

## A MORE STRATEGIC FOCUS

comprehensive, integrated approaches that address the root causes and risk factors that lead to the catastrophic impact of these diseases (for example, unsafe sex, underweight births, micronutrient deficiencies, lack of contraception, unsafe water).

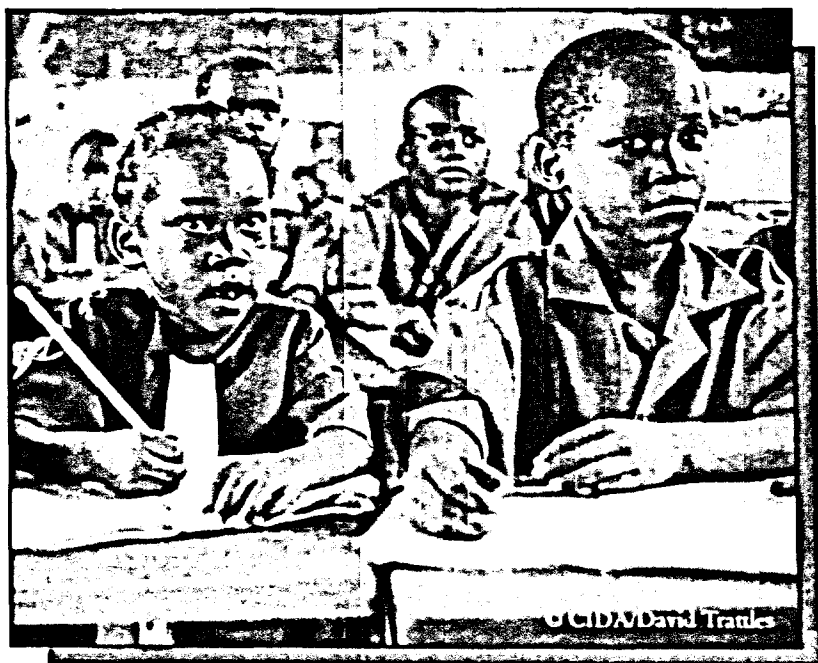
- **Strengthening the capacity of health systems** through improvements in: health training and staffing; surveillance and public health capacity to address new and emerging issues (particularly those affecting women and children); health promotion and applied research; water and sanitation, medical supply chains; and sustainable health-systems financing. Canada will build its assistance on considerable Canadian expertise in rights-based, evidence-based public-health initiatives.
- **Improving infant and child health** in areas related to immunization, development of new vaccines, acute respiratory infections, diarrhea, malnutrition, and related illnesses. Proven technologies and interventions such as micronutrient supplements and immunization can prevent millions of childhood deaths. Canada will continue to assist in these areas through support to targeted interventions as well as through broader health-system support and surveillance to target vulnerable children.
- **Strengthening sexual and reproductive health and reducing maternal mortality** through access to quality services in the following: family planning; skilled birth attendants and emergency obstetric care; surveillance and treatment of sexually transmitted infections; and adolescent sexual and reproductive health. The MDGs cannot be achieved without due attention to sexual and reproductive health. In many parts of the world the most basic reproductive health needs of women and adolescents, such as access to qualified practitioners, are not met. Canada will promote improved access to information and services to remove barriers to achieving health outcomes, such as gender inequality, violence, stigma and discrimination. Canada will also be at the forefront of global efforts to promote sexual and reproductive rights and health.

- **Improving food security.** For the poorest people living in the poorest countries, hunger is the greatest development challenge. Hunger afflicts those facing chronic shortfalls in food supplies and broader groups who lack secure access to adequate food. Based on its established reputation as a leader in agricultural production, in nutrition programs and in adapting technologies to address food-security issues, Canada will continue to provide assistance to develop and sustainably manage local resources to improve the nutrition and health of the poorest and most vulnerable.

### Strengthening Basic Education

*Canada will assist countries to accelerate progress toward ensuring that every girl and boy is able to access and complete free, compulsory, quality basic education.*

Universal primary education and equal access to education are key elements of the MDGs, both in their own right and in support of other goals. Many developing countries have identified strengthening of basic education as a top priority for donor engagement. This has been recognized and is being supported through international initiatives such as the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative. This supports universal primary education through



Boys and girls in Zambia have access to basic education for their first nine years of schooling.