

Canada and the Millennium Development Goals

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Improve maternal health

The challenge: Each year, more than half a million women die, and twenty times that number suffer serious injury or disability, during pregnancy and childbirth. A mother's death can be particularly devastating to the children left behind, who are more apt to fall into poverty and become objects of exploitation. Universal access to reproductive health care, including family planning, is the starting point for maternal health. Currently, 200 million women have an unmet need for safe and effective contraceptive devices.

Canada's contribution: Canada focuses on two major areas in maternal health: sexual and reproductive health, and safe motherhood, and spends \$54 million annually on them.

CIDA and its partners have contributed to:

- *Increased awareness for youth.* In Central America, life skills and counselling services for preventing sexually transmitted diseases among young people led to more than 600,000 visits to clinics and the distribution of nearly two million condoms.



- *Stronger reproductive rights.* In Kenya, Canada supported a local network that provides shelter for sexually abused girls, advocacy against female genital mutilation, and education for girls, including life skills and reproductive health.

- *Increased access to family planning.* Every year, contraceptives distributed by the UN Population Fund, through CIDA support, prevent an estimated 187 million unintended pregnancies, 60 million unplanned births, 105 million induced abortions, 2.7 million infant deaths, 215,000 pregnancy-related deaths, and 685,000 children from losing their mothers due to pregnancy-related deaths.

