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### Inland Transport Committee

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Item 7 (h) of the provisional agenda

**Strategic questions of a horizontal and cross-sectoral policy  
or regulatory nature: Road safety**

## 2020 progress report of the United Nations Road Safety Fund

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

#### *Summary*

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 — projects with significant and sustainable impact on road safety, based on established and internationally recognized best practices that increase road safety and minimize and eventually eliminate road crash trauma for all road users.

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.

## I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) was launched in April 2018 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, pursuant to the General Assembly resolution A/RES/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.

2. In August 2020, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/299 proclaimed a new Decade of Action for Road Safety, with the target to halve the number of road deaths and injuries between 2021-2030. The resolution invites member States to support the activities of United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety and the United Nations Road Safety Fund.

3. As a unique financing instrument, bringing together 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. In 2020, the UNRSF has welcomed the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the eleventh participating UN organization.

4. 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. 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. Governing bodies**

5. Hosted by the UNECE in Geneva, under the direct supervision of the UNECE Executive Secretary since 1 October 2020, the secretariat provides substantive, operational and logistical support to the Advisory Board and the Steering Committee.

6. The secretariat continued to service its governing bodies in 2020. It organized four sessions of the Steering Committee in 2020 and one Advisory Board meeting.

7. During its fourth session in February 2020, the Steering Committee approved ten projects to be financed under the 2019 Call for Proposals, with a total budget of USD 4 million.

8. In May 2020, the fifth Steering Committee looked at the lessons learned and good practices from the 2019 Call for Proposals. It also considered the possibility for access to the Fund by non-UN organizations. The Steering Committee continued the discussion in an informal virtual workshop organized in July 2020.

9. In July 2020, the Advisory Board convened its fourth session, back to back with the sixth session of the Steering Committee and issued a decision on the funding cycle parameters for the 2020 Call for Proposals.

10. In July 2020, the Advisory Board decided to extend the UNRSF until 31 December 2030, to coincide with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A few weeks later, the UNRSF Advisory Board members elected the EU Deputy Director General and the European Coordinator for Road Safety/Sustainable Mobility, Mr. Matthew Baldwin as the new Chair of the UNRSF Advisory Board during the next biennium.

11. At its seventh session in October 2020, the Steering Committee identified thematic areas for the 2020 Call for Proposals, based on likelihood of impact through alignment with national priorities, opportunities for synergies and avoiding duplications with other road safety funds and programmes. It should be partially connected with COVID-19. It will also take into account partnerships and leveraging of other resources, including co-financing; the new UN Resolution A/RES/74/299 and the links with UN Sustainable Development Goals.

12. With this mandate, the UNRSF secretariat launched the 2020 Call for Proposals for a three-month opening period, between 30 October 2020 and 31 January 2021, with an overall disbursement of USD 4 million to approved projects.

13. To help participating United Nations organizations, the UNRSF secretariat organized a briefing session on the 2020 Call for Proposals in November 2020.

14. Following a first kick-off meeting of UNRSF with Bloomberg Philanthropies, FIA Foundation and World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility (GRSF) in July, it was agreed that the secretariat organizes such coordination meeting at least twice a year to seek inputs and feedback to foster complementarity of projects received and to avoid duplication.

## **III. The projects funded by UNRSF**

15. After two and a half years of its establishment and three Calls for proposals (Call 2018 for pilot projects, Call 2019, Call 2020), the UNRSF is operational and has proven its value-

add and effectively positioned itself as a solution to the world's enduring road safety challenge.<sup>1</sup>

16. The UNRSF is currently financing fifteen projects, covering four regions, in nineteen countries, ranging from improving infrastructure for active mobility, capacity building, policy and law enforcement to strengthening data collection systems.

17. For the 2019 Call for proposals, a total of seventy-three projects requesting support for fifty-two countries were submitted. USD 62.5 million would have been needed to finance all these projects. With a budget of USD 4 million available, the Fund's Steering Committee made a concerted effort to direct resources where they would be most needed.

18. The UNRSF project number is set to grow with the 2020 Call for Proposals which was launched in October 2020 and will be closed in January 2021. The call will again disburse USD 4 million to support projects with significant and sustainable impact in low- and middle-income countries. It will encourage complementarity between road safety partners, promote interconnection with other SDGs challenges and will be partially connected with COVID-19 measures.

## **A. First results**

19. Two UNRSF funded projects have been completed in 2020. The first project "Strengthening Speed Management in the Philippines", implemented by UNESCAP, realized significant impact with more than 170 speed enforcers trained in best-practice speed enforcement, high-level officials supported in developing speed enforcement plans, and more than 75,000 people engaged through social media on the importance of appropriate speeds. A speed enforcement package has been developed ensuring the sustainability of the speed management trainings through "Train the Trainer" workshops.

20. The second project completed is "Child-responsive urban planning and sustainable urban transportation", implemented by UNICEF in Paraguay and in the Philippines. It has developed a sustainable model school showing that child responsive urban planning and engineering interventions can reduce the number of children fatalities and injuries. As another result of the project, the Paraguay Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning issued a memorandum to ensure that all future urban development projects take child rights into consideration.

## **B. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on UNRSF projects**

21. Development projects around the world are finding ways to quickly adapt their projects to changing contexts as well as develop safety measures that can help reduce the rate of infection as a consequence of COVID-19. UNRSF were no exception and most work was delayed as a result of disruptions caused by the pandemic. However, this also means that UNRSF projects are finding innovative ways to adapt, mitigate, and maintain the momentum of their work by showcasing how their added value can support government safety mitigation measures.

22. This is the example of the UNRSF project "Safe road: Scaling up safe street designs", implemented by UN-Habitat in Ethiopia. During the pandemic, the Government has accelerated its road safety initiatives. The National Non-Motorized Transport Strategy gained momentum and recognition in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic that squarely fits in line with the safe transportation measures.

23. In May 2020, the UNRSF secretariat prepared and shared tools and tips "Adapting programming during COVID-19" for project managers to adapt programmes during the pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> <https://unece.org/projects-2>

## IV. Fundraising activities

24. UNRSF has so far attracted almost USD 20 million in pledges from sixteen donors from the public and private sectors. While this is good progress, the UNRSF needs to go much further to reach its ambitions and needs to make a call for replenishment of funding for 2021 to 2025.

25. In 2020, four new donors joined the UNRSF, The Kingdom of Bahrain and the Republic of Mauritius and two private sector companies, Essilor and the Spanish TV Nuez Audiovisual Productions. Hungary made a second generous donation to the Fund.

26. The UNRSF has enhanced its donor outreach efforts in 2020: developed a donor ranking scheme for donors to encourage higher level of giving, devised a structured effort to reach out the new Member States donors and published a donor brochure. The secretariat convened in November an informal working group to discuss fundraising issues, prepared a survey and a roadmap on future fundraising.

27. The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety and the UNECE Executive Secretary continued to advocate tirelessly for the Fund. In that perspective, the Special Envoy used fora to raise visibility among wider stakeholders, including the Third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Stockholm, the meetings of the UN Road Safety Collaboration, events with the "Geneva Friends of Road Safety Network", meetings of the FIA High Level Panel for Road Safety, or bilateral discussions with prominent world leaders such as Bahrain, Egypt, Kenya or Monaco in November 2020.

28. 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.

## V. Communication activities

29. The Steering Committee approved the Guidelines of the UNRSF Brand and logo in 2020 and the UNRSF secretariat published its 2019 Annual Report showcasing the first results of the Fund projects.<sup>2</sup>

30. The Fund secretariat increased the visibility of the Fund in 2020 with the publication of two newsletters, the UNRSF updated brochure and video, a flyer for the two years anniversary of the Fund and a webinar on the impact of the COVID-19 on road safety. Furthermore, the UNRSF also launched its Twitter and Facebook profile in Autumn 2020.

31. To commemorate the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims (WDOR), the UNRSF launched two social media campaigns. The first campaign was a joint initiative of the UNRSF with the European Union and other UN organizations. It consisted of eight video messages reminding viewers that every 24 seconds, someone dies on the road and to remember, support and act for road safety. The campaign ended with the thirty-first anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The second campaign was a collaboration between UNRSF and UN agencies which are implementing UNRSF projects such as UNDP, UNECA, UNESCWA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF and WHO. Through testimonies of road crash survivors, viewers learnt about road safety challenges in low- and middle-income countries.

32. The UNRSF recently launched a survey and started a consultation to build its communication strategy.

## VI. Next steps

33. In 2021, the UNRSF secretariat will scale-up financing through traditional as well as innovative resource-mobilization.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://unece.org/publications/transport/UN%20Road%20Safety%20Fund>

34. The ambition of the Fund is to respond to huge demand for the Fund by expanding its geographical and programmatic footprint – with the new projects resulting from the 2020 Call for Proposals. A priority is to ensure that these projects will have significant and sustainable impact on road safety.

35. The UNRSF secretariat will establish partnerships to advance interlinkages between road safety and other core development issues. It will work on increasing the visibility of the Fund through social media campaigns, joint events with partners and donors, and the development of a new website.

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