

roundtable on BRIDGING HEALTH & HYGIENE

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share
Health and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity

WaterAid

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Dr Md Khaireul Islam (Country Representative, WaterAid)

The current situation resembles a "vicious circle." As the health impact of hygiene promotion is not measured, it is not considered to be important, and this attitude leads to a lack of investment, which means its significance will not get measured: this cycle then repeats itself.



Guy Collender (SHARE research consortium, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

SHARE is keen to be involved in the WaSH sector of Bangladesh by providing financial and technical support to different research organisations like ICDDR,B; WaterAid etc. Share also wants to strengthen sectoral involvement by influencing policy documents with adequate data and information.



Prof Syed Anwar Husain (Editor, daily sun)

Prof Syed Anwar Husain (Editor, daily sun): Hygiene is an integral part of water and sanitation. To ensure appropriate water and sanitation facilities for commoners in the country, hygiene needs to be incorporated in national health programmes and policy. A concerted effort from all stakeholders is required to establish the practice.



Dr Mahmudur Rahman (Director, Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research)

Children, women or the elderly may get infected and suffer from diarrhoea just because they do not follow hygiene practice. If people practice hygiene and have access to safe drinking water, their sufferings from water-borne diseases would decrease.



daily sun hosted a roundtable on 'Bridging Health and Hygiene' in collaboration with Water Aid, SHARE, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), and ICDDR,B.



Prof Dr Benazir Ahmed (Line Director of Communicable Diseases Department of DG Health)

We do all our activities with our hands. So, through our hands various germs can easily enter our body. That's why hand washing is very important. But people should wash their hands with safe water. So we have to ensure availability of safe water. The government has selected 1700 primary schools to introduce hygiene and hand washing practice among the primary school going students and it will be done by school teachers. Such practice would help improve their personal health and prevent diseases.



Dr Sehelia Ahmed (Health Adviser, DFID, Bangladesh)

If people can be educated and made aware of hygiene and hand washing, sufferings and infections from diseases would decrease. So awareness campaign on hand washing should be launched in a large scale.



Dr Ainun Afroz (Chairman and Professor, Pediatric Department of BSMMU)

The hands of the doctors sometimes may become lethal weapons too. In developed countries most of the infections of people originate from ICUs. So, the health providers also need to practise hygiene. We have to popularise and prioritise the practice of hand washing. As for prioritising, we have to fix the areas where we will prioritise and as for popularising the practice the media can play a vital role.



Shamim Ahmed (E&I Focal Person, WaterAid)

There is no nationwide data available on hygiene coverage. So the review of existing hygiene messages disseminated by NGOs is crucial as they have become backdated and ineffective. There should be different hygiene messages and communication channels for reaching the vulnerable and communities like waste collectors, sex workers, indigenous people etc.



Antonu Rabbani Phd (Department of Economics, Dhaka University)

Human productivity will increase only when people will be physically fit. And pre-condition of physical fitness is their personal and domestic hygiene, which has to be ensured. Moreover, poor people will grow poorer if they have to invest money in purchasing medicine for diseases which result in from the absence of hygiene. However, we need to identify why people do not wash their hands and for this we need adequate data.



Dr Timothy G Evans (Dean, Brac School of Public Health)

Measurement of handwashing is extremely difficult. Observation is the most acceptable research method in case of Handwashing. A nationwide randomized control trial should be undertaken to generate evidence based data which will help to design effective programme.



Dr Dibalok Singh, (Executive Director, DSK)

Corporate houses should play a major role in financing water, sanitation and hygiene programmes. They can't avoid their responsibility by providing only short term supports to the sector.



Milan Kanti Barua (WASH Programme Head of BRAC)

As an implementer I see that hygiene is a much neglected area. We have observed that behavioural change requires a long time. So, we need more financial aid from both inside and outside donors in this regard. As hand washing is related with the construction of toilet, supply of pure water etc., these issues should be included in our hygiene campaign.



Sheikh Masudur Rahman (Programme Communication Officer, Water and Environmental Sanitation Section, UNICEF Bangladesh)

Hand washing is a social norm. So we need to actually identify the motivational factors. Here, the government should take the lead. The non-government organisations can support the government in this regard.



Segulita Yesmin (Vice President, CSR, Robi)

Almost 50 per cent of the population of our country are women and most of them are mothers. So if women are habituated with the hygiene practice, their families will also follow it. So women should be made aware about this.



Sonia Afrin (Team Leader, WSUP-CARE, Bangladesh)

Hand washing can reduce 40 per cent of water-borne diseases. Recently we launched a programme in collaboration with Unilever Bangladesh to aware school going children about hand washing and personal and domestic hygiene. But the interesting thing we noticed that most of the schools in rural areas do not have the required facilities to practise hand washing.



Shahnoor Wahid (Joint Editor, daily sun)

We have heard a lot about behaviour change today. Traditional behaviour patterns can change only if proper messages can be taken to the communities where good hygiene practices are absent. I know about a BCC unit under the DGHS of the health ministry, which has mass communication channels at its disposal. I would like to know what this unit is doing about creating awareness about hand washing in Bangladesh.