

Creating Safe Journeys to Access Schools and Public Spaces: The Samoa Experience

Road Safety Capacity Building Program

Webinar Series – 7th July 2026

Protecting Lives: Children, Youth and Vulnerable Road Users within the Safe System

Samoa's Case Study focus on **"Using Data, Safe Speeds and Infrastructure Improvements to Create Safer Journeys for Children and Vulnerable Road Users"**

Presenter: **Fa'aofonuu Christina Wanganui**

Principal Strategic Planning Officer,

Land Transport Division,

Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure (MWTI), SAMOA.



Samoa's Road Safety Vision

Samoa National Action Plan for Road Safety 2021–2030 (SNAP)

Vision: Towards a Safe System where no loss of life or serious injury on Samoa's roads is acceptable

National Target:

- 50% reduction in road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030.
- Long-term aspiration of zero fatalities and serious injuries by 2050



Safe System Pillars

1. Road Safety Management
2. Safe Roads and Mobility
3. Safe Vehicles
4. Safe Road Users
5. Post-Crash Response
6. Safe Speeds
7. Access for All

These pillars place particular emphasis on children, pedestrians, people with disabilities, the elderly and public transport users



Why Focus on Children and Vulnerable Road Users?

Samoa's Road Safety Challenges

Children and vulnerable road users frequently interact with roads:

- Walking to school.
- Crossing roads near schools, churches and villages.
- Using public buses.
- Travelling as passengers in family vehicles.
- People living with disabilities accessing services and public facilities.

Safe System Principle

Human beings make mistakes, but the road system should be designed so mistakes do not result in death or serious injury.



Road Safety Data – A Foundation for Action

Introduction of the DRIVER/National Crash Database System

One of Samoa's most significant initiatives is the development of a:

National Crash Database System (DRIVER)

SNAP identifies the DRIVER system as a priority activity to:

- Collect accurate crash information.
- Geolocate crash sites.
- Identify high-risk locations.
- Support evidence-based decision making.
- Guide infrastructure investment and speed management



Progress to date:

- DRIVER project completed (2024-2025).
- Continuous sharing of data from MOP to MWTI for input to the DRIVER (operationalize)
- Training with stakeholders on how to use the system
- Shared information platform for relevant stakeholders

Using Crash Data to Protect Children

How DRIVER Supports Child Road Safety

Crash data is expected to be used to:

- Identify school routes with elevated crash risk
- Locate pedestrian crash hotspots
- Prioritize infrastructure improvements
- Support safer speed zone decisions
- Inform public awareness campaigns
- Guide the National Road Safety Committee's interventions

Outcome:

Moving away from reactive responses towards proactive and evidence-based road safety planning



Safer School Zones and Public Spaces

Infrastructure Initiatives Under SNAP

Samoa is implementing a range of Safe Roads and Mobility measures:

- New pedestrian protection platforms.
- Improved road signage.
- Enhanced line marking.
- Improved street lighting.
- Footpath construction.
- Bus bay installation.
- Black Spot Program targeting high-risk locations

Priority:

Protect pedestrians, particularly:

- School children.
- Elderly persons.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Public transport users.



Safer Speeds Around Schools

School Zone Speed Management

SNAP specifically promotes:

- Reduced speed limits near schools.
- Lower speeds near churches.
- Safer speeds around community centers.
- Infrastructure treatments that reduce vehicle speeds

Key Target

Implementation of:

30 km/h or 40 km/h
limits in areas with high
pedestrian activity

This reflects global Safe
System practice that
recognizes pedestrians
are significantly more
likely to survive a
collision at lower vehicle
speeds.



Road Safety Education for Schools

Building a Road Safety Culture

SNAP includes a dedicated program to develop school-based road safety education through collaboration between:

- Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC)
- Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)
- Land Transport Authority (LTA)
- Ministry of Police and Prisons (MOPP)
- Ministry of Works, Transport & Infrastructure (MWTI)

Focus Areas

- Safe road crossing.
 - Bus safety.
 - Seat belt use.
 - Helmet use.
 - Cycling safety.
- Young driver awareness.

Road safety education is being aligned with evidence emerging from crash database analysis.



Access for All – Protecting Vulnerable Persons

Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

A unique feature of Samoa's SNAP is Pillar 7: *Access for All*

Key initiatives include:

- Improving pedestrian accessibility.
- Working with Nuanua O Le Alofa (NOLA).
- Accessibility planning across Apia.
- Safer public transport access.
- Disability awareness programs.
- Improved signage and mobility infrastructure.

Objective

Ensure every Samoan can safely access:

- Schools.
- Health facilities.
- Government services.
- Public spaces.



Multi-Agency Road Safety Governance

Whole-of-Government Approach

Road safety is coordinated through:

- National Road Safety Committee (NRSC)
- Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure (Lead Agency)
- Land Transport Authority (LTA)
- Ministry of Police and Prisons (MOPP)
- Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC)
- Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)
- Samoa Fire and Emergency Services Authority (SFESA)
- Community stakeholders.

Importance
No single
agency can
deliver child
road safety
alone.



Key Lessons from Samoa

- Good data drives good decisions
- Protecting children requires safer roads and safer speeds together
- School safety must be integrated into national road safety planning
- Accessibility and inclusion should be considered alongside road safety
- Strong partnerships are essential for sustainable results



Future Priorities – Samoa's Next Steps

- Expand use of DRIVER crash database analytics.
- Strengthen school-focused road safety interventions.
- Continue black spot treatments.
- Expand pedestrian infrastructure.
- Enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Strengthen road safety education in schools.
- Continue implementation of SNAP 2021–2030



Creating Safe Journeys for Every Samoan

Every child should be able to travel safely to school. Every vulnerable road user should be able to access public spaces safely. Through data-driven decision making, safer infrastructure, safer speeds and strong partnerships, Samoa is working towards a road transport system that protects all road users

FA'AFETAI LAVA !



References



1. Samoa National Action Plan for Road Safety 2021–2030 (Draft), Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure.
2. World Bank Global Road Safety Facility (GRSF), Road Safety Management Capacity Assessment for Samoa. (Referenced within SNAP).
3. Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030. (Referenced within SNAP).
4. Samoa National Road Safety Committee documentation and DRIVER Crash Database implementation activities.

