

a national think tank has helped shape educational reforms that give children a better start.

INCREASING FOOD SECURITY

High food prices, natural disasters, poor soil, and weak investment in agriculture: any one of these can deepen hunger. Food scarcity is particularly acute in developing countries, which account for 98 percent of the world's undernourished people.

IDRC supports Canada's goal of increasing food security through cutting-edge research on agriculture and the environment. One example is the Canadian International Food Security Research Fund, a multi-year, \$125-million partnership with CIDA, that twins Canadian and developing-country expertise. In Ethiopia for example, research on pulse crops is improving both nutrition and soil fertility. In India and Sri Lanka, a new use of nanotechnology is helping reduce spoilage of mangoes.

As part of Canada's commitment to fast-start financing for climate change action in developing countries, IDRC also manages the African Adaptation Research Centres Initiative. Seven centres are now researching water and crop management options to help farmers manage climate risks. And this year, we expanded our focus on climate change hot spots with the launch of the Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia, co-funded with the UK Department for International Development.

STIMULATING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Developing countries have enjoyed unprecedented rates of growth in recent years. But growth alone does not automatically translate into rising incomes or employment, and its benefits may be unevenly distributed.

IDRC supports research that promotes inclusive growth—enhancing opportunities for all, especially the poor. We help build evidence on strategies that create decent jobs and spur entrepreneurship, with a focus on small- and medium-sized businesses. Research has shown these can be gateways for the poor and for women, who make up the majority of workers in small firms.

As the examples that follow illustrate, IDRC supports research that helps government and business fine-tune employment, trade, investment, and enterprise development strategies. In Paraguay, a leading think tank is building an evidence base to strengthen the country's trade strategy. Across Africa, IDRC has worked with TrustAfrica to

support research on business and investment that has resulted in a number of practical innovations. In Asia, case studies are shedding light on the factors that lead to small business success. And over the past year, IDRC turned its attention to the pressing lack of job opportunities for youth in Africa.

Across the spectrum, the research we support aims to foster growth, not only for its own sake, but also as a means to reduce poverty and inequality.

ENSURING SECURITY AND STABILITY, AND ADVANCING DEMOCRACY

Worldwide, some 1.5 billion people live amid violent conflict or large-scale organized crime. This insecurity deepens human suffering, and undermines progress in all areas of development. The threat of violence and the failure of the state to provide justice and security also limits citizens' representation in society. Past efforts to reduce violence and build secure and just societies have had uneven success in creating legitimate and accountable states.

IDRC addresses insecurity as both a cause and a result of weak governance. Post-war societies struggle to establish good governance. And where governments are corrupt or unstable, criminal organizations flourish—in some regions, controlling entire communities. IDRC's response is to strengthen institutions and build networks that link researchers, governments, and civil society in seeking ways to reinforce stability and security, and to advance democracy.

As the examples that follow show, we focus on the most vulnerable and excluded. In South Asia, for example, new research focuses on legal reforms to reduce sexual violence and ensure perpetrators face justice. And as rapid urbanization threatens poor city neighbourhoods, we have joined DFID in launching a new program of research to support safe and inclusive cities.

In Tunisia and other Arab countries undergoing rapid transformation, we are supporting research efforts to address political participation by women, and to reinforce their rights. This builds on work to understand the political and economic factors influencing transitions in the Arab World, with a view to helping policy actors who are trying to steer the process towards stable democracy and more equitable economic growth.

Our support for research to strengthen democracy also focuses on how states and societies build legitimate and