



## Estimating Injury Mortality in sub-Saharan Africa

**Objective:** To estimate the incidence of injury mortality in sub-Saharan Africa using verbal autopsy data from HDSS sites.

**Background:** Reliable estimates of the incidence and burden of injuries are essential inputs for prioritizing national health strategies. While injury surveillance systems are the best source for such data, infrastructure for such surveillance is unlikely to be established in most low-income countries in the near future. Thus, we are building analytical tools for estimating the burden of injuries in sub-Saharan Africa. We have established a general methodology for assembling data from multiple data sources into national and regional burden of injury estimates. Typically, we work with data from hospitals, health surveys, crime reports, death registers, mortuaries, crematorium records and community surveillance. More details about the ongoing research can be found on our website: [www.globalburdenofinjuries.org](http://www.globalburdenofinjuries.org). This project is part of the current revision of the Global Burden of Disease (GBD-2005) study. The GBD Injury Expert group, which is co-led by Dr. Kavi Bhalla (Harvard University), is a collaboration of over 160 injury researchers worldwide. Injury researchers from Africa are encouraged to join in this international collaboration. More details can be found at <http://sites.google.com/site/gbdinjuryexpertgroup/>.

**Using HDSS Data for Estimating Injury Mortality:** Verbal autopsy (VA) data collected at HDSS sites are a key data source for estimating the incidence of injury mortality in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in rural settings. We propose to work in collaboration with researchers from HDSS sites to analyze their VA injury mortality data and to extrapolate the results to regional injury mortality incidence. Estimates will be produced for all external causes of injuries including road injuries, falls, drownings, burns, poisonings, animal attacks, homicides, suicides, and others. The collaborative work will focus on assessing the quality of the injury VA data, improving coding of injury mortality, generating incidence estimates, extrapolation to regional estimates, and validation of these estimates by comparison based on other data sources. Our project can provide partial support for HDSS sites to code verbal autopsy data that is already collected. We are also interested in collaborating with sites that have already collected and coded injury data. Participation of researchers with an interest in injury epidemiology and prevention is particularly encouraged.

We expect that this work will result in multiple research publications in leading academic journals and a report to the World Bank. Researchers from HDSS sites will be invited to co-author these publications and reports with us. In addition, all data contributions will be appropriately acknowledged in these reports.

**Funding source:** This project is funded by a grant from the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility.

**Timeline:** The time schedule of this project is driven partly by the needs of the GBD-2005 study. Thus, all data collection will need to be completed by July 2010. Data analysis, report writing and dissemination will end by December 2010. We are currently exploring longer-term funding opportunities for research in injury prevention in Africa.