Communications Update

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ICIWaRM Co-Sponsors African Women, Water and Wells Photography Exhibit for World Water Day

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. Striking black and white photographs of African women in their daily lives and environment tell a profound story of how water is essential to life and the consequences of not having it. Access to clean water is a basic human need, but 1.3 billion people do not have it. Gil Garcetti's photographs in *African Women, Water and Wells* focus on the human toil of women and children who have to fetch water to survive, and the hope, health and education that accompanies access to clean water.

The photographs in this exhibit debuted in two locations in Washington, D.C. on Friday, March 22 for World Water Day 2013. Kicking off the International Year of Water Cooperation 2013, the photos were exhibited at United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of State. Approximately 60-70 attendees including the public, private and civil society sectors, federal agencies, academic organizations, water coalitions, NGOs and the private sector participated in the World Water Day event at the State Department.

The exhibit was sponsored by USAID, U.S. Department of State, and the International Center for Integrated Water Resources Management (ICIWaRM), under the auspices of UNESCO. ICIWaRM is a Category II UNESCO center located at the USACE Institute for Water Resources.

African Women, Water and Wells tells a moving story of how clean water in villages in West Africa changes the lives, health, education, and opportunities of the people there, especially those of women and girls. Though deceptively beautiful, the images in this exhibit do not all tell a positive story as more than a billion people are without safe water. When clean water is available, entire village economics change and the lives of the inhabitants are transformed from disease and malnutrition to hope and success. Traveling in countries such as Niger, Ghana, Mali, and Burkina Faso, interviewing villagers and seeing first-hand what water means to these elegant peoples, Garcetti became moved to bring the story to a wider audience and initiate a call to action to the industrialized world through his photographs.

Previously a prosecutor with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office for 32 years, eight of which he was the elected District Attorney (1992-2000), a serendipitous photo of an ironworker working on the construction of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles led Gil Garcetti to a new career. His photography books have led him to tell his stories in numerous photo exhibitions and presentations throughout the world, such as at The United Nations in New York, UNESCO in Paris, the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., the Fowler Museum at UCLA, and the Millennium Museum in Beijing.

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