Assignment 1

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

* + - * 1. Increasing population size
        2. The diverse nature of the urban community
        3. Infrastructure required for WASH services
        4. Governance, in particular the process through which resources for improving WASH services are allocated and utilized.

#### Answer

The particular challenges for providing WASH services in urban areas arising from these factors include:

* + **.Increasing population size** – this exerts pressure and competition on available WASH infrastructure due to the exponential 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 actually planned and implemented.
  + .**The diverse nature of the urban community** –Cultural amalgamation presents a big challenge in hygiene promotion. Incidentally, promoting safe hygiene and sanitation practices is difficult if the community is very diverse, mixed and the people do not share a sense of responsibility for their neighbours or environment.
  + .**Infrastructure required for WASH services** – mobilising sufficient resources funds to plan and implement infrastructure projects is difficult. In water supply, meeting the 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.
  + **.Governance –** the process through which resources for improving WASH services are allocated and utilised is complicated. Moreover the distribution of resources and infrastructure may not be town-wide, socially inclusive or equitable.

2. What are the major health risks from?

* + - * 1. open defecation
        2. allowing food waste and litter to accumulate in a ditch
        3. not washing hands before eating.

Briefly explain how these risks could be reduced.

#### Answer

* Many diseases are caused by ingesting contaminated food or water, including waterborne diseases, and infection by intestinal worms and other parasites.
* If raw faeces are deposited in open areas then pathogens can be washed into rivers and groundwater
* Consequently, vectors like flies are likely to transfer pathogens from faeces onto food.
* If food and other organic waste is allowed to accumulate it will encourage flies and rats to breed, which are vectors of disease. It is possible that piles of waste will also contain excreta so the risks will be rampant.
* Proper hygienic practices like handwashing before eating , after visiting toilet or working in sewer environment 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 exposures and risks could be checked 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.
* Boiling of drinking water is also very important in destroying pathogenic breeding .

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

#### Answer

Urban communities living in slums and peri-urban areas have particular characteristics that make it challenging to provide sustainable WASH services. These are:

* *Illegal settlement:* People living in slum areas and at times in peri-urban areas have no legal status, which automatically makes it impossible to improve the WASH situation. For example, utilities provide connections to legally owned premises but most slum dwellers do not have these rights. The case of latrine construction is similar.
* *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.
* *Poverty:* Communities are usually very poor and cannot pay for improved services.
* *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. The settlement pattern also hinders attempts to plan interventions that can improve the situation.

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

#### Answer

There are many challenges associated with community involvement that you might come across when planning and implementing urban WASH projects. They include:

* 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.
* It is difficult to reach all members of a community especially those on low income, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Women may not be able to participate in meetings but it is important that they are involved in WASH developments.
* Lack of coordination between different sectors and multi-sectoral organisations makes it difficult to make effective plans. Poor communications between different organisations adds to the problem.