



## Traffic Casualty Reduction in the ESCWA Region



A recent ESCWA workshop set the target of 30 per cent for the reduction of road crash fatalities in the region by the year 2015. This target figure was reached and agreed upon by over 90 representatives of 13 ESCWA member countries, private sector companies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who gathered in Abu Dhabi to discuss road safety targets.

The workshop was the fourth that ESCWA has arranged to deal with road safety issues in recent years. It was part of preparations for the first UN Ministerial Conference on Global Road Safety, to be held in Moscow in November 2009, and it has advised member countries to participate with high-level representation.

The workshop proposed that

governmental authorities in the ESCWA region adopt good practices on road safety in order to achieve relatively low-cost road safety targets within a short period of time. It was recommended that member countries adopt and improve methodology for data collection and develop national computerized data bases on road crashes. In order to ensure the highest levels of traffic safety, the development of laws regulating the rights and duties of road users and transportation safety-related traffic was also advised.

The workshop on regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets was organized by ESCWA and the National Transport Authority in the United Arab Emirates on 16 - 17 June, 2009. It was

opened by Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Public Works and Chairman of the Board of Directors of NTA, and Nasser Saif Al Mansouri, director general of the NTA, who welcomed participants from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Member countries participating in the meeting were encouraged to activate national road safety councils and implement appropriate interventions; including speed enforcement, usage of seatbelts and helmets, treatment of high-accident locations, improved drivers' training and licensing, proper emergency and first aid services. Member countries that have not

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Traffic Casualty Reduction in the ESCWA Region
- Education to Prevent Exploitation
- ESCWA holds its first "HR Day"

## Education to Prevent Exploitation

Aida Abu Ras of Jordan believes education can serve as a catalyst to prevent the exploitation of women, and her work to educate women and enlighten them about their rights has earned her the honour of being named as one of the "Heroes Acting to End Modern-Day Slavery" in this year's *Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report*, issued annually by the State Department of the United States.

In 2003, the ESCWA regional advisor on empowerment and advancement of women created Friends of Women Workers (FWW), the first NGO in Jordan to tackle human trafficking and the problems of female migrant workers. In the context of FWW, Abu Ras worked relentlessly to provide

## Traffic Casualty Reduction in the ESCWA Region (Cont.)

yet set road safety targets were encouraged to make efforts in order to put evidence-based casualty reduction targets for 2015 and onwards. They were also invited to provide ESCWA with national reports, including their road safety management programmes, their plans for setting targets to reduce traffic fatalities and all the activities/actions/legislations taken since 2005, the year in which ESCWA initiated road safety activities in the region. ■

## Education to Prevent Exploitation (Cont.)

training in equal rights, health and safety, as well as legal counselling for over 60,000 migrant women in her home country. Her efforts against trafficking in persons and to put an end to misinformation and ignorance have earned Abu Ras a nomination as a TIP Hero. ■



*“Hero Aida Abu Ras, a Jordanian anti-trafficking activist, is a fierce advocate for the rights of foreign domestic workers, often so vulnerable as they labour behind closed doors”. Ambassador Luis CdeBaca, director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the State Department.*

## ESCWA holds its first “HR Day”

On 29 June 2009, all ESCWA staff members were invited to attend the first “HR Day” event aimed at sharing information with staff of the Commission on human resources issues. The Human Resources Management Section (HRMS) offered to respond to queries from staff on topics ranging from Benefits, Entitlements, Staff Development, Training, Recruitment and Medical issues in a one-stop-shop format.

On the topic of new contractual arrangements, the “HR Day” provided an opportunity for staff to voice their specific concerns to HR professionals in a small group format, moderated by Ms. Anastasia Wilson, Chief of HRMS.

The Benefits and Entitlements team led by Ms. Sabah Chebib, provided staff with hand-outs on various topics and invited them to discuss their benefits and entitlements questions.

The Training team, coordinated by



Ms. Souad Azar, gave an overview of the Commission’s upcoming training activities and urged staff to register for courses. Staff also provided suggestions on possible future training activities.

The Recruitment team, led by Mr. Gilles Baltrusaitis, held a “PHP Clinic” aimed at improving applicants’ Personal History Profiles by sharing technical and content-related tips. It also provided general advice to Programme Managers on drafting vacancy announcements and on the selection process.

The Medical team, led by Dr. Josette Sfeir, offered free health-related tests and counseling for cardiovascular risk factors in collaboration with local health professionals. Tests included: blood pressure, body mass index, carbon-monoxide, and blood sugar



and triglyceride levels. A briefing session on “smoking and new treatment modality” was also conducted, which encouraged some staff members to stop smoking.

The feedback was very positive. Through an evaluation form, attendees reported a high level of interest in issues related to benefits and entitlements, stressing that they felt mostly “reassured” by the explanations provided on the subject of the upcoming contractual reforms. Efforts of the Medical team were also praised. Comments were made on the “convenience” of the on-the-spot diagnosis and the “relevant advice” provided by health professionals. HRMS will take all comments into account for the next “HR Day” event, since most participants were eager to see “HR Day” repeated on a regular basis. ■

### Address

P.O. Box 11-8575, Riad El-Solh, Beirut-Lebanon e-mail: [webmaster-escwa@un.org](mailto:webmaster-escwa@un.org)  
 Tel.: 961-1-981301; Fax: 961-1-981510 website: [www.escwa.un.org](http://www.escwa.un.org)