



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

USAID and Rotary Clubs Join to Provide Clean Water and Improved Sanitation Worldwide

*Collaboration merges Rotary's grassroots strength
with Agency's technical expertise*

ISTANBUL, TURKEY - March 18, 2009. - The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Rotary International (RI) are teaming-up to save lives by bringing clean drinking water and basic sanitation to communities in the developing world. The partnership was announced today at the World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey, in celebration of the March 22nd observance of World Water Day.

The public-private alliance will leverage the resources of both organizations to implement sustainable, long-term water supply, sanitation and hygiene projects in three countries: Dominican Republic, Ghana and the Philippines. Other countries will follow based on the success of these pilot experiences. Alliance activities in each country will be funded jointly by USAID and Rotary International with an expected minimum of \$2 million per country in the initial phase.

USAID Acting Administrator Alonzo Fulgham noted, "The service ethic and commitment of Rotary clubs in these countries will be complemented by USAID's development expertise and technical leadership. This partnership will yield a significant, sustainable increase in water supply and sanitation coverage for the planet's poorest and most vulnerable populations."

Past RI President Bill Boyd, chair of the collaboration's steering committee, added: "We intend this joint effort to be a model for future alliances with other strategic partners and in this way to enhance our contribution to world understanding, goodwill and peace."

Worldwide more than one billion people lack access to reliable sources of safe water, and twice that many lack access to sanitary human waste disposal systems, creating an environment that allows the disease-poverty cycle to thrive. Each year more than 1.8 million people - most of them children - die of diarrhoea alone. Economic development also suffers as women and girls forego education and occupations to spend hours every day fetching water for their families.

Rotary, a global humanitarian service organization, and USAID see the collaboration as an effective, resource-efficient way to contribute to the UN's Millenium Development Goals, which call for a 50 per cent reduction in the proportion of the world's population without access to safe water and basic sanitation by 2015.

For more information about USAID and other water projects, please visit: www.usaid.gov

For more information about Rotary water and sanitation projects, please visit:
www.wasrag.org or contact us at: info@wasrag.org

**WASRAG: Rotarians working to improve Life and Livelihood
through the provision of Safe Water and Sanitation**