



A Developing World

Produced by the Canadian International Development Agency

Canada began to assist developing countries in the early 1950s. CIDA was created as the principal agency to carry out Canada's official program of development cooperation.

Canada assistance is provided in three main ways: through country-to-country agreements, through Canadian contributions to international organizations such as United Nations agencies, and through voluntary groups. Most of this assistance goes into projects to help the people of the South achieve development, but some is emergency relief for refugees or victims of disaster.

Many Canadians take part in this effort — for example, by working on projects overseas, by growing food that is sent, or by supporting Canadian voluntary agencies. The goal is to help the people of the world's poorer countries now so that they will be able to provide for their own basic needs tomorrow.

Three-quarters of the world's people live in the developing countries (also called the South, or the Third World). As the figures on this map clearly show, as many as two billion people never have enough food, education, health care, and many other things that we take for granted in fact, life is so hard in many places that roughly 4,000 children die every day in the developing countries because of malnutrition and preventable disease.

Most of the developing countries were once colonies. Many became independent very recently, after the Second World War. Since then, they have faced many problems, but have also made some impressive progress, boosting food production, literacy, school enrollment, life expectancy and industrialization. Most of the effort and almost 90 per cent of the investment have come from the people of the developing countries themselves — but the industrialized nations (the North, or the developed countries) have also provided significant help (called development assistance, or foreign aid).

Canada assists many countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Why? Because most Canadians feel it is right to help the victims of world poverty; because a more just and fair world will probably be a more peaceful and stable world; and because a more prosperous South can provide the opportunities that Canadians will need in the years ahead for jobs and trade as the world economy grows more and more interdependent.

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