



Grand Challenges Canada®
Grands Défis Canada

News Release

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Health Innovations to Scale-up With Canadian Support

Funded by the Government of Canada, Grand Challenges Canada helps to scale-up projects in India, Africa and Latin America/Caribbean

Toronto, Canada – Eight innovations that have successfully demonstrated ways to improve health in developing countries are scaling up with support from Grand Challenges Canada, funded by the Government of Canada, and a host of partners.

Grand Challenges Canada's investment of CAD \$5.7 million will be doubled by the contributions of a wide range of partners, creating a total investment of more than \$10 million.

The innovations, implemented in India, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, build on significant results from projects that were seed funded by Grand Challenges Canada, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the "Saving Lives at Birth" and "Saving Brains" partnerships.

"By investing in health innovation, Canada is helping to energize the next generation of global entrepreneurs," said Dr. Peter A. Singer, Chief Executive Officer of Grand Challenges Canada. "Innovation and entrepreneurship are key pieces in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and in saving and improving the lives of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people."

The announcement was made at the Every Woman Every Child luncheon at the United Nations General Assembly in New York City. The eight innovations support the Survive, Thrive, and Transform objectives of the *Every Woman Every Child Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health*.

The eight projects are described below.

INDIA

Life-changing health kits for mothers and newborns

ayzh Health and Livelihood Private Limited (India) | \$1 million

With funding from Grand Challenges Canada, ayzh aims to touch the lives of millions of mothers and newborns over three years by providing portable and affordable clean home birth kits.

ayzh's "janma Clean Birth Kit" contains all the essential tools required to ensure safe and sterile conditions during a home birth, as recommended by the World Health Organization. The \$2 kit includes a cord clamp, scalpel blade, sterile surface, and sterilizing hand wipes – all contained in a biodegradable jute purse.



The funding will help ayzh, which has already touched the lives of 500,000 individuals by selling over 250,000 kits, to reach its goal of providing 600,000 people with kits across India. The renewed funding will help expand distribution networks, increase production, and develop new kits for newborns and new moms.

Led by SDG Pioneer Zubaida Bai, ayzh is dedicated to improving maternal health and reducing infant mortality, while also supporting the livelihoods of women across India.

With the push to have mothers deliver in facilities, care providers are struggling to keep up with the demand for their services, often resulting in unsanitary birth environments. ayzh's portable and affordable kits aim to buttress a struggling supply chain and help reduce maternal and newborn mortality.

Through this investment by Grand Challenges Canada and partners, ayzh will also expand its "kit-style" product line to other areas of maternal, newborn and child health. Several new products are already in development, including an essential newborn care kit, a post-partum hemorrhage kit, and a menstrual hygiene kit.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada, CAMTech, Investor's Circle, MIT D-lab, Open IDEO, Open Road Capital, Girl Effect Accelerator

A low-cost and portable device to test for iron-deficiency anemia – without needles
Biosense (India) | \$350,000

With new funding from Grand Challenges Canada and partners, Biosense aims to screen 3 million people and treat 1.5 million people for anemia.

Their affordable, portable and needle-free screening tool, TouchHb, reduces the need for time-consuming lab analysis by pulling instant, reliable results from a non-invasive scan of a patient's eyelid.

In trials, the device was shown to be more accurate than the current standard for anemia screening and more sensitive than any other non-invasive anemia screening device on the market.

The TouchHb device, fitted over a patient's eye, can measure the patient's blood haemoglobin levels using light, minimizing risk of contamination while providing rapid results without costly transportation and lab analysis.



Biosense is seeking regulatory approvals to bring TouchHb to a broader market.

Some 1.5 billion people experience iron deficiency anemia every year, which is especially dangerous for pregnant women who may suffer from fatal blood loss during childbirth and give birth to a low birth weight baby. Babies born to anemic mothers are also more likely to experience developmental delays or suffer from anemia themselves.

Early detection can help reduce anemia-related deaths, but invasive tests that require needles, transportation materials, and extensive lab analysis are often out of reach for people living in low-resource settings. Tests like TouchHb are key to increasing anemia detection and preventing death for the hardest to reach populations.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada; Strategic Partners; Government of Rajasthan; Villgro India; Eris Lifesciences Pharmaceuticals; the Government of India's Department of Biotechnology; The Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council; GSF; Insitor Fund

Toilet use in India improved by bundling TV subscriptions, other services

Samagra Waste Management Private Limited (India) | \$450,000

Thanks to new funding from Grand Challenges Canada and partners, up to 100,000 people will soon be able to access Samagra's clean, safe and reliable community toilet facilities in India.

To increase access to toilets and promote their use in India, Samagra, a social enterprise, works with municipal agencies to renovate and manage existing community toilet infrastructure with an emphasis on changing users' behaviour through incentives.

Users are rewarded with extra services, including TV subscriptions and financial, bill payment, and mobile phone top-up services. Users can access all the services for a monthly membership fee, which gives unlimited 24/7 access to safe toilet facilities.

By bundling toilet usage with other value-added household services that meet the critical needs of the poor, Samagra improves sanitation and breaks down the reputation of toilets in many communities as unsafe or unsanitary.

Over 600 million people practice open defecation in India. Diseases related to poor sanitation cost India an estimated \$50 billion in lost productivity every year (equivalent to 6% of India's GDP), with the largest burden falling on the country's women and children.

Samagra successfully demonstrated its innovative model in the slums of Pune, India, where the ten community toilet blocks installed reached over 10,000 people. Results achieved included a 600 percent increase in the number of people paying for toilets, 492 first-time toilet users, 92 percent customer satisfaction, and fewer reported sexual assaults.

The new toilet blocks in Pune are expected to increase the reach of the program to 100,000 daily users by August 2017.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Pune Municipal Government

AFRICA

Micro-clinics open access to care for people living in Nairobi's slums

Access Afya (Kenya) | \$500,000

With Grand Challenges Canada's support, Access Afya will expand its chain of low-cost, quality-assured micro-clinics and field-based health programs in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya.

Access Afya has already reached more than 10,000 low-income patients through two micro-clinics and health programs in Mukuru, Nairobi's third largest slum. The additional funding will help open two new clinics and expand health programs, extending reliable health services to an estimated 15,000 new patients.

Access Afya's neighborhood micro-clinics provide a wide range of quality healthcare products and services to the poorest of the poor.

The affordable, high quality primary healthcare includes pediatric care such as immunizations and services to combat diarrhea, infectious diseases and malnutrition, enabling children to thrive in school. The clinics also focus on care for women and girls, offering antenatal and postnatal care, family planning services and more.



Access Afya uses responsible task shifting and technology to lower the costs of care. Every patient gets to consult with Kenyan Clinical Officers, who are supported within the clinic by community members hired to do administrative work and supported remotely by internal and external doctors and specialists who step in when needed. Access Afya tracks outcomes for every single patient, meaning they know not just the number of people they serve but also if sick patients get better, or if women are satisfied with their family planning choices.

The micro-clinics act as anchors for Access Afya's Healthy Schools and Healthy Factories programs, which offer proactive health services and education at nearby schools and workplaces in the community, such as regular deworming for students and risk screening days for casual labourers.

The Healthy Schools program has already touched the lives of over 200 students, with half reporting reduced health issues based on check-ups and treatment conducted at the start and end of the school term.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada; Child Relief International Foundation; Moondance Foundation; Anthemis Group; Ministry of Health & County Government; Sasa Finance; UNDP's Business Call to Action

Providing high-quality maternity care through public and private facilities

Jacaranda Health (Kenya) | \$900,000

With funding from Grand Challenges Canada and partners, Jacaranda Health will expand its network of high-quality, low-cost maternity clinics to help over 15,000 patients in Kenya.

Jacaranda, a Nairobi-based, for-profit creating a group of maternity care clinics, has consistently delivered high-quality maternal care, having provided maternal healthcare to roughly 17,500 women, including over 2,225 safe deliveries.



Its services are in high demand: 57 percent of Jacaranda mothers report being firmly decided to deliver in facilities rather than at home, and nearly 90 percent of those mothers report Jacaranda as their facility of choice.

All deliveries conducted in Jacaranda's facilities are attended by at least one trained midwife, and every newborn begins breastfeeding within 24 hours. Almost all (90 percent) are still exclusively breastfeeding at 9-weeks – nearly three times the Kenyan average for infants aged 2-3 months. Additionally, 100 percent of Jacaranda's delivery clients receive postnatal care within 24 hours of delivery, compared to just 35 percent on average in Kenya.

The renewed funding will enable Jacaranda to continue its transformation of maternity care in East Africa by innovating in high quality, low-cost and respectful maternity care, extending services to over 8,700 mother-infant pairs.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada; Kiambu County public facilities (Ruiru, Kiarui, Kiandudu); Marie Stopes International; Harvard School of Public Health; University of North Carolina Health Care System; Mulago Foundation; Sall Foundation; Child Relief International; Health Enterprise Fund

LATIN AMERICAN/CARIBBEAN

Working with microfinance clients to increase access to affordable and reliable healthcare *Fonkoze - Fondasyon Kole Zepol (Haiti) | \$850,000*

Fonkoze's network of micro-entrepreneurs will bring affordable, accessible, and reliable health products to up to 500,000 hard-to-reach people in rural Haiti thanks to new funding from Grand Challenges Canada and partners.

With the goal of improving the health of vulnerable hard-to-reach women and children, Fonkoze developed Boutik Sante ('health shop'), a model for the delivery of essential health products and services in rural Haiti through female micro-entrepreneurs.

Fonkoze helps successful microcredit borrowers operate self-sustaining micro-businesses that deliver healthcare products and services to those lacking affordable and reliable access in rural areas. Micro-entrepreneurs are trained to communicate appropriate health information in association with the products they sell, promote increased and appropriate utilization of existing health services, and more.

As the largest microfinance institution in Haiti, Fonkoze is leveraging its existing client base of borrowers and vast infrastructure of branches and credit centres to scale efficiently and cost-effectively across rural Haiti.

Fonkoze has already trained 267 female micro-entrepreneurs who have helped deliver healthcare products to more than 8,000 people, including micronutrient supplements, iodized salt, sanitary pads, and contraceptives.

With renewed funding from Grand Challenges Canada and partners, Fonkoze aims to train 600 micro-entrepreneurs, reaching over 500,000 rural Haitians. By addressing child malnutrition, diarrhea,



mosquito-borne diseases, anemia and hypertension, the project aims to reduce morbidity among young children by 20 percent.

At full scale, Fonkoze hopes to engage 1,800 women entrepreneurs to start and run their health micro-enterprises.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada; Healthy Entrepreneurs; Fonkoze USA; Cordaid Foundation; Columbia University

Eco-friendly sanitation services for Haiti's urban slums

Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods Haiti (SOIL) (Haiti) | \$650,000

SOIL Haiti will build and install safe and hygienic toilet facilities for up to 6,000 people in Haiti's vulnerable urban settlements, thanks to new funding from Grand Challenges Canada and partners.

What makes SOIL innovative is the ecological way that it eliminates waste. SOIL collects and transports waste from its "EkoLakay" toilets to a local composting waste treatment facility where it is safely transformed into rich, organic, and agricultural-grade compost.



SOIL has already installed toilets in more than 900 households, providing ecological sanitation services to over 5,000 people, while also producing rich, organic compost to serve as a natural resource for Haiti's badly-depleted soils.

Prior to 2010, there were no government-run waste treatment facilities in Haiti, and human waste was left completely untreated.

Haiti has the highest rate of childhood diarrhea in the world and is currently battling the largest and most virulent cholera outbreak in recent global history. Diarrhea caused by waterborne pathogens aggravates an already severe nutrition crisis in Haiti, where nearly half of the population is undernourished and agricultural production has steadily declined over the past decades due to reductions in soil fertility.

With transition-to-scale funding, SOIL will focus on the continued development of its EkoLakay toilet production and compost business, as well as further refinement of its business model.

Scaling Partners: Grand Challenges Canada; American Red Cross



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A community-based intervention to address developmental delays in Peru

Socios En Salud / Partners in Health (Peru) | \$1 million

A new program to improve the brain development of children experiencing or at high risk of developmental delay will expand to reach about 3,000 children, thanks to funding by the Saving Brains partnership and collaborators.

The evidence-based CASITA intervention trains community promoters to coach parents on child stimulation and positive parenting. The new funding will deliver at least 12 sessions to caregivers across Carabayllo, one of Peru's oldest and poorest municipalities.

CASITA was developed by the Peruvian organization Socios En Salud in response to a call by the Mayor of Carabayllo, Peru for improved child development.

With over a quarter of the population living in poverty, many children in Carabayllo face challenges such as malnutrition, lack of access to healthcare, or domestic violence that can disrupt healthy brain development.

Providing young children with nurturing and stimulating environments during this critical window of early child development can improve long term outcomes and create happier, healthier and more productive individuals.



Scaling Partners: Saving Brains partnership; Municipality of Carabayllo; Casa Amiga - Municipality of Carabayllo; Partners in Health; Korea International Cooperation Agency

For more information, visit grandchallenges.ca and look for us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.

About Grand Challenges Canada

Grand Challenges Canada is dedicated to supporting Bold Ideas with Big Impact® in global health. We are funded by the Government of Canada and we support innovators in low- and middle-income countries and Canada. The bold ideas we support integrate science and



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technology, social and business innovation – we call this Integrated Innovation®. Grand Challenges Canada focuses on innovator-defined challenges through its Stars in Global Health program and on targeted challenges in its Saving Lives at Birth, Saving Brains and Global Mental Health programs. Grand Challenges Canada works closely with Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and Global Affairs Canada to catalyze scale, sustainability and impact. We have a determined focus on results, and on saving and improving lives.

www.grandchallenges.ca

About Saving Brains

Saving Brains is a partnership of Grand Challenges Canada, the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The ELMA Foundation, Grand Challenges Ethiopia, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, the Palix Foundation, the UBS Optimus Foundation and World Vision Canada. It seeks and supports bold ideas for products, services and implementation models that protect and nurture early brain development relevant to poor, marginalized populations in low- or middle-income countries.

www.savingbrainsinnovation.net

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