



## PREFACE

Road traffic deaths, injuries ( RTIs) and disabilities are increasing at an alarming pace in India. From 54,000 deaths in 1990, it has increased to an estimated 1, 00,000 by 2002. Nearly 1.5 million seriously injured people receive care from various health care institutions. One half of injury related disabilities are due to RTIs. The economic losses from this man made epidemic are huge and phenomenal to the Indian society. The psychosocial suffering for the family members after the death of their near and dear ones and for the survivors are hard to imagine and difficult to quantify; only those experiencing and sharing the tragedy will be able to share, but needs to be understood by all others.

India is also experiencing infrastructure expansion amidst addition of large number of different size and capacity vehicles every day. This heterogeneous mix of varying vehicles in limited road environments often leads to conflicts resulting in crashes, injuries, deaths and disabilities. This complex scenario is unique to India and other Low and Middle Income Countries. This transportation growth is occurring in the absence of comprehensive, integrated and coordinated systems, required for governing road safety in India.

The present report brings together a comprehensive review of the burden, impact, risk factors, current initiatives from the Indian region, and about ways to reduce and lessen the impact of road crashes in a simple and easy to understand manner. It highlights that multiple interventions aimed at different types of road users and integrated and coordinated in a systems approach is required for India.

Lessons learnt from High Income Countries based on more than 3 decades of research and implementation experience reveals that Road Traffic Injuries are predictable and preventable. These include a variety of measures ranging from better design of road environments, better design and standards of vehicles, legislations for helmets - seat belts and child restraints, improved and safer pedestrian facilities, improved trauma care and several other sustainable solutions. RTI prevention and control needs to be provided a defined space in the growth and development of India and should receive immediate attention of policy makers professionals and political leaders. Health sector and health professionals are major partners in this process.

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