MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH OCCURRENCE OF DIARRHOEA IN CHILDREN AGED LESS THAN 5 YEARS IN UGANDA: A CASE STUDY OF SEVEN TOWNS ON THE SHORES OF LAKE VICTORIA

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the socio-demographic, environmental and behavioural factors associated with the occurrence of childhood diarrhoea using already existing cross-sectional data from the 2006/07 Uganda Urban Inequities Survey (UIS) for Water and Sanitation obtained from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) on 7 secondary towns along the shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda namely; Bugembe, Ggaba, Kyotera, Masaka, Mukono, Mutukula, and Nyendo. The study analysed 4228 children aged less than 5 years at the time of the survey of who 2149 (50.8%) had diarrhoea in the 2 weeks preceding the survey.

At the bivariate level, the results showed that the association between occurrence of diarrhoea and age of child, mothers'/caretakers' level of education, type of toilet facility, sharing toilet facilities with other households, presence of a hand washing place in or near the toilet, treating drinking water and disposal of household solid wastes were all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, the association between occurrence of diarrhoea and age of the mother/caretaker and between occurrence of diarrhoea and source of drinking water were not statistically significant ($p>0.056$).

At multivariate level, the odds of a child aged less than 5 years in a household not sharing toilet facilities having diarrhoea is about 0.7 times the odds of a child in a household sharing toilet facilities having diarrhoea ($p = 0.006$). The odds of a child aged less than 5 years in a household that treats their drinking water to make it safer having diarrhoea are reduced [OR: 0.56, $p = 0.004$]. The odds of a child aged less than 5 years whose mother/caretaker has primary level education having diarrhoea increased [OR: 1.14, $p = 0.567$] while the odds for a child whose mother/caretaker has secondary level education are reduced [OR: 0.89, $p = 0.596$].

Interventions targeting control of diarrhoeal diseases need to be promoted through inter-sectoral collaboration rather than isolated ventures.