

Social and economic programs

A major part of the work of the United Nations consists of helping to improve social and economic conditions throughout the world, especially in the developing countries. Broadly speaking, activities can be classified in three categories: independently-administered programs; special-purpose funds; emergency-relief operations.

All the activities included in the three categories, except the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), are financed wholly or in part by voluntary contributions. UNCTAD is financed through the regular budget of the United Nations. Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency, has been one of the major supporters of these multilateral voluntarily-financed activities.

The United Nations includes several major independently-administered programs, which deal with social, economic and environmental problems, provide relief to the destitute, and finance training and research in the affairs of multilateral organizations. Each operates like a separate organization, with its own budget and secretariat. The programs to which Canada makes voluntary contributions are:

- the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)
- the United Nations Environment Program Fund (UNEP)
- the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Special funds to which Canada has not made voluntary contributions are those administered by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator.

Canada does, however, help defray the costs of the UNIDO and UNDRO secretariats through its assessment under the regular budget of the UN, and contributes indirectly to UNIDO's development-assistance programs through the UNDP. Other voluntary UN activities for which Canada has not so far made a contribution include the UN Special Fund created by the sixth special session of the General Assembly, and the United Nations University.

The *United Nations Development Program* is the world's largest multilateral source of technical and pre-investment assistance for economic and social development in low-income countries. It was formed by the General Assembly in 1965 by merging the United Nations Special Fund (1959) and the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance (1949). The UNDP is