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# Assessing the effects of terrorism on female health outcomes: Evidence from sub-Saharan African countries

*This paper aims at assessing the effects of terrorism on a range of female health outcomes in 20 sub-Saharan African countries between 2002 and 2018. A causality test is implemented to find out if terrorism causes a deterioration in female health outcomes. Additionally, regression analysis is used to assess the impact of terrorism on female health outcomes after controlling for female education, seats held by women in parliament, average income, military expenditure, political stability, and the incidence of malaria. The causality analysis shows that terrorism is directly altering female health through its impact on mortality outcomes while its impact on the other dimensions of female health is indirect or uncertain. The regression analysis reveals that terrorism has a positive, significant, and robust impact on the lifetime risk of maternal death and the maternal mortality ratio meanwhile its effects on the fertility rate, the proportion of women living with HIV, and life expectancy are not significant. The findings suggest that African governments could improve female health outcomes by altering the root causes of terrorism with policies promoting the rule of law, ethnic and religious diversity, inclusive political dialogue, checks and balances, and strong political institutions.*

**Keywords:** terrorism; female health; maternal health; sub-Saharan Africa.

**JEL classification:** C23; F5; H75; I12.

## 1. Introduction

Terrorism is the intentional use of threats and violence by individuals or organizations to achieve political or social aims through the intimidation of a broad society beyond the potential victim in general. The outcomes of terrorism are similar to those of civil wars as the former is often associated with the looting of natural resources, corruption, ethnic and tribal tensions, political uprisings, and ideologies that lead to conflicts and insurgencies (Anyanwu, 2014; Asongu et al., 2019; Tahir et al., 2019).

Terrorist attacks instill a sense of fear and great insecurity in the general populace that often has effects on healthcare delivery and health outcomes (Keasley et al., 2017; Kadir et al., 2019). The impact of terrorism on healthcare goes beyond the immediate repercussions of killings, maiming people, and causing injuries and traumas. These attacks damage food and drug supplies, intrude

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