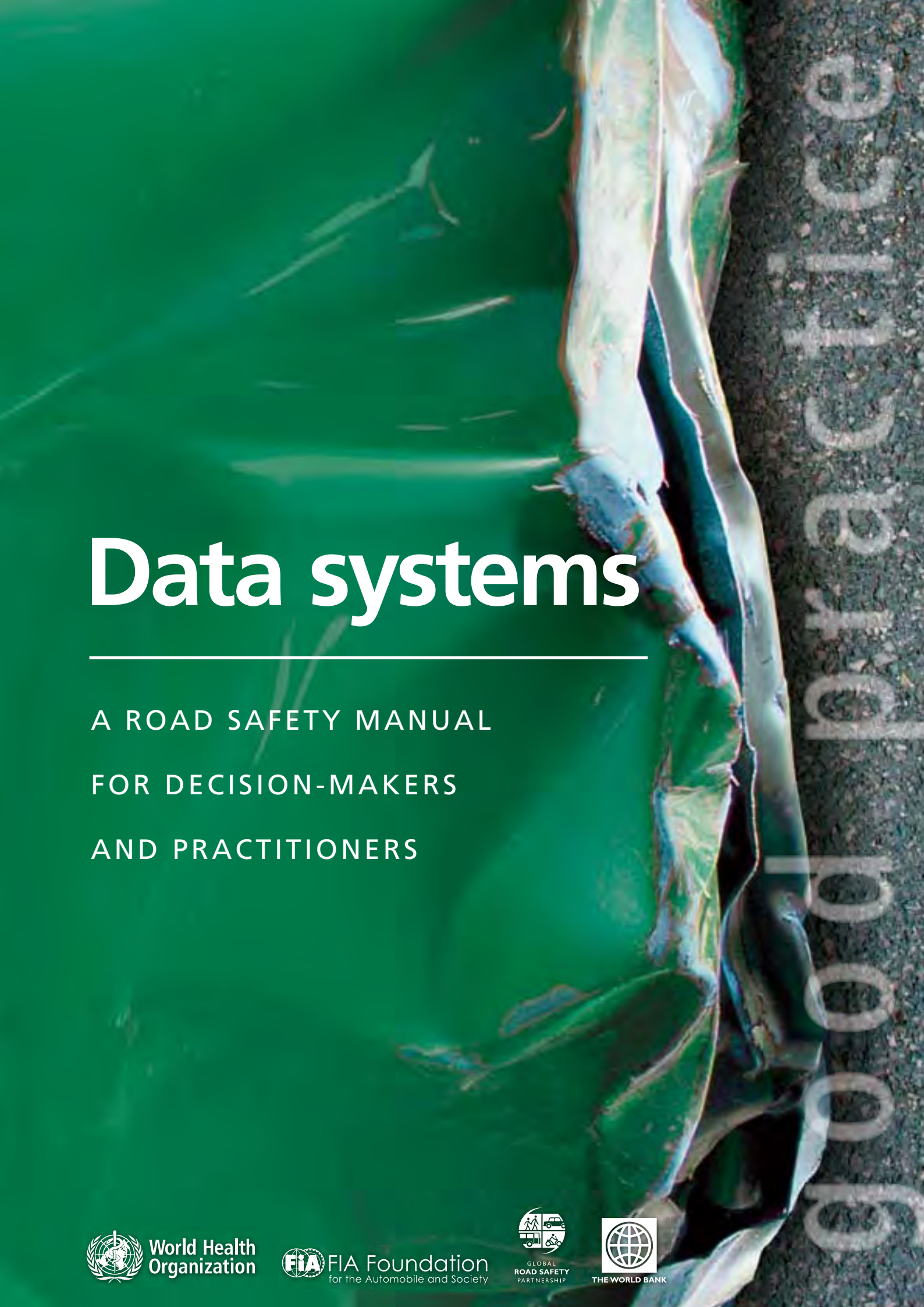

Data systems

A ROAD SAFETY MANUAL

FOR DECISION-MAKERS

AND PRACTITIONERS

World Health Organization

FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society

GLOBAL ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

THE WORLD BANK

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Preface

Road traffic injuries are a major public health problem and a leading cause of death and injury around the world. Each year nearly 1.3 million people die and millions more are injured or disabled as a result of road crashes, mostly in low- and middle-income countries. As well as creating enormous social costs for individuals, families and communities, road traffic injuries place a heavy burden on health services and economies. The cost to countries, many of which already struggle with economic development, may be as much as 1–2% of their gross national product. As motorization increases, preventing road traffic crashes and the injuries they inflict will become an increasing social and economic challenge, particularly in developing countries. If present trends continue, road traffic injuries will increase dramatically in most parts of the world over the next two decades, with the greatest impact falling on the most vulnerable citizens.

Appropriate and targeted action is urgently needed. The *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, launched jointly in 2004 by the World Health Organization and the World Bank, identified improvements in road safety management and specific actions that have led to dramatic decreases in road traffic deaths and injuries in industrialized countries active in road safety. The use of seat-belts, helmets and child restraints, the report showed, has saved thousands of lives. The introduction of speed limits, the creation of safer infrastructure, the enforcement of limits on blood alcohol concentration while driving, and improvements in vehicle safety are all interventions that have been tested and repeatedly shown to be effective. The *World report on road traffic injury prevention* also identified the importance of collecting accurate, reliable data on the magnitude of the road traffic injury problem: it highlighted the need for data systems to be put in place to collect the information needed to allow countries to develop evidence-driven road safety policies.

The international community must now take the lead to encourage good practice in road safety. To this effect, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on 14 April 2004 urging that greater attention and resources be directed towards the global road safety crisis. Resolution 58/289 on 'Improving global road safety' stressed the importance of international collaboration in the field of road safety. Two further resolutions (A/58/L.60 and A/62/244), adopted in 2005 and 2008 respectively, reaffirmed the United Nations' commitment to this issue, encouraging Member States to implement the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*.

In November 2009, ministers and heads of delegations to the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety echoed these calls with the adoption of the Moscow Declaration, resolving to take a number of actions to improve road safety, including improvements to national data collection systems and international comparability of data.

To contribute to the implementation of these resolutions and the Moscow Declaration, the World Health Organization, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, and the World Bank have collaborated to produce a series of manuals aimed at policy-makers and practitioners. This manual on developing road crash data systems is one of them. Each manual provides step-by-step guidance to countries wishing to improve a particular aspect of road safety, according to recommendations outlined in the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. These steps can save many lives and reduce the shocking burden of road traffic crashes around the world. We encourage all to use these manuals.

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