <https://www.unece.org/unrsf/participating-organizations.html>

29. UNRSF will also continue to strengthen its activities on fundraising, on monitoring of the implementation of the five pilot projects and will communicate their success stories on its website and through social media.

30. On 18 April 2020, UNRSF celebrates its second anniversary, which presents an opportunity to demonstrate the success of its pilot projects, solidify the support of current donors and attract new ones.
