Appendix

1- Lobbying for the Construction of Pedestrian Bridges in Lebanon (Case study from 2005)

Background

Although it is every Lebanese citizen’s duty to claim their right to use pedestrian bridges for their own safety, rare are those who are aware about their rights as vulnerable road users.

The Youth Association for Social Awareness (YASA) presented the Minister of Public Works and Transport Najib Mikati with a study illustrating the importance of constructing additional pedestrian bridges. In May 2001, Minister Najib Mikati promised to build around 100 pedestrian bridges throughout the country.

However, during the last ten years almost nothing has been seriously done.

Mr. Ziad Akl, the founder of YASA, coordinated efforts to ensure the success of this campaign in Summer 2005.

In response to the sit-in organized by road victims and YASA, Dr. Alain Kordahi, Vice President of the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), promised construction of the Louaizeh (Lebanese city) pedestrian bridge would be initiated in the coming weeks, adding «in a few months from now we will have several other pedestrian bridges raised all over the country.»

Some agencies had a tendency of pretending «Lebanese people did not use pedestrian bridges as they should, while
studies have shown that 80 percent of the Lebanese actually used the pedestrian bridges.»

CDR had even gone so far in 2003 as to try and build ten bridges on the road between Hazmieh and Saofar (two cities in Lebanon), but the project had been stopped by the government for financial reasons.

According to the Scientific Research Foundation (SRF) which was established in 1997 as a Lebanese NGO concerned with the organization of research, studies and statistics related to environment and accident prevention, pedestrian accidents cause 220 casualties a year in Lebanon which is around 40% of total road casualties, with 1,100 people suffering permanent disabilities and 3,500 minor injuries. SRF believes that pedestrian bridges play a major role in decreasing road accidents and could save up to 70 lives per year.

SRF estimated that more than 70 persons are killed each year in Lebanon due to the lack in the construction of pedestrian bridges. It recommended that there is a need for «no less than 150» such bridges nationwide, while «currently there are only 25.»

**The Actors**

The major actors concerned to build more pedestrian bridges: Council of ministers, Parliamentarian committee for Transport and Public Works, Municipalities, Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, Council for Development and Reconstruction, Media and NGOs

**Facts**

On June 25, 2005 Elias Nabhan, a 17 year old student, died
on his way home from the school scouts. He was crossing the road leading to his home when a car suddenly hit him. He had no choice since there were no pedestrian bridges on that road although money has been allocated to build many bridges including one in that location.

The negligence of the government led to the death of this young boy since it never took action to build a pedestrian bridge on that busy highway.

Parents of the deceased contacted Mr. Ziad Akl, founder of YASA, and together they sought to tackle this problem by organizing a sit-in to push the government to build more pedestrian bridges.

On August 8, 2005 another person, George Haddad, was yet another victim on that road. He was crossing the road with his wife when a car hit them at a high speed. He died instantaneously while his wife suffered severe injuries.

**Strategy Decisions and Actions**

YASA in collaboration with the Lebanese Association for School Safety (LASS) and SRF arranged various plans of action to face this problem. Parents of the deceased Elias Nabhan and other road victim families supported and participated in the actions organized by YASA.

- **Sit-ins**

  On the 1st of July 2005 relatives of the deceased Elias Nabhan along with members from YASA organized a sit-in to push the government to take more action to build more pedestrian bridges. The sit-in was peaceful and officially licensed.

  The sit-in was held in front of the Grand Serail and was widely covered by the media which helped attract public attention. During the sit-in the mother of the deceased said the family will
take escalatory measures if the government does not agree to and achieve their demands. YASA said it will continue to hold demonstrations until the bridge is built.

On July 14, 2005 a second sit-in was organized by both parties in front of the Council for Development and Reconstruction. During the sit-in a meeting was held between Mr. Ziad Akl, the father of the deceased Elias Nabhan, and CDR vice president Dr. Alain Kordahi. After the meeting Dr. Alain Kordahi promised construction on the Louaizeh pedestrian bridge would be initiated in the coming weeks. The mother of the deceased said “I promise that my son is going to be the last pedestrian victim in this careless country. I swear to all of you now, and to God, even if I have to sleep on the road myself or block the road with my car”.

Mr. Ziad Akl had many interventions in which he emphasized the government’s negligence in this critical matter and said “we can’t really keep waiting until the tragedy occurs to react, right? We have to prevent the tragedy from happening”.

**Applied strategies of the intervention**

**• Media interviews**

YASA organized many interviews on various radio channels in order to discuss the importance of building more pedestrian bridges and alert officials about pedestrian accidents. Interviews were heavily organized on radio stations after the death of Elias Nabhan. The mother of the deceased along with some family members participated in these events.

**• Media talk shows**

YASA organized many talk shows on Television stations. The
The major issue of the talk shows was pedestrian accidents and the importance of building more pedestrian bridges. The mother of the deceased along with some family members participated in these events.

**Meeting with the Lebanese President General Emile Lahoud**

On July 19, 2005 members from YASA, SRF, Lebanese Association for School Safety (LASSA), and the Arab Road Safety Organization (AROSO) visited the Lebanese President General Emile Lahoud in the Presidential Palace. The group gave the president a list of demands among which was the urgent need to build more pedestrian bridges.

The President in turn vowed to put all his capabilities in action to help achieve those demands. He asked YASA to present him a study showing the importance and the need to implement each demand. YASA followed up with the President and on July 27, 2005 it presented him the study.

**Press conference**

YASA in collaboration with LASS and SRF held many workshops and eventually held a press conference to state their recommendations.

On August 3, 2005 YASA organized a press conference in the Press Club in Beirut City Center. The press conference was widely covered by the media. During the conference the following recommendations were made:

- The urgent need to build more pedestrian bridges quickly
- Encouraging the Minister of Public Works and Transport Mohammad Safadi to make pedestrian bridges a priority on his
agenda.

- The urgent need for the government to reply to the requests of the civil society in order to limit road traffic injuries.
- The urgent need to establish a time frame for building all the necessary bridges
  - Organizing a large sit-in in case the government continues its negligence in ensuring public safety
  - Organizing large public and media campaigns in case the above mentioned recommendations are ignored

**Outcome**

As a result of the lobbying done by YASA, the CDR built a pedestrian bridge on the road where the young boy died. The wide media coverage of the sit-in and the activities of YASA assisted in triggering the emotions of the public who supported the organization and the victim’s family in their quest.

The construction of the bridge started on August 15, 2005 and was completed within two months. However, the death of another citizen George Haddad on the morning of August 8, 2005 on that road pushed government officials to begin the construction immediately.

This bridge is one of many bridges scheduled to be built on Lebanese roads. YASA and the victim’s family promised to continue their quest until all the bridges are built.

**Lessons and Reflections**

One can conclude from this case that in certain cases lobbying can be successful. Showing officials their mistakes and pushing them to take corrective actions is a good strategy especially when accompanied by wide media coverage. The media helped in winning public affection and hence their support in this case. This left officials with no choice but to build the bridge.
2- Management and fight against mass accidents
By Mona Akl

Mona Akl, Head of the YASA Association in Lebanon, conducted a new survey intended to optimize the management and fight against mass accidents. Taking advantage from a training given by the French police, she suggests an action plan aiming at facilitating the rescue operations and giving the chance to injured people to survive thanks to efficient and quick care.

Public and private authorities have the obligation of ensuring the security and safety of citizens and providing the necessary equipment to face all kinds of accidents and unusual circumstances, mainly natural disasters and those resulting from war situations. This is why the preparation to such eventualities must be studied and organized according to the means that are available in each region, or district or city. It has also to abide by a clear plan defining the obligations and responsibilities of each authority, so that we can avoid panic situations which very often impede, or at least delay rescue operations.

For this action plan to succeed, some features have to be ensured: first of all accuracy which improves with experience; then flexibility in order to facilitate the execution of the plan and its application in all situations.

Injured people should be rushed to the nearest place next to where the accident took place in order to receive the first aid before being transferred to a hospital. These operations have to go along with other measures that require technical and preliminary skills such as providing water, electrical power, supplying oxygen and blood and coordinating among the different authorities concerned.
Management of rescue operations

Managing rescue operations is the responsibility of two specialized authorities which in spite of having different roles and functions have to coordinate their activities in order to ensure the success of the operations.

The first authority is represented by the manager in charge of suppressing the disaster, defining the safety zone and facilitating rescue operations. The second authority is the director general of medical supplies.

Transportation of victims after the disaster

Victims should be carried from the scene of the accident to a place where their condition can be assessed and their number counted. Transportation should be assured by people enjoying experience and good field knowledge. The assiduity and perseverance of the authorities concerned and the advanced equipment and techniques of the institutions concerned are necessary to confine and decrease the impact of the disaster.

Rescue operations are limited to the necessary lifesaving measures. In case there are different rescue teams, tasks shall be distributed in an organized and fast way; gaining time is essential for the good progress of operations.

It would be preferable at this stage that the medical team doesn't intervene on the field (because of the imminence of danger and the cost rise). The security forces, however, are responsible at this level. They have to put up safety barriers in order to keep the citizens away and prevent them from gathering in the accident place.
Gathering the victims in the same center

One of the basic rules in casualty medicine is that the first rescuers who arrive to the accident place should ask for the help of the rescue team as quickly as possible, after assessing the accident and the number of victims. They should also ensure a place where they can move the victims to and assess their condition. This place must be close to the accident field and at the same time outside the threatened area. It must be spacious and easy to get to, with wide lanes for rescue vehicles, and equipped with medicines and first aid material (water, power, oxygen, blood…)

Advanced medical center

In some cases, however, ensuring a close medical center capable of fulfilling this function and meeting the generally required conditions proves to be impossible. Therefore, the available medical center has to provide first-aid for the severely wounded victims and those who cannot be immediately rushed to a hospital. The importance of setting an action plan for each region or caza.

The distance separating the place of the accident from big cities and equipped hospitals requires an action plan in adequacy with the geographical situation of the related region or caza. Supplying water, power, oxygen and blood is indeed much more difficult in the remote regions than in those situated in the center of Beirut and close to the important hospitals. That’s why we should set a specific action plan, according to the geographical situation and the human and technical elements of every region or district, and make sure they coordinate well among each others.
3- Driver Training and Licensing in Lebanon

prepared by M. Ziad Akl founder of YASA

The present driver training and licensing tests do not prepare the learning drivers for the conditions they will meet in the ordinary traffic, which can be characterized as undisciplined, aggressive, impatient and unpredictable. Partly, this may be a result of the inadequate training. More comprehensive training is necessary. Research and studies had proved that the drivers of motor vehicles play a major role in the road traffic injuries. The official statistics of most countries proved that young drivers and new entrant drivers regardless of age are over-represented in the traffic crashes. This underlines the importance of creating an efficient system for the training of the learner drivers so that they are well prepared for their role in the road traffic system when they get their driving licenses. The license tests should be designed to ensure that the training has been successful in transmitting the necessary knowledge and skills to the learner drivers.

There are many ways in which the driver training and licensing in Lebanon can be improved. The most important reform from a safety point of view is to make the learner drivers better prepared for the ordinary traffic. The final part of their training and the practical driving test should take place in ordinary traffic, but then the traffic environment must not be too complicated and the behavior of other drivers must be more disciplined and predictable.

In connection with the changes to the traffic legislation in Lebanon, it is a must to change the license classification to be in accordance with the Vienna Convention from 1968, and to adapt the licenses to the EU Model Driving License layout. The validity period of driving licenses should also be revised when the classification and layout is changed. Instead of the present
renewal stamp system it is recommended to introduce a renewal of the complete license, with a recently taken photo. A system with validity periods depending on the age of the applicant may be considered, and also an eyesight test or a more comprehensive medical examination before renewal, from a certain age. The behavior of Lebanese drivers is a cause for great concern. It is necessary to increase enforcement of fundamental rules and regulations, to increase the fines for traffic offences and revoke driving licenses for serious offences. A driver having his or her license revoked should be required to have a number of lessons at a driving school and then pass the licensing test again.

Proposed components in an upgrading program

It is recommended that an upgrading of the driver training and licensing system should include:

• Changes in the road traffic legislation to the extent necessary for the following;
  • A revised driver training program with several hours in ordinary traffic;
  • Regulations for the private driving training;
  • Development of a modern learner driver’s handbook;
  • Vehicle and driving license classes adapted to international agreements;
  • Validity periods of driving licenses revised;
  • Driving licenses adapted to the EU model layout;
  • Specified curriculum for the practical and theoretical driver training;
  • Specified and standardized theoretical (written) and practical driving tests;
  • Specified curriculum for driving instructor training;
  • Training courses for driving instructors and examiners;
  • Stricter enforcement and higher fines for traffic offences;
Endeavors to improve the road safety in Lebanon must include improvements of the quality of driving. Initiatives must start with a fundamental revision of the driver training system and a radical change of the examination system as a consequence. First of all it must be emphasized that driver training is the primary part of the system, and the license testing is a secondary part. Also, it must be emphasized that the training needs to be much more comprehensive. Motivating learner drivers to accept this will be difficult unless they can be offered an educational program with contents immediately giving them the impression of useful help in finding their way as quickly and safely as possible to the point where they can cope with the ordinary traffic. The educational program should be made accessible to all instructors, examiners and learner drivers so that it is very clear to everybody – the exact contents of the theoretical part as well as the practical part, how the two parts fit together, where to start and where to end, and the exact level of detail to which the different topics should be instructed, practiced and learned. The theoretical training should be oriented towards the practical driving. The traditional content of traffic rules and regulations, road signs, etc. must be supplemented by a marked extension of topics on risk factors, etc., the necessary background for which must be compiled from analysis of the accident statistics based on police reports, daily experience from the traffic, systematic observations of road user behavior, road and vehicle inspections, literature studies, etc. A modern learner driver’s handbook should be compiled, to be used by both the driving schools and the learner drivers who are trained privately. The practical driver training must include several hours of driving in ordinary traffic. The practical
driving test should be specified to the extent this is necessary to ensure that the candidates’ performances will be checked in all relevant issues of the program, and the test should be conducted in ordinary traffic. Training courses for drivers of heavy trucks and buses must be developed. Certain minimum requirements should be introduced regarding the driving instructors and the examiners, to ensure at least a certain minimum level. A gradual rising of the minimum level over a certain time can be considered. The behavior of Lebanese drivers is a cause for great concern. It is necessary to increase enforcement of fundamental rules and regulations, to increase the fines for traffic offences and to revoke driving licenses for at least three months for serious offences, longer time for repeated serious offences. Serious offences should include red light driving, driving in the wrong direction on a one-way street or motorway, speeding more than 20 km/h over the limit, and drink and/or drug driving. A driver having his or her license revoked should be required to have a number of lessons at a driving school and then pass the licensing test again. A demerit points system may also be considered, that could end with total disqualification of the driver and no renewal of the license.