

Newsletter



October 2025



Department of Transit of Pará (DETRAN/PA) 2021

Message from the Head of the UNRSF Secretariat

Welcome to the October edition of our newsletter.

This month, we highlight how UNRSF grants closed critical gaps in the national road safety systems of Lao PDR and Brazil. In Lao PDR, UNRSF has been helping the government to improve and align its national driving licensing system with international best practice. While in Brazil, the UNRSF helped the state of Pará to put in place measures to strengthen speed limit enforcement on high risk highways.

We also reflect on meetings convened by the Fund at UN Headquarters in New York, to explore ways to prioritize road safety efforts, ensure complementarity of interventions, and address the challenge of achieving scale ahead of the 2026 UNGA High-Level Meeting on Road Safety and beyond.

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CASE IN BRAZIL

Catalyzing others to replicate and scale

THE LEVERAGE AT WORK

Through a grant of USD 321,000, the UN Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) supported the State of Pará, Brazil, in strengthening its road traffic enforcement system. The Fund's investment helped the Department of Transit of Pará (DETRAN-PA) and the Military and Civil Police expand evidence-based operations, train enforcement officers, and introduce coordinated data management systems.



DETRAN/PA 2021

This catalytic support triggered significant state investment, totalling USD 23.9 million by 2024, to scale and sustain the model. The government has since financed new enforcement vehicles, expanded breathalyser testing, and installed speed cameras across 52 cities.

UNRSF funding: USD 321,000

Government and partners: USD 23.9 million

“

By developing an interoperable data collection and analysis system, we are replacing guesswork with science, ensuring that preventive countermeasures (whether in infrastructure or enforcement) are targeted, effective, and rapid, drastically reducing injuries and deaths. The result of this project will be a legacy of knowledge and safety for Brazil, fulfilling our mission to protect every citizen who uses our roads”.

Adriualdo de Lima Catão,
National Traffic Secretary,
Ministry of Transport
(Brazil)



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project: Strengthening Road Traffic Enforcement in Brazil

Challenge:

Before the project, enforcement operations were not focused on key risk factors, and traffic officers had low confidence in applying national road safety legislation. Activities were often carried out without proper planning, had low visibility and only done in the vacation month of July, and were mostly concentrated in Belém, the capital city of Pará.

UNRSF Intervention:

With UNRSF support, DETRAN-PA started to carry out enforcement operations in all of the state highways (not only Belém), strengthened enforcement capacity, institutional coordination, and data-driven decision-making). UNRSF's support also inspired a new Federal Law 14.954 in 2023 creating the National Day of Road Traffic Officers on 2 June, and a new State Law 10.587 in 2024 establishing a State Day of the Traffic Officer to be celebrated in the State of Pará every 11 May.

Key results include:

- New State Enforcement Protocol established to standardise operations;
- 171 officers trained across seven courses in 2022, with all reporting improved skills;
- Breathalyser tests more than doubled and fines increased by 73% in 2022;
- Traffic deaths fell by one-third, from 6.13 to 4.13 per 10,000 vehicles between 2021-2022;
- Public awareness video gained international recognition at the 2022 International Safety Media Awards.
- The project also supported the creation of a State Data Analysis Commission, improved coordination among enforcement agencies, and introduced a draft bill to formalise a professional career track for traffic officers.

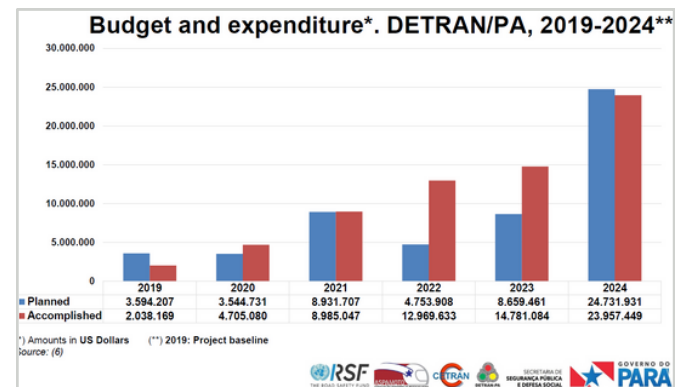
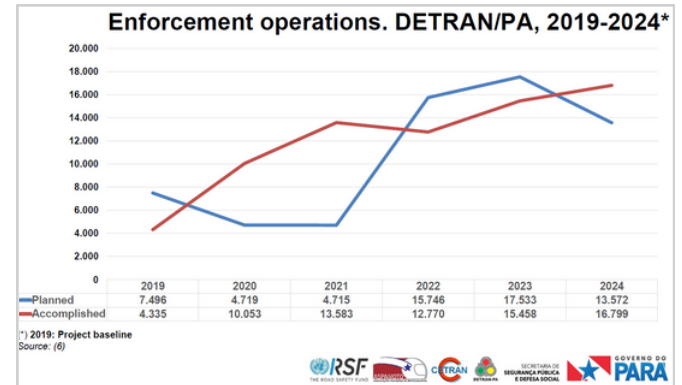
CASE IN BRAZIL

Catalyzing others to replicate and scale

WHAT'S NEXT

The Government of Pará has fully integrated the UNRSF-supported enforcement model into its 2024–2027 Multiannual Plan, ensuring continued financing and policy alignment. Upcoming actions include:

- Updating the Brazilian Drug Information Observatory (OBID);
- Revising National Regulation No. 432/2013 on drink-driving enforcement (pending CONTRAN approval);
- Proposing a new bill to extend mandatory drug testing to taxi and motorcycle taxi drivers.

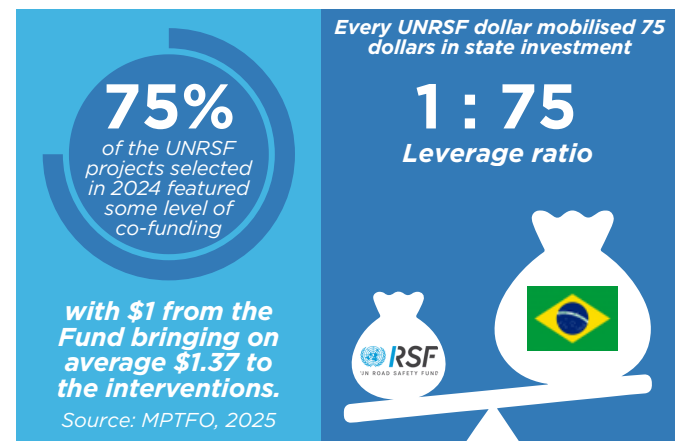


FOLLOW-ON INVESTMENT

Since the project's completion in 2022, the State of Pará has scaled up its enforcement capacity through substantial self-financing:

- Breathalysers increased from 4 in 2020 to 159 in 2024, including the nine units purchased through the UNRSF project;
- Fixed speed cameras expanded from 2 to 248 across 52 cities, covering 36% of municipalities;
- Enforcement budget grew fivefold, from USD 4.7 million in 2020 to USD 23.9 million in 2024;
- 80 new vehicles procured for traffic enforcement operations.

This sustained government investment demonstrates how UNRSF seed funding catalysed systemic, state-financed reform, transforming a targeted pilot into a scalable national model for safer roads.



**DOWNLOAD
THE STORY HERE**

CASE IN LAO PDR

Sharing lessons learned



PROJECT:

Improvement of Driver Licensing System in Lao People's Democratic Republic

The project was launched to address the rising number of road traffic fatalities in Lao PDR, where weak driver training and licensing systems were contributing to unsafe roads. Rapid growth in vehicle ownership had increased pressure on the country's road system. Many new drivers received little or no formal training, and driver testing standards were outdated. This made roads less safe for everyone, especially young and inexperienced drivers.

The project aligns closely with the UN Road Safety Fund's priorities of strengthening national institutions and improving enforcement systems in countries with a high burden of road deaths.

The UNRSF supported this initiative because it addressed a major gap in Lao PDR's road safety system, the absence of a modern, standardised driver training framework. By helping to reform policies, update regulations, and introduce new technologies, the project built lasting capacity for safer, more professional driver education nationwide.



WHAT WORKED?

The project addressed critical gaps through new curriculum, streamlined regulations, and access to digital knowledge, including:

- ✓ **New driving licence training curriculum**
- ✓ **Updated licensing regulations**
- ✓ **Digital tools for learning and testing**
- ✓ **Capacity building and Training of Trainers (ToT)**

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

1. Adoption of revised curriculum and regulations

- Development and government approval of eight new driver training courses covering all vehicle categories.
- Drafting and approval of new regulations to guide driver education and testing.

2. Two innovative digital tools were also introduced:

- Dot Smart App, a free mobile and web-based learning tool that allows users to study traffic rules, take practice tests and schedule their driving exams.
- The E-Driving system, an automated testing platform that uses GPS and cameras to score driving tests objectively.

3. Strengthened institutional capacity

- 200 Department of Transport staff completed Training of Trainers sessions, building the capacity to operate and promote the revised curriculum, updated regulations, and new digital tools.





NEW DRIVING LICENCE TRAINING CURRICULUM

- A modern driver training curriculum was developed to replace the outdated framework. It includes eight courses, six newly created and two updated, to cover all vehicle categories that previously lacked formal training. The curriculum was modelled partly on Thailand's approach and integrates principles from key UN road safety conventions.
- It was successfully piloted in Savannakhet Province and formally approved by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT). The Ministry expressed its intention to scale and expand it nationwide subject to available financing.



UPDATED LICENSING REGULATIONS

- The project helped revise existing licensing regulations to improve procedures for issuing and renewing driving licences across all vehicle categories.
- Four new policy documents were produced, detailing the updated rules and guidelines. These were approved by the government and are now in effect nationwide, improving transparency and consistency in the licensing process.

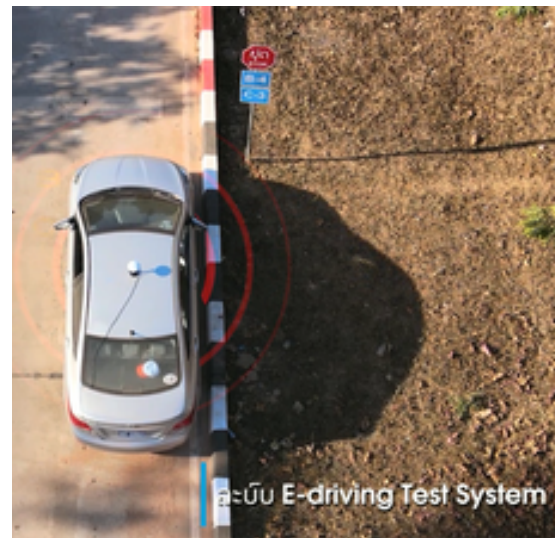




DIGITAL TOOLS FOR LEARNING AND TESTING

To support the digitalisation of public services, two new tools were developed: the Dot Smart App and the E-Driving system.

- The Dot Smart App is a free mobile and web-based platform where users can learn traffic rules, take online courses, practise theory test questions, schedule exams, view results, and receive updates from the licensing authority.
- The E-Driving system is an automated testing platform equipped with GPS, cameras, and sensors to assess driving performance objectively. It offers both practice and official test modes and was successfully piloted in Savannakhet Province. The MPWT now plans to expand it to other provinces and vehicle categories.

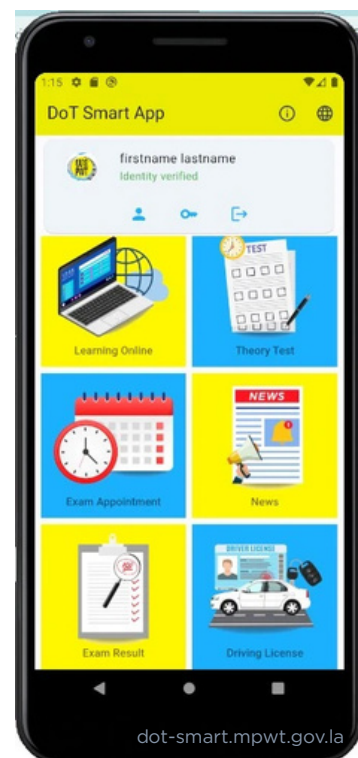


dot-smart.mpwt.gov.la



CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

- Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops were organised for staff from the Department of Transport, including personnel from vehicle and driving licence units and driving schools in several provinces. These sessions strengthened their ability to use and promote the new curriculum, digital tools, and licensing regulations, helping embed the new systems into the national licensing process.



CASE IN LAO PDR

Sharing lessons learned



LESSONS LEARNED FOR SCALING AND REPLICATION

SUCCESSSES

- The project successfully addressed long-standing gaps in driver training and licensing by creating a modern, inclusive, and digital system. It showed how focused UN support can strengthen government institutions and create frameworks for sustainable improvement.
- Strong collaboration and consistent government engagement were central to these achievements. Close alignment with national priorities ensured ownership, smooth implementation, and long-term integration into national systems. The project directly supported the 2021–2030 National Road Safety Strategy and its 2020–2025 Action Plan, while also advancing the government’s wider digitalisation agenda.

CHALLENGES & MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- **Sustainability and scale-up:** Continued support from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT) is essential to maintain momentum and roll out the new system nationwide.
- **Mitigation:** Future projects should include a clear post-pilot plan to guide implementation and ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- **Inclusion gaps:** The project design did not fully integrate gender equality, human rights, or disability inclusion, limiting its reach to all vulnerable road users.
- **Mitigation:** Future initiatives should embed these priorities from the start, ensuring that road safety systems are inclusive and benefit everyone equally.



AUGUST 13, 2024

The Ministry of Transport has improved the driver's license issuance system through the website and mobile app, allowing everyone to access information more conveniently.

The Department of Transport, Ministry of Public Works and Transport has received a grant from the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF), under the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Europe...

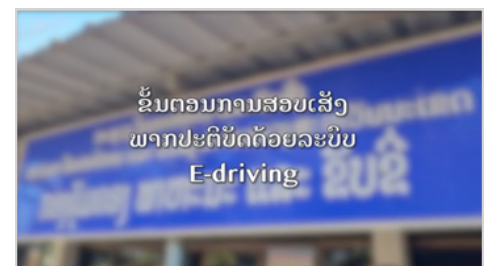


AUGUST 13, 2024

Organize a seminar on the system/procedure for issuing driving licenses in the Lao PDR, January 9–19, 2024

Between January 9–19, 2024, which is divided into 3 generations: Generation 1, January 9–11, 2024; Generation 2, January 15–17, 2024; Generation 3, January 17–19, 2024. Seminar organization, system/procedure, issuance of certificates...

[Read more >](#)



AUGUST 13, 2024

Practical exam procedure with E-Driving system

The E-Driving system is a system that assists in practical driving tests by using an electronic system to determine the scores for the various positions used in the test and deduct points for errors that actually occur during the test.

[Read more >](#)



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MISSIONS

UNRSF Champions Brazil's Police Training to Advance Road Safety in Latin America

The UNRSF joined Brazil's Federal Highway Police (PRF) for the International Road Safety Course (CISV) in Florianópolis, where 55 police officers from nine Latin American countries trained together to strengthen their skills in crash investigation, enforcement, and mobility management.

For the Fund, it was more than a classroom visit. The exchange showcased how UNRSF funding in Brazil is building institutional capacity and setting a model for replication across the region. Officers shared experiences, compared challenges, and learned from evidence-based enforcement practices that can be adapted to their national contexts.

UNRSF Communications and Partnerships Officer Marianelly Díaz, who represented the Fund at the event, reflected:

“

Seeing officers from nine countries exchange experiences reminded us what UNRSF is all about, helping governments build strong enforcement systems, mainstream global safety standards, and catalyse regional replication for safer roads across Latin America.

”



Opening ceremony and first sessions of the IV International Road Safety Course, Florianópolis, Brazil.



BRICS Forum, 2025.

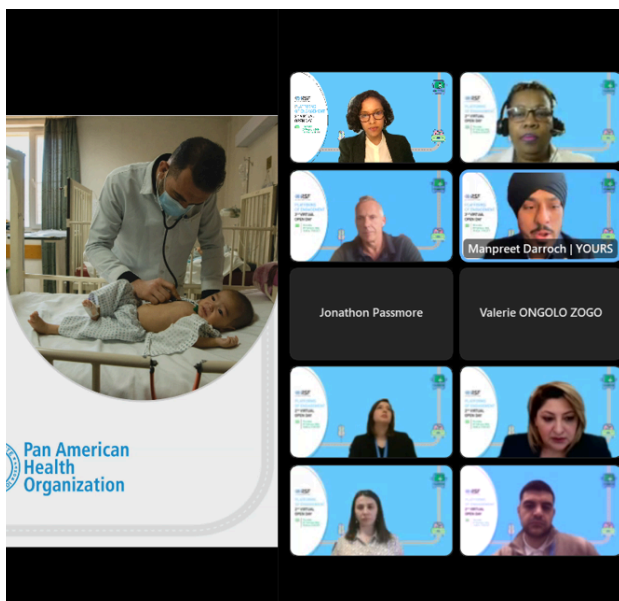
MISSIONS

UNRSF Brings the Safety Lens to the BRICS Forum

At this year's BRICS Forum, UNRSF Partnerships Officer Valeria Motta joined a high-level panel on the next generation of transport infrastructure, where she underscored one clear message: innovation is only sustainable if it is safe.

Valeria highlighted how the UN Road Safety Fund is helping countries and cities embed safety into smarter, cleaner mobility systems, by bridging governments, private actors, and international partners to scale up solutions that save lives.

“Every conversation about the future of transport must start with safety. Without it, we can't build mobility that's truly equitable, inclusive, or sustainable.”



3RD UNRSF OPEN DAY

3rd UNRSF Open Day

This year's online Open Day, on 05 December, will spotlight the catalytic impact of UNRSF projects, providing an interactive space for partners to connect, share results, lessons learned and discuss challenges. [Take a look at the 2024 event.](#)

MISSIONS

UNRSF Convenes Global Partners Ahead of the 2026 High-Level Meeting on Road Safety

During 13–14 October at United Nations Headquarters in New York, the UN Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) brought together major road safety funders, public health family offices, philanthropies, and industry leaders to explore collaboration opportunities and innovative approaches to scaling funding and interventions as we reach the halfway point of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety.

A closed-door “Strategic Dialogue on Financing Road Safety” and the public session “Catalyzing Philanthropic Leadership on Road Safety and Global Health” highlighted concrete avenues for strategic, programmatic, and financial collaboration, while identifying future opportunities in the lead-up to the 2026 UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Road Safety.

The Public Foundation hosted the New York edition of Brands for Safer Roads—the third event in the 24seconds in support of UNRSF initiative 24seconds—to examine successful industry-led innovative financing mechanisms and their potential application to road safety.

The meetings concluded with a forward-looking discussion with the President of the General Assembly, helping to inform preparations for the 2026 High-Level Meeting on Road Safety.



“

To close the road safety funding gap, we must move from one-time donations to sustainable, predictable financing. Road safety should be built into the way the world does business.

”

— Stephen Keppel, President, PVBLIC Foundation



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The project "Improving Crash Prevention on Federal Highways in Brazil," developed with the invaluable support of the UN Road Safety Fund, symbolises the collective commitment to preserving life and promoting safer highways. Through technological strengthening and technical training, the Federal Highway Police is advancing in the construction of a robust methodology and an interoperable and intelligent data system capable of more accurately identifying risk factors on federal highways.

This initiative not only strengthens road safety governance in Brazil but also directly contributes to the effective reduction of road traffic injuries and deaths, in alignment with the objectives of the UN Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety."



Insp. Fernando Oliveira
Director-General of the Brazilian Federal Highway Police, Ministry of Justice and Public Security (Brazil)

“

"The new driver licensing system has transformed how we prepare drivers in Lao PDR. Drivers are now more aware of road safety, and I've seen a significant improvement in their skills. This change is saving lives on our roads."

”

— Dr. Bounta ONNAVONG, Director General, Department of Transport, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Lao PDR



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