

Dr. Kwadwo BOATENG



Dr. Boateng is the Ag. Director of Research and Productivity with the Management Development & Productivity Institute (MDPI), a Lead Researcher, and AI Expert Trainer.

Email: boatengkwdw@gmail.com / kwadwo.boateng@mdpi.gov.gh

Road safety as industrial policy

... Why cutting crashes is the next competitiveness play

Safer roads don't just save lives; they cut logistics costs, shrink insurance losses, reduce inventory buffers, and make Ghana a better place to do business.

Lede: The delivery that never arrived

At 5:42 a.m., a refrigerated truck pulls out of Tema. By 7:10 a.m., it is idling in a tailback near a crash site, the driver's breath fogging the windscreen while dispatch keeps phoning for updates.

The grocer expecting fresh produce pays overtime. A small factory waiting on inputs misses an export cut-off and pays for airfreight.

The truck eventually arrives—the margins do not. Now ask the uncomfortable question: if the cheapest industrial policy is the crash that never happens, why are we not treating road safety as a core competitiveness strategy? “The cheapest industrial policy is the crash that never happens.”

The macro case — crashes as an economic tax

Globally, road crashes kill roughly 1.19 million people each year, with low- and middle-income countries bearing the heaviest toll, losing 1–3% of GDP to medical costs, lost productivity, and damaged property.

Ghana is living this reality. Provisional data show 1,504 deaths in the first half of 2025, up from 1,237 in the same period of 2024. Older estimates peg Ghana's annual crash cost at about 1.6% of GDP, the kind of structural drag that compounds if left unchecked.

Competitiveness scoreboard — reliability investors can bank on

When boardrooms assess locations, they buy reliability. Ghana's 2023 World Bank Logistics Performance Index places us 97th of 139 countries with an overall score of 2.5/5.

The sub-scores tell a sharper story: tracking & tracing and timeliness lag peer reformers, a signal that supply chains face unpredictable cycle times. Investors read that as higher working capital, higher insurance premiums, and lost sales.

Who really wears our roads — and who should pay more

Pavement damage doesn't rise in a straight line; it explodes with axle load, the ‘fourth-power law.’ Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), especially transit trucks carrying Sahel-bound cargo from Tema across long distances, impose outsized wear. The policy principle is simple: light vehicles pay a modest fee; local HGVs pay by axle and distance; and transit HGVs pay a higher, distance-based corridor fee collected electronically (RFID/ANPR) and verified by weigh-in-motion. Ring-fence that revenue to fix high-risk blackspots and maintain the very corridors these trucks use.

Balance sheets feel it — insurance and claims

Crashes are not only a public-health crisis; they are a financial drain. Ghana's insurers paid roughly GH¢3.3 billion in claims in 2024, about GH¢9.2 million every day across life and non-life lines, a material share from motor.

Reduce crash frequency and severity, and loss ratios improve; premiums stabilise; coverage can deepen for SMEs. In a capital-scarce economy, every cedi not paid out on avoidable crashes can underwrite growth.

Factory-floor economics — inventory, spoilage, and on-time delivery

Operations managers live by brutal arithmetic: when lead-time variability spikes because a crash locks a junction, firms must hold more safety stock, borrow more to finance it, and absorb spoilage/obsolescence.

Cutting peak-hour incident disruptions directly reduces days-on-hand and overtime, while raising on-time delivery, the metric retailers and exporters watch most. This is why road safety is not a social add-on; it sits in the cost of goods sold.

What works — a



Figure 1: Ghana's Logistics Performance Index snapshot (World Bank, 2023).

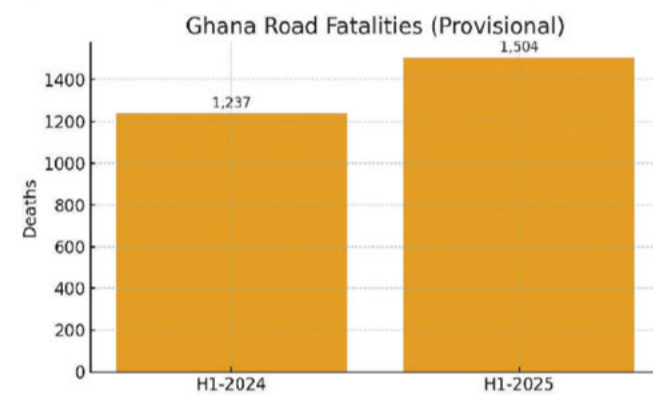


Figure 2: Ghana road fatalities (H1-2024 vs H1-2025, provisional).

five-lever safety & reliability bundle

1) Speed management at blackspots. Automated speed enforcement is the fastest, fairest way to pull down severe crashes.

2) High-impact junction ‘surgery’. Ban the most conflict-heavy turns at peaks; extend turn pockets to prevent spillback; retune signals quarterly; add protected phases near schools and markets.

3) Fleet standards. Professional driver training, fatigue rules, speed governors for buses/HGVs, load-security protocols, and basic telematics (harsh-brake/speed alerts) shift behaviour at scale.

4) Safe design for vulnerable users. Markets and school zones require pedestrian-first geometry and managed bays; the surge in pedestrian knockdowns underlines the urgency.

5) Rapid clearance. Incident command and tow-away ‘hot hours’ restore flow quickly; every minute saved

limits secondary crashes and lost output.

Training as policy — a national upskilling agenda for operators

Make training the engine of reform. A cohort-based Transport Operator Academy led by MDPI can certify HGV and bus/trotro operators in defensive driving, fatigue management, load security, telematics use and cost control.

Tie completion to insurance discounts, priority access to municipal loading bays, and compliance points for route permits.

The message is not punishment; it's professionalisation.

Funding the fix — without new taxes

Don't raise rates; re-aim them. Reinstate tolling on engineered corridors via multi-lane free-flow

e-tolling (no booths), and charge transit HGVs a higher corridor fee commensurate with wear. Use RFID tags and ANPR cameras to collect at speed, backed by weigh-in-motion for axle-based pricing.

Ring-fence a defined share of that revenue to a Safety & Reliability Fund that delivers: the top 50 blackspots (civil + signal fixes), automated enforcement at the worst 20 sites, and an incident-clearance program (tow trucks + protocols).

Every cedi should be traceable on a public dashboard that reports collections, works delivered and crash reductions by corridor.

ROI & scoreboard — prove value fast

A conservative, first-year business case practically writes itself: avoided crash costs (medical, property, delay) tied to the 1–3% of GDP global range and Ghana's historic 1.6% benchmark; a 10–15% drop in severe motor claims that improves sector loss ratios; and a 10–20% improvement in 90th-percentile corridor travel times, which means smaller safety stocks and fewer write-offs.

Publish a quarterly scorecard that tracks deaths/serious injuries; corridor average and 90th-percentile travel times; automated violations and appeals; incident clearance times; and on-time delivery rates among partner firms. If the numbers do not move, change the tactics. If they do, scale.

Policy milestones (12 months)

Policy milestones for 12 months: Q1—designate the top 50 blackspots; install the first 20 camera sites; launch two MDPI operator cohorts. Q2—retune 25 junctions; implement weigh-in-motion on two freight corridors; publish Scorecard 1. Q3–Q4—expand automated enforcement; deliver blackspot civil works; publish Scorecards 2–3; table a Safety & Reliability Fund report in Parliament.

Call to Action — Make Safety Core Industrial Policy

To Cabinet, MMDAs, NRSA, MTTD, NIC, insurers, shippers, and transport operators: treat road safety as a competitiveness strategy, not a side project. Fewer crashes mean lower logistics costs, more stable insurance premiums, smaller inventory buffers, and, most importantly, lives saved.

Daystar Power appoints Yischai Beinisch as CEO to lead next phase of growth

Daystar Power, a provider of hybrid solar power solutions for commercial and industrial customers in West Africa, has appointed Yischai Beinisch as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective September 1, 2025.

Yischai joins Daystar Power from Power business in Shell, and is taking on this role in addition to his current position as General Manager, Emerging Markets Power in Shell.

Daystar Power is grateful and thanks its outgoing Group CEO, Jasper Graf von Hardenberg and outgoing President Christian Wessels, who founded Daystar Power in 2017, for their contribution in building the business and steering it on this sustainable path of growth.

According to the Incoming CEO, Yischai Beinisch: “Daystar Power has built a strong foundation as a

reliable solar power provider in Africa, and I am excited to work alongside this talented team to deliver on our ambitions. I would like to extend my gratitude to Jasper and Christian for their strong support and leadership and wish them all the best in their future.”

About Daystar Power

Daystar Power, a Shell Group company, is a leading provider of hybrid solar power solutions for commercial and industrial customers in West Africa.

Operating in Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo, the company designs, installs, and manages clean energy systems that help businesses reduce costs, improve reliability, and cut carbon emissions.

