

# Mortality and climate

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Climate variability, which might arise through global warming or other factors has been shown to have an impact on mortality rates in sub-Saharan Africa, according to research published in the *International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development*.

Baishali Bakshi of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, in St Paul, Minnesota, USA, Raphael Nawrotzki of Deutsche Evaluierungsinstitut der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (DEval) in Bonn, Germany, Joshua Donato of Houston Engineering, Inc. in Maple Grove, Minnesota, and Luisa Silva Lelis of Universidade de Sao Paulo, Piracicaba, Brazil, explain how the persistence of high [mortality rates](#) in this region are stifling development and [sustainable development](#) in particular.

They have look at [climate variables](#) over the last half a century and more to see if climate patterns correlated with mortality rates. Any insights in this regard might then be returned to policymakers, healthcare, and education to find ways to ameliorate the effects and perhaps lower mortality rates and thence allow sustainable development to proceed without this intrinsic hindrance.

The team looked at elevated mortality in rural Kenya, Mali, and Malawi during the period 2008 to 2009 and then analysed this against climate variability at this time against a long-term climate normal period, 1961-1990. The results were quite enlightening: Cold snaps led to increased mortality in Kenya but reduced mortality in Mali and Malawi, the team reports. Too much rain, as well as droughts, was also associated with increased mortality in Kenya and Malawi. Moreover, adverse climatic conditions increased mortality where HIV/AIDS was prevalence but led to lower mortality in malaria-stricken areas.

"Programs for reducing climate-related mortality through early warning systems, agricultural extension services, and improved access to health infrastructure will help more fully realise sustainable development goals of mortality reduction for sub-Saharan Africa," the team concludes.

**More information:** Baishali Bakshi et al. Exploring the link between climate variability and mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa, *International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development* (2019). [DOI:](#)

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