

For immediate release: January 14<sup>th</sup> 2004

## **Burnham Rotarian joins WaterAid trip to Malawi.**

The daily struggle to find safe drinking water in Malawi will be experienced first-hand by Burnham Rotarian Ian Black.

Ian is travelling to Malawi for two weeks with the charity **WaterAid** on January 17. With crumbling water infrastructure and widespread disease, Malawi is a long way from his home in Hedgerley, Buckinghamshire.

During his trip to Malawi, Ian will spend a day living the life of a family in Salima where people have to live without any safe drinking water or basic sanitation facilities. Ian will visit deprived rural villages and see WaterAid's project work in action including projects funded by Rotary. Before he leaves the UK he is gathering messages from Buckinghamshire people on a bucket, this will then be presented to the villagers.

Ian commenting on the trip said: "We are so lucky in the western world to receive fresh, clean water on a reliable basis. I feel strongly about helping WaterAid establish the safe water and sanitation that we all take for granted. During my visit I will be spending a day in a village without safe water supplies. I also hope to meet local leaders to discuss the effects of living without safe water and sanitation. On my return to the UK, I am planning to raise awareness of these issues – and, more positively, their solutions. Women and children in Malawi walk up to 20km a day to collect water from rivers and muddy holes. It is back-breaking work and the water often brings disease to their families. A child dies every 15 seconds from water-borne illnesses.

"The problems can sound daunting, but we can all do something to help. It costs less than £15 to provide someone with a lasting supply of safe water and sanitation. In February Thames Water is sending out WaterAid appeal leaflets in the water bills. I do hope people in the Thames Valley will be able to respond."

WaterAid opened a programme in Malawi to start a rehabilitation of the water supplies in November 1999. A wide range of projects are now underway all over the country. Ian will see first-hand how their fundraising is having a direct impact on the world's poorest.

In the last year Rotarians in Great Britain and Ireland raised more than £186,000 to fund wells in 22 villages in Tanzania.

Ian is currently the District Governor of Rotary District 1090 which includes 61 clubs in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Middlesex and Greater London.

### **Notes to Editors:**

To arrange **photos or interviews** please contact: Judith Diment PR for Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Telephone 07860 162313 or 01628 672965 or email [judithdiment@aol.com](mailto:judithdiment@aol.com)

For more information about **WaterAid** please contact **Lisa Martin**, on **020 7793 4524** or email [lisamartin@wateraid.org](mailto:lisamartin@wateraid.org)

Ian Black **returns from Malawi on Thursday, January 29 2004.**

