

**The Question of:** Measures to prevent a further increase in the number of road deaths in LEDCs

**Forum:** The Economic and Social Council

**Position:** President of the Economic and Social Council

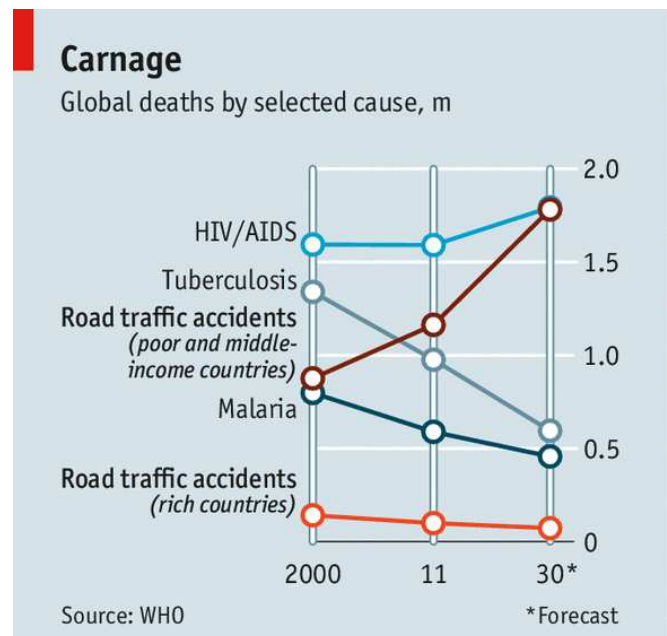
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## Description of the Problem

The number of road deaths has been increasing to a shocking amount of 1.3 million people each year since the 1960s. While industrialized countries manage to keep the number of deaths at a very low level, missing security standards and lacks of infrastructure and penalties in combination with economic- and population growth lead to more road death victims in less developed countries. LEDCs have spent a lot of money on streets and infrastructure but not on the safety of roads and cars. Roads are needed to transport goods which is essential for trade thus for economic growth. The awareness for the danger of traffic is low in LEDCs and laws are not strict enough. That way reckless drivers only need to pay a small fine and then keep on driving too fast which often costs them their own or others lives. Road accidents belong to the top ten causes of death in the developing world where the number of victims lies over one million already and is constantly rising. The number is expected to increase up to 1.8 million victims in 2030, approximately as many lives as HIV/AIDS will take. This makes traffic accidents much more dangerous than diseases like Tuberculosis and Malaria which can be healed in many more cases due to medical advancement.



Picture 1: number of road deaths in million

## Background Knowledge

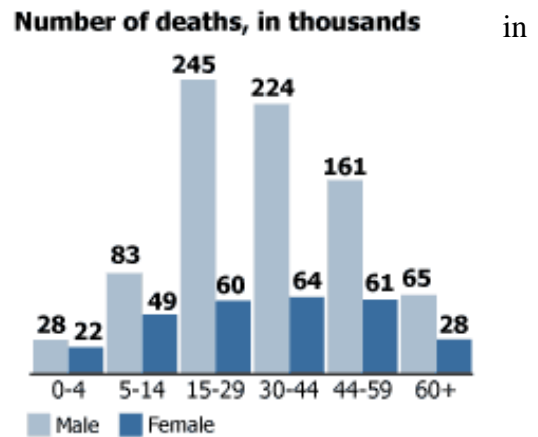
### Causes and Effects

Economy, population and car use in LEDCs is rapidly increasing. Due to a growing economy and financial aid from MEDCs the countries can spend more money on a road system which mainly consists of trading routes. But people walk on these roads and wait for the bus or use it as a way to work. As a cause of urbanization there is more and more life around streets that

## Measures to prevent a further increase in the number of road deaths in LEDCs

once were in rural areas. People are rushing along these streets because they do not fear to get a penalty which causes one fatality each 30 seconds. 22% of the victims are pedestrians which means they are not even inside a car. 23% are motorcyclists and 5% cyclists which are often not seen in traffic. When drivers are caught being too fast, they often only pay a low fine and get away with it. In most LEDCs you do neither have speed limits, drunk-driving laws, an obligation for seat belts or helmets nor separated ways for pedestrians and cyclists. All in all, security standards are too low.

In 2010 77% out of 1.24 million victims that died traffic were male mostly under the age of 30. These men bear a great responsibility for their families. Due to the concept that the children one day care for their parents, which is still applied in most LEDCs, the families face high debts. Since most people do not have a health insurance relatives often have to face the loss a family member who maybe was the only provider for food and cash which can mean that they have to live in poverty for several generations.



Picture 2: number of road deaths worldwide by sex and age group (2002)

What have MEDCs done?

There are 28 countries representing 7% of the world population that have proper laws addressing the five most dangerous risks in traffic: speed, drink– driving, helmets, seat-belts and child restraints. These countries faced the same situation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that LEDCs face nowadays. By spreading awareness, investing in the security of streets and assuring proper medical treatment for victims MEDCs managed to decrease the number of road deaths to 10.3 out of 100 000 people.

### Definition of Key Terms

Less economically developed country (LEDC)

These countries have low living standards and insufficiently industrialised economies. Often they are former colonies, rely on agriculture and are highly indebted. Most LEDCs are located in Africa, South America and Asia. The developing status of a country is not exactly defined but the GDP or the Human Development Index (HDI) can be indicators for that. The HDI measures the economic capability of a country and if the people can live a healthy life in a safe environment. Developing countries have high growth rates (industry, population etc.) since the 1990s. The development often follows the western example.

Road Death

All kinds of lethal injuries or accidents that are related to traffic, whether inside or outside a vehicle, can be referred to as road death.

## Countries and Organizations Involved

### World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO published the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2009. It states that over 90% of the world's road deaths occur in LEDCs and NICs where one can only find 48% of the world's registered vehicles. The report predicts that road traffic injuries will become the fifth leading cause of death by 2030.



Picture 3

### RoadPeace

RoadPeace is a national Charity in the UK which cares for relatives of traffic accidents and introduced the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims (see below).



Picture 4

### Nigeria

In Nigeria hardly anyone takes care in traffic that is why they have the worst traffic statistic with 34 deaths per 100 000 people (WHO report 2013). The biggest problem is speeding. Due to corrupt policemen the wrongdoers often just face a fine instead of a trial. There have been tries to impose stricter measures but people always find a way to escape the system.

### Indonesia

Every day about 120 people are killed on Indonesian roads. As in most Asian countries there is a tremendously high amount of motorcycles in Indonesia: 60 million motorcycles and in contrast to these 8 million cars. Motorcycles are easily affordable but not very safe in traffic. 6% of the victims on Indonesian roads die on two- or three-wheelers.

### Kenya

Africa's largest trade road runs through Kenya's capital Nairobi. The European Union donated \$91 million of which almost everything was invested in asphalt and not safety. Among the big lorries and fast cars with speeds of 130km/h pedestrians almost have no chance to get save to where they want. It is especially dangerous for Kenyan children to go to school as they have to cross big streets without traffic lights or safe crossings.

## Treaties and Actions Taken

A/RES/64/255 "Improving global road safety" (2010) including the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011 – 2020

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims takes place on the third Sunday in November and is supposed to acknowledge victims of road traffic crashes and their families. It was started by the organization RoadPeace in 1993 and adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005.

### Questions for the Delegates

Is your country an affected LEDC?

What laws should be changed or adopted in order to prevent road deaths?

How can money be invested in the safety of streets and cars?

What can be done to draw more attention to motorcycles and pedestrians in traffic?

What measures can LEDCs adapt from MEDCs that managed to decrease the number of road deaths?

### Useful Links and Sources

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2486752/>

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/roads-kill-the-toll-of-traffic-accidents-are-rising-in-poor-countries/2014/01/12/b1065922-56d2-11e3-8304-caf30787c0a9\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/roads-kill-the-toll-of-traffic-accidents-are-rising-in-poor-countries/2014/01/12/b1065922-56d2-11e3-8304-caf30787c0a9_story.html)

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs310.pdf>

[http://www.transport-links.org/transport\\_links/filearea/publications/1\\_332\\_TRL247 - Socio-economic aspects of road accidents in developing countries.pdf](http://www.transport-links.org/transport_links/filearea/publications/1_332_TRL247_-_Socio-economic_aspects_of_road_accidents_in_developing_countries.pdf)

<http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2006/RoadTrafficAccidentsIncreaseDramaticallyWorldwide.aspx> (picture 2)

<http://www.economist.com/news/international/21595031-rich-countries-have-cut-deaths-and-injuries-caused-crashes-toll-growing> (picture 1)

<http://www.un.org/en/roadsafety/>

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/255](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/255)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_traffic-related\\_death\\_rate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_traffic-related_death_rate)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developing\\_country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developing_country)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traffic\\_collision](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traffic_collision)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_Day\\_of\\_Remembrance\\_for\\_Road\\_Traffic\\_Victims](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Day_of_Remembrance_for_Road_Traffic_Victims)

<http://www.roadpeace.org/why/> (Picture 4)

<http://www.who.int/en/>

[https://pbs.twimg.com/profile\\_images/2189537674/WHOLogo\\_400x400.png](https://pbs.twimg.com/profile_images/2189537674/WHOLogo_400x400.png) (Picture 3)