

# Conflict has little effect on malaria control

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Very few studies have quantitatively assessed the associations between conflicts and malaria transmission, particularly across several

countries. The analysis looked at the association between conflicts and variations in the prevalence of the *Plasmodium falciparum* parasite over 13 years in sub-Saharan Africa.

Over the past two decades, Africa has seen substantial numbers of armed [conflicts](#) which pose significant challenges to the control of malaria which killed 438,000 and infected 2.1 million people this year.

However, very few studies have quantitatively assessed the associations between conflicts and [malaria transmission](#), particularly across several countries.

The analysis in the *Malaria Journal* by Dr Luigi Sedda from Lancaster Medical School and Professor Andrew Tatem from Southampton looked at the association between conflicts and variations in the prevalence of the *Plasmodium falciparum* parasite over 13 years in sub-Saharan Africa.

They found that there were 17 countries with a decreased prevalence of the parasite compared with 12 suffering from increased transmission.

Some of the countries with the highest transmission pre-conflict were still found with lower transmission post-conflict.

One of the most significant characteristic in conflicts which is associated to increase in malaria is violence.

Conflicts are not the major factor controlling malaria changes with effects limited in time. Therefore it is possible that where health care systems are relatively efficient and malaria interventions are in place, post-conflict reduction in malaria prevalence is feasible.

The researchers concluded that: "Resilience to the negative effects of

conflict on [malaria](#) across much of Africa is evident, offering hope for the longer term prospects of control and elimination of the disease in the face of any future violence.

**More information:** Luigi Sedda et al. A geostatistical analysis of the association between armed conflicts and *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria in Africa, 1997–2010, *Malaria Journal* (2015). [DOI: 10.1186/s12936-015-1024-5](#)

Provided by Lancaster University

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