

Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority Develops National Road Safety Policy



Group photo of Stakeholders at the workshop



The Executive Director, Dr Bendu making a statement



The Permanent Secretary, MTA delivering the key note address



Dr Martin Monono/ WHO facilitating the process

The Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority (SLRTA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, WHO and other stakeholders in the Road Transport Industry held a three day workshop in Bo from 22-24th May 2012. The objective of the Workshop was to develop a Road Safety Policy for the country and eventually a National Road Safety Strategic Plan as part of efforts to address the rising road crashes in the country. The policy will be aligned with the five pillars of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety which seeks to stabilize and reduce the road traffic fatalities around the world by 2020.

Analyses of the road traffic situations in the regions were presented by regional representatives in order for the stakeholders to prepare a comprehensive response strategy to address the problems associated with road safety challenges in Sierra Leone. The policy is being developed through a consultative process with participation from the public and private sectors in the road transport industry and technical support of the World Health Organization.

Delivering the key note address the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Transport and Aviation (MTA), Mr Saa Kpulun acknowledged that road safety is now a serious challenge that the country is grappling with. He identified population growth and the non corresponding infrastructural development as well as the ineffective implementation of road safety regulations as some of the factors responsible for the deterioration of road safety. Mr Kpulun stated the need for capacity development of the Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority in order to adequately implement the road traffic regulations that were recently updated by the Authority to meet the challenges of road safety.

The Executive Director of the SLRTA, Dr. Sarah Bendu reiterated that Sierra Leone has immense challenges with road safety. She stated that the nonexistence of a sound National Road Safety Policy and the lack of a comprehensive document that the Authority and its partners could rely on to coordinate, design and effectively implement a holistic road safety policy and strategic plan needs to be addressed with utmost urgency to reduce the rising road traffic crashes.

When finalised the road safety policy will facilitate the establishment of a road safety data base as well as trauma care centers in all regions of the country. Development of the policy is being facilitated with technical and financial support from the WHO Regional Office for Africa and the Country Office.