

Canadian Development Assistance Programs

These exceptional Canadian measures should not distract attention from a wide variety of ongoing programs being implemented in Africa in 51 different countries. In 1986-87, total Canadian assistance to Africa from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will amount to about \$900 million or approximately 40% of CIDA's total budget. The latter amount encompasses the entire spectrum of CIDA contributions and programs and thus includes the bilateral programs (\$380 million), food aid (\$135 million), non-governmental organizations (\$90 million) as well as contributions to several multilateral organizations such as those of the World Bank Group (\$107 million) or the African Development Bank (\$72 million). Canada's \$900 million contribution to Africa includes grants to Canadian organizations such as the International Development Research Centre (\$16 million) and the Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation (\$27 million).

Canada and the Sahel

The Sahel is one of the several regions in Africa where Canadians are implementing development projects. The eight countries of the Sahel (Chad, Niger, Cape Verde, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mauritania and the Gambia) share a common heritage of subsistence agriculture, essentially land-locked economies (except for Senegal and Cape Verde) and a fragile ecology marked by low and declining rainfall. These countries are among the poorest in the world, and their collective population of 33 million (growing at 3% per annum) has an average per capita annual income of US \$250. With three quarters of the population dependent on rainfed agriculture and pastoral herding, the impact of the droughts of 1974-75 and 1983-84 was particularly severe.

These countries generally lack both adequate physical infrastructure (Chad has less than 50 miles of paved roads) and trained human resources. Most of their trade must be moved at great expense through other countries. Aid accounts for an average of 16% of the region's GNP, and is approximately equal to the region's merchandise exports. Exports from the region are mainly agricultural and some minerals, but cover only about 60% of imports. For the years 1986-90 annual debt service (after rescheduling) will be above 20% of export receipts.