

Bi weekly knowledge sharing Virtual Seminar Session

Date: November 05, 2024 (Tuesday)

Time: 16:00 – 17:30 BST(GMT+6)

Topic: Improving WASH Infrastructure and Addressing Climate Change in Urban Areas: Mitigating the Health Risks of Unplanned Urbanization

Seminar Minutes

The 2nd bi-weekly Knowledge Sharing Virtual Seminar Session on "Improving WASH Infrastructure and Addressing Climate Change in Urban Areas: Mitigating the Health Risks of Unplanned Urbanization," organized by the Bangladesh Urban Health Network (BUHN), took place on November 05, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM (BST) via the Zoom platform. The event was moderated by *Dr. Maliha Khan Majlish, Senior Technical and Development Officer at Eminence Associates for Social Development*. Participants discussed the challenges faced in Bangladesh's urban areas due to rapid population growth, lack of sewer disposal facilities, the impact of climate change, and proposed various innovative solutions to improve sanitation and water access in underserved communities, with a call for a multifaceted approach to address the complex relationship between climate change, wash infrastructure, and health in urban areas.

Seminar Agendas:

- Welcome speech
- Presentation on “Improving WASH Infrastructure and Addressing Climate Change in Urban Areas: Mitigating the Health Risks of Unplanned Urbanization”
- Panel discussion
- Open Discussion/ Q&A Session
- Speech by the Chief Guest
- Speech by the Session Chair
- Closing remarks and next step

Seminar Discussions:

SN	Discussion Points	Seminar Discussion
1	Welcome Speech	The seminar commenced as <i>Dr. Margub Aref Jahangir, Health Officer (Urban) UNICEF Bangladesh</i> , extended a warm greeting to the participants, emphasizing the critical need for cross-sectoral collaboration to improve WASH infrastructure and address climate change impacts in rapidly urbanizing cities like Dhaka, where inadequate infrastructure and environmental challenges heighten health risks for urban communities.
2	Presentation on “Improving WASH Infrastructure and Addressing Climate Change in Urban Areas: Mitigating the Health Risks of Unplanned Urbanization”	<i>S. M. Tareq Bin Jamil Neoaz, Assistant Director (Engineer), Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK)</i> highlighted discussed the urgent challenges of WASH infrastructure in Bangladesh's urban areas, stressing the impacts of climate change and rapid urbanization, and showcased DSK's innovative solutions to improve water and sanitation access in underserved communities.

3	Panel Discussion	<i>Azahar Ali, Governance Improvement and Capacity Development (GICD), Improving Urban Governance and Infrastructure Project (IUGIP), highlighted the challenges faced by local governments in Bangladesh, emphasizing the need for improved governance, resource mobilization, and gender-responsive budgeting to address financial constraints and climate-resilient WASH infrastructure, while proposing a conditional support approach based on performance indicators.</i>
3	Open Discussion/ Q&A Session	<i>Mujibul Haque Munir, Head of Social Development, RDRS Bangladesh supported Azahar Ali's recommendations, highlighting the importance of developing a climate-resilient WASH theory to effectively tackle climate change challenges.</i> <i>Writer and researcher Gawher Nayeem Wahra emphasized the negative impact of household submersible pumps on water management, advocating for rainwater harvesting, better surface water management, and improved planning for high-rise buildings to reduce dependence on river water in urban areas.</i> <i>Dr. Md. Saidur Rahman, Team Leader, Partners in Health and Development (PHD), discussed utilizing surface water, deep groundwater, and rainwater harvesting in urban areas, with S. M. Tareq Bin Jamil Neoaz, Assistant Director (Engineer), Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK) noting that the choice depends on geological factors, and Writer and researcher Gawher Nayeem Wahra highlighting widespread groundwater contamination issues.</i> <i>Writer and researcher Gawher Nayeem Wahra highlighted issues with cheap roofing materials and water misuse in Bangladesh's southern coastal areas, while Camille Medema, Urban Health Research Collaborator, International Society for Urban Health(ISUH), stressed the need for resilient infrastructure, emergency planning, and increased awareness on these issues.</i> <i>Writer and researcher Gawher Nayeem highlighted concerns about using boosters as an intermediary material, advocating for global discussion, and Camille Medema, Urban Health Research Collaborator, International Society for Urban Health(ISUH), supported this by stressing the need for public awareness through announcements and community health experts.</i>
4	Speech by the Chief Guest	<i>Camille Medema, Urban Health Research Collaborator, International Society for Urban Health(ISUH), discussed ISUH's approach to improving health through healthy housing</i>

		interventions, such as their Mud to Mortar program and partnership with Archive Global, emphasizing inclusive planning, climate-resilient WASH infrastructure, and the co-benefits of health and community advocacy in addressing health and climate change issues.
5	Speech by the Session Chair	<i>Dr. Mohammad Zahirul Islam, Senior Programme Officer/Health Advisor, Embassy Of Sweden</i> highlighted the interconnectedness of climate change, WASH infrastructure, and urban health, stressing the importance of a collaborative approach to effectively address these challenges.
6	Closing remarks and next step	<i>Dr. Shahin Akter, Technical Operation Director, Eminence Associates for Social Development</i> thanked all participants, emphasized the critical importance of effective groundwater management, resilient infrastructure, and climate-focused planning to address the interconnected challenges of climate, health, urbanization, and governance.

Seminar Decisions:

1. Municipalities should strengthen governance structures and explore diverse funding mechanisms to provide sustainable water and sanitation services.
2. Local governments need to design and implement master plans that prioritize resilient water and sanitation infrastructure, with a focus on alternative water sources like rainwater harvesting and surface water treatment.
3. Urban planners, engineers, and architects should incorporate climate resilience in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
4. Government agencies should enforce regulations on hazardous building materials, such as asbestos, and ensure the safety of WASH infrastructure, especially in vulnerable communities.
5. Local authorities, urban health experts, and researchers should engage communities in WASH project planning and raise awareness of health risks associated with inadequate WASH services, particularly in slum areas.

Attendance Sheet of the Seminar:

Following attendees from BUHN, ISUH, DGHS and other partner organizations joined the Virtual Seminar-

SN	Name	Designation	Organization
1	Camille Medema	Urban Health Research Collaborator	International Society for Urban Health (ISUH)
2	Dr. Margub Aref Jahangir	Health Officer (Urban)	UNICEF Bangladesh
3	Gawher Nayeem Wahra	Writer and researcher	Individual
4	Azahar Ali	Governance Improvement and Capacity Development (GICD)	Improving Urban Governance and Infrastructure Project (IUGIP)
5	S. M. Tareq Bin Jamil Neoaz	Assistant Director (Engineer)	Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK)
6	Bappadipta Mondal	WASH Officer	World Health Organization (WHO)
7	Chandrasegarar Soloman	Health Manager	UNICEF Bangladesh
8	Dr. Ikhtiar Uddin Khandakar	Director-Health program	Care Bangladesh
9	Saiha Marjia	Senior Program Manager	BRAC
10	Dr. Md. Shamim Hayder Talukder	Chief Executive Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
11	Dr. Mohammad Zahirul Islam	Senior Programme Officer/Health Advisor	Embassy Of Sweden
12	Azmal Hossain	Programme Analyst-Urban Health	UNFPA Bangladesh
13	Fatema Showkot Jahan Rojy	Senior Deputy Director	Partners in Health and Development (PHD)
14	Dr. Tasrina Rahman	Urban Health Consultant	Unicef Bangladesh
15	Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaqul Alom	National Consultant	Unicef
16	Masuda Begum	Director (Health and Nutrition)	Nari Maitree
17	Dr. Abu Jamil Faisel	Chairman & Treasurer	Health21
18	Dr. Md. Saidur Rahman	Team Leader	PHD
19	Dr. Nazia Rahman	PC-CQI	Partners in Health and Development (PHD)
20	S M Sharif Ahmed	Assistant Director	PHD
21	As- Saba Hossain	Medical Doctor	ICDDR'B
22	Mujibul Haque Munir	Head of Social Development	RDRS Bangladesh
23	Chopola Rozario		PHD
24	Dr. Sumaiya Shawkat		
25	Kazi Saiham Diamond		
26	Rokshana Yasmin		
27	Tanjina Farhana Upoma	UNV Health Officer	Unicef Bangladesh

28	Dr. Shahin Akter	Technical Operation Director	Eminence Associates for Social Development
29	Ummay Farihin Sultana	Senior Research and Knowledge Management Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
30	Maliha Khan Majlish	Senior Technical & Development Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
31	Md. Wahiduzzaman	Urban Health Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
32	Dr. Md. Asifur Rahman	Health Manager	Eminence Associates for Social Development
33	Mostafizur Rahman	Senior Program Implementation Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
34	Uttam Kumar Roy	Project Manager	Eminence Associates for Social Development
35	Sakera Khatun Mony	Nutrition Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
36	Mohammad Mahtabuddin	Communication Manager	Eminence Associates for Social Development
37	Md. Jahangir Alam	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (MEO)	Eminence Associates for Social Development
38	Md. Dipta Saha	Health and Development Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
39	Md. Sabith Hasan Khan	Health and Development Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
40	Atia Munni	Health and Development Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
41	Mash-oodur Rahman	Research & Communication Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
42	Abhijeet Kumar Singh	Research & Communication Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
43	Sayma Sultana	Communication Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
44	Abir Chowdhury	IT Officer	Eminence Associates for Social Development
45	Md. Shoriful Islam	Graphic Designer	Eminence Associates for Social Development

Snapshot of the Seminar:

