

USAID awards \$8.5 million to water and sanitation project in Southeast Asia

THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL Development (USAID) awarded up to \$8.5 million to WaterSHED (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Enterprise Development) – a joint effort of UNC’s Gillings School of Global Public Health, Kenan-Flagler Business School and the Kenan Institute-Asia. Mark Sobsey, PhD, Kenan Distinguished Professor of environmental sciences and engineering, is the principal investigator.

Researchers identify sustainable ways to increase the use of ceramic or biosand water filters in homes that lack clean drinking water, to help reduce diarrhea and related diseases that kill nearly two million children a year worldwide. They also investigate ways to achieve financially sustainable, scaled-up access to safe water sources, such as harvested rainwater; improved sanitation, including latrines; and greater practice of personal hygiene, especially hand washing with soap.

The award grew out of the Carolina Global Water Partnership, one of the first Gillings Innovation Laboratories funded through a \$50 million gift to the public health school from Dennis and Joan Gillings. ■