

Closing the road safety loop: challenges and future directions

Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah

Universiti Sains Malaysia and School of Civil Engineering, Universiti Sains Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Road Safety has risen as amongst the top public health issue, especially in the low and middle-income countries (LMIC). Despite the proclamation by the United Nations dedicating this decade as the Decade of Action for Road Safety, the world is not seeing improvement in road safety performance. Nations are not achieving even the deflection point from increase to the aspired downturn in trend, what more in achieving the agreed target of halving all critical road safety indicators by the year 2020 from a 2011 baseline. A closer scrutiny shows that many road safety efforts concentrates on only the introduction of interventions but without emphasising on the attainment of strategic outcomes related to those interventions. As we have not seen the desired results, it is about time that we need to ensure that we close the loop by ensuring that any prescribed interventions are designed to be executed to deliver the desired outcomes that consequently will provide us with the desired road safety results. This paper will highlight examples of ineffective past interventions, lessons to be learned and a sharing of experience on the new approach that has been attempted in Penang and several other districts in Malaysia.

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Safe Kids: Malaysian experience

Kulanthayan KC Mani

Safe Kids Malaysia, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The number of road crashes in our country standards alarmingly at 521,446 which results in 7,152 road deaths for the year 2016. Based on 2015 road deaths, 62.6% involved motorcyclist and pillion riders. 56.4% of the motorcycle user deaths are contributed mainly from head injuries and followed secondly 29.6% by multiple injuries which may include head injury. Thus road deaths for motorcyclist from head injuries is anywhere from 56.4% to 86.0% (PDRM, 2016 – Statistical Report Road Accident Malaysia – 2015). One of the effective safety product to prevent and reduce deaths and injuries for a motorcyclist is by using a Motorcycle Safety Helmet which has a potential to decrease risk and severity of injuries by about 72% and decreases the likelihood of death by up to 39%. This prompted Safe Kids Malaysia Universiti Putra Malaysia to join hands together with Road Safety Department of Malaysia (JKJR) in launching the Motorcycle Child Helmet Initiative towards preventing and reducing injuries and death among child pillion riders traveling on motorcycle to school. Motorcycle Child Helmet is seen as a Vaccine to prevent head injuries among child pillion riders. Through this initiative, Safe Kids Malaysia, UPM provides complimentary child helmets with SIRIM label through the funding obtained from Safe Kids Worldwide USA and Halliburton Charitable Foundation USA for the children to obtain full safety benefits while commuting by bike to selected schools in Selangor in 2016-2017. The initiative manage to increase children usage of motorcycle child safety helmet in post evaluation compared to pre-evaluation (3.6% to 35.5%). This was closely followed by an increase also on adult rider's proper usage of safety helmet by adult (75.6% to 87.3%). We hope the PUTRA BAKTI – SAFETY HELMET VACCINE will make a difference and saves more motorcyclist lives especially children.