

GLOBAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

CNA POSITION

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) values the contribution of its member organizations, as well as national and international organizations, in sharing professional and technical expertise and resources to support capacity development among its global health partners.

CNA believes that international development is a “social, cultural, economic and political process that leads to the fulfillment of fundamental human rights.”¹

CNA believes that effective international development assistance can be attained only through truly collaborative partnerships.²

CNA believes that justice is a value central to ethical nursing practice. CNA’s *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses* specifies that nurses “uphold principles of justice by safeguarding human rights, equity and fairness and by promoting the public good.”³

CNA supports the view of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) that sustainable development is concerned with “providing a framework whereby groups, communities and individuals have access to resources and opportunities, and exercise their rights, using them to create infrastructures that promote healthy communities.”⁴

CNA endorses the partnership principles of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, which include, among others, respect for human rights, shared vision and goals, inclusivity, embodiment of equity and accountability.⁵ CNA’s global health partnerships with nursing organizations, health provider groups, civil society organizations and governments are built on these principles.

Through its global health partnerships, CNA seeks to maximize health systems strengthening and to contribute to achieving improved health outcomes, particularly among populations affected by conditions that create vulnerability.

CNA believes that nurses in Canada from all domains learn from experiences working in genuine partnership with international health organizations. CNA values investments in such partnerships and believes that they increase the capacity of both nurses and national nursing associations to strengthen the nursing profession and national health systems.

CNA believes that nurses and the nursing profession in Canada have the right and the responsibility to contribute to the advancement of global health and equity.⁶

¹ (Canadian Council for International Co-operation [CCIC], 2009, p. 3)

² The agreement on improving the effectiveness of international development assistance, *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, outlines elements of a genuine partnership, which places countries clearly in charge of their own development processes and results in more effective use of development assistance. The Paris Declaration outlines commitments made by partners in the spirit of mutual accountability (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008).

³ (Canadian Nurses Association [CNA], 2008, p. 17)

⁴ (International Council of Nurses, 2007, p. 2)

⁵ (CCIC, 2009)

⁶ (CNA, 2009)

BACKGROUND

The United Nations *Declaration on the Right to Development* states that “the right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.”⁷

Increasingly, Canadian nurses from all domains are working internationally in global health settings. Their contributions will be enhanced by an understanding of the relationship among the principles of partnership, development effectiveness and equity.

With funding from the Canadian International Development Agency, CNA has been creating partnerships with national nursing associations (NNA) in developing countries since the mid-1970s. The goal of these global partnerships is to increase the capacity of NNAs to build nursing leadership and strengthen the nursing profession, to improve health outcomes, and to influence nursing and regulatory policies and legislation. Through global partnerships, the NNAs also seek to reinforce the value of nurses’ contribution to the health sector and the leadership position of women in their societies.⁸

CNA participates in a number of global partnerships, including, through ICN, the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Partnership for Maternal Newborn and Child Health.

The final report of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health final report⁹ calls for countries and agencies to work in partnership to achieve health equity as part of a global movement for change.

CNA’s global health partnerships support the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and are consistent with the objectives of sustainable development. MDG 8 focuses specifically on expanding and strengthening a global partnership for development.¹⁰

*Approved by the CNA Board of Directors
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⁷ (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1986, Article 1, para. 1)

⁸ (CNA, 2004)

⁹ (World Health Organization, 2008)

¹⁰ (United Nations, 2000)



References:

- Canadian Council for International Co-operation. (2009). *Code of ethics and operational standards*. Ottawa: Author.
- Canadian Nurses Association. (2004). *Annual narrative report 2003-2004: Strengthening nursing associations and nurses for the advancement of global health and equity*. Ottawa: Author. Available from http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/CIDA_report_2004_e.pdf
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- World Health Organization. (2008). *Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health. Final report of the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health*. Geneva: Author.

Also see:

Related CNA Position Statements:

Registered Nurses and Human Rights (2004)

Peace and Health (2009)

Ethical Nurse Recruitment (2007)

Related ICN Position Statements and Fact Sheets:

Health and Human Rights (2006)

Nursing and Development (2007)

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