

BRIEF REPORT OF THE 7::30 BREAKFAST DEBATE – AUGUST 31st 2012

Road Safety in Tanzania: How do we tackle the causes of traffic accidents?

The proportion of citizens involved in road accidents each year now exceeds the nation's annual population growth. Research shows that 3.4 % of the Tanzania's GDP is lost due to traffic accidents each year and the problem is increasing as since 2007, road deaths and injuries have increased by an average of 10%.

Road safety is now an immense issue in Tanzania, that is why Policy Forum decided to dedicate its August 2012 debate on the issue of road safety , the debate is titled: Road Safety in Tanzania: How do we tackle the causes of traffic accidents?

The debate included two presentations:-One was done by **Dr. H. Bwire,from the University of Dar es Salaam and the other by Josh Palfreman from Amend Org**

The Debate was facilitated by Alex Ruchyahinduru from the Policy Forum Secretariat.

The first presentation was done by Dr. H. Bwire, who gave an assessment of child mobility and safety concerns in Dar es Salaam.

He said, child mobility is a major concern in Africa where access to education is a constraint, in the sense that most of these children use public transport (daladala) and walk all the way to school, something which is really dangerous to them as road crash fatalities and crime, child molestation are a major concern. In 2008 a report on road safety showed that about 79% of road accidents are caused by road users.

He said, in a study which they had conducted in some parts of Dar es Salaam reveals that, the majority of school children walk all the way to school followed by daladala.

He continued to say that, when these children were asked which mode of travel they preferred they answered school bus.

He said, the results of the study shows that over 80% of children aged 7-9 cross roads on their own

He further said that the questionnaires were extended to parents they neither agreed or disagreed that they usually look out for other peoples children in the their area.

He concluded by saying that, it is reported that most of the accidents are due to traffic therefore it is very dangerous to let these children travel alone on the roads.

The second presenter of the breakfast talk, Josh Palfreman, presented about road safety in Tanzania.

He said, the proportion of citizens involved in road accidents each year now exceeds the nation's annual population growth where 3.4 % of the Tanzania's GDP is lost due to traffic accidents each year and the problem is increasing as since 2007, road deaths and injuries have increased by an average of 10%.

He added that, research indicates that 75% of accidents are caused by 'human factors' notably: careless driving, speeding and overtaking and it is the passengers and pedestrians who die due to such injuries.

He demonstrated practically and through pictures how the packing system is worst in Dar es Salaam and how it is impossible to drink and drive.

He said that, most the accidents caused to the pedestrians are due to the fact that their pavements are being taken away by the government.

He mentioned the 3E's of Road Safety as Education, Engineering and enforcement that is, road safety should be educated practically and enforcement should not only be the concern of the police but parents, school staffs and older children as well.

He concluded his presentation by giving some advice to the motorized users as follows: they should park considerately, leave generous space for pedestrians to walk around their car, stop for pedestrians at intersections, leave space for cyclists on the sides of the road, drive at a constant and controlled speeds rather than speeding and overtaking, you will save fuel/money and prevent accidents, wearing a seatbelt reduces the risk of a fatality among front seat passengers by 40-50% and of rear seat passengers by between 25-75% and Wearing a motorcycle helmet correctly can reduce the risk of death by almost 40% and the risk of severe injury by over 70%.

After the two presentations the facilitator welcomed the **discussant Mr. Oscar Kikoye**, Executive of the Consumer Consultative Council of the

Surface and Marine Transport Regulatory Authority (SUMATRA) who thanked the two presenters for their informative presentations.

He said that there is a need to revisit the Road Traffic Act of 1973 which is a very old law that does not cater for the current road problems; the law has very minimal (absurd) compensation.

He said, the law and its respective policy is so much disintegrated, there is a need to harmonize this.

He added that, there is also a need to reduce institutions dealing with road transport as currently there are five institutions dealing with the same.

Comments and Questions from Plenary Discussion:

- Issues of compensation should be looked at in context.
- There should be advocacy for the change of the Road Traffic Act, 1973
- There should be a good enforcement system which pushes those at fault.
- Road accidents are mostly caused by reckless drivers who are sometimes influenced by the commands of their bosses and us road users.
- We should have a joint effort so as to carry our decisions to the road safety action of 2011-2020 through the 5 pillars.
- Attitude towards road safety is a big problem especially to children.
- Other things should be looked at before handing someone a licence for instance psychotic issues, doctors should be part of the team.
- Passengers should be educated on their rights while they are on the road.
- People should change their reckless behaviours while they are on the road so as to avoid accidents.
- Road safety should be incorporated in primary school syllabuses.
- Most the buses in Tanzania overload their passengers something which is likely to cause accidents.

Respond to the comments and Questions:

- There is a big legal problem pertaining to road safety.
- Most of the traffics judge their own cases which is wrong, there should be a separate body dealing with inspection.
- Sumatra comes with regulations but enforcement is to be done by the traffic police.
- Mwakyembe has promised that the transport policy will be reviewed.

Mr. Alex Ruchyahinduru closed the discussion and he welcomed again participants for the next 7:30 Breakfast Debate the coming month.