

# TRENDS OF ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS IN CAMEROON BETWEEN 2007 AND 2011

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**Background** Insufficient valid statistics is a hindrance to the development and implementation of targeted and appropriate interventions to tackle the problem of road traffic accidents (RTAs) in the developing world.

**Aims** To undertake a descriptive study of frequency and characteristics of RTAs in Cameroon, from 2007 through 2011.

**Methods** We compiled and analysed data from messages of accident reports transmitted by all the traffic police units of the country to the police headquarters. Such messages are transmitted mostly for intercity accidents representing 86% of all reports. The source data comprise the type of crash, type of conflict, the number of people injured and the number of death.

**Results** Between 2007 and 2011, the trends in RTA were erratic with 15% increase of killed and 20% of injured in 2008 compared to 2007 and a 13–17% drop in 2009. In 2011, while the number of crashes markedly dropped by 47%, the fatality rate of recorded accidents increased by 40%. Detailed analysis of year 2010 data shows that on average the fatality rate was 58 death/100 accidents, which is at least 10-fold higher than in most developed countries. The most vulnerable road users (VRU) are pedestrians and 2-wheel users representing 27% and 35% of death respectively. In fact, 22% of the recorded accidents involve a car and a pedestrian.

**Significance** On average, at least four people per day are killed on Cameroon roads. The saw tooth evolution of RTA numbers and fatality reflect the insufficiency of prevention policy. Efforts to preserve the most VRU are warranted.