

In this regard, 2015 was a pivotal year that encouraged new thinking on international assistance and how Canada, as a member of the global community, can both contribute to and lead the call for more effective assistance.

Three significant developments have changed our approach to international assistance. One was the adoption of the ambitious United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ("2030 Agenda"), which identifies actions for eradicating poverty in all its forms. The second was the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, which actively encourages a wider spectrum of financial partnerships, including—but not limited to—private-public arrangements. The third was the broad-scale adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, an agreement that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience. The Government of Canada is currently reviewing its policy and funding framework for international assistance to ensure that it is poised to respond effectively and efficiently to this changing global context.

The results presented in this report thus reflect both the thematic priorities in place since 2009 and new, emerging priorities. This includes a greater emphasis on women and girls in all of our development programming, tackling climate change, and responding to the crises in Iraq, Syria and neighbouring countries.

Notably, Canada was quick to respond to urgent international needs in 2015–2016. Demonstrating global solidarity at a critical time, Canada welcomed almost three times as many refugees for resettlement as in any recent year. Most of these refugees are from conflict and war-torn regions of the world, such as Syria and Iraq. In addition, Canada provided urgent humanitarian assistance to people displaced by conflict in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and South Sudan; to victims of the 2015 Nepal

earthquakes; and to families facing food insecurity due to El Niño-related droughts.

Canada also strongly advocated for effective action to prevent and reduce the detrimental effects of climate change. This included the adoption of a new global climate change agreement at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that encourages all countries to take action toward a low-emissions and climate-resilient economy. Helping vulnerable countries transition to low-carbon economies is a top priority for the Government, as demonstrated recently by the Prime Minister's announcement to deliver \$2.65 billion in climate change financing for developing countries. Enhancing the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable in developing countries is consistent with Canada's commitments under the UNFCCC and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both of which aim to foster a more environmentally sustainable future.

Canada has 25 countries of focus for development programming. These countries have been identified based on their crucial needs, their capacity to benefit from development assistance, and their alignment with Canadian foreign policy priorities. The Government of Canada's ODA is aligned with the principles of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda emphasizing that donors and partners are mutually responsible for delivering results that improve quality of life for the most vulnerable. The results and progress achieved in each country were made possible with cooperation from our Canadian, international and civil society partners. Our long-standing and continued work with these partners is essential as we move forward to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Highlighted in this report are stories and results of Canada's efforts in 2015–2016 to end poverty and build a better world.

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The Official Development Assistance Accountability Act (ODAAA) came into force in 2008 with the purpose of ensuring Canada's official development assistance (ODA) is specifically channelled to reduce poverty in developing countries. The law identifies three conditions that must be satisfied for international assistance to be considered ODA.

These conditions include that 1) Canadian ODA contribute to poverty reduction; 2) the perspectives of those that receive ODA have been taken into consideration; and 3) Canadian ODA be disbursed in a manner that is consistent with Canadian values, and with international human rights standards. Canadian ODA can also be directed toward alleviating the effects of natural or artificial disasters, or other emergencies, occurring outside Canada. This is consistent with aid effectiveness principles and Canadian values.

The ODAAA requires that an annual summary report showcasing the results of Canada's ODA, highlighting disbursements by federal government departments and agencies, be tabled in Parliament by the Minister of International Development on behalf of the Government of Canada.

In addition, an annual *Statistical Report on International Assistance* is produced for all Canadian ODA disbursements, including those made by provinces and municipalities. The next edition of the statistical report will be available on the Global Affairs Canada website in March 2017. ODA terms are in accordance with international reporting standards agreed upon by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee.