



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

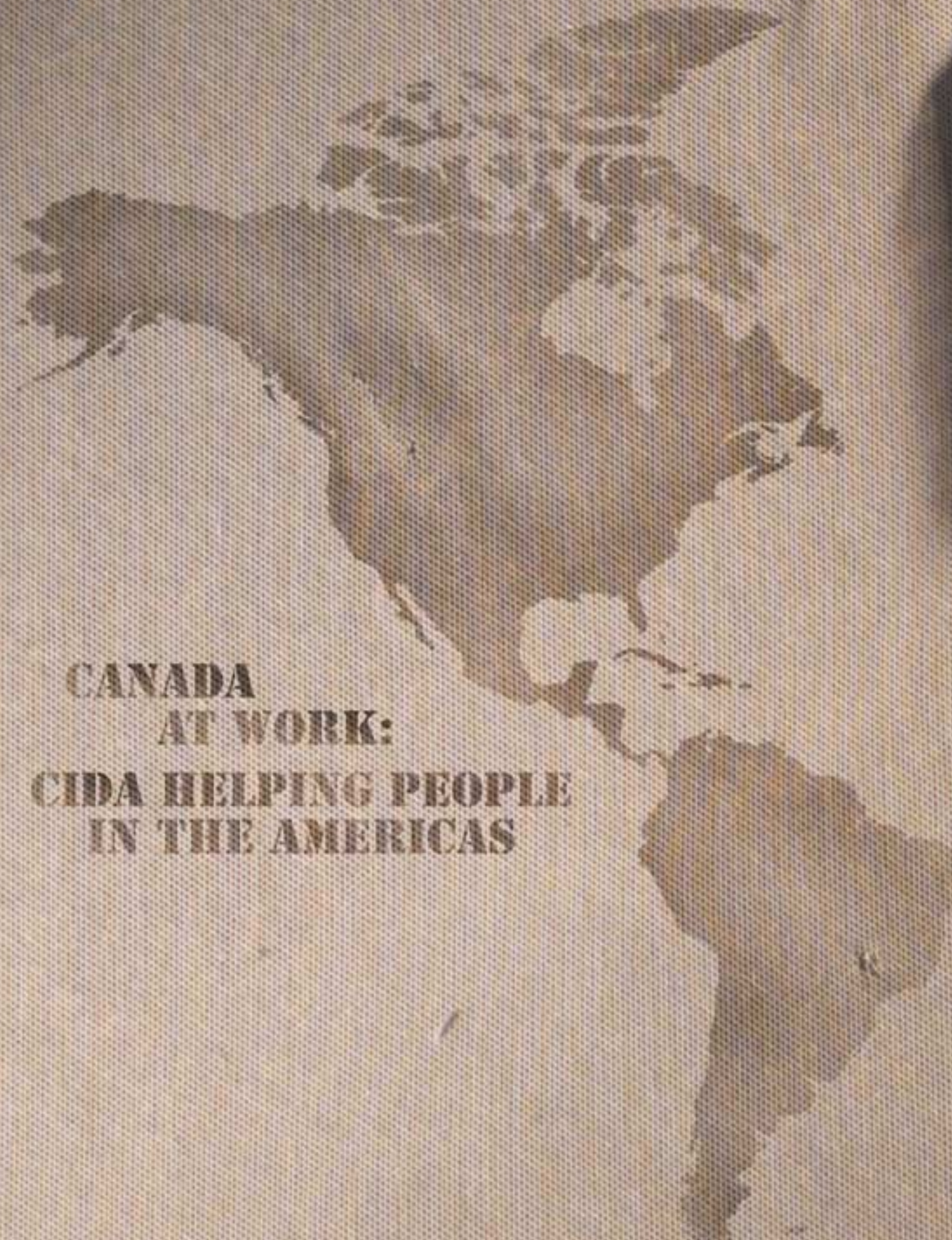
CANADA

and Development Cooperation in the Americas



PHOTOS FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM

Canada



**CANADA
AT WORK:
CIDA HELPING PEOPLE
IN THE AMERICAS**





Message from the Minister

La gran familia—the big family—is the community of nations of North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean. It's a close family with roots that go back for generations. These roots are in the shared land mass that runs from one end of the globe to the other, in the Aboriginal communities throughout the Americas, in a common background of historical influences, and in trade. Canada is an integral part of that family, and our ties with our neighbours are growing closer every day.

The Summit of the Americas 2001

It is these ties that will be discussed at the Summit of the Americas, where Canada will focus on the people of these continents and how to improve their quality of life. As Prime Minister Jean Chrétien has said, the Summit is about more than just economics—it's about our common set of aspirations and values, including democracy, fair markets, and social justice. The Summit needs to produce a clear and vigorous commitment to placing the welfare of our citizens above all else, and recognizing that they can only realize their full potential if their security is assured, if their human and democratic rights are respected, and if they are given equitable access to economic and social opportunities.

Canadians reaching out to the world

Throughout our shared history of cooperation and assistance, many Canadians have been able to contribute to this pursuit of equity, peace, and justice in our hemisphere.

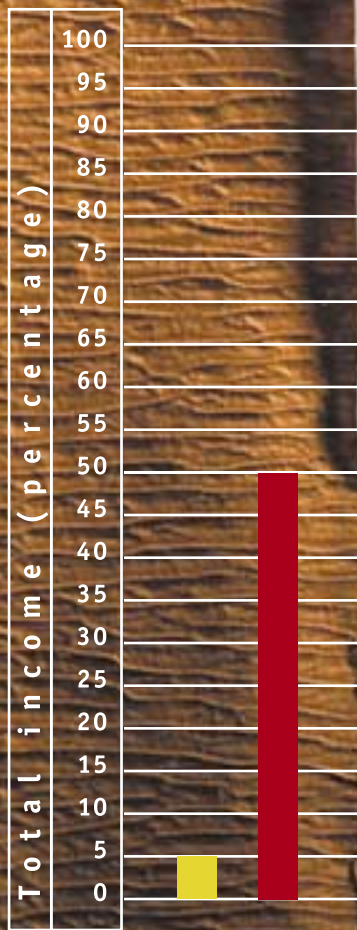
We're tremendously proud of Canadians like Sister Jeanmine Gagnon of Mauricie, Québec, who went to Haiti at the beginning of her career to teach and kept going back year after year; or Marie-Claire Nadeau of Montréal, whose experience with women's health groups in Peru is now helping her in her work with the poor in her own home town; or Father Tim Coughlan of Cobourg, Ontario, who founded Horizons of Friendship with two friends after a life-changing volunteer experience in Honduras; or Daniel Gagnon, a forester from the city of Québec whose agroforestry guide for poor farmers in Central America, *El Machete Verde*, is still in use nearly 10 years after he developed it.

The legacy of these Canadians continues today, as literally thousands of people from across Canada work with their partners in some of the hemisphere's poorest and most disadvantaged communities. This photo album tells some of their stories, and invites all Canadians to get to know their extended family a bit better. I hope you like it.

Maria Minna
Minister for International Cooperation



To have and to have not:
The distance between
rich and poor
in Latin America
and the Caribbean



The poorest 20%
The richest 20%

At the dawn

of the 21st century, almost all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are democracies, peace has returned to many war-torn communities, and most countries have opened their economies to the international market. But the challenges remain. Despite an economic growth rate of 3.6 percent, some 200 million of the region's 800 million people are living in poverty, and that number is growing. The greatest gap between rich and poor in the world is in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the region's most pressing need is to ensure that the poorest people can participate in and benefit from economic growth.

introduction

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is responsible for the bulk of the Government of Canada's contribution to poverty reduction and sustainable development worldwide. In Latin American and Caribbean countries, CIDA works with Canadian and local partners to help these countries extend the benefits of growth and globalization to all, improve health and education, and protect themselves from all kinds of instability, whether in the economy, the weather, or the society. CIDA's four social development priorities—health and nutrition, basic education, HIV/AIDS, and child protection—play a major role in our cooperation program.



Earthquakes!

Recovering lost ground in El Salvador

In January 2001, an earthquake hit Central America that left more than 800 people dead, thousands injured, and tens of thousands homeless. Although the earthquake was felt from Panama to Mexico, El Salvador sustained nearly all the damages, since the epicentre of the quake fell along its coastline.

Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), was the first country to provide aid by immediately announcing that CIDA would contribute \$1 million to help the victims of the earthquake. As the extent of the damages became known, Canada acted again by providing a further \$1.3 million to help victims.

In February 2001, El Salvador was rocked by a second major earthquake, which hit communities that had remained intact during the first quake. This earthquake claimed more than 270 lives and injured more than 2,000 people. Thousands were left homeless.

After the February 13 earthquake, Canada signalled its continuing commitment to meeting the urgent needs of the Salvadorans by announcing an additional \$1 million in assistance. The total aid package for the two earthquakes is \$3.3 million, and the Government of Canada has committed to helping El Salvador rebuild.

The aid was distributed by a rapidly mobilized community of non-governmental organizations that CIDA was already supporting as part of its development-cooperation program in Central America. These included the Canadian Red Cross, the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation, Oxfam Canada, Oxfam-Québec, CARE Canada, and Development and Peace. Their job was not only to meet the needs of those affected by the earthquake, but to help them get back on the road to development as soon as possible.

Development cooperation is about people—about their ability to make their own choices and improve their quality of life. Access to quality health care and education is a human right, and it is essential for people who want to escape poverty and build a better future for their families.



CIDA photo: Greg Kinch

With a grain of salt

Less than a generation ago, more than 60 percent of the primary-school-aged children in Bolivia suffered from goitre (an enlargement of the thyroid gland), a telltale sign of iodine deficiency. These children—mostly from the poorest families—struggled with the effects of this disorder, including impaired mental ability, poor physical coordination, and low energy. All they had to look forward to in life were low-skilled jobs, such as herding animals or shining shoes.

Iodine deficiency is the most common single cause of preventable brain damage and mental retardation in the world, and the government of Bolivia was determined to do something about it. Supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, it worked with UNICEF, the Pan American Health Organization, the World Health Organization, and the Bolivian Association of Salt Producers to produce enough iodized salt to reach all of these families.

Today, 93 percent of Bolivians are consuming the iodine they need from their own table salt, and Bolivia has become the first developing country to be certified for universal salt iodization, a goal set in 1990 at the World Summit for Children.



Learning the tools of the trade: Teachers of the Amazon

In the dense equatorial forests of Guyana's hinterland, Amerindian communities live in poverty and isolation. They have no electricity, no telephone service, and no roads to the outside world. Health care is often days away, and the education system is still in its earliest stages of development. Most of the primary teachers are local women, and most have not completed high school, let alone teachers' college.

But the situation is changing. With Canada's support, Tecslut International Ltd. of Montréal is helping the Cyril Potter College of Education in Georgetown, Guyana, to develop and deliver distance-education programs for teachers. They are producing course materials that the teachers study at night by kerosene lamp, and they are training tutors who work directly with the teachers at monthly coaching sessions. These sessions take place at regional centres, which are often a couple of days' travel from some of the more remote villages.

By 2003, more than 1,200 teachers and 400 principals will have been trained through this project. For most, the program will take four-and-a-half years, but motivation is high. As one participant says, the program has "brought to our community something that was once rare"—the opportunity for a better life without having to leave home.

CIDA

The most powerless people in the world are the youngest. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the rights of children—including the right to health care, education, and protection—received a boost after the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of the Child* was passed. Most countries have ratified this Convention, and have laws of their own to implement it.

But they need help to make that vision a reality. Children are still caught up in wars, working in dangerous occupations, living on the streets, and dealing with the terrible spectre of HIV/AIDS.



CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

Voices from the south: Working children

Acualinca City Dump, Managua, Nicaragua

"Myself and the other people who work on the dump, we run a lot of risks and face danger constantly. We can be mistreated, hit, raped. The younger kids suffer when adults take away the things they have collected. And because they are younger, adults take advantage of the children. They are defenceless.

Dos Generaciones tells us to study, to go to school, and to make an effort because this is our future. Most kids were not going to school before."

"I want to leave this place... I want to move forward."

Elena, 12, talks about her life as a garbage scavenger and about the role of the organization Dos Generaciones, which runs a school for working children and provides scholarships for teenagers to attend secondary school. Dos Generaciones also provides counselling and protection, especially for children who are abandoned or abused, and advocates on behalf of all children with government and the local community. This organization, which won the Body Shop Human Rights Award in 2000 for its commitment to working children, is supported by Save the Children Canada and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency.



CIDA photo: Pierre St-Jacques

HUGS for PEOPLE living with AIDS

Sally's life was changed the day she was diagnosed with HIV. She faced discrimination in the community and at the hospitals in her village in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. But instead of hiding, she went public on national television. Her appearance gave AIDS a human face, and people responded with acceptance and support.

People like Sally are playing an important role in preventing and controlling AIDS in the Caribbean. With the support of the Government of Canada, the Canadian Public Health Association works with its colleagues at the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre to strengthen local organizations as they develop health-promotion programs, improve the surveillance system, and upgrade community-based diagnosis, care, and support for people living with AIDS and their families. After Africa, the Caribbean region is the second-most affected by AIDS.

The impact has been tremendous. At one time, people living with HIV/AIDS would have been shunned, says Dr. Bilal Camara, director of the project. But things are changing.

"For the first time, in Guyana, for example, we have seen the President hugging someone who was living with HIV/AIDS," says Camara. "It means the leaders have understood and are moving with us."

Over the next few years, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, or FTAA, will expand to include more and more countries. The Government of Canada, through CIDA, supports a wide range of projects that make sure the poor are not left behind—helping people learn skills, get access to credit, and move into the global economy.



CIDA photo: Greg Kinch

Opportunidada: **Credit for the poor in Bolivia**

For the street vendors, shoe-shiners, bakers, tailors, and other small businesses of the world, the biggest barrier to growth is the lack of credit. They don't need much—but small loans cost a lot to administer for very little return, and banks are not keen to lend to people with no collateral.

Prodem, a Bolivian non-governmental organization, began providing credit to small businesspeople who organized themselves into groups and guaranteed each other's loans. These loans, plus the training Prodem offered, were a tremendous success—especially among poor women, who make up the majority of its clients.

Prodem decided to expand and become a formal financial institution. With CIDA's support, Toronto-based Calmeadow Foundation provided technical advice and assistance to help strengthen the organization and allow it to offer more services to its clients. In January 2000, a new financial organization, Prodem Opportunidada, was born. It now provides a range of group and personal loans, wire transfers, smart cards, and other services from 51 offices to a growing client base of 36,000 people.



CIDA photo: Patricio Baeza

Closing the information gap

Latin American countries, determined to become global-market contenders, are racing to acquire the skills and infrastructure of the knowledge-based economy. They are leapfrogging over older technologies right into the 21st century, and Canada is helping to ensure that all citizens will benefit. Some of the projects the Canadian International Development Agency is funding to help Latin America and the Caribbean close the information gap include the following:

- The Centre missionnaire oblat of Montréal is providing disadvantaged youth in Peru with information technology training—such as computer-assisted design—so they can find work or begin their own businesses.
- Montréal-based SR Telecom is helping set up public telephone facilities in Haiti, and training local personnel in how to manage the systems.
- The Canadian Society for International Health is training Bolivian health-care staff to help them develop and introduce a new model of community health services.
- Vidéodisques Formatex of the city of Québec is helping the Guatemalan government digitize their maps and their geographic database to help increase access to land for the poor and to improve natural-resource management.
- International Datacasting Corporation (IDC) of Ottawa is carrying out a feasibility study to help various Latin American countries improve their distance-education services with better infrastructure. IDC is already helping Mexico deliver Internet data, streaming media, video on demand, and multimedia teaching tools by satellite, especially to remote and underserved areas.



Although most of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are democracies, many are still fragile.

These young democracies are working hard to consolidate their gains by ensuring free and fair elections, educating and encouraging people to vote and participate in public affairs, and opening up dialogue with volunteer and community-based organizations.

They are also building up government institutions like legislatures and independent courts, strengthening public services, and making sure that human rights are observed.



CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

WOMEN IN POLITICS:

Majority numbers, minority participation

The group most consistently excluded from decision-making in the Americas is women. But that's changing, as women enter politics as advocates, lobbyists, and elected officials.

The Canadian International Development Agency is supporting a number of projects that provide training and technical expertise to help women stand up and be counted in their communities:

- In Guatemala, the Democratic Development Fund, managed by the Centre d'études et de coopération internationale (CECI), promoted women's participation in the political process by helping them get access to decision-makers, teaching them how to register their votes, and providing support for analysis of issues and development of strategies for lobbying elected officials.
- In Haiti, the Gender Equality Fund supported the training of women candidates before elections and the subsequent training of the successful candidates to enable them to exercise power and integrate gender concerns into the political process.
- In Colombia, 28 percent of the women candidates trained through Gender Equity Fund programs were elected as governors, mayors, counsellors, and members of departmental assemblies.

VOICES OF YOUTH



CIDA photo: John Williamson

Project K'aslemal, funded through the CIDA-supported Democratic Development Fund of Guatemala, which is managed by the Centre d'études et de coopération internationale (CECI), is helping community-based organizations participate in the political process. The project involves providing training and technical assistance to help draft legislation and work with parliamentarians and other decision-makers. It also trains young students about their rights and duties as citizens of Guatemala, and about the responsibilities of the state, especially the Congress.

As a result of this program, teachers are now teaching these subjects in school and hold annual "Girls and boys, Congresspersons for a day" programs. These highly popular and well-publicized events involve children acting as Congresspeople and proposing changes to laws affecting children's rights.

CIDA

COMMON INTERESTS, **COMMON FUTURE**

Over the years, Canada's development-cooperation program in Latin America and the Caribbean has evolved from a donor-recipient relationship to a partnership between equals. We are dealing with the same issues, like environmental degradation and the impact of globalization on the poor, and we are learning how to deal with them together for the benefit of all our populations. As we work together, we are also sharpening our skills for the global marketplace, building our economies, and working to make sure that as many people as possible can share in their growth.

Perhaps most important of all, we are building human relationships based on trust, compassion, and solidarity. And we are doing all these things through the development-cooperation program. As members of the same hemispheric family, we are building a future of prosperity and peace with our colleagues, our partners, our friends.

For more information on Canada's development-cooperation program in Latin America and the Caribbean, please visit CIDA's Web site at:

www.acdi-cida.gc.ca



Canadians reaching out to the world



CIDA photo: Greg Kinch



CIDA photo: Greg Kinch



Photo: Samaritan's Purse



Photo: Samaritan's Purse



CIDA photo: Peter Bennett

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La version française est aussi disponible
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For more information about CIDA's programs,
activities, and operations, please visit our
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