

# STRATEGIA NETHERLANDS



**POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)**

## **ASSIGNMENT FOR MODULE 7 (URBAN WASH)**

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## ASSIGNMENT CONTENTS

(MY ANSWERS TO ALL QUESTIONS)

1. Describe the particular challenges of providing WASH services in urban settings arising from each of the following factors.

- a) **Increasing population size:** this situation gives pressure on existing WASH facilities due to the increased number of users and often leads to generally reduced access levels and frequent breakdown. The rate of increase in population is often many times higher than the rate at which WASH service improvements are planned and implemented.
- b) **The diverse nature of the urban community:** if the community is very mixed and the people do not share a sense of responsibility for their neighbours or environment, the promotion of safe hygiene and sanitation practices is difficult.
- c) **Infrastructure required for WASH services:** It's not easy to mobilize enough funds to plan and implement infrastructure projects. Meeting the water growing demand of the continuously increasing population size is a challenge. Lack of waste collection, transport and disposal infrastructure adds to increasing environmental pollution in urban and peri-urban areas.
- d) **Governance, the process through which resources for improving WASH services are allocated and utilized is complicated.** The distribution of resources and infrastructure may not be town-wide, socially inclusive or equitable.

2. What are the major health risks from?

- (a) **open defecation** can pollute the environment and cause health problems as faeces with pathogens deposited in open areas can be washed into rivers and groundwater. At the same time, the flies are likely to transfer pathogens from faeces onto food. Many diseases are caused by ingesting contaminated food or water, including diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, typhoid, and infection by intestinal worms and other parasites.

These problems could be reduced by providing sufficient numbers of well-designed and maintained latrines so that people did not have to defecate in the open

- (b) **allowing food waste and litter to accumulate in a ditch:** flies and rats which are vectors of disease, are attracted by the food and other organic waste accumulated in the ditch and likely to transfer pathogens elsewhere. Possibly that piles of waste will also contain excreta, so the risks of health problems are obvious.

These problems could be reduced by providing a waste management service that ensured wastes were collected and disposed of appropriately.

(c) not washing hands before eating. Briefly explain how these risks could be reduced.

Handwashing before eating is an important aspect of good hygiene practice. Without this there is a risk of transmitting pathogens into your mouth, which may result in the faecally transmitted diseases.

These risks could be reduced by ensuring everyone has access to sufficient water to make it easy to wash hands routinely and by introducing community programmes to inform people about the benefits of handwashing and good hygiene.

3. Describe three specific challenges posed by peri-urban areas and slums for improving access and utilization of WASH services.

Below are the three of specific challenges posed by peri-urban areas and slums for improving access and utilization of WASH services:

1. **Unplanned settlement patterns:** These are a key feature in peri-urban and slum areas. This makes it difficult to provide basic infrastructure, including WASH services. Roads, water supply networks and public latrines with proper access for sludge removal are lacking.
2. **Lack of infrastructure:** These areas have little or no infrastructure and often there are no access roads. In the absence of access roads, bringing WASH services to residents of slum areas is impossible or very challenging.
3. **Poverty:** Communities are usually very poor and cannot pay for improved services.

4. Explain three challenges associated with engaging stakeholders in planning and implementing urban WASH projects.

Engaging stakeholders in planning and implementing urban WASH projects always faces challenges, which include:

1. **Lack of coordination** between different sectors and organizations makes it difficult to make effective plans. Poor communications between different organizations adds to the problem.
2. **It is difficult to reach all members of a community especially those on low income, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.** Women are also to be involved in WASH developments.
3. **Working across disciplinary and sector boundaries** presents challenges because different ways of working must be brought together cooperatively, but this is not always easy to achieve.

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