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Contact: Dain Hansen
(202) 445-7514
dain.hansen@iapmo.org

IAPMO, WaterAid and Millennium Water Alliance Team for WASH Partnership Event

Washington, D.C. (Sept. 12, 2019) – The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO®) today collaborated with WaterAid and the Millennium Water Alliance for a Capitol Hill event highlighting the important role partnerships play in solving the global water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) crisis.

The “Partnerships for Advancing International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene” event served as an important opportunity to recognize the incredible work being done in this sector, noting that even more can be accomplished by looking to the private sector for key allies and partners to help communities around the world gain access to clean water, adequate sanitation and healthy hygiene services.

“It was incredible to see the support from Congress, USAID, NGOs and industry at today’s standing-room only gathering,” said IAPMO CEO GP Russ Chaney. “Increasingly, we are seeing what can be accomplished when we better partner together. It not only moves the needle on the delivery of water and sanitation services to marginalized communities, but this work also helps grow local and international industry — building skilled workforces and supply chain capacities.”

Speakers at the Rayburn House Office Building event included U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR); Chris Milligan, agency counselor with the U.S. Agency for International Development; Troy Benavidez, vice president Public Affairs for LIXIL Water Technologies Americas; Ratish Namboothiry, associate director of Innovation for Good at Kohler; Ira Hersh, director of Partnerships with Gap Foundation; Silvia Cruz-Vargas, director of Social Impact for PepsiCo.

“For more than 150 years, American Standard has protected the health of our nation by providing access to safe plumbing,” Benavidez said. “Now, as part of LIXIL, we are committed to bringing safe sanitation to communities around the world. We are thrilled to be part of this discussion about how private sector, governments, NGOs and other stakeholders can better partner together to help underserved communities across the globe — helping children and families lead lives that are healthier and safer. We appreciate the work IAPMO is doing to not only help organize today’s events, but also to lay the groundwork for communities to move up water and sanitation value chains.”

In 2005, U.S. Congress passed the Water for the Poor Act, which helped to specifically allocate funds for WASH programs, and in 2014 Congress unanimously passed the Water for the World Act, which helped strengthen and guide the WASH programs at USAID and State Department. In 2017, the U.S. released the Global Water Strategy, committing 17 federal agencies to address global WASH challenges. These federal actions create a roadmap for WASH programs and present an opportunity for private and public sector to build upon that work.

“Kohler is committed to its ongoing and growing efforts to address the global need for access to safe water,” Namboothiry said. “Under the umbrella — Safe Water for All — Kohler is helping to address this global need through its associates, products and services. Partnerships are critical to bringing about sustainable change in the WASH sector. We are grateful to be working with IAPMO, WaterAid and the Millenium Water Alliance in helping to draw attention to this important issue.”

Additionally, at the event USAID officially announced that Jennifer Mack has been designated as U.S. Global Water Coordinator. She is the second person to hold this congressionally established position at USAID. Mack has spent more than a decade advocating for and working to improve U.S. foreign assistance. She previously served as deputy assistant to the administrator in the Bureau for Food Security (BFS), where she oversaw external engagement for the U.S. government’s Feed the Future initiative and supported the USAID transformation.