



What makes an integral approach into a success?

How can you get people with different backgrounds, different means, and different targets to work together in a project and complete it to everyone's satisfaction? A difficult question. Most important in such a cooperation is to invest in an atmosphere in which insight is gained in the interests, possibilities and limitations of all those involved. This insight and appreciation of the position of the others that are involved is essential for a successful cooperation regarding road safety.

Integral policy

Generally speaking, the minimum conditions for integral policy are harmony between the policies of the different parties that are involved and these parties being aware of the fact that their actions may affect other parties. Using this (minimal) definition of integral policy, SWOV has studied several regional road safety projects that were carried out by using an integral approach. People from different disciplines (education, infrastructure and enforcement) were involved and there was some rapport between the organisations these people represented. Policy makers who were involved in the projects were interviewed and, whenever available, the evaluation reports of the projects were studied.

Success factors

A sound problem analysis and the planning and financing are essential for every successful project. But the success of an integral approach

is also determined by three other factors:

- the choice of the team members;
- the investment in a relationship between the team members;
- the appointment of an independent project manager.

It is important that representatives of the correct organizations are invited to participate in the project, and that the correct people as regards motivation and decision making are delegated. Once the project begins, those participating must learn to trust one another and to enter into open discussion. This does not occur naturally, but requires effort. It is therefore advisable to allow for extra time in which the participants can get to know each other. During the course of the project, there must be sufficient time for regular meetings of the project group. The appointment of an independent project manager should be considered to ensure smooth proceedings of the project

and of the meetings in particular. The purpose of this independent person is to give everyone the feeling of being equal as a participant who can freely give his opinion as a full member of the group.

Communication and assessment

It is recommended to communicate the above information to the organizations and their policy makers who are involved to ensure an integral approach in the area of road safety. Furthermore, formal evaluations of the projects are required to establish whether an integral approach is indeed effective. The evaluation of a project must therefore be included in the planning.

Two SWOV reports have been published that discuss the integral approach:

An integral approach of road safety projects.
 M. Doumen (2011). H-2011-1. SWOV, Leidschendam. (entirely in Dutch)

Integral road safety policy: what, in fact, is it?
 M. Doumen, C. Schoon & L. Aarts (2010). R-2010-11. SWOV, Leidschendam. (Dutch with an English summary)