Over 1 million killed in road accidents each year: WHO

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United Nations: Some 1.25 million people die each year as a result of road accidents, according to a report issued here by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Road traffic crashes are a leading cause of death globally and have taken an "unacceptable toll -- particularly on poor people in poor countries", Xinhua cited from WHO's global status report on road safety 2015.

The report noted that "a big gap still separates high-income countries from low and middle-income ones where 90 percent of road traffic deaths occur in spite of having just 54 percent of the world's vehicles".

In the past three years, 79 countries have seen a decrease in the absolute number of fatalities while 68 countries have seen an increase, the report showed.

Europe, in particular the region's wealthier countries, has the lowest death rates per capita; Africa the highest, said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

The report also found that some vehicles sold in 80 percent of all countries worldwide fail to meet basic safety standards, particularly in low and middle-income countries where nearly 50 percent of the 67 million new passenger cars were produced in 2014.

On a positive note, the number of deaths is stabilizing even though the number of motor vehicles worldwide has increased rapidly, said Dujarric.

According to the WHO, countries that have had the most success in reducing the number of road traffic deaths have achieved this by improving legislation, enforcement, and making roads and vehicles safer.

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