**The prevalence of Caesarean section and its outcomes on maternal health in SSA**

By Rachael Nagaddya, 19th August 2025.

In the pursuit to attain SDG 3 and reduce maternal and/or child mortality, assisted vaginal delivery and safe caesarean section (CS) are remarkably essential. The latter is a life-saving procedure for both mother and child that averts complications during labour and delivery. However, there is a growing concern that globally, the c-section practice for medical, economic and social reasons is on the rise, regardless of race, age, medical condition and gestational age.

As such [WHO](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-RHR-15.02) recommended that the c-section prevalence should not surpass 10-15 percent with evidence signifying that c-section prevalence beyond 15 percent is not linked to further reduction in maternal and child morbidity and mortality. In addition, WHO cautions that, birth by c-section is associated with both short- and long-term risks that can extend years beyond the current delivery and affect the health of the woman, the child and future pregnancies. The latest data shows several countries such as South Africa, Ghana and Kenya are already past the recommended 15 percent while Senegal and Tanzania need to find ways to lower the births by CS to those required for medically indicated reasons.