



# road research

The Newsletter of the Road Traffic Injuries  
Research Network

## ROAD TRAFFIC INJURIES RESEARCH Voices from Latin America!

Dear colleagues and friends

Welcome to the third of our region-themed issues of Road Research – and many thanks to our partners from Latin America for their contributions – it is wonderful to read about such a vibrant array of activities.

In this issue you will also find a report from the recently held meeting co-sponsored by the Network - the National Health Sciences Research Symposium, at Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan, entitled Injuries in the Developing World – from Prevention to Care. The meeting was co-chaired by our Secretary Dr Junaid Razzak and drew together colleagues from throughout Pakistan as well as the region. Immediately prior to the symposium, in association with colleagues from Johns Hopkins University, the Network hosted a workshop on injury surveillance, lead in large part by our partner Dr Nhan Tran. Further information on the workshop and the meeting, including copies of the workshop presentations, can be found on our website ([www.rtirn.net](http://www.rtirn.net)).

A special highlight of the main meeting, though, was an opportunity to acknowledge the work of the Network, and in particular, the role of the Secretariat, based at Aga Khan University. As some of you may recall, a year ago we had planned to “launch” the new Secretariat, but had to delay the meeting. It was a special privilege, therefore to showcase the significant role the Secretariat had played in the growth of the Network over the past year and to especially congratulate Dr Razzak, not only for his roles in the symposium and the Network, but also as the newly appointed Foundation Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Aga Khan University.

We were very pleased to receive a competitive number of applications for our call for funding for junior researchers. Funding for this call has been provided by the Global Road Safety Facility of the World Bank. We look forward to announcing the recipients of these awards within the next few weeks. Also within the next few weeks we plan to announce further funding and calls for applications from senior researchers. Watch the website!!!

In closing, on behalf of the Board – and indeed our partners worldwide – I would like to acknowledge and thank three of our outgoing Board members – all of whom have played important roles in the establishment and ongoing growth of the Network. Specifically, Dr Martha Hajar, from Mexico, Dr Abdul Ghaffar, mostly recently representing the Global Forum for Health Research, based in Geneva, but now in Cairo, and Professor Dato’ Ir. Radin Umar, from Malaysia. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours and appreciate the significant energy you have all given to the Network. Over the next few weeks we hope to announce the appointment of our new Board members.

Safe travels and best wishes

**Robyn Norton**  
Chair, RTIRN

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## Recent Events

### RTIRN at the Aga Khan University 12th National Health Sciences Research Symposium



*Junaid Razzak, Chair AKU Symposium*

The Road Traffic Injuries Research Network played an important role at this event organized by the Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan from the 26 - 28 August 2008. The symposium this year was themed 'Injury in the developing world – from Prevention to Care'. The organizing committee for the symposium was chaired by Junaid Razzak, Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at the Aga Khan University and Secretary RTIRN. The symposium was attended by over 400 participants from different areas of health and research.

RTIRN activities at the symposium included a workshop, plenary lectures and presentations by Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and many partners. A booth was also setup to distribute RTI prevention material. The booth exhibited the RTIRN website with demonstration of website features and partnership procedure. Several individual partners, and two organizations working in the area of road injuries in Pakistan signed up for partnership during this symposium. The network also supported ten local and foreign speakers from LMIC who delivered talks in various sessions at the symposium.

The RTIRN supported this event as part of its 'Regional Workshops' project under the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility grant.

### RTIRN Workshop: 'Measuring the Burden of Injuries: a Cost Effective Approach'

This pre-symposium workshop was attended by over 50 participants from different disciplines of health and different institutions around Karachi. The workshop was conducted by RTIRN partner



*Nhan Tran Facilitating RTIRN Workshop*

Nhan Tran from the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health. Workshop Facilitators included Muhammad Shahid, Aga Khan University; Syed Ameer Hussain, Road Traffic Injuries Research and Prevention Center – JPMC Pakistan; Robyn Norton, George Institute and Adnan Hyder, Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health. The one day, interactive workshop focused on introducing the participants to the rationale and approaches to measuring injury burden, describing the principles of injury surveillance and discussing practical aspects of setting up a surveillance system for injuries in a

developing country. Consisting of talks, discussions and case exercises, the workshop was evaluated by many participants to be of good use and applicability. The resource material and presentations from the workshop are available at the RTIRN website on the following address:

[http://rtirn.net/RTIRN\\_at\\_AKU.asp](http://rtirn.net/RTIRN_at_AKU.asp)

## RTI Research in Latin American Countries

Martha Hajar, National Institute of Public Health of México



According to the World report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, Road traffic Injuries are of special importance due to the high country rates found in some Latin American countries (41.7 per 100 000 population in El Salvador, 41.0 per 100 000 in the Dominican Republic and 25.6 per 100 000 in Brazil) and also to the rapid increases in road traffic fatalities since 1992. In 2004, a study was conducted with a focus on identifying the situation of RTI research in this area.



Forty five Latin American and Caribbean countries were included in this cross-sectional survey that used secondary data from 1965 to 2003. A total of 135 studies and documents related to RTI were found and analyzed. It was found that 50% of the available information is concentrated in just 3 countries: Brazil, México and Colombia. There is a concentration of studies in pedestrian injuries, policy issues, the need of trained professionals in traffic safety, the status of road traffic safety in government, the unclear role of the different sectors involved, among other concerns of countries who are currently working in the RTI field in the region with very pro-active NGO's.

Some conclusions from the results of this study were that the large number of papers published in the region indicates the level of concern about RTIs and their consequences in the region. The lack of information in many of the region's countries is a result of the absence of research in those countries. The Central America and Caribbean region would be a target area to support research, mostly in the intervention arena. The experience on Road Traffic Injuries research in this region is relatively new and, in some countries, absent. For this reason, most interventions applied to reduce the road traffic injuries problem have been imported from developed countries, with no successful consequences.

For further information, please write to Martha Hajar at [mhajar@correo.insp.mx](mailto:mhajar@correo.insp.mx)

## Road Traffic Accidents in Brazil – an update

Marli de Mesquita Silva, Ministério da Saúde – Brazil



In Brazil, road traffic accidents caused 35,155 deaths in 2006, of which 82% were men and 18% were women. Accidents involving motorcyclists are also showing frightening growth in recent years. The mortality rate for RTA is 18.7 per 100 inhabitants for all accidents, 5.2 for pedestrian, 4.6 for occupant of vehicle and 3.7 for motorcyclist.

To address one of the factors related to this issue, on June 20, 2008 the "dry law" came into force, prohibiting driving after ingestion of alcohol, with punishment of fine and imprisonment. Since the implementation of the law, the emergency services have recorded a decrease in road traffic accidents of 24% on average.

For further information, please write to Marli de Mesquita Silva at [marli.silva@saude.gov.br](mailto:marli.silva@saude.gov.br)

## Road Safety in Brazil: advances, challenges and perspectives

Luiz Otávio Maciel Miranda, Pará State Traffic Department – Brazil



The Pan-American Conference on Road Traffic in 2005 in Brazil, supported by the Pan-American Health Organization, consolidated the discussion of the theme in the country and marked the beginning of advances in Latin America and Caribbean towards the implementation of the recommendations of the World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention 2004 and the normative directions of the United Nations Assembly and the World Health Organization.

The national mobilization produced the first results in 2006 with discussions and meetings involving the sectors of health, traffic and transport and the federal, state and municipal governments, non-governmental organizations and the society. In 2007, the Ministry of Health promoted actions to celebrate the First United Nations Global Road Safety Week. In the same year, the federal government adopted the theme “Young and the traffic” in the Educative National Week of Traffic, and instituted the National Committee of Mobilization for Health, Security and Peace in Traffic.



At the proposal of the Pará State Traffic Department, the National Association of the Traffic Departments promoted the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims in 2007.

The country is now passing through what could be a deep social transformation, with the adoption of the ‘Dry Law’ that reduces the allowance of blood alcohol index for driving to zero. The enforcement of the law and institutional strengthening are some of the most important challenges that must be overcome for the promotion of road safety in Brazil.

For further information, please write to Luiz Otávio Maciel Miranda at [luiz@detran.pa.gov.br](mailto:luiz@detran.pa.gov.br)

## Road Safety in Latin America

Andrés Villaveces - Colombia



In the last decades, Latin American cities have experienced large increases in population. This urban growth has been irregular and unplanned and as a consequence has generated multiple environmental and mobility problems. This has led to an increase in road traffic injuries mostly because of higher density of pedestrian and vehicle traffic, poor or insufficient infrastructures, lack of control and enforcement measures, and poor product safety standards. In the last decade several large metropolitan areas have begun to respond to this problem using multiple strategies. To address high density and poor infrastructures many cities have constructed or are constructing affordable mass transportation systems aimed at improving mobility along strategic mass transit corridors, while increasing accessibility for poorer populations by using feeder services and fare integration. Some cities such as Bogotá, Colombia have also combined this with large infrastructure modifications aimed at separating road users and hence reducing injury risks. In terms of enforcement and control, several



*TransMilenio Bus Rapid Transit System and separation of road users in Bogotá, Colombia*

cities have passed laws mandating the use of helmets for an increasing motorcycle pool, strengthened laws aimed at controlling alcohol consumption among drivers, such as the national zero tolerance law recently passed in Brazil and engaged in efforts to control speed limits mostly in urban areas. Product safety standards have also been improved. However useful all these efforts are, there are still many places where prevention strategies are insufficient and where policies are not in place. Transport injury prevention research in the region is developing but still insufficient. The challenges are many but promising programs in large cities have demonstrated that such efforts can yield positive results even in circumstances where resources are limited.

For further information, please write to Andrés Villaveces at [avillav@email.unc.edu](mailto:avillav@email.unc.edu)

## Road Traffic Injuries Research in Argentina

*RTI Research Group at the Mar del Plata National University*



Like in many other Latin-American countries, road-traffic injuries constitute a serious public health problem in Argentina. Un-intentional injuries constitute the leading cause of death from the age of 5 through 34, and the 3rd for the general population. Mortality data is obtained through death certificates, hospital discharge records and a national surveillance system for non-fatal injuries named SiViLe. Through the first 40000 reports analyzed so far, it was evident that traffic related events were the most common cause of non-fatal injuries.

The following lines of research relating to road traffic injuries are being pursued at the Mar del Plata National University: A study on Motorcyclist's helmet use by Raquel Peltzer and Dr. Rubén Ledesma to see the prevalence of use in relation with gender, type of motorcycle, weather conditions, time of the day, city area and type of road.

The assessment of driving styles and their relation to driver errors, personality traits, aggressive driving, traffic accidents, traffic-code violations and alcohol use by Dr. Ledesma, Fernando Poo and Raquel Peltzer. Currently an inventory to assess dissociative driving styles is being developed. Other projects address the relationship between working conditions and health status in taxi drivers under different work schedules.

A further line of work by Dr. Mariana Cremonte examines the role of alcohol use in intentional and non-intentional injuries. This research group participated in WHO's Collaborative project on alcohol and injuries and collaborates with the ERCAAP project. Drs. Clotilde Ubeda and Jorge Ungaro work with community workers to develop injury prevention strategies such as training in diagnosing situations and planning, developing and evaluating interventions. This line of work has allowed several municipalities to enter the Healthy Municipalities Network. For instance, in the state of Neuquén, a program conducted by Dr. Guillermo de Hoyos has promoted and enabled the development of local community actions, showing significant reduction of morbid-mortality and sustainability over time.

For further information, please write to Raquel Peltzer at [ripeltzer@gmail.com](mailto:ripeltzer@gmail.com)

*For the latest information about RTIRN, updates on RTIRN events, announcements for upcoming RTIRN activities and to become a partner of the network, please visit our website at [www.rtirn.net](http://www.rtirn.net).*

## Partner Profile



### Otaliba Libânio de Moraes Neto

*Ministry of Health – Brazil*

Otaliba Libânio de Moraes Neto is the Director of the Department of Health Situation Analysis and the Health Surveillance Secretariat in the Ministry of Health of Brazil. Graduating in medicine in 1987 and specializing in preventive medicine in 1989, he now holds a PhD in Public health from the Campinas State University in São Paulo, completed in 2002, following a Masters degree in public health in 1997.



Before taking up his current position in the Ministry of health, Otaliba has held several key positions in public health in Brazil, including those of Adjunct Professor in Public Health at the Federal University of the state of Goiás since 1992, Municipal health secretary for the city of Goiania, state of Goiás (2001-2004) and Director of the National council of municipality health secretaries (2001-2004).

His current work focuses on coordination of health promotion policy in Brazil, including violence, road traffic injury surveillance and prevention, and mortality information systems in Brazil. Otaliba's special interest lies in research in health situation analysis, especially in the areas of violence and road traffic injury, health service systems management and in formulating policies for violence and road traffic injury prevention and safety promotion.

On a personal note, Otaliba loves to spend spare time in the kitchen, cooking his favorite Brazilian dishes!



### Road Traffic Safety Intervention in Peru

*Hernán Málaga, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia - Peru*

Hernán's doctoral thesis is on the subject "The Impact of the restriction in the time to sale liquors on one district of Lima (La Victoria)." Lima and Callao account for 70% of 3000 deaths by car injuries in the whole country. In this area, there are 1029 hazardous spots. In 2005, La Victoria, a district of Lima, had the highest incidence of car injuries with 33 deaths and 827 injuries in 870 accidents. In this district 122 hazardous spots are located.



In January 2007 a restriction was placed on the sale of liquors after midnight from Monday to Thursday and after 3:00 am on weekends. To evaluate the results of this restriction in terms of car accident injuries and aggression, data from the Hospital Dos de Mayo was used. Preliminary results showed that from 2006 to 2007, there was a decrease of 13.03% in injuries in La Victoria. These results are similar to those obtained in Asunción, Paraguay, during the first year of a similar restriction. Results from the first six months of 2008 show the same tendency, showing sustained impact of the restriction. Further data from the Instituto de Medicina Legal will be analysed to see the impact of the restriction on road traffic accident related deaths.

For further information, please write to Hernán Málaga at [hmalaga@speedy.com.pe](mailto:hmalaga@speedy.com.pe)

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## RTIRN Projects – Supported by the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility

- Successful applicants for Scholarships for Junior Researchers have now been shortlisted! Look for the list coming soon on the RTIRN website ([www.rtirn.net](http://www.rtirn.net)).
- Fellowship grants – the network will soon be announcing these grants that will be made available to senior road safety researchers from LMICs to spend at least 3 months at another centre of excellence to exchange ideas and learn from other experts in the field. Look out for the call for applications on the RTIRN website and mailing list.

### New RTIRN Partners!

We welcome the new partners who have recently joined RTIRN:

- Argentina:** Peltzer Raquel, Fernando Martín Poó, Mariana Cremonete, Ruben Daniel Ledesma  
**Australia:** Matthew Ericson  
**Bangladesh:** Sabreena Anowar, Shamima Jahan, MD. Nezam Uddin Biswas  
**Barbados:** Curtis Sonny  
**Brazil:** Marli M S Montenegro, Otaliba LM Neto  
**Cameroon:** Guy R D Ndjoukya  
**Canada:** Henry J. Moller  
**China:** Yanru Ye, Zhou Feng, Jingyi Li, Yanping Hu  
**Colombia:** Andres Villaveces  
**Denmark:** Danny S Quiros  
**Egypt:** Amr A Mahmoud, Maged El-Setouhy, Mohamed El Sayed Abbasy, Marwa Rashad Salem  
**Ghana:** Agyemang William  
**India:** Samrat Dev, Utpal K Tamuli, Tamal Das  
**Iran:** Fereshteh Z Alavijeh, Hamid Soori  
**Malaysia:** Noradrenalina Isah, Farah A Mansor, Kee L Sien, Maslina Musa, Wan FW Yaacob, Norfaizah M Khaidir  
**Mexico:** Jorge M R Hernandez, Oscar S Espinosa, Pablo A R Castro, Rodrigo R Osuna, Miguel Mondragon  
Ricardo Pérez-Núñez, Norma G Padilla Eguiluz  
**New Zealand:** Educating NZ  
**Nigeria:** Rotimi O Oduola, Joseph Terhemba Ahom, Federal Road Safety Commission  
**Norway:** Bjarne Otterlei  
**Pakistan:** Ajmal Khoso, Junaid Bhatti, Faisal Mohammad Ibrahim, Road Traffic Injuries Research and Prevention Center  
RESCUE 112, Farah Zaki, Raja Nankani, Farhan Abdul Rauf, Anis Rehman, Bilal Ahmed, Kashmiri Serali Nanji,  
Emaduddin Siddique, Uzma Khan, Muhammad Ilyas, Munawwar Khursheed, Amber Mehmood  
**Paraguay:** Mercedes N M G Cabello  
**Peru:** Hernan Malaga, Manuel J Loayza  
**Philippines:** Gerardo C Clemente  
**Saudi Arabia:** Ahmed Zafar  
**Thailand:** Chatchawal Simaskul  
**Uganda:** Paul I Mukwaya, Godfrey Mwesige  
**USA:** Samantha Kluglein  
**Vietnam:** Duy N Pham, Tam M Nguyen, Trang Vu, Viet TT Lai, Nguyen Thi Lua

### Make the RTIRN newsletter your own!!

- Have news of road traffic injuries research in your region?
  - Intervention projects?
  - Upcoming events or new publications?
- Share it with us at the following address: [administrator@rtirn.net](mailto:administrator@rtirn.net)

Support for the RTIRN made Possible by:  
The Global Forum for Health Research  
The World Health Organization  
The World Bank

## Recent RTI Publications from Low and Middle Income Countries

*Ledesma R, Poó F, Peralta M*

***Working conditions and health status of taxi drivers***  
*Revista Del instituto De investi gaci ones De la FacultaD De psi  
cologí a / uba - año 13 - n° 1 - 2008*

*Ledesma RD, Peltzer RI*

***Helmet use among motorcyclists: observational  
study in the city of Mar del Plata, Argentina***  
*Rev Saúde Pública, 2008; 42(1):143-5*

# Save the dates!!

**20-23 October 2008**  
**Christchurch, New Zealand**  
17th International Safe Communities Conference (road safety stream)  
<http://www.conference.co.nz/index.cfm/Iscc08/Welcome/>

**2 - 6 November 2008**  
**Hanoi, Vietnam**  
Second Asia Pacific Conference on Injury Prevention  
<http://www.apacph2008.org/>

**10-12 November**  
**Adelaide, Australia**  
2008 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing  
and Education Conference  
<http://www.roadsafetyconference2008.com.au/>

To become a partner of the network, please visit our website at [www.rtirn.net](http://www.rtirn.net)

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