Youth for Youth Safety Project Report

Organized by:

GAMBIA RED CROSS SOCIETY YOUTH COMMISSION and NATIONAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Theme “Changing Minds, Saving Lives”

GAMBIA 2010
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Background
According to WHO, nearly 1.3 million people die as a result of a road traffic collision each year—more than 3000 deaths each day—and more than half of these people do not travel in a car. Twenty to fifty million more people sustain non-fatal injuries from a collision, and these injuries account for an important cause of disability worldwide. Ninety percent of road traffic deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, which claim less than half the world's registered vehicle fleet. Road traffic injuries are among the three leading causes of death for people between 5 and 44 years of age, killing more people each year than malaria. Unless immediate and effective action is taken, road traffic injuries are predicted to become the fifth leading cause of death in the world, resulting in an estimated 2.4 million deaths each year.

The economic consequences of road insecurity have been estimated between 1% and 3% of the respective GNP of the world countries, reaching a total over $500 billion. Reducing road casualties and fatalities will unlock growth and free resources for a more productive use.

Introduction
The Gambia joined the rest of the world to participate in the first World Crossing Campaign; an initiative by Youth For Road Safety (YOURS). The campaign tasked the contestants to come up with a Ten-second video, highlighting a powerful message on road safety with strong emphasis on visibility.

The main thrust of the global competition was to portray the vulnerability of young people in the traffic and to create awareness on the significance of youth involvement in road safety. The rather thought-provoking exercise culminated to an award by a constituted Jury that honoured The Gambia and Siaka K. Dibba in particular with a prestigious award after submitting his work with other young people from across the world.

As part of the requirements of the competition, the winner is to come up with a road safety project attracting a 1000 Euro award. The Gambia already established a partnership agreement between the National Youth Parliament and the National Youth Commission of the Gambia Red Cross Society. This alliance seeks to inspire and empower young people in the Gambia to take responsibility and advocate safer roads.

This project, strives to connect young people and their organizations to network and or collaborate in order to raise a strong voice by building the capacity of road safety advocates on the theme "Changing Minds, Saving Lives"

Objectives of the Project
1. To raise awareness on road safety through the following:
   - Three (3) radio talk shows;
   - Key message on Road safety on 5 newspapers; and
   - Press briefing targeting at least 50% of the population.
2. To create dialogue and inculcate positive behaviour towards the responsible use of roads targeting at least 1500 students from three (3) schools
3. To empower 50 young people to serve as road safety ambassadors in their schools and organisations.
**Project Activities**

As part of activities of the World Crossing Campaign the following were planned and implemented:

**Media Campaign (Press Briefing, newspaper publications and TV interview)**

A media briefing was organised to brief journalist on the activities of the project. The briefing, which attracted several young journalists from both print and electronic give them the opportunity to learn about the project, the Red Cross-Youth Parliament partnership and as well have first-hand information on road safety from WHO-Gambia office. During the briefing, many issues relating to road safety were highlighted and with Journalists given the opportunity to ask questions in relation to the project and road safety in general. This event was covered and broadcast as one of the news headlines on the national TV as well as on many newspapers.

During the project implementation week, the winner of the World Crossing Campaign had an interview with the state TV; aired twice and the newspapers published the capacity enhancement program appearing on the front page. These remarkable media coverage speak volumes about the importance The Gambia attaches to road safety; from young people to journalists.

**Capacity Enhancement Programme**

A two-day capacity building forum on road safety was organized for members of the two groups that joined forces (National Youth Parliament and Gambia Red Cross Society), youth leaders, students and young journalists within the Greater Banjul area. The training was the first of its kind convened in The Gambia and it helped to build the capacity of young people who have very little knowledge in the area of road safety. Young people who had very little knowledge in road safety were targeted with a view to not only turning them into road safety advocates, but to also arm them with communication and advocacy skills to implement effective road safety projects as well as raise awareness on the vulnerability of young people on the road.

**Training Methodology**

The training took various forms, key among them include:

- Power point presentation
- Group works
- Brainstorming
- Video show

**Opening Ceremony**

Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Youth and Sports, Sheriff Gomez, the Executive Secretary of the National Youth Council (NYC), Marcel Mendy, described the training programme as a significant milestone in the drive to promote road safety in The Gambia. “It
will also prepare advocates for the task that lies ahead of them,” says Mr Mendy. He lamented that the calamities on our roads are no longer secret and that youth advocates can play a critical role in promoting road safety.

Lamin Saidykhan, administrative secretary of the National Youth Parliament, said road crashes are unique and therefore considered it all the more important for collaboration in broadening the minds of the youth to advocate road safety.

Addressing the trainees at the occasion, the winner of the World Crossing Campaign Competition, Siaka K. Dibba said the devastation that road crashes wreak on victims, their families, friends, and communities are incalculable. “People have no idea that the one whose life has been abruptly ended in just one crash could have been an engine of meaningful development.” According to him, services for victims, such as access to relevant information, legal assistance, physical therapies, counselling, provision of wheelchairs, or other rehabilitative devices need to be planned and provided by government, NGOs and the private sector.

Dibba finally called on Government, UN agencies, NGOs among other organizations to allocate adequate funds, appropriate legislations, policies and programmes towards road safety.

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Alieu K Jammeh for his part, opined that the fight to save lives is a noble cause, adding that the struggle for road safety is commendable.

Jammeh concluded by assuring the gathering that the Ministry of Youth and Sports is concerned and committed to all youth-initiated undertaking.

Momodou Gassama the WHO Health Promotion Officer, who also served as a resource person during the training said the global health body is concerned with road safety because they value the lives and health of the people. He said it is the responsibility of WHO to see every person attain the highest level of health.

He pointed out that road safety is one aspect of their job at the WHO, noting that many people are dying due to road traffic crashes. He finally urged young people to be careful on the road, as they are more vulnerable to road traffic crashes.

Sessions

**Day One: 4th December 2010**

The sessions started with an introduction of participants and facilitators. Several prominent presenters were invited to lead participants through very interesting topics, such as:

- Reason for over representation of young people in road traffic injuries;
- Health and social implications of road traffic injuries;
- Traffic signs and rules;
- Safety at Work and Road Maintenance.
The first presentation ‘Reason for over representation of young people in road traffic injuries’ was facilitated by the WHO Gambia’s Health Promotion Officer-Mr. Momodou Gassama. His deliberations covered areas such as:

- Faces behind the figures;
- Number of young people dying because of road traffic injuries;
- Profile of road users and how to prevent road traffic deaths/crashes among young people.

This session was interactive and gave the participants the opportunity to share experiences on accidents they witnessed.

“A second year Development Studies student at the University of The Gambia sustained severe injuries on his face and worst of all his left hand got broken as a result of an unqualified driver who was escaping a police check point. This accident led to the deferment of his course at University, his work was also affected and this affected his family as he is the breadwinner of the family he could not offer them any support during the period of the accident” said a university student who was a participant.

Many participants witnessed accidents while on their way to school, work, or business. A participant who was an eyewitness gave another glaring scenario.

“A 22 year old boy was crossing the road while a lorry and a van coming from different directions collided and the young boy happened to be in between the two vehicles, he sustained fractures on his head and died on the spot” a participant bemoaned.

The next session delved into traffic signs and rules in The Gambia, officials of The Gambia Police Force-Traffic Unit were invited to serve as resource persons but were not available. As a result, the participants themselves had a very productive group discussion during which they identified common traffic signs as well as the rules and laws. This was followed by presentations, questions, and clarifications on the traffic signs and laws. Prominent among those signs known to young people are Speed Limit, Hospital Sign, Zibra Crossing, Stop, Give Way, No U turn, T Junction, Y Junction.

As to the existing laws, the participants also made mention of the compulsory use of seat belts and NON USE of mobile phones while driving.

The last session of the day was a video show. Participants had the opportunity to watch World Crossing Campaign Movie and The Winning Video.

**Outcomes of the day**

From the presentations, participants learnt about the important role they could play in mitigating road crashes. This served as a motivation towards identifying various traffic signs and laws to be able to reorient themselves for ensuing awareness raising.

The testimonies they shared were relevant for consciousness building on the need for care and the need to advocate strict traffic regulations.
**Day two: 5th December 2010**

The second day of the training started with a recap of the previous day deliberations. The recap was done in a participatory manner and all the participants were able to reflect back on what was discussed.

Mr. Kenbugul Diko of Riders for Health-The Gambia, facilitated a session on Health and social implications of road traffic injuries. His presentation focused on statistics (Global and National), Implications of road traffic injuries on health, and the Social implications it has. Mr. Diko reported that road traffic victim's account for a large portion of hospital bed occupancy in surgical wards. He cited that in case of prolonged treatment or death of victim, the family may end up selling most of their valuable assets and getting trapped into long-term debt.

Ms Frances Coker-Singateh -Feeder Roads Manager- National Roads Authority (NRA) deliberated on **Safety at Work and Road Maintenance.** Her presentation was more of a pictorial on the safety measures put in place when working on the roads and during their maintenance. Since development is a continuous process including the maintenance of roads, safety must be given priority in routine road maintenance. Safety signs should be within a reasonable distance say 25m from the workers on site, the Feeder Roads Manager told participants. Examples of this were shown through pictures of executed works of the National Roads Authority (NRA).

**Outcomes of day two**

From the presentations the participants learn the statistics both global and national and also if measures are not taken road traffic injuries will be among the 5th leading cause of death particularly among young people. This trigger them to come up with recommendations to address the issues of road crashes.

**Radio Talk Shows**

Three (3) radio programmes were conducted at (Paradise FM, West Coast Radio and Gambia Radio), which are one of the well-listened radios in the Gambia. The radio programmes took the form of live phone-in, which attracted many listeners who call and contributed. The programmes, were done in the local languages in order to give the listeners the opportunity to clear their doubts about existing traffic laws in The Gambia as well traffic/road signs, amongst others.

**School Outreach Programmes**

**Methodology**

The methodology used during school outreach programs was assembly speech and questions and answers. The reason for choosing this method is to share with students and
teachers key road safety issues and also give the opportunity to clear doubts and also add there voice to the crusade against road crashes.

Assembly Speeches

Two (2) Senior and one (1) Junior Secondary Schools were visited during the school tours. The tours took the form of speeches on road safety during school assemblies and this helped raise the level of awareness of students on the causes and precautionary measures to be taken to avert Road Traffic Crashes. The presentations that lasted for 30mins each gave the students and teachers the opportunity to ask questions pertaining to road crashes and measures to avert it.

As a result, those trained students took the lead in school outreach programmes to share the knowledge gained during the training with their fellow students.

Target Reached

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Campaign/outreach</td>
<td>50% of 1.5 million Gambian populace between 15-35</td>
<td>At least 40% of the Gambian populace and also those outside the Gambia were reached through the internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School tour/outreach</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1000 directly reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road safety capacity building training and symposium</td>
<td>50 people</td>
<td>50 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impact/Progress

-Testimonies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Testimonies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The training is education and it has made a positive change in my knowledge towards traffic issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic signs, complications aka traffic accidents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


General Evaluation:

1. The training was very educational and informed us about the importance of traffic rules. The younger generation knows the implications of traffic crash, the issues related to traffic rules and all of which were clearly dealt with by presenters and participants alike.

2. I intend to share through discussions with peers, family, and loved ones changed by views on traffic rules as it comes to being a safe driver and made me reconsider my attitude on the road.

gained? I intend to share my knowledge with people who does not known about the road safety. What impact does it make in your life? What I learn about concerning about the road safety? What will you recommend for future training? My recommendation is to go to school to train them on road safety.
I intend to share the knowledge with my fellow young people, especially those around my neighborhood who are drivers and non-drivers everyday all road users.

It has increased a step ahead of my life skills and strengthened my knowledge on traffic and road safety.

To allocate transport refund for participation and provide road safety management.

Excellent and very nice.

To all my friends, and be considerate and nice.

Positive impact cause new result stand and really advocate for our own safety.

Marked several training, media talk show.

EVALUATION of Buddy Jobs

The overall training were very interesting, interactive and very educative.

Indeed I’ve learned a lot concerning the cost, prevention and the role the community at large should play when it comes to road safety.

The training was just great.

The training is very important in our collective drive to give road safety the due prominence it deserves at all levels.

2. I have learnt a lot. These include the national and global RIDS, RTI, statistics, road safety signs, the need for greater capacity building, charge of authorities, legislation review and the complexity of the situation.

3. The breakfast was good but there were no
Challenges

- Some of the Resource persons/experts who have special knowledge on specific road safety issue were not available.
- The school outreach programmes were done during examination time thus making it very difficult to get the first identified schools. Instead new schools were identified and visited.
- Transport fares were not refunded to participants and this made it challenging to attend the two-day training.

Lessons Learnt

- Road safety is increasingly becoming a development priority; with a growing recognition of the opportunities to align its focus on results with other sustainable development goals.
- Since no single government, agency or institution can single-handedly address the complexity of road safety, it behoves all and sundry to make the enterprise all-inclusive.
- Road crashes are the leading cause of death among young people.
- Policies/laws could contribute to the reduction of road crashes.

Recommendation

- To conduct a situational analysis on road safety in The Gambia.
- To develop a National Road Safety Strategy.
- Establishment of Community First Aid Response Team.
- To organize road safety capacity building workshops including first aid for different groups (law makers, Traffic Police officers, Drivers, young people and journalist).
- Increased commitment on the part of government, policy makers, NGOs and private sectors (more funding for road safety programs/projects).
- Organise sensitizations on road safety in schools, communities and with drivers, especially young ones.
- Road safety policies and laws need to be more comprehensive.
- Popularization of road safety legislation in The Gambia.
- To consider people with special needs when planning road constructions.
- Provision of urgent, good quality pre-hospital care.
Conclusion

Road traffic injuries aside from being a major health hazard leading to a high rate of morbidity, disability and death, have great social impact on the victims, their families and the nation. Preventing road accidents and injuries should be an important area that calls for the attention of policy makers, as it is not only crucial to the health, social and transportation sectors but it is also cost-effective.

The training was generally interesting, participatory, and successful. Participants expressed their gratitude and appreciation in the training strategy and acknowledged that it has taken them to another level as their capacities are built on issue that were not known to them before. They further pledged that they will make best use of the opportunity given to them and disseminate the information to their colleagues and the public.

The school outreach activities and radio programs also created an impact as students promised to take their rightful positions to sensitize their peers as well the drivers on their way to or from school.
Annex:

Schools

Greater Banjul Upper Basic School
Kairaba Senior Secondary School
Daddy Jobe Comprehensive

Television and Radio Stations

Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS)
Paradise FM 105.7MHz or www.paradisefm.gm
West Coast Radio 95.30MHz or www.wcr.gm
Gambia Radio 98.6MHz