

Introduction

Road safety remains a critical issue worldwide, causing significant numbers of deaths, injuries, and disabilities. Each year, approximately 1.19 million lives are lost to road traffic accidents, with about 50 million non-fatal injuries globally, with many incurring a disability. Notably, 92% of road traffic fatalities occur in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with the African continent bearing a substantial portion.

In The Gambia, a small West African country with a population of 2.7 million, the rate of road traffic fatalities per 100,000 population has risen to 22, marking a serious public health concern. The Gambia, as a member of the United Nations and committed to improving road safety, developed The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030 with the primary goal of significantly reducing road traffic-related fatalities, injuries, and disabilities. The vision for the decade is to achieve zero road fatalities or serious injuries by 2030.

Since the adoption of the 10-year strategy by stakeholders, implementing the strategy has posed challenges for the entities responsible for steering the nation toward its vision. Nevertheless, some progress has been made on other fronts concerning road safety in the Gambia.

To assess the progress and evaluate the gap between the current situation and the target set by The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030, we conduct an analysis with six years remaining to achieve the objectives.

Overview of The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030

The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030 serves as the central guiding tool for the vision of zero road fatalities or serious injuries by 2030. The strategy aims to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by 50% by 2030. It operates at three levels: Safety Outcome Targets, Safety Performance Targets, and Delivery Targets.

At the top of the hierarchy is the Safety Outcome, which encompasses the number of fatalities, rate of fatalities per 100,000 population, number of serious injuries, and number of pedestrian fatalities. Additionally, eight intermediate safety outcomes support the achievement of the overall target in alignment with the UN voluntary road safety performance targets.

Method

Since the implementation of The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030, both local and international organizations have monitored and evaluated efforts and challenges impacting safety outcomes. To assess the current road safety status in relation to the anticipated 50% reduction in fatalities and serious injuries, this tracker measures indicators under the Safety Outcome Targets.

As a civil society and for-impact NGO, Road Safety Action International – The Gambia aims to raise awareness and collaborate with government and NGOs to achieve the 2030 targets. This evaluation tracker provides insights into the progress and gaps in achieving the 2030 Road Safety Strategy.

Data used to measure the gap were derived from the WHO Global Status Report 2016 and 2021.

The Gambia 2030 Road Safety Outcome Targets Tracker

Safety Outcome	2018	2023	2030 Target	Remarks
Number of fatalities	139	200	<100	WHO Global status report
Rate of fatalities per 100,000 population	18 (WHO)	22 (WHO) +22.22%	-50%	WHO Global status report
Number of serious injuries	1390 (421.21% more than target)	2000 (606.06% more than target)	<330	Using the WHO 10:1 serious injuries-to-fatality ratio for LMIC)
Number of pedestrian fatalities	NA	NA	<40	Not Available

Analysis

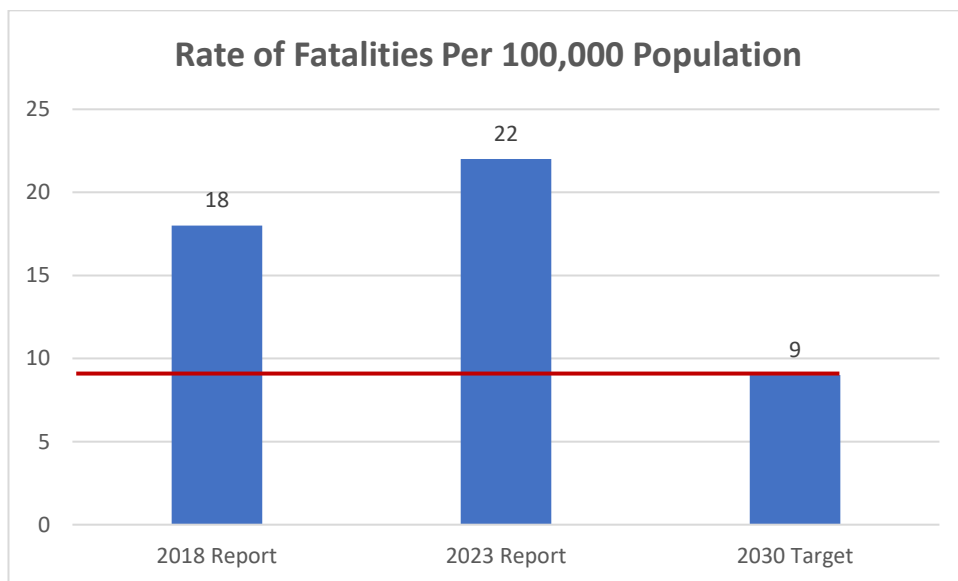
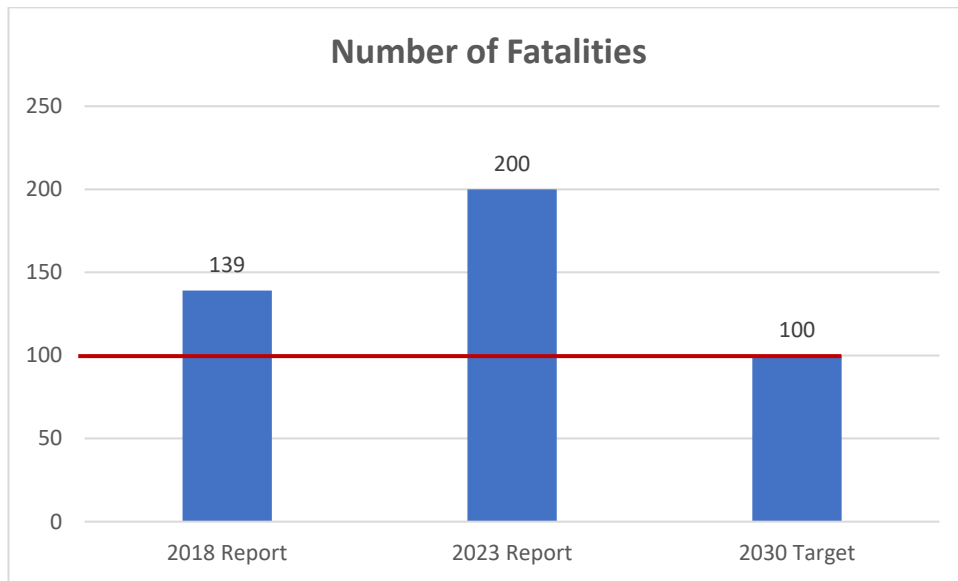
The Gambia aims to reduce the number of road traffic fatalities to fewer than 100 per year by 2030. However, the WHO Global Status Reports for 2018 and 2023 recorded 139 and 200 fatalities, respectively, indicating that The Gambia is currently more than double its target.

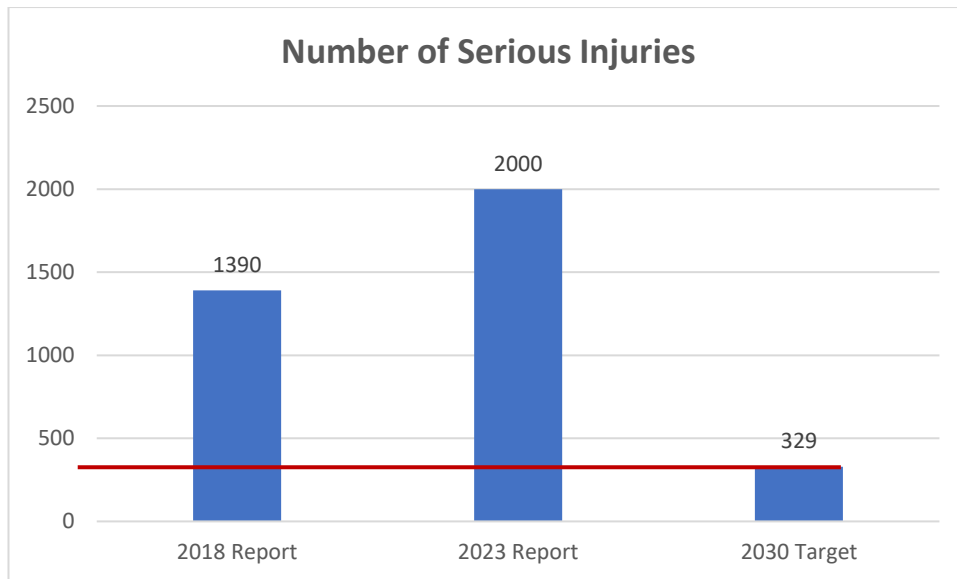
The second safety outcome, the rate of fatalities per 100,000 population, was aimed to be reduced by 50% from a baseline of 18 fatalities per 100,000 population. Nevertheless, recent data from the WHO Global Status Report reveals an increase to 22 fatalities per 100,000 population in The Gambia.

Additionally, the strategy aims to reduce serious injuries to fewer than 330 per year. However, starting with 421.21% above target in 2018, the most recent WHO Global Status Report shows approximately 2,000 serious injuries, which is 606.06% above the targeted threshold.

Pedestrian fatalities, although not well-documented due to a lack of data, can be projected to account for nearly half of all road traffic fatalities. This indicates that pedestrian fatalities in The Gambia are likely increasing in line with overall fatalities and serious injuries.

The Gambia 2030 Road Safety Outcome Targets Tracker Charts





Conclusion

The current state of road safety in The Gambia demonstrates a significant gap between the targets set in The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030 and the present reality. The ongoing challenges in achieving the desired 50% reduction in fatalities and serious injuries highlight the need for intensified efforts and renewed strategies. Despite the commendable progress made on other fronts, the country continues to face a public health crisis due to the rising rate of road traffic accidents, fatalities, and serious injuries.

Recommendations

- Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation
- Strengthen Legislation and Enforcement
- Investment in Infrastructure
- Promote Sustainable Transportation
- Collaborative Approach
- Regular Training and Capacity Building
- Focus on Vulnerable Road Users

By taking these steps, The Gambia can accelerate its progress toward the goals set forth in The Gambia Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030 and work towards achieving zero road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030. Continuous efforts and collaboration among all stakeholders will be crucial in making a tangible impact on road safety in the country.