



Facts:

- Road traffic injuries killed an estimated 1.2 million persons in 1998.
- Over 70% - nearly 850,000 persons - killed in road traffic injuries in 1998 were under 45 years of age.

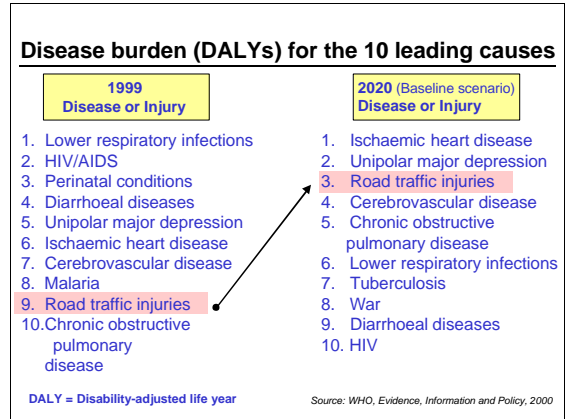
Magnitude of the problem

Deaths from injuries are projected to rise from 5.1 million in 1990 to 8.4 million in 2020—with increase in road traffic injuries as a major cause for this rise. Currently deaths from road traffic injuries account for 2.2% of the global mortality affecting all age groups.

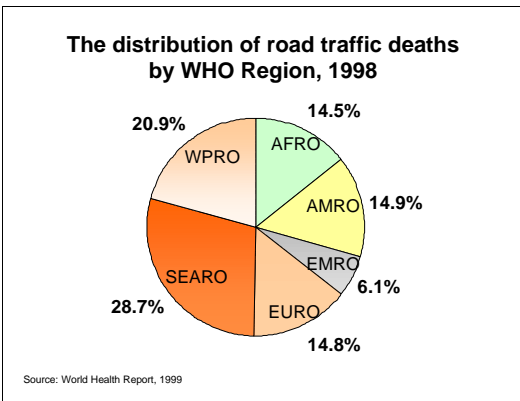
Road crashes, ranking ninth among the leading causes of disease burden worldwide, account for 2.8% of all global deaths and disability.

Although the number of motor vehicles per population is much higher in developed countries, the toll due to road traffic injuries is highest in developing countries representing more than one million (or 88%) deaths in 1998.

The economic costs of traffic injuries are enormous. Some 50% of road traffic fatalities world-



wide involve young adults aged 15-44 years corresponding to the most economically productive segment of the population.



Key factors responsible for road traffic injuries are preventable

- **Driving under influence of alcohol**
- **Speeding**
- **Under-utilization of seat belts and child restraints**
- **Poor road design and roadway environment**
- **Unsafe vehicle design**
- **Under-implementation of road safety standards**

For adult men aged 15-44 years, road traffic injuries rank second to HIV/AIDS as the leading cause of ill health and premature death world-wide .

Role of public health

- To demonstrate the health and economic impact of injuries.
- To collect data on fatal and non-fatal injuries.
- To study the risk factors and protective factors.
- To ensure appropriate care and rehabilitation for all injured persons.
- To promote road traffic education and safer driving behaviour.
- To monitor and evaluate road safety interventions.
- To promote a multisectoral approach to prevention of road traffic injuries.

Key Contacts



Dr E.Krug
 World Health Organization
 Tel: +41-22-791 3535
 Fax: +41-22-791 4332
 Email: kruge@who.ch