

2.6 billion people have nowhere to go

Bring relief to the
Global Sanitation Crisis



Dear Prime Minister,

We, the members of Sanitation & Water Action Network (SWAN) Canada, a newly-formed and growing coalition of Canadian non-governmental organizations, wish to bring to your attention the fact that around the globe, 2.6 billion people – 42 per cent of the world's population - live without access to basic sanitation. This means no toilets, no latrines, no separation of human waste from daily life.

The consequences of the global sanitation crisis are devastating and far-reaching. Every year, some two million people - mostly children - die from diarrhoeal diseases caused by poor sanitation and dirty water.

To highlight the critical role that sanitation plays in reducing poverty, the United Nations has designated 2008 as the "International Year of Sanitation". Ending the global sanitation crisis is achievable, but increased support from countries like Canada is urgently needed.

WHY INVEST IN SANITATION?

- .. **Investing in sanitation makes sense.** The economic cost of the global sanitation crisis amounts to \$38 billion each year. In contrast, every dollar spent on improving sanitation generates an average economic benefit of \$9.
- .. **The cost is much less than what you might think.** With sustained funding from the international community, basic sanitation for the entire world could be achieved within one to two decades. In relative terms, the cost of such investment (approx. \$10 billion globally per year) is less than one per cent of annual world military spending, or about one-third of yearly spending on bottled water.
- .. **Canada can make a difference and lead the way.** Sanitation and water-related projects represent just two per cent (approx. \$70 million) of Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) annual disbursements. Increased funding for sanitation would yield significant results and lay a strong foundation for CIDA's broader poverty-fighting efforts.

Prime Minister, we, the members of SWAN Canada, call upon you and the Canadian government to provide international leadership in the fight against global poverty by investing in sanitation and water initiatives in the developing world. Sanitation for all can and should be achieved.

Sincerely,

- Kevin McCort, Interim CEO, CARE Canada
- Anna Miller, Director of Programmes, Canadian Physicians for Aid & Relief
- Constance Wansbrough, Executive Director, Harbinger Foundation
- Robert Fox, Executive Director, Oxfam Canada
- Blaise Salmon, President, Results Canada
- Velma McColl, Chair of the Board, Ryan's Well Foundation
- Gary H.J. Pluim, Executive Director, WaterCan
- Tony Petrucci, President, Water for People Canada
- Ron Denham, Chair, Water & Sanitation Rotarian Action Group

Cc: The Hon. Beverly J. Oda, Minister of International Cooperation

To read the full version of this letter,
visit www.swanCanada.org

