

Sh581m grant for sanitation project

By **ATHMAN AMRAN**

Kenya is set to save Sh27 billion it spends annually on treating sanitation-related diseases through a four-year sanitation project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Foundation has given more than Sh581 million to Plan International, which will work closely with the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation in a research to reduce diarrhoea and other diseases.

"The most vulnerable and disproportionately affected are children under the age of five," Plan International said yesterday during the launch of the project in Nairobi.

Plan International Country Director, John Morris, said more children



Bill Gates

in this age group die from diarrhoea than from HIV, malaria and tuberculosis put together.

The learning and implementation funding from the Foundation is for determining the best way to introduce community-led total sanitation (CLTS) solutions in developing coun-

tries. "The project will be implemented in Homa Bay and Kilifi counties," Morris said.

"CLTS, originally pioneered in Asia, is an approach that works in Kenya, as well as over 30 other African countries, through mobilising communities to collective action to completely get rid of open defecation," said Morris.

He said the grant would enable Plan International to test how they could manage CLTS to ensure its impact went beyond the village level to sub-counties and counties in a cost effective way.

An estimated 21 million Kenyans have no access to sanitary facilities, while 10 million others still defecate in the open.