



EVERY JOURNEY. EVERY CHILD.

A new partnership for the Global Goals, protecting the rights of children to safe and healthy mobility free from road traffic danger and air pollution. For every child, on every journey. For every life.



**CHILD HEALTH
INITIATIVE**

#EVERYLIFE



IMPLEMENTING
THE NEW
URBAN AGENDA



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development

A SAFE & HEALTHY JOURNEY TO SCHOOL FOR EVERY CHILD

Every child has the right to healthy development and an education. But every day more than 3000 children and adolescents – a toll equivalent to the student population of two large schools – suffer a road traffic death or serious injury. Road danger and air pollution blight the school journeys and lives of millions more. The health burden to children caused by motorised traffic constitutes a major obstacle to child development and an unacceptable and preventable human tragedy.

Every child deserves a safe and healthy journey to and from school. The Child Health Initiative is a coalition of organisations and agencies coming together to advocate and work for this vision to become reality by 2030. Practical and cost-effective solutions are available, and can be delivered with sufficient political will.

With a focus on policies for sustainable transportation; road safety; clean fuels and vehicles; and equitable urban development, we advocate for, and support practical activities to deliver, these **Rights of the Child**:

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, LOW CARBON MOBILITY

CLEAN AIR AND A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

A SAFE AND HEALTHY JOURNEY TO SCHOOL



In January 2016 the UN Sustainable Development Goals were launched. These Global Goals include several targets for safe and sustainable mobility, which each have strong links to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We are working to ensure a 'children first' focus in delivering these targets, believing that transportation systems designed to work for the health, well-being and needs of children will benefit all.

OUR MISSION: A SAFE AND HEALTHY JOURNEY TO AND FROM SCHOOL FOR EVERY CHILD BY 2030.

WE ARE:



See the website for our full global and regional coalition of partners.

- **Ensure safe routes to school** for all children, with walkable pavements, safe road design and crossings, and effective and appropriate vehicle speed management;



- **Ensure safe travel to school.** Seatbelts and safety checks for school buses, seat belts or appropriate child restraints in cars, helmets for motorcycle passengers;



- **Improve safety for all road users on high risk roads,** meeting at least 3 star (out of 5) safety performance as measured by the International Road Assessment Programme;



- **Encourage policies to reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality,** such as reducing sulphur levels in fuel (below 50ppm); particulate filters on vehicles; and improved vehicle fuel economy. Promote 'Avoid, Shift, Improve' approach.



- **Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists in urban planning,** increasing investments in safe infrastructure for non-motorised transport to encourage active, low carbon, mobility;



- **Deploy and encourage pedestrian-friendly vehicle design and safety technologies,** such as Autonomous Emergency Braking, which can mitigate or even stop a crash;



TRANSPORTATION AND URBAN PLANNING POLICIES AND CHOICES HAVE A HUGE IMPACT ON THE HEALTH AND BASIC RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

500 children
die every day in road crashes, thousands more are seriously hurt.

2m+ children
each year miss out on education through death or injury in road traffic crashes.

300 million
children are breathing toxic air.

Road traffic injury is a leading cause of death for young people. 500 children die every day in road crashes, thousands more are seriously hurt.

Air pollution is a toxic, carcinogenic and invisible killer, seriously affecting the development of children's lung function and responsible for a huge burden of health.

Unsafe and unhealthy urban space deters people from walking, cycling and exercise. Children learn and form habits early which last a lifetime.

2 billion children live in areas where outdoor air pollution exceeds international limits. 300 million children are breathing dangerously toxic air.

Non communicable diseases and obesity, to which both air pollution and lack of exercise are contributors, are becoming a significant health issue for young people across the world.

An estimated 1 million+ children each year miss out on education through death or injury in road traffic crashes. Many more have their life-chances affected by injuries to parents and breadwinners.

Transport generates nearly a quarter of all CO₂ emissions. Promoting low carbon mobility is crucial, and short journeys - like the school run - are a good place to start.

There are serious issues of inequity in transport provision: everywhere in the world it is the poorest children who live alongside the most dangerous roads; breathe the dirtiest air; and have the biggest barriers to access to education and, eventually, employment because of where they live.

SCHOOLS: THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Education propels progress. Learning provides life-chances; empowers girls; boosts economic and social development; raises new generations out of poverty. For children, their school is the launch pad for a life of opportunity. For parents, they are the focus of hopes and ambitions for the future.

Providing quality education and ensuring early years' health are twin core objectives for progressive governments and for the international donor community. Vast investments of financial and human resource are deployed to secure these aims. Yet little attention is devoted to the health and well-being of children as they grow into adolescence, and too often investment in their well-being stops at the school gate.



SCHOOLS AS A HUB TO PROMOTE LOW SPEED, LOW EMISSIONS INTERVENTIONS

The catchment areas of schools overlap in circles that encompass whole communities. By focusing on improving the journey to school for children – providing relatively low cost infrastructure improvements, reducing traffic speed, zones for enforcing vehicle emissions regulations – it is possible to improve mobility, the environment and quality of life for everyone. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals targets for road safety, air quality and sustainable urban transport, and to meet the vision of the Habitat III 'New Urban Agenda' which has prioritised 'the safe and healthy journey to school for every child', investing in child mobility – for education, for health, for equity – is essential.

SAFE & HEALTHY ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Time and again, across the developing world, we find examples of schools sited alongside high speed roads, with minimal facilities to enable children to travel safely. Technical surveys on thousands of kilometres of road in dozens of countries, undertaken by our partner iRAP, show that more than 80% of roads with vehicle speeds of more than 40km/h – roads used by pedestrians – have no viable footpath. Millions of children are placed in harm's way, and hundreds die every day, because basic infrastructure is not being provided. It is these same schools, serving the lowest income communities, which also suffer the worst local air quality.



At this school in Cambodia children navigate busy roads with no sidewalks or crossings. The result of this neglect, for this little boy, is life-long disability.



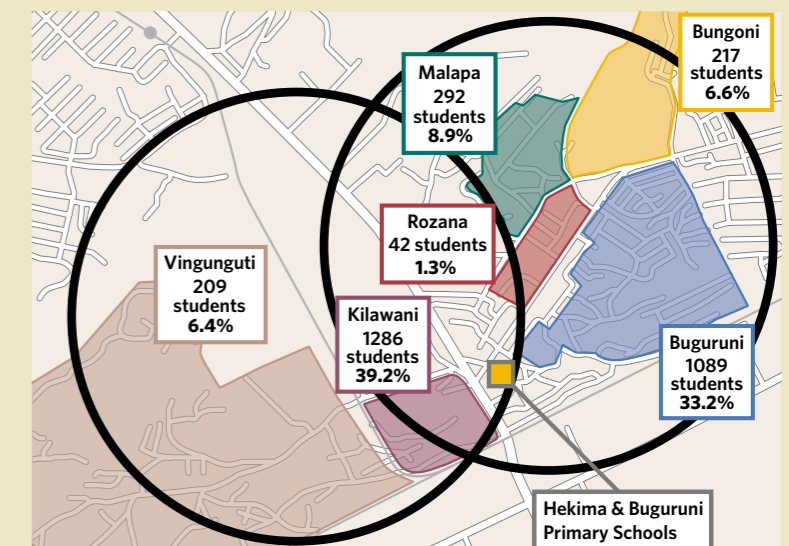
Every child deserves a safe and healthy journey to and from their education, free from traffic danger or dangerous air pollution. There is strong evidence from major investment in safe routes to school in countries from the US to South Korea that providing walking and cycling infrastructure and reducing traffic speed through 'safe system' design and physical traffic calming reduces child traffic casualties and enables healthier travel behaviour. We are building the evidence base to show that these approaches also work in low-income communities in Africa and Asia.

HIGH COST OF AN EDUCATION

Our partner Amend has mapped incidence of road traffic injury amongst students at schools in low-income areas of Dar es Salaam, and found that around 2% of the school population is injured every year. If similar conditions exist in communities across sub-Saharan Africa, this constitutes a serious, hidden but preventable epidemic.

Hekima & Buguruni Primary Schools, Dar es Salaam, TZ

- Surrounded by two major dual carriageway highways & one single carriageway municipal road
- School Population (2014): 2,675
- RTI Injury Rate (2014): 2.2%
- Approx. 59 students injured (at least one killed) in 2014



TOGETHER, WORKING FOR CHILDREN

The Child Health Initiative combines research, advocacy and evidence-based interventions to promote our vital child rights agenda.

Our global advocacy aims to mainstream child and adolescent health and mobility issues into international development and climate change policies.

At country level we support efforts to integrate child rights and health outcomes into national and/or city level transportation and planning policy and practice.

Together and with partners around the world, we are working for a safe and healthy journey to school for **every child**.

In **Jamaica** and **Paraguay**, UNICEF is promoting national policy change to protect children from road crashes.



In the **US**, we work with the National Center for Safe Routes to School promoting safe routes as part of a 'Vision Zero' safe system approach.



In **Mexico** and **Brazil**, WRI is supporting city authorities in implementing protected cycle lanes; pedestrian facilities and safe routes to school; delivering a city safer by design. Our regional partner FGR and the FIA together promote child restraint safety across **Latin America**.



Our research partner ODI is working with cities in **Latin America, Africa** and **Asia** on how best to deliver sustainable mobility policies.



In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, UNEP is leading efforts to reduce the sulphur content in fuel; a necessary step to cleaner and more efficient engines and reduced emissions.



In **South Africa** the FIA Foundation, GRSP and UNICEF are advocating for traffic speed reductions around schools, backed by applied research demonstrating the benefit of traffic calming and safe crossings.



In 10 countries in **Africa**, the FIA Foundation is supporting regional partner AMEND to research the impact of sidewalk provision and speed reduction around schools in low-income neighbourhoods.



In **Kenya**, UNEP's 'Share the Road' initiative is advising the Nairobi County Government in the development of a non-motorised transport policy, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists - including children.



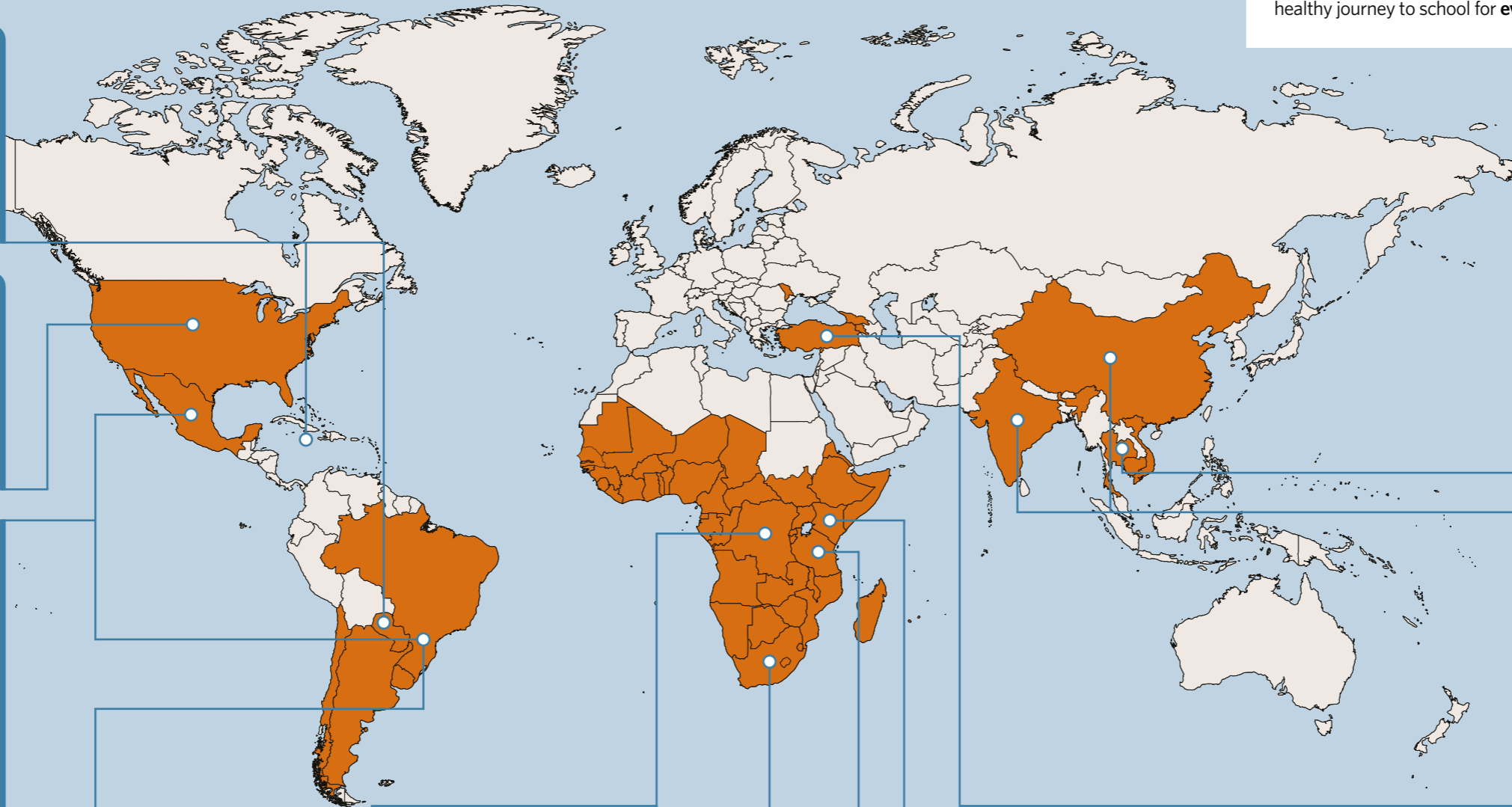
In **Turkey** WRI enables urban design change; in the **Caucasus** the FIA Foundation works through regional partner EASST to promote air quality and safer roads.



In **China** and **India**, road injuries and air pollution exact a huge health toll on children. We are working with technical partners, including iRAP, PCFV, IRTE and Clean Air Asia to support solutions.



In **SE Asia** our regional partner AIP Foundation is working with UNICEF, Save the Children and donors including USAID to support legislative action and enforcement on child pedestrian & motorcycle safety.



TOGETHER, ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN

The Child Health Initiative provides a global voice promoting the rights of children to safe and clean mobility. In 2016 we successfully advocated for the Habitat III New Urban Agenda to prioritise the right of every child to 'a safe and healthy journey to school'. Now we seek to translate this political commitment into real action, to ensure a 'Step Change' in approach.



Highlighting the vital need for low vehicle speed as the foundation for an urban 'Safe System' to protect children, we launched the #SpeedVaccine campaign, with support from public health leaders including President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter, Michael Bloomberg and Margaret Chan. The launch of the campaign, in Jamaica, was supported by sprint champions Usain Bolt and Yohann Blake (l-r) and Prime Minister Andrew Holness (c).

Our research is highlighting the impact of vehicle emissions and road traffic injury on the health of the poorest children; uncovering the poverty cycle effects of traffic injuries on some of the most vulnerable families around the world; and promoting policy change to 'Cities Safer By Design'.



Our Declaration of Every Child's Right to Safe & Healthy Streets, launched at a major event in London, highlights six rights that every child should enjoy: to use roads and streets without threat to life or health; to breathe clean air; an education; to explore and play; protection from violence; to be heard and respected. We will be campaigning for policymakers to endorse these rights and prioritise them in practical delivery of urban and transportation planning; environmental protection; and scaled up support for road safety.

DECLARATION OF EVERY CHILD'S RIGHT TO SAFE & HEALTHY STREETS

EVERY JOURNEY.
EVERY CHILD.

ARTICLES

Every child has the right to health and a safe environment, including the right to protection from air pollution and traffic danger.

Yet every day around the world at least 3000 children are killed or seriously injured by road traffic. For adolescents, road traffic injuries are now the leading global cause of death.¹

300 million children live with dangerously toxic levels of air pollution, to which road traffic is a significant contributor. Two billion children are living in urban areas which breach WHO air quality guidelines.² As a consequence, many will suffer long term health effects including asthma and heart disease.

This must be a new priority for child rights, equity and social justice. It is the poorest children and communities who live alongside the busiest and most dangerous roads, breathing the most toxic air.

The international community must intervene to tackle these emerging public health epidemics.

A legal mandate for action is provided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.³

The global policy framework includes specific targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals addressing road safety, air quality, liveable cities and non-communicable diseases⁴; and an explicit demand, in the Habitat III New Urban Agenda, for 'a safe & healthy journey to school for every child as a priority'.⁵

An ethical policy dimension for prioritising children is provided by Sweden's 'Vision Zero' philosophy, now being adopted and adapted in cities across the world, with its recognition that 'children have special rights within the society and therefore also in the road transport system...Children have to rely on adults and the society for their protection at all times'.⁶

To support and spur practical delivery of this child rights agenda by governments and cities, we the undersigned adopt and pledge to campaign for the realisation of the following principles in the Declaration of Every Child's Right to Safe & Healthy Streets:

- 1** **Every child has the right to use roads and streets without threat to life or health.** We call for action to ensure every child has a safe and healthy journey to school by 2030.
- 2** **Every child has the right to breathe clean air,** which at minimum meets WHO guidelines. We support the 'Breathe Life' campaign to achieve safe air quality levels by 2030.
- 3** **Every child has the right to an education, without risk of injury.** Safe and healthy journeys to school are a litmus test for a city's wider approach to environmental sustainability, human development and social justice.
- 4** **Every child has the right to explore their world in safety.** Healthy streets - prioritising people, not cars - encourage walking, cycling, outdoor play and regular exercise; and are vital for tackling climate change, improving air quality, preventing road traffic injuries and reducing non-communicable diseases.
- 5** **Every child has the right to protection from violence,** intended or unintended. Reducing urban traffic speeds to levels proven safe for children is a Speed Vaccine, the essential foundation of a 'safe system', and must be deployed as a priority action for child and adolescent health.
- 6** **Every child has the right to be heard.** We commit to ensuring that the voices of children, demanding their basic right to a safe environment, echo across the world. Leaders at the highest level must now listen, and act: for every child, on every journey. For every life.

¹ World Health Organization ² UNICEF Clear the Air for Children, 2016 ³ The Convention on the rights of the child, United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/25 of Nov 20 1989, in specific article 3, 6, 19 and 24. ⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300> ⁵ <http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda> ⁶ The Tylosand Declaration, 2007, describes principal rights of citizens' road traffic safety under Vision Zero https://www.unicef.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/roadsafe/unda/Sweden_Tylosand_Declaration.pdf

A COALITION FOR CHANGE, A PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN



"In planning and in policy, children seem to be at best an afterthought - or in the worst cases, just totally neglected. You have to conclude that there's not much value being placed on safeguarding our children on the roads. And as a mother, I want a different future for my children. This is an initiative for the health of future generations, for the right to an education, for the fight against poverty."

Zoleka Mandela,
road safety & child rights
advocate

"This is one of the great development challenges of our age. On the world's roads, every single day 500 children lose their lives and many thousands more are left with permanent disabilities. So much of this happens on the journey to school. This journey ought to be the safest journey that any child takes. Yet it's too often a matter of life and death."

Kevin Watkins,
CEO, Save the Children UK



"Schools are a vital social network. They sit at the heart of every community. And this important journey that our children make every day is the ideal starting point for a transformation of the entire mobility agenda."

Rt. Hon. Lord Robertson,
Chairman, FIA Foundation

"I very much welcome the Child Health Initiative. Children are much more vulnerable to pollution than we adults are. So we should make sure that the road from home to school is safe; safe from accidents and safe from pollution."

Erik Solheim,
Executive Director, UN Environment



"I fully support this new initiative which brings together key mobility stakeholders from different sectors, united in the goal to promote the undisputable right of every child to a safe, clean and above all healthy journey, no matter where in the world."

Jean Todt,
UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety



GET INVOLVED

If your organisation would like to support or partner with us on advocacy, research or funding practical in-country work by our network of implementation partners, please get in touch.

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