ARSENIC 2002

An Overview of Arsenic Issues & Mitigation Initiatives in Bangladesh

NGO's Arsenic Information & Support Unit NAISU
NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation

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Arsenic 2002 provides an overview of: the origin and extent of the arsenic problem in Bangladesh; the current status of the national mitigation effort; the activities being undertaken by different organisations to research and mitigate arsenic contamination of water supplies; alternative safe water supply options; arsenic removal technologies and test kits, plus; sources for IEC materials and other relevant issues.

NAISU has developed this updated reference for: all those who are interested in deepening their understanding of arsenic issues and mitigation options in Bangladesh; organisations cooperating to support affected communities, and; all those who share the belief that well coordinated national efforts can deliver sustainable mitigation to affected communities.

We are thankful to all those individuals and organisations that have actively cooperated in preparing this document.

A decade has passed since the arsenic problem in Bangladesh was identified. The government, private sector and non-government organisations have developed a variety of strategies and technologies to mitigate the problem. It is high time that national progress and plans for supporting affected communities and extending mitigation are comprehensively reviewed, to ensure affected communities are supported within the shortest possible time.

The number of identified and reported arsenicosis patients to date is over 13,000 (August 2002, DGHS). These may be just the ‘tip of the iceberg’, the actual number of people affected is believed by many to be much higher. With each passing month the symptoms of arsenicosis or related diseases are becoming more visible amongst people in arsenic affected communities. Sickness and death from arsenicosis is inexorably rising; thousands of arsenicosis patients are waiting for advice and treatment. Millions of people in the affected communities are desperate for alternative safe water supply options, as their long-used shallow tube wells are discharging arsenic contaminated water.

Foreword & Recommendations

The responsibility to address this serious public health and economic problem lies with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB); it needs to proactively take up the lead role in national arsenic mitigation and coordination.

National efforts have taken a positive turn in the last two years. The GoB has declared a comprehensive National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (NAMP) approach and established a high level ministerial Secretaries Committee, supported by a National Committee of Experts to review arsenic mitigation initiatives and work on technical issues.

The GoB has established an Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU) under the Secretaries Committee. The APSU will coordinate between ministries, on the implementation of the NAMP, and between the government and donors on funding support for mitigation initiatives under the NAMP.

An international expert workshop in January 2002 identified clear strategic priorities, in key sectors, for effective arsenic mitigation. The proactive efforts of particular national and international agencies’ programmes have ensured that: highly affected communities have been identified; community and household level mitigation technologies have been thoroughly tested; new alternative water supply options have been tested, their designs improved and costs reduced, and last but not least; arsenic field test kits’ usability has been improved by the private sector and new kits with significantly improved accuracy have been developed.

As of March 2003 it is understood that a GoB National Arsenic Policy is to be promulgated imminently. Then, after due consultation, the GoB’s National Strategy and Action Plan for Arsenic Mitigation will be finalised within a few months and disseminated to the nation and all potential implementing agencies.

However, even with the positive steps outlined above, it is deeply distressing to the affected communities that the sum of all government, non-government, multi/bi-lateral agencies and private sector efforts has not yet been effective in delivering safe, appropriate, affordable, water supply alternatives on a national scale, to address the needs of arsenic affected communities.
Unless the arsenic issue is analysed and planned for, as a potentially grave public health and economic burden to the nation, the GoB's budget processes and the international community's donor agencies are not going to prioritise resources to address the problem.

In the SHORT TERM, four key areas require urgent prioritised action and then sustained national attention:

[1] Testing and Data sharing:
The national screening effort must be completed for all tube wells and groundwater and the information accurately distilled for planning the next phase of the national mitigation effort. Only 50% of tube wells have been tested for arsenic to date and those just once.

The geo-referenced data from this testing process must be compiled, stored and maintained in a well resourced national database (e.g. NAMIC). Multiple copies of the database should be maintained and regularly synchronised at key GoB and implementing or public service agencies resource centres (e.g. NGO Forum), to ensure rapid reliable access to the public and any implementing agency.

We need to be clear and unequivocal about the utility of arsenic field testing, ensuring that communities and the organisations supporting them develop effective long term water quality monitoring support systems. Arsenic contamination is just one water quality parameter that needs monitoring; bacteriological quality and other chemical contaminants require thorough and regular checks.

[2] Patient Identification and Treatment
The national effort to identify arsenicosis patients should be accelerated; all identified patients treated and their home communities supplied with arsenic removal technologies or arsenic free water supplies as soon as possible. DGHS has produced a training module on diagnosis and management of arsenicosis patients. The national health sector agencies now need to redouble their efforts to train health professionals in arsenicosis and associated diseases.

As of February 2003 arsenicosis has been declared a ‘notifiable’ disease, like typhoid or polio. Once adequate medical staff have been trained in all affected upazillas, notification will help to: provide epidemiological information about patients; ensure rapid treatment of those affected, and; provision of mitigation measures to communities where arsenicosis patients are discovered.

There is urgent need to accelerate the government's technical verification of household and community level arsenic removal technologies so that the verified effective options can be confidently recommended to affected communities and supplied by the private sector. Two years have passed: the official protocol for technology verification (OCETA-ETV-AM) has not been finalised for approval by the government, and no arsenic removal technologies have been approved for use in mitigation programmes.

A group of mitigation technologies and another group of alternative water supplies have been thoroughly researched and field tested by reliable national and international agencies. However, without official GoB verification and approval, implementing agencies will be reluctant to promote or fund the deployment of these technologies for affected communities.

[4] Coordination & Communication
In the past decade the whole national effort for arsenic mitigation has suffered significantly from the absence of effective coordination and information sharing. This experience should be learned from; future national strategies and plans must incorporate effective regular coordination and information dissemination amongst all stakeholders in arsenic mitigation.

National communication campaigns for affected communities need to be re-vitalised, moving beyond 'poison warnings' to holistic mitigation IEC processes.

Significant information, of great value to people who are directly affected, is available to national leaders and their experts; this information needs urgent synthesis, translation into lay person's language and dissemination via a multi-media strategy.

In the MEDIUM TERM the key priorities to further mitigation initiatives and address the current knowledge gaps are:

Further investment in research and development of alternative water supply options is required; to develop a range of appropriate, affordable community level alternatives to tube wells in arsenic affected areas.

Thorough research and assessment of the potential risks of sourcing groundwater from deep aquifers should be completed, before deep tube wells are deployed nationally as a standard alternative to shallow tube wells.

[7] Epidemiology & the Food Chain

Significant knowledge gaps remain to be addressed on the metabolism of organic and inorganic arsenic in the human body. These gaps require thorough research attention to commence urgently. Studies on arsenic in the food chain are underway (CSIRO, Australia) but useful conclusions for broadening arsenic mitigation strategies and action plans are not yet available.

Rapid dissemination of verified conclusions from these research areas should be prioritised.


The arsenic issue has served as a 21st century wake up call and fresh warning, that the safety of our most fundamental resource for life cannot be taken for granted. Other potential water contaminants exist above and below Bangladesh's soils, either natural like arsenic, or introduced by human actions.

A comprehensive national protocol on is to be completed in March 2003, by a GoB Task Force. This will guide the routine implementation of comprehensive water quality surveillance. But, the prioritisation of resources, for: training of the responsible government or private sector agencies, and; for long term implementation of the Water Quality Surveillance protocol, by these agencies, will need to be thoroughly addressed.

The GoB and all collaborating agencies have considerable work to do to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive national response to the arsenic problem, but the enormity of the task should not daunt us. In order to bring a positive change in the present status of the national response, efforts from the government, non-government and private sector agencies should be accelerated under pro-active government coordination.

Regular sharing of information and experience amongst all stakeholders must be ensured, to avoid duplication of mitigation efforts and eliminate the dissemination of inaccurate or confusing information amongst arsenic affected communities.

We ought to work in a collaborative, coordinated and comprehensive manner to minimise the current and future burden on Bangladesh of morbidity and mortality due to arsenic.

All those with resources, large or small, to support the national arsenic mitigation effort, should renew their commitment to support initiatives to resolve this ongoing crisis.

The origin of this challenge is not human by design, but the responsibility for its solution on undoubtedly lies with us.

S.M.A. Rashid
Executive Director
NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation

Timothy J. Claydon
Country Representative
WaterAid Bangladesh
Our Voice

NGOs Arsenic Information & Support Unit (NAISU) has prepared this document with an aim to provide an overview on the arsenic situation and mitigation activities by both the governmental and non-governmental organisations in Bangladesh. This documentation is the second successive update of the previous report 'Arsenic 2000' prepared by WaterAid Bangladesh. In this issue we have focused on the following issues on the basis of current knowledge and experience:

- the background to the arsenic contamination;
- the potential scale of the problem;
- the major work of key organizations working on arsenic mitigation;
- the methods of arsenic detection at both field and laboratory.
- the arsenic free alternative water option currently recommended for arsenic mitigation.

An additional primary objective of this document is to promote coordination and information sharing between organizations and to portray a picture of the current arsenic mitigation activities and enhance communication with “newcomers”, providing a directory of activities and agencies already active in this field. In this issue we have documented the type of mitigation activities with the intervening areas with an aim to forestalling any duplication of work which we believe will help to take appropriate arsenic mitigation strategy for the management of arsenic crisis in Bangladesh.

The NGOs Arsenic Information and Support Unit (NAISU), has been established to provide arsenic information support to small to medium sized organizations, to synthesise and disseminate appropriate arsenic mitigation related information, in plain language, for affected communities and for field workers at the grass roots supporting affected communities and households. To serve these objectives NAISU currently: publishes a quarterly newsletter 'Arsenic Bulletin' in easily understandable and accessible Bangla; provides training to small to medium sized organisations working with affected communities on arsenic issues and mitigation; develops and distributes communication materials for organisations and communities actively seeking deeper understanding on arsenic issues and mitigation options.

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We like to extend special thanks to the reviewers for their suggestions and comments.

We also here admit our failure in the case of any organisations which we could not reach and thus their initiatives could not be incorporated in this current report.

Please contact NAISU to update your organisations activities profile or contacts for the 2003 update !!!

sanjoy@ngof.org
ziahasan@ngof.org
arsenic@ngof.org

Dr. Ziaul Hasan Rumi
Technical Specialist
NGOs Arsenic Information & Support Unit (NAISU)
A collaborative project of WaterAid Bangladesh and NGO Forum for DWSS.
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Introduction:

Bangladesh is located in the midst of one of the world’s largest river systems. Although this vast amount of water provides a living for almost 1/3 of the country’s population, the water quality is poor and the abundance of this water does little to meet the drinking needs of the people. Drinking water in Bangladesh is not largely a river based water purification system but instead, the most crucial source of drinking water remains groundwater. However, the discovery of “Arsenic” in groundwater in several areas of Bangladesh has aroused widespread concern in the last ten years. The arsenic crisis in Bangladesh has been called the worst environmental catastrophe of the twentieth century. Arsenic, a metalloid element known for its toxicity and carcinogenicity, is soluble in water and occurs naturally in many minerals. Arsenic contamination of groundwater in Bangladesh is widely accepted to be of geological origin, though the exact mechanisms remain poorly understood. Arsenic occurs in different forms, organic and inorganic, with different toxicity. Humans get affected by arsenic mainly through ingestion and probably the nutritional status is important in relation to the development of arsenicosis. The World Health Organization (WHO) has set a provisional guideline value of 0.01 mg/l (10 ppb) for total arsenic in drinking water. The Government of Bangladesh has set a provisional water quality standard of 0.05 mg/l (50 ppb) arsenic for drinking water.

The groundwater of Bangladesh provides drinking water to about 97% of the rural population. This extensive coverage is indicative of the country’s successful attempt to provide safe drinking water to its general population as surface water sources were often polluted and diarrhoeal disease was widespread. This respectable public health effort was overshadowed in 1993 when an alarming discovery confirmed arsenic contamination in groundwater. The discovery of arsenic contamination was first identified in the north western part of the country. But it was soon evident that the contamination was more widespread and not confined to any one local area, but it is assumed based on different studies so far conducted that the population at risk may vary from 25 million to over 36 million (using the Bangladesh standard of 50ppb). As more chemical tests and research work were being performed and subsequently concluded, the extent of the problem became evident. Estimates vary on how many people are affected. Tens of thousands of people have already been showing skin discoloration and other more serious manifestations of arsenic toxicity. Children below the age of ten are also now showing signs of chronic arsenic poisoning.

Not only clinical symptoms but also a number of social and societal problems are aggravating the situation. Dissolution of marriage, avoidance of arsenicosis patients, arsenic panic in the affected areas etc. have been reported in many areas.

Many national and international organizations have come forward to work on arsenic for the mitigation of arsenic crisis in Bangladesh from the beginning of the problem. Many organizations are doing lot of researches on clinical, social and safe water technology aspects. Different information, education and communication (IEC) materials including participatory learning materials have been and are being developed by different agencies which are very much important for the mitigation strategy of arsenic contamination in Bangladesh.

The objective of this document and its subsequent updating is to compile the mitigation and research activities of different organizations and to make them readily accessible to all of them for information sharing and forestalling any duplication of work which will minimize our efforts and increase our efficacy to combat the deadly crisis of arsenic contamination of groundwater in Bangladesh.
A.0. Background To The Arsenic Contamination And Potential Scale Of The Problem

The arsenic in ground water is of natural origin, and the distribution of arsenic contaminated groundwater is related to the geology, with most of the arsenic contaminated tube wells drawing water from the Middle and Upper Holocene sediments.

The arsenic is believed to be released from soil under conditions conducive to dissolution of arsenic from solid phase on soil grains to liquid phase in water. Among the few hypothesis initially proposed to explain the possible mechanism of arsenic release most scientists have settled to two hypothesis: i) Oxidation theory - oxidation of arsenic mineral 'Arsenopyrite' or arsenic rich 'Pyrite' resulting in release of arsenic in ground water and ii) 'Reduction theory' - reduction of arsenic rich iron-oxi-hydroxides leaching the arsenic which remain at adsorbed state on its surface.

Mechanism of Arsenic release in underground water

In some of the arsenic affected countries including Bangladesh and West Bengal, India, two most probable (natural) sources responsible for arsenic contamination of underground water are: i) Arsenopyrite (FeAsS) and Arsenic-rich pyrite and ii) Arsenic-rich iron oxi-hydroxides.

(i) Arsenopyrite and Arsenic-rich Pyrite (Oxidation Process):

Oxidation of arsenic bearing sulfide minerals [such as arsenopyrite (FeAsS) and pyrite (FeS2)] in aquifer can release arsenic into underground water. The rate of oxidation of sulfide minerals is limited by the presence of an oxidizing agent, most commonly atmospheric oxygen (as O2). Relatively deeper ground water is isolated from the atmosphere and the availability of oxygen in deep aquifers is limited by the amount of oxygen present in recharge water. Human activity that can significantly influence sulfide mineral oxidation and arsenic release into the aquifer is increased pumping of underground water. Increased pumping and reducing recharge can greatly accelerate oxidation rates of arsenic-bearing minerals by lowering water table and exposing minerals to atmospheric oxygen. The whole process is also known as “Oxidation Process”.

In the absence of oxygen, nitrate (NO₃) can also act as an oxidizing agent and can promote oxidation of arsenic-bearing sulfide minerals. High nitrate concentrations from agricultural activities can therefore enhance arsenic release into underground water.

(ii) Arsenic rich Iron Oxi-hydroxides (Reduction Process):

Arsenic derived from weathering of arsenic-rich base metal sulfides is often found to be associated with iron oxyhydroxides in downstream sediments. Arsenic (both arsenite and particularly arsenate) has high affinity for iron oxyhydroxides and becomes associated with them as a result of adsorption. Sediments in the Ganges delta region are known to have iron oxyhydroxides grains on the mineral coatings on the mineral grains and at many places these coatings have been found to be rich in arsenic.

Arsenic can be released from these arsenic rich iron oxi-hydroxides as a result of dissolution and desorption. A reducing redox environment (oxygen-deficient conditions) in the subsurface can promote dissolution of iron oxi-hydroxides and release of associated arsenic into underground water. The normal burial of the alluvial sediments during the development of the delta leads to strongly reducing conditions due to the microbial consumption of oxygen during the process of organic matter oxidation. Introduction of organic waste into an aquifer can also promote a reducing environment. In addition, lowering of pH can also promote dissolution of iron oxi-hydroxides and subsequent release of associated arsenic. This process in general is known as the “Reduction Process”.

The above two hypotheses may be operative in different parts of a country at a time. However the BGS report “Arsenic contamination of groundwater in Bangladesh” (Ref X, 2001) strongly supports the second hypothesis – the reduction process associated with iron oxides, although it does state that it is still a hypothesis and requires further study. The BGS study found that high arsenic concentrations were associated with strongly reducing conditions rather than oxidizing conditions. The oxidation hypothesis is not getting support in the absence of widespread arsenopyrite in arsenic-prone areas of Bangladesh, and arsenic concentrations showed a broad negative correlation with sulphate concentrations. The intensity of arsenic problem has not been found to have any relationship with ground water fluctuations. Similarly the hot spots in Bangladesh are not located in areas of high withdrawal of ground water for irrigation.
Natural processes of groundwater flushing would eventually wash the arsenic away, but this will take thousands or tens of thousands of years. The flushing is particularly slow in the Bengal basin due to the low hydraulic gradients in such a large flat deltas.

**Arsenic Catastrophe in Bangladesh: The Scale of the problem**

Bangladesh is very much dependent on ground water both for drinking and irrigation purposes. Until the discovery of Arsenic, groundwater was considered safe for drinking. Tubewells have, in the majority, replaced the traditional surface water sources and diarrhoeal disease has reduced significantly. An estimated 97% of drinking water of the rural population in Bangladesh is now supplied by groundwater. About 80% of the population is covered by manually operated shallow tube wells and 6% by manually operated deep tubewells (Table 2.1 in Ref 1). It has been estimated that about 8.0 million hand pump tube-wells have been installed under private initiatives and government has sunk about 1.2 million tube-wells. In 1993 DPHE first identified high concentration of arsenic in shallow tube-well in Chapai Nawabganj adjacent to an area of West Bengal which had been found to be extensively contaminated in 1988. Extensive contamination was confirmed in 1995 when additional surveys showed contamination of shallow tube-wells across much of southern and central Bangladesh. WHO declared arsenic contamination as a 'Major Public Health Issue’ in 1996 and informed Bangladesh Government to deal with emergency basis.

Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) , British Geological Survey (BGS) and Mott MacDonald Ltd. survey (approximately 3500 samples) throughout Bangladesh, but excluding the Chittagong Hill Tracts, revealed that 27% of the shallow tube-wells are contaminated with arsenic above the level of 0.05 mg/l (50 ppb) and 46% of the shallow tube-wells tested are contaminated with arsenic above the WHO guideline 0.01 mg/l (10 ppb). Eight of the 61 sampled districts had no samples exceeding the Bangladesh standard for arsenic (0.05 mg/l) and all districts except Thakurgaon had at least one well exceeding WHO guideline value.

According to the study finding the worst affected districts (percent of sampled wells with greater than 0.05 mg/l arsenic) were Chandpur (90%), Munshiganj (83%), Gopalganj (79%), Madaripur (69%), Noakhali (69%), Satkhira (67%), Comilla (65%), Faridpur (65%), Shariatpur (65%), Meherpur (60%), Bagerhat (60%) and Lakshmipur (56%). The least affected districts were Thakurgaon, Barguna, Jaipurhat, Lamonirhat, Natore, Nilphamari, Panchagar, Patuakhali (and 0%), Rangpur (1%), Dinajpur (2%), Noagoan (2%).

Most of the arsenic has been found in the shallow aquifer, with only 1% of the deep tubewells (greater than 150m) tested in the BGS study (Ref X) having arsenic greater than 50 ppb and 5% greater than 10ppb. However there are some concerns regarding future arsenic contamination of the deep aquifer, particularly where the shallow and deep water is not separated by an aquitard.

DPHE/BGS/ MML in phase 1 studies estimated that the population exposed to arsenic contamination more than 0.05 mg/l (>50 ppb) would lie in the range 18.5-22.7 million. However the BGS-DPHE studies finally gave an estimation of the number of population exposed to arsenic concentration above 0.05 mg/l (50 ppb) and 0.01 mg/l (10 ppb) to be 35 million and 57 million respectively. (Based on upazilla-averaged statistics the exposure levels to arsenic exceeding 0.05 mg/l (50 ppb) and 0.01 mg/l (10 ppb) were computed as 28 million and 46 million respectively, but the BGS report states that they consider the larger figures to be more reliable).

School of Environmental Studies (SOES), Jadavpur University, Calcutta and Dhaka Community Hospital Trust tested water from 64 districts of Bangladesh. Their finding up to February 2000 shows that in 47 districts arsenic in ground water is above 0.05 mg/l and in 54 districts above 0.01 mg/l.

Chronic exposure to high doses of arsenic cause dermatologic, neurologic, vascular and carcinogenic effects. The most common symptoms of arsenicosis is dermatological which include dark/white pigmentation (melanosis) and gradual hardening of palms and soles along with appearance of hard nodular lesions over these areas (keratoses). Exposure to arsenic from drinking water increases the risk of skin, lung and bladder cancer and possibly that of other sites also. In a report WHO has predicted that in most of the southern part of Bangladesh almost 1 in every 10 adult deaths will be a result of cancer triggered by Arsenic poisoning in the next decade (Contamination of drinking-water by arsenic in Bangladesh: a public health emergency - Alan H. Smith, Elena O. Lingas & Mahfuzar Rahman). From the experience of Taiwan it has been forecasted that almost two million of people are at risk of developing cancer in the next decades.
An estimate of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and DGHS reveals:

Total Arsenic Contaminated Districts: 61
Total Upazillas contaminated with Arsenic: 268
Total number of Patients: 13333 (August, 2002- DGHS)

Everyday new patients are coming to notice and the number of arsenicosis patients so far identified in Bangladesh is just the ‘tip of an iceberg’ and the actual number is much higher than the present statistics. The current screening efforts (of wells and people) present a "freeze-frame" picture of the situation at one point in time. The true and dynamic picture will only start to appear once private testing becomes accessible to people and once the health service kicks in on the patient screening side (now arsenicosis has been declared as a notifiable disease, there will be a better chance that the patient numbers would more accurately reflect reality). The current arsenic situation of Bangladesh has been considered as one of the greatest environmental disasters of the world. So an effective and appropriate mitigation program is urgently warranted for tackling this crisis in Bangladesh.
A.1. Summary of activities and developments since the Arsenic 2000 report

Although in 1993 the presence of Arsenic in a Bangladesh tubewell was first detected, the magnitude and extent of the problem was not known clearly before 1997. Various agencies conducted tests of tubewell water samples from different districts randomly and comprehensive testing could not be done due to lack of testing facilities in Bangladesh. After 1997 there was lots of initiative taken by the Government (through DPHE), various national and international NGO’s, and research institutions. In particular, in recent years many small scale Arsenic removal technologies have been developed, field tested and used under action research programs in Bangladesh. Since the Arsenic 2000 report there have also been some improvements in field test kits such as the Hach EZ and Merck Sensitive.

DPHE with the donor agencies conducted various survey, study and mitigation activities in the country and some of these are still continuing. Under the assistance of DFID, DPHE and British Geological Survey conducted systematic and comprehensive groundwater studies (1997 to March 2000) in 61 districts (except in the Chittagong Hill Tracts), which helped identify the extent of arsenic contaminated groundwater within Bangladesh. The DPHE / UNICEF arsenic mitigation initiative to date consisted of several National-scale activities and a focused action research project. Under the ‘Action Research into Community Based Arsenic Mitigation’ project DPHE- UNICEF worked in five upazillas (with BRAC, Grameen Bank, DCHT and ISDCM/Rotary) and developed the second phase (2001 to 2003) of the project in 15 upazillas. Since the beginning of 2002 with funding received from UNF, WHO and UNICEF, are collaborating with DPHE and DGHS in an action-research community-based arsenic mitigation project in three upazillas under the 15 upazilla project.

In the second half of 2002 the program will be further expanded, when communication and well-screening activities will commence in further 25 upazillas. DPHE – DANIDA Arsenic Mitigation Pilot Project has been taken up in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh for three years and a half (up to June 2004). WHO, being an active partner of GoB, organised a National Co-ordination Conference (1999) and the International Workshop on Arsenic Mitigation (January 2002). From this International Workshop some short term and long-term outline recommendations, on alternative water supply options, hydrogeology and health were made.

The Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) was designed about four years ago (in August 1998) when, the nature, magnitude and impacts of the Arsenic contamination problem were not adequately understood by all concerned. The US$ 44.4 million project is co-funded by GoB, World Bank and SDC. The Arsenic contamination problem and its mitigation strategy being a multidimensional problem, the BAMWSP included multi-sectoral components for implementation. A large amount of screening of tubewells has been carried out under BAMWSP, but coming towards its proposed final date it can be seen that a huge amount of mitigation and institutional aspects of the problem are still to be addressed and BAMWSP alone is not sufficient for handling such multi-sectoral issues.

DFID funded “Rapid Assessment of Household Level Arsenic Removal Technologies” was jointly managed by WaterAid Bangladesh and DFID and implemented by WS Atkins International Ltd. This study (commenced in August 2000 and ended in March 2001) was focused on comparative assessment of the performance and acceptability of nine household level technologies and finally came up with seven. The study also included a comparative evaluation of field test kit also. The report was submitted to the BAMWSP Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and TAG reviewed the study and recommended four technologies.

In late 2001 ICDDR, B has started a research project in the Matlab area to study the effects of exposure to arsenic. This project is executed in collaboration with BRAC and supported by WHO, SIDA and USAID. In mid 2002 an annotated overview of all health research on arsenic undertaken in the last few years was published by the Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC).

Many organizations, NGO- Forum, BRAC, DCHT, CARE and others are very much involved in arsenic mitigation: awareness raising, patient identification & management and small-scale research. BUET, DU and IDE are also involved in some research on mitigation options. In January 2002, the DFID funded (US$ 49.3 million) Rural Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply Project has been started by DPHE with assistance from UNICEF.
Initial studies have been undertaken to address the concern regarding the contribution to arsenic in the food chain by water contaminated with arsenic and used for irrigation or cooking. Studies undertaken by FAO, CSIRO/Australia & Dhaka University and AllHPH/Kolkata with WHO, point to substantial contributions to the total arsenic content in green leafy vegetables, when grown with contaminated irrigation water. However a study by Australian National University (ANU) in collaboration with NGO Forum "An Intervention Trial to Assess the Contribution of Food Chain to Total Arsenic Exposure" in May 2000, which chose exposure based on arsenic content in irrigation water, failed to demonstrate a difference in arsenic content in the small number of raw food samples tested from the high and low contamination areas. Further studies investigating the arsenic content in different types of food from areas with high and low contamination of irrigation water, are recommended.

It is evident that since 2000 many Government, Non Government and Bilateral organisations are working on this issue and much action research has been carried out, however the situation of many communities has not improved greatly. The broad spectrum of institutional arrangement should be such that it ensures sustainable development. The services that are required, be it technological or financial, need to be delivered optimally. The situation now demands to review and reform the institutional arrangement to address sector issues appropriately.

To develop a more coordinated response to the arsenic crisis, GoB has taken new initiative to establish Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU) in the Local Government Division (LGD) to prepare and implement a National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (NAMP) through a partnership approach. It is an indication that GoB and donors wish to address the arsenic crisis in a more holistic way than has been possible under the BAMWSP. DFID is currently designing a Support to the National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (SNAMP) and would assist APSU in implementing the recommendations for action that resulted from the International Workshop held in January 2002.
B. Who Is Doing What On Arsenic

Current And Proposed Activities on Arsenic
Bangladesh
Government Initiatives

Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project-BAMWSP
National Arsenic Mitigation Program-NAMP
Water Development Board
DPHE-DANIDA
DPHE-UNICEF
DGHS-UNICEF
1.0 Bangladesh Government initiatives

DPHE and LGD are both key departments under the Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Co-operatives (LGRD&C). DPHE has a number of different arsenic activities at various levels of implementation and is working with a wide variety of development organisations. A summary of the Government involvement in arsenic activities follows in Section 1. Further details of the programmes are contained under the partner and/or supporting organisations.

It is proposed under the planned National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (NAMP) that the Local Government LGD should be the focal ministry for arsenic mitigation and should co-ordinate cross-sectoral interaction through the Secretaries Committee.

1.1 Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project BAMWSP

The US$44.4million Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) is implemented by Department of Public Health Engineering of the Local Government Division (LGD) under Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. BAMWSP is co-funded by GoB, World Bank and SDC. In August 1998 World Bank approved a credit of US$32.4million to GoB to implement the four-year project. The project had a slow start and the project completion date is likely to be extended.

The objective of BAMWSP is to reduce mortality and morbidity caused by arsenic contamination of groundwater. The principal components of the project are:

- Improved understanding of the arsenic problem through national survey;
- Strengthening implementation capacity of the Local Govt. entities and Community Based Organizations; and
- Onsite Mitigation through sub-project development and implementation jointly by LGE and Community Based Organizations.

Major Activities:

- a) Screening, Community Development and Mitigation Program in 188 Upazilas.
- b) Screening and Mitigation in 100 Pourashava
- c) Training of 2000 Doctors and 11000 Health Workers
- d) Strengthening of existing DPHE Zonal Laboratories and establishment of 3 New Zonal Labs
- e) Partnership Approach
  - Technology Validation
  - Hydro geological Investigations
  - Health Relief
  - Media and Communication

Implementation Status (as of May 2002)

a) Screening, Community Development and Mitigation Program in 188 Upazilas.
   i) 41 Upazila (Phase I & II) - Screening Complete
   ii) 6 Upazila (Phase I) - Community Development and Mitigation (ongoing)
   iii) 35 Upazila (Phase II) – Emergency Mitigation and Community Development (ongoing)
   iv) 147 Upazila (Phase III) - Screening (to be initiated in October, 2002)
b) Screening and Mitigation in 100 Pourashava
   i) Production well screening (complete)
   ii) Hand tube well screening (to be initiated in October, 2002)

c) Training of Health Personnel:
2000 Doctors and 11000 Health workers have been trained. The project is also providing emergency health intervention, including patient identification, and health referrals.

d) Strengthening of DPHE Zonal Laboratories and Setup of New labs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening of 3 Existing DHPE Labs</td>
<td>By September 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setup of 3 new labs at Barisal, Rangpur and Sylhet</td>
<td>By June 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e) Partnership Approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCSIR</td>
<td>For technology validation. Agreement has been signed and validation of arsenic removal technology is underway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Health &amp; DGHS</td>
<td>For training of medical personnel and health relief to Arsenic affected Patients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Information</td>
<td>For intensive dissemination of Arsenic related messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSB</td>
<td>For hydro geological investigation and Groundwater Mapping.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BAMWSP aims to co-ordinate arsenic interventions through its National Arsenic Mitigation Information Centre (NAMIC), to collect, collate and disseminate arsenic information from and to interested or active organisations. NAMIC has established a standardized format for nationwide screening and is receiving survey data collected under BAMWSP and by other stakeholders involved in screening, including UNICEF and a number of NGOs. A NAMIC website has been launched, and is available at: http://www.bamwsp.org/Namic/Namic.htm

The BAMWSP Technical Advisory Group (TAG) have reviewed information on alternative water supply and removal of arsenic. They have recommended 4 non-chemical based technological options for short-term mitigation programs: Pond Sand Filter, Rainwater Harvesting, Dug Well; and Deep Tubewell (in the coastal belt). TAG have also recommended four technologies for arsenic removal based on their review of the Rapid Assessment report submitted to them by DFID. These technologies, recommended for use on an emergency pilot basis are:
- Alcan Enhanced Activated Alumina Filters
- BUET Activated Alumina Filters
- Steven’s Institute of Technology Filters
- Sono 3-Pitcher Filters

Subsequently the BAMWSP Project Steering Committee (PSC) has endorsed the recommendation.

Contact:
Project Director, BAMWSP
DPHE Bhaban, 14 Shahid Capt. Monsur Ali Sharani
Kakrail, Dhaka-1000
Phone: 8322438, 9359060 (PABX)
Fax:
Email: pdamwsp@bdmail.net, namic@bdmail.net
Website: www.bamwsp.org
1.2 “National Arsenic Mitigation Program (NAMP)” – A new initiative of the Govt. of Bangladesh for the mitigation of Arsenic Crisis in Bangladesh.

The arsenic problem is widespread and mitigation requires long-term processes and the involvement of many different ministries of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (NAMP) is a new initiative of the GoB to develop a more coordinated response to the Arsenic crisis than before, through a programme through partnership approach. This program will be started by the end of September 2003. Two overriding problems in addressing the crisis have identified, these are-

- Extensive knowledge gaps to mitigate the effects of arsenic
- Lack of institutional capacity at all level particularly at the local level

The GoB is in the process of establishing an Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU) in the Local Government Division (LGD) to prepare and implement the NAMP. Its main role on the whole would be to liaise, coordinate and facilitate. It is proposed that APSU would coordinate the arsenic activities of GoB via the Secretaries Committee for Arsenic, including Secretaries from the Ministries of Local Government, Health, Planning, Water Resources, Science & Technology, Environment, Information, Energy and Agriculture.

In order to help GoB to move forward on the establishment of the APSU and the development of NAMP, DFID agreed to support the effort and is currently designing a Project Memorandum for the Support to the National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (SNAMP).

Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU):

The GoB is in the process of establishing an "Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU)" to assist in the development and implementation of new government policy and strategy, monitoring, and coordinating arsenic related activities. It is proposed that the APSU would coordinate the arsenic activities of GoB via the Secretaries Committee for Arsenic including Secretaries from the Ministries of Local Government, Health, Planning, Water Resources, Science & Technology, Environment, Energy, Information and Agriculture.

The overall activities of APSU is to liaise, coordinate and facilitate all the activities of designing the national strategy and action plan for arsenic mitigation, and further details of proposed activities follow in Table 1.2. The main ministries with important roles to play in addressing the arsenic crisis are shown in Figure 1.2b. In addition to links with different ministries of GoB, APSU will also maintain links with other governmental and non-governmental agencies (see Figure 1.2c). APSU would give active support for activities to BAMWSP and the National Committee of Experts; and liaise with Donor Coordination Unit, all other non-governmental stakeholders and the Unit for Policy Implementation.

The APSU team is an informal interim unit to help create the National Arsenic Mitigation Program, & Support Unit. APSU is going to be started for 2 years initially with a review of progress after one year. Resources for APSU will come from variety of sources, both from donors mainly DFID and from Government of Bangladesh.

The Secretaries Committee agreed that LGD should be the focal ministry for arsenic mitigation and should co-ordinate cross-sectoral interaction through the Secretaries Committee. APSU would provide support to LGD and report to the Secretary LGD who would be the National coordinator of the Arsenic mitigation Program. The Secretary LGD would provide the cross-sectoral interaction through reporting on behalf of APSU to the Secretaries Committee and vice versa. According to the proposed structure of APSU is the following (Figure 1.2a):
Figure 1.2 a) Proposed APSU Structure

**Arsenic Policy Support Unit Structure**

Secretary LGD - National Coordinator AMP

APSU TEAM:
- 1 Local Expert
- 1 International Expert
- 1 BAMWSP consultant
- 2 Support Staff

Joint Secretary LGD
Coordinator APSU

Deputy Secretary LGD

Senior Assistant Secretary LGD

Figure 1.2 b) APSU involvement in creation of the National Arsenic Mitigation Program & Support Unit, showing main ministries with important roles in addressing the arsenic crisis.

**APSU to create National Arsenic Mitigation Program**

Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU) → Arsenic Program Support Unit

Secretary LGD - National Coordinator

Food Chain BARC → Ministry of Agriculture

Health DG Health → Ministry of Health

Hydrogeology GSB → Ministry of Energy

Technology Verification BCSIR → Ministry of Science and Technology

Urban DPHEDPH Rural BAMWSP

Information Directorate of Information

Ministry of LGRD&C

Ministry of Information
Figure 1.2 c) APSU links with other governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Table 1.2: The priority APSU activities that have been proposed are as follows:

1. Finalization of the National Strategy/Action Plan for Arsenic Mitigation
2. Finalization of the design of the National Arsenic Mitigation program
3. Facilitate preparation of, and mobilize committed donor support to:
   - Deep aquifer/Holocene mapping
   - Local government capacity building for implementation of arsenic mitigation
4. Design the Partnership Program with the relevant Ministries and agencies, but with early attention on Ministry of Health and Information and on GSB
5. Prepare monthly status/co-ordination reports for Secretary LGD on BAMWSP, DPHE-UNICEF project, DPHE-Danida project, Watsan Partnership Project (SDC funded), World Vision Project, any other donor/GoB funded projects
6. Finalize strategy for rainwater harvesting
7. Assist relevant ministries and agencies in addressing the food chain issues
8. Formulate agreed national policy on cost-sharing for water supply facilities
9. Provide support to the Secretary LGD in ensuring effective co-ordination of arsenic related activities of different ministries and agencies
10. Facilitate development and implementation of BAMWSP’s partnership with different government agencies, NGOs and development partners
11. Facilitate LGD’s interaction with relevant development partners
12. Assist the LGD in preparing various arsenic related documents, strategy papers, and study proposals on current and emerging issues
13. Provide secretarial assistance through LGD to Secretaries’ Committee and the National Committee of Experts on Arsenic
14. Keep the Secretary LGD informed about developments and findings of different arsenic related studies and recommendations of different workshops and seminars
15. Set up a mechanism for routine monitoring of the implementation of the new strategy, including the program partnerships, and for reporting to the Secretary LGD and other relevant partners
16. Assist LGD in undertaking professional and analytical work by drawing on the expertise available within different government agencies and development partners
17. Devise an effective dissemination strategy with NAMIC, ACIC, WARPO and Directorate of Information
1.3 **Directorate General Health Services (DGHS)**

**Completed Activities:**

Directorate General Health Services (DGHS) worked with UNICEF in eight upazillas for screening of arsenicosis patients. DGHS, with the assistance of NIPSOM, and financial and technical support of WHO has also developed a national protocol for the diagnosis of arsenicosis patients and a management protocol also which were presented and discussed in the ‘International Workshop on Arsenic Mitigation’ held on January, 2002.

**Ongoing Activities:**

Directorate General Health Services (DGHS) is currently developing a recording system all over Bangladesh through the health services network for the proper records of arsenicosis patients in Bangladesh and it will be finalized by this year with the technical support of UNICEF. DGHS has already provided training to almost 2000 doctors and 20,000 field workers on diagnosis of arsenicosis patients and its management and providing awareness campaign through the health care providers at government level. A training module on arsenic is currently being developed and expected to be finalized by October 2002.

**Contact:**

Dr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman
Project Manager Arsenic DGHS
Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212
Phone: 017 – 243978

Dr. Ranjith Kumar Dey
Director Planning and Research DGHS
Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212
Phone: 8819958; 9880082
Fax: 9880082
e-mail: ranjikumar49@hotmail.com

1.4 **Water Development Board**

Water Development Board (WDB) under the Ministry of Water Resources has been working on geological investigation for arsenic in different parts of the country. The experts from WDB have completed 36 shallow drilling and 6 deep drilling with different governmental and non governmental bodies like DPHE/NIPSOM, BAMWSP, Geohazard Research Group, Dept. of Geology, University of Dhaka. They collected both sediments and water samples of these areas for arsenic analysis and have identified different levels in these areas to be arsenic free. The reports are made available at the WDB and respective organizations.

As per the result of the investigation it has been opinioned that identification of the arsenic free water level in different areas is needed for providing safe drinking water on immediate basis. In order to formulate long term planning, strategy and community water resources development area wise identification of arsenic uncontaminated aquifers may be continued through drilling, study and research activities.

**Publications:**

- Arsenic Contamination of Ground Water in Bangladesh -- Syed Musleh Uddin & Lutfenur-1995
- The Hydro-geochemical of Western Border Belt of Bangladesh with Special Emphasis to Access Arsenic Contamination in Ground Water (Water Supply Paper 548) Kazi Shafiu Hossain - 1996

**Contact:**

Alamgir Hossain
Director, Ground Water Hydrology,
Bangladesh Water Development Board
Ministry of Water Resources,
72, Green Road (2nd Floor), Dhaka-1205
Ph: 8121272
1.5 DPHE / DANIDA

An agreement between the Governments of Bangladesh and Denmark on the Danish Sector Programme Support (SPS) to the Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) Sector was signed in June 1999. The SPS for the WSS Sector aims to facilitate implementation of the National Policy for Safe Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation. Among others the SPS includes support to Urban and Rural WSS Components and Arsenic Mitigation Component in the coastal area.

The DPHE / DANIDA Arsenic Mitigation Component (AMC) commenced in January 2000 and supposed to end in June 2004. It aims to work within the visions of the National arsenic mitigation policy.

These are:
- Facilitating the access of all citizens to arsenic free water
- Bringing behavioral changes necessary for ensuring continued use of arsenic free water for drinking and cooking.
- Reducing the incidence of arsenic poisoning.
- Building capacity of the local governments and communities to deal more effectively with arsenic related problems.
- Creating awareness and promoting sustainable arsenic mitigation options.
- Promoting the use of surface and rain water in order to reduce the intake of arsenic contaminated water.

DPHE / DANIDA Arsenic Mitigation Component has another section "Research and Development " which is involved in the research and developmental activities like evaluation and monitoring of alternative safe water option and arsenic removal technologies, awareness campaign in the intervention areas.

Working Areas:

DPHE / DANIDA has been working in 11 Upazilas (Bakergonj, Banaripara, Barisal Sadar, Ujirpur under Barisal district, Pirojpur Sadar, Sonagazi under Feni district, Lakshmipur Sadar, Raiipur, Ramgati under Lakshmipur district, Begumgonj under Noakhali district, Noakhakli Sadar.

Completed Activities:
- Screening for tube-wells in some of the working areas and 85000 tube wells have been screened already (for details please contact DPHE/DANIDA Arsenic Mitigation Component).
- Installation of about 950 deep tube-wells up to June 2002.
- Evaluation of Bucket Treatment Unit (BTU) as arsenic removal technology.

Ongoing Activities:
- Evaluation of the following technologies as alternative safe water options in terms of water quality, monitoring of effectiveness, social acceptability.
  - Pond Sand Filter in Potuakhali and Noakhali
  - Minpipe Water Supply in Ramgati under Lakshmipur district.
  - Rain Water Harvesting System
  - Shapla Unit of International Development Enterprise (IDE) in Begumgonj under Noakhali district.
  - Steven's Star Filter in Lakshmipur.
  - Fill and Draw (F & D)
- Screening of tube-well for arsenic contamination.
- Awareness campaigning, patient detection and referral to hospital.
- Installation of deep tube-wells as safe water source.
- Geographical Information System (GIS) and mapping.
- Equipping and running one laboratory in Noakhali.

Duration of the Project:
The project commenced in January 2001 and supposed to end in June 2004
Contact:
Md. Iqbal Choudhury,
Chief, R&D Unit,
DPHE / DANIDA Water Supply and Sanitation Component,
DPHE Bhaban, Kakrail, Dhaka - 1000.
Tel: 9346167-70, Fax 9344791
E-mail: watsap@dhaka.agni.com

Mr. Azhar Ali,
Chief Socioeconomic Advisor,
Socioeconomic Section, R & D,
DPHE / DANIDA Water Supply and Sanitation,
House-35 (fifth floor), Road - 28,
Dhanmondi, Dhaka.
Tel: 9124152
E-mail: watsap@dhaka.agni.com
1.6 DPHE / UNICEF

Completed Activities:

The DPHE / UNICEF arsenic mitigation initiative to date has consisted of several National-scale activities and a focussed 'Action Research' project in five upazillas.

The national-scale activities undertaken include testing of 51,000 tubewells in 1998 using field test kits (29% of the tubewells contaminated above 50 ppb) to give the first idea of the scale of contamination Nationwide, and the development and testing of a comprehensive communication campaign including radio and television spots.

The 'Action Research into Community Based Arsenic Mitigation' project has worked in five upazillas with BRAC (two upazillas), Grameen Bank, Dhaka Community Hospital Trust and the Integrated Service for the Development of Children and Mothers (ISDCM - with Rotary Funding). The project followed an integrated approach and included four main activities: testing of all tubewells in the upazilla; arsenicosis patient identification / support; implementation, monitoring and evaluation of alternative water supply technologies; communication about arsenic and arsenicosis. The technologies tested ranged from home-based solutions such as the 3-kolshi arsenic removal filter to community-based solutions such as the Pond Sand Filter (PSF) for treatment of surface water.

Ongoing and Future Activities:

2001-2003, 15 Upazilla Arsenic Mitigation and water supply project

DPHE / UNICEF developed the second phase of the project which has similar activities with further emphasis placed on sustainability, community involvement and monitoring, and community cost sharing. Other innovations and additions to the program include the implementation of pre-intervention baseline, and post-intervention follow-up arsenic-KAP surveys in the 15 upazillas, the introduction of GPS mapping of wells and the development of union-level "map booklets" for use as local planning and decision-making tools. The phase two project is being implemented in 15 upazillas. The project has on offer for interested parties an "arsenic database" which can be used to track (and report) testing results, with the collected data formatted according to the standard BAMWSP data collection form.

The communication and screening phase of the 15 upazila project was completed in the first half of 2002, with the help of a total of 8 NGOs. Some 300,000 wells were tested, of which 68% were found “red”. An additional 2,300 patients were identified through a combination of house-to-house surveys and community health-camps. The safe water options component of this program will continue at least until the end of 2003. Safe water options currently being piloted under this program include low-cost household- and community Rain Water Harvesting, Pond Sand Filters, large-volume surface water treatment systems, improved dug wells, imported community-level arsenic adsorbent plants and locally manufactured household-level arsenic adsorbent plants (Shapla). Three of the 15 upazilas are funded by the UN Foundation, and work there is carried out in cooperation with the WHO.

2002-2004, 25 Upazilla Arsenic Mitigation and water supply project

In the second half of 2002 the program will be further expanded, when communication and well-screening activities will commence in a further 25 upazillas. Six more NGOs will be brought on board, bringing the total number of NGO partners to 14. Six of the new 25 upazillas will be covered exclusively by DPHE, in an attempt to increase government ownership and involvement in arsenic mitigation. It is anticipated that under this 25 upazila project 500,000 wells will be tested by end of December 2002. Safe water options implementation will start from January 2003, and continue at least until the first half of 2004.

DFID is the main funder of a US$ 49.3million five year Rural Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply Project, implemented by DPHE with assistance from UNICEF. The water supply component is primarily aimed at low water table and underserved areas in 38 districts of Bangladesh. It is not specifically targeted at arsenic-affected areas but measures will be taken to ensure that all water supplies provided are free from arsenic. Implementation is expected to commence early in 2001, on completion of the inception phase.
Contact:
Mr. Moniruzzaman
Executive Engineer (XEN R&D Division)
DPHE, DPHE Bhaban
14 Captain Monsur Ali Sarani
Kakrail, Dhaka-1000
Tel: 9330061 Fax: 9343357
Email: bgs@bangla.net

Contact:
Md. Shafiquil Islam
Deputy Chief (Water & Environmental Sanitation),
Team Leader Arsenic Mitigation
UNICEF, BSL Office Complex
1 Minto Road, Dhaka-1000
Tel: 9336701-10, Fax: 9335641-2
Email: shislam@unicef.org
1.7 Directorate General of Health services / UNICEF

UNICEF have supported DGHS and Dhaka Community Hospital Trust to develop a patient treatment protocol and in training doctors and health workers in 80 districts across the country. DGHS and UNICEF are working together to build capacity of public health workers to identify and treat patients.

The health division of UNICEF also supports the following activities:

- Active patient identification in UNICEF working areas by house to house screening.
- Compilation of a patient profile with all related information such as - biological investigation results (including nail and urine) water information, sign-symptoms etc.
- Disseminate patient lists to relevant organisations, so that alternate options are prioritized to the areas with most patients.
- Distribute medicine (anti-oxidants and skin ointment) to the identified patients.
- Nationwide training of doctors and health workers through DGHS.
- Establish a referral and surveillance system with collaboration from DGHS and DCHT (link patient with alternate water options in addition to treatment facilities)
- Collaboration with CDC for epidemiological studies (study to commence January 2003).
- A collaboration study with DCHT to see efficiency of different treatment options for the patients.

Contact:
Dr Yasmin Ali Haque,
Project Officer, UNICEF,
1 Minto Road, BSL Office Complex, Dhaka
Tel: 880-2-9336701-10
Fax: 880-2-933641-42
Email: yhaque@unicef.org
2 World Health Organization – Bangladesh

2.1 Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE)/WHO

The WHO Environmental Health Team in Bangladesh has supported the Government of Bangladesh since the early stages of recognition of the arsenic problem (1993), mostly by providing technical expertise. This expertise included both technological aspects of arsenic removal and an epidemiological review of the health effects and immediate actions required for mitigation.

As a result in 1997, WHO informed GoB that arsenic in drinking water was a "Major Public Health Issue" which should be dealt with on an "Emergency Basis". Joint studies with local institutes have been carried out to test household arsenic removal techniques and the quality of alternative drinking water sources. An evaluation was made of the field test kits available (1998). WHO has been an active partner to GoB and in the context of interagency collaboration, through support to the organization of a National Co-ordination Conference (1999) and the International Workshop on Arsenic Mitigation (2002), support for various aspects of arsenic mitigation, and through the management of an inter laboratory comparison exercise aimed at improving capacity of local laboratories to determine arsenic contamination in water.

WHO has supported strengthening of laboratories within DPHE, and is a lead partner in DPHE’s efforts to establish a national water quality monitoring and surveillance system.

In 2000 WHO, with the support of BAEC and IAEA, has executed an inter-laboratory comparison with 25 participating laboratories to improve laboratory practice and measurement of arsenic. A next round will be organized in late 2002.

WHO have been involved in an informal Emergency Arsenic Taskforce, requested by the LCG WATSAN which has documented an emergency action approach and funded a geographical information system (GIS) mapping of arsenic hotspot villages and working areas of various arsenic projects. This information is held by NAMIC who are responsible for updating the maps.

DPHE and UNICEF are collaborating in implementing a arsenic mitigation project in 15 upazillas. WHO and UNICEF have received funding to start a two-year action research project on arsenic mitigation in three upazillas, with funding from the UN Foundation. In addition to funding direct mitigation activities (through UNICEF), the project will support capacity building for screening of patients and tubewells, for development of laboratory capacity at upazilla level, and for community based project implementation and monitoring. An important element of the action-research will be to examine the effectiveness of the project interventions in sustainable reduction of exposure to arsenic. The project will start on April 1, 2002 and will have a duration of two years.

Contact:
Mr. Han A. Heijnen,
Environmental Health Advisor, World Health Organization,
DPHE Bhaban, Kakrail, Dhaka 1000
14 Captain Monsur Ali Sarani
Kakrail, Dhaka-1000
Tel: 9343372, Fax: 8613247,
E-mail: whosani@ctechco.net
2.2 **Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS)/WHO**

In the course of 2001, DGHS expressed a need to develop criteria for diagnosis of arsenic patients. DGHS, with the assistance of NIPSOM, and financial and technical support of WHO has developed a national protocol for the diagnosis of arsenic patients. First steps have been undertaken to prepare a similar protocol for the management of arsenicosis patients.

The two protocols were presented and discussed at the January 2002 International Workshop on Arsenic Mitigation. Training modules are now under preparation, and the protocol will be field tested during the first half of 2002. The protocols will be reviewed during a regional meeting in Thailand in October 2002 to arrive at an agreed protocol for identification of arsenic patients in Asia. Simultaneously further steps will be undertaken to improve the protocols that are for patient management.

**Contact:**

Dr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman

Project Manager Arsenic

DGHS

Mohakhali

Dhaka 1212

Phone: 017 – 243978

Fax: 9880082

Dr. Ranjith Kumar Dey

Director Planning and Research

DGHS

Mohakhali

Dhaka 1212

Phone: 8819958; 9880082

e-mail: ranjitkumar49@hotmail.com

2.3 **ICDDR,B Centre for Health and Population Research/WHO**

WHO is co-financing a research project on Arsenic in tube well water and health consequences. Other financial support is provided by SIDA and AusAid.

The consequences of exposure to arsenic will be extensive and include excess incidence and mortality in cancers and cardio-vascular diseases. However, the knowledge base is weak on the weight of this new burden of diseases and on the speed by which it develops. Little is known about the reproductive health consequences, and about the possible aggravating role of the widespread malnutrition in Bangladesh on arsenic-induced health effects.

The overall objective of this project is to establish a strong epidemiologic platform of research on levels of arsenic exposure through drinking water, occurrence of arsenic skin lesions, consequences for reproductive outcome, effect on adult mortality, modifications of effects by the nutritional status, and effects of an intervention with alternative water sources.

**Contact:**

Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman, MBBS, PhD.

*Arsenic and Environmental Epidemiologist*

Public Health Sciences Division

ICDDR,B - the Centre for Health and Population Research

GPO Box 128, Mohakhali CA, Dhaka 1000

Phone +880 2 9885155, 8811751-60 (ext.2236) , Cell: 011-811751

Fax +880 2 8826050

E-mail: mahfuzar@icddrb.org
2.4 **World Health Organisation (WHO) – Guidelines and Protocols**

In response to the arsenic crisis the WHO Task Force dealing with the WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality has given priority to the preparation of a technical monograph on the control of health hazards from arsenic in drinking-water. This work was undertaken as a joint endeavour of interested United Nations agencies including UNICEF, WHO and World Bank. As a result a UN Synthesis Report on Arsenic in Drinking Water has been prepared, covering the following areas:

- Sources of Contamination
- Environmental Health and Human Exposure Assessment
- Exposure and Health Effects
- Diagnosis and Treatment of Chronic Arsenic Poisoning
- Drinking Water Quality Guidelines and Standards
- Safe Water Technology
- Communication for Development
- Development of Mitigation Strategies

This report is a synthesis of the "state-of-the-art" arsenic knowledge. It is expected that planners, government officials, development aid agencies, and other stakeholders at the national and regional levels, as well as the scientific community in general, will use the report as a primer on arsenic and will promote necessary action. At the same time, the report will identify current knowledge gaps and research needs.

The final draft report is available since late 2001 on the WHO website at "www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/water_quality/arsenic.htm". An updated and edited version is now being readied for publication, by early 2003.

Under the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), WHO, in conjunction with the ILO and UNEP has published an update of the Environmental Health Criteria (No. 224) on Arsenic and Arsenic Compounds in November 2001. EHC 224 provides an authoritative reference on environmental transport and distribution of arsenic; environmental levels and human exposure; kinetics and metabolism; and effects on laboratory animals and in vitro systems, on human health and on other organisms in the environment. The publication can be downloaded from www.inchem.org/pages/ehc.html

At the end of February 2003 WHO will publish the revised Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality. The Guidelines will provide guideline values about a wide range of microbial, chemical and radiation risks associated with drinking water. A special section on chemical constituents and on household water treatment and storage will be provided. In recognition of its growing importance as a source of drinking water, rainwater and rainwater quality will be discussed. Risk assessment techniques such as HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) will be presented and complement by Hygiene Codes.

Occasionally, WHO provides support for health research through its on-going country programme, or through the WHO South East Asia Regional Office in New Delhi.

At the Regional Level WHO provides support to countries suffering from arsenic problems through an intercountry programme. Among many issues, this programme intends to strengthen health capabilities in arsenic mitigation, including further development of protocols for diagnosis and management of arsenicosis patients.

**Contact:**
Mr. Han A. Heijnen  
Environmental Health Advisor,  
World Health Organization  
DPHE Bhaban, Kakrail, Dhaka 1000  
Tel: 934-3372, Fax: 8613247,  
E-mail: whosani@citechco.net

Dr. Jamie Bartram  
Water, Sanitation & Health Program  
PHE/SDE, World Health Organization  
CH-1211 Geneva 27,  
Switzerland  
Fax: 41 22 791 4159,  
E-mail: bartramj@who.ch
3 World Bank

The US$44.4 million National level Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) is co-funded by GoB, World Bank and SDC. In August 1998 World Bank approved credit of US$32.4 million to GoB to implement the four-year project. BAMWSP aims to co-ordinate arsenic interventions and through its National Arsenic Mitigation Information Centre (NAMIC) collect, collate and disseminate arsenic information from and to interested or active organisations. See preceding Section 1.1 for a summary of the BAMWSP activities. BAMWSP’s Project Management Unit (PMU) is headed by DPHE.

Contact: Paul Martin
Environmental Specialist
World Bank Office, Dhaka
3A Paribagh, Prioprangan Apartment
Dhaka-1000
Tel: 8611056-8, Fax: 8613220, 8615351
Email: p martin@worldbank.org
Web: www.bamwsp.org

Arsenic Public Health Project: A new IDA Credit has been proposed to assist the Government of Bangladesh in addressing the health aspects of the problem through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to complement the water sector activities being carried out under the Local Government Division. This project is at a very preliminary stage of preparation and is very tentatively indicated as a $45 million effort to finance Behaviour Change Communication (health-related messages), Capacity Strengthening of the health sector, and Research activities, including some pilot operations to test some of the experimental treatment regimens for arsenicosis. If the Government undertakes preparatory activities expeditiously, project implementation could begin in the second half of 2003.

Contact:
Sundararajan S. Gopalan
Senior Health, Nutrition and Population Specialist
World Bank
3A, Paribagh, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh
Tel: 8611056-8, Fax: 8613220, 8615351
Email: sgopalan@worldbank.org
4. **Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)**

AusAID has initiated an arsenic mitigation program named 'Australian Arsenic Mitigation Program (AAMP)' with funding of A$3 million over the period 2001-2004. The goal of the program is to contribute to the mitigation of arsenic poisoning in Bangladesh and West Bengal, India. In June 2000 proposals were requested from Bangladesh, India and Australia in a public tender. Among the three selected projects, two are being implemented in Bangladesh and one in West Bengal, India. A Subsidiary Agreement was signed on 21 May 2002 between the Government of Australia and the Government of Bangladesh in this regard. The projects are:

- **Bangladesh-Australia Centre for Safe Water and Food Project** - The Australian company, EGIS Consulting will be implementing this project in collaboration with Dhaka Community Hospital (DCH). The objective of the project is to provide a substantial contribution to the prevention of arsenic poisoning in the communities of Bangladesh through an integrated and sustainable set of programs including establishment of the Bangladesh-Australia Centre for Safe Water and Food at DCH and the implementation of a Community Health Education Program in the arsenic affected areas.

- **Health and Social Research Project** - This project will be implemented by the Australian National University in collaboration with the NGO Forum for Drinking Water and Sanitation, Bangladesh. The objective of the project is to assess the social and health costs of exposure to arsenic contamination and compare these to the monetary, social and health costs of arsenic mitigation programs.

**Contact:**

Mr Md Rakib Hossain  
Senior Program Officer  
Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)  
Australian High Commission  
184 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212  
Tel: 8813101-5 Fax: 8823794  
Email: rakib.hossain@dfat.gov.au

**Contact:**

Ms Vilaisan Campbell  
First Secretary (Development Assistance)  
Australian High Commission  
184 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212  
Tel: 8813101-5 Fax: 8823794  
Email: vilaisan.campbell@dfat.gov.au

5. **Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)**

CIDA are currently funding a three-year (2000/2003) Environmental Technology Verification (ETV-AM) - Arsenic Mitigation Project. The project works closely with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and BAMWSP (see section 1.1) and is implemented though the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Local Government Division and Ontario Centre for Environmental Technology Advancement (OCETA), and further details are given in Section 28?? The CIDA contribution to the project is approximately US$2.7million.

The objective of the project is to develop a transparent process for assessing and verifying arsenic removal technologies and the transfer of the process and procedures to an entity designated by the Government of Bangladesh. The main outputs will include internationally recognised criteria for examining arsenic removal technologies, a process for certification of arsenic removal technologies and confirmed technology viability through a comprehensive field verification program.

**Contact:**

Ms. Sylvia Islam  
Development Adviser  
Canadian High Commission (CIDA)  
House # 16/A, Road # 48  
Gulshan, Dhaka-1213  
Tel: 9887091-7 Fax: 8826585, 8823043  
Email: sylvia.islam@dfait-maeci.gc.ca
6 Department for International Development (DFID)

Completed Activities

The Phase 1 study commenced in January 1998, with the Final Report issued in early 1999. It included the compilation review and database of existing groundwater and sediment arsenic data from Bangladesh; a systematic groundwater quality survey using laboratory analysis for the 41 districts then believed to be worst affected in Bangladesh; a detailed geochemical investigation in three special study areas; modelling the movement of groundwater and arsenic in a typical Bangladesh situation. Covered 250 thanas - essentially that part of the country to the south of and including the Padma and Upper Megha flood plains, but excluding the Chittagong Hill Tracts.


Phase two continued from Phase one and extended the survey to the remaining districts of Bangladesh excluding the three districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The final data set for this survey consists of a sample of 3534 well waters. In addition to arsenic it considers other elements of concern, such as manganese, boron and uranium. The principal findings were presented in March 2000 and the Final Report was completed in February 2001, and is now available in print. A limited number of further complimentary copies are available to bonafide organisations working within Bangladesh in the field of arsenic mitigation. Requests should be sent on headed paper to DFID Manager (Water & Sanitation), House No 42, Road No 28, Gulshan, Dhaka. Copies may also be purchased from Graphosman, 3/3-C Purana Paltan, Karim Mansion (1st Floor), Dhaka-1000. Enquiries from outside Bangladesh concerning further copies should be addressed to Dr D G Kinniburgh at the British Geological Survey (email dgk@bgs.ac.uk). Information can also be viewed and downloaded from the BGS website at www.bgs.ac.uk/arsenic/Bangladesh.


This DFID-funded study evaluated nine arsenic removal technologies for technical and social acceptability. The studies commenced in August 2000, and the Final (Phase II) Report was issued in March 2001. The Final report is available on the WaterAid website at www.wateraid.co.uk. The report was submitted to the BAMWSP Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and TAG reviewed the study and have recommended four technologies to use in emergency basis water supply, in acute arsenic affected area on an experimental basis.

Ongoing Activities

DFID is the major funder of a US$ 49.3million five year Rural Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply Project, implemented by DPHE with assistance from UNICEF. The water supply component is primarily aimed at low water table and underserved areas in 38 districts of Bangladesh. It is not specifically targeted at arsenic-affected areas but measures will be taken to ensure that all water supplies provided are free from arsenic. Implementation commenced in January 2002, with an initial two-year developmental phase in selected upazilas within seven districts (Rangpur, Gaibandha, Brahmanbaria, Jamalpur, Madaripur, Sirajgonj, Chuadanga, Rangamati, Khagrachhari, Bandarban).

DFID is also currently considering an upscale of its previous programme with the INGO, WaterAid, to further develop sustainable, people-centred approaches to community managed, safe water supplies including those in arsenic prone areas and through NAISU to improve the clear communication of safe water issues to communities and small NGOs.
Future Projects

The Government of Bangladesh has decided to establish an Arsenic Policy Support Unit (APSU) in the Local Government Division (LGD) to prepare and implement a National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (NAMP). DFID is currently designing a Support to the National Arsenic Mitigation Programme (SNAMP), and has recently approved preliminary funding of approximately 0.6 million UK Pounds over two years to support APSU in planning and coordinating its cross-sectoral response to arsenic. This preliminary DFID funded support to the APSU will include the funding of an international and local consultant. SNAMP itself is expected to be a three year programme, commencing in 2003, offering flexible assistance in knowledge generation, awareness raising and capacity building.

Contacts:

Peregrine Swann  
Senior Engineering Adviser  
DFID, United Nations Road  
Baridhara, Dhaka-1212  
Tel: 8822705-9, Fax: 8823474  
Email: p-swann@dfid.gov.uk

Rodney Dyer  
DFID Manager (Water & Sanitation)  
Department of Public Health Engineering  
DPHE Bhaban (GoB-UNICEF, 3rd Floor)  
14 Shaheed Captain M Ali Sharani  
Kakrail, Dhaka-1000  
Tel: 9354016, Mobile: 011 807741  
Fax: 8823474 or 8823181  
Email: r-dyer@agni.com

7 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA):

Ongoing Activities:


JICA are funding a Study Team to investigate groundwater development of deep aquifers for safe drinking water supply to arsenic affected areas in Western Bangladesh. DPHE is the implementation partner and the project duration is December 1999 to July 2002. The study has been conducted in three phases and a Draft Master plan has been prepared for Development of Groundwater in Deep Aquifers or Safe Drinking Water Supply to the Arsenic Affected Areas with target year 2010. After approval of JICA, this Masterplan is scheduled to be submitted to GOB in July 2002.

ii) Integrated Approach for Mitigation of the Arsenic Contamination of Drinking Water in Bangladesh (Sharsha upazilla of Jessore District covering 300,000 people)

This partnership program is to improve the symptoms of arsenic patients and to prevent new cases of Arsenic poisoning by securing safe drinking water. The implementation partner is Asia Arsenic Network and the project duration is January 2001 – December 2004. The following activities are included:

1. Organize community workers and conduct training on Arsenic, arsenicosis and how to use test-kit.
2. Test all tubewells
3. Operation of a Mobile Arsenic centre to conduct awareness education with visual Aid
4. Identify arsenicosis patients
5. To install safe water options
6. Distribute medicine.

Contact:
Mr. Takuya Otsuka or Md. Zulfikar Ali,  
JICA, head office, IDB Bhaban Agargaon (12th Floor)  
Tel: 812 4551-3, 9126315, 9132535, Fax # 9128804, 9128857  
E-mail: jicabd06@citechco.net or E-mail: jicabd07@citechco.net
8 Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

Ongoing Activities:

The following two Arsenic projects are currently supported by Sweden (Sida):

1) “ARSENIC IN DRINKING WATER AND HEALTH CONSEQUENCES”

This is a support to the International Centre for Health and Population Research in Dhaka, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B), working in close co-operation with BRAC (Bangladesh) and Linköping University. Sida finalised its decision to support to ICDDR,B in 2001 and the project is currently under implementation since 1 July 2001. Fieldwork started in late autumn 2001, and is geographically located to the Matlab district southeast of Dhaka. (A six-monthly technical report, covering the period Jan-June 2002, was submitted to the Embassy in July ‘02.) The total allocation to the project is SEK 3 500 00 for the two year period 2001-03.

Objective: The Centre wants to conduct epidemiological studies in their Matlab area (Upazilla) and where people have been exposed to different levels of arsenic contaminated drinking water. The area is known to be badly affected by arsenic. Hence the main focus is to assert/identify the different Health consequences of long-term exposure to dangerous water intake.

During the first six months of 2002 extensive training (skin screening & water testing) were provided to different field staff, which was provided by BRAC. Screening of approx. 12800 tube wells in the Matlab area have been identified and numbered by GPS (Geographic Positioning System) teams. Skin screening: Approximately 25.000 people have been examined (1/7 of all population). A referral routine has been established in cases where Arsenic related diseases are detected.

The use of tube well water as drinking water has been identified through interviews. Clinic activities undertaken and where selected cases and referents checked. Furthermore assessment of arsenic in tube wells has been conducted, done by field teams. Water samples are analysed by Karolinska Institute, in Stockholm, where also quality control of randomly selected samples from the batches analysed in Dhaka will be performed. Finally mitigation actives: Before testing as well as after completion of testing of tube well water, meetings are organised in the villages. Discussions are held with the Village Arsenic Mitigation Committees which mitigation options there might be. So far a number of 4-pitcher filters have been supplied, a pond sand filter system is planned to be implemented, and a few rainwater-harvesting systems have been installed.

2) ARSENIC MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN GREATER FARIDPUR

This project has just been approved by Sida, Stockholm, and is yet awaiting final approval of ERD. The support is based on a request from Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) and is linked to the Productive Employment Project (PEP or RD-5) which is geographically located in the Greater Faridpur area since 1986-87. (Greater Faridpur consists of the five districts: Faridpur, Rajbari, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur.)

Sida has approved support to a Pilot Phase, which will have a duration of one year 2002-03, and allocated a maximum amount of SEK 3 000 000 (Approx. 300.000 USD). The development objective is to provide PEP target group members as well as other nearby community members with sustainable sources of safe, arsenic free drinking water and thus reduce the risk of arsenic related diseases.

The more immediate objective of the pilot phase will be to establish linkages with different GOs and NGOs involved in arsenic mitigation activities in order to gain experiences and to identify, finalise the best suitable options and others related activities for PEP members and related community members:
- Implement arsenic mitigation approaches that include both technical and socio-economic strategies, alternative water supplies;
- assist improved access to information, equipment and other items needed;
- establish linkages between line at both national and local levels and to address the immediate and long term issues of arsenic problems in the project area; and;
- generate increased awareness and provide training to the PEP group members on health implications of prolonged intake of arsenic contaminated water.
Contact:
Mr Johan Norqvist
First Secretary
Swedish Embassy
House 1, Road 51
Gulshan, Dhaka
Bangladesh
Tel: +880 2 882 4761-4
Fax: +880 2 882 3948
Email: johan.norqvist@sida.se
9  **Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC)**

SDC, with GoB and World Bank, is co-funding the US$44.4million National level Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) as described in preceding Section 1.1.

The WATSAN Partnership Project (see Section 23) is SDC funded and is a collaborative community based rural water supply, sanitation and hygiene sector project currently undertaken in Rajshahi and Chapai Nawabgonj Districts. The problem of arsenic contamination in ground water has necessitated investigation and implementation of affordable new technologies for the most severely affected people in the project area.

Another project financed by SDC is the Rain Water Harvesting Project in Bangladesh. This project is an Action Research Project implemented by NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation. The goal and objective of the project is to introduce the household rainwater harvesting system in combination with other alternatives as a safe, socially acceptable, low-cost and affordable water supply system in the areas where the ground water is contaminated by arsenic. The project commenced in June 2000 and is ongoing.

**Contact:**
Dr. Fazila Banu Lily  
Swiss Development Co-operation (SDC)  
Embassy of Switzerland  
House # B-31, Road # 18  
Banani, Dhaka-1213  
Tel: 8812392-4  
Fax: 8823497  
Email: dhaka@sdc.net

10  **Arsenic Crisis Information Centre (ACIC)**

The West Bengal & Bangladesh Arsenic Crisis Information Centre was founded in 1997 in Dhaka. ACIC is a private not-for-profit service focusing on enhancing the visibility and accessibility of arsenic crisis related information using Internet technologies. Currently it maintains:

- A website at http://bicn.com/acic
- An opt-in email newsletter (1045 subscribers currently) to announce when new information is added to the website (email arsenic-crisis-news-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to subscribe)
- Three moderated email discussion groups at egroups.com,

(1) arsenic-source , for those interested in all aspects of arsenic geochemistry (email arsenic-source-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to subscribe);

(2) arsenic-safewater, for those interested in water treatment technologies and alternative supplies (email arsenic-safewater-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to subscribe); and

(3) arsenic-medical, for those interested in arsenic disease diagnosis, epidemiology, treatment of symptoms, etc. (email arsenic-medical-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to subscribe)

**Contact:**
Sara Bennett  
Email: sbennett@bicn.com
11 Asia Arsenic Network

**Completed activities:**

The Asia Arsenic Network (AAN), a Japan based NGO is a pioneer organization working since 1996 in Bangladesh to find out the ways of reducing the sufferings of victims and alternate sources of safe drinking water. In March 2000 AAN completed a 3-year pilot study project in the Samta village of Sharsha Upazilla under the Jessore district. The project consisted of three pillars; namely research, community participation and measures for safe drinking water and management of patients.

**Major activities of the project included:**

1) Screening of all the tube wells for arsenic;
2) Production of a “contamination map” illustrating the locations of tube wells with colours to show arsenic contamination level of each tube well;
3) Formation of, and collaboration with, Arsenic Prevention Committee;
4) Geological and hydrogeological surveys to find the reasons of arsenic contamination of aquifers;
5) Patient identification and management (including surgical operation and distribution of vitamins);
6) A pond sand filter was installed as safe community water source.

The results of these researches and activities were reported in an Interim Report titled “Arsenic Contamination in Groundwater in Bangladesh” (April 1999) by AAN, Research Group of Applied Geology (RGAG) and NIPSOM. Another report titled “Arsenic contamination in groundwater and hydrogeological background in Samta village, western Bangladesh” (July 2000) was published by RGAG with a supplement “Recommendation for mitigation of arsenic contamination in Bangladesh” by AAN and NIPSOM.

**Ongoing and proposed activities:**

On the basis of Samta experience AAN started a new project; namely, a Mobile Arsenic Centre (MAC) project, to extend their mitigation program to other arsenic affected areas surrounding the Jessore district. A Mobile Arsenic Centre is a team of experts consisting of a chemist/technician to analyze water quality, medical experts and environmental engineer to find most suitable safe water options and a social worker to conduct awareness education. The MAC is also equipped with transportable necessary instruments, chemicals and medicines for the patients.

The MAC team visits seriously affected villages to mitigate the arsenic problem there. The total project is implemented with the co-operation and support of community people and the local NGOs. Prior to the visit of a MAC, a local NGO conducts the screening of tube wells for arsenic in a village and prepare a contamination map. The data of screening and the map form the basis of MAC activities. In the arsenic affected village MAC conducts a house-to-house survey to identify arsenicosis patients, and awareness education is carried out in a village meeting and in small gatherings in yards. Villagers are encouraged to set up an Arsenic Prevention Committee to deal with the problems related to arsenic contamination and its mitigation in their village. MAC also provides guidance on acceptable and environment-friendly safe water options.

So far AAN has conducted three MAC programs in fourteen villages in Khulna division. The villages are Mazdia, Achintanagar and Bara Kamarkundu of Jhenidah, Agarhati, Marua and Durbadanga of Jessore, Benagari, Takpara and Gopenathpur of Chuadanga, Chhatian of Meherpur, Chupria, Noapara, Khalishkhal and Sreemantakati of Shatkhira districts.

In these villages about 700 arsenicosis patients were identified and are now under AAN’s medical supervision. Among them three cancer patients were found during the MAC operation and they received surgical treatment as well as anticancer therapy. So far four pond sand filters (PSF), three modified dugwell with filter and four deep tube well have been installed in eight villages as arsenic safe water options. And the installation of three PSF and three deep tubewells, modified dug wells with sand filter are in progress with the active participation of Village Arsenic Committees.
For screening of tubewell water AAN utilize NIPSOM Field Kit which is a locally developed version of AAN Field Kit invented by Mr. Hiromi Hironaka, Environmental Chemist and member of AAN.

Regarding the arsenic safe water option AAN thinks that no single option can ensure to provide safe drinking water to the whole community throughout the year. In the MAC program AAN recommends the three options; namely a) Pond Sand Filter (AAN-NIPSOM Type), b) Modified Dug Well (with sand Filter), and c) Deep Tube Well (with seal) depending on the situation of safe water sources and geographical/geological condition of the village.

Home-based Arsenic Removal Unit:
After screening of tubewell water in highly arsenic affected villages, it is very important to withdraw the people from drinking arsenic contaminated tubewell water to safe one as early as possible. But within the timeframe of implementing the mitigation activities it is very difficult to provide arsenic safe water by installing any community based option. In that case AAN introduce one domestic arsenic removal unit “AAN Filter” which can remove arsenic effectively and also can provide arsenic and bacteriological safe water at a very low cost to the people.

Now AAN is going to implement a 3-year arsenic mitigation project under JICA Development Partnership Program in Sharsha Upazila of Jessore District.

Contact:
Ms. Sachie Tsushima
Country Representative Asia Arsenic Network
House # 142, Road # 12,
Block- E, Banani, Dhaka – 1213
Mobile : 018-240803,011-806766,
Email: tsushima@citechco.net
12 BRAC

BRAC, is one of the largest national non-governmental organisations and has a proven capacity for field-level programme implementation, socio-economic research, a strong institutional network and experience in training of community members in testing tubewell water for arsenic.

Completed Activities:

BRAC initiated arsenic mitigation activities through testing all 802 tubewells in its field offices. 12% were found to be arsenic contaminated.

In Hajiganj upazilla 93% of the 11,954 tubewells tested by BRAC in this upazilla showed the presence of arsenic. When the results of field testing by Village Health Workers (VHW) were cross-checked with laboratory results 93% were consistent. The testing program in Hajiganj upazilla was completed in just over a month.

In 1998 BRAC completed a countrywide testing of tube wells, which were installed by the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) during 1997-1998 with assistance from UNICEF. A total of 12,604 tubewells were tested under this project using field kits. It took 35 days to complete the testing.

Ongoing Activities:

In 1999 BRAC, in collaboration with UNICEF and DPHE, initiated a pilot project on community-based arsenic mitigation in one union of Sonargaon upazilla under Narayanganj district. The project followed an integrated approach and included four main activities: communication about arsenic and arsenicosis; testing of all tubewells in the upazilla; arsenicosis patient identification / support / implementation; monitoring and evaluation of alternative water supply technologies. The technologies tested ranged from home-based solutions such as the 3-kalshi arsenic removal filter to community-based solutions such as the Pond Sand Filter (PSF) for treatment of surface water.

In June 1999 BRAC extended the action research on community-based arsenic mitigation to two upazillas: Sonargaon of Narayanganj district and Jhikargacha of Jessore district. Working closely with DPHE/UNICEF, BRAC actively involved communities in assessing and mitigating the arsenic crisis.

Once tubewells have been tested for arsenic BRAC then involve communities in highly affected areas in finding alternative sources of safe drinking water. This project attempted to test different options of safe drinking water in the two upazillas. As very little was known about the effectiveness and acceptability of different safe water options at the beginning of the project, it was essentially an ‘action research’ to assess the different options.

BRAC have now started an arsenic project in 4 new upazillas. The upazillas are Borura, Haimchar, Bhanga and Monirampur. The objectives of the project in these areas are to test all tubewells for arsenic and mark with appropriate paints red or green and building awareness among the people. Testing have already completed. Awareness raising has been done through training, workshops etc. In addition to the action research into community based arsenic mitigation project activities, BRAC implemented a rural multipurpose piped water supply in Pakunda village of Sonargaon. The capacity of the overhead tank is 50,000 litre. It has the provision of providing water for both drinking water through domestic supply line and agricultural purposes as well. People have contributed 20% of the total installation cost and they have agreed to pay the maintenance cost.

Contact:
Mr. Zakaria
Environmental Researcher
Arsenic Section, BRAC
66 Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka-1212
Tel: 8824180-7  Fax: 8823542
Email: bracamr@bdmail.net
The arsenic activities of CARE Bangladesh are associated with three programmes. The Sanitation And Family Education Resource (SAFER) project in Sitakunda, Chittagong; the WATSAN Partnership Project (WPP) in Rajshahi, Nawabganj (see section 3.22??); and the Integrated Food Security Program (IFSP). These address arsenic issues as part of their programme activities. The Integrated Food Security Program (IFSP) is addressing the arsenic problems through their Flood Proofing Project in Kurigram, Netrokona (FPP) and SHAHAR in different parts of the country. Accordingly SAFER and WATSAN is also addressing the issue in Sitakunda and Rajshahi respectively.

Completed Activities:

SAFER project:
This project has been closed after December 2000. The duration of the project was September 1999 to December 2000 and the working area was Amirabad village in Sitakundu in Chittagong. The activities under this project have been withdrawn and handed over to Para Committee with collaboration of PNGO-YPSA.

The activities completed under this project are the following:
- Screening of tube wells for arsenic contamination.
- Creating public awareness
- Identified alternative water sources.
- Installed an 'Arsenic Removal Plant' presently being used by about 200 households.
- Provided 'Bucket Treatment Unit'.

Ongoing Activities:

Integrated Food Security Program:
This component of Care, Bangladesh is addressing the arsenic issues through its FPP and SHAHAR projects with a project duration from 2000 to 2004.

The activities under these projects are the following:
- Tube-well screening for arsenic contamination.
- Creating arsenic awareness
- Implementation of arsenic mitigation water options.
- Identification of patients and referrals.

The Working Areas are:-
Netrokona, Kishoregonj, Sunamganj, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Sirajgonj, Dinajpur (Dinajpur Pourashava), Jessore (Jessore Pourashava), Mymensingh (Mymensingh Pourashava), Gazipur (Tongi Pourashava).

Contact Person:

Dr. Ziya Uddin
Project Coordinator, WATSAN Project
CARE Bangladesh
House # 60, Road # 7A
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka - 1209
Tel: 8114207 - 9, 9111948
Fax # 8114183
E- mail: ziya@carebangladesh.org

R. K. Das
Technical Coordinator- Environment
CARE Bangladesh
House # 60, Road # 7A
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka - 1209
Tel: 8114195 - 98 Ext: 199
E- mail: das@carebangladesh.org
14 Dhaka Ahsania Mission
(DPHE-DANIDA Arsenic Mitigation Component)

Within the broad framework of the objectives of the DPHE-Danida Arsenic Mitigation Component, Dhaka Ahsania Mission signed an agreement with Royal Danish Embassy in July 2001 to implement the activities of the component. The objective of the component is to contribute to the national objectives of the removing arsenic from drinking water and supply arsenic free water from alternative water sources in arsenic affected areas and to reduce arsenic induced mortality and morbidity.

Target Group:
The arsenic mitigation component will mainly target the 4.0 million population of 148 unions of 5 districts under Noakhali and Patuakhali region for the duration of July 2001 to June 2004.

Completed Activities:
♦ Base line survey
♦ Finalization of implementation plan
♦ Orientation and training for central, district and upazilla level staff about the implementation of arsenic mitigation component.
♦ Screening of 90,000 tube wells
♦ Installation of 1000 deep tube Hand Tube wells (DHTW)
♦ Registration of visible manifestation of arsenic poisoning.

Ongoing Activities:
♦ Tube well screening
♦ Patient identification
♦ Awareness raising
♦ Hygiene promotion
♦ Promotion of household mitigation options.

Future Plan and Activities:
♦ Installation of 5000 DHTWs in the component area.
♦ Social mobilization program
♦ Promotion of three household treatment options (BTU, 3 Kolshi unit and Bashi Pani method) as an intermediate arsenic mitigation measure.
♦ Distribution of BTUs or 3-Kolshi units to the real poor at a highly subsidized price.
♦ Establishment of 20 mini pipe schemes at community level.
♦ Implementation of rainwater harvesting and pond sand filter (PSF) in areas which are not technically feasible for DHTW installation.

Contact Person:
M. Nurun Nabi,
Arsenic Coordinator,
House # 35, Road # 15 (New),
Dhanmondi R/A Dhaka-1205
Phone: 9124152, 9142261
E-mail: damrwssc@bdonline.com

House # 19, Road # 12
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka - 1209
Ph: (880-2)-8119521-22, 9123420, 8115909
Fax: 880-2-8113010, 880-2-8118522
E-mail: dambgd@bdonline.com
Website: http://www.ahsania.org

Component Office

Head Office
DCH, a private sector, non-profit institution, has contributed significantly towards raising arsenic awareness at Government and international level and have alerted the general public to the incidence of arsenicosis. In 1996 DCH identified the first arsenicosis patient in Bangladesh and made the issue public.

**Main Objectives of DCH in this regard:** The target of Dhaka Community Hospital is to provide safe drinking water for the people and treatment for the arsenicosis patients through-

a) Taking sustainable and community acceptable water options  
b) Consulting the community for taking mitigation measures  
c) Operational and maintenance activity must be directed by the community and community based organization  
d) Drives for screening of patients  
e) Facilitating the rural centres to identify and management of patients  
f) Develop a patients management protocol

**Completed Activities:**

In 1999 DCH completed a UNDP/WB supported survey (Rapid Assessment Project - RAP) in 500 villages on behalf of MoH&FW, to verify the extent of contamination and arsenicosis. Using its own resources, DCH has also completed a country-wide sampling survey of tubewell water and found evidence that 41 of a total of 64 districts could be at risk. DCH undertook an extension to the RAP, within a further 300 villages. This study was managed and executed through MoH&FW (section 3.2), UNDP funded and completed June 2000.

DCH, in collaboration with NGO Forum, Village Education Centre and WaterAid Bangladesh, have undertaken small scale arsenic action research into the effectiveness of community mobilisation and information systems.

**On going Activities (From 1996 to date)**

The ongoing projects of Dhaka Community Hospital are listed below and more information on activities can be found in Annex YY:

1. **Arsenic Problem, Causes and Remedies in Bangladesh** (July 1996 – ongoing)  
   Executing and Funding Agencies: Dhaka Community Hospital & SOES, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, India.

2. **Community Based Arsenic Mitigation Project** (Support: UNICEF-DPHE-DCH)  
   Project Area 1: 182 (all) village of Sirajdikhan Upazila of Munshiganj district  
   Duration: June 2001 to May 2003  
   Project Area 2: 171 Village of Bera Upazila of Pabna District  
   Duration: July 1999 and ongoing (2 years support by UNICEF-DCH)

3. **Emergency Arsenic Screening Project:** (Support: BAMWSP and DCH)  
   Project Area: 558 (all) village of Laksham Upazila of Comilla district  
   Duration: November 2000 to continue (BAMWSP provided funds for 6 month, now DCH is continuing its activities by its own funds)

4. **Assessment of Arsenic Contamination in Hand Pump Project:** (Support: CARE-Bangladesh)  
   Project Areas: 225 village of 11 Upazilas; & 4 district towns of 4 Districts  
   Duration: October 2001 June 2002

5. **Arsenic Patient Identification and Management in 14 Upazila** (Support: UNICEF and DCH).  
   Project Areas: All the villages of 14 Upazila. (DCH alone in 7 Upazilas and DCH and DGHS jointly in 7 Upazila)  
   Duration:
6. **Patient Identification and Management**: (Funding: DCH)  
   Project area: 25 Areas of 21 Upazilas  
   Duration: 1996 to date

7. **Arsenic Patient Management at Hospital**: (Funding: DCH)  
   Number of Patients Treated: 587  
   Duration: July 1996 and ongoing

8. **Establishment of Bangladesh-Australia Arsenic Mitigation Resource Centre**  
   (Support: AusAid)  
   Project area: 30 village of Bangladesh  
   Duration: 2002 to 2003 (2 years)

9. **Molecular Epidemiology of Arsenic Exposure and Skin Lesions in Bangladesh** (Support: Harvard University, USA and DCH)  
   Sample size: 1600 case and control  
   Duration: 2001 to 2003 (3 years)

10. **Pilot Study on Community Based Arsenic Mitigation**: (Support: UNDP and DCH)  
    Project Area: 2 village  
    Duration: August 2000 to July 2001 (DCH is continuing the project on its own)

11. **Assessment of Arsenic Contamination of Town Water**: (Funding: DCH)  
    Project area: All the districts  
    Duration: 2000 to continue

12. **National Screening of Arsenic Contamination**: (Support: BAMWSP)  
    Project Area: 31 Upazila  
    Duration: September 2002 to December 2002

13. **Arsenic Mobile Clinic**: DCH has been running its mobile arsenic clinic since the problem emerged. The mobile clinics screen the arsenic patients and give them treatment. If necessary the clinics refer patients to its hospital. The clinics also screen tube well that is being used by the patients.

14. **Arsenic Training Programme**: Dhaka Community Hospital is well-reputed training organisation nationally and internationally. So far it has trained up 371 doctors, 420 village doctors, 200 government officials, 80 donor and international agency officials, 1500 NGO staffs, 410 community leaders, 4043 community workers nationally. DCH also trained up medical personnel and other officials of Nepal and Vietnam government.

15. **Patients Referral System**: Dhaka Community Hospital is the only hospital in the country that is working as an arsenic patient’s referral centre. Our rural health clinics, mobile clinics refer patients to its hospital. Government hospitals, NGOs, donors are also referring arsenic patients to DCH. Dhaka Community Hospital is developing an Arsenic Patients Management Protocol in collaboration with international universities and research institutions.

16. **Water Testing Laboratory**: Dhaka Community Hospital has set up an water quality testing laboratory by its own with the technical help of SOES, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India in 2000. It is regularly testing parameters of water quality like Arsenic, Iron, Phosphate, Potassium, Aluminium, Sulphate, Fluoride, Sodium, Chloride, Nitrite, Nitrate, Alkalinity, **Salinity**, Calcium, Turbidity, COD, BOD, Bacteriological analysis are being done here. We offer individuals, institutions, NGOs to use the facility at a cheaper rate.

17. **Communication Materials**: Dhaka Community Hospital has produced leaflets and posters for creation awareness in the community. DCH has 9 video documentary on arsenic issue both in Bangla and English. It is available in CD also. In our project areas, rural health clinics and the mobile clinics are showing the videos among the people. The training department developed other communication materials like flip chart, patients identification protocol etc.
18. **Dissemination of Information:** Dhaka Community Hospital is very sincere and careful for disseminating information. We share all information with the community, stakeholders, NAMIC and other government offices and other concerned agencies nationally and internationally. Through monthly newsletter (publication and email system), press briefing and press release, stories published in the newspapers and various radio and television programmes DCH is distributing information all over the country and abroad. It conducts regular meeting with community people, community leaders and media people. Besides these Dhaka Community Hospital hold meetings with universities, colleges, schools and other educational institutes and organisations.

19. **Advocacy at Policy Level:** Dhaka Community Hospital is continuously lobbing at the policy level to combat arsenic menace. It has been emphasising to use natural and indigenous resources to make mitigation programmes sustainable. DCH is taking part in the policy planning and implementation. From the very beginning it has been suggesting about the use of surface water, banning further tubewell installation, to give VGF card to the arsenic victims, providing free treatment for the patients and reducing safe level of arsenic in water at 0.01 mg/l.

20. **Conference/Seminars:** Dhaka Community Hospital is organising conference, seminars and workshop in regard of arsenic poisoning in ground water in Bangladesh. Besides hundred of seminars-workshops at the national and local level DCH has organised 4 international conferences in Dhaka. The conferences made 4 DHAKA DECLARATIONs. The last conference was organised in January 2002 and the Honourable President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was present as the Chief Guest.

**Contact:**

**Ranjit Das**  
Project Director  
Dhaka Community Hospital  
190/1 Wireless Railgate, Baromoghazar  
Dhaka – 1217.  
Phone: 9351190-1, 8314887  
Fax: 9338706  
Email: dch@bangla.net

**Shamimul Islam**  
Public Relation Officer  
Dhaka Community Hospital  
190/1 Wireless Railgate, Baromoghazar  
Dhaka – 1217.  
Phone: 9351190-1, 8314887  
Fax: 9338706  
Email: dch@bangla.net
Grameen Shikkha and UNICEF are jointly working with the Building Community Based Arsenic Mitigation Response Capacity Project in Muradnagar upazilla, Comilla, and Shahrasti upazilla, Chandpur. Muradnagar upazilla has 22 unions and 304 villages, while Shahrasti upazilla has 9 unions, one pourashava and 176 villages. Work commenced on the project in early July/2001, tube-well testing was completed in December 2001 and awareness building work is ongoing and will continue up to May 2002.

Grameen Bank has tested 30199 tube-wells in Muradnagar upazilla out of which 28234 are found highly contaminated with arsenic. Only 1965 could be painted green, 421 are out of order (not tested). In percentage 93% tube-wells are arsenic contaminated and only 7% arsenic free. We have tested 16360 tube-wells in Shahrasti upazilla out of which 16211 are highly contaminated. Only 149 tube-wells are Green. 462 tube-wells are out of order (not tested). In percentage 99% tube-wells are arsenic contaminated and only 1% arsenic free. In 149 out of the 304 villages in Muradnagar upazilla there is not a Green tube-well at all. And in 108 out of the 176 villages in Shahrasti upazilla there is not a single Green tube-well. As they are working with the awareness work Grameen is experiencing huge demand in the community for different safe water options.

Community involvement is one of the approaches in dealing with the situation and in the solution to the problem. Another approach is communication campaign including distribution of posters, brochures, flash cards etc. Grameen Shikkha conducted district and upazilla level workshops up to April 2002. In the campaign and workshops, they demonstrated various safe water options to the villagers. Grameen also discussed with them about installation of various water options and the feedback was highly satisfactory.

Proposed activities:
Grameen Shikkha are planning, contingent upon financial assistance from UNICEF, to install in Muradnagar upazilla 35 units of PSF and 500 units of Rain Water Harvesting. We are planning to develop a RWH model village in Muradnagar with 350 RWH units, and the remaining 150 RWH units will be installed in the other villages of the upazilla for demonstration (7 units in one union). Ten test dug-wells will also be installed in the project area. Under the same project, we will install in Shahrasti upazilla 23 units of PSF and 370 units of Rain Water Harvesting. We will develop a RWH model village (similar to that in Muradnagar) with 250 RWH units, and the remaining 120 RWH units will be installed in the other villages of the upazilla for demonstration (15 units per union). Ten test dug-wells will be installed in Shahrasti.

Contact:
Nurjahan Begum
Managing Director, Grameen Shikkha (Arsenic Project)
Grameen Bank Bhaban
Mirpur-2, Dhaka-1216
Phone/fax: 8011425
E-mail: g_iprog@grameen.com
17  International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B)

ICDDR,B is an independent, international, non-profit organization for research, education, training, clinical services, and information dissemination.

ICDDR,B is running a health and demographic surveillance system in 142 villages of the Matlab upazilla, encompassing a 220,000 population. The Matlab health and demographic surveillance system (HDSS) was initiated in 1966. The database records all vital events and health information upgraded on a monthly basis. The databases include child health, maternal health and nutrition information, and are linked to a GIS (Geographic Information System) database.

Completed Activities:
ICDDR,B has been involved in small-scale research on arsenic exposure and mitigation. A pilot study was performed in Matlab with a sample of tube wells from all areas. In Matlab surveillance systems revealing more than three quarters of samples had total arsenic above the Bangladesh permissible limit of 50 ppb.

Ongoing Activities:
ICDDR,B are currently (since 2000) initiating large-scale epidemiological studies on arsenic and health consequences. This project is co-financed by WHO and SIDA. The consequences of exposure to arsenic will be extensive and include excess incidence and mortality in cancers and cardio-vascular diseases. However, the knowledge base is weak on the weight of this new burden of diseases and on the speed by which it develops. Little is known about the reproductive health consequences, and about the possible aggravating role of the widespread malnutrition in Bangladesh on arsenic-induced health effects.

The areas of Matlab are heavily affected by the arsenic contamination of drinking water. Screening for skin lesions in the 220,000 population, assessment of arsenic content of the 9000 (? or 15000) tube wells of the Matlab surveillance area, and an establishment of a data base for epidemiological studies of levels of arsenic exposure and manifestations of arsenicosis in the population will take place. Immediate analyses will be performed on the risk for arsenic related skin lesions and effects on reproductive outcome and mortality. A village-based arsenic mitigation activity is coordinated with the surveillance, and priority will be given to the areas with the highest exposure. Reversibility of skin changes will be assessed. The consequences of a shift to other water sources will also be evaluated, including monitoring of diarrhoeal diseases through the surveillance system in Matlab.

The mitigation activity is collaborated with BRAC, a major national NGO with the longest experience of arsenic mitigation programmes in Bangladesh. Collaboration is suggested with the Institute of Environmental Medicine, Division of Metals and Health, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden, in the area of arsenic biochemistry. The project will assist ICDDR,B to purchase analytical instrumentation for analysis of water and biological samples for arsenic and provide funds for the field research.

Prof. Lars Ake Persson is the project coordinator. The project has started in late 2001 and present WHO funding will be exhausted by end of 2002. The overall project will be completed in late 2003.

ICDDR,B has been working through local and international NGOs on arsenic monitoring and mitigation efforts which have included testing household level arsenic removal technologies, pond sand filter testing and piloting low cost rainwater harvesting techniques.

Contact:
Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman
Arsenic and Environmental Epidemiologist,
ICDDR,B, GPO Box 128, Dhaka-1212
Tel: 880-2-8811751-60 (ext 2236), 9885155
Fax: 880-2-8826050
Email: mahfuzar@icddrb.org
Website: www.icddrb.org
18. IDE (International Development Enterprises)

IDE is a not-for-profit development organization based in Denver, Colorado, USA. Their mission is to improve the social, economic and environmental conditions of the world’s poorest people by identifying, developing, and marketing affordable technologies that can be manufactured locally and sold at a fair market price through a private sector supply chain.

As part of its efforts to address the arsenic crisis, IDE concentrated its activities on the imperative of exploring a variety of arsenic mitigation technology options and to look for alternative sources of safe drinking water. The critical factors IDE took into consideration are:

a. provision for household level solutions,
b. affordability (offer multiple technology/price options),
c. reliability and effectiveness.

Low Cost Rainwater Harvesting System and Shapla Arsenic Removal Filter are specific technologies that IDE has developed through intensive laboratory and field-testing and are ready for rural use.

The Shapla filter has been developed in collaboration with Dr. Fakhrul Islam, Professor of Applied Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Rajshahi University. It uses an inexpensive filter media of iron salt solution bonded to crushed brick particles. Further details are given in Annex 5 J. Tests of the Shapla filter have been undertaken in Bangladesh by IDE in conjunction with UNICEF, Danida and WorldVision as well as BRAC and Grameen.

Beginning in April 2000, the development of Rain Water Harvesting Systems (RWHS) has evolved through several stages each providing an option for safe drinking water. The original design costs varied between 4,500 Taka and 7,500 Taka for a 2,000 and 3,000-liter storage tanks. In September 2001, at IDE’s research center in Savar, IDE innovated a “breakthrough” technology, which reduced the cost of the conventional 3,000-liter rainwater storage tank, dramatically. The current cost per liter is 1.3 Taka of this tank to the customer for a 3,000-liter system, which includes guttering systems and a reasonable profit for private sector supply chain. IDE continues research on further reduction of cost per liter.

Up to now, clean, safe, Rainwater Harvesting Systems have only been available to a small number of households in arsenic affected rural communities. IDE is currently working closely with SDC, DPHE, UNICEF, World Vision and local partner NGOs on rainwater harvesting systems with a goal to achieve the following:

1. To increase public awareness through education on the arsenic contamination of ground water in Bangladesh
2. To test arsenic levels in tube-wells and other water sources
3. To develop low-cost arsenic mitigation options which includes rainwater-harvesting systems (RWHS) and Shapla Filter.

Contact:
Country Director
International Development Enterprises (IDE) – Bangladesh
House 15, Road 7
Dhanmondi
Dhaka 1205
Phone: 8614485, 8619258
Fax: 8613506
E-mail: dbnunley@agni.com
Webpage: www.ide-bangladesh.org
19 NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation

NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation was formed in 1982 in line with the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-90) under the joint auspices of the leading national NGOs and UN Steering Committee on IDWSSD in Bangladesh to support safe water supply and environmental sanitation activities of the grassroots NGOs in Bangladesh. NGO Forum functions on partnership approach. Through forging of alliances with 533 NGOs & Community Based Organizations (CBOs), NGO Forum has spread its WatSan (Water & Sanitation) network throughout Bangladesh.

The discovery of arsenic in groundwater has generated great concern in the public health sector of Bangladesh. NGO Forum has been striving to mitigate this arsenic problem as far as its resources permit. A brief account of the activities that has so far been performed by NGO Forum in relation to arsenic is outlined below:

19.1 ARSENIC CELL

As an apex service delivery agency of WatSan programme implementing NGOs and CBOs in Bangladesh NGO Forum is responsible to provide all its possible effort to meet any WatSan related crisis such as the acute environmental hazard due to the presence of arsenic in groundwater. In this regard, NGO Forum has established an “Arsenic Cell” to focus and priorities its involvement in arsenic mitigation activities to supply safe water.

Objectives of the Cell:

The ultimate goal of the Arsenic Cell is to provide safe drinking water for the people in the intervention areas through –

I. Exploring the possibilities of applicable and sustainable mitigation measures as well as seeking alternative water supply sources.
II. Implementation of arsenic mitigating activities for safe water supply through NGOs & CBOs.
III. Setting up a decentralised organisational structure capable of implementing operating, and maintaining the mitigation measures.

The above mentioned objectives will be attained by –

I. Networking and collaboration with the NGOs, CBOs, government & external support agencies, multilateral organisations, researchers and academics working on this issue.
II. Optimal utilisation of NGO Forum’s resources - both software & hardware - in implementing arsenic mitigation measures.

19.2 TESTING OF WATER SAMPLES

NGO Forum started detecting the presence of arsenic in ground water through its regional offices since October 1997. It has tested 35912 water samples so far with the help of available field testing kit. Out this total number of tested samples, 8618 were found arsenic contaminated.

All these tests were conducted in 2882 villages in 257 Upazilas of 58 districts. Out of those tests 782 villages were found having arsenic above the permissible limit. The concentrations of arsenic were detected from 0.10 mg/L to 3.0 mg/L and the depth of the affected tubewells varies from 26 feet to 960 feet. The lowest depth of tubewells were found in Laxmipur, Chandpur, Barisal districts and the highest depths were found in Jessore, Satkhira, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Sunamganj districts.

This information are shared regularly with National Arsenic Mitigation Information Centre (NAMIC).

Beyond the establishment of the Arsenic Cell and the water quality testing, NGO Forum is also giving due emphasis on the following areas:

19.3 INTER-AGENCY & TRANS SECTORAL COLLABORATION

NGO Forum has been maintaining close collaboration with relevant government agencies (DPHE, NIPSOM, LGED, etc.), Universities, UN bodies (UNICEF, World Bank, etc.), Donors, DPHE-DANIDA, Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) as well as with other NGOs in relation to arsenic by
sharing findings of its field level interventions. NGO Forum is also extending necessary cooperation to other stakeholders at the field level to identify arsenicosis affected patients and also to test water samples. NGO Forum is playing a vital role in Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) as a member of the steering committee as well as also in the implementation of the project including selection of Partner NGOs and CBOs for implementation in the selected area. NGO Forum is also working as one of the support organisations (SO) of BAMWSP to implement arsenic related activities at Harirampur Upazila of Manikganj.

19.4 FACILITATION OF ARSENIC RELATED TRAINING COURSES
NGO Forum is well recognized by nationally and internationally both as one of the training providing organization on arsenic issue. NGO Forum has a good experience to conduct arsenic related training courses with the collaboration of BAMWSP.

19.5 DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION MATERIALS
NGO Forum has developed and produced posters and leaflets and an 'Arsenic communication material package' on arsenic issue. These materials have been distributed among the affected community people through the partner NGOs & CBOs of NGO Forum and also among other stakeholders including mass media and NAMIC. The 'arsenic related communication material package' has been developed by Development communication cell in collaboration with Arsenic cell. The package specially developed for grassroots level NGOs, CBOs and people contains an arsenic booklet, 3 posters, 2 stickers, 2 leaflets, a manual on arsenicosis patient identification and a flip chart on arsenic free, safe water options. The Arsenic cell also developed 2 videocassettes on arsenic related issues (1 in Bengali & 1 in English) in collaboration with Training cell. These materials are also available for sale.

19.6 INFORMATION DISSEMINATION
NGO Forum has been disseminating research-oriented information relating to arsenic and arsenicosis through its monthly Bengali newsletter titled “PANIPRABAHO” and quarterly English newsletter “WatSan”. These newsletters are distributed among various NGOs, government offices and other concerned stakeholders all over the country.

NGO Forum has been discussing the arsenic issue on priority basis at different WatSan related gatherings such as workshops, seminars, discussion forums, etc. with the partner NGOs & CBOs, and also with all relevant agencies. Moreover, the issue is regularly being discussed in the community level through NGO Forum's promotional activities such as courtyard meetings, local discussion forums, school programmes, etc. in order to avoid possible panic of the community people on arsenic issue rather to help them in taking necessary preventive measures. (For details please see Annex 3)

19.7 PROVISION OF SAFE ALTERNATE WATER OPTIONS
NGO Forum is providing alternate water options such as;
- DANIDA's Bucket Treatment Unit (BTU),
- Rainwater Harvesting System (RWHS),
- Pond Sand Filter (PSF), Dug Well,
- Iron Arsenic Removal Plant (IARP), etc to the arsenic affected community.

19.8 RESEARCH ACTIVITIES
In the year of 2000, Arsenic cell completed 4 important arsenic related studies.

i) Study on Chronic arsenic exposure and respiratory effects:
A prevalence comparison study of respiratory effects among subjects with and without arsenic exposure was conducted. An article based on this study results has been accepted by the ‘Journal of Occupational health’ and is expected to be published in its July / September 2001 issue.

ii) A study on Evaluation of BTU in terms of Social acceptability, Arsenic removal efficiency, Health hazards and cost effectiveness.
A detailed report of the study is available at Arsenic cell of the NGO Forum and can be collected on request.

iii) A Study on Evaluation of Arsenic Detecting Field Kits
The published report is available on request.

iv) An Intervention Trial to Assess the Contribution of Food Chain to Total Arsenic Exposure in collaboration with Australian National University.
The report of the study is available on request.
19.9 WATER QUALITY TESTING LABORATORY
NGO Forum has established a water quality-testing laboratory. It is the first of its kind full-fledged water-testing laboratory in NGO sector. Funded by Danida, the laboratory has been developed with the technical assistance of School of Environmental Studies (SOES), Jadavpur University, Calcutta, India. Various parameters of water including Arsenic, Iron, Residual Chlorine, Chloride, Fluoride, Nitrite, Nitrate, Phosphate, Sulphate, Aluminium, pH, Total dissolved solids, Suspended solid, alkalinity, Total hardness, Salinity, Conductivity, Turbidity, Sodium, Potassium, Calcium, COD, BOD, Dissolved Oxygen, Bacteriological analysis, etc are being tested regularly in this laboratory at a cheaper rate.

19.10 CAPACITY BUILDING OF PARTNER NGOs & CBOs ON ARSENIC ACTIVITIES
NGO Forum has also been endeavouring to build up the capacity of its partner NGOs & CBOs by delivering different messages, imparting necessary training, and supplying communication materials such as posters, leaflets, etc.

NGO Forum has organised some 3-day long training courses on arsenic in different districts, which was participated by more than 1000 staff of a number of partner NGOs & CBOs. Necessary knowledge on how to test water sample and disseminate information to the community was imparted by those training courses. They also offer training services on arsenic to different external agencies, and already have trained staff of CARE, Action Aid, Save the Children Fund (Australia), Save the Children, USA, World Vision, IDE, Bangladesh etc.

Recently NGO Forum offered training services to BAMWSP for its ‘Emergency Screening and Arsenicosis Patients Identification’ programme involving local community people at Singair Upazila of Manikganj district. It also provided ‘TOT’ training to the staff of the SOs of BAMWSP, who are involved in implementing BAMWSP activities in different Upazila.

19.11 OTHER ARSENIC RELATED PROJECTS OF NGO FORUM

i). Community- Based Safe Water Supply and Arsenic Mitigation Project

Geographical Location: Babuganj Upazila under Barisal district
Funded by : UNICEF
Collaborating agency : DPHE
Project Duration : June 2001- May 2003

Objectives:
- To provide basic information among community people regarding arsenic and its related health hazards to raise their awareness as regards the calamity and how to get arsenic free water;
- To determine the extent of arsenic contamination through testing of tube-well;
- To identify arsenic affected patients and support them taking possible treatment measures;
- To mobilize the local communities into arsenic mitigation through local government and existing NGO and CBO;
- To strengthen the capacity of local government for arsenic mitigation in the health and water supply sector;
- To provide the communities in selecting alternative water technologies that provide arsenic and bacteria free safe water and
- To develop a replicable model of community based arsenic mitigation that can be executed in other affected areas of the country in a wider scale.

ii) Sensitization against Arsenic and Training Help Initiatives (SATHI)

Location : All the 13 Unions of Nasirnagar Upazila
Funded By : Save the Children USA
Project Duration: Sep 2001-August 2003

Objectives :
- To increase the community awareness about arsenic contamination problem and its mitigation;
- To motivate the arsenic affected families to adopt water use for drinking and cooking purpose from the arsenic free safe water sources given the current arsenic contamination of ground water;
- To make the people aware about the low cost alternative options of arsenic free safe water;
• To increase the capacity of the community on operation and maintenance of the alternative water options;
• To check the water quality of the alternative water options;

iii). Risk and Benefits of Arsenic Mitigation Programs in Bangladesh: Evaluation of Water Treatment Option

NGO Forum has started a new project in collaboration with Australian National University titled "Risk and Benefits of Arsenic Mitigation Programs in Bangladesh: Evaluation of Water Treatment Option"

Objective:
The objective of this study is to assess the effectiveness in the field of interventions currently in place in Bangladesh as part of the arsenic mitigation program. The two interventions to be assessed are the three-pitcher filter and the sanitary protected dug-well.

The project has been started in September 2001 and will be continued until February 2003. Data analysis and report writing is expected to be completed by June 2004.

Contact:
S M A Rashid
Executive Director,
NGO Forum for DWSS,
4/6 Block-E, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207
Ph: 8119597, 8119599
Fax # 8117924
E-mail: ngof@bangla.net

Dr. Abul Hasnat Milton,
Chief, Arsenic Cell,
NGO Forum for DWSS,
4/6, Block- E, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207
Tel: 8119597, 8119599
Fax # 8117924
E-mail: arsenic@bttb.net
20. NGOs Arsenic Information and Support Unit – (NAISU) 
A new initiative of NGO Forum

NGO Forum recently launched a project titled ‘NGOs Arsenic Information and Support Unit (NAISU)’ in collaboration with WaterAid, Bangladesh. The main objective of this project is to increase the access of the general people as well as grassroots level NGOs & CBOs to essential arsenic related valid information through different participatory approaches. With the view of its objectives "NAISU" publishes quarterly arsenic bulletin which disseminates arsenic related valid information in easy Bangla. Besides, NAISU has already prepared a "Training Manual" with most urgent and valid information regarding arsenic readily accessible to field workers using the most effective way of communication. It has prepared the communication material, "Charai Charai Arsenic" (already published and available at NAISU), and "Bornoimalai Arsenic", Procholito Charai arsenic, "Flip Chart" "Namta Pathe Arsenic" which are going to be published very soon. NAISU has a vision to work as a focal point for arsenic related information collected a collated from different governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Contact:
sanjoy@ngof.org
ziahasan@ngof.org
arsenic@ngof.org
Tel:880-02-9125954, Cell:011-845408
21. Ontario Centre for Environmental Technology Advancement (OCETA)

The Government of Bangladesh is implementing the ETV-AM (Environmental Technology Verification – Arsenic Mitigation) Program for the assessment and verification of arsenic removal technologies for drinking water. This program will ensure that arsenic mitigation technologies being proposed for use in Bangladesh meet Bangladesh drinking water quality standards.

A partnership agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities for implementation of this program has been signed between the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) of the Ministry of LGRDC, and the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) of the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST). The development of a formal technology verification program by BCSIR through partnership with BAMWSP requires that goals and timeframes for achieving goals be clearly identified. Therefore BCSIR has developed a work plan to provide a clear strategy for implementing the ETV – AM Program over the next two years. The work plan describes BCSIR’s roles, responsibilities and activities, including the establishment of the necessary management structure, process, resources and infrastructure within BCSIR and training requirements.

Meanwhile the arsenic removal technology verification process has already begun by inviting the first batch of candidate technologies to register with BCSIR prior to participating in the ETV-AM Program. The advertisement went to the newspaper on 24th of January 2002. BCSIR started the registration process on 9th February 2002 and last date of registration was 28th February 2002. Technology proponents went to BCSIR to register with the ETV-AM Program. After completing the registration forms, the BCSIR provided proponents with the electronic application forms. Proponents submitted the electronic and hard copy of the completed application forms to BCSIR. Last date of submitting forms was 9th March 2002. Technical, social and fiscal information are required for the screening process. BCSIR is responsible for safe custody of all confidential and proprietary information.

The ETV – AM staff of OCETA and BCSIR are now proceeding with the first batch technology screening according to the Screening Protocol. Government of Canada will fund the testing and verification of up to 12 technologies that are selected using criteria in the Screening Protocol. The Screening Protocol will enable the team to rank technologies according to how well they meet Bangladesh requirements.

Technologies with adequate laboratory and field test data generated by an independent testing agency can bypass laboratory and field testing and proceed to verification. Technologies requiring laboratory and field test data must undergo an independent laboratory and field assessment based on the requirements and guidelines described in the Laboratory Protocol and the Field Testing Protocol.

The ETV–AM team of OCETA is working intensively with the ETV–AM team of BCSIR and providing necessary assistance and training such that BCSIR personnel gain the experience and management skills to manage the ETV-AM Program.

Contact:
Elma Morsheda
Associate Programmer, ETV - AM,
Ontario Centre for Environmental Technology Advancement (OCETA)
DPHE Bhaban, 14 Monsur Ali Sharani
Kakrail, Dhaka-1000
Phone: 018243712
E-mail: emorsheda@oceta.on.ca
Website: www.oceta.on.ca
22. PROSHIKA

In the context of the arsenic crisis in Bangladesh PROSHIKA is working to ensure arsenic free water to the community through surface water treatment technologies and arsenic treatment technologies with giving more emphasis on surface water treatment. PROSHIKA in collaboration with international agencies has experimented and tested with two types of surface water treatment plant and two types of arsenic removal plant from existing tube-wells – that is:

♦ Household level slow and filters for surface water treatment.
♦ Community based surface water treatment plant.
♦ Household arsenic removal filter.
♦ Community based arsenic treatment plant.

A. Surface Water Treatment Technology:
   a. Household filter Bashundhara
   b. Community Based Surface Water Treatment Plant- Nirapod (please see annex)

B. Arsenic Removal Technology:
   a. Household Arsenic Filter
   b. Community Based Arsenic Removal Plant

Besides the installation of the water purification plant, 30,000 tube-wells are tested for arsenic and marked according to the level of arsenic contamination, awareness building (staff and community), advocacy program and referral of suspected arsenicosis cases.

Contact:
J. K. Baral
Director,
Health, Housing & Health Infrastructure Building
PROSHIKA, 1/1-GA, Section - 2
Mirpur-2, Dhaka - 1216.
Tel: 8015945 - 6, 8016015
Fax: 8015811
E-mail: baral@proshika.bdonline.com
23. Village Education Resource Center (VERC)

VERC are actively involved in the tubewell screening and development of community led arsenic mitigation strategies and approaches. As a partner organization of BAMWSP, VERC implemented the activities of survey and identification of arsenicosis patients in six Unions of Bhairab Upazila in Kishoregonj District and seven Union of Belabo Upazila in Narsingdi. The activities such as conducting of advocacy workshop, imparting training, the task of testing tube-well water for arsenic and arsenicosis patient identification in all Unions were completed within the project period. The data are available on request.

Activities on Arsenic in BAMWSP Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Area – 1</th>
<th>Project Area – 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>District:</strong> Kishoregonj</td>
<td><strong>District:</strong> Narsingdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upazila:</strong> Bhairab</td>
<td><strong>Upazila:</strong> Belabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Union:</strong> Shibpur, Kalikaprasad, Sadekpur, Shimulkandi, Aga Nagar, Gazaria</td>
<td><strong>Union:</strong> Belabo, Binyabaid, Sallabad, Narayanpur, Amlabo, Patuli, Bajnabo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main components of this project are:
- Orientation and training for different types of stakeholders
- Household survey
- Tube-well water testing
- Identification of Arsenicosis patient

Water Aid Supported Activities:
VERC and WaterAid Bangladesh are working together in the piloting of household level arsenic removal technologies, tubewell screening, community awareness raising and community led mitigation activities in their project areas of Sitakunda and Nawabgonj.

i) Water point screening activities:
In all 1616 water point have been tested for arsenic. Verc tested the shallow tube-wells, ring wells, deep tube-wells and Tara Pumps in different areas as Sitakunda, Chittagong, teknaf in Cox’s bazaar, Lalmohan in Bhola, Chapai Nawabganj, Barishal, Rajshahi and Naogoan. The data regarding this is available on request.

ii). Motivational Activities for Awareness rising on Arsenic contamination issues:
Two field workers are disseminating information on arsenic among the community people intensively in Muradpur and Sayedpur Union under Sitakunda Upazila in Chittagong District

The following issues are discussed in the sessions:
- Not to drink and cook with red colored tube well water.
- Eat more green vegetables.
- Share green color tube well water for drinking and cooking.
- Showing the symptoms of arsenicosis using posters.

Contact:
Md. Masud Hossain
Associate Project Co-ordinator
VERC, Anandapur, Savar, Dhaka
Tel: 7710412, 7710779
Email: verc@bangla.net
24. WaterAid Bangladesh

WaterAid Bangladesh is actively involved in: community level arsenic screening, awareness raising and mitigation, through their rural, urban and national NGO partner organisations), plus; advocacy of best practice and co-ordination at national and policy level. WaterAid emphasizes the need to consider arsenic within the overall context of water quality and public health.

**Completed Activities:**

1. WaterAid Bangladesh researched and produced the original report "Arsenic 2000: An Overview of the Arsenic Issue in Bangladesh" which was finalized in February 2001. Developments in this sector have occurred rapidly in the past year and WaterAid Bangladesh is supporting NAISU in their updating of this report. WaterAid Bangladesh participated in the expert panel of the arsenic awareness raising public meeting held in the British House of Lords, December 2000.

2. WaterAid, working in collaboration with British Geological Survey (BGS), developed a six page *Arsenic Fact Sheet* (see Annexe 10) summarising the health effects, occurrence in groundwater, field testing methodologies and remediation techniques.

3. WaterAid Bangladesh and a rural partner NGO, the Village Education Resource Centre (VERC), have worked together in the *piloting of household arsenic removal technologies, screening and mitigation* in their project areas of Sitakunda and Nawabgonj.

4. Village Education Resource Centre (VERC) in collaboration with WaterAid Bangladesh, DCHT and NGO Forum undertook small-scale *action research into the effectiveness of community mobilisation and arsenic information systems*.

5. WaterAid Bangladesh and VERC have provided *alternative water supply options* such as deep tube wells in arsenic prone areas. They have assessed the safety risks involved with the excavation of ring wells and have developed safe working methods using the Reverse Chicago Method which is detailed in the illustrated VERC *Ring well Manual*.

6. The DFID-funded *Rapid Assessment of Household level Arsenic Removal Technologies* was jointly managed by WaterAid Bangladesh, DFID and implemented by WS Atkins International Ltd. The consultancy focussed on household level arsenic removal technologies with a first phase concentrating on field testing technical parameters and a second phase of technical and social parameter testing. The final report (March 2001) was reviewed by the BAMWSP Technical Advisory Group (TAG) who then recommended five arsenic removal technologies to use in acute arsenic affected areas on an experimental basis, and also fed its rapid response results into longer-term initiatives in Bangladesh. Canadian CIDA have supported a substantial intervention in partnership with Bangladeshi agencies to assist BAMWSP to develop an Environmental Technology Verification (ETV-AM) protocol and OCETA is assisting with the long-term assessment of technological options.

**Ongoing and Proposed Activities**

7. WaterAid Bangladesh and its partners are continuing to focus on providing safe water and sanitation through people-centred approaches. WaterAid Bangladesh have evaluated *existing best practice in arsenic field testing methods and test kits*, and have produced an *Arsenic Field Testing Protocol* for use by their partner organisations. They are continually updating these approaches as new information and technologies become available. They are also providing practical training in arsenic issues and field testing. WaterAid and partners are continuing to provide *alternative water supply options* such as rainwater harvesting, surface / deep wells in arsenic prone areas.

8. A formal partnership between NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation and WaterAid Bangladesh exists, for funding and support to the *NGOs Arsenic Information and Support Unit (NAISU)* which commenced in early 2001. NAISU's objective is to assist in the synthesis and promotion of easily understandable, appropriate and reliable information dissemination to communities affected by arsenic and field workers involved in arsenic mitigation initiatives. WaterAid Bangladesh has recently been supporting NAISU in the update of the Arsenic 2000 report to provide an Arsenic 2002 edition. WaterAid Bangladesh is currently proposing to strengthen funding support to NAISU to expand its range of activities from 2003.
The NAISU target information group is an important aspect of the approach as the aim is to ensure understanding of the cause, effect and mitigation measures of arsenic and other water quality issues in groundwater. The target group will include communities, field workers and office workers. These target groups require different levels of information presented in an appropriate format. In order to reach the broadest possible network the NGO Forum regional offices will have access to information via email, telephone and the postal service.

NAISU's immediate objectives are to reach out and support small to medium sized NGOs across Bangladesh who are trying to understand the issues surrounding arsenic contamination of water supplies and support them to assist their beneficiaries to address and tackle these issues. NAISU will also further develop and disseminate layman's (easily understood) Bangla and English language material and training to a target population of affected communities and non-technical field workers.

9 The WaterAid Bangladesh Programme Support Team have developed two sets of participatory arsenic awareness tools which encourage discussion and understanding at community level, and continue to carry out training and refresher training to trainers and field staff in the use of these tools.

10 WaterAid Bangladesh is currently designing an expansion of their rural and urban programmes for sustainable environmental health. As part of an integrated approach to hygiene promotion, sanitation and water supply, WaterAid Bangladesh and partners will be seeking to further develop sustainable, people-centred approaches to community managed, safe water supplies including those in arsenic prone areas.

WaterAid Bangladesh actively encourages coordination and information sharing amongst all stakeholders involved in arsenic mitigation.

Contact:
Ms. Nargis Akter
Programme Engineer
Water Aid-Bangladesh
House 123A, Road 4, Banani,
Dhaka
Tel: 880-2-8815757 / 019 343394
Fax: 880-2-8815757
Email: nargism@agni

Contact:
Mr Timothy Claydon
Country Representative
Water Aid-Bangladesh
House 123A, Road 4, Banani,
Dhaka
Tel: 880-2-8815757 / 019 343394 / 011 805477
Fax: 880-2-8815757
Email: wateraid@agni.com
25. Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) Bangladesh

Established in 1979, WSP is an international partnership whose mission is to help the poor gain sustained access to improved water and sanitation services. WSP is administered by the World Bank, and enjoys financial support of many of the world’s foremost international development agencies. WSP has presence in Latin America, Africa, East Asia and South Asia. In South Asia, WSP has country offices in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The WSP is involved in piloting innovative approaches for rural and urban water and sanitation services. WSP helps governments in strengthening and refining policies with the lessons learned from the pilots and other best practices. WSP disseminates knowledge through publications and learning events.

WSP Bangladesh has been involved in arsenic mitigation initiatives in Bangladesh since the identification of the problem. It worked closely with the World Bank in identifying the key requirements to handle the crisis. As a result, a groundwater study was launched with financial assistance from DFID. Similarly, UNDP launched a rapid appraisal project in suspected hard-hit areas. WSP assisted the World Bank and the Government of Bangladesh in the preparation and undertaking the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP).

Currently WSP Bangladesh is conducting a number of pilot projects in rural piped water supply with one-point water quality monitoring and treatment. It is also assisting BAMWSP in implementing arsenic mitigation activities in urban areas. In addition, it is looking into ways to strengthen the local government bodies for decentralized service delivery.

WSP Bangladesh has recently conducted two major studies on arsenic mitigation and sustainable water supply. The first one is a need assessment for local government involvement for decentralized, scalable and sustainable water supply. The second one is entitled “Fighting arsenic – listening to rural communities: willingness to pay for arsenic free safe drinking water in Bangladesh”. This is an investigation about people’s preferences for various arsenic mitigation options and their willingness to pay for such alternatives. This study used a state-of-the-art contingency valuation method. Both studies were carried out by internationally renowned experts. Study reports are available from WSP.

WSP Bangladesh has strategic partnership agreement with the Local Government Division and the Rural Development Academy of the government. It also co-chairs the Local Consultative Sub-Group on Water and sanitation – the main coordination body of donor agencies and other stakeholders. Through these instruments of partnership, WSP promotes the best knowledge and experience among its partners.

Contact:
K.M Minnatullah
Senior Water & Sanitation Specialist
Water and Sanitation Programme
World Bank
3A Paribagh
G.P.O. Box 97
Dhaka 1000
Tel: (880-2) 966-9301, 861-1056; ext 351
Fax: (880-2) 861-5351, 861-3220
E-mail: kminnatullah@worldbank.org
Website: http://www.wsp.org
26. WATSAN Partnership Project (WPP) / SDC

The WatSan Partnership Project (WPP) is a unique partnership initiative of SDC to create sustainable access to water and sanitation facilities. The WPP has been working in the districts of Rajshahi and Chapai Nawabganj of Bangladesh since 1998. The prime focus of the WPP was on testing new strategic orientation and partnership for WSS service in particular and development in general. The Project aimed to develop mutual beneficial relationships among organizations, where roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities are clearly defined. The WPP partnership is based on three international NGOs - CARE, DASCOH and IDE - act as support organizations to facilitate the development of community level organizations and building their capacity in working towards sustainable community-based organizations. SDC plays an important role as the initiator of the approach and funding the project. It also extends its cooperation through co-ordination and management of the project partners and providing technical assistance through the Project Management Unit (PMU). The WPP has selected and trained 15 local NGOs to work as implementing/facilitating organizations. The Project furthermore collaborates with local set-up of government line agencies of different ministries and the Union Council.

The WPP partners, having worked together for a number of years enjoy significant positive synergies and provide an opportunity for the implementation of the community based arsenic screening and mitigation program in the WatSan Project Area. Accordingly the WPP has completed the arsenic screening and mitigation program in 640 villages distributed in 10 Upazillas under Rajshahi and Chapai Nawabganj districts 2001. The report is made available on request to the organization.

Objectives of the WPP Arsenic Program were:

- Create arsenic awareness.
- Capability building for arsenic testing.
- Build capacity of VDCs for CAP and self-monitoring.
- Screen all operational groundwater sources in WPP area.
- Identify arsenic patients and linkage with Upazilla Health Program.
- Provide support for emergency mitigation (Rx, Safe water).

To mitigate the arsenic problem, WPP has been working with arsenic reduction technologies and alternative safe water sources. The arsenic reduction options tested are Shapla Filter, DPHE/ DANIDA Bucket Treatment Unit (BTU), Three Pitcher Method, Safi Filter, BCSIR filter, Alcan filter and SORAS. The alternative water source options are rainwater harvesting, dugwells (with handpump, with rope pump and open with protection) and SODIS and terra cotta filter for improving the bacteriological water quality. The village piped water supply action research is also being implemented in collaboration with the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank.

The successful completion of the arsenic screening and mitigation program in 640 villages has resulted a great demand to complete the whole two districts. BAMWSP has also pleased to welcome the partnership efforts in mitigation of arsenic problems in the Rajshahi and Chapai Nawabganj districts. SDC is convinced and has planned to carry out the program in the rest of the areas of the two districts. The 2nd phase program has been started from April, 2002 and expected to be completed by December, 2003.

Contact:
Abdul Motaleb
Director, Project Management Unit
SDC – WatSan Partnership Project
House # 54 (1st floor), Block H, Road 7/A
Banani, Dhaka-1213.
Tel/Fax: 9887595
E-mail: wpppmu@citech-bd.com, wpppmu@bdmail.net
27. World Vision Bangladesh (WVB)

In the context of Arsenic crisis in Bangladesh, World Vision Bangladesh has taken initiatives for its mitigation. Many of the existing technologies and approaches for provision of arsenic free safe water are considered in Food Security Enhancement Initiative Program (FSEI) covering 16 Upazila/Area Development Program (ADP) to mitigate safe drinking water contamination that described as below:

1. Coordination:
   - National level coordination with Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation and Water Supply Project (BAMWSP), UNICEF Bangladesh, CARE Bangladesh and USAID
   - Upazila Coordination with Upazila Arsenic mitigation committee
   - Union level Coordination with Union Arsenic mitigation committee
   - WVB also coordinate with other agencies involved in Arsenic mitigation activities beyond above.

2. Water testing:
   - Under ADPs (Area Development Program) in known arsenic contaminated Upazilas, 100% tube-well would be tested and marked all within June 2002. HACH Arsenic Test Kit is being used to make it competitive with BAMWSP. The findings on ground water testing are being forwarded to BAMWSP to incorporate in National database.
   - ADPs (Area Development Program) in Upazilas where arsenic contamination yet to find will test 100 to 200 tube wells randomly across the Upazila.
   - World Vision Bangladesh (WVB) has MoU with BAMWSP in 16 Upazilas (names are mentioned in Table 1 (Annex 10) and WVB will carry out ground water testing under its Food Security Enhancement Initiative Program in these areas. Table 1 shows a total of 146,691 Tubewells tested up to 30 April 2002.

3. Water facilities:
   World Vision Bangladesh adapted the appropriate technology to the community considering the number of community people benefits, location, status, communities preference, working technologies & its cost and future maintenance aspect, i.e.:
   - Rehabilitation of existing dug wells (RDW)
   - Digging new dug wells (DW)
   - Arsenic filter
   - Community sand filter for arsenic contaminated tube-wells (CSF)
   - Rain water reservoir (RWR)

   The above can be reviewed time to time and considerable change can be made as per requirements. The plan and implementation of different technologies for Arsenic Mitigation is shown in Annex 10, Table 2.

Contact:
FSEI coordinator,
World Vision Bangladesh
Phone: 8815515, 8813555-7
Fax: 8815180
E-mail: albert_rozario@wvi.org
28. Unit for Policy Implementation (UPI)

*Completed Activities:*

**Rapid Appraisal:** On request from LGD, UPI did a Rapid Appraisal of Phase - I of Arsenic Mitigation. The main objective of the study was to assess the achievement and failures of the service delivery process with the intention of improving future projects process and implementation. The study report is currently under internal review.

**Ongoing Activities:**

**Process Monitoring**

UPI, on request from LGD, is involved in Process Monitoring (PM) of the Phase - I (pilot phase) of BAMWSP. The main focus of PM was to identify problems, and work with users/stakeholders in recommending solutions to improve subsequent projects implementation. UPI expects to continue the activity in future.

**Rain Water Harvesting (RWH)**

UPI has been working closely with LGD, IDE and BAMWSP in testing delivery of guttering system for rainwater harvesting leaving the responsibility for rainwater storage to the users. This system is expected to lead to a strategy to promote local initiative and private sector in production and delivery of RWH systems.

**Contact:**

Unit for Policy Implementation (UPI)  
Local Government Division, MLGRD&C  
5th Floor, DPHE Bhaban  
14, Shaheed Capt. Monsur Ali Sharani, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000  
Tel: 8316794, 8311466 Fax: 8315387

29 Environment and Population Research Center (EPRC)

Environment and Population Research Center (EPRC) is a multi-disciplinary non government research organization. It is conducting arsenic mitigation action research in two rural and one urban sub-district. It is also conducting a study on contamination of water at household level which includes arsenic and other water quality parameters. It coordinates a network, Global Applied Research Network, South Asia for Water and Sanitation (GARNET-SA) in collaboration with WEDC, Loughborough University. The main objective of the network is to contribute towards capacity building of its member organization through exchange of information, training and collaborative project. Arsenic is one of the main themes under GARNET-SA. There are about 420 member organizations in GARNET-SA. It is working on further development of Emergency GARNET (About Emergency GARNET Filter, see annex- 05G). EPRC also runs an Environmental Laboratory.

**Contact:**

Dr. Bilqis Amin Hoque  
Chairperson  
Environment and Population Research Center  
1/7, Block-E, Lalmatia, Dhaka - 1207  
Ph: 9117421 Fax: 8115376  
E-mail: eprc@bol-online.com
30. Bangladesh University for Engineering and Technology (BUET)-
International Training Network-ITN

A. ITN-BUET Research:

1) Development of a domestic arsenic removal unit based on activated alumina,
2) Improvement of the two-bucket unit using ferric chloride as a coagulant,
3) Development of a domestic arsenic removal unit based on iron coated sand,
4) Development of arsenic-iron removal unit, and
5) Management of arsenic sludge from arsenic removal unit.
6) Evaluation of the performance of pond sand filters and Rainwater Harvesting as alternative sources
   of water supply.

B. ITN-BUET Publication:

1) Technologies for Removal of Arsenic from Drinking Water,
2) Alternative Water Supply Options for Arsenic Affected Areas in Bangladesh,

C. Workshop and Seminars

1) Assisted GoB in holding the International Workshop on Arsenic Mitigation in January 2002. The
   Proceedings has been prepared and submitted to the Government for formal publication.
2) Jointly organized the International Workshop on Technologies for Removal of Arsenic from Drinking
   Water, in May 2001 (With United Nations University).

D. Human Resource Development to Address Arsenic Issue

1) Organised a Specialised Course on Arsenic Contamination of Groundwater and Mitigation Options
   (18-23 May 2002)
2) Upcoming Specialised Course on Arsenic Contamination of Groundwater and Mitigation Options (10-
   15 August 2002)

BUET has an extensive array of arsenic measurement equipment including AASGF, AASHG, SDDC units
and Field Test kits.

In addition M. Feroze Ahmed, Professor of Civil/Environmental Engineering, BUET is an active member of
the BAMWSP Technical Advisory Group (See Section 1.1).

Contact:
Professor M. Feroze Ahmed,
ITN -Bangladesh Centre,
Civil Engineering Building (3rd floor), BUET, Dhaka 1000,
Tel: 9663693, 9665650-80 Extn. 7689
Fax: 880 2 9663695
Fax: 9663695
E-mail: itn@agni.com
31. Dhaka University

The University of Dhaka has undertaken a number of arsenic related research works within the Department of Geology, the Department of Soil, Water and Environment and the Department of Chemistry. These are summarised under the relevant departments below. A detailed list of the research papers produced features as Annexe 2.

Department of Geology

Department of Geology, Dhaka University has been involved in arsenic research since the very beginning of the problem. Different faculty members of the department undertake individual research, as well as there is collaboration with national and international institutions/organisations. The main area of research is the origin and occurrence of arsenic in groundwater. Some research has also been undertaken in the filed of mitigation. Currently there are collaboration with national organisations such Bangladesh Water Development Board, Department of Public Health Engineering. Among the international collaborators are: British Geological Survey (UK), Columbia University, New York (USA), University College London (UK), Royal Institute of Technology of Stockholm (Sweden), Delft Technological University (the Netherlands), etc.

There are a good number of research papers published by the faculties and students of the department. Also a large number of scientific reports and thesis has been completed. The Geohazard Research Group of the department takes the leading role in arsenic research (activities has been described separately).

Contact Persons:

1. Dr. Kazi Matin Ahmed, Associate Professor, Department of Geology, Dhaka University, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh. Tel: 966 1900-59, Ex. 4897; Fax: 861 5583; Email: kmahmed@udhaka.net
2. Dr. Aftab Alam Khan, Associate Professor, Convenor, Geohazard Research Group, Department of Geology, Dhaka University, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh. Tel: 966 1900-59, Ex. 6029; Fax: 861 5583; Email: aftab@udhaka.net
3. Chairman, Department of Geology, Dhaka University, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh. Tel: 966 1900-59, Ex. 6015; Fax: 861 5583; Email: geology@udhaka.net

Department of Soil, Water and Environment

The department runs a joint ACIAR (Australia)-Dhaka University project on the "Transfer of Arsenic in water-soil-plant systems in Bangladesh and Australia". The project duration is initially for a period of three years extendable to five years. The department is working on the arsenic load from irrigation water to the soil and its subsequent transfer to the human body and other biological systems through the food chain.

Relationships between the nutritional status of a patient and the manifestation of the contamination are being studied. Some statistical models on the whole system are being produced. The Australian team leader is Dr. RAVI NAIDU from CSIRO, Adelaide. The co-partners in the project are DCHT and INFS, Dhaka University, those in Australia are Ballarat University, CMIS, Adelaide.

Under this project the bio-accessibility of arsenic through food chain is being studied. The project started in May 2002 in Australia and the experiment will be studied on pig.

Transfer of arsenic from geological source is being studied which started in May 2002. Under this research several gangetic alluvium prone areas (30 villages) of Bangladesh are selected and the geological arsenic content of these areas will be ascertained and then the transfer of this arsenic to households, crops, irrigation, human body, neighbouring areas will be determined. The project duration is two years and UNICEF is co funding in this project.

The laboratory at the Department of Soil, Water and Environment is equipped with AAS hydride generator to analyse Arsenic in ppb levels.

Contact:

Dr. S.M. Imamul Huq, Professor,
Department of Soil, Water and Environment,
Dhaka University, Dhaka 1000
Tel: 9661900-59 Fax: 8615583 Email: immh@bttb.net.bd
Department of Chemistry

Research and development of the three kolshi household level arsenic removal technology in collaboration with the Sono Diagnostic Center Environment Initiative. The original sono-3-kolshi filter during this year has been totally modified in its design and operational aspects and the commercial name has been given as ‘Sono Filter - model MP-ZVI (45-25)’ and the patent of the technology is pending. The filtering materials are same with addition of brickets. The whole technology is under technical evaluation by the BAMWSP for its large scale application. The original published scientific document of original version is published in the ‘International Conference on Bangladesh Environment 2000 and 2001’ proceeding.

Contact:
Professor Amir H. Khan,
Department of Chemistry, Dhaka University
Tel: 505846
email: ahkhan@udhaka.net

32 Department of Occupational and Environmental Health (DOEH) / National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM)

The arsenic contamination in ground water in this sub-continent was first reported in the year 1983 in West Bengal, India. Having a similar geological formation and socio-economic context, Bangladesh could not escape from this catastrophe. The Department of Occupational and Environmental Health (DOEH), NIPSOM in the year 1994 started to find out the existence of this problem in Bangladesh. Getting a report from DPHE about the high arsenic content in some tubewells of Nawabganj district, DOEH performed a survey and found 8 patients in the village of Chamagram in Baroghoria union of Nawabganj district. These 8 cases were the first reported cases of Bangladesh.

Following the confirmation of these arsenicosis cases DOEH started extensive activities on arsenic contamination, which are as follows:

1) Formation of “Committee for Reviewing the Situation of Arsenic in Drinking Water In Bangladesh” as per instruction of Director General Of Health Services in May 1994. NIPSOM, DPHE, Atomic Energy Commission, Geological Survey of Bangladesh, Department of Environment, WHO, UNICEF were the members of the committee and Head of DOEH was the member secretary of the committee.

2) Initiated a Fact Finding Survey which was carried out in 40 districts during the year 1995 – 96 and submitted report time to time to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

3) Participated in an International Conference on Arsenic Problem held in February 1995 at Calcutta, India.

4) Development of Arsenic Test Kit: To identify the contaminated tubewells as well as exposed people, DOEH considered rapid screening program. With this objectives DOEH developed an effective, simple, cheap and user-friendly field level arsenic test kit which is popularly known as NIPSOM Arsenic Test Kit. Since, 1996 this Arsenic Test Kit is being used to detect arsenic in tubewell water. At present this test kit is being used widely by different national and international NGOs to test the tubewell water for arsenic.

5) Management of the Arsenicosis patients: Due to unsatisfactory result of treating arsenicosis patients by chelating agents like d-penicillamine, DMSA and DMPS, from 1996 DOEH started to treat and manage the patients by giving a regimen comprising Vitamin A,E & C and keratolytic ointment along with arsenic safe water. The regimen has been found effective to remove the arsenicosis manifestations quickly. This regimen is still being used through out the country to treat the arsenicosis patients.

6) Training Programme on Arsenic Contamination and Mitigation: In October’ 96, DOEH organized a training program on Arsenic contamination and its mitigation for different interested and related organization with the collaboration of Disaster Forum and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. This was the first training programme on Arsenic contamination in Bangladesh. Subsequently a number of training programmes were arranged by this department.
7) Arsenic Removal from contaminated water and Arsenic safe water Options:
At the initial period (upto 1996) DOEH advised the people to remove arsenic from the contaminated 
tubewell water by adding alum and distributed some arsenic removal filter of School of Environmental 
Studies (SOES) with the collaboration of WHO and Asia Arsenic Network (AAN)
After that they developed (1997) a chemical powder which packet was found more effective to remove 
arsenic. That powder was manufactured under a project of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and 
distributed through out the arsenic affected areas. Due to some human behavioral and technical reasons 
this chemical powder could not be continued.

DOEH does not encourage the use of underground water, but rather the use of surface water for all 
purposes including agriculture. DOEH believes that whatever is the arsenic treatment plant or to keep 
arsenic inert on the surface today or tomorrow this huge amount of arsenic which will be withdrawn from 
the ground water will be another disaster. As such DOEH encourage to surface water more for all 
purposes. They are also advocating to use rain water through simple and affordable devices

With the collaboration of AAN they are installing Pond Sand Filter (PSF) in various arsenic affected 
villages, which have been found cost effective surface water treatment plant and accepted by villagers. 
They have also installed some modified dug wells in some arsenic affected villages.

8) Arsenic Mitigation Activities: DOEH conducted comprehensive arsenic activities in some villages 
(Rajarampur of Nawabganj, Samta of Jessore, Hossainpur, Tilchandi and Nilkanda of Narayanganj, ) to 
identify the Arsenicosis cases, management of cases, identification of contaminated tubewells, 
distribution of arsenic purification domestic filter and arsenic removal chemical packets for purification of 
water and awareness program.

In Samta the activities are still going on as a cohort study with the help of AAN, Beside regular 
treatment and management of patients they successfully treated 18 severe arsenicosis patients having 
cancer and other neoplastic manifestations due to arsenic. In other villages they are conducting arsenic 
mitigation program by treatment and management of the patients and providing arsenic safe water 
options.

9) BCC activities: DOEH also conducted Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities 
including development and propagation of radio jingle. TV spot & posters on arsenic contamination 
issues for awareness and motivation of the people.

10) Arsenicosis case definition and case management protocol: DOEH faculty members were involved in the 
formulation of draft protocol for arsenicosis case definition and arsenicosis case management in 
collaboration with DGHS. The final documents (national consensus protocols for arsenicosis case 
definition and arsenicosis case management) were thus formulated in national workshops and in 
International workshops in the year 2002.

11) Research and Publications: For dissemination of information and knowledge gathered through research 
experience DOEH members published many research articles in national and international journal and 
participated in many seminars. They have published two books on arsenic contamination for easy 
understanding of the problem by the related personnel.

DOEH continuing their research activities on various aspects of Arsenic Contamination and Mitigation to find 
out a way to mitigate the arsenic contamination problem, manage the arsenic victims effectively and 
affordably. Every year a number of students conduct research on arsenic contamination under guidance of 
DOEH faculty members.

Contacts:
Dr. M. A. Khalique Barbhuiya
Prof. and Head,
Dept. of Occupational and Environmental Health
NIPSOM, Mohakhali, Dhaka - 1212
Phone: 602776
E-mail: kbbhuiya@aitlbd.net

Dr. S. Akhtar Ahmad,
Associate Professor,
Dept. of Occupational and Environmental Health
NIPSOM, Mohakhali, Dhaka - 1212
Phone: 602776
E-mail: anon@bdcom.com
33 Harvard/MIT projects.

Scientists from Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) became involved with understanding, and advertising the Bangladesh arsenic problems in February 1997.

The present work has three prongs:

(1) Professor Charles Harvey and others from MIT are collaborating with Professor Feroze Ahmed and other scientists from BANGLADESH University of Engineering Technology (BUET) in attempting to understand the hydrochemistry of the problem. Highly instrumented test wells were sunk in April 2000. Cores were analysed and the water has been monitored continuously. Preliminary work has been presented at several conferences.

(2) Professor David Christiani of Harvard School of Public Health and others are performing an epidemiological study involving biomarkers. This is in collaboration with Dhaka Community Hospital.

(3) Professor Richard Wilson of the Physics Department at Harvard University started in 1998 a website: http://phys4.harvard.edu/~wilson/arsenic_project_main.html with a shortcut: arsenic.ws to advertise the worldwide nature of the arsenic problem. This site has several auxiliary pages with:
   (i) a list of all relevant arsenic references of which we are aware: arsenic_project_references.html
   (ii) a list of remediation options and technologies: arsenic_project_remediation_technology.html
   (iii) links to every website of which we are aware.
   (iv) Lists of conferences, past and future, with abstracts of papers when available: arsenic_project_conferences.html
   (iv) A searchable address list of persons concerned about arsenic.

These are updated as information becomes available. Please send comments and information of potential links to wilson@huhepl.harvard.edu and yakovlev@fas.harvard.edu This site is still widely used. The main page receives 50 hits a day.

(4) Professor Wilson has located some small funds to help Dhaka Community Hospital with test equipment (including some for project 2) and giving help to villagers get pure water in the places where we have visited.

Contact:
Professor Richard Wilson
Email: Wilson@huhepl.harvard.edu

34 London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

LSHTM is co-ordinating an epidemiological research programme funded by the European Union on cancer risk related arsenic in drinking water in Europe. Tony Fletcher of LSHTM is a member of the Steering Committee for the WHO-UNF/UNFIP-UNICEF Project: “Building Community Based Arsenic Mitigation Response Capacity in Muradnagar, Serajdikhan and Bhanga Upazillas”.

LSHTM, has a contract with DFID to provide occasional technical support as required to the DFID funded, Unicef managed Rural Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply Project.

Contact:
Tony Fletcher
Environmental Epidemiology Unit, Dept of Public Health & Policy
LSHTM, Keppel St, London WC1E 7HT, UK
Tel: 44-(0) 20 7927 2429
Fax: 44-(0) 20 7580 4524
Email: tony.fletcher@lshtm.ac.uk
C. Methods of Arsenic Detection At Both Field And Laboratory
Methods of Detection of Arsenic:

Arsenic can be detected either at the field level using portable test kits or by laboratory testing. Field kits are very important given the scale of testing required but are not accurate for determining the exact arsenic concentration in water at the low concentrations important for human health. The Bangladesh standard of 50 parts per billion (ppb) for arsenic in drinking water. The equivalent of ppb is micrograms/litre or µg/l. The World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline value for arsenic in drinking water is 10ppb.

A semi quantitative result of arsenic concentration can be obtained using the field kits, most of which depend on comparing the colour obtained during the test to a colour chart with the kit.

Weaknesses of field testing include the issues such as:

1. the field test kits being subject to fluctuations in sensitivity and accuracy depending on the model of the kit;
2. excess light and certain other water quality parameters encountered in the field, are thought to interfere with the analysis,
3. individual differences are inevitable when many field workers are involved (i.e. operator error in the procedure or reading of result, such as confusion over decimals) and reading of the colour chart can be subjective.
4. field storage conditions of reagents of some kits can dramatically decrease the working life of the reagents.

Field kits users are usually from a non-technical background, and may feel pressurised to read the resulting colour to tend towards expected results. However proper training to the field workers does improve results. Some crosschecking of field results is important.

For the purpose of screening of the tube wells field testing is being widely used in spite of its limitations. Laboratory testing is much more expensive than field kit since laboratory testing has a cost of approximately US$ 8 to US$ 15 and the cost of field kit testing is about US$ 0.50 per sample.

Field test kits that are commercially available use the mercury bromide method or the Silver Diphenyl Dithio Carbamate (SDDC) method. Laboratory analytical equipment used includes atomic absorption spectrometry (AAS), ICP (Inductively Coupled Plasma), Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA), ICP/MS (Inductively Coupled Plasma/Mass Spectrometry) and Anodic Stripping Voltametry, TXRF and PIXE.

Field Test Kit Methodologies

Mercury Bromide stain method

Most of the current field-test kits (e.g. Merck, Asian Arsenic Network -AAN, General Pharmaceuticals Limited -GPL, NIPSOM, HACH) are based on the "Gutzeit" method. This involves the reduction of arsenite and arsenate by zinc to give arsine gas, which is then used to produce a stain on mercuric bromide paper.

There have been several studies on the sensitivity and reliability of these kits, although some of these are rather out-of-date since not all of these studies were carried out using the most recently available kits. The most extensively field tested of these kits were the E-Merck, AAN and GPL kits. The evaluations have generally shown these kits to be reasonable at detecting high concentrations (greater than 100ppb) but less reliable at lower concentrations. Merck and Hach therefore focussed on improving the kits at low concentrations and have developed the Merck-Sensitive kit and the user-friendly HACH EZ. The Arsenic Cell, NGO Forum is intending to update their earlier conducted evaluation study on different field kits available in Bangladesh.

The newly developed HACH EZ is a simplification of the HACH 5-stage kit, in that it uses only 2 reagents and is therefore quicker and more straightforward for field workers. This HACH kit has currently undergone field-testing and to date has produced encouraging results on both reliability and accuracy when cross-checked with laboratory testing. HACH EZ is now recommended by Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP), UNICEF, WaterAid Bangladesh and many other organizations for arsenic screening at field level. These organizations are currently using this field test kit for screening purpose.
The PeCo75 was a handheld digital instrument developed by Professor Walter Kosmus of the Karl Franzens University in Austria. This field kit technology follows the standard Gutzeit method in that it replaces zinc with sodium borohydride and so removes the problem of obtaining low-arsenic zinc. The kit was not produced commercially although there was a significant demand for it. To make the technology commercially available Professor Kosmus joined forces with Wagtech International Ltd. in a partnership venture to produce an improved version of the PeCo75 kit’s technology; this was named the Wagtech Digital Arsenator.

The Wagtech Digital Arsenator was launched at the Kolkata WEDC Conference in November 2002. It has been designed to be more user friendly than the PeCo75 and will give a digital readout down to 2ppb. It is fully portable for field use and easy to operate. Consumables will be readily available in refill packs. Wagtech have a local supplier/agent in Bangladesh.

Information on Arsenic Field Test Kits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Test Kit</th>
<th>Capital Cost (approx)</th>
<th>Commercially &amp; Locally available?</th>
<th>Manufactured by</th>
<th>Waiting time taken per test - minutes</th>
<th>Shelf Life</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US $</td>
<td>Tk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Merck Or Merck Sensitive</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>About 2,600-2,800 Taka (per 100 tests) depending on quantity of order.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Merck KGaA Germany</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3 years. (15°-25°C) May reduce once opened due to field storage conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPL</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2,000-2,500 depending on quantity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>General Pharmaceuticals Bangladesh</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bromide strip: 1yr but when opened best to use within 45 days Other 2 chemicals: 5 years. Storage: 20°-25°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIPSOM</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NIPSOM Bangladesh</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Unopened: 6 months Opened: 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HACH 5-stage</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>9,000, (per 100 tests) less on large quantity order. (but large orders may require 6-8 weeks delivery time)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>HACH, USA</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Reagents: 3-5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HACH EZ</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4,700, (per 100 tests) less on large quantity order. (but large orders may require 6-8 weeks delivery time)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>HACH, USA</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Reagents: 3-5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagtech-Digital Arsenator</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>60,000 (approx) (per 500 tests) (but large orders may require 6-8 weeks delivery time)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Wagtech Int. Ltd. UK</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Reagents: 3-5 years. Filter paper: 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagtech-Colour detection kit</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>9,900 (approx) (per 200 tests) (but large orders may require 6-8 weeks delivery time)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Wagtech Int. Ltd. UK</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Reagents: 3-5 years. Filter paper: 1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is generally recommended that all the test kits which use strips should be used within six months of opening.

Further Contacts:

MERCK: Mr. T. Ali Proprietor, G.A. TRADERS, Tel: 9557299, 9559275 Fax: 9562591, E-mail: gat@bdmail.net

GPL: Mr. Zaki Azam Choudhury Marketing Manager, General Pharmaceuticals Limited Tel: 9132594, 8120081, 017681072, 017811642 Fax: 9120657 E-mail: zac@aitlbd.net

HACH: Mohammad Abdul Baten, Marketing & Technical Supports Manager, TECHNOWORTH Associates Limited 78, Motijheel Commercial Area, 1st floor, Dhaka -1000. Phone: 9555646, 9559776, 9568461, 9567981, 9568794, 018241772 Fax:880-2-9562215, 880-2-8616947, E-mail: worth@bangla.net

NIPSOM: Dr. S. Akhtar Ahmad, Associate Professor, Dept. of Occupational and Environmental Health NIPSOM, Mohakhali, Dhaka - 1212 Phone: 802776, E-mail: anon@bdcom.com

Wagtech Digital Arsenator & Colour Detection Kits
Sabbir Ahmed, Managing Partner, BINDER Phone: 7122619, 7122615, 7121412, 0171-538365, 0171-530982 Fax:880-2-9553058, E-mail: sahmed1@bangla.net
Colorimetric methods

Other field test kits use the SDDC (Silver Diphenyl Dithio Carbamate) method which relies on arsine generation and the colour reaction with SDDC. Arsenic hydride is absorbed into a solution of silver diphenyl dithio carbamate; the orange to red-violet soluble compound that is produced is analyzed by absorption spectrophotometry. The absorption line is measured to find the arsenic concentration. If no substances that obstruct the process are present then detection of arsenic concentrations to below 50 ppb is feasible.

Two addresses of companies that manufacture and supply field spectrophotometers include Spectrochem Instruments Pvt. Ltd. (AsDETECT) and HACH Company.

Contact:
Madhav Tenneti
Managing Director
Spectrochem Instruments Pvt. Ltd.
B-23 Huda Complex, Saroornagar
Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh
500 035 INDIA
Ph: 91-40-4053341 or 4053342
Fax: 91-40-4146308
Email: madhav@spectrochemindia.com
Web: www.spectrochemindia.com

HACH Company, USA
(Bangladesh Distributor)
Contact:
Mohammad Abdul Baten
Marketing & Technical Supports Manager
TECHNOWORTH Associates Limited
78, Motijheel Commercial Area, 1st floor,
Dhaka -1000.
Phone: 9555646, 9559776, 9568461, 9567981,
9568794, 018241772
Fax:880-2-9562215, 880-2-8616947
E-mail: worth@bangla.net
Web: www.hach.com
International Enquiries: intl@hach.com

Wagtech Portable Trace Element Analyzer (PTEA)

This is a portable device for measuring metals in water, including arsenic (but also lead, copper, etc). The operating principle is voltaic stripping. Due to price and complexity you cannot consider it equivalent to a field test kit, but it can be used in the field. It can attain the same accuracy and precision as a AAS, at a fraction of the cost (also without need for reliable electricity, airconditioning, etc.). Potential uses are as system for cross-checking field kit results, or for use as part of a mobile laboratory (e.g. setting up a temporary water supply analysis facility at union or upazilla level). The PTEA is marketed by Wagtech in the UK. Further details from:
Nick Price, Export Manager
Wagtech UK Ltd., Wagtech House
137-139 Station Road, Thatcham
Berkshire RG19 4QH
nick.price@wagtech.co.uk

Laboratory Methodologies:

The following are the different methodologies for determining arsenic concentration.

a) Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry
   - Flow Injection Hydride Generation AAS
   - Graphite Furnace AAS
   - Flame AAS
   - Electrothermal AAS
b) Neutron Activation Analysis
c) Inductively Coupled Argon Plasma Emission Spectrometry (ICP)
d) Anodic Stripping Voltametry
e) Spectrophotometry
f) X-ray spectroscopy
   - Particle-induced X-ray emission spectrometry (PIXES)
   - X-ray fluorescence (XRF) spectroscopy
   - X-ray absorption fine structure (XAFS) spectroscopy
The minimum detection level of Flow Injection Hydride Generation Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer is 0.003 mg/l and that of Spectrophotometer is 0.03 mg/l.

Many governmental and non-governmental organizations and different institutes have laboratory set up where arsenic analysis facilities are available on commercial basis. NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation has set a laboratory where arsenic analysis and other 30 parameters of water are tested on commercial basis. NGO Forum analyses arsenic by spectrophotometer. Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology, Atomic Energy Commission, BCSIR, Dhaka University (Soil, Water & Environment Dept.) have AAS facilities in their laboratory.

Due to the nature of laboratory testing being remote good co-ordination is necessary with the field to ensure correct tubewells are marked with correct concentrations (i.e. painted red or green). Collaboration with field staff as well as map information and efficient transportation are essential.
D. Arsenic Mitigation Options
Arsenic Mitigation Options

Safe water is the prerequisite for improved public health situation of a country. In addition to the arsenic problem, numerous water borne diseases toll lot of lives every year in Bangladesh. Both the GoB and NGOs have been working with great emphasis in this field since last few decades for ensuring safe drinking water to the people.

Concept of Safe Drinking Water:

- Water has no objectionable taste, colour and odour.
- Water that does not contain harmful biological agents,
- Water that does not contain toxic materials & chemicals,
- Water that contains permissible limit of minerals.

Drinking water can be obtained from groundwater, surface water or rainwater sources. Each source has characteristics relating to quality, quantity, reliability, user acceptability and costs that will determine use. While it was claimed that about 95% of the total population of Bangladesh have been brought under safe water supply, the current ground water arsenic contamination is a severe blow to that perceived success. Now it has become urgent to seek alternative water source other than shallow tube-well in the arsenic contaminated areas.

When considering sources and water supply technologies for arsenic mitigation, selection should be on the basis of avoidance or of a substantial and consistent reduction of the ingestion of arsenic.

In assessing best alternative water options and/or arsenic removal technologies the following basic criteria should be evaluated:

- Water Quality (i.e. does the system consistently provides bacteriologically and chemically safe water?)
- Water Quantity (e.g. flow rate, access to water at peak times)
- Affordability (capital, operation & maintenance)
- Reliability
- Life expectancy (e.g. how does one know when to change filter media)
- Convenience (e.g. time & effort involved)
- Time considerations
- Gender issues (e.g. ergonomically appropriate, division of labour)
- Environmental risks (e.g. sludge disposal, excess water / drainage issues)
- Operational safety (e.g. user accidental misuse, physical and chemical safety, robustness)
- Risk substitution (e.g. introduction of bacteriological contamination)
- Logistical sustainability of system (e.g. are reagents available locally, life time of system, market base, involvement of private sector)
- User acceptability
- Necessary operation and maintenance training
- Information, Education & Communication

Different field studies revealed that arsenic free alternative safe water options should be area specific depending on the features and geological structure of that area. Rain water Harvesting System (RWHS) or deep tube wells will be a better source of drinking water in the coastal areas where the shallow aquifer is contaminated with arsenic and less potable because of high salinity. In some areas, particularly those without an aquitard separating the shallow and deep aquifers, there are concerns about the deep aquifer also coming contaminated with arsenic. So many experts consider that the long-term recommendation of an alternative water supply option should be aimed at the best proper use of surface water, but this must consider the treatment of typically high pathogen loadings.
Alternative Safe Water Options

Alternative safe water options can be provided at either household or community level.

The household level options include:

- accessing water by sharing safe (green) tubewells,
- using protected dug wells,
- rainwater harvesting,
- treating surface water (e.g. by use of household filter or solar disinfection).

Community level alternative options include:

- Deep tube well with hand pump,
- Deep tube well with motorized pump, overhead tank and series of stand posts (below tank or distributed in the area),
- Rainwater harvesting,
- Surface water treatment through pond sand filters,
- Other surface water filters or treatment technologies,
- Disinfection systems

Arsenic Removal Technologies

Household and community level arsenic removal technologies should be subjected to rigorous testing in idealized field conditions, in real household conditions, and in laboratory conditions. It is imperative that the performance of the technologies is adequate and as anticipated in the household or the community - not only in the laboratory or in supervised field conditions. They should produce an adequate quality and quantity of water even when the technology is subject to a certain degree of “misuse” such as may be caused by improper mixing, use beyond assumed safe removal capacity of a filter, shortcuts, etc. Removal technologies should be such that their presentation (sachet, pill or adsorbent layer), operation and functioning (mixing, settling), storage and abstraction, favour the adequate operation at the household and community level to ensure provision of safe water.

There are four main methods of arsenic removal:

- co-precipitation (coagulants form flocs that bind arsenic and are then filtered out)
- adsorption (arsenic adsorbed onto surface of media)
- ion-exchange (arsenic ions attracted to charged polymer resins)
- membrane filtration (selectively permeable membranes remove arsenic by filtration)

Some stakeholders have expressed doubts about the viability of household arsenic units, and suggested that community level arsenic removal units are preferable. They note the difficulties associated with persuading millions of households to use arsenic removal units, and in ensuring that they are used correctly, and the advantages of centralized operation and maintenance, including arsenic testing, by trained caretakers. They also express concern about the effect of private sector involvement, with its emphasis on commercial viability, on the poor. However, these compelling arguments ignore history. The failure of concerted efforts to provide community water supplies for all is what led to the massive growth in private hand pump tubewells in the first place, and existing investments in community water treatment units, such as pond sand filters, or iron removal plants, have rarely produced safe or sustainable water supplies.

This listing of technologies does not indicate that they are safe technologies to use or that they consistently remove arsenic to below 50ppb. This listing should be used as an information point and organisations are encouraged to seek further detail either from organisations testing the technologies or the technology proponents. The responsibility for safe implementation lies with the respective implementing organization.
Household level Arsenic Removal Technologies

Rapid Assessment of Household Level Arsenic Removal Technologies:

The DFID funded the project 'Rapid Assessment of Household Level Arsenic Removal Technologies' which comparatively evaluated the first nine of the household level technologies listed below and was carried out as part of the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP) with management support of WaterAid Bangladesh. It was carried out by WS Atkins International with the assistance of the Bangladesh Engineering and Technological Services (BETS), the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) and Imperial College, London.

The study was conducted in two phases. Phase I sought to answer the question "Does the technology consistently reduce arsenic concentration below the Bangladesh Guideline Standard of 0.05 mg/l". Seven of the nine technologies passed and were included in Phase II.

Phase II was concerned with:

- Arsenic removal under normal conditions
- Fourteen other water quality parameters
- Bacteriological contamination
- Breakthrough
- User acceptability
- Affordability
- An evaluation of field based arsenic testing kits.

The household level arsenic removal technologies that were considered during Phase I are:

1. Passive Sedimentation
2. DPHE / DANIDA Bucket Treatment Unit
3. Stevens' Institute Technology
4. Adarsha Filter
5. GARNET home-made filter
6. SONO- 3 kolshi method
7. BUET Activated Aluminium Filter
8. Alkan Activated Aluminium Filter
9. Tetra Hedron
10. Ion exchange resins
11. Rajshahi University / New Zealand iron hydroxide slurry
12. SORAS (Solar Oxidation and Removal of Arsenic)

The seven technologies that passed to second stage (Phase II) are the following:

- Alcan Enhanced Activated Alumina
- BUET Activated Alumina
- Sono 3 - kolshi
- Stevens Institute Filter
- DPHE/DANIDA Two Bucket
- GARNET Home-made Filter

The first four were consistently good at removing arsenic, with no apparent negative impact on any of the other key water quality variables. The last three were most unpredictable, two of them struggling to cope with high arsenic concentration in ground water. Of the four consistent technologies, the Alcan and the Sono were the most acceptable to householders, whilst the BUET and Stevens were less so. Key factors for acceptability were cost, ease of use, waiting time and flow rate. The full report is available on-line at the WaterAid web site (http://www.wateraid.co.uk) under 'Research and campaigns' and the Arsenic Crisis Information Centre site (http://bicn.com/acic/).
Household Level Arsenic Removal Technologies:

Household level arsenic removal technology options include the following (see Annexe 5 for further details of the technologies):

1. **Passive Sedimentation**
   No proponent

2. **DPHE / DANIDA Bucket Treatment Unit**
   Contact: DPHE-Danida Water Supply and Sanitation Components, Arsenic Mitigation Component, 2888, Central Road, Harinarayanpur, Majde Court, Noakhali. Ph. 0321 5582

3. **Stevens' Institute Technology**
   Professor Meng, Center for Environmental Engineering, Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, NJ 07030. E-mail: xmeng@stevens-tech.edu
   Ms. Nasrine R. Karim, Director General, Earth Identity Project, F 6/1 House 2, Road 17, Block - C, Banani, Dhaka-1213. Tel: 8812049-53

4. **Ardasha Filter**
   Mr. Sounir Mojumdar, CRS-Ardasha Filter Industries, Chagelan Bazar, Chagalanaya, Feni.

5. **GARNET home-made filter**
   Mr. Tofael Ahmed, Programme Officer, GARNET-SA, 1/7, Block-E, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207, Tel: 9171421

6. **SONO- 3 kolshi method**
   Professor A.H. Khan, Department of Chemistry, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, E-mail: akhhan@udhaka.net
   Dr. A.K.M. Munir, Director, SDC-Environment Initiative, College More, Courtpara, Kushtia 7000 Ph: 07153144

7. **BUET Activated Alumium Filter**
   Dr. M.A. Jalil, Department of Civil Engineering, BUET, contact: e-mail:majalil@ce.buet.edu

8. **Alcan Activated Alumina Filter**
   M. Saber Afzal, MAGIC Technologies Ltd, House 15, Road 5 Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205. Tel: 861 5279, 989 3747 Fax: 861 5279 E-mail: magc@bdmail.net Website: www.magctech.com

9. **Tetra Hedron**
   US: Dr. Waqi Alam, tetrahedron@prodigy.net
   Bangladesh: Wazir Alam or Md. Masud Rana 9882770, 601852, 017171376 10.

10. **Ion exchange resins**
    Contact: BAMWSP, email: pdmwsp@bol-online.com??

11. **Rajshahi University / New Zealand iron hydroxide slurry**
    Contact: BAMWSP, email: pdmwsp@bol-online.com??

12. **SORAS (Solar Oxidation and Removal of Arsenic)**
    Contact: Martin Wegelin, Daniel Gechter and Stefan Hug, Swiss Federal Institute for Env. Science and Technology (EAWAG), Dept. of Water & Sanitation in Developing Countries (SANDEC), 8600 Duebendorf, Switzerland internet: www.eawag.ch, www.sandec.ch
    Abdullah Mahmud and Abdul Motaleb, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), GPO Box 928, Dhaka, Bangladesh

13. **Shapla Filter**
    Contact: David B Nunley, Country Director, International Development Enterprises (IDE) – Bangladesh, House 15, Road 7, Dhanmondi, Dhaka 1205, Phone: 8614485, 8619258, Fax: 8613506
    E-mail: dbnunley@agni.com Webpage: www.ide-bangladesh.org
Community Level Arsenic Removal Technologies:

Community level arsenic removal technology options include the following (see Annexe 6 for further details on the technologies):

1. **Arsenic / Iron Removal Plants**

2. **SIDCO**
   - Mir Moaidul Huq, General Manager, Sidko Limited
   - Paragon House (7th Floor), 5, Mohakhali C/A., Dhaka-1212
   - Phone: 880-2-9881794 / 8827122
   - Fax: 880-2-9883400
   - E-Mail: sidko@neksus.com

3. **Alcan**
   - M. Saber Afzal, MAGC Technologies Ltd, House 15, Road 5 Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205. Tel: 861
   - 5279, 989 3747 Fax: 861 5279 E-mail: magc@bdmail.net Website: www.magctech.com

4. **Arsen-X System**
   - Contact: Ostertech Inc. 37 North Forge Drive, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania 19460, USA
   - Phone / fax: +610 935 066
   - Email: lewo@att.net

5. **Tetra Hedron**
   - US: Dr. Waqi Alam, tetrahedron@prodigy.net
   - Bangladesh: Wazir Alam or Md. Masud Rana
   - 9882770, 601852, 017171376 E-Mail:

6. **Nirapad**
   - PROSHIKA / Altech

7. **Apyron System**
   - Contact: Forrest Cookson, American Chamber of Commerce Dhaka (c/o. Sheraton Hotel)
   - Phone: 011852337

8. **READ-F**
   - Contact: Brota Services International, Al-Islam Chamber (2nd Floor), 91
   - Agrabad, Chittagong. Phone: 031-712183, 725865. Dhaka Office: 262/KA Fakirapool, Dhaka 1000. Phone: 9350390
Annexes

In the Context of arsenic crisis in Bangladesh the Govt. of Bangladesh has given due emphasis to address the issue. 'An international workshop on Arsenic Mitigation' was held at Dhaka on 14th - 16th January 2002 to find way to the mitigation of the problem. The inaugural session was addressed by our prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia. The workshop was participated by numerous national and international experts on arsenic. The experts were categorized into three different groups depending on the background of the participants. The three groups were

♦ Health Group
♦ Alternative Water Option Group
♦ Hydrogeology Group

A number of different recommendations were propounded in the workshop by the experts. The strategies recommended in the workshop were aimed to address the arsenic issue on emergency, short term and long term basis. A diagnostic and management protocol was presented at the conference so that there may not be any confusion regarding diagnosis and management of the arsenicosis patients.

A review report on the recommendation made in the workshop are summarized below.

ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY COMPONENT

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS
The alternative water supply groups recognized that:
- alternative technologies are area dependent and cannot be prioritized for the whole country;
- the country is broadly divided in Shallow Water Table Area, Low Water Table Area, Coastal Saline Area, Stony Area and Chittagong Hill Tracts Area requiring technological variations;
- no single option can serve the purpose of the people having different social & economic conditions;
- choice of the communities should be given priority in the selection of technological options;
- there exists knowledge gap in some areas that impedes decision making regarding selection of alternative technologies for arsenic affected areas

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Alternative Water Supply Options
Despite many constraints the following alternative water supply options are recommended:

Emergency Option:
In acute arsenic problem areas an alternative safe water point appropriate in the area is to be provided in each village on an urgent basis following ongoing national screening program.

Short-term Options (Alphabetically, not in order of priority) :
- Deep Tubewell (where suitable aquifer is available).
- Dug/Ring well (where technically feasible).
- Rainwater harvesting.
- Treatment of surface water (adequate quality and quantity).
- Treatment of arsenic contaminated water.

Long-term Options:
- Proven safe and sustainable technologies implemented under short-term options.
- Piped water supply.
2. Site Specific Selection of Options
The possible sites for different alternative technologies are given below:

Deep Tube Wells
Manually operated deep tubewells are source of safe and reliable water supply in many parts of the coastal area. In other areas, safe deep aquifers may be available to produce water of acceptable quality for water supply.

Requirements
- It is important to first delineate the areas where such deep aquifers are available that are separated from shallow contaminated aquifers by relatively impermeable layers.
- The annular space of bore holes of the deep tubewells are required to be sealed at the level of impermeable strata to avoid percolation of arsenic contaminated water.

Dug/Ring Wells
Dug wells may be constructed where feasible for arsenic safe water supplies. The areas with aquifers at shallower depth and the hilly areas are suitable for construction of dug wells. The areas with thick consolidated clay layers are not suitable for dug well construction. There should be a sanitary protection and provision for disinfection of dug well water.

Caution
Dug/ring wells are to be tested in an acute arsenic problem areas for arsenic content under following conditions of:
- Continuous withdrawal of water for few days
- Complete sanitary protection

Possibility of Contamination from on-site sanitation

Rainwater Harvesting
Rainwater harvesting has good potential for water supply in arsenic and salinity affected areas in Bangladesh. It is suitable in the coastal islands, south-western part of coastal area and hilly regions of Bangladesh.

Requirements
- Standardization catchments area and storage tank in relation to rainfall intensity and distribution in Bangladesh.
- Monitoring of water quality, particularly during the lean period.

Surface Water Treatment
Treatment of surface water can be an option in any part of Bangladesh having perennial surface water of adequate quantity and of good quality. The flowing rivers, reservoirs, oxbow lakes protected ponds are preferred sources. The technologies include:
- Slow Sand Filters/ Pond Sand Filters (PSFs)
- Pressure filtration followed by disinfection.
- Small-scale conventional or prototype treatment plants
- Conventional surface water treatment plants

Requirements:
- Removal of impurities of any health concern.
- Desired level of clarification and disinfection.

Treatment of Arsenic Contaminated water
Some units developed for treatment of arsenic at household and community levels and installed for experimental use in different parts of Bangladesh have shown very good potentials for use in water supply in all arsenic affected areas.

Centralized arsenic removal plant for urban water supply is possible.

In period of scarcity, arsenic treated water may supplement other sources.

Caution
- Protocols for management of sludge and wastewater rich in arsenic are needed to be developed.
- Validation of technologies is essential prior to mass scale use.

Piped water Supply
Piped water supply is the long-term objective. In an urban center with piped water supply, the people dependent on shallow tubewells can shortly be brought under piped water supply through expansion of existing areas of service coverage. Piped water supply should also be introduced in the urban centers fully dependent on contaminated shallow tubewells. Arsenic removal would be required for the few urban centers having arsenic contaminated production wells.
Piped water supplies are also possible for clustered households in villages, growth centers and the rural areas having good rural road network. Arsenic safe water for piped water supplies may be available from any sources such as deep tubewell, treated surface or arsenic contaminated water or water from community dug wells.

3. **Monitoring and Surveillance:**
Performance and quality of water of the existing safe tubewells and the proposed short-term options need regular monitoring and surveillance.

4. **Institutional Arrangement for Implementation of Alternative Water Supply**

4.1 **Vision Statement:**
Safe and adequate amount of water will be provided for drinking and cooking in all households through effective, efficient and sustainable institutions. Services will be provided and managed locally, which will be transparent and accountable to the people. National interests and public goods issues will be addressed by the Central Government. 
(Safe: arsenic-safe, free from other chemical and microbiological pollutants)

4.2. **Role of the Central Government**
   a. A national legislation for water quality and supply for regulation, monitoring and implementation should be developed. National Water Council must play an important role in this process.
   b. The regulatory capacity of DPHE to provide technical guidance and monitoring for supply of safe water should be strengthened.

4.3. **Role of Local Government**
   a. The governmental policy of decentralized provision of services related to safe water options through the Union Parishads (UP) should be operationalized immediately. This will lead to a much closer involvement of local government in the implementation of safe water options.
   b. UPs should also be involved in mobilizing resources, monitoring and information management; more specifically registration of tube wells can be undertaken by the UP.

4.4. **Role of Communities and NGOs**
   a. Local communities must be facilitated and empowered to undertake planning, implementation and management of safe water options. This should be based on informed choices. NGOs must play a vital role in this process.
   b. There should be a strong focus on capacity development at the local and/or community level for technical implementation and monitoring.
   c. Formation of user groups for local implementation and monitoring should be encouraged throughout the country with support from NGO’s and the local government.

4.5. **Role of the Private Sector**
   a. The private sector can play a key role in implementation of safe water options and interacting with the end users. This role should be included in the mainstream national policy for provision of safe water options and development of innovative, enterprising solutions should be encouraged.
   b. Involvement of private sector in financing of well monitoring and safe water options should be encouraged through tax relief and other incentives.

4.6. **Capacity Development**
   a. Institutional capacity development for the regulatory functions and monitoring should be undertaken by the Central Government (Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives).
   b. Capacity development at the local and community level should include technical capacity for installation, operation & maintenance, and monitoring should be a key element of the national policy. This should also include the capacity for information management and reporting.

4.7. **Information Management and Applied Research**
   a. Knowledge and information should be managed centrally to ensure transparency of the implementation process. Ready accessibility of information to all stakeholders is essential. Governmental institutions, such as NAMIC, should undertake this sustained role of functioning as an information warehouse at the national level.
   b. Centers of excellence on relevant research on safe water options should be developed. These centers should focus on existing information and knowledge leading to identifying and conducting research on key areas.

5. **Task Force**
A Task Force led by DPHE may be constituted to undertake prioritizations of safe water options and develop strategies for their implementation. The Task Force should focus on: (i) a clear time frame for implementation; (ii) the formulation of a protocol that includes technological and socio-economic criteria; and (iii) a strategy for information management and dissemination.
The Task Force will formulate the roles and responsibilities of the ministries, departments and directorates, local government institutions, research institutions, private organizations, NGOs and CBOs. The information emerging from the Task Force should be adequate for making informed choices by communities.

6. Researches and Development
There are many areas of research and development in diverse fields of alternative water supplies in Bangladesh. Some of them are listed below:

- Leaching characteristics of arsenic rich sludges under different conditions and possible contamination from arsenic rich effluents produced by arsenic removal technologies.
- Development of construction, operation and maintenance manuals for each of the following:
  - Rainwater harvesting
  - Dug wells
  - Water treatment plant
  - Piped water supply
- Effect of sanitary protections on arsenic content of dug well water.
- Development of an accurate and reliable field kit for measurement of arsenic at the village level.
- Development of effective, affordable and environment friendly arsenic removal technologies for use in rural areas of Bangladesh.
- Analysis of water supply situation including population exposed to arsenic contamination based on updated data available from on-going studies and national screening program.
- An evaluation of effectiveness, impact and replicability of arsenic mitigation initiatives in Bangladesh.
- Study of water treatment plants in operation in Bangladesh: identification of problems and possible solutions for application in the design of alternative water supply technologies.

HEALTH THEME GROUP
Preamble:
The overriding priority for the health of the people of Bangladesh is to ensure access to wholesome and pure, arsenic free, and bacteriologically safe, water. Time is too short, we need to act now!!!
Implication of health effects and impacts were presented and discussed by more than thirty experts from home and abroad. Three key presentations in the fields of diagnosis, treatment and research were debated and recommendations made thereon.

- Case Diagnosis Guideline
  - Prof. M A Khalique Barbhuiya
- Management Protocol
  - Prof. M Mazibul Haque
- Research Priorities
  - Dr Harunur Rashid

Case diagnosis guidelines: - Summary

- Three Flow Diagrams were suggested as diagnostic guidelines by Professor MA Khalique Barbhuiya
- Following extensive discussion amendments were made and one comprehensive flow chart was agreed that can be used at the field level. (Please see Annex)

Recommendations(diagnosis)

- Issues related to Arsenicosis both clinical and public health should be incorporated in the Undergraduate Medical Curriculum as well as Training of Paramedics
- Set-up and maintain an effective and proper referral chain for clinical case management of Arsenicosis cases
- Preventive and Social Medicine should be incorporated
- Health Workers need to be trained as soon as possible on case detection and management
- Detection and reporting of cases should be implemented - the hierarchical classification was endorsed
- Establish a Multidisciplinary National Task Force for identification, monitoring and recommendations on (mitigation of) health impacts
Case Management - Summary

- The Management Protocol provided a table containing Manifestation, Stages and Recommended Management process.
- As the asymptomatic patients won't seek any clinical intervention - it should be deleted from the management protocol.
- Scientific proof is necessary before incorporating the anti-oxidants like Beta Carotene and vitamin C and E in the recommended management protocol.
- The structure of the Management Protocol should not contain any staging
- Add follow-up and counseling to the management protocol
- The role of Keratolytic Agents is merely palliative - if given, then 5-20% salicylate should be used.
- The management protocol should include a footnote as follows: 
  **Beta carotene, Vitamin C and E is thought to be helpful for Arsenicosis Management but are yet to have a proven role.**
  Appropriate nutritional supplement should be given to those who are malnourished.

Research Summary

- Up to this date 73 research studies have been conducted or are ongoing on health impact of Arsenic Exposure - 8 on management or clinical trials
- There is a need for coordinated research - both interdisciplinary and intersectoral was highly emphasized
- A multi-disciplinary, autonomous, International Centre for Arsenic Mitigation should be established in Bangladesh
- High quality laboratories for epidemiological and diagnostic investigation should be established in Bangladesh
- A multi-disciplinary, autonomous, International Centre for Arsenic Mitigation should be established in Bangladesh
- There is a need to coordinate research - including interdisciplinary and intersectoral research.
- Keep room for Investigator Initiated Research

Seven Priority Areas
for research in health are:-

- Prevalence study - exposure, cases including the dose-response relationship
- Clinical trials - showing the effect of antioxidants and other drugs
- Effects on young, especially neonates and infants
- Effects on Reproductive Health
- Health effects/impacts of alternative water options
- Long-term cohort - interdisciplinary
- Bio-availability and food chain

Other Priority areas
for research in health are:-

- Low cost management
- Natural History
- Pre-clinical - GI tract (absorption role)
- Non-cutaneous manifestation and involvement of other organs
- Long-term risk associated with arsenic-caused carcinoma
- Pharmacodynamics and kinetics of arsenic in the body
- Factors related to Arsenicosis

Recommendation of the Hydrogeology Group

Screening of Tubewells

1. Government has given due priority of screening of all tube wells. It is recommended that the process be accelerated and screening of all the tube wells both hand pumps and irrigation wells (approx. 10 million) be completed by field kits on Priority Basis in highly contaminated areas in accordance with the guide lines of the Government's Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation, 1998 . (Short term)
2. Reliable testing facilities should be available to people at a reasonable cost. (short term).
3. Quality control of field surveys is essential for which Reference Laboratories to validate field test results be established on a priority basis (short term).
Monitoring of screened tubewells
1. System be developed to monitor the presently found safe wells, if possible once a year (mid term goal).

Aquifer Mapping
1. Immediate mapping be based on existing data of tubewells on Arsenic concentration and depth of wells if location is available. This should be used as local level guide for new tubewells (short term).
2. Priority Project should be undertaken to find criteria for mapping the Upper, Middle and Lower aquifers (Holocene and Plio-Pleistocene sediments) on Upazila as units. Union level exercise may be tried at a later date (mid term).
3. Because arsenic is related to geology, a priority project should be undertaken for mapping of facies, geometry and chemistry, and classification of the Holocene sediments and correlate them to the aquifer systems.

Groundwater Management
1. In those areas where groundwater is known to be safe, it should continue to play a role in providing safe water supplies. But this must be supported by a monitoring program (short term).
2. In arsenic affected areas, no new irrigation wells should be installed in the arsenic safe aquifer to protect the presently safe water supplies. This aquifer is frequently found at greater depth. (Short term).
3. The abstraction rate of the safe aquifers needs to be determined to assess the potential for sustainable future water supplies from this resource (short term).
4. Ensure that the entire population has access to arsenic safe water (mid term).
5. Determine uses that require arsenic safe water such as cooking, drinking and agricultural, etc (short term).
6. Monitor the quality and quantity of groundwater for those purposes requiring safe water particularly for arsenic (mid term).
7. Develop enforceable standards for water well construction to prevent cross-contamination of aquifers (short term).

Research
# Investigate the source, release mechanism and mobilization of arsenic in the ground water on a priority basis (short term).
# Detailed analyses and transport properties of the aquifer sediments should be undertaken (mid term).
# Research on soil build-up of arsenic through arsenic laden irrigation water and bio-availability of arsenic and its subsequent entry into crop, agriculture and food chain (mid term).
# Evaluate methods of in-situ arsenic removal from groundwater as an alternative method for supplying arsenic safe water (mid term).

1. Evaluate the effects on hydrologic and geochemical systems to actual and future development of the groundwater resource (short term).
2. Identify isotopic signature of arsenic contaminated water from arsenic safe deeper aquifers and to study the interactions between shallow and deeper aquifers (mid term).
3. Investigate the seasonal changes in arsenic concentration and other information required to develop a reliable and cost effective monitoring program (short term).
4. Develop simple tools to assist local drillers in site and depth selection (mid term).

Administrative and Legal Issues
1. Groundwater is a valuable natural resource. A suitable "Groundwater Act" should be enacted to control all activities regarding sustainable groundwater exploration, development and management (short term).
2. A national standard should be established for arsenic content of irrigation by groundwater (short term).
3. There is no single organization in the country that deals with all aspects of groundwater although all our neighboring countries have organizations such as “Groundwater Commission”, “Groundwater Board” or “Groundwater Agency”. The Government should create or identify an organization bringing all the personnel working on groundwater under one umbrella organization.
4. Government should coordinate all stakeholder activities in the sector based upon their approved strategy.
5. Local Government Institutions should be given sufficient resources in recognition of its key role in ensuring provision of arsenic safe water to the people.
6. An international center for groundwater related research and training needs to be established in the country.
Actions following the January International Workshop 2002

After the Workshop the Govt. of Bangladesh has formed an "National Expert Committee" (please see annex:02) on arsenic with the approval of "Secretariat Committee". The national experts were assigned to prioritize the recommendation of the workshop to determine the immediate programs needed to be taken by the government.

The experts on "Alternative Water Supply Option", "Hydro-geology" and "Health" group submitted their report on prioritized issues that need to be addressed on immediate basis.

Prioritized Actions:

The Priority Actions in respect to hydrogeological issues and alternative water supply option that has been approved by the "Secretariat Committee" are the following:

A. Hydrogeological Issues:

   a) Aquifer Mapping: To know the position and characteristic of aquifers in Bangladesh. This will provide data as to where and at what depth safe ground water can be found.
   b) Enactment of Ground Water Act for regulation of use of ground water.

The priority action on hydrogeological issues has been already started. The aquifer mapping has been started since May, 2002.

The Govt. of Bangladesh has planned to incorporate the ground water act in the "Water Act" which is in the final process of formation. If not possible a different ground water act will be enacted.

B. Alternative Water Supply Option:

   a) Development of guidelines for arsenic mitigation activities by partner organizations for uniformity in practices and assurance of acceptable standard of services.
   b) Development of a strategy for rain water harvesting for the ensuing rainy season.
   c) Development of construction, operation and maintenance manuals for each of the following:
      1. Surface water treatment
      2. Piped water supply
      3. Dug wells
      4. Rain water harvesting
   d) Study on the effect of sanitary protections on arsenic content of the dug well water.
   e) Validation of arsenic removal technologies
   f) Study on leaching characteristics of arsenic rich sludge under different conditions and possible contamination form arsenic rich effluents produced by arsenic removal technologies.
   g) Preparation of project implementation plan for emergency water supplies.

Among the above stated prioritized actions several of them have been started. For the development of Strategy for rain water harvesting a pilot project named "Rain Water Harvesting Pilot Project" has been started in May 2002.

Objective: The main objective of the pilot project is to habituate the people of arsenic affected areas to rain water at least during rainy season.

Project Area: The study is being conducted in 20 villages of different arsenic affected areas of Bangladesh.

Approach: Subsidy is given to construct only the gutter for collection of rainwater. No subsidy is given to construct any container. The people will collect the water with their own container and by or construct
any container according to their need. No storage is being advocated, as the strategy of the pilot project is to accustom the people to rain water as a source of drinking water.

For **Technology Validation**, BCSIR has been assigned to validate different technology for arsenic removal. BCSIR has already called for submission of different arsenic removal technologies for validation. This project is funded by CIDA and assisted by OCETA.

C. **Health Issue:**

The diagnostic protocol which was prepared in January international workshop 2002, has been approved by the 'Secretariat Committee' and it is decided to illustrate in an easily understandable form for field use.

---

**Flow diagram for diagnosis of arsenicosis**

---

**Probable Case**

- History of Exposure to Arsenic/
- Anyone in family/neighborhood with similar signs

- Pigmentary Change(s) on covered part of the Body (Trunk) and/or Palm (Diffuse or Spotted) and/or Bilateral Palmoplantar

- Points for consideration
  - Present since birth
  - Evidence for less than one month
  - Appearance relatable to any drug intake or occupation
  - Margin Elevated (in case of hyperpigmentation)
  - Inflammatory ring present
  - Scaling over lesion
  - Present in face only
  - Hyperpigmentation along the creases of

- Urgent Tubewell Arsenic Screening

- Thana Level

- Clinical Evaluation

- ARSENOCISIS

- Complication

- Specialist Consultation

- Yes

- NO

- YES

- NO

- Yes

---

**Flow diagram for diagnosis of arsenicosis**

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**Arsenic 2002**

March 2003

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ANNEX: 02

Constitution of the National Expert Committee

Secretary, Local Government Division  Convener

On the basis of expertise:

1. Professor S.Z. Haider  Member
2. Mr. C.K.M. Abdullah  Member
3. Professor Kazi Kamruzzaman  Member
4. Professor Muhammad Masihuzzaman  Member
5. Professor Ainun Nishat  Member
6. Professor Firoz Ahmad  Member

On the Basis of Head of the respective Institute

1. Director General, Health Department  Member
2. Chairman, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission  Member
3. Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council  Member
4. Director General, Environment Department  Member
5. Director General, Bangladesh Geological Survey Department  Member
6. Director General, Bangladesh Water Development Board  Member
7. Chief Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department  Member
8. Head of the Department, Department of Civil Engineering
   Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology  Member
9. Head of the Department, Dermatology
   Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University  Member
10. Chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation  Member
11. Director General, Water Resources Planning Organization  Member
12. Director General, Agricultural Extension Department  Member
13. Coordinator, Dhaka Community Hospital  Member
14. Project Director,
    Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project  Member
ANNEX: 03

Arsenic Related Research and Publications of Dr. K M Ahmed, Department of Geology, Dhaka University:

Publications:

Student Research:
Overseas Student Research:

Other Research:
ANNEX-04

Research Studies and Publications on Arsenic Contamination by the Department of Occupational & Environmental Health, NIPSOM.

International Journal:


National Journal:


ABSTRACTS & PROCEEDINGS:

1. Ground Water Arsenic Contamination and its Effect on Human Health in Bangladesh. 8th ASCON, ICDDR, B, Dhaka, Bangladesh; February 1999.


8. Khan AW, Ahmad SA, Hadi SA. Survey on Health Hazards Due to Arsenic Toxicity. Research report

**Thesis/Dissertations (Completed & Ongoing)**


**ANNEX: 05 A**

**MAGC/Alcan Enhanced Activated Alumina Filter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Enhanced Activated Alumina Filter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Adsorption to enhanced activated alumina (AAFS-50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Semi-reversible adsorption to Al2O3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical controls</td>
<td>Formulae to calculate bed-volumes to exhaustion (for 0.1mg/l AsO4, 15000 bed volumes). Periodic back wash required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>Main unit placed under well head and pump directly into the filter. For household unit, contaminated water is collected from tubewell and poured into filter for processing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate - low turbidity</td>
<td>Main unit: &gt;300 litres per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate - high turbidity</td>
<td>Household unit: &gt;100 litres/hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass</td>
<td>Main unit: 3-5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass</td>
<td>Household unit: 7-10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres in 12 hours</td>
<td>Main unit: &gt;3600 litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres in 12 hours</td>
<td>Household unit: &gt;1,000 litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration - low turbidity</td>
<td>No deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration - high turbidity</td>
<td>No deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims on effectiveness (Results and references)</td>
<td>Studies by Department of Chemistry, Dhaka University, and BRAC (Sonargaon) show a removal rate of 100%. Validation under Rapid Assessment of Arsenic Removal Technologies under BAMWSP/DFID/WATERAid confirmed the same fact and adjudged as top technology in Bangladesh in all respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Main unit: Unit cost US$170 (5 year warranty, expected life 20 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Lower cost main unit $50 (no warranty, expected life 5 years). Same filter material costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>: Filter material costs US$220 for 1st 80,000 litres of processed water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>: Replacement cost of filter material US$ 220 for further 80,000 litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Household unit: Initial cost US$ 34 (unit plus filter material) for 11,000 litres of processed water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>: Replacement cost of filter material $ 14 for further 11,000 litres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Costs expected to fall further.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details</td>
<td>M. Saber Afzal, MAGC Technologies Ltd, House 15, Road 5 Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205. Tel: 861 5279, 989 3747 Fax: 861 5279 E-mail: <a href="mailto:magc@bdmail.net">magc@bdmail.net</a> Website: <a href="http://www.magctech.com">www.magctech.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ANNEX: 05 B

## BUET Activated Alumina Filter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>BUET Activated Alumina Filter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Oxidation, sedimentation, filtration, active alumina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Semi-reversible adsorption to Al2O3, Arsenite removal occurs (through oxidative step)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical controls</td>
<td>Formulae to calculate bed-volumes to exhaustion (for 0.1mg/l AsO4, 15000 bed volumes), Potentially prone to clogging by FeOH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>Fill top bucket and add chemicals as directed. Stir vigorously and leave for one hour. Turn tap to allow water into the activated alumina column. Retrieve water from bottom of column</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate - low turbidity</td>
<td>Approx. 8 litres per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate - high turbidity</td>
<td>Approx. 8 litres per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass</td>
<td>Approx. 2.5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres in 12 hours</td>
<td>Approx. 96 litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration</td>
<td>Steady gentle deterioration (&lt;10% over 15 batches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- low turbidity</td>
<td>Steady gentle deterioration (&lt;10% over 15 batches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- high turbidity</td>
<td>Steady gentle deterioration (&lt;10% over 15 batches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims on effectiveness</td>
<td>(Results and references)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Tk. 1000/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details</td>
<td>Dr. M.A. Jalil, Department of Civil Engineering, BUET, E:mail: <a href="mailto:majalil@ce.buet.edu">majalil@ce.buet.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ANNEX: 05 C**

**Sono 3- Kolshi Filter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>SONO 3-KOLSHI FILTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Filtration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chemical controls**
- Relies on passive coagulation with Fe and/or adsorption to sand matrix
- PO4 > ASO4 >> SiO4 > F
- High HCO3 has –ve impact
- High Ca/Mg has +ve impact

**Physical controls**
- Sand/iron fillings/charcoal packing in filter
- Distribution of water over filter
- Sand grain size and clays
- Sand Fe and Organic C content
- Character and rate of flow through filter

**Operating procedure**
- Pour water into top kolshi. Use water from the bottom kolshi

**Flow rate**
- Low turbidity: Approx. 5 litres per hour
- High turbidity: Approx. 5 litres per hour

**Time for 20 litres to pass**
- Approx. 4 hours

**Litres in 12 hours**
- Approx. 60 litres

**Batches before deterioration**
- Low turbidity: 15 batches with no major deterioration
- High turbidity: 15 batches with no major deterioration

**Claims on effectiveness**
- As (III) from 800ppb to less than 50ppb (2ppb)
- As (total) from 1100ppb to less than 50ppb (10ppb)

**Costs**
- Tk. 325/- (See note below)

**Contact Details**
- Professor A.H. Khan, Department of Chemistry, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, E-mail: ahkhan@udhaka.net
- Dr. A.K.M. Munir, Director, SDC-Environment Initiative, College More, Courtpara, Kushtia 7000 Ph: 07153144

The total cost of the three kolshi unit is Tk 250 to 300 (US$ 5 to 6), of which about 50% is the cost of the metal stand. BRAC have experimented with bamboo and wooden stands, but found that these were even more expensive to produce than the metal stand. The cost of a replacement kolshi, including iron filings and coarse sand, is about Tk 55 (US$ 1.10).
### ANNEX: 05 D

**Stevens Institute Technology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Stevens Institute Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Coagulation/filtration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Chemical controls | Relies on enhanced coagulation and co-precipitation (ferrous sulphate)  
Less dependent upon groundwater Fe   
Chemical oxidant (chlorine-based) enhances arsenite removal  
PO₄ > ASO₄ >> SiO₄ >F  
High HCO₃ has –ve impact   
High Ca/Mg has +ve impact |
| Physical controls | Sand cleaning and packing in filter   
Distribution of water over filter   
Sand grain size and clays   
Sand Fe and Organic C content   
Character and rate of flow through filter |
| Operating procedure | Collect 20 l in a bucket, add chemicals and stir rapidly for a minute. Pour into filter (bucket with holes on top of sand in larger bucket) and wait for water |
| Flow rate   | 18 litres per hour  
- low turbidity  
- high turbidity |
| Time for 20 litres to pass | Just over 1 hour |
| Litres in 12 hours | Approx. 240 litres |
| Batches before deterioration | Steady decline to 50% initial flow after 10 batches  
- low turbidity  
- high turbidity |
| Claims on effectiveness  
(Results and references) | Kachua - less than 50ppb As in treated water (max. 25ppb) from initial As concentrations of 300-800ppb).  
BAMWSP testing programme  
Kishoreganj and Munshiganj – max. As was 19ppb from initial untreated concentrations of 280-468ppb.  
| Costs | Installation Cost: Tk. 2000  
Chemical Cost : Tk. 200 |
| Contact Details | Professor Meng, Center for Environmental Engineering,  
Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, NJ 07030. E-mail: xmeng@stevens-tech.edu  
Ms. Nasrine R. Karim, Director General, Earth Identity Project, F 6/1 House 2, Road 17, Block - C, Banani, Dhaka-1213. Tel: 8812049-53 |
## ANNEX: 05 E

### DPHE/DANIDA Bucket Treatment Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>DPHE/DANIDA Bucket Treatment Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Oxidation/coagulation/filtration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Relies on enhanced coagulation. Less dependent upon groundwater Fe. Chemical oxidant enhances arsenite removal. PO4 &gt; ASO4 &gt;&gt; SiO4 &gt; F. High HCO3 has –ve impact. High Ca/Mg has +ve impact. Ideal pH 6.5 to 8 for optima functioning of alum. Possible residual Mn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>Pour water into the top bucket. Add mixture of aluminium sulphate and potassium permanganate and stir vigorously 20 times. Leave to settle for 2 hours. Turn tap to send water to lower bucket where it passes through a sand filter. Turn tap in bottom bucket to get drinking water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate (low turbidity)</td>
<td>70 litres per hour (but 23 l/hr including 2 hours preparation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate (high turbidity)</td>
<td>50 litres per hour (but 17 l/hr including 2 hours preparation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass (approx)</td>
<td>3 hours (1 hour settling + 1 hour filtration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration (low turbidity)</td>
<td>17 batches – no deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration (high turbidity)</td>
<td>40% fall in flow after 6 batches, then constant to 15 batches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs (capital and recurrent)</td>
<td>Tk. 300-350 depending on the production cost of the flat cover for the lower bucket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact details</td>
<td>DPHE-Danida Water Supply and Sanitation Components, Arsenic Mitigation Component, 2888, Central Road, Harinarayanpur, Majidee Court, Noakhali. Ph. 0321 5582</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Households buy the reagent from project staff at Tk 10 (US$ 0.10) for a 250g pot that lasts an average household about one month.
## Tetra Hedron

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>TETRAHEDRON, INC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Ion Exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle</td>
<td>Ion Exchange is a reversible physical chemical process in which ionic species (As$^{3+}$, As$^{5+}$) in aqueous solution are exchanged with ions attached to the exchange media. After exhaustion a simple regeneration by 25L of 10% brine solution (NaCl) can refresh the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxidizing Agent</td>
<td>Chlorine that acts as a disinfectant also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Capacity depends upon water quality. A one year long pilot study at 150 sites under the supervision of BAMWSP revealed that whatever might be the arsenic concentration (1ppb to 1500 ppb), a half cubic feet Tetrahedron's resin can treat minimum 30000 L to maximum 120000 L of water before regeneration. After regeneration the system is as effective as a new one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other water quality</td>
<td>Iron is removed by back wash. Bacteria free, and other parameter is within Bangladesh standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow Rate</td>
<td>2.5 L/minute or 150 L/hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liters in 12 hr</td>
<td>1800 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batch or continuous?</td>
<td>Continuous process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacterial Performances</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Tk. 12500.00 (imported) and Tk. 8000.00 (Local)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration Cost</td>
<td>Tk. 30.00 to 40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste Disposal</td>
<td>Procedure developed with the help of Chemical Engineering Dept. BUET</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Contact Details     | **US**: Dr. Waqi Alam, tetrahedron@prodigy.net  
**Bangladesh**: Wazir Alam or Md. Masud Rana  
9882770, 601852, 017171376 |
### ANNEX: 05 G

**Emergency Home-made Garnet Filter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Emergency GARNET FILTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Filtration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Relies on passive coagulation with Fe and/or adsorption to sand matrix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PO4 &gt; ASO4 &gt;&gt; SiO4 &gt;F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More or less treats arsenic up to 0.4 mg/l concentration without adding any chemical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment capacity (with arsenic greater than 0.4 to 1 mg/l) increases and performance improves by adding approximately 0.25 tea spoon bleaching powder solution in 10 liters of influent water. The flow rate can be also increased up to about 2 liter per hour by adding the bleaching powder solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>((High HCO3 has –ve impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Ca/Mg has +ve impact ?))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical controls</td>
<td>Brick chips, sand and synthetic cloth packing in filter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More or less even distribution of water over filter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brick chip and sand grain size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance status and rate of flow through filter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>ii). Water poured in the first bucket as and when the level goes down. Flow rate controlled in both buckets separately using a I_V flow control meter, a clean cloth string or any other devise at the rate of about 180-200 ml per minute or one tea spoon per minute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii). Exchange of the bucket position required once in 3-4 weeks interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii). Cleaning of the materials required once in about 3-4 weeks interval after the exchange of position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv). This option can be made with local materials at household level. Instead of bucket, chari (as in original design) or any other container can be used. But flow rate is critical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v) Suitable for emergency purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate</td>
<td>0.7 - 1.2 litre per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- low turbidity</td>
<td>0.4 – 0.6 litres per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- high turbidity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass</td>
<td>Approx. 18-30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres in 12 hours</td>
<td>Approx. 7-15 litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims on effectiveness (Results and references)</td>
<td>Removal efficiencies of 60-100% cited in GARNET’s and Rapid Assessment (by DFID and MAWSP) literatures. The Rapid assessment Assessment document has referred to it as an interesting option and suggested further research and development. It is being further studied by EPRC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Tk.250-600 based on material for stand and containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details</td>
<td>Tofayel Ahmed/Sufia Khanam, GARNET-SA. C/o Environment and Population Research Center (EPRC). 1/7, Block-E, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207, Tel: 88-2-8115376</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ANNEX- 05 H

### Passive Sedimentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>PASSIVE SEDIMENTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Sedimentation – co-precipitation with iron on oxidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Relies on passive coagulation with iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main control is iron in the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PO4 &gt; ASO4 &gt;&gt; SiO4 &gt;F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High HCO3 has –ve impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Ca/Mg has +ve impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical controls</td>
<td>Duration of settling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final water could be contaminated by stirring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bacteriological contamination could be an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>Fill kolshi and leave to settle for over 12 hours. Pour top 2/3rds for use and discard lower 1/3rd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- low turbidity</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- high turbidity</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass</td>
<td>12 hours (depends on size of kolshi – 12 hrs = 30l kolshi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres in 12 hours</td>
<td>20 litres (depends on size of kolshi – 20 litres = 30l kolshi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- low turbidity</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- high turbidity</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims on effectiveness</td>
<td>Only 2 out of 17 wells tested took As below 50ppb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Results and references)</td>
<td>Greatest influence seen was negative correlation between As removal and Electrical Conductivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs (capital and recurrent)</td>
<td>20 litre aluminium kolshi – approx. Tk. 200/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ANNEX: 05 I

**Adarsha Filter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Adarsha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Filtration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical controls</td>
<td>Character and flow rate through filter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>Pour water into tray within bucket. Use tap to get treated water from bottom of bucket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Flow rate | - low turbidity | 1.1 litre per hour |
|           | - high turbidity | 1.1 litre per hour |

| Time for 20 litres to pass | 19 hours |
| Litres in 12 hours | 13 litres |

| Batches before deterioration | - low turbidity | No deterioration in 15 batches |
|                             | - high turbidity | No deterioration in 15 batches |

| Claims on effectiveness (Results and references) | DPHE R& D (Ishtishamul Hoque) have done some assessment and think it reduces As below 50ppb. Not sure why |
| Costs | Tk. 550 |
| Contact Details | Mr. Sounir Mojumdar, CRS-Ardasha Filter Industries, Chagalnaya Bazar, Chagalnaya, Feni |
# Shapla Arsenic Removal Filter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Shapla Arsenic Filter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Absorption, filtration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical controls</td>
<td>Relies on As absorption to Fe₂O₃ through brick sand matrix P₀₄ &gt; AsO₄ &gt; &gt; SiO₄ (order of competing ions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical controls</td>
<td>Fe₂O₃ impregnated brick sand in filter container Brick sand grain size (+/- 2mm) Time exposure to treated media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating procedure</td>
<td>Disperse As contaminated water throughout filter media and use water from the bottom tap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow rate</td>
<td>Approx. 2-3 litres per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approx. 2-3 litres per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for 20 litres to pass</td>
<td>Approx 7 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres in 12 hours</td>
<td>Approx. 30 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batches before deterioration</td>
<td>3000 liters at As level 300 ppb per media charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims on effectiveness</td>
<td>2 years lab testing: Conducted by Professor Fakhrul Islam, Department of Applied Chemistry &amp; Chemical Technology, Rajshahi University Input water (857 ppb As) reduced to 9.5 ppb = 98.9% As removal rate Input water (257 ppb) reduced to 6.8 ppb = 97.4% As removal rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Results and references)</td>
<td>Household level field tests: Field tested in UNICEF working areas in Sonargaon &amp; Kachua, Danida working area in Noakhali and SDC WATSAN-WPP working area in Rajshahi, test results show arsenic removal rate 98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost (Capital and current)</td>
<td>350-400 taka including media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 kg of replacement media 100 taka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact details**

David B. Nunley
International Development Enterprises (IDE-B) House # 15, Road # 7, Dhanmondi, PO Box 5055 New Market, Dhaka-1205 Tel (880) 2-861 4485, 861-9258 Fax 861-3506 Email: dbnunley@agni.com
Shapla Arsenic Removal Filter (continued)

International Development Enterprises (IDE), in collaboration with Dr. Fakhrul Islam, Professor of Applied Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Rajshahi University, has developed an inexpensive filter media (iron salt solution bonded to crushed brick particles) that has been proven to be effective in the lab and field reality. Twenty kgs of this media has proven to filter arsenic from 3,000 to 4,000 liters of contaminated water containing levels of 0.1 to 0.5 ppm As. Test results show that arsenic concentrations were removed completely and/or reduced to well below the Bangladesh acceptable level of 0.05 ppm As and supplies an average family with 20 to 30 liters of safe drinking water per day. The filter also removes iron, phosphate and turbidity and enhances taste of water. The filter can produce about 50-60 liters of water in 12 hours but the effective life the media will be reduced significantly. For the economic standpoint of the rural poor, the filter is being promoted for daily production of 20-30 liters of water per 12 hours.

Shapla is an extremely environment friendly filter which does not produce any hazard to environment or health. The used filter media is non-toxic and can be disposed of safely without danger to the environment or human health. The Filter is also extremely user-friendly and requires almost no operation and maintenance challenges. The users simply pour arsenic contaminated water in the filter and collect arsenic free water through the faucet.

The Shapla arsenic filter is becoming rapidly accepted as the most affordable, simple, and effective filter for the removal of arsenic in Bangladesh. The cost of a family sized Shapla filter in rural Bangladesh is about Taka 450. The cost of 20kg media (which runs approximately about 3-4 months on an average depending on the water parameters and water output) costs about Taka 150.

Tests of the Shapla filter have been undertaken in Bangladesh by IDE in conjunction with UNICEF, Danida and WorldVision as well as BRAC and Grameen.
ANNEX: 06

Detail on Community Level Arsenic Removal Technologies

ARSENIC / IRON REMOVAL PLANTS

A number of organisations working in geographical areas with the problem of high iron concentrations in drinking water have designed and constructed community level iron removal plants. In areas that are also effected by high arsenic concentrations the arsenic removal rates of these iron removal plants have been monitored.

Organisations that have piloted this arsenic removal methodology include:

- 18 District Towns Project
- Rotary International / UNICEF
- DPHE / DANIDA
- NGO Forum for safe drinking water and sanitation

SIDCO

AdsorpAs® is an Adsorbent developed by M/S HARBAUER GmbH, Berlin in co-operation with the Technical University of Berlin, Germany.

SIDCO claim that studies on the adsorption of both arsenic forms (AsIII & AsV) on different adsorbents have determined that granular activated ferric Hydroxide with high specific surface has 5 to 10 times higher efficiency for adsorption of Arsenic from water than other adsorbents.

The main application of AdsorpAs® is the adsorptive removal of arsenate and arsenic. Arsenic binds on the surface of AdsorpAs® by chemiesorption process forming a stable surface complex with ferric hydroxide. AdsorpAs® does not require chemical regeneration and does not produce any regenerate sludge. The residual mass of the spent AdsorpAs® is small.

The adsorption technique with Granular Ferric Hydroxide in fixed bed reactor is simple, safe and effective method for elimination of arsenic from contaminated groundwater. Depending on the concentration of arsenic in raw water 50,000 to 70,000 bed volumes can be treated with Granular ferric Hydroxide.

SIDCO claim that the system is cost-effective. The running/operating cost of the AdsorpAs® system for removal of arsenic from drinking water having a 250 ppb Arsenic concentration is less than 1.0 paisa (US$0.02) per liter of guaranteed arsenic below the WHO (10ppb) recommendation level in water. All adsorption plants (SIDCO, Alcan, BUET, Apyron, Shapla etc.) are influenced in their efficiency by competing ions in the water (as well as by things such as pH). Phosphate (PO4) is an effective competitor for adsorption, and can significantly reduce run-lengths before media needs to be replaced. This is relevant to Bangladesh, since there are various areas with high Phosphate in the water.

The DPHE Pabna & PROSHIKA mobilized the community to organize themselves for running the plant smoothly. They are doing all the regular maintenance and collecting monthly contribution from beneficiaries regularly. From that fund they are paying salary for the caretaker and electric bill to REB. They also generating fund so that they can purchase Granular Ferric Hydroxide in future where required.

Our principal M/S Harbauer GmbH Germany can supply for municipal water supply system of any capacity as per customer requirement. We can also install Arsenic Removal Plant in the existing municipal water supply system.

Contact: Mir Moaidul Huq, General Manager, Sidko Limited
Paragon House (7th Floor), 5, Mohakhali c/A., Dhaka-1212
Phone: 880-2-9881794 / 8827122
Fax: 880-2-9883400
E-Mail: sidko@neksus.com
ALCAN Activated Alumina Filter

A process of sedimentation, filtration and active alumina with the system usually attached to well head and pumped directly into the filter. Approximate flow rates of >300 litres per hour. Approximate capital cost US$170 (5 year warranty, expected life 20 years). Annual filter material costs US$220 (assuming 80,000 litres of treated water). Studies have been carried out by Department of Chemistry, Dhaka University, and BRAC (Sonargaon). Within a 12 hour timespan >3600 litres can be treated. Contact: M. Saber Afzal, MAGC Technologies Ltd, House 15, Road 5 Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205. Tel: 861 5279, 989 3747 Fax: 861 5279 E-mail: magc@bdmail.net Website: www.magctech.com

Arsen-X System

Arsen-X adsorbent is an inorganic matrix which selectively adsorbs and binds targeted compounds. The media will bind arsenic, chromium, selenium and ferric cyanide. Arsen-X is claimed to be suitable for either dose or flow through systems. Arsen-X also claims to produce a very low sludge volume. The pH value of the treated water will increase slightly when Arsen-X is working enabling a monitoring systems other than testing for arsenic concentrations to be put in place. Contact: Ostertech Inc. 37 North Forge Drive, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania 19460, USA Phone / fax: +610 935 066 Email: lewo@att.net

Community Base Surface Water Treatment Plant - Nirapad

‘Nirapad’ is a kind of surface water treatment plant, the production of which has been pioneered by PROSHIKA in Bangladesh, using a simple process of chlorinating with calcium hypochloride tablets, filtration through sand layers of different granulometries and dechlorination with active carbon. It can supply drinking water to 2000 consumers of rural communities with production capacity of around 1200 litters per hour of instantly drinkable water. This is a join venture project of PROSHIKA with a Belgium farm, ‘Altech’. The cost of this plant is 8,00,000 Tk.

In Tungipara Upazilla under Gopalganj district one such plant was experimentally set up last year. Later, one plant in Monla, two in Manikgonj and one plant in Pirojpur have been installed. Preparatory work to establish five more plants has already been completed during the reporting period. Construction of the plants will start very soon in Rampal, Mathbaria, Gopalganj and Horirampur.
ANNEX: 07

Upazilla wise Arsenic Mitigation Activities by Different Organizations

Who is Doing What on Arsenic: Upazila Coverage Area (up to June 2001)

**BAMWSP**

**BAMWSP: Phase 1 (6 Upazila)**
Status: Screening - Completed, Mitigation – Ongoing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl #</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Upazila</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>Uzirpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>CHANDPUR</td>
<td>Hajiganj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>DHAKA</td>
<td>GOPALGANJ</td>
<td>Gopalganj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>KHULNA</td>
<td>KUSHTIA</td>
<td>Bheramara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>RAJSHAHI</td>
<td>PABNA</td>
<td>Ishwardi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>SYLHET</td>
<td>SYLHET</td>
<td>Golapganj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BAMWSP: Phase 2 (25 Upazila)**
Status: Screening – Completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl #</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Upazila</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>Banaripara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>Gaurnadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>Agaljhara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>JHALAKATI</td>
<td>Jhalakati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>BARISAL</td>
<td>PIROJPUR</td>
<td>Bhandaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>BRAHMANBARI</td>
<td>sarail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>CHANDPUR</td>
<td>matab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>CHANDPUR</td>
<td>faridganj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>COMILLA</td>
<td>daudkandi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>COMILLA</td>
<td>laksham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>CHITTAGONG</td>
<td>LAKSMIPUR</td>
<td>raipur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>DHAKA</td>
<td>GOPALGANJ</td>
<td>kotalipara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Status: Screening – Completed

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### List of Upazilas covered by different non governmental Stakeholders

**UNICEF : Phase 1 (5 Upazila)**

Status : Screening – Completed

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**UNICEF : Phase 2 (15 Upazila)**

Status : Screening – Completed, Mitigation ongoing

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### UNICEF: Phase 3 (25 Upazila)

**Status:** Ongoing Screening – Program

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### WATSAN Partnership Project (WPP)

**WPP: Phase 1 (8Upazila)**

**Status:** Screening- Ongoing/Completed in 640 Village

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**WPP: Phase 2 (5Upazila)**

**Status:** Screening – Plan for Next Phase

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### DPHE- DANIDA – Arsenic Mitigation Component

**DPHE – DANIDA:** Phase 1 (8 Upazila)

Status: Screening – Ongoing/ Completed

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### World Vision International – Arsenic Mitigation Program

**WVI:** Phase 1 (14 Upazila)

Status: Screening – Plan

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### ANNEX: 08

**Summary Result Of The Screened Upazila (BAMWSP: 42, UNICEF: 20)**

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<th># of Union</th>
<th># of Village</th>
<th># of Ward</th>
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<th>Total Operative TW</th>
<th>Arsenic Safe TW</th>
<th>Arsenic Conta. TW</th>
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**Total (62 Upazila)**

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<th># of Ward</th>
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<th>Arsenic Safe TW</th>
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<th>% of Arsenic Conta. TW</th>
<th>Total Population Surveyed</th>
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Total: 699 11371 6291 1073384 504484 568927 53.00% 16946544 13459

*Data From SL # 1 to 42 are Collected from the Screening Result of BAMWSP
*Data From SL # 43 to 62 are Collected from the Screening Result of UNICEF

Source: NAMIC
Summary of project activities by Dhaka Community Hospital

1. Arsenic Problem, Causes and Remedies in Bangladesh

Executing Agency: Dhaka Community Hospital & SOES, JU, Calcutta, India
Funding agency: 1. Dhaka Community Hospital 2. SOES, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, India
Project Duration: July 1996 – continue

Major Activities of the Project:
1. Water samples (randomly) test of HTWs and DWTs all over Bangladesh by AAS method
2. Patient identification and biological samples test (Urine, Blood, Nail, Hair and skin)
3. Patient management and flow-up
4. Awareness building
5. Knowledge dissemination on arsenic mitigation
6. Preparation database on arsenic contamination and arsenicosis
7. National of National Map on Arsenic

2. Community Based Arsenic Mitigation Project

Project Area:
1. 182 (all) village of Sirajdikhan Upazila of Munshiganj district
   Duration: June 2001 to May 2003

2. 171 Village of Bera Upazila of Pabna District
   Duration: July 1999 to continue (2 years funding by UNNICEF-DCH, Now DCH is continuing with its own funding)

Support: UNICEF-DPHE-DCH

Objective:
1. Assessment of Arsenic contamination
2. Development of alternative safe drinking water sources
3. Awareness building

Major Activities:
1. Test and mark of arsenic contamination of all tubewell of the project by field kit
2. Identification and management of arsenic patient
3. Provide alternative safe water
4. Awareness creation
5. Community mobilization and empowerment
6. Ensuring of local participation

3. Emergency Arsenic Screening project

Project Area:
1. 558 (all) village of Laksham Upazila of Comilla district
   Duration: November 2000 to continue (BAMWSP provided fund for 6 month, DCH is continuing its activities by own fund)

Funding: BAMWSP and DCH

Objective:
2. Assessment of Arsenic contamination
3. Development of alternative safe drinking water sources
4. Awareness building
5. Local resource mobilization and capacity building
Major Activities:
6. Test and mark of arsenic contamination of all tubewell of the project by field kit
7. Identification and management of arsenic patient
8. Provide alternative safe water
9. Awareness creation
10. Community mobilization and empowerment
11. Ensuring of local participation

4. Assessment of arsenic contamination in Hand pump project

Project Areas:
1. 225 village of 11 Upazilas
2. 4 district town of 4 District

Duration: October 2001 June 2002
Funding: CARE- Bangladesh

Objective:
1. Assessment of Arsenic contamination
2. Awareness building

Major Activities:
- Test and mark of arsenic contamination of all tube well of the project areas by field kit
- Awareness creation
- Community mobilization and empowerment
- Ensuring of local participation

5. Arsenic Patient identification and Management in 14 Upazila

Project Areas: all the villages of 14 Upazila

Implementation:
1. DCH along in 7 Upazila
2. DCH and DGHS jointly in 7 Upazila
Funding: UNICEF and DCH

Objective:
1. Development of patient management protocol
2. Capacity building of local health facilities
3. Awareness building

Major Activities:
1. Patient identification and management
2. Prepare patients baseline
3. Awareness building
4. Provide alternative safe water
5. Information dissemination

6. Patient Identification and Management
   Project area: 25 Areas of 21 Upazilas
   Duration: 1998 to continue
   Funding: DCH
   Objective:
   1. Continuous arsenic patient identification and management
   2. Patient rehabilitation (Physical, social and economical)
   3. Community awareness
   4. Information dissemination
Major Activities:
1. Continuous patient identification (new patient)
2. Provide treatment
3. Social awareness creation
4. Patient follow-up
5. Patient data base
6. Provide alternative safe water to the patient families

7. Arsenic Patient Management at Hospital
Project area: Serious Arsenic patient of Bangladesh
Funding: DCH
Duration: 1996 to Continue
Objective:
1. Better treatment of serious arsenic patient
2. Development of patient data base
Activities:
1. Patient treatment at out door (all the days)
2. Investigation (pathological and others) support
3. Admission and treatment including operation
4. Food and medicine support
5. Long term follow-up
6. Physical rehabilitation

8. Establishment of Bangladesh-Australia Arsenic Mitigation Resource Centre
Project area: 30 village of Bangladesh
Funding: AusAid
Duration: 2002 to 2003 (2 years)
Objective:
1. Establish a resource Centre for Arsenic mitigation
2. Development of safe water source based on surface water
3. Prevention of arsenic exposure through food.
4. Development of community education system
Major activities
1. Set-up laboratory and resource library
2. Provide alternative safe water
3. Collection and analysis of food, soil, water, human samples
4. Community mobilization and training for arsenic patient

9. Molecular Epidemiology of Arsenic exposure and Skin Lesions in Bangladesh
Sample size: 1600 case and control
Duration: 2001 to 2003 (3 years)
Funding: Harvard University (USA) and DCH
Major Activities:
1. Patient identification, management and long term follow-up (at least 3 years)
2. Testing of samples for 3 years (human and water)
3. Provide alternative safe water
4. Awareness building
10. Pilot study on Community Based Arsenic Mitigation

Project Area: 2 village
Duration: August 2000 to July 2001 (DCH is continuing the project by its own )
Funding: UNDP and DCH

Objective
1. Developed community based sustainable mitigation model
2. Development of community financing

Major Activities:
1. Testing all tubewells
2. Identification, management and follow-up of all patients
3. Provide safe water sources
4. Community mobilization and empowerment
5. Awareness building

11. Assessment of arsenic contamination of Town water

Project area: All the districts
Duration: 2000 to continue
Funding: DCH

Objective:
1. Assess the contamination of town water
2. Find out the possible alternative safe water sources

Major Activities:
1. Testing of drinking water
2. Identify and mange arsenic patient
3. Awareness building
4. Inform community about alternative safe water sources

12. National Screening of Arsenic Contamination

Project Area: 31 Upazila
Duration: September 2002 to December 2002
Funding: BAMWSP

Major Activities
1. Testing and marking all the tubewell of the Upazilas
2. Awareness building
3. Community mobilization and empowerment
4. Training to field workers
5. Provide safe water (2nd phase)
ANNEX: 10
Water Quality Fact Sheet
Arsenic

*download the original pdf document from WaterAid:*

http://www.wateraid.org.uk/site/in_depth/research_centre/groundwater/

*NB: look for the link button “Arsenic” at the bottom of the groundwater page*
Water Quality Fact Sheet:

Arsenic

WHO guideline value (recommended limit): 10 µg/l
National standard in most countries: 50 µg/l
Typical range in groundwater: usually <10 µg/l (up to around 3000 µg/l)

This is one of a series of information sheets prepared for a limited number of inorganic constituents of significant health concern that are commonly found in groundwater. The sheets aim to explain the nature of the health risk, the origin and occurrence of the constituent in groundwater, the means of testing and available methods of mitigation. The purpose of the sheets is to provide guidance to WaterAid Country Office staff on targeting efforts for water-quality testing and to encourage further thinking within the organisation on water-quality issues.

Health effects

Arsenic is a ubiquitous element found in the atmosphere, soils and rocks, natural waters and organisms. It is mobilised in the environment through a combination of natural processes such as weathering reactions, biological activity and volcanic emissions as well as through a range of human activities, including mining, industry and agricultural use of arsenical pesticides. Of the various sources of arsenic in the environment, drinking water probably poses the greatest threat to human health.

Arsenic has long been recognised as a toxin and carcinogen. Long-term ingestion of high concentrations from drinking water can potentially give rise to a number of health problems, particularly skin disorders, of which the most common are pigmentation changes (dark/light skin spots) and keratosis (warty nodules, usually on the palms and feet). Additional symptoms include other more serious dermatological problems (e.g. skin cancer and Bowen’s disease), cardiovascular (blackfoot disease, Raynaud’s syndrome, hypertension, gangrene), neurological, respiratory and hepatic diseases as well as diabetes mellitus. Such symptoms have been well-documented in areas of known groundwater contamination such as Bangladesh, West Bengal, Taiwan, northern China, Mexico, Chile and Argentina.

A number of internal cancers have also been linked with As in drinking water, particularly lung, bladder, liver, prostate and kidney cancer (e.g. Smith et al., 1992; 1998). Much research is being carried out to assess the risks of such cancers at the levels of the drinking-water standards. Clinical symptoms of As poisoning and their relative prevalence seem to vary between affected regions and there is no clear agreement on the definition of As poisoning.

Some studies have shown a clear relationship between arsenic dose from drinking water and the development of cancer and other diseases. However, the relationship may be complicated by other factors such as nutritional and general health status (hepatitis B may exacerbate the problems) and water chemistry (e.g. aqueous arsenic chemistry, dissolved iron concentration). Debate also remains over whether a threshold As concentration exists below which the element is effectively safe (e.g. Smith et al., 1992; Clewell et al., 1999).

Latency periods of several years for the development of arsenic-related health problems have been noted in several investigations, a factor which in part explains why many of the problems in developing countries have only recently emerged despite several years of groundwater use.

Many of the advanced and most serious clinical symptoms are incurable. Others can be treated and symptoms can go into remission provided a supply of low-As drinking water is provided at a relatively early stage. Early detection of arsenic in drinking water and provision of low-arsenic alternatives is therefore critical and the element warrants special monitoring in potentially vulnerable groundwaters.

Following the accumulation of evidence for the chronic toxicological effects of As in drinking water, recommended and regulatory limits of many authorities are being reduced. The WHO guideline value for As in drinking water was provisionally reduced in 1993 from 50 µg/l to 10 µg/l. The new recommended value is based largely on analytical capability. Standards based on risk alone would likely be lower still. At present, most countries, and indeed all developing countries, continue to use the 50 µg/l limit as the national standard because of limited analytical capability.
Occurrence in groundwater

Arsenic concentrations in natural waters vary significantly, potentially spanning more than four orders of magnitude. Groundwaters are generally more vulnerable to accumulation of high arsenic concentrations than surface waters because of increased opportunity for chemical reactions between water and host rocks and the high ratios of solid to solution compared to surface waters. Exceptions can occur locally where surface waters (as well as groundwaters) are contaminated by point sources (mining, geothermal, industrial) or where river waters have a high component of baseflow (groundwater). Groundwaters are where the greatest number of, as yet unidentified, high-arsenic sources are likely to be found.

Observed arsenic concentrations in groundwater are themselves highly variable. Most groundwaters tend to have concentrations <10 µg/l but may range up to and in excess of 3000 µg/l in some conditions. Arsenic and fluoride together are now recognised as the greatest problems of all inorganic constituents in groundwater.

Most cases of arsenic contamination in groundwater are naturally-derived, either due to the occurrence of favourable oxidation/reduction and pH conditions in the aquifers (see below) or due to inputs from local geothermal sources. Arsenic problems may also be exacerbated in areas affected by mining activity (coal and metals associated with sulphide minerals). Both mining effluent and geothermal waters often have arsenic concentrations in the milligram-per-litre range and can cause major increases in concentrations of surface waters and groundwaters. Unlike affected major aquifers, these tend to be relatively localised to the contaminant source and are usually easily identified. Contamination from industrial sources may also be severe locally, but such cases are comparatively rare.

Unlike many other toxic trace elements, arsenic is potentially highly mobile in water given the appropriate environmental conditions. It forms anionic (negatively charged) species in water and hence unlike cations can be stable in soluble form at the neutral to alkaline pHs (6.5–8.5) characteristic of most groundwaters. However, arsenic is strongly adsorbed (adhered) onto sediments and soils, particularly iron oxides, as well as aluminium and manganese oxides and clays. These are common constituents of aquifers and are the reason why most groundwaters have low arsenic concentrations.

Arsenic occurs in two oxidation states in water. In reduced (anaerobic) conditions, it is dominated by the reduced form: arsenite and in oxidising conditions by the oxidised form: arsenate. Adsorption (and hence restricted mobility in water) is particularly strong for arsenate.

High arsenic concentrations in groundwater are mainly found in cases where adsorption is restricted. These are found naturally under two main types of conditions:

i) strongly reducing (anaerobic, low-Eh) groundwaters where arsenite dominates and hence sorption to oxides is less favourable. Iron oxides themselves may also dissolve in such conditions, which may release further arsenic;

ii) oxidising (aerobic) aquifers with high groundwater-pH values (>8), typically restricted to arid or semi-arid environments. Such groundwaters commonly also have high concentrations of other potentially toxic elements such as fluoride, boron, uranium, vanadium, nitrate and selenium.

Although the precise mechanisms of arsenic release in groundwater are not yet fully understood, there appear to be two further criteria necessary for the development of high arsenic concentrations in groundwaters from these two environments. Naturally contaminated aquifers recognised so far tend to be:

i) geologically young (ie. sediments deposited in the last few thousand years) and;

ii) groundwaters characterised by slow flow conditions, either because of low hydraulic gradients (low-lying areas such as flat alluvial basins and the lower parts of deltas) or lack of active rainfall and recharge (arid areas, closed basins).

Examples of anaerobic aquifers affected by arsenic include the alluvial and deltaic aquifers of Bangladesh and West Bengal (formed by erosion of the Himalaya in the last few thousand years), and alluvial and lake sediment aquifers of Inner Mongolia, southern Taiwan and the Danube Basin, Hungary. Examples of oxidising aquifers with arsenic problems include the loess aquifers of central Argentina and Chile (formed over the last few thousand years largely by wind erosion of Andean rocks) and alluvial aquifers of northern Mexico and parts of south-west USA (Figure 1; Smedley and Kinniburgh, 2000).

Arsenic problems in mining and mineralised areas occur because of the oxidation of sulphide minerals (especially pyrite and arsenopyrite) which can contain very high concentrations of arsenic and which oxidise by aeration, particularly by the disturbances created by the mining activities. Arsenic problems have been recorded in sulphide-mining areas in
many parts of the world, but are particularly well documented in parts of Thailand, Ghana, the USA and Canada (Figure 1). Recent health problems from mining-related arsenic contamination have also been recognised in part of Madhya Pradesh, India.

Areas where potential future arsenic problems may be identified therefore include:

i) large low-lying present-day alluvial and deltaic basins composed of young sediment where groundwater flow is slow or stagnant and where anaerobic conditions prevail (possibilities include the lower reaches of the Indus Valley, Pakistan, the Mekong and Red River deltas of Vietnam and possibly the lower reaches of the Niger Delta, Nigeria);

ii) inland basins with young sediments in arid and semi-arid areas (such as parts of northern China);

iii) sulphide-mineral rich areas, particularly metal- and coal-mining areas (occurring in basement aquifers in for example parts of Africa, including Ghana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and India);

iv) geothermal areas (possibilities include the East African Rift of Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, although no arsenic data are known for the region).

Arsenic in water is invisible and has no taste or smell. Hence other diagnostic features of water chemistry need to be investigated to identify potential arsenic occurrences. Features of the different types of high-arsenic groundwater environment are shown in Figure 2.

Field testing for arsenic

Arsenic has not been traditionally included on lists of elements routinely tested by water-quality testing laboratories in developing countries and so some arsenic-rich sources undoubtedly remain to be identified. The recent discovery of arsenic contamination on a large scale in Bangladesh in particular has highlighted the need for a rapid assessment of the situation in similar aquifers world-wide. The intended revision of the drinking-water standard for arsenic in a number of countries has also prompted the need for inclusion of the element in water-quality monitoring programmes.

Aquifers with identified arsenic problems typically have a high degree of variability in concentrations,
There are a number of new developments in field-test kits but probably the most promising is the ‘Arsenator Light’ developed by Professor Walter Kosmus of the Karl Franzens University, Graz, Austria. This is a logical development of the standard Gutzeit kit in that it replaces zinc with sodium borohydride and so removes the problem of obtaining low-arsenic zinc; uses tablets instead of liquid chemicals and so avoids the need for carrying strong acids in the field; has a simple and robust arsenic generator; has improved sensitivity and precision, uses a calculator-style device to measure the stain developed photometrically rather than by eye and is easily calibrated. The kit is still being developed with the support of UNICEF, Bangladesh.

Remediation techniques and supply of low-arsenic drinking water

A number of solutions to the arsenic problems of vulnerable aquifers have been suggested for different situations. The only clear conclusion is that no single solution is appropriate for all problems.

Identification of safe tubewells

In areas where groundwater-arsenic problems may be suspected but data are lacking, a broadscale randomised survey of selected tubewells is required to identify the scale of the potential problem.

In areas of known arsenic problems such as Bangladesh and West Bengal, identification of safe tubewells is being carried out by rigorous water testing (laboratory and field tests) of sources used for drinking, as well as periodic monitoring to ensure long-term safety. Even in severely contaminated areas, not all wells within a given aquifer are contaminated (greater than the national standard concentration). Hence groundwater should not be abandoned completely without further evaluation. In Bangladesh, a British Geological Survey study has shown that of some 3500 groundwaters collected nationally, 25% were above 50 µg/l and 35% above 10 µg/l (Kinniburgh and Smedley, 2000). There is also the possibility of selective use of contaminated sources (for washing etc). However, in some areas, a high percentage of tubewells may be contaminated and alternatives therefore need to be found.

Groundwater treatment

The most commonly used methods of treatment of high-arsenic waters at community and municipal level are by the addition of coagulants such as alum or potassium permanganate. Alum is readily available in most countries but has the drawback of leaving residual aluminium and sulphate in treated waters and is not very efficient for waters above pH 7.5. Alum is being promoted for domestic use in...
Bangladesh using a two-bucket (alum, potassium permanganate and sand) system. Potassium permanganate is added to the reducing waters to oxidise arsenite to arsenate and thereby facilitate its removal. Adsorption of arsenic to the manganese oxide produced also occurs. Ferric chloride is also used, but more so in western countries because of cost. The efficacy of the various treatments depends on a number of factors, including the original arsenic concentrations and the overall water chemistry. Activated alumina is also used in some areas to remove arsenic by adsorption, though this is also expensive and not so suitable for developing countries. Both alum and activated alumina are also commonly used to remove fluoride (see Fluoride Fact Sheet).

Treatment of affected groundwater in Bangladesh and West Bengal is also being tried at household level using pots with various adsorption media (e.g. sand, gravel, clay, brick chips) with varying success.

For anaerobic groundwaters, variable amounts of arsenic may be removed by simply leaving water for a period (overnight) to allow aeration and settling of iron oxide (passive sedimentation). However, arsenic removal efficiency is variable. In Bangladesh groundwaters, removal efficiency is of the order of 30%, but varies as a function of iron concentrations, arsenic concentrations and arsenic to iron ratios. Removal will be less effective where arsenic concentrations and arsenic-to-iron ratios are high. Treatment methods using adsorption media or addition of alum or permanganate are a much more effective approach. The method is not effective for aerobic groundwaters because iron concentrations are invariably low. All village-scale treatment methods require considerable care to avoid bacterial contamination. Field testing of household treatment methods in Bangladesh found significant increases in bacterial contamination using passive sedimentation in particular (Jones and Uddin, 2000).

In oxidising aquifers with high pHs, arsenic is often not the only water-quality problem. Water treatment may also require salinity reduction alongside removal of other problem elements such as fluoride, boron, uranium, vanadium and selenium. Where possible, reverse osmosis is commonly carried out to remove these constituents, but the method is expensive and not suitable for village-level treatment in poor communities.

A denite tubewell siting

In Bangladesh and West Bengal, older aquifers at greater depth (>150 m) have mainly low arsenic concentrations and have in places been developed for drinking-water supply. The great spatial variability in arsenic concentrations also offers some possibilities for alternative siting. Potential for alternative tubewell siting, either laterally or with depth therefore arises in some vulnerable aquifers. However, lateral and depth variations in arsenic concentrations are not universally predictable in different aquifers. For example, the occurrence of low-arsenic groundwaters at depth in parts of Bangladesh and West Bengal is specific to the region and cannot be used as a rule of thumb elsewhere. This approach requires a detailed knowledge of the hydrogeological and geochemical conditions of the local aquifers. Provision of deeper tubewells involves significant extra cost. The current extent of understanding of spatial variations on a local scale probably does not allow accurate prediction of the locations of low-arsenic groundwater sources spatially.

Use of hand-dug wells in reducing aquifers

In reducing (anaerobic) aquifers, it has often been found that shallow open hand-dug wells have low arsenic concentrations whilst tubewells only a few metres deeper have much higher concentrations. The difference is probably due to maintenance of aerobic conditions in the open well and also to regular flushing of the shallowest parts of the aquifer, close to the water table, by inputs of recent rainwater. Low arsenic concentrations are typical of hand-dug wells in Bangladesh and West Bengal as well as in Ghana. The problem arises with bacteriological quality of open dug wells, as they are more vulnerable to pollution from the surface. Such sources require bacterial disinfection for potable use. UNICEF (India) has developed a sanitary well system with a well cover, hand pump and chlorination pot for this purpose.

Rainwater harvesting

In areas with sufficient rainfall, collection and storage of rainwater for potable use may be possible, at least seasonally. The method involves collection of rainwater either from roofs or with sheets of plastic and storage in large cement tanks. Once in the tank, rainwater can be stored safely without bacterial contamination for several months. Rainwater harvesting has been practised for a long time in many coastal areas, island communities and other areas where aquifers are saline. It is now also being tried in arsenic-affected areas, for example parts of Bangladesh.

Treated surface water

Surface water usually has low arsenic concentrations (generally much less than 10 µg/l) but may suffer from serious bacterial contamination and can cause severe health problems if not treated. Use of pond sand filters is being tried to remove bacteria in some areas. These usually involve filtration of surface
water through a sand- and gravel-filled tank. Such filters are being installed for example by UNICEF in parts of Bangladesh. The filters are generally effective, provided they are periodically cleaned.

On a larger scale, urban piped-water supplies distributing treated river water are being installed in some arsenic-affected areas (e.g. West Bengal). This is however expensive and not suitable immediately for many large, dispersed and rural communities.

**Data sources**


