

The Women's Initiatives Fund (\$8 million, 1991-98) is helping to improve the socio-economic situation of women entrepreneurs in Upper Egypt by enabling them to get access to bank credit and assistance for management and technological adaptation. Three years into the project, 200 women have established 150 businesses employing 350 women. The project is being carried out by the Foundation for International Training, a Canadian non-governmental organization.

In Lebanon, CIDA's activities, which include a project to reform the public administration and another to reform the tax system, support the government's essential role in the process of national reconstruction and rehabilitation. Bilateral disbursements for Lebanon are close to \$1.5 million per year.

In the countries that form the Maghreb, CIDA emphasizes private sector development and institutional enhancement. Two examples are Morocco and Tunisia.

In Morocco, CIDA relies extensively on Canadian expertise to implement projects involving water, environment and infrastructure; they represent investments of \$25 million (1994-96). Canada invests heavily in projects that affect water, a rare resource in Morocco. The National Potable Water Bureau is CIDA's main partner in this sector; the major project is the construction of a purification and waste-water recycling station jointly with the Canadian company ADS.

In Tunisia, a contribution of \$15 million (1995-2000) to the Canada-Tunisia Institutional Reinforcement Program will help to enhance educational institutions in order that training might be better suited to the job market and to the dynamics of industry. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges are managing the project.

West Africa

CIDA has development aid programs in eight of the 11 West African countries that are members of the Francophonie, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal.

CIDA's aim here is to reduce poverty by supporting socio-economic change that will more effectively balance population, economy and environment. The priorities include developing the private sector, and urban and regional infrastructures; meeting basic human needs (education, potable water and health); social communications; and management of natural resources, especially fisheries, major river ecosystems and implementation of the convention on desertification.