

ANALYSING PUNJAB DATA TO SUPPORT POLICYMAKING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION



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IN BRIEF

- » Access to drinking water and sanitation directly impacts public health outcomes
- » There has been much data collection but little has been usable for policy analysis
- » IGC researchers conducted a rigorous data analysis based on the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) and the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS)
- » The Government of Punjab has asked IGC to contribute to the Health Sector Roadmap and help improve official data repositories

Access to drinking water and sanitation directly impacts public health outcomes and the effectiveness of public spending on health. There has been much data collection sponsored by UNICEF and USAID but little that has been usable for policy analysis.

IGC researchers took available population-based surveys to determine the main correlates of health, particularly those that can be influenced by policy. Height, weight, and mortality rates of children are used as indicators of health.

The study concluded that a family's economic status and education level of the mother are by far the most important determinants of health. Further, the effect of peoples' economic status on the health of their children appears to be increasing over time. Consequently, an important role for the government is to mitigate inequities in income on other dimensions of wellbeing. Beyond these results, there is little that is completely certain concerning the determinants of health based on data extracted from the established population-based surveys used by the Government of Punjab. None of these surveys are adequate for answering essential policy questions. Getting more precise evidence on the role of public intervention on health is of the utmost priority.

The findings are now informing the health roadmap of the provincial government.