

## WSSCC STRENGTHENS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SANITATION AND HYGIENE PRACTICES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

*Geneva, 19 February 2010* – The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) has received nearly \$2.1 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support its efforts at improving access to safe sanitation and promoting good hygiene practices for people in developing countries. These funds, provided over the next two years, will enable WSSCC to carry out its global networking, knowledge management and advocacy work programmes.

### **Saving lives through improved sanitation and hygiene**

Around the world, 10 million children die every year. Poor sanitation and hygiene are the chief or underlying causes in over half of these deaths. Diarrhoeal diseases, caused primarily by inadequate sanitation, are the second largest killer of children, and cause 17% of deaths in children under-five. Over the past 10 years diarrhoea has killed more children than all the people lost in armed conflicts since the Second World War. Clean toilets and improved hygiene save lives, which is why WSSCC works to enhance collaboration and coordination of all sanitation sector stakeholders in 36 developing countries as well as internationally. WSSCC believes that enhanced collaboration contributes to the broader goals of poverty eradication, health and environmental improvement, gender equality and long-term social and economic development.

### **WSSCC: “thrilled and honoured”**

“We are thrilled and honoured to be selected by the Global Development Program of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for these funds,” said WSSCC’s Executive Director, Jon Lane. “Our mission is to provide sanitation, hygiene and water to all people. The foundation’s support will help us to carry out our work programme, to increase global and national awareness of these important issues, and to have a positive impact on peoples’ lives.”

The foundation is the first non-state donor to WSSCC, joining the Governments of Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States as supporters of the organisation.

### **Support to WSSCC’s core programmes**

WSSCC’s networking and knowledge management work provides a neutral space for individuals and organisations concerned with water, sanitation and hygiene for poor people in developing countries to network and share ideas. The advocacy and communications efforts work to change and influence water, sanitation and hygiene policies and practices at the global and national levels, and to inform and facilitate dialogue and exchange with stakeholders on key issues.

(more)



Participants discuss WASH advocacy during a recent WSSCC training workshop in Tanzania. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's support will help WSSCC to carry out its networking, knowledge management and advocacy work in 36 developing countries.

# WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL

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CONSEIL DE CONCERTATION POUR L'APPROVISIONNEMENT EN EAU ET L'ASSAINISSEMENT  
CONSEJO DE COLABORACION PARA EL ABASTECIMIENTO DE AGUA Y SANEAMIENTO

Specifically, the funding helps WSSCC to:

- enhance coordination and collaboration through WSSCC's National WASH Coalitions
- circulate knowledge and information in the areas of sanitation, hygiene and water
- influence the development and implementation of national policies, and
- increase awareness and influence the global policy debate on sanitation and hygiene.

"Achieving these objectives will contribute to WSSCC's vision of success by providing sector professionals and organisations around the world with the knowledge, skills and commitment to serve poor people's needs for sanitation, hygiene and water supply," said Lane. "In turn, this work will accelerate the number of people having access to safe sanitation, water and good hygiene practices and reduce child mortality."

## Note to editors

*The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) is a global multi-stakeholder partnership and membership organisation that works to save lives and improve livelihoods. It does so by enhancing collaboration among sector agencies and professionals who are working to improve access for the 2.5 billion people without safe sanitation and the 884 million people without clean drinking water. Through its work, WSSCC contributes to the broader goals of poverty eradication, health and environmental improvement, gender equality and long-term social and economic development. WSSCC has coalitions in 36 countries, members in more than 160 countries, and a Geneva-based Secretariat hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).*

Visit [www.wsscc.org](http://www.wsscc.org) for more information.

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