

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE GLOBALLY

developing countries. In health, two major strengths explain this demand. Canada's longstanding experience in strengthening accessible health care systems at home and abroad has been reinforced by its clear global leadership in recent years in fighting communicable diseases; strengthening sexual and reproductive health (especially for women); and improving infant and child health and food security.

In education, developing countries come to Canada for its well-established expertise in learner-centred approaches, teacher training, curriculum development, and the creation of child-friendly, girl-friendly schools. Another special strength for the conditions of many developing countries is built on our geography—Canada's leadership in distance education and new technology to develop educators and expand access to education information and resources.

Environmental sustainability must be integrated at planning and programming levels to ensure that programs and projects are implemented in a sustainable manner that meets agreed standards. Healthy ecosystems at the local level are essential to long-term, meaningful

development and sustainable livelihoods for many of the world's poor. At the same time, many environmental challenges are global in their causes and impacts and require a coordinated response through multilateral channels. We will work on a global level to ensure that developing countries are able to participate fully in global environmental initiatives, such as combatting climate change, that meet our common goals.

Gender equality will be a crosscutting theme. Empowering women to participate fully in the political and economic activities of their communities is an MDG in its own right and is essential to achieving poverty reduction. Canada has been a leader among donors in promoting gender equality, both as a global issue and as a practical matter in implementing programs and projects. Across all five sectors, gender equality will be systematically integrated into programming. The focus will be on equal participation of women as decision makers, on their full human rights, and on their equal access to and control over community and household assets.