



Media Advisory

Water and Sanitation Essential for Life

WSSCC, USAID Launch New Infrastructure and Hygiene Guidance,
Conduct Learning Center at Commission on Sustainable Development

New York, 12 April 2005 - With over one billion people on the planet lacking adequate access to clean and safe water, and over two billion without appropriate sanitation facilities, the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will launch a *"Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Programming Guidance"* handbook tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the United Nations. The handbook is a tool for those who implement and advocate for improved infrastructure of sanitation facilities and the hygienic practices that must be adopted for their full health benefits to be realized.

This handbook release, combined with a "Learning Centre" event *"Programming for Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion: How to Do It"* featuring instructors and case studies from different countries, will be presented to delegates of the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13) that is meeting at the United Nations from 11 to 22 April.

The handbook is a revision and update of a previous manual produced by UNICEF in 1997. The WSSCC and USAID, in collaboration with many partners, including the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP), the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) collaborated on the new and updated programming guidance.

Water supply, sanitation and hygiene are all critical needs for public health. While great progress has been made in improving both water supply and sanitation, worldwide coverage of sanitation is less than half of the coverage of safe water. WSSCC Executive Director Mr. Gourisankar Ghosh said: "The timing of this release could not have been more opportune. There is a great need for the innovative approaches described in this handbook to promote sanitation and hygiene in ways that result in sustained behaviour change."

The learning centre will include instructors comprising: Ms. Merri Weinger (USAID), Mr. Henk van Norden (UNICEF), Mr. Gourisankar Ghosh (WSSCC), Ms. Yasmin von Schirnding (WHO), and Mr. Ede Ijjasz-Vasquez (Water and Sanitation Program, a partnership administered by the World Bank).

This learning centre session will take place at the United Nations, Conference Room C, on Wednesday, 13 April, from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. All CSD-13 delegates and accredited journalists are invited to attend.

For more information, please contact:

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