



NEWS RELEASE

December 15, 2009

USAID and Rotary International's Water Alliance Launched in the Philippines

Led by the U.S. Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission Ms. Leslie Bassett, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Rotary International (RI) launched the Water Alliance, a joint initiative to provide Filipinos access to clean water and sanitation services on December 15, 2009 in Makati City.

According to Ms. Bassett, "increased access to clean water protects health, promotes security, and sustains economic prosperity. The USAID-Rotary International Water Alliance stands on a shared goal of supporting the Philippines' Millennium Development Goal of cutting by half the population without access to clean water and sanitation services by 2015."

The launch was highlighted by grant awards to five Rotary Clubs and Districts, namely: Rotary Clubs of Zamboanga City West, Davao City, Dipolog City, San Fernando, La Union; and combined Districts 3810 and 3780, which proposed water supply and sanitation projects for underserved poor communities.

USAID and the Rotary Foundation provided a total of US\$ 1.1 million grant funding for the five projects that will benefit 9,500 people with piped water supply and 168,000 people with improved wastewater treatment services. These resources are leveraged further with contributions in cash and in kind by the participating Rotary Clubs and other partners.

In 2007, USAID and RI signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to implement joint activities that are in line with shared development goals in countries where they both operate. In the World Water Forum held in Istanbul, Turkey last March 16-22, RI and USAID launched the "Water Alliance" aimed at helping countries achieve their Millennium Development Goals for water supply and basic sanitation. The Philippines, along with Ghana and Dominican Republic, are a part of this partnership.

The partnership builds on each organization's strengths and comparative advantage. Rotary International brings grant funding to local clubs through its Rotary Foundation; Rotary Clubs bring on the ground knowledge of needed projects, management capability and counterpart financial; and USAID provides technical expertise and technologies, management capability and resources in cash and kind.

"Apart from leveraging USG and Rotary resources, the Water Alliance brings together the Rotarians strong sense of commitment to the pursuit of development goals and USG's deep and wide experience in supporting development projects," Ms Bassett explained.

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