

NEPAL

ROAD SAFETY PROFILE

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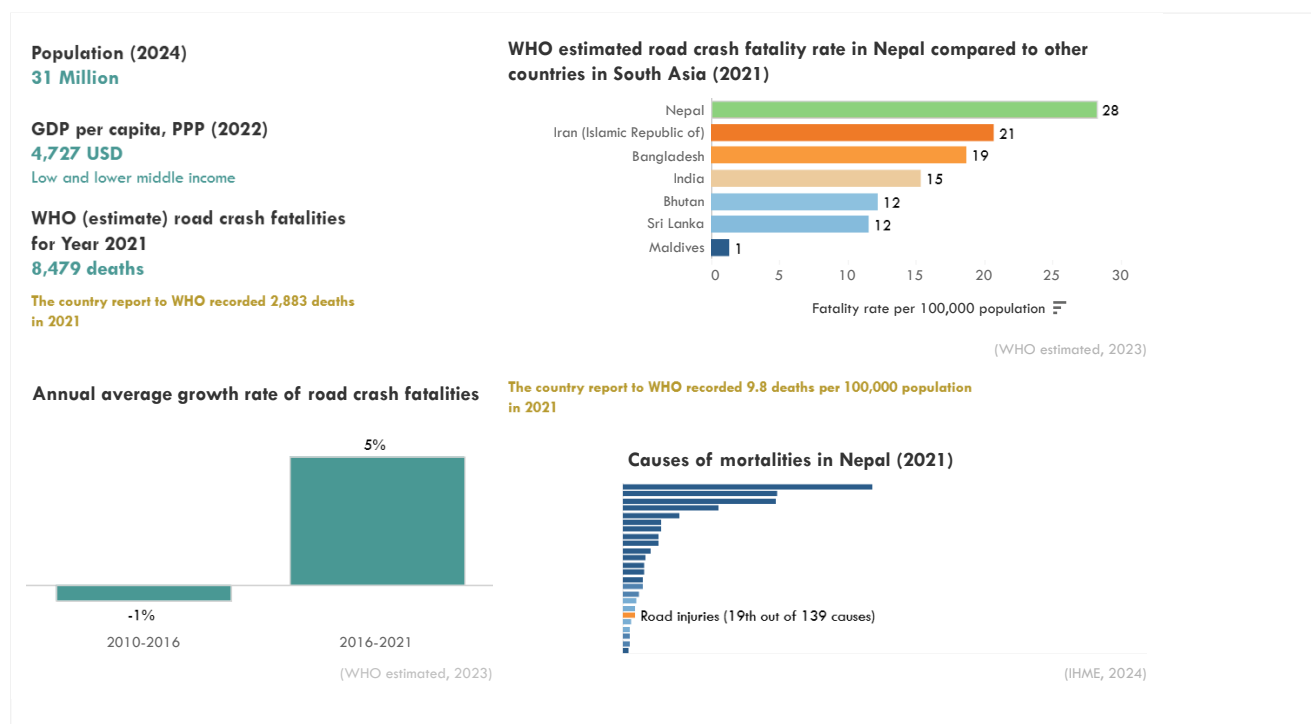


The ATO road safety profiles offer insights into the road safety in 37 Asia-Pacific countries by utilizing road safety related data from various sources and policy information extracted from a range of documents.

These road safety profiles were developed by the Asian Transport Observatory in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO) and the International Road Federation (IRF). This September 2025 edition updates the February 2025 release—prepared for the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Marrakech—to inform discussions at the Asia-Pacific Regional Road Safety Conference in Manila.

Country Summary

Road safety in Nepal presents a significant challenge. In 2021, it was estimated about 8 thousand fatalities in Nepal due to road crashes (WHO), representing a fatality rate of 28.2 per 100,000 population. Road crash injuries accounted for 0.9% of all deaths in Nepal in 2021.



A significant challenge in understanding the full scope of the problem is the discrepancy in reported data. For 2021 and 2022, official country statistics and the Global Burden of Disease report similar figures of about 2 thousand fatalities, significantly lower than the WHO estimate of 8 thousand. This discrepancy highlights the need for improved data collection and reporting mechanisms to assess the road safety situation accurately.

Road crash fatality rate, by source

WHO (estimate) for Year 2021

28.2 per 100,000 population

WHO (country-report) for Year 2021

9.8 per 100,000 population

Country official statistics for Year 2021

6.6 per 100,000 population

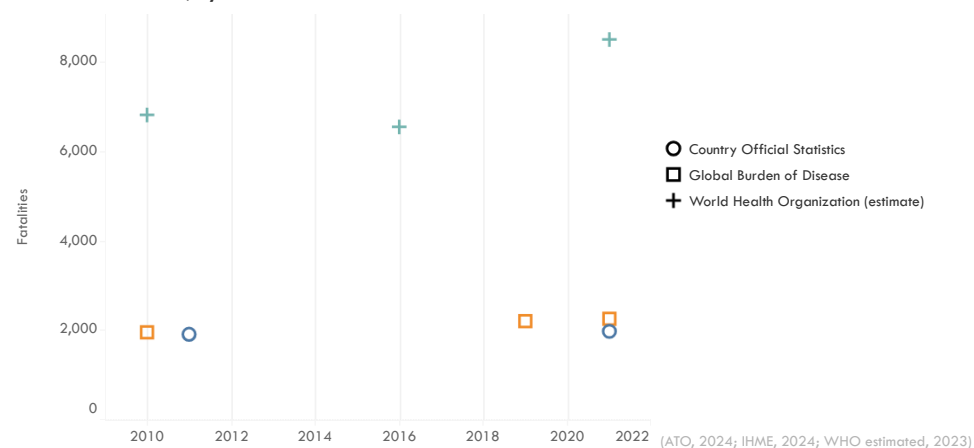
GBD estimate for Year 2021

7.5 per 100,000 population

(WHO estimated, 2023)

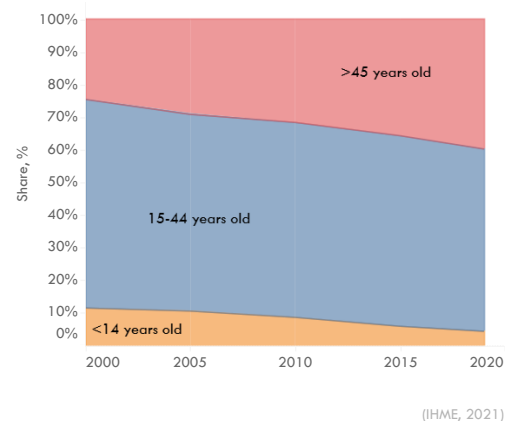
Every 24 minutes, someone dies in a road crash in Nepal

Road crash fatalities, by source

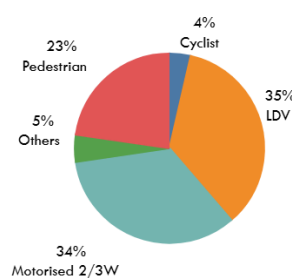


Disaggregated data reveals essential insights into the demographics of road crash victims. The share of female fatalities increased slightly from 28% to 29% between 2010 and 2021, exceeding the Asia-Pacific average of 23%. The combined share of minors (<14 years) and seniors (>65 years) in fatalities also increased from 41% to 43% between 2015 and 2019, again higher than the Asia-Pacific average. Pedestrians and bicyclists constitute a significant vulnerable road user group, representing 27% of fatalities in 2021, slightly lower than the Asia-Pacific average of 31%.

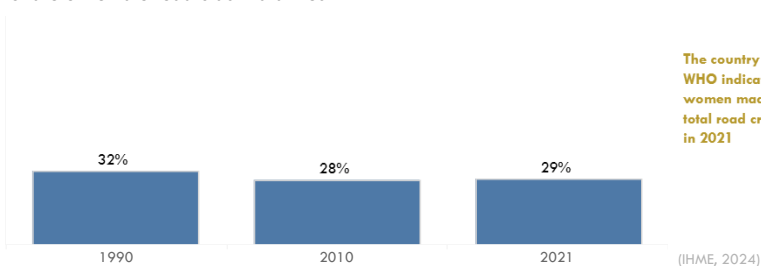
Road crash fatalities, share by age group



Road crash fatalities, share by road user

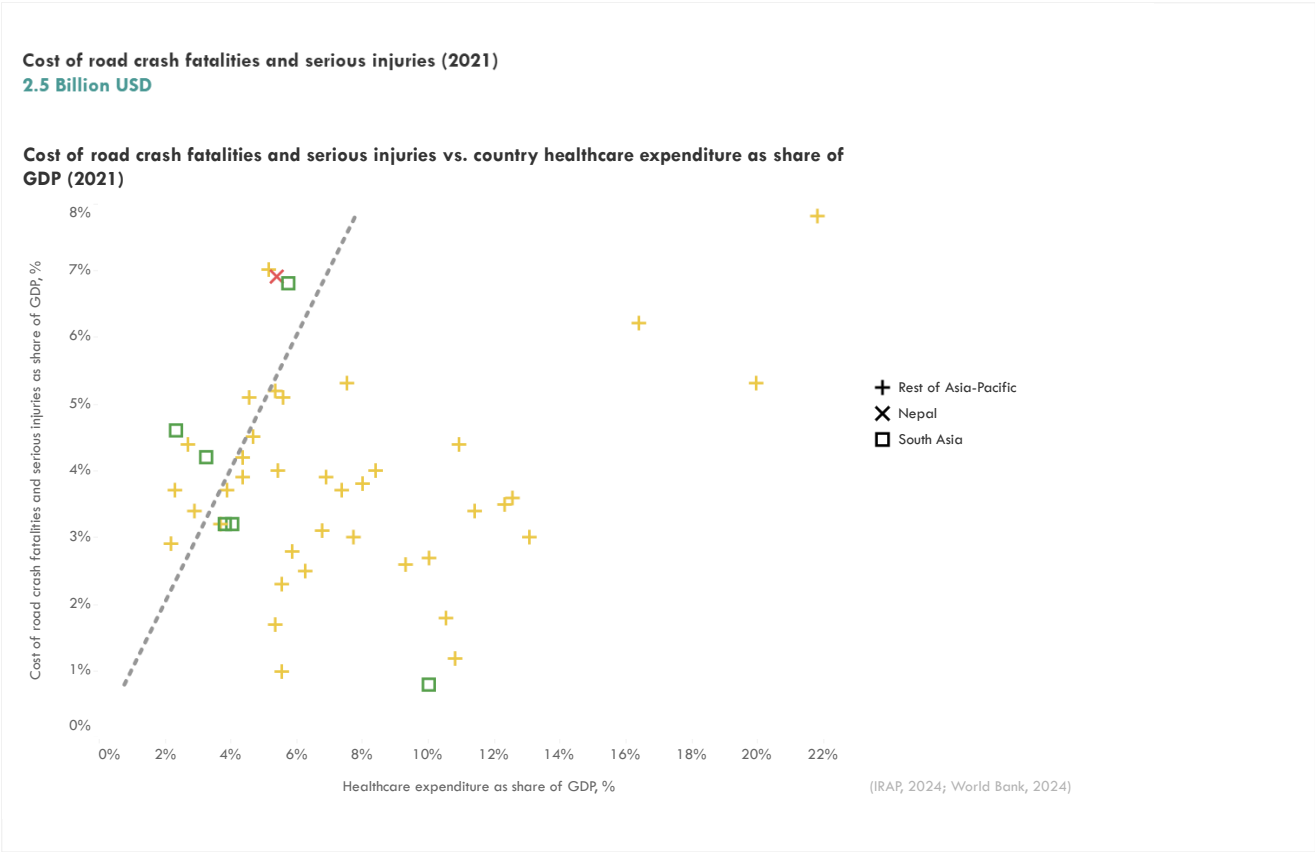


Share of female road crash fatalities

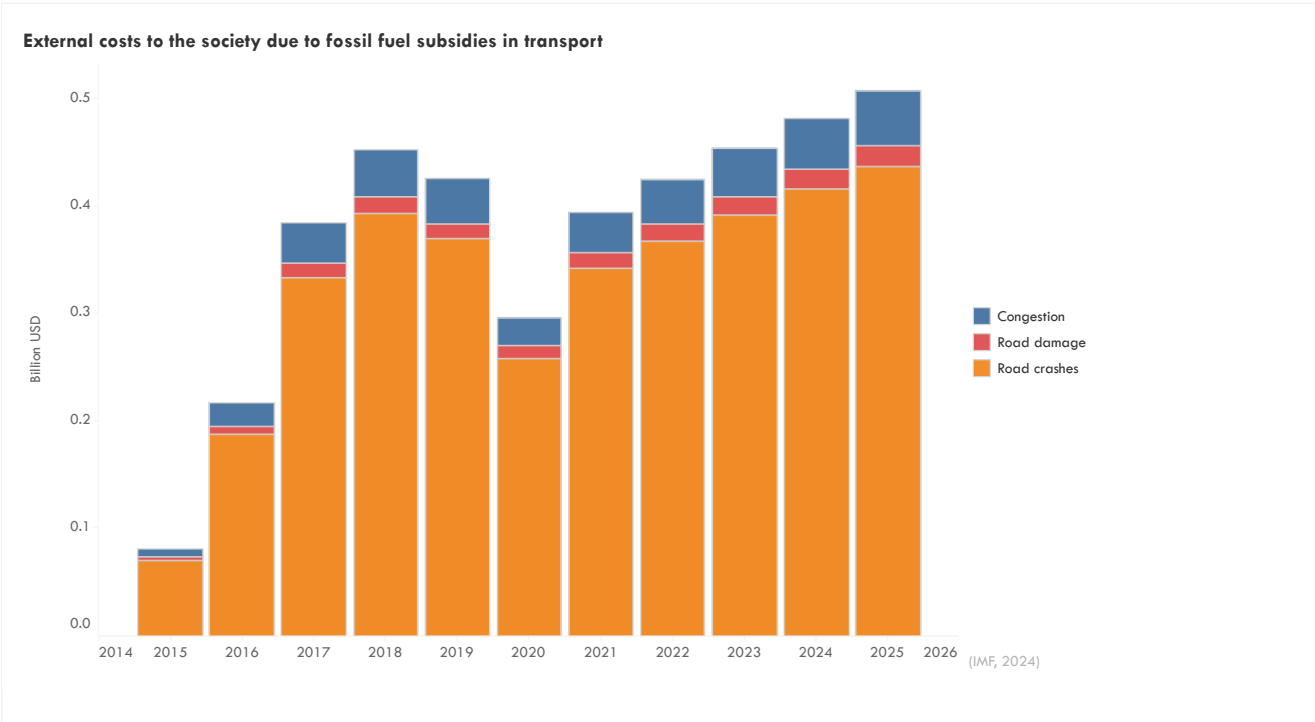


The country report to WHO indicates that women made up 18% of total road crashes deaths in 2021

The economic burden of road crashes in Nepal is substantial. Fatalities and serious injuries cost an estimated 3 billion USD in 2021, equivalent to roughly 7% of Nepal's GDP. This surpasses the country's healthcare expenditure of 5.4% of GDP in the same year.

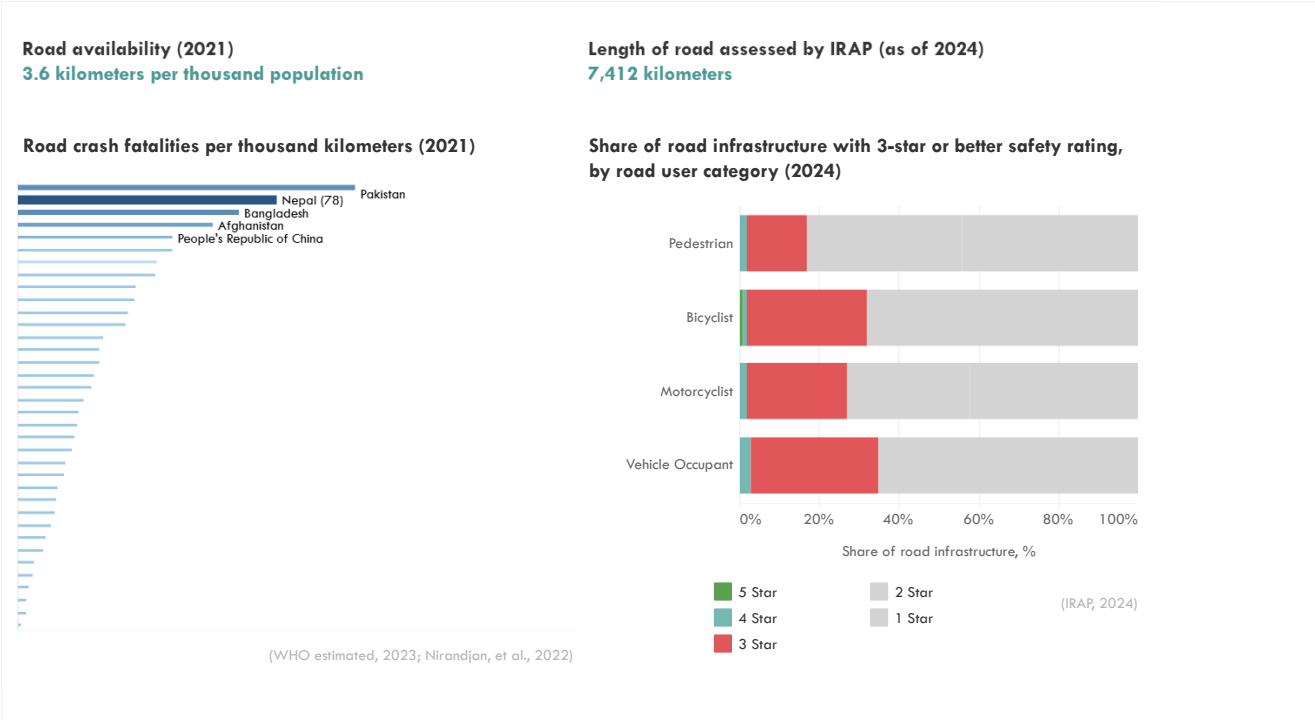


Road crashes also contribute significantly to the implicit costs of fossil fuel subsidies in transport, accounting for approximately 87% of the total. Investing in road safety can yield significant economic benefits. IRAP estimates that an annual investment of 134 million USD (0.4% of Nepal's GDP) could save around 3 thousand lives annually.



The quality of road infrastructure plays a crucial role in road safety. As of 2024, only 17% and 32% of Nepal's roads have a 3-star or better IRAP rating for pedestrians and bicyclists, respectively. While these figures are comparable to the Asia-Pacific averages, there's still significant room for improvement. For vehicle occupants, at least 35% of the road infrastructure has a 3-star or better rating, while only 27% achieve this rating for motorcyclists, highlighting a disparity in safety

standards for different road user groups. Nepal had high fatality rate per road infrastructure, about 78 fatalities per thousand kilometers of road.

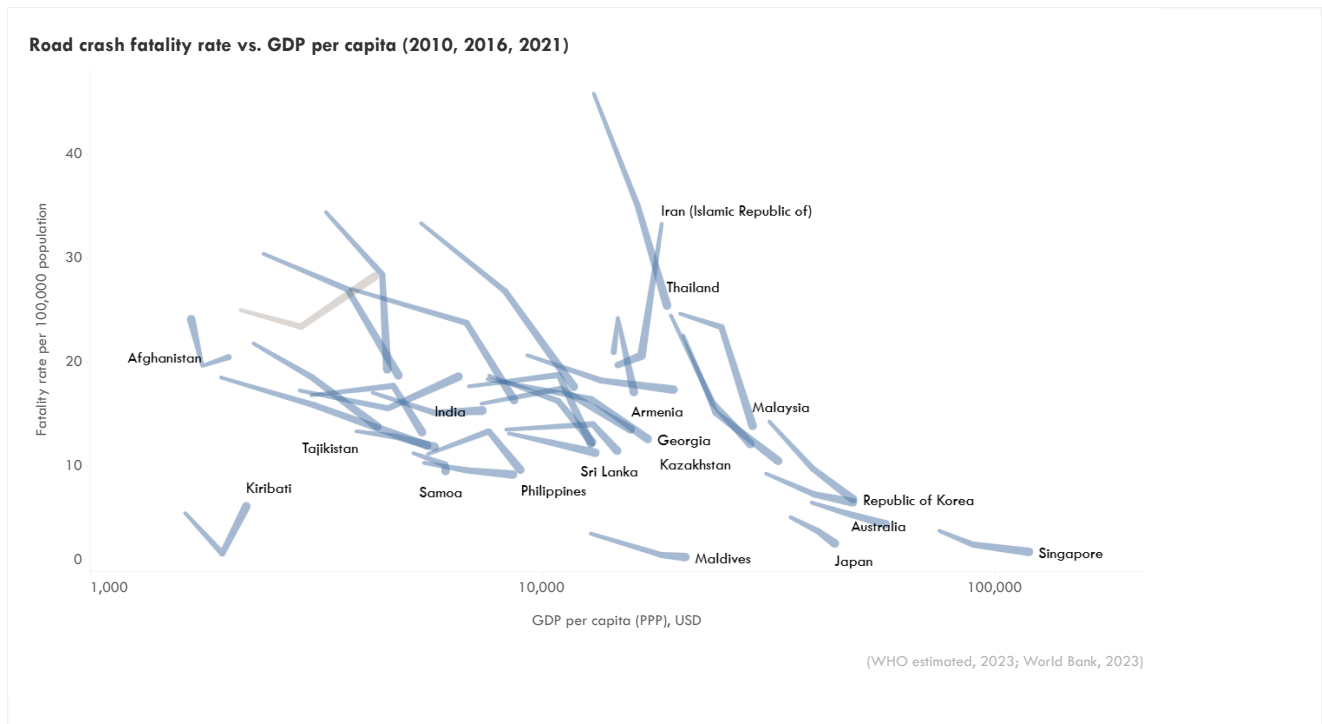


Data on vehicle fleet in Nepal is not available to understand the dynamics of motorization and its impact on road safety.



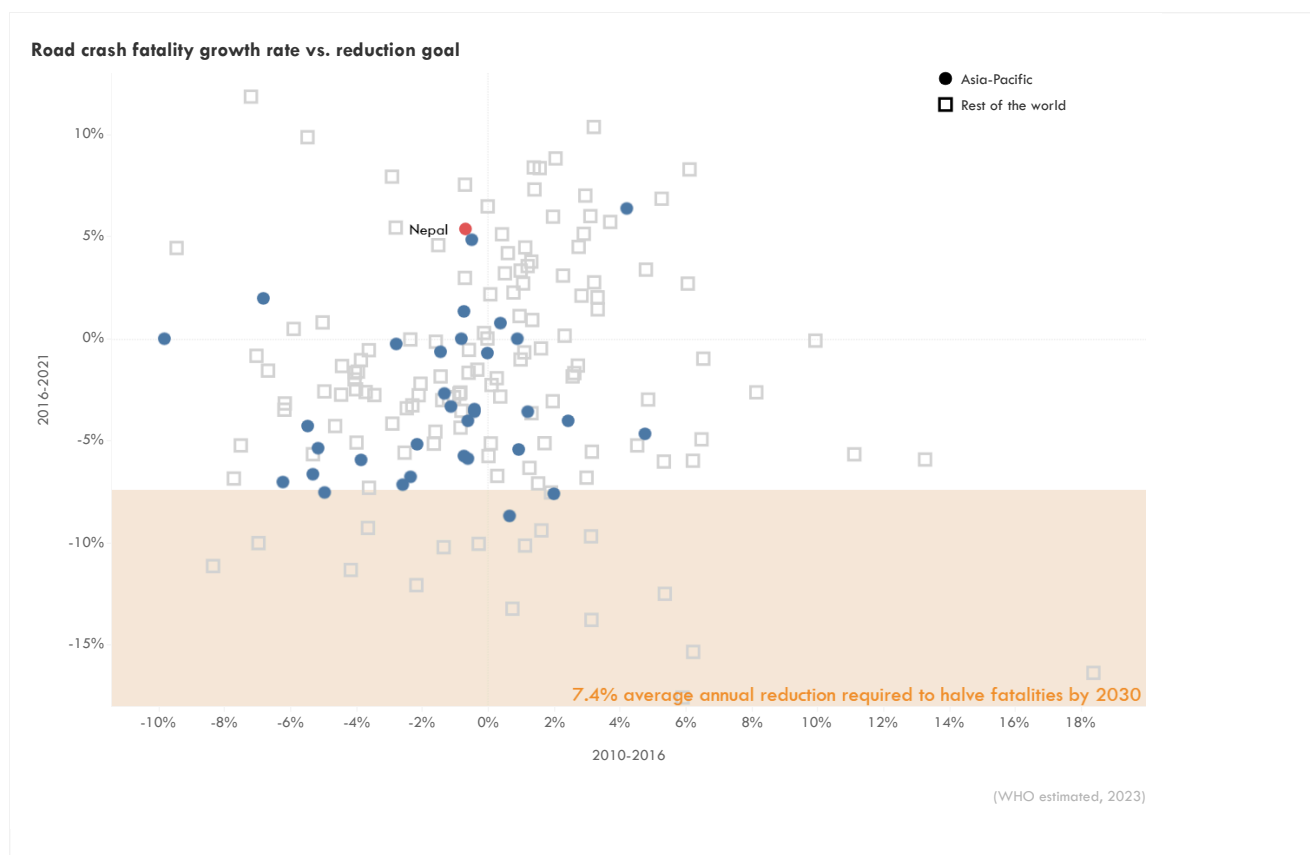
Benchmarking

Benchmarking Nepal's road safety performance against regional and global averages reveals significant disparities. Nepal's fatality rate starkly contrasts with the Asia-Pacific average of 15.2 and the South Asia average of approximately 16.1 for the same year. The trend is also concerning, with WHO estimating a 13% increase in fatalities per 100,000 population between 2010 and 2021, while the Asia-Pacific and South Asia regions saw improvements. This highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions and a renewed focus on road safety.



Can Asia meet the 2030 target of halving fatalities?

- **Urgent action needed to reduce road fatalities** The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 aims to cut road fatalities in half by 2030. An annual reduction of at least 7.4% is necessary to achieve this.
- **Asia-Pacific region falling behind** Despite reaching a peak in road crash fatalities, the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to meet the 2030 goal. The average annual reduction in deaths between 2016 and 2021 was only 0.6%, far below the required rate.
- **Varying progress across Asia** Using the 2016-2021 road crash fatality growth rate as a basis for estimates until 2030:
 - Only 3 Asian countries are projected to achieve the 50% reduction target by 2030.
 - 18 Asian countries are expected to reduce fatalities by at least 25%.
 - Worryingly, 7 Asian countries will continue to increase road fatalities, moving further away from the target.
- In Nepal, road crash fatalities increased by approximately 5.4% per year between 2016 and 2021. If this pattern persists, the gap between current trends and the 2030 target will only widen



Policy Landscape

Despite the challenges, Nepal has taken steps to address road safety. The Nepal Road Safety Action Plan (2021-2030), published in 2022, provides a framework for improving road safety. Other policy documents, such as the National Sustainable Transport Strategy and the National Transport Policy, indirectly contribute to road safety. However, the lack of specific road safety targets is a key gap. While Nepal has targets related to infrastructure, public transport, and transport finance, specific, measurable targets for road safety are crucial for tracking progress and ensuring accountability.

Targets to reduce road crash fatalities or injuries		Target year	Document	Year published
No data				
Measure type	Other targets with indirect benefits to road safety	Target year	Document	Year published
General infrastructure improvements	Families with access to transportation within the distance of 30 minutes = 95 (baseline = 82 (2018/19))	2024	The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24)	2020
General public transport	By 2025, ensure at least three provinces operate electric public transport,	2025	Second Nationally Determined Contribution	2020
General transport finance	Transportation, storage and communication Gross Domestic Product and sector-wise value addition target (In 10 million rupees) = 37,122 (baseline 2018/19 = 22,135) Economic growth rate and sector-wise value addition target = 10.8% (baseline 2018/19 = 5.9%) Sector-wise contribution to the gross domestic product = 7.7% (baseline 2018/19 = 7.2%) Incremental capital-output ratio and total investment (At the constant prices of FY 2018/19) (In 10 million rupees) = 45740	2024	The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24)	2020

Policy measures with indirect benefit to road safety



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