



18 March 2009

Subject: International H<sub>2</sub>O Collaboration

Dear Rotarians,

We are pleased to announce the official launch of the International H<sub>2</sub>O Collaboration. The International H<sub>2</sub>O Collaboration is a new worldwide alliance of Rotary International/The Rotary Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The alliance is dedicated to implementing long-term, sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene projects in the developing world.

More than one billion people lack access to a safe reliable source of drinking water, and more than two billion lack access to any sanitary means of excreta disposal. Combined with unsafe hygiene practices, the result is nearly 1.8 million deaths – the vast majority children – from diarrhea every year. The poor suffer disproportionately from inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene, which helps perpetuate a cycle of disease and poverty. Further, many women and girls spend hours each day fetching water for their families, time that could be spent learning or on other productive activities.

The International H<sub>2</sub>O Collaboration is initially exploring alliance projects in three countries: the Dominican Republic, Ghana, and the Philippines. These countries were selected based on their need as well as the ability and experience of local Rotary clubs and USAID missions to address the need. As it progresses, the alliance will strategically consider expanding to other countries.

More information about the International H<sub>2</sub>O Collaboration can be found on the RI Web site. We encourage you to learn more about this alliance and find ways to get involved. Questions regarding the alliance may be addressed to [amanda.robertson@rotary.org](mailto:amanda.robertson@rotary.org).

We look forward to the exciting future that lies ahead of us as we embark on this new adventure.

Best regards,

*D.K. Lee*

D.K. Lee  
2008-2009 President  
Rotary International

*Bill Boyd*

William B. Boyd  
Past President, RI  
Chair, International H<sub>2</sub>O  
Collaboration Steering Committee