



**SANITATION & WATER ACTION
NETWORK CANADA**

**RESEAU D'ACTION POUR
L'ASSAINISSEMENT ET L'EAU CANADA**



March 18, 2008

The Hon. Beverley J. Oda
Minister of International Cooperation
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A1



Dear Minister Oda:



Sanitation & Water Action Network (SWAN) Canada is a coalition of Canadian non-governmental organizations united in the belief that improving global access to safe, affordable, and sustainable water supply and sanitation services needs to be a foreign aid priority for Canada.



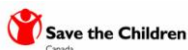
Both the Canadian public and the Canadian government have expressed their growing expectations that Canada's foreign aid should be directed towards poverty-fighting initiatives that deliver cost-effective and concrete results. We believe that boosting water and sanitation investments is one of the best ways to meet those expectations.



Beyond the immediate humanitarian and health benefits, water and sanitation investments also make good economic sense. According to the World Health Organization, failure to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets of halving the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation by 2015 would have a global economic cost of around \$38 billion per year, with 92 per cent of this value attributable to poor sanitation. In contrast, every dollar spent on improving sanitation generates an average economic benefit of \$9. Increasing funding to the sector would also help support Canada's broader poverty-fighting efforts, such as reducing child and maternal mortality, protection of the environment, and improving girls' access to education.



Over the past three years, CIDA's spending on water and sanitation has averaged approximately \$70 million annually. We believe that Canada's fair share of the global funding gap to achieve the MDG targets for water and sanitation should be about \$200 million per year, equivalent to about five per cent of CIDA's annual budget.



One way that Canada can immediately and substantively increase funding to the sector is to be among the first countries to donate to the **Global Sanitation Fund (GSF)**, a new initiative launched by the UN's Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council. Investing in the GSF would go a long way towards strengthening Canada's support for the MDG targets for water and sanitation. It would also be a fitting and meaningful way to mark the UN International Year of Sanitation 2008, particularly with World Water Day approaching on March 22, 2008.



In the longer term, however, there is an urgent need for CIDA to develop a **water and sanitation strategy/action plan**, particularly if funding to the sector is substantially increased. Such a strategy/action plan would provide CIDA with a clear roadmap for how best to engage its civil society, bilateral and multilateral development partners in order to support Canada's contribution towards achieving the MDG targets for water and sanitation.



Coordination Office – Bureau de coordination

rue 321 Chapel Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 7Z2

Tél/Tel: (613) 230-5182 / 1-800-370-5658 Fax: (613) 230-0712 info@swanacanada.org www.swanacanada.org

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these proposed initiatives, and elaborate further on the many benefits of making water and sanitation a Canadian foreign aid priority.

Sincerely,



Alanna Rondi
Executive Director
AMREF Canada



Kevin O'Brien
Executive Director
Canadian Physicians for
Aid & Relief



Constance Wansbrough
Executive Director
Harbinger Foundation




Robert Fox
Executive Director
Oxfam Canada



Blaise Salmon
President
Results Canada



Susan Hreljac
Executive Director
Ryan's Well Foundation



David Morley
Chief Executive Officer
Save the Children Canada



Gary H. J. Pluim
Executive Director
WaterCan



Tony Petrucci
President
Water for People Canada



Ron Denham
Chair
Water & Sanitation
Rotarian Action Group



David Toyce
President & CEO
World Vision Canada