

Canada and the Millennium Development Goals

An overview of the first five years

In September 2000, 191 countries adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which led to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs are a set of specific targets for poverty reduction, health, education, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and global partnerships to be reached by 2015. In 2002, the international community struck a new development agreement to achieve these goals under the Monterrey Consensus. Developing countries assumed primary responsibility for them, while the industrialized countries, including Canada, committed to supporting their efforts through aid, trade, and debt relief.

In parallel to our increases in aid volumes (see box) has come the growing recognition that, in an interdependent world, development cooperation is central to international affairs and to statecraft in the 21st century. In response to this new reality, in April 2005, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World* was issued. It integrates defence, development, and diplomacy, and underscores the connection between security and development while reinforcing the links between trade, investment, debt relief, technology transfer, and aid.

The International Policy Statement also includes a pledge to deliver a visible and lasting impact on the MDGs. Canada's revised development priorities—governance, health (especially HIV/AIDS), basic education, private sector development, and environmental sustainability, with gender equality integrated across all areas—directly support Canada's contribution to helping the world achieve the MDGs.

Canada is now participating in more large-scale, multi-donor programs based on developing-country priorities that use local institutions and systems for their implementation. This reinforces the capacity of well-governed developing countries that have assumed primary responsibility for achieving the MDGs and it also helps coordinate and focus aid.

The following pages provide an overview of some of Canada's contributions, mainly through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) working with its Canadian partners in government departments and agencies, volunteer organizations and institutions, and the private sector in collaboration with other donors and its counterparts in developing countries.

Canada has committed to the MDGs through a number of major initiatives since 2000:

- In June 2002, the Government of Canada, together with the other G8 countries at Kananaskis, Alberta, committed to an action plan in response to Africa's launch of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Canada dedicated \$500 million to establish the Canada Fund for Africa to implement the Africa Action Plan.
- In July 2005, Canada, along with its G8 partners, agreed to increase aid for all developing countries by some \$50 billion per year by 2010, of which at least \$25 billion extra per year will go to Africa.
- Canada specifically will double (relative to 2001) our international assistance to more than \$5 billion per year by 2010; and by 2008–2009, Canada's aid to Africa will double its 2003–2004 level. Also by 2010, at least two thirds of Canada's bilateral assistance will be targeted at 25 of the poorest developing countries—more than half of which are in Africa—with a demonstrated capacity to use aid effectively.
- Canada has also opened its markets to imports from the world's poorest countries, taken major steps to provide debt relief, and was the first country to pass legislation to allow the manufacture of essential drugs at lower prices for countries in need.
- Improved fiscal health has enabled Canada to increase its provision of international assistance. Last year, in 2004–2005, Canada provided \$3.74 billion to international assistance, including an extraordinary humanitarian relief contribution in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami. Even excluding this relief, international assistance was 21 percent higher than in the previous fiscal year.

