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TI: Elasticity of demand for water in Khartoum, Sudan.
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AB: A survey of the quantities of water purchased from vendors in the the squatter areas of Khartoum, Sudan, was used to assess the effect of the price charged for water and of household income on domestic water consumption. Households in two squatter communities -- Meiyu and Karton Kassala -- were studied by observatio and by interview. In spite of the substantially higher charges, water consumption in Karton Kassala was as high as that in Meiyu. Households within these communities showed no tendency to use less water when paying a higher price for it, or when their income was below average. In other words, no price elasticity or income elasticity was detectable. This was all the more striking in view of the high proportion of income that was spent on water; 17% in Meiyu and

56% in Karton Kassala. One consequence of this lack of elasticity is that the poorest households devote the greatest percentage of their income to the purchase of water, although the only major item in their household budget which can be sacrificed to make this possible is food. The high price of water in urban Sudan is probably a major cause of the malnutrition prevalent in the squatter areas. Another consequence is that a low-income household's consumer surplus for domestic water is very high, amounting to a substantial proportion of its total income. This has important consequences for the economic appraisal of urban water supply schemes. It also follows that wealthier households with private connections would be willing to pay at least as much for water as that currently paid by the poor.

MESH: Costs-and-Cost-analysis; Data-Collection; Economics-; Socioeconomic-Factors; Sudan-; Water-Supply-statistics-and-numerical-data
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