

How Bogotá, Colombia, Used Communication and Enforcement to Save Lives



Image from the campaign featuring trauma and emergency surgeon Dr. Juan Manuel Martínez. (Translation: Believe me, I see it every day: Speeding kills! #WeAreNotANumber Respect the limit)

Highlighting Life-Saving Enforcement

Motorcyclist safety is a significant issue in Bogotá. According to the [Bogotá Secretariat of Mobility](#), motorcyclists accounted for 47.3% of traffic fatalities in 2024—267 out of 565 deaths. Bogotá has been the city with the most motorcyclist fatalities yearly in Colombia since 2021, as per [the National Road Safety Agency](#).

Ahead of the holiday season, the Bogotá Secretariat of Mobility strategically launched the “[We are not a number, respect the limit](#)” mass media campaign to curb speeding among motorcyclists. The campaign’s public service announcement (PSA) launched in November of 2024 and showed life-saving enforcement in action—police checkpoints, technology—as well as the consequences of speeding, which include a motorcyclist crash and emergency room visit. Featuring trauma surgeon Dr. Juan Manuel Martínez, it highlighted speeding risks and the need to slow down.

The campaign was coordinated with enhanced, data-driven speeding enforcement operations. Campaign materials were displayed at enforcement checkpoints, and the Secretariat of Mobility deployed educators to personally remind drivers of speeding risks and encourage compliance. Earned media, including news coverage of the enforcement, reinforced this message and amplified the operations’ impact. This allowed multiple communication channels on the roads, closely tied to the potential speeding behavior: drivers could see the ads, notice police presence, and have a chance to speak with educators to understand why speeding is risky and enforcement matters.

The campaign ran in two waves (December 13-25, 2024 and January 14-February 14, 2025) with a US\$350,000 government investment across radio and TV, on out-of-home posters on city bridges and social media. Geo-crash data not only guided enforcement operations but also helped strategically identify locations for out-of-home roadside advertisements.

Evidence-Based Design

The campaign was guided by research and previously conducted evaluation, including a message-testing study of speed reduction advertisements ([link here](#)) and exploratory formative research with local motorcyclists aged 18 to 55.

Vital Strategies partnered with Los Andes University to conduct a [formative study](#) to understand motorcyclists' risks, behaviors, and views on road safety. The findings highlighted significant motorcycle safety concerns in Bogotá, revealing a disconnect between motorcyclists' high level of general speeding risks awareness and their low personal risk perception. Motorcyclists showed prevailing skepticism toward enforcement practices—83% of respondents perceived traffic cameras as revenue-driven rather than safety-focused. Still, concern about fines remained a powerful motivator, with 69% reporting worry about penalties for speeding.



Campaign poster at Avenida NQS30, National University bridge (left) and Motorcyclist checkpoint during speeding enforcement operation (right).

Results

This enforcement-focused media campaign paired with enforcement operations yielded immediate results. According to Bogotá Secretariat of Mobility data, motorcyclist fatalities in December 2024-February 2025 dropped by 24.3% compared to projections for that period.

	March-Nov	Dec-Feb		
 Fatalities, all road users	420	131	Campaign year	 12.1% compared to control group
	423	148	Previous year	
 Fatalities, motorcyclists	164	48	Campaign year	 24.3% compared to control group
	157	59	Previous year	

A [post-campaign evaluation](#) conducted by Target Research Agency in March 2025 with 700 randomly selected drivers in Bogotá found that nearly one in three (27%) drivers saw and remembered the campaign, and its message had the desired impact. The evaluation demonstrated that a significant majority of campaign-aware respondents (91%) agreed that the campaign helped them understand the consequences of speeding; 72% reported that the campaign made them more concerned about speeding; and 86% said that the campaign motivated them to adhere to the speed limit.

Drivers who saw and remembered the campaign demonstrated a higher risk perception: 37% of campaign-aware respondents, compared to 39% of campaign-unaware respondents, believed it was acceptable to exceed the speed limit as long as they were in control of the vehicle. Fewer campaign-aware respondents (18%) than campaign-unaware respondents (27%) felt comfortable accepting the risk of speeding.

Importantly, the drivers who saw the campaign demonstrated a more positive perception of traffic police (22% vs. 18%). The campaign and supplementing media efforts and personal engagement resulted in speeding being widely recognized in society as a major road crash risk by both campaign-aware (95%) and unaware (92%) respondents.

Takeaways

Governments that sustain speeding campaigns and follow best practices can gradually shift driver attitudes, behaviors, and norms. Key strategies include using crash and social-behavioral data to shape campaigns, conducting formative studies with drivers to refine messaging, and combining mass media with police enforcement before high-risk periods. Over time, these efforts help build a stronger road safety culture where speeding is seen as socially unacceptable behavior.