

Canadian businesses need equal opportunities to compete with other businesses seeking business linkages in Africa. Other Western countries have set up Development Financial Institutions (DFI) to support the efforts of the business sector in their jurisdiction in benefiting from international business. A DFI that has a special focus on Africa and African women would enhance the Prime Minister's commitment to development in Africa. CAABWA supports the Canadian businesses' initiative in recommending a DFI for Canada.

Recommendations:

23. That Canada establish a DFI as an effective means of ensuring that its international commitment to promote and enhance sustainable socio-economic development in those countries that need it the most.
24. That Canada ensure that the DFI incorporate and adapt CIDA's Gender Equality Policy as part of its framework of operations.

Special Recommendations from Survey Responses

25. While ODA policies have a "poverty reduction" focus, CIDA's lack of an agriculture and food security priority results in an urban bias to Canada's development assistance programming. This is the case even though between 66% and 75% of the poorest people of developing countries live in rural areas and derive a major portion of their livelihood from agriculture.
26. In relation to rural Africa, the lack of an agriculture and food security priority undermines women's development and defeats CIDA's strategy of mainstreaming gender in any rural development programming. Rural African women contribute more toward family food security than do their male counterparts. They depend most on their farm production to meet family food needs.
27. It is absolutely essential to recognize that Africa's rural women are food producers, entrepreneurs and food managers as well as mothers. Their first obligation to their families is to provide enough food. Most rural women achieve this through a combination of farm production and enterprises based on value added processing businesses and trades of their agricultural products. New partnerships that aim to deliver benefits and effectively assist African women will need to promote and implement policies and strategies that:
 - Support women's agriculture production practice and recognize the food production and income earning roles of rural women;
 - Increase women's access to land, to technology (that is appropriate for women's production and processing), to technical training, to micro-business training and to credit for enterprise development;
 - Mainstream gender considerations into the programs of research institutes and into the training and extension services delivered by Departments of Agriculture and NGOs;