



Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

Conseil de Concertation pour
l'Approvisionnement
en Eau et l'Assainissement



PRESS RELEASE

WSSCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INVITES ROTARIANS TO JOIN WASH CAMPAIGN VIA "ROTAWASH"

Chicago, Illinois, 20 June - Gourisankar Ghosh, Executive Director of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), extended an invitation to thousands of community leaders attending Rotary International's centennial celebration, to join the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for all (WASH) campaign through a new initiative called "ROTAWASH".

Mr. Ghosh was a featured speaker at the "Water Resources Symposium", which is one of many events being organized this week by Rotary International, an international NGO that is celebrating its 100th birthday in the mid-western city of Chicago. Attended by over 2,500 Rotary Club members from around the world, the symposium was moderated by Mr. Ron Denham (Rotary's Water Resources Task Force Coordinator), and featured speakers Ms. Vanessa Tobin (UNICEF), Mr. Ravi Narayanan (WaterAid) and Mr. Ghosh.

In his presentation, the WSSCC Executive Director stressed the need to make a paradigm shift from the old supply-driven and hardware-focused interventions to the demand-driven, people-centred and software-oriented approaches, with government playing the role of leader, motivator and regulator, and only in special cases, providing water and sanitation services.

Describing its national and regional WASH partnerships in over 35 countries, and the global WASH programme that have been widely recognized by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, Mr. Ghosh also introduced a proposed initiative with UNICEF where Rotary Clubs could play an important role. Called "15 by 15", the initiative would aim to provide 15 million people with basic sanitation by the year 2015, the deadline for achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

"Rotary brings commitment, strong professionalism and even unique partnerships between urban and rural sectors," said Mr. Ghosh. "With its 1.2 million members contributing \$1 a year, Rotarians can mobilize \$1.2 million dollars that can provide 40,000 toilets and bring safe water to 2,000,000 people - a substantial contribution towards meeting the MDGs," he added.

According to Mr. Ghosh, Rotary Clubs can participate in WASH in many ways: provide or advocate for appropriate and affordable, low-cost technologies such as rainwater harvesting, link with hygiene education and school sanitation campaigns, develop WASH coalitions at local level in partnership with WSSCC's coordinators and partners, act as knowledge centres, encourage small entrepreneurs and focus on gender-sensitive issues such as promoting separate toilet facilities for boys and girls.

Genuine interest in the subject was shown by many participants as demonstrated by the questions raised after the presentations. A flyer entitled "WASH: *Why it's the Big Issue*", pins and coasters were also distributed at the Symposium.

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