

Priority has been given by the Costa Rican government to increasing the number of housing units in impoverished rural areas. In this country of over 2.4 million, it is estimated that 143,000 families are poorly housed.

Mr. Clark stated that this was not Canada's first venture into the housing sector in Costa Rica, where since 1986 a Canadian counterpart fund had enabled the national government to finance the construction of 1,974 houses. Using this fund, it is expected that housing will be provided to more than 6,000 rural families in the coming years.

Since 1982, the projects financed under the Canadian bilateral program include three lines of credit, a scholarship fund and a technical assistance project for refugees. Two of these projects, namely the third line of credit and the scholarship fund, are in force. Using the lines of credit, counterpart funds in Costa Rica currency have been provided to build these rural housing units.