

THE IMPACT OF WATER POVERTY ON CHILD HEALTH POVERTY IN SUDAN: THE CASE OF GEZIRA STATE (1993-2013)

Mutasim Ahmed Abdelmawla¹

¹Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Rural Development, Gezira University, Box 20, Medani, Sudan

ABSTRACT

Adequate access to water is a prerequisite for realizing development. Furthermore, water and sanitation are considered effective public health interventions for reducing child mortality and improving child welfare in particular. In spite of the fact that great efforts are exerted towards child wellbeing in Sudan, child mortality rates are still high. This paper investigated from an empirical point of view, the impact of water poverty on both the incidence of diarrhea and mortality rate among children under 5 years of age for the case of Gezira State, Sudan over the period (1993 – 2013). The OLS technique is adopted for estimating the empirical models. The results obtained asserted that water poverty significantly increases both the incidence of diarrhea and under 5 years mortality rate. In particular, a 1% increase in water poverty is found to increase the incidence of diarrhea by 0.40%. The elasticity of under 5 years mortality rate with respect to changes in water poverty index is estimated at (0.31). The study recommends investing in water and sanitation as cost – effective policy option, construction of water harvesting schemes, facilitating access to better source of drinking water, supporting child health protection programs in the areas of vaccination and providing free of charge medical treatment for children, improving maternal health, and encouraging mothers to attend child nutrition and first aid training courses.

KEYWORDS: Sudan, Gezira State, water poverty, diarrhea, child mortality rate.