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INVESTIGATION ON SPEED RELATED ROAD CRASHES ON HIGHWAYS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THE NIGERIAN CASE STUDY

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In Africa, credible studies indicate that defective road design, poor driver education, increase in vehicular use and bad roads condition have combined to make speeding beyond legal limit very unsafe.

Objective To investigate existing efforts for addressing speed related road crashes in Nigeria and make recommendations.

Method A 3-week observation was carried out on Benin-Asaba road, a major Nigerian highway of 150km transversing three cities; Benin, Onitsha and Asaba. 240 drivers and road users were interviewed. Road Safety check points were examined.

Analysis The investigation revealed non-existence of speed limit signs and no speed calming initiative except one product advert with. Enforcement officers at Check points had no speed monitoring facilities. 84% of road users interviewed confirmed speeding beyond legal limit of 100km/h as major cause of RTIs. 98% of drivers interviewed have never been booked for speeding violations yet 80% confirmed exceeding 100km speed limit at various times. No established procedure to report erring drivers.

Conclusion Speeding beyond limit is a major cause of road crashes in Nigeria. Lack of monitoring facilities make prosecution of erring drivers almost impossible. The Road Safety regulating agency should be well equipped with speed monitors and appropriate speed limit signs should be placed on highways. NGOs and National Road Safety Agency should collaborate to conduct sensitisation and build capacity of road users to report erring drivers through provision of call centre numbers.