

0272 MOTORCYCLE SIN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

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Road traffic injuries are a threat to development in the Western Pacific region where about a quarter of the world's road traffic deaths occur. Vulnerable road users constitute the majority of road deaths, especially in low-income countries.

According to a survey funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies for the Global Status Report on Road Safety, motorcyclists accounted for nearly 100 000 road traffic deaths in the region. In many countries, riders and passengers of motorcycles are over-represented in road traffic death figures in comparison to the proportion of motorcycles to the total number of vehicles. In countries such as Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Vietnam, where motorcycles constitute the major mode of transport, the surge in road traffic deaths in the last decade is most likely due to an escalation in the number of motorcycles.

Helmet legislation and its enforcement, proper fastening of helmets and availability of low-cost certified helmets are important strategies for prevention. Countries in the region vary considerably with respect to their helmet legislation, policies to encourage walking and cycling and commitment to public transport.

In the long term, effective land-use strategies and investment in public transport are important to reduce the burden of motorcycle injuries.