

**UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda
Report 2020**



UGANDA PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS' NETWORK (UPDN)

**REPORT ON COMMEMORATION OF WORLD DAY OF
REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS IN UGANDA
15th November 2020**



Driver Association representatives with the traffic police representative, and Ministry of Health Emergency Director during the 2020 World day of remembrance at the UNRA grounds in Kyambogo

Global Theme 2020:

Prepared by
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UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020

INTRODUCTION:

The day of remembrance of road traffic victims was started in 1993 by World Peace, a United Kingdom charity for road traffic victims. On October 26, 2005, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 60/5 on improving global road safety. The Resolution called for the third Sunday of November each year to be recognized as an annual day for remembrance of road traffic victims. Globally the day for remembrance of road traffic victims is a major advocacy day for road traffic injury prevention.

Public remembrance of the road traffic victims is not for the benefit of the victims to remember what happened to them, but it is a day for public reflection which is an act of recognition. It states to the victims and their families that their humanity is valued and that their loss is our loss and that we share in their suffering.

In Uganda on average, 10 people lose life every day in road traffic crashes. In 2018 alone, Uganda lost 3,689 lives in road traffic crashes equivalent to 57 full buses with seating capacity of 64 persons (*Uganda road safety report, 2018*). In terms of serious injury, the police traffic report recorded 9,539 serious injuries equivalent to 198 people seriously injured on a weekly basis. Ministry of Health report shows that only 11% of those involved in road crashes arrive at hospital aboard an ambulance, leave alone other necessary support such as emergency health care, security and psych-social support.

Most of those killed are young people and in the prime of their lives whose presence and contributions are missed by their families and the country. The impact of such traumatic events are largely felt at family level as families are frequently driven into poverty by the cost of prolonged medical care, loss of a family bread winner or the extra funds needed to care for people disabled by road traffic injuries. At country level, the annual cost of road traffic crashes is estimated at 4.4 trillion representing 5% of the GDP. Despite the extent of this tragedy and the associated extreme human suffering, the issue of road traffic deaths, injury and the suffering of victims has largely been ignored by Government with meager national budget apportioned to it.

Uganda Professional Drivers' Network (UPDN) organized the day for commemoration of road traffic victims in Uganda on November 15th, 2020 in partnership with the inter-religious council of Uganda; sponsored by, Integrated Transport Systems Limited, Graben Logistics Academy, Association of Professional Driving Schools Uganda, Safe Way Right Way, UDSA, Prestige Driving School and several Drivers Associations' (UPDN); joining the rest of the world in the remembrance of road traffic victims in Uganda. The purpose of the commemoration was to bring to national attention the devastating impact of road deaths and injuries on families and the Economy.

❖ UPDN Secretariat (Executive Director).

- The secretariat has grown from coordinating 6 driver association to 17 driver association currently.
- Called upon Government to implement the point system for errant drivers who keep on causing road accidents.
- Also mentioned that over 80% of the road traffic accidents are preventable since 90% are caused by human error.

UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020

- Called upon Government to embrace driving schools as an important partner in driver professionalism. UPDN is mobilizing other schools to join the driving school association of Uganda.
- UPDN currently developed a database that will house driver database details in Uganda and this is expected to push away incompetent drivers and also highly complement Government work and employer background checks on individual drivers.
- Thanked Dr Namaye John Baptist from Ministry of Health for their continued support in road safety.
- Highly concerned that in the last amendment of the road safety act, Government scrapped the Transport licensing board and the national road safety council which were very unfortunate events in the story of road safety in Uganda.
- Motorcyclist the pedestrians still don't have lanes created for their road use in most roads in Uganda hence Government should standardize on road use.
- Called upon Government to invest in road safety since they also collect a lot of revenue from road related fees and driver training schools.
- Professional driving is still lacking as driving schools struggle with limited training equipment hence producing half trained drivers. Furthermore, the drivers are unable to afford the expensive training cost of HGV professional training fee.
- Government should ensure ministry of education is involved in driver training and the need for a certification body for professional certification of drivers.



*UPDN Executive Director
presenting on key road safety
issues at the event at UNRA
grounds, Kvacombogo*

❖ REPRESENTATIVE OF DRIVING SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

- The driver training schools of UDSA, GRABEN, and PRESTIGE have come together for one common goal of professionalizing the driving industry in Uganda.
- He was hopeful to see the establishment of an association that will sensitize boda boda cyclist on safe road usage especially with the aim of protecting school going children from accidents.
- He was among the people who conducted road assessments status in the northern corridor in 2018 that revealed the highest caused of road accidents as human error and not road status.
- He was happy with the progress made by the association of professional driving schools in Uganda which has already been registered.

UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020



UPDN staff during the candle lighting moment in remembrance of road accident victims.

- ❖ **Representative from Safe Way Right Way driver training school (Peter Tibigamba)**
 - Talked about professional driver training in Uganda, and SWRW focuses mainly on HGV and PSV driver training.
 - Have been working with different partners since 2016 including the MoWT, and other driving schools and stakeholders.
 - One key challenge in driver training is that employers are usually not willing to provide ample time to their drivers for training periods due to work related commitments.
 - SWRW also conduct driver instructor training for various driving schools hence this can be scheduled for those interested in taking the driver instructor training.
 - He emphasized on the need for more engagement with the employers towards availing time for their drivers to take professional driver trainings.
 - Another challenge affecting driver training is cost related both by the schools in managing training cost which also becomes expensive for the trainees.
 - He believe all the above issues can be handled if the industry stakeholders and players come together to advocate for a common cause.

- ❖ **Representative from Prestige Driving School**
 - Prestige has tried their best to extend driver training throughout the country.
 - Human attitude still contribute a lot to road accidents since drivers think they know more than their fellow drivers.
 - Prestige has also focused on building driver schools from the beginner level to professional driving.
 - We have also introduced the HGV driving training section.

- ❖ **Representative from UDSA (Uganda driving standard agency)**
 - We have invested in driver instructor and they have invested in themselves.
 - Working collectively with other driving schools to advocate for key issues affecting road safety issues in Uganda.

UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020

- Players in the transport sector need to plan well and be ready to utilize opportunities in the upcoming African Free trade area.
- Welcomed other driver training schools to join the association of professional driving training schools.



Driver community gathers in solidarity to remember their fellow community members who have been victims of road accidents during world day of remembrance for road accident victims at UNRA grounds, Kvambogo

❖ **Representative from Inter religious Council of Uganda**

- There is still lack of professionalism among some driver training schools in that some schools process driving license for those not trained in driving skills.
- Some schools are also money minded in that they ask for many financial related obligations from the trainer like medical fee and yet they do not provide doctors to check the vision of a trainee.
- There are still very many informal driver trainers operating in play grounds which pose a very big risk in driver professionalism by producing half-baked drivers on the road.
- A greatest percentage of boda boda operators do not have the required driving licenses.
- He also called upon Government to consider having a centralized driver school or institution responsible for professionally examining the trained drivers before they are allowed on the roads.
- He concluded by calling upon Government to consider standards in licensing driver training schools.

❖ **Representative from Uganda Long Distance and Heavy Truck Drivers' Association (ULDHTDA).**

- Their assessment with the police traffic indicated that a number of truck drivers operate on the road with counterfeit driving permits.
- They have been much involved in mobilizing drivers for HGV training at SWRW and UDSA training schools.
- He concluded by saying the oil and Gas sector will need about 2,500 professionally trained drivers which call upon drivers to consider undertaking professional trainings.

❖ **Representative from Professional Female Driver Association of Uganda**

- The challenge female drivers' face is that some people do not trust their ability yet they can do better than men.
- She encouraged ladies out to come and join driving as a profession.

UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020

- She appreciated the contribution of professional driving schools like SWRW and UDSA
- Encouraged various companies involved in driver employment to employ more female since female drivers are committed and know what they do.
- Some employers still demand for sex in exchange to employment which poses a challenge to female drivers.
- She finally thanked UPDN for building her professional capability through various training and mentorship platforms.



Representatives of professional female driver Association with their chairperson (m) delivering a speech at DOR 2020 commemoration at UNRA grounds, Kyambogo

❖ **Ministry of Health (Represented by Dr. John Bosco Namaye- Commissioner emergency services)**

- Ministry of health was glad to participate in the commemoration of world day of remembrance for Road traffic victims on UPDNs' invitation.
- UN General Assembly declared a decade of action on road accidents in march 2010 which seek to save millions of lives through advocacy on road safety
- Health services comes in the 5th pillar of the declaration which is post-crash care
- Effective pre hospital response system is necessary in road accident related scenarios which contribute a lot to saving lives.
- Globally, road traffic death account for 1.35 million deaths annually, and the most affected age group in 5 to 29 years, majorly pedestrians, cyclist and motorcyclist affected.
- Sustainable development goals 3.6 calls for reduction of road traffic death by end of 2020.
- Africa contributes to the highest number of road fatality rates yet they have the less motorized
- Pre hospital trauma response is also still low
- Annual health sector performance report also indicates that injuries are the 3rd commonest form of admission accounting for 107,000 cases in the country annually. And this was not the case 10 years ago and injuries didn't even appear among the first ten.

UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020

- 80% of emergency beds in various hospitals especially Mulago national hospital is being occupied by road accident related patients.

❖ STEPS TAKEN BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

- In the recently amended traffic and road safety act, it provides for right of access to emergency care without due regard to ability to pay which provide for access to health service in case of emergency where medical facilities are required to save lives first before payments.
- Government worked with Uganda Red Cross to handle pre hospital emergency care system. Government provided funds for Uganda Red Cross to establish the highway emergency response system through an assessment done in 2019 which indicated 250 hotspots in Ugandan major roads.
- The prime minister recently commissioned 10 ambulances in the first phase to Uganda Red cross out of the required 25 state of the art ambulances.
- Developed the first Aid training curriculum for first Aid response in emergency cases. Processes are ongoing to make it a requirement for driving school training institution.
- Have conducted training of 80 staff on major incidence response especially on situations of accidents involving many victims.
- The Health ministry also plans to train 2 on sight accident response in each parish for the next 5 years.
- Establishing the national ambulance system to ensure timely response to emergency road related accidents.
- Also conducted the training for the emergency care responders/technicians who will be deployed in the ambulances
- The ministry is in the process of upgrading Naguru hospital in to a national emergency and trauma center so that victims can receive the required fast care in case of an accident. Also functionalizing the emergency units at health center IV, General hospitals and regional referral hospitals.
- Advised that the issue of establishing a centralized driver assessment and certification center could be discussed in a multi stakeholder meeting so that all the responsible ministries are involved.



Dr. Namaye- (m) - Commissioner emergency services) at Ministry of Health, Monsignor Kasibante (r) and Kampala traffic director (L), lighting up candles in remembrance of road accident Victims at UNRA grounds- Kyambogo

**UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda
Report 2020**

Key Recommendations

| Action | Responsible body | Status |
|---|---|--|
| Certification of driver training schools | Ministry of Education | In progress |
| Establishment of national highway ambulance services | Ministry of Health | In progress |
| Enrollment of first Aid training curriculum in driving schools | Ministry of Education/ Health | In progress |
| Reduction in use of counterfeit driving license | Traffic police | In progress |
| Advocate for training and employment of female drivers | UPDN/ Development partners | UPDN is coordinating the formalization of national professional female driver association. |
| Follow up to ensure the day is gazette on the National Calendar | Ministry of Local Government | In progress |
| Continuously participate in behavior change campaign through National drivers' conferences, pushing for punitive measures on errant drivers and pursuing recommendation for a National Hotline to report errant drivers-Promote self-regulation | UPDN/ Uganda Traffic Police, Road safety partners | In progress |
| Pursue the Ministry for Works and Transport and MoES for certification and accreditation of drivers-National Qualification framework | Ministry of Works & Transport/ MoES | In progress |

KEY CHALLENGES:

- Low media participation due to limited resources from UPDN
- Limited time in mobilizing participation of other important stakeholders like; Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and Sports including others like Insurance Regulatory Authority.
- Limited Resources to ably cater for mobilization of all relevant stakeholders and taking care of participants' welfare.
- Limited awareness and recognition on this International day by various stakeholders and players in the road sector.

LESSON LEARNED:

- We need to in time, constitute a multi-sectorial organizing committee in advance to support improved stakeholder mobilization for future commemoration events
- Government participation through various agencies showcasing Government achievements in the transport sector and road safety would promote visibility.

UPDN Commemoration of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims in Uganda Report 2020

- There is need for early planning on stakeholder engagement to support timely resource mobilization.
- More Government agencies and development partners need to join hands with one voice in such events to jointly front key road safety issues to responsible policy holders.
- There is need to profile some road accident survivors to directly tell their stories to facilitate educative messages.

CONCLUSIONS:

UPDN would like to appreciate all partners, Government stakeholders, driver associations, driver school association and those who virtually participated in the 2020 DOR commemoration. We are delighted that the actions generated during the 2020 commemoration are geared towards road safety improvement in Uganda. We also appreciate the association of professional driving schools for their enormous contribution towards this day and their commitment to the road safety sector. We would like to assure all the stakeholders that UPDN is committed to change the driving industry in to a professional sector through continuous professional driver trainings and other innovations including centralizing the driver database system.

