

Chapter 5	IMPLEMENTATION OF FIVE-YEAR NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMMES	STAGE III
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5.1 In-country conditions conducive to Stage III activities

By Stage III, the government may have received some technical assistance to implement a road safety action plan. An improved accident data system should be in place, with suitably trained local staff operating it. Analysis of blackspot locations and characteristics of road user groups most at risk should be conducted regularly. A national road safety council with subcommittees providing policy guidance and some financial support to road safety committees in municipalities and provinces should be in existence. Road and highway engineers and authorities should be skilled in basic accident blackspot improvement work and undertaking blackspot improvement programmes on national and provincial roads. Efforts should already be underway through the national road safety council subcommittees, to improve driver tests and vehicle inspections and develop children's traffic education programmes and legislation. There should be a core of interested professionals specializing in various aspects of road safety. Road safety research should also be underway in institutions and universities, and the media should be active in putting pressure on the government to take action. Countries that have already implemented a priority action plan will have a number of government agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in improving road safety, thus creating a conducive atmosphere to implement a series of five-year safety programmes.

5.2 The primary focus / purpose of Stage III activities

A particular problem for developing countries entering a high growth stage of motorization is that road accidents and deaths will generally increase in line with the rapid increase in numbers of vehicles and their usage. In such circumstances, it is very difficult to establish politically acceptable targets for

road safety. It is also not possible to predict how much road deaths will drop within five years. It is thus better to think in terms of lives saved as a result of particular interventions and countermeasures, even though the actual number of deaths may have increased. This is likely to be more politically acceptable.

The main purpose of Stage III is to consolidate the activities begun during the priority action plan and to implement new activities and interventions which will enable the annual toll of road accident-related deaths and injuries to be reduced. The first five-year plan should be seen largely as an extension of the activities and programmes initiated in the priority action plan. However, actual implementation should be undertaken through national road safety plans which should be prepared annually to guide and focus the activities of various agencies towards achievable targets, but should operate within the context of the overall five-year programmes. Subsequent five-year programmes should build on the previous five-year programmes.

5.3 Typical activities to be undertaken in Stage III under a five-year programme

The types of activities required at this stage are a continuation of the activities begun in earlier stages in all the major 14 sectors discussed above (Section 3.1), with increases in the quantity or quality of each activity. An overview of the major sectors has been presented in figure 2 and the five-year programmes were discussed in Section 4.9.

The selection of activities at this stage depends on the nature of the activities, budgetary allocations, and availability of human resources. Figures 2 and 5 through 13 can be used for preparing a detailed work programme.

5.4 Time- scale for completion

As indicated, five years is a suitable period for the implementation of the first phase of the road safety action programmes. Within the programme, however, an annual plan should be prepared with a focus on particular activities and widely publicized so that all agencies clearly understand what needs to be achieved during the period. The objective of fully safe roads will not be achieved within this period, and the road safety activities will not end in five years. Rather, upon completion of the five-year programme, the goal of having established a system should have been completed. Subsequent programmes can then focus on strengthening the programmes and widening their coverage by involving all concerned segments of the population.

5.5 Resources required and sources of funding

By this stage, the government should appreciate the annual losses to the economy from traffic accidents and be willing to make expenditures on safety as an investment which will, in the long term, reduce economic and social losses.

Costs to establish the necessary procedures and systems to tackle safety problems can vary from several million to several hundred million US dollars. Some countries set aside a fixed proportion of their annual GDP for working towards the reduction of road accidents. For example, until recently, Japan used to invest about half of its estimated annual losses from road accidents (about 0.6 per cent of its annual GDP) in the improvement of road safety.

It is necessary to make significant investment in road safety activities, recognizing that money spent to reduce accidents will be

repaid many times over through the savings to the economy.

Funding should be included in the government's annual budgeting and five-year programmes. Only some items in the programme (such as infrastructure improvements or a marking/signing programme on the national network, can be financed by agencies such as international development banks and bilateral aid agencies. While governments should certainly seek opportunities to obtain funding from aid agencies to finance parts of road safety programmes, it has to be recognized and accepted that the primary source of investment in a five-year action programme needs to be the country itself. Unfortunately, road safety is an ongoing problem. Completion of the first five-year programme does not mean that the problem has been solved. It will be necessary to have a second and probably more five-year programmes to reduce the numbers and severity of road accidents.

5.6 Monitoring and evaluation of road safety programmes

As with the priority action plan of Stage II, it is essential that the implementation of road safety programmes be properly monitored to ensure that the activities are effective in achieving the objectives and reducing the long-term numbers and severity of road accidents. Five-year action plans specify quantifiable targets concerning the numbers or rates of casualties to make it possible to assess whether the programme has been effective. In addition, monitoring frameworks based on the DEE approach (see Section 4.9) should be established to periodically assess whether the overall objectives are being achieved in each sector. If targets are not achieved, programmes should be reassessed and corrective measures implemented.