
A Question Of Clean Water And Its Contamination

Water and Sanitation

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this. But due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, every year millions of people, mostly children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene. Water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation negatively impact food security for families across the world.

What do we mean by the term "clean water"? In general context, it is referred to water that is safe for human consumption. Safe water must be free from disease-causing pathogens. But water that is free of pathogens may still be clouded by sediment.

Water that is fit for human consumption must be clean and clear. It must be water that does not have offensive odor or color, making it undesirable and unpalatable, and deterring people from drinking it. It must be desirable to drink it and people must have confidence that they can give it to their family with certainty that they are giving them water that is fresh, clean, clear, healthy and safe.

Uses of clean water

Access to safe, clean water opens up a world of possibilities for community development. Without water, the most basic element of life, all other development efforts cannot be imagined.

Sanitation and hygiene, working together with a source of clean water create lasting community health and sustained human growth and development.

Just the simple act of washing hands with soap can reduce the incidence of diarrheal disease. When coupled with the use of adequate sanitation facilities and a dependable source of clean water, the multiplied effects are even greater.

With the benefits of clean water, adequate sanitation, and good hygiene in place, educated individuals grow up to be the future of their respective nations.

Causes of water contamination

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The water pollution these days has become a major problem around the world. The major factors for water being polluted are basically the mistakes that are caused by people's negligence. Some of the key water pollution sources are industrial waste, radioactive waste, sewage and marine wastes that are being dumped directly into large sea bodies without treating them from chemicals.

Effects of unclean water

There are many water borne diseases that can spoil the health of an individual and may even become the cause of a life threat. Some bacterial diseases often associated with drinking or using contaminated water are as listed below:

Cholera – One of the most rapidly fatal illnesses, with symptoms including diarrhea, nausea, cramps, nosebleed, and vomiting.

E.coli infection – Causing severe diarrhea and dehydration, being especially dangerous for young children and the elderly.

Dysentery – Resulting in passing feces with blood and sometimes vomiting of blood.

Salmonellosis – Causing diarrhea, fever, vomiting, and cramps.

Typhoid fever – Characterized by sustained fever, profuse sweating, and diarrhea. Can last up to four weeks and cause death.

Some Facts and Figures

Roughly 2.6 billion people have access to improved drinking water sources since 1990, where as about 663 million people are still without pure water.

Between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of the global population using an improved drinking water source has increased from 76 per cent to 91 per cent.

But water scarcity affects more than 40 per cent of the global population and is projected to rise. Over 1.7 billion people are currently living in river basins where water use exceeds recharge.

More than 80 per cent of wastewater resulting from human activities is discharged into rivers or sea without any pollution removal.

Each day, nearly 1,000 children die due to preventable water and sanitation-related diarrheal

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diseases according to Economic report (2008).

Hydropower is the most important and widely-used renewable source of energy and as of 2011, represented 16 per cent of total electricity production worldwide.

Approximately 70 per cent of all water abstracted from rivers, lakes and aquifers is used for irrigation.

Pure Water is the World's First and Foremost Medicine. – Slovakian Proverb.

If the problem of water pollution is not properly taken care of, the costs are going to be huge both for people and for the economy. There are already many organizations working towards providing pure drinking water even to the poorest of the poor, such organizations include WATER.ORG, WATER FOR GOOD, PURE WATER FOR THE WORLD and many more. Civil society organizations should work to keep governments accountable, invest in water research and development, and promote the inclusion of women, youth and indigenous communities in water resources governance. Generating awareness of these roles and turning them into action will lead to win-win results and increased sustainability and integrity for both human and ecological systems.

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