

SECTION

2

CIVIC IDEALS AND
PRACTICES



Law and Order in the Society

Civic ideals and practices

INTRODUCTION

In this section, we shall examine road safety in the Ghanaian society. Road safety includes making sure we follow the rules of the road like paying attention to traffic signals and speed limits, wearing our seat belts and helmets, and being aware of our surroundings. Of course, it is always important to be polite and respectful to other riders, walkers, and bikers we see on the road.

It is important for road users in Ghana to respect each other and obey the rules. According to the National Road Safety Authority (NRSA), in 2023 alone, as many as 2,276 persons were killed in 14,135 reported road accidents involving 23,998 vehicles. There is therefore the need to take this section very seriously so you will become a responsible road user.

At the end of the section, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning and purpose of road safety in the Ghanaian society.
- The causes of road accidents, their socio-economic implications and strategies to minimise them in Ghana
- Road signs and markings and their implications for road safety in Ghana
- Discuss the institutions responsible for maintaining road safety, the challenges they face and how these challenges can be addressed.

Key Ideas

- Road accidents are causing a big developmental challenge for Ghana. They are responsible for the loss of lives of thousands of people every year.
- Poor roads, poor maintenance and driver indiscipline are some of the causes of road accidents in the country.
- Some institutions responsible for road safety in Ghana include Motor Traffic and Transport Department (MTTD), Driver Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and National Road Safety Authority (NRSA).

MEANING AND PURPOSE OF ROAD SAFETY IN GHANAIAN SOCIETY

Dear reader, we believe this is not the first time you have heard of the term road safety. Can you think of its meaning? **Road safety** refers to the measures and strategies that are taken to prevent accidents, injuries, and fatalities on the roads.

Road safety involves implementing safety rules, guidelines, and best practices to ensure that everyone is safe on the road.

It also involves creating awareness, campaigns, and education programmes, and strengthening road infrastructure, including building safe roads, sidewalks, speed bumps, and traffic lights.

Simply put, road safety is about staying safe walking along the road or when you are on the road.

The purpose of road safety campaigns is to promote responsible and sustainable movement, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the quality of life of those who use the road. In short, road safety aims to protect human lives and minimise the risks associated with the use of roads.

Activity 2.1

1. Have you noticed road safety measures in your community? Discuss some locations in your community that has road safety infrastructure.
2. Have you observed how road users respond to these safety measures?

Write Your Answers

Importance of road safety in Ghana

The purpose of road safety campaigns is to promote responsible and sustainable mobility, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the quality of life of road users. This makes road safety important. Below are some of the importance of road safety:

It saves lives

Road accidents can result in deaths, injuries, and disabilities. The implementation of safety measures will go a long way to reduce accidents on our roads. Road safety education, awareness campaigns, and safety measures can help prevent these accidents and fatalities on the road.

It reduces injuries

Road safety campaigns create awareness of safe driving practices like the wearing of seatbelts, paying attention to traffic signals and maintaining the required speed limit. Road users are also advised not to use mobile phones while on the road. Proper road design, maintenance and signage on the road also improve road safety.

It prevents traffic congestion

Accidents caused by irresponsible behaviours on the road can result in traffic congestion and affect the flow of traffic. Road safety measures can prevent accidents and reduce traffic congestion.

It improves the economy

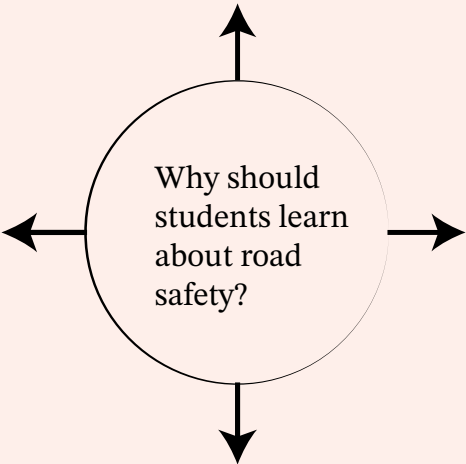
Road accidents have serious economic effects such as medical expenses, property damage and loss of productivity due to injuries affecting individuals' families. With fewer accidents, there will be less pressure on healthcare systems. The country's economy will also benefit from increased productivity when people are able to go to work and return home safely.

It promotes sustainable mobility

Sustainable mobility refers to the use of transportation systems and modes that are environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically viable. This improves public health and enhances social and economic opportunities. Road safety education promotes awareness of environmentally friendly and sustainable modes of transportation, such as cycling, walking, and using public transport.

Activity 2.2

Discuss four reasons road safety education should be part of your community. Write each reason on the arrow in the compass below:



Activity 2.3

What are the key benefits of safer driving in the Ghanaian society? Complete the table below.

Key reason	Explanation
Sustainability	
Economy	
Congestion	
Life saving	
Reducing injuries	

Extended task

Find an example of a common traffic accident spot in your local area. How could road safety be improved there? How would it improve the wider community if road safety there was improved?

Activity 2.4

Design a multimedia campaign to promote road safety in Ghana. It should be aimed at young people, encouraging them to be responsible road users.

Use the planning template below to plan the campaign.

Positive reasons for road safety	Type of advertising (social media/ TV/ radio/ poster)	Why have you chosen this type of advertising?

Present your campaign to your class. If you have access to ICT resources, consider using them.

THE CAUSES OF ROAD ACCIDENTS, THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS AND STRATEGIES TO MINIMISE THEM IN GHANA

Causes of Road Accidents in Ghana

Several reasons contribute to road accidents in Ghana. They include:

a. Inadequate or poor driving

Drivers need to undergo proper training and education to help reduce the number of accidents on the roads. By improving their driving skills and knowledge of traffic

laws, drivers can become more confident and safer on the road. This benefits the drivers and all other road users who share the same space.

b. Mobile phone usage

Road users, who talk on the phone or text while driving, are distracted from the road. It is important to recognise the risks associated with distracted driving. This can lead to dangerous mistakes with severe consequences. These consequences may include loss of life, as well as a depletion of other valuable resources.

c. Broken down vehicles on roads

It is important to acknowledge that broken down vehicles parked on roads can lead to dangerous accidents. Since some of these vehicles are mostly heavy-duty vehicles, towing them from the road could be delayed. Due to this, unsuspected drivers ran into them, especially during the night, causing fatal accidents. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain vehicles regularly to prevent breakdowns and ensure they are in good condition.

d. Disregarding traffic rules and road signs

Traffic rules and road signs are put in place to regulate and direct traffic flow, ensuring the safety of road users. When drivers fail to obey these rules and signs it can lead to confusion, misunderstandings, and accidents. For instance, running a red light or failing to stop at a stop sign can result in collisions with other vehicles or pedestrians. Drivers must follow traffic rules and pay attention to road signs to prevent accidents and promote road safety.

e. Overloading vehicles

It is important to note that overloading vehicles can lead to dangerous accidents. This is because vehicles carrying excessive weight are less stable and more prone to accidents.

Overloading can also lead to damaged roads and bridges, which can be costly to repair. It is crucial to adhere to the weight restrictions and ensure vehicles are not overloaded.



Fig 2.1 A picture of an overloaded vehicle

f. Excessive speeding

When road users, such as drivers and motorcyclists, encounter obstacles while travelling at a high speed, they may lose control of their vehicles. This can lead to serious accidents and injuries. As such, all road users must exercise caution and adhere to speed limits to ensure safety for themselves and others on the road.

g. Drunk driving

The consumption of alcohol impairs an individual's judgment and reaction time, which can result in severe consequences on the road. The impaired driver puts their own life at risk and endangers other road users, including pedestrians and passengers in other vehicles.

h. Poor conditions of roads

Bad roads and a lack of proper road signage increase the risk of accidents. These accidents can result in loss of life, physical injuries, and property damage, leading to significant costs to individuals, families, and the society.



Fig 2.2 A picture of a bad road

Activity 2.5

Have a discussion with your classmates on the main causes of accidents in your communities. Write some conclusions and suggestions in the box below:

Cause of accidents	How is this a cause of accidents?	How could this be reduced as a risk by drivers?

Activity 2.6

Thinking about the main causes of accidents that you have learned about so far, which ones apply the most to your area? Why do you think that this might be the case? How do you think community leaders can educate drivers on the causes of road accidents in your area?

Write your notes here

Activity 2.7

Discuss a road accident that has been reported in the news. This could be from your area or from the news.

1. What were the causes of the accident?
2. What can we learn from it as a group of young Ghanaians?

Notes from discussion**Activity 2.8: Case Study**

At age 15, Kwame was not supposed to ride a motorbike but when his parents were not home, he decided to ride to school on his dad's bike. He was involved in a serious accident with head injuries because he did not wear a helmet.

Imagine you were a police officer at post and this case was reported to you.

1. How would you hope to prevent future tragedies like this from happening again?
2. Who would you reach out to for assistance to prevent future accidents such as this?

Write your responses here

Socio-economic Implications of Road Accidents in Ghana

Dear reader, do you know road accidents have a lot of negative effects on both our social and economic lives as Ghanaians? Let us take time to discuss some of them below.

a. Loss of lives

Losing a loved one in a fatal accident is a devastating experience that impacts the family as well as the entire community. The emotional toll of such an incident is immeasurable, as families grieve and struggle to come to terms with their loss.

The economic impact of these accidents is also significant as the loss of human capital means, the community is deprived of individuals who could have contributed to its growth and development.

b. Injuries and disabilities

Many survivors of road accidents in Ghana suffer from severe injuries and disabilities, ranging from broken bones to traumatic brain injuries. These injuries can have long-lasting physical, emotional, and financial impacts on individuals and their families.



Fig 2.3 Showing victims of accidents on admission

c. High cost of healthcare

Treating accident victims consumes resources and impacts healthcare systems. The resources required to provide adequate medical care to accident victims can strain healthcare systems and impact the availability and quality of healthcare services for other patients. Additionally, the financial burden of medical treatment can have a ripple effect on the standard of living for the accident victim and their family members, potentially leading to financial hardships and social instability.

d. Loss of productivity

It has been observed that injuries can result in the loss of working days, which eventually affect productivity and economic growth. When workers are injured, they are unable to perform their duties effectively and this can lead to delays in the completion of tasks or even a complete shutdown of operations.

e. Vehicles and infrastructural damage

Road accidents often cause damage to vehicles and infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and traffic signals. The cost of repairing this infrastructure adds to the economic burden of road accidents and can lead to troubles in transportation and commerce.



Fig 2.4 An accident scene

f. Traffic congestion

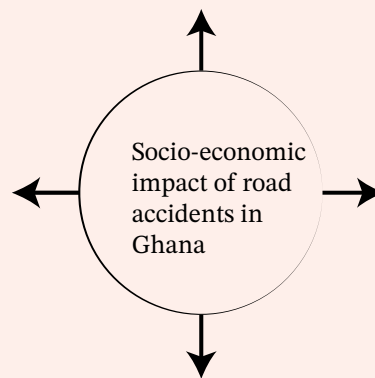
Accidents often lead to traffic congestion, especially on our major roads and highways. This does not only cause problems for travellers but also increases the risk of additional accidents due to overcrowded roadways.



Fig 2.5 Traffic congestion in Accra

Activity 2.9

Use the diagram below to make notes on the socio-economic impact of road accidents in Ghana. Make sure you include as much detail as possible and add explanations and evaluations of the significance of the impact.



Activity 2.10

Which of the impacts in activity 2.9 causes the most damage to the Ghanaian society and its economy? Why do you think so?

Strategies to Minimise Road Accidents

Road accidents are a grave issue that affect many people each year. However, understanding how to minimise these accidents is important for everyone, including young people like you. Here are some of the strategies to help make our roads safer.

a. Obedience to road signs

The first measure to reduce road accidents is to encourage individuals to obey the rules and regulations on the roads. If everyone follows the set guidelines, the number of accidents that occur on our roads will decrease significantly.

b. Improvement in road infrastructure

Investing in safe roads, efficient signalling systems, and pedestrian-friendly zones can significantly improve road infrastructure. Such improvements would lead to a reduction in road accidents, making the roads safer for everyone. Pedestrian-friendly zones would encourage more people to walk, promoting physical fitness and reducing pollution levels. At the same time, efficient signalling systems would help ease traffic congestion, leading to faster and more reliable transportation for commuters.

c. Strict enforcement of traffic laws

Consistent enforcement of traffic regulations sends a message that road safety is a priority. Over time, this can help create a culture of compliance where motorists understand the importance of following the rules of the road, including abstaining from using mobile phones while driving. When laws are strictly enforced, it raises public awareness about the punishment for certain behaviours and makes road users careful. One example of this is the National Road Safety Authority (NRSA) Act, 2019 (Act 993). This established the National Road Safety Authority as a statutory body with a mandate to regulate, coordinate, and promote road safety. The act gives the NRSA the authority to:

- i. Impose fines and sanctions.
- ii. Develop and enforce road safety standards.
- iii. Collaborate with other agencies to improve road safety.

d. Public education/Awareness creation

Road safety campaigns must be organised regularly to create awareness among pedestrians, drivers, and passengers. These awareness campaigns play a key role in promoting road safety. These initiatives help educate people about the risks and best practices associated with driving, walking, and being a passenger. Regular campaigns can remind individuals to stay vigilant, follow traffic rules, and respect each other on the road. They also provide valuable information on how to handle emergencies and promote a culture of responsibility among all road users. The NRSA has produced some campaigns. Have you heard any of them?

- i. **Bloom Safety Campaign:** Launched in June 2023, this campaign promotes the use of helmets while riding bicycles and motorcycles. It aims to save lives and reduce the risk of injury.
- ii. **Stay Alive Ghana Campaign:** Introduced during the UN Global Road Safety Week, this campaign encourages motorists to drive within the speed limits, wear seat belts, and avoid driving under the influence of alcohol.
- iii. **Arrive Alive Campaign:** Organised by the Ministry of Transport and NRSA, this campaign focuses on reducing road traffic fatalities. Themes include the importance of using pedestrian crossings, adhering to speed limits, and avoiding distractions while driving.

e. Construction of cyclist and pedestrian pathways

It is important to consider the needs of all individuals when constructing roads. One crucial aspect to keep in mind is the provision of cyclists and pedestrian walkways. To ensure the safety and convenience of all commuters, these pathways must be included in the planning and construction process. Failure to do so could hinder accessibility of cyclists and pedestrians and will force them to use the main roads. It is important for social studies to advocate for the construction of roads that cater to the needs of all road users. One example of an increased investment in cycle ways is the Accra Bicycle Network. The Accra Bicycle Network is an initiative to create a more bike-friendly environment in Ghana's capital city. The project is part of the broader effort by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) and other stakeholders to develop sustainable urban transport solutions. The network includes dedicated bike lanes on major roads within Accra to ensure safe and convenient cycling. These lanes are marked and separated from vehicle traffic to enhance cyclist safety.

Activity 2.11

Think about one of the main behaviours that cause road accidents and one of the main impacts of such accidents. Produce a solution on how these behaviours can be changed and present it to your class.

Use the table below to plan your project. When you present, think about using ICT tools, verbal presentations, and posters.

Project Planning

Which behaviours will you address and why?

What is the main impact of such behaviours and why?

What strategies will you use to minimise the occurrence of such accidents?

What strategies will you use to minimise the impact of road accidents?

ROAD /TRAFFIC SIGNS AND MARKINGS IN GHANA

Dear reader, as we have indicated earlier, road safety is aimed at protecting the lives of road users be it motorists, passengers, pedestrians, or cyclists. For this goal to be achieved, authorities have designed some signs, markings, and symbols to regulate, educate and warn all road users. These are what we refer to as road signs or traffic signs. What then are road signs?

Road signs are signs placed on the road, by the road or on top of the road to give instructions or provide information to road users to promote road safety. Examples of road signs include road markings, traffic lights, speed limits and directional signs.

We believe you have seen some of these road signs in your community or outside your community whilst travelling. These road signs serve different purposes on our roads and are made with specific colours and shapes. Yes! every road sign has a specific colour associated with it. All these colours have their meanings to the road user and all road users including you need to know and understand them to promote road safety in our communities. Below are some of the colours used in road signs and their meanings.

Red

Red road signs refer to situations where you must stop or yield. All stop signs and yield signs use the colour red, but other signs such as do not enter, and wrong way signs can also use red colouring.

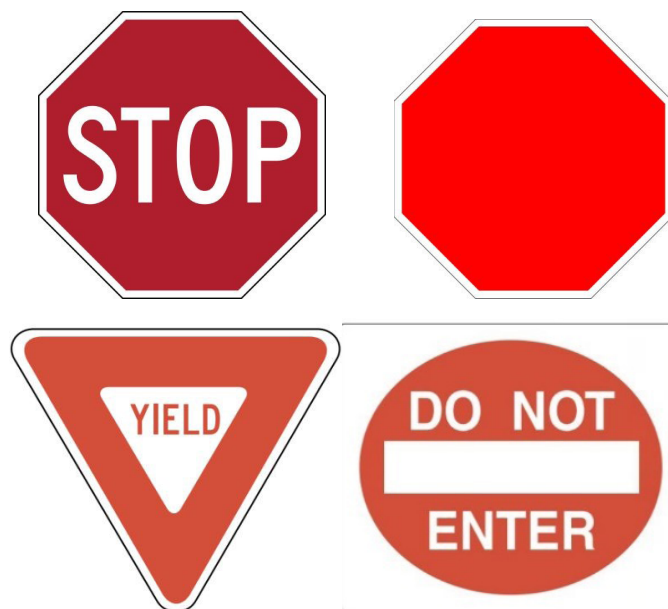


Fig. 2.6: Red Road signs

Green

Green road signs are directional signs. This colour is used for things like street signs (the names of streets), exit signs, mile markers, and signs showing you directions to a certain city or the distance to a specific place.



Fig. 2.7: Green Road signs are directional signs

Blue

Blue road signs display services for travellers. These signs are normally found on highways, directing motorists to where they can find places such as rest areas, tourist sites, hospitals, hotels, fuel stations, restaurants, and other services commonly used by motorists.



Fig. 2.9: Blue Road signs display services for travellers

Yellow

Yellow road signs are general warning signs to indicate potential dangers or changing road conditions ahead. For example, road signs that use the colour yellow may warn you that there is a narrow bridge ahead, a railroad crossing, curves in the roadway, a pedestrian crossing, or any other potential danger.



Fig. 2.10: Yellow Road signs are general warning signs

Orange

Orange road signs are usually temporary signs relating to road work, temporary traffic control, and maintenance warnings. When you see orange road signs, be sure to watch for workers on or near the roadway.



Fig. 2.11: Orange Road signs as temporary signs relating to road work

Black and White

Road signs with black and white colours provide motorists with regulations and laws governing the use of that road.



Fig. 2.12: Black and white signs provide motorists with regulations and laws governing use

Road Signs

Dear reader having known some of the colours and their meanings in road signs, let us take a trip to identify some of the road signs in Ghana. In this section, we will consider three broad divisions of Road signs namely: regulatory signs, warning signs, and marking signs.

1. Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs are traffic signs that regulate traffic by giving directions that must be obeyed by road users most especially motorists. These signs are used to help road users drive safely by reinforcing traffic laws and regulations.

They include the following:

a. Stop Signs

This requires motorists to stop completely at intersections and yield the right of way. In other words, drivers must come to a full stop and wait until crossing vehicles and pedestrians have cleared the road before proceeding.

b. Yield Signs

These tell motorists to stop for another motorist to use traffic usually at intersections. Its primary purpose is to regulate the right-of-way at intersections and ensure the smooth movement of vehicles.

c. No Entry Signs

These prohibit entry into a specific area or road. These signs are located at places where vehicles are not allowed to enter. It is erected at the end of a one-way road to prohibit traffic from entering a roadway in the wrong direction and at each intersection along a one-way road.

d. One-Way Traffic Signs

These indicate a one-way street in which traffic is travelling. It shows that drivers must not travel in the opposite direction of the one-way sign due to the risk of a head-on collision.

e. No U-Turn Signs

These are designed to prevent vehicles from turning onto the other side which may be dangerous to other vehicles.

f. No Left/Right Turn Signs

These are traffic signs which restrict turning in a specific direction. It is often displayed by roadsides to help inform motorists that the road ahead on the left cannot be driven onto. This message is displayed by a black left-pointing arrow with a red line passing through.

g. No Overtaking Signs/Overtaking Signs

These signs are used to tell when drivers may or may not overtake. Thus, it prohibits passing other vehicles. These signs end when the lines in the road change from a continuous white line to a broken line.

h. Speed Limits

These signs give indications to the motorists the minimum and maximum speed limit he/she can go within an hour or at a place or a period.



Fig. 2.13: Speed limits signs.

2. Warning Signs

These are signs designed to warn road users especially motorists of hazards or dangers ahead. Therefore, they should slow down to prevent accidents. Below are some of the warning signs in Ghana.

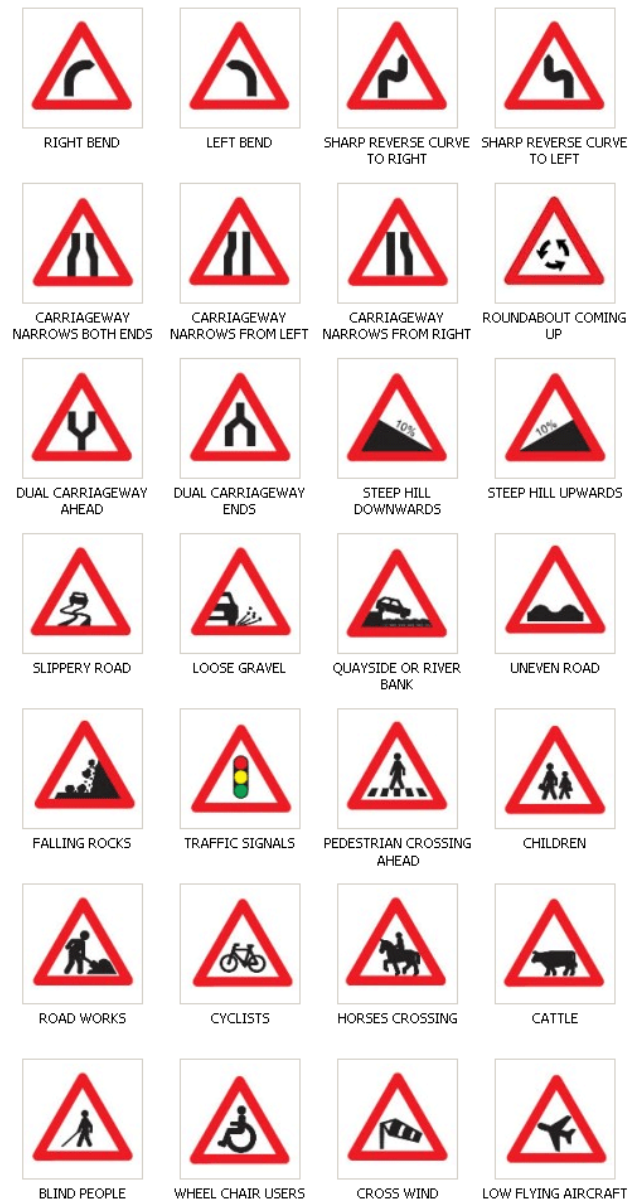


Fig. 2.14: Warning signs.



Fig.2.15: Warning signs

3. Marker Signs

These are signs designed on the road to provide information about routes, junctions and other routes or roads. The road markings include the following:

a. Lane Markings

These lines divide lanes and guide traffic flow. They are for proper lane discipline or preventing collisions. They are either straight or black-and-white broken lines which are mostly white.

b. Pedestrian Crossings

These are referred to as zebra crossings due to their nature. They are pedestrian lanes with marked paths where people can walk across a street or road safely.



Fig. 2.16: Zebra crossings

c. Stop Lines

These lines indicate the position beyond which vehicles should not proceed when required to stop at intersections by traffic police or other control device.



Fig. 2.17: Stop lines

d. Centre Lines

These are either continuous or broken lines dividing or separating a road into two halves. S



Fig. 2.18: Center lines

e. Edge Lines

These are line markings used to define road boundaries and prevent vehicles from straying off the road.



Fig. 2.19: Edge lines

a. Speed Humps

Markings on speed humps alert drivers that they will need to slow their speed down



Fig. 2.20: Speed humps.

Activity 2.12

Instructions: Match each road sign on the left with its correct meaning on the right.

Road Signs

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Meanings

- Pedestrian crossing
- No entry
- Stop
- Parking
- Fuel station
- Right turn only
- Warning or caution
- Traffic light ahead
- No bicycles
- Litter disposal

Implications of Road Signs for Road Safety

Our dear reader, now that you have been introduced to the major road signs on our roads, what are the implications on you as a motorist, cyclist, pedestrian, hawker, or food vendor by the roadside, how do these road signs affect your usage of the road to prevent accidents. Below are some of the implications of road signs on road users.

Activity 2.13

Discuss with your friend: in what ways can road signs keep people safer in Ghana? As we go through the lesson, see if the ideas that you produced are correct.

Notes from discussion

Road signs reduce accidents and injuries.

One major importance of traffic rules and signs is the provision of safety on our roads. Many hazards and dangers on the road can cause harm and put road users, especially motorists at risk. However, traffic rules and safety signs help to mitigate these risks and reduce the occurrence of accidents. For example, speed limit signs, stop signs, and giveaways help avoid accidents by controlling the flow of traffic and the speed of travel.

Road signs provide consistent rules.

Road signs provide road users with clear and consistent rules, directions, and warnings. Having consistent and communicated rules ensures that every road user is aware of them and can follow them. Once these signs are known by road users and followed strictly it clears confusion on our roads leading to improved road safety.

Road signs protect cyclists and pedestrians.

Motorists are not the only road users. There are other road users, like cyclists and pedestrians, hawkers and food vendors that also rely on traffic rules and signs in Ghana. [Pedestrian crossing signs](#) also allow pedestrians to know where they can safely cross the road to prevent knockdowns. They also warn drivers to respond to the presence of pedestrians. Cyclists rely on many of the same traffic signs and rules as drivers, so these signs are important for everyone to share the road safely.

Road Signs provide directions to first-time users of the road.

First-time users of a road can use the road safely through the directions of road signs. Despite the availability of GPS technology, if you did not have things like street signs or directional signs, you would have a challenging time finding your way. These types of signs make travelling much easier and less stressful for drivers and passengers.

Road signs manage traffic flow.

Traffic flow is not only important for safety but also for the efficient movement of traffic. Heavy traffic can be an issue in many cities, and road signs can help to manage it. Traffic signs help traffic flow more easily and help avoid accidents in heavy traffic situations at roundabouts, intersections and

Road signs guide drivers at nights.

Night-time conditions are one of the most difficult driving situations due to the limited availability of visual information in the environment and limitations to the human

visual system. In such conditions, road markings and road signs are the main source of information for drivers. Research has shown that road markings and road signs, if professionally designed and placed, can positively impact driver behaviour and thus overall road safety.

Activity 2.14

What road signs can you identify on this image and what purpose are they serving?



Activity 2.15

You are a pedestrian waiting to cross a busy road intersection with no traffic lights, but you see a gap in traffic. What should you consider before deciding to cross the road?

Step 1

.....

Step 2

.....

Activity 2.16

1.
 - a. Study the image below in pairs and complete the following tasks:
 - i. What hazards are there to drivers?
 - ii. What hazards are there to pedestrians?
 - iii. What road markings would you add to increase safety and why?
 - iv. What road signs would you add to increase safety and why?



b. Complete the same activity for this road:



c. Complete the same activity as you did in (a) for the road below:



2. Discuss: what differences in road hazards are there in different areas of Ghana? What similarities are there?

Differences**Similarities****Activity 2.17**

Think about your local community and your commute to school and answer the following questions:

1. What hazards are there for learners in the school as they get to school?
2. What hazards are there for drivers in this area?
3. What road signs and markings already exist?

Activity 2.18

Complete the following table.

Road Hazards in My Area	Existing Safety Measures	How it could be improved.
Conclusion: how safe is your local area for all road users?		

Activity 2.19

How could you, as young Ghanaians, help improve road safety in your area? Produce an action plan as a class or in small groups.

Notes from discussion

INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING ROAD SAFETY, THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE AND HOW THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE ADDRESSED

Institutions Responsible for Road Safety in Ghana

There are several institutions which are responsible for road safety in Ghana. These include:

1. National Road Safety Authority (NRSA)

The National Road Safety Authority (NRSA) is the lead agency for road safety management in Ghana under the Ministry of Transport. The objective of the Authority that was established by the NRSA Act, 2019 (Act 993) is to reduce the incidence of road traffic crashes, fatalities, and injuries through the:

- a. promotion of road safety,
- b. development and coordination of policies in relation to road safety
- c. implementation and enforcement of standards for road safety

Therefore, it is important to note that, the NRSA campaigns and educational programmes are to educate the public on road safety in our communities.

2. Motor Transport and Traffic Department (MTTD) of the Police Service

Its primary responsibility is to enforce road traffic laws and regulations. Whenever you are on the road, make sure you keep an eye out for MTTD officers, who are easily identifiable by their distinctive uniforms and equipment. These officers have the authority to stop and inspect any vehicle they suspect of violating traffic laws or regulations, and they can issue fines and penalties accordingly. You should know that the MTTD play a significant role in promoting road safety, and you should always follow their rules and regulations when you are behind the wheel. This means obeying speed limits, wearing a seatbelt, and avoiding distractions while driving.



Fig 2.21 A picture of a road safety team

2. Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA)

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) is an institution that plays a significant role in ensuring proper licensing and vehicle standards. By promoting safe driving standards and ensuring that vehicles are roadworthy, the DVLA helps to keep our roads and other public places safe for everyone. Whether you are a driver or a vehicle owner, the DVLA is there to help us acquire licenses and know the vehicle regulations, so that we can stay safe and legal while on the road.

3. Ghana Highways Authority

The Ghana Highways Authority plays a key role in managing the country's public or national highways. As a responsible body, it takes care of the administration, control, development, and maintenance of these essential infrastructures to make sure that remain safe and accessible for all.

4. Department of Feeder Roads

The Department of Feeder Roads plays a vital role in enabling the provision and maintenance of feeder roads. These roads are important for easy movement of people, goods, and services. When feeder roads are maintained, communities have better access to markets, schools, healthcare facilities, and other important services. The department's efforts are vital in ensuring that these roads remain in good condition, enabling safe and efficient transportation for all.

5. Department of Urban Roads

The Department of Urban Roads is responsible for making sure city streets work smoothly. They plan, fix, and manage the roads in cities. Their goal is to make it easy for people, cars, trucks, and buses to move around the city safely. By doing this, they help businesses deliver goods and services, and they make it simpler for people to get where they need to go."

Activity 2.20

Complete the following table to summarise the roles of each of the key institutions responsible for road safety in Ghana.

Institution	Roles and responsibilities

Activity 2.21

Visit any well-known driver in your community and interview him or her on how a license from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) in Ghana is acquired and write a report.

Notes from interview

Challenges of Maintaining Road Safety in Ghana

Dear reader, despite the efforts being made by the above institutions to promote road safety in the country, certain challenges are hindering their efforts to work effectively. These challenges can be put under institutional, execution and managerial.

1. Institutional Challenges

The institutions in charge of road safety do not have a clear direction. The agencies are unable to co-operate well with each other and this has affected free flow of information. Instead of the institutions and agencies to work together for effective road safety activities, they will be working separately with different directions. This can result in finger-pointing and a lack of ownership over finding solutions to their challenges.

Another institutional challenge is resource allocation. Since the state is not having enough funds, the funds allocated to road safety programmes may be too small for all the agencies. Therefore, the institutions and agencies will not get the needed funds to work effectively.

2. Executional Challenges

It is very difficult for the agencies to implement road safety measures as a result of inadequate knowledge on road safety by some of the staff who are appointed on party line but not on qualification, lack of political will, where new government is not ready to continue a project started by the previous government due to political differences, and finally, lack of funds to carry out with projects and programmes. For instance, the suggestion by the Road Safety Authority to government to build a dual carriage road from Accra to Kumasi has delayed due lack of funds.

3. Managerial and Operational Challenges

Road safety programmes and activities are affected by poor management. Poor engineering starting from poor construction of roads, poor maintenance of roads and poor road markings. In some of our roads, there are no road signs, and where they are some are faded while some are wrongly placed. In our cities most of our traffic lights are not working. All these managerial and operational challenges affect the promotion of road safety in the country. Finally, some unqualified and inexperienced staff also affect the operations of the institutions and agencies under road safety.

4. Attitudinal and Behavioural Challenges

Most road users in the country have negative attitudes towards road safety. Some drivers show unsafe driving such as wrong overtaking, over speeding, wrong parking, and lack of respect for traffic signs and signals. This negative attitude leads to several preventable accidents on our roads. This is going on because the institutions that are supposed to check and arrest the offenders collect bribes and leave them to go. Due to bribery, some drivers do not even go through the right processes to obtain their driving licences.

Activity 2.22

For each of the institutions, list the challenges that you think would apply most to them.

Institution	Challenges that they face

Activity 2.23

Discuss, either in small groups or as a class, what you think the biggest challenge faced by Ghanaian road safety institutions is and why this may be this way. Produce some solutions for this challenge.

Notes from discussion

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Activity 2.24

One day when the parents were out of home two of their children decided to ride their father's motorbike, they were involved in an accident and sustained serious head injuries because they were not wearing helmets.

Describe what you would have done if you were a police officer, and the case was reported to you.

Notes

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What of the challenges above may be faced by the police officer?

Notes

Measures to Address the Challenges of Road Safety

There are several measures which can be used to address the challenges of road safety in the country. These measures can be taken by individuals, groups agencies or institutions of the state. Below are some of the measures that can be taken to promote road safety in Ghana.

1. Collaboration

There should be proper collaboration between the agencies in charge of road safety and all the other stakeholders in road safety. Forging partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, transportation departments, healthcare providers, educational institutions, and businesses. these collaborative efforts can leverage diverse expertise, resources, and networks to address road safety challenges comprehensively.

2. Community engagements

Engaging local communities in road safety plans by involving them in decision-making processes, asking for their feedback, and allowing them to take ownership of safety measures in their neighbourhoods. when this is done, community members will protect road signs in their area, and desilt drains along their roads to ensure proper drainage to protect our roads. This will help yield greater acceptance and sustainability.

3. Public Awareness Campaigns

Institutions responsible for road safety are to educate the public on road safety through campaigns using the media to make road safety information more accessible. Educating pedestrians about the importance of using the right walkways and crossing signals when using the road will help in reducing pedestrian knockdowns in our communities. Also, road traffic injuries caused by human behaviour such as drunk driving, excessive speeding, wrong overtaking, and the use of cell phones when driving, will be checked if the education goes down well with the people.

4. Investment in road safety programme

Road safety is expensive so the state, NGOs, and individuals should invest in road safety. The state with the support of identifiable groups, institutions and patriots should donate adequate funds for the construction and maintenance of roads,

installation of speed cameras, and purchase of ambulances and tolling trucks to promote road safety in the country.

5. Designing roads to accommodate other road users

One measure to address the challenges of road safety is the design of roads to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. they should be provided with designated lanes, safe crossings, and separated pathways. this will help curb the rampant knockdowns of motorcyclists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Activity 2.25

Let us assume that drivers overspeed on the road which passes through your community and then knock down pedestrians. What four measures would you put in place to prevent such incidents again in your community?

Activity 2.26

Plan and design a social media campaign to help improve road safety in your area. Use the table below to help you plan. Present this to the class.

Who will you target with your campaign and why?	
What type of social media will you use and why?	
What road safety issue will you choose to address and why?	
Which government institution will you ask to help you with this campaign and why?	

Finally, we have come to the end of section 2, and we believe you have learnt a lot. Bravo!!

EXTENDED READING

Look at the following recommended books and links for more information on the topics discussed in this section.

- Frederick Anlimah Kaku Ackah (2019) Road Traffic Safety in Ghana
- [Road Safety Agencies \(police.gov.gh\)](https://police.gov.gh/)
- <https://www.hindawi.com/publish-research/reviewers>
- Road Safety Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of Ghana **Stephen T. Odonkor**, Hugues Mitsotsou-Makanga, and Emmanuel Nene Dei.
- <https://www.nrsa.gov.gh/>

Review Questions

1. Why is it risky to engage in phone conversations while driving?
2. Discuss five innovative ways that can be adopted to make road safety measures more effective to reduce road accidents in the country.
3. Identify three challenges facing the MTTD in your community and suggest ways by which these challenges can be addressed to promote road safety in your community.
4. What factors account for the high road accidents on our roads.
5. How can attitudinal and behavioural challenges of maintaining road safety be minimised in Ghana?
6. A new traffic law is introduced in your city that mandates the use of helmets for all motor and bicycle riders. How would you address concerns from community members who feel the new law is unnecessary or inconvenient?

Answers To Review Questions

1. When drivers engage in phone conversations,
 - It is against the laws of driving
 - It confuses the mind of the driver.
 - It takes the driver's eyes off the road
 - increase the risk of accidents
2. Measures such as:
 - promoting public awareness campaigns about accident prevention,
 - installing road signs on our roads
 - installing cameras on our roads
 - enforcing road safety laws and better safety regulations
 - tolling or removing breakdown vehicles on time
 - provision of emergency response systems.
 - constructing separate lanes and walkways for cyclists and pedestrians
3. Some challenges of **Motor Transport and Traffic Directorate** MTTD
 - Financial problem
 - Inadequate equipment
 - Alleged bribery
 - Poor coordination with other agencies
 - Political interference
 - Inadequate staff

Addressing any three of them answers the second part.

4. Reasons for the high accident cases on our roads.
 - Poor road maintenance
 - Poor lighting on our roads
 - Careless driving
 - Poor car maintenance
 - Drunk driving
 - Fatigue
 - Absence of road signs and reflectors
5. Addressing the attitudinal challenges
 - Making road safety education part of our school curriculum

- Constant and intensive public education
 - Strict enforcement of road safety laws
 - Erecting big billboards with strong accident scenes
 - Banning drivers who drive carelessly
6. Why you must wear a helmet as a rider
- To protect your head, brain, face, and neck from serious injuries in case of an accident or collision.
 - To improve your vision and hearing by reducing wind noise.
 - To increase your visibility for other road users
 - To keep your head warm and dry in cold or rainy weather.
 - To follow the law and set an example for your children and others.

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