

Summary:

Evaluation of the Sida Support to the Global Road Safety Partnership

This Final Report presents the results of the Evaluation of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) Support to the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP). GRSP is a global partnership of business, civil society and government working for sustained reduction of road accidents and aimed at improving road safety conditions in developing and transition countries.

Sida, which has supported GRSP since 2000, has commissioned the Institute of Transport Economics (TOI) to undertake the evaluation. The objectives are to (i) Review the main outputs and activities since July 2000 in the light of the Programme's objectives emphasising the current phase that started in July 2002, (ii) Review the pro and cons of the GRSP concept and the modalities of action and (iii) Review the existing demand relating both to policy advice and programme assistance. The evaluation is based on information collected in the period June – September 2004.

The Road Safety Problem

The World report on road traffic injury prevention - prepared jointly by the World Health Organization and World Bank in 2004 - indicates that the number killed in road accidents worldwide amounts to more than one million each year and as many as 50 million are injured. Projections indicate that these figures will increase by about 65 per cent over the next 20 years unless there is new commitment to prevention of road accidents. Low-income and middle-income countries account for about 85 per cent of road traffic deaths. It is anticipated that road traffic deaths will increase substantially in low-income and middle-income countries. Without appropriate action, road traffic injuries are predicted to be the third leading cause of disability and injury in 2020. The economic cost of road accidents varies from 1 – 2 per cent of gross national product. The cost in low-income and middle-income countries is estimated at US\$ 65 billion or more than they receive in development assistance.

Review of Main Output and Performance of GRSP

At the global level, the GRSP secretariat in Geneva is active in several fields in addition to its secretariat function for the governing committees and support to focus countries. The most important fields are promotion of road safety and the partnership approach as well as knowledge sharing through a well functioning website, a knowledge base, focus notes, research reports/information notes and other publications.

The GRSP output relates strongly to the results of activities in the ten focus countries in Africa, Asia, Central Europe and Latin America. GRSP has generated

a large amount of road safety activities and projects in these countries, varying from a few in some countries to more than twenty in others. Most activities in focus countries fall under information, education and training. Focus country activities in 2004 amount to approximately US\$ 4 million in total or three times the current budget of the GRSP secretariat in Geneva.

The review of performance reveals that GRSP activities are relevant and address global and country level road safety policies in a meaningful way. Generally, GRSP activities appear effective as they address the objectives defined. It should be noted, however, that objectives are formulated in quite general terms. Two weaknesses have been identified. One concerns the difficulties in generating road safety activities in some focus countries, e.g. in South Africa where the current activity level is low. The other concerns upgrading of the ability to demonstrate good practice in focus countries as very few proper evaluations of projects are undertaken today.

It is difficult to assess the efficiency of GRSP operations, as the evaluation framework has not allowed in depth investigation in this regard. The information gathered, however, indicates that efficiency is fairly good at the secretariat level and possibly also at the country level. Furthermore, it appears that the GRSP secretariat has developed into a professionally strong entity.

Also impacts have been difficult to assess, mainly because comprehensive evaluations of GRSP projects are missing. Only one project has been formally evaluated. There are, however, indications of positive effect in some focus countries, notably Hungary (one evaluation carried out), Brazil, India, Poland and Thailand.

The GRSP has a well functioning secretariat and what seems to be a sound financial basis. It appears that the organisation is moving rapidly towards organisational and financial sustainability. Sustainability at the country level is, however, not assured yet. Two countries, India and Thailand, appear to have achieved sustainability. Another two countries, Brazil and Poland may be close to reaching sustainability and focus at this stage on how to take the final step in this direction. For four countries, Costa Rica, Ghana, Hungary and Romania sustainability has not yet been secured. The same applies to South Africa where sustainability may be at risk. Finally, in Vietnam, operations are only starting up now.

A number of lessons have been learned during the evaluation team's reviewing of experience, among them: The World Bank and other international development agencies are indispensable road safety partners. National branches of international corporate partners appear to be vital catalysts for building focus country networks and transferring knowledge. When introduced at the national level, it is of vital importance that GRSP fits into the present pattern of road safety organisations. GRSP operations may be easier to develop if there already is a well functioning National Road Safety Committee with extensive activities and government support. Impacts of focus country activities cannot be properly documented unless comprehensive evaluations become a standard component of such activities. This, however, will require clear guidance and possibly additional support and financing from the GRSP secretariat.

Review of Demand for Road Safety Policy Advice and Programme Assistance

The assessment of the overall demand for road safety assistance is based on experience from previous road safety work in low-income and middle-income countries and the new understanding brought forward by the World report on road traffic injury prevention (The World Report). Experience with traditional and usually minor "first generation" road safety projects has been less positive than expected. The World report projects a dramatic increase in road deaths and injuries towards 2020. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly debate on the global road safety crisis and the World report in April 2004 revealed a huge demand for intensified safety interventions in low- and middle-income countries. Against this background it appears that a new kind of major stand-alone "second generation" multi-sector road safety projects are required in such countries.

Most of the road safety interventions needed are not simple ones. They require multi-sector co-operation at the government level of the transport, health, police and education sectors. In addition, input from civil society and the private sector will be required. Resource mobilisation is clearly needed if low- and middle-income countries that face the biggest challenges are going to make substantial progress. In addition to road safety investments, capacity building at government level is urgently required in such countries to enable governments to address efficiently the interventions needed. Such capacity building is required prior to that a country can start implementing major new road safety projects.

Few low- and middle-income countries have so far introduced road safety measures that have led to significant reduction of road deaths and injuries. Awareness raising, capacity building and in very many cases international assistance to major new second generation road safety projects are, therefore, required. If the new US\$ 25 million road safety project, now being negotiated between Vietnam and the World Bank, should form the model for new road safety projects, the total costs for addressing the global road safety crises will be high and much higher than what is being spent today. Addressing the crises will, in respect of official international development resources, require a substantial increase in the allocations to road safety for multilateral and bilateral development organisations. In addition comes support from civil society and the private sector.

Against the above background it appears that the overall demand for international road safety assistance will increase substantially over the next few years. This will be the case for road safety financing as well as for technical assistance and it seems likely that the demand for GRSP services will increase similarly.

Comparative Review of the GRSP Concept

Two new global initiatives are now being planned, the World Bank Global Road Safety Trust Fund and the private sector Global Road Safety Initiative (GRSI) of the Sustainable Mobility Project of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development. Both may be seen as competitors to GRSP.

It appears that the proposed World Bank trust fund is aimed at governments in low- and middle-income countries. Its main role will be capacity building in the public domain. It is still at an early stage of development but could when launched provide an effective preparatory facility for multi-sector second generation road

safety projects. The GRSI private sector initiative will focus on areas where the private sector could play a role. It will need a secretariat but it may want to collaborate with the GRSP secretariat and thus avoid the establishing of a complete new entity for this purpose.

GRSP is the only existing body and it has been operating successfully for five years. It has performed well and it has a potential for adopting its operation to meet the new challenges. The two new initiatives will aim at different targets. GRSP and the two new initiatives appear to have highly different aims and the modes of operation will be different. They could rather be seen as complementary organisations than competing bodies. On the other hand, GRSP and the new initiatives may to some extent be seen as competitors in respect of financial resources.

Introduction of the two new global initiatives appears as a challenge to GRSP. It seems, however, likely that GRSP based on its current performance and professional strength and with continued support and adjustments to its mode of operation could adapt well to the new global road safety challenges.

The possible adjustments to the GRSP mode of operation could be based on a systematic assessment of the emerging challenges, in particular the changes in demand for policy advice and programme assistance and the two planned new global initiatives. Such assessment would also provide a more solid framework for an in depth review of the weaknesses identified by this evaluation, notably the need for better structured and more operational objectives and a more systematic approach to evaluation of GRSP activities. Such review could lead to a discussion of possible adjustments to the basic GRSP tri-sector approach in the light of the emerging challenges.

Recommendations

The conclusions of the evaluation show that GRSP has developed successfully. With continued support and adjustments to its mode of operation, it could easily develop further to address the new global road safety challenges as well as playing a useful role at the regional and country level.

The GRSP organisation will have an important role to play in the light of the new understanding of the global road safety crises. The new GRSI private sector initiative may choose to use GRSP for some secretariat functions as a means to supporting country activities. The partnership approach is useful and a continued balance between government, private sector and civil society partners is considered important. Further support from international development agencies is therefore needed. The output and possible future impact of GRSP appear to justify financial support from all the various groups of partners.

Against the above background, it is recommended that Sida continue supporting GRSP for a new period of three to five years. Two adjustments to the mode of operation are, however, recommended to rectify weaknesses identified during the evaluation. One concerns the definition of objectives. A clarification and clearer structuring of objectives, including measurable operational targets, would enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of GRSP. The other adjustment concerns improving the ability to demonstrate good practice in focus countries, which

today is weakly developed. Much more emphasis should be given to evaluating and analysing the effects of road safety interventions in focus countries.

In addition, it is suggested that GRSP more comprehensively review its mode of operation. This should be based on a systematic assessment of the emerging challenges, among which the changes in demand for road safety policy advice and programme assistance and the planned new global initiatives. Such assessment would provide a useful framework for the in depth review of objectives and operational targets as well as relevant input to the development of a systematic approach to the evaluation of GRSP's own activities.