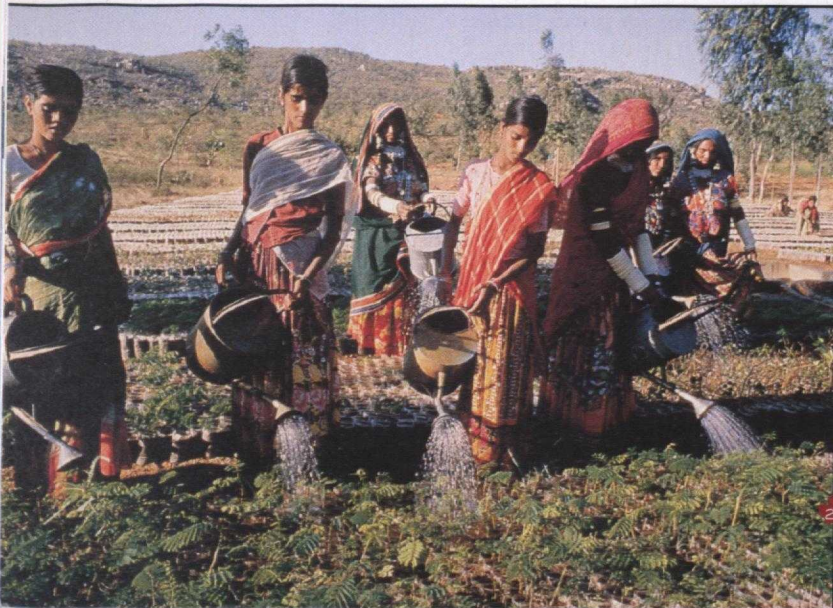


SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC *Development*

Sustainable development is a cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy. Canada's approach is practical and results-oriented. We recognize that it is the people of developing countries, their organizations and governments, who play a central role and hold primary responsibility for achieving progress. Canada's Official Development Assistance program begins with the recognition that a sound development program must be people-centred, with a focus on human development – on building capacity, which means helping men, women and children in developing countries to acquire the skills and resources needed to sustain their own social and economic progress. An emphasis on poverty is vital – one that recognizes that there is no single approach to poverty reduction and that our efforts to help the poor must rely on an array of programs and policies working together in an integrated fashion. Finally, an effective development program must be built on a wide range of partnerships, at home and abroad, to bring together the best possible combination of expertise and skills. Partners in Canadian development assistance include NGOs, the private sector, universities and colleges, youth, professional organizations, all

levels of government, the Canadian International Development Agency, and the International Development Research Centre.



Canada sees the United Nations, its funds and programs and specialized agencies, as key instruments for promoting economic and social development. Our UN reform efforts have focused on the economic, social and development sectors. Positive steps have already been taken by UN Funds and Programs to increase their effectiveness. We strongly support plans to use administrative savings as a “development dividend” to fund the alleviation of poverty and economic growth generation among developing countries.

Canada has supported African development for many years, and today, Africa receives almost half of Canada's official development assistance. We have been a leading player in addressing the problem of debt, being among the first to forgive ODA debt to the least-developed and other poor countries as well as in reduction of official debts of the poorest highly-indebted countries. We have a long tradition of development assistance in Asia and are active partners in building new forms of cooperation in APEC and other regional fora. Canada is also a full partner in Latin America and the Caribbean and maintains an active program of assistance to Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to assist in their transition to democracy and market economies.

A key element of Canada's approach is to make technologies and information accessible to all on an equitable basis. It is critical that developing countries have the means – in their own way, at their own pace and in their own language – to communicate with each other. In June 1997, Canada and the World Bank co-hosted Global Knowledge 97 to address the problem of the marginalization of developing countries in the global information revolution.

