

Project Report

Road safety for children and adolescents, Pune district

An approach to institutionalizing Child Road Safety

Timeframe: The project timeframe was September 2023 to March 2024

Partners: UNICEF Maharashtra, RISE Infinity Foundation

Government agencies: Pune District Road Safety Committee, Pune District Administration, Pune Municipal Corporation, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation and the concerned departments and institutions.

Introduction

Road safety for children is a major concern in India. Children below 18 years of age, with 31% of India's population, form one of the largest vulnerable road users (VRU) group. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 77,386 children were killed in road crashes in five years during 2018 to 2022. In other words, more than 40 young lives are being lost per day to road crashes in India. Road crash fatalities in the age group below 18 years increased by 10.45% in a year, from 14,875 in 2021 to 16,443 in 2022. The irony is that these deaths are preventable. In 2022, total 30,971 road crashes occurred near a school/ college/ educational institution stressing on the need for prioritizing road safety improvements near and on routes to schools.

The Initiative

The project "Child and Adolescent Road Safety" was taken up in Pune District by CEE with support from UNICEF and RIF. The project aimed at creating institutional mechanisms and capacity, demonstrating the "Safe Systems" approach by improving road safety around the schools and drafting an action plan for Pune district and a policy brief focused on child road safety.

Project objectives

- Engage with key stakeholders and adopt a vision for child road safety in Pune District,
- Assessment of child road safety in Pune district,
- Develop a training module on child road safety with safe systems approach,
- Train and orient representatives from local government institutions, departments and civil societies,
- Develop IEC materials on child road safety and the safe systems approach,
- Demonstrate institutional, infrastructural and behavioural measures to improve road safety around three schools in the district, one each in Pune rural, Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad municipal authorities,
- Prepare a draft of action plan on child road safety for Pune district, and
- Draft a policy brief on child road safety for the state government.

Activities and achievements

1. A **Visioning workshop** was conducted on child road safety in Pune district under the aegis of the Pune District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) in Nov 2023, chaired by the District Collector Pune and attended by the member and concerned departments, civil society groups, NGOs and road safety experts. A vision for Pune district was adopted drawing from the national target of halving the road crash deaths and fatalities by 2030, in all age groups in Pune district. School Transport Committees (STC), set up at the schools under the Maharashtra Motor Vehicles Rules were identified as the appropriate mechanism to

institutionalise child road safety at the local level. Initiatives already underway were documented for identifying areas of synergy.

2. An **assessment** of the Child and Adolescent Road Safety in Pune District was conducted based on secondary data and reports, interactions with stakeholders and users and visits to some of the schools in the district. A report was compiled based on the study with identification of areas for improvements. Stakeholders with their roles were also mapped with regard to child road safety in the district.
3. A **Training Module** for Local Governments – Towards Safer Mobility for Children and Adolescents was developed seeking inputs from the master trainers of Education Department and DIET Pune. The content covered were concepts of child road safety, Safe Systems approach, school zone safety, roles of concerned departments and stakeholders and planning way forward for institutionalisation of road safety at school level through School Transport Committees. Methodologies were slide presentations, videos, expert talks, field visits, worksheets, group discussions and planning.
4. Three two-days **training workshops** on Child and Adolescent Road Safety and Safe Systems Approach were organised to train and orient representatives from education, roads (NHAI, PWD, MSRDC) and health departments of district and municipal authorities, traffic police, RTOs, public transport operators, local planning authority and from NGOs, civil society organisations and schools including sustainable and road safety experts. About 83 delegates were oriented in these workshops.
5. **IEC materials** including posters on creating and managing safe systems for child safety, handbook for STC and video film were developed for adults responsible for safety of children including parents, teachers and other caretaker.
6. **Demonstrations** of child road safety measures were undertaken at three schools in the Pune district, one each in Pune rural, Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) and Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC). These school demonstrations included institutional, infrastructural and behavioural aspects of child road safety in the school zones.
 - a. Participatory **road safety audits** were conducted by the certified auditors at the three schools to identify and recommend the areas for improvement in child road safety around schools.
 - b. **Orientation** sessions were conducted with the School Transport Committees members at each schools sharing the audit outcomes and recommendations based on the Indian Road Congress (IRC) standards and codes.
 - c. A **Tactical Urbanism** was undertaken at Shri Mhalsakant Vidyalaya in PCMC to highlight the school zone and safety for school students walking, crossing and cycling by colour painting.
 - d. Based on the audit report, **road signages and markings** were installed on the National Highway at the Zilla Parishad Primary School in Shikrapur, which is a rural school located adjacent to National Highway. Signs on school zone, speed limit, pedestrian crossings, drop-off points and other warning signs were installed.
 - e. Teachers were trained in **First Aid and First Respondent** training by an *Apada Mitra*.
 - f. The school road safety **audit reports** were submitted to the local road departments/ authorities to undertake the full measures suggested for improving road safety in the school zone.

7. A **Road Safety Action Plan** focused on children and adolescents was drafted for Pune District. Plan consists of required actions for making schools and school journeys safer for children under the pillars of Safe Systems approach. It indicates targets that can be broken down yearly to achieve in the five years the vision of 50% reduction. It identifies the departments and their role as well as other stakeholders, resources require and indicators to measure the progress. It includes engagement of main departments which would coordinate with stakeholders. Plan is open for discussions and course corrections.
8. A **Policy Brief** on Child and Adolescent Road Safety is drafted based on the learnings of this project. It highlights the key aspects of the project including the approach, aim, activities, outcomes and outputs and key learnings with recommendations for way forward. It proposes recommendations to be undertaken at the district and state levels with regard to improving the child road safety.

Outputs and downloads

1. [Report of the Visioning Workshop on Child and Adolescent Road Safety in Pune District, Nov 2023](#)
2. [Training Module on Child and Adolescent Road Safety, Jan 2024](#)
3. [Assessment Report on Child and Adolescent Road Safety in Pune District, March 2024](#)
4. IEC materials for adults on child road safety and Safe Systems approach, March 2024 ([English](#)/[Marathi](#))
5. Road Safety Audit reports of demonstration schools, March 2024
 - a. [ZP Primary School Shikrapur](#)
 - b. [Shri Mhalsakant Vidyalaya PCMC](#)
 - c. [SS Bharate School Warje PMC](#)
6. [Draft of Child and Adolescent Road Safety Action Plan for Pune District, April 2024](#)
7. [Policy brief on child road safety for the state government, April 2024](#)

Learnings

There is an urgent need to implement safe school zones, prioritizing schools in high-risk areas such as along highways through scientific road safety audits, speed management in school zones, implementation of safe walking, crossing and cycling infrastructure facilities, enhancing shared modes in school transportation, enforcement of road safety equipment including child helmets and child restraint systems and equip emergency response and trauma care systems for children.

- Schools and colleges can play an important role in engaging families, school staff, communities and institutional stakeholders in child road safety and adopting the safe systems approach.
- Teaching traffic rules to young children may not be enough to keep them safe due to the physical and mental development stages they are in.
- Strengthening understanding about the “Safe Systems” approach among institutional actors, especially members of the District Road Safety Committees is key to driving the change.

Way Forward

The following elements were identified for future work

- Clear policy articulation and formalization of action plan at the state and district level,
- Evidence-based and time-bound implementation proposals in a phased manner, to meet the target of reduction of road crash fatalities, and
- Working with the DRSC leadership, institutional capacity building, multi-stakeholder engagement, integration and resource enabling for achieving the target.