

CANADIAN PERSPECTIVES ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

REPORT OF RESULTS | APRIL 2015



FOREWORD



“When 94% of a population believe something it is not a trend, it is an underlying ethos... a mainstay of our national character that should be reflected in every political party platform and feature prominently in every national budget. Improving health, education and economic opportunity for people living in the world’s poorest countries is not a policy option it is a matter of national identity yet we don’t pull our weight internationally. We are rapidly falling further and further behind. Canada, we can do better because we already agree!”

- Michael Simpson, Executive Director
British Columbia Council for International Cooperation

“Canadians are committed to improving health, education and economic opportunities for the world’s poorest people and Canadians want their government to lead the way in ensuring Canada is amongst those countries that make change possible. Let’s work together to return Canada to its place as a world leader in poverty reduction and international cooperation. We can do better.”

- Heather McPherson, Executive Director
Alberta Council for Global Cooperation

“This survey will allow us to have a better understanding of the opinions and attitudes of Canadians in regards to Canadian engagement in international development. It is interesting to note that a large majority of Canadians (94%) feel that it is important to improve living conditions for the world’s most vulnerable populations.”

- Hélène Gobeil, Acting Executive Director
L’Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale

“Canadians understand the connection between reducing global poverty and a sustainable future. Moreover, they expect Canada to be leading progress in the areas of health, education, and economic opportunity. This poll demonstrates that Canadians believe we can – and should – do more.”

- Jennifer Slood and Carolyn Whiteway,
Atlantic Council for International Cooperation

“62% of Canadians said they want this government to take a leadership role in global poverty reduction; this means meaningful, dedicated, transparent actions with an eye to our post 2015 agenda.”

- Jacqui Wasacase, Executive Director
Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation

“This poll is a clear call to action. It provides significant evidence that Canadians have the will to end global poverty and believe that individuals and government can do much more.”

- Kimberly Gibbons, Executive Director
Ontario Council for International Cooperation

“This poll affirms what most of us in the international development community already believe – Canadians care about global poverty and they want our Government to be a leader in reducing it.”

- Janice Hamilton, Executive Director
Manitoba Council for International Cooperation



“Canadians have spoken clearly: we believe it should be a priority to help improve the lives of the world’s poorest citizens. On both national and international stages, 2015 is the year we set the tone for Canada’s leadership for the coming generation. It is the perfect moment to heed the call of Canadians. Let us commit to play a greater role in the movement to address global poverty.”

- Boris Martin, Executive Director
Engineers Without Borders

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Engineers Without Borders Canada (EWB) invests in leaders and innovations to create a world free from poverty and inequitable development: a world of dignity and equal opportunity where everyone is able to realize their full potential. We are leading a movement with thousands of passionate members in Canada, as well as staff and volunteers in Canada and in our African partner countries.

The Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation (ICN) is a coalition of eight provincial and regional Councils for International Cooperation. These member-based Councils represent over 400 diverse organizations from across Canada that are committed to global social justice.

OBJECTIVES

In February 2015, EWB, in partnership with the ICN and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, commissioned a public opinion poll to gain an understanding of Canadians’ knowledge of, opinions on and engagement in global poverty issues.

This poll intends to build on similar polls conducted in Canada, such as the 2012 Canadian Engagement in Global Poverty Issues poll by the ICN, and those conducted in other G7 countries through The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s Narrative Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- There is a national consciousness in Canada about global poverty reduction, with 94% of Canadians saying it is important to improve health, education and economic opportunity for the world’s poorest and 76% of Canadians agreeing we have a moral obligation to help expand health, education, and economic opportunity for the world’s poorest.
- Most Canadians are optimistic about our world’s future, as the majority believe that conditions in the poorest countries will improve in the next 15 years and that both the government and individuals can play a role in reducing global poverty.
- Canadians want their government to take a leadership role in global poverty reduction, with 62% of Canadians agreeing that Canada should be one of the leading countries in providing international development.
- Canadians have a good grasp of how much the government currently spends on foreign aid, and 46% believe the government should spend more.
- The Government of Canada can—and should—enhance the country’s leadership role in addressing global poverty by aspiring to surpass Canada’s 2010 Official Development Assistance (ODA) levels of 0.34% of gross national income (GNI) before the end of the 42nd Parliament, as a step toward meeting the United Nations’ target of committing 0.7%.

METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

Online survey of 1,008 Canadians. The average survey took 15 minutes to complete. As this survey was conducted using non-probability sampling, we are precluded from reporting a margin of error.

FIELD DATES

Data was collected between January 22 and January 27, 2015.

SAMPLE

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

TOTAL	1,008
Atlantic Canada	101
Québec	243
Ontario	396
Prairies	111
British Columbia	157

AGE

18-34	28%
35-54	37%
55+	35%

GENDER

Male	48%
Female	52%

EDUCATION

HS or Less	20%
Some PS	18%
Coll/Undergrad	49%
Post-Grad	12%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

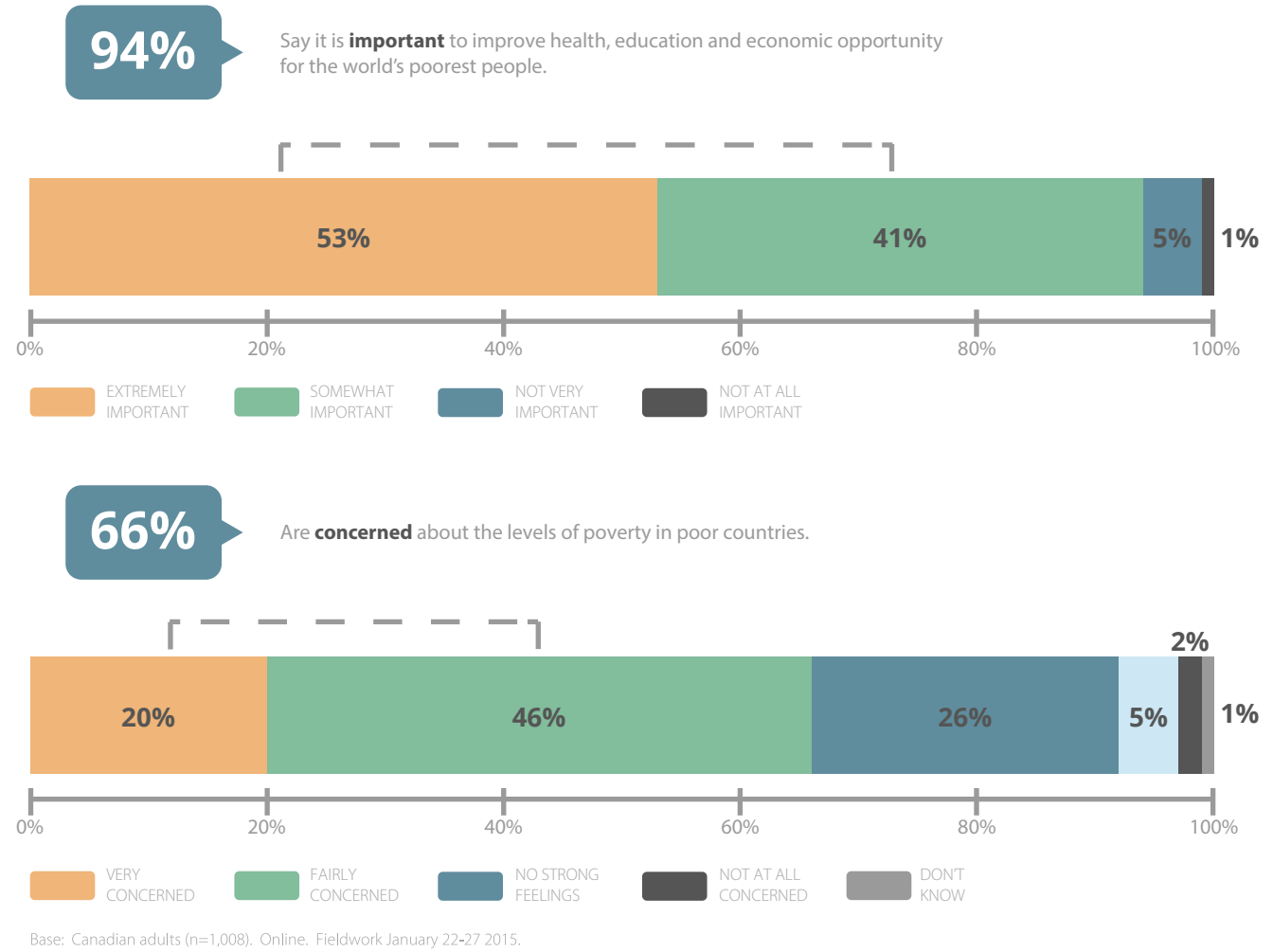
<\$20k	10%
\$20-40k	16%
\$40-60k	17%
\$60-80k	15%
\$80-100k	12%
\$100-150k	12%
\$150k+	7%
No Answer	12%

SAMPLE SOURCE

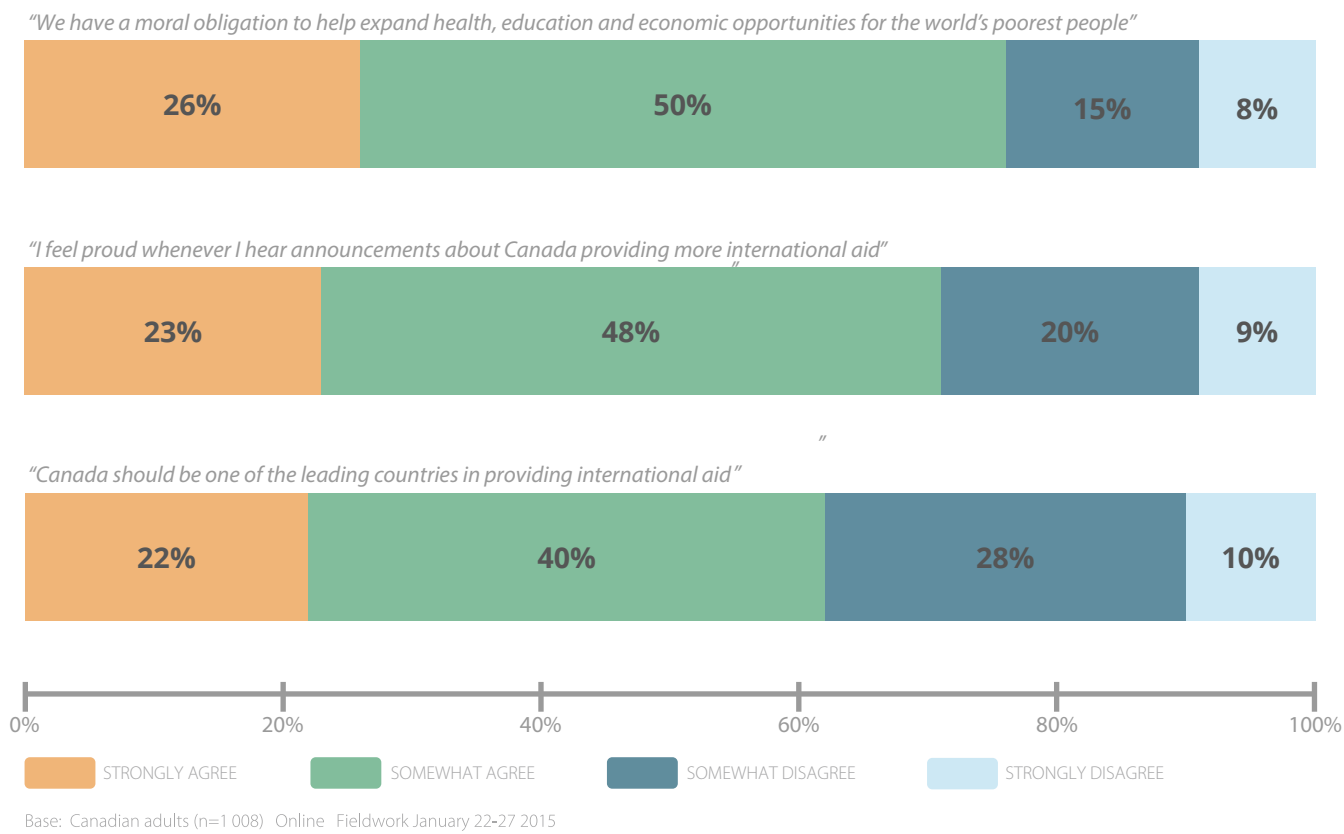
Nielsen Opinion Quest

DETAILED RESULTS

There is a national consciousness in Canada about global poverty reduction

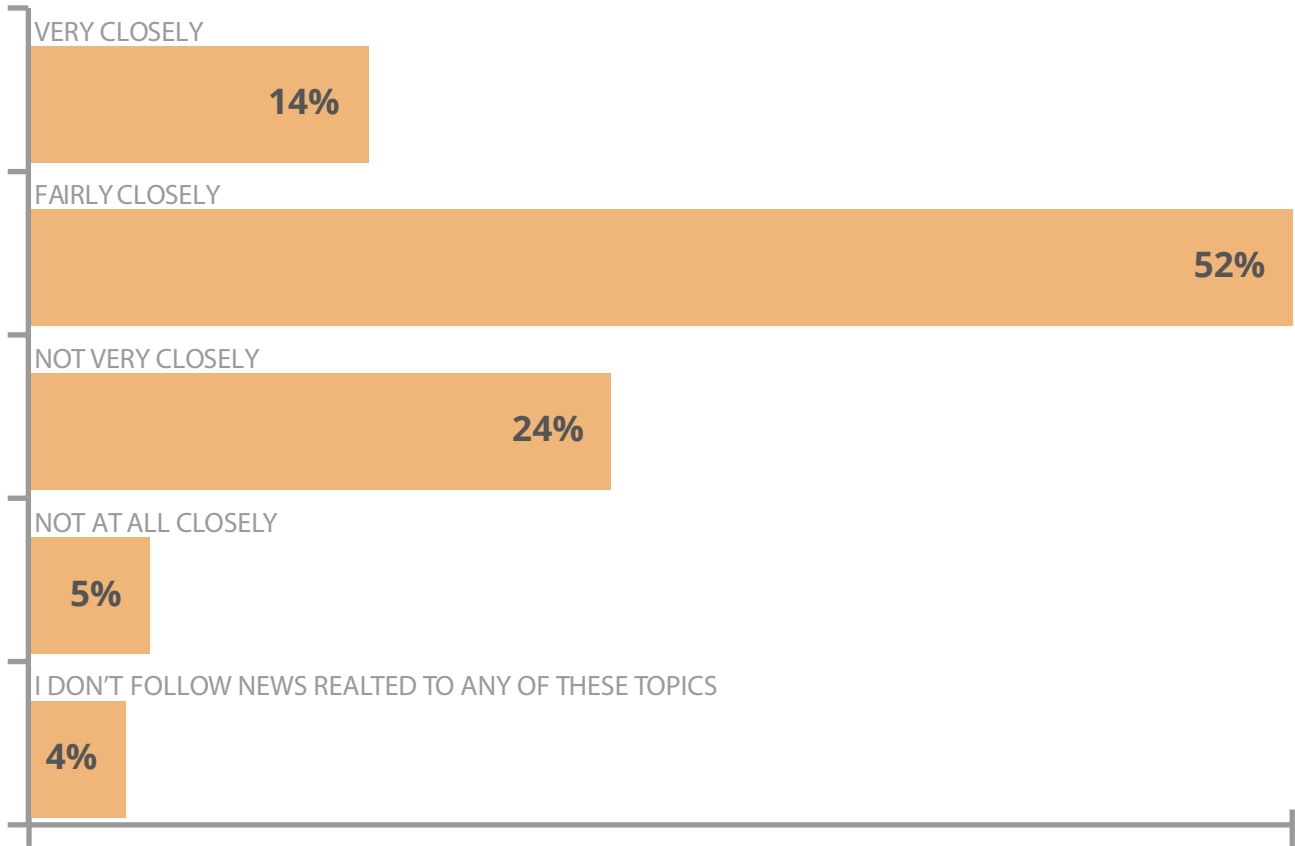


Canadians have a sense of pride and moral obligation to contribute to global poverty reduction



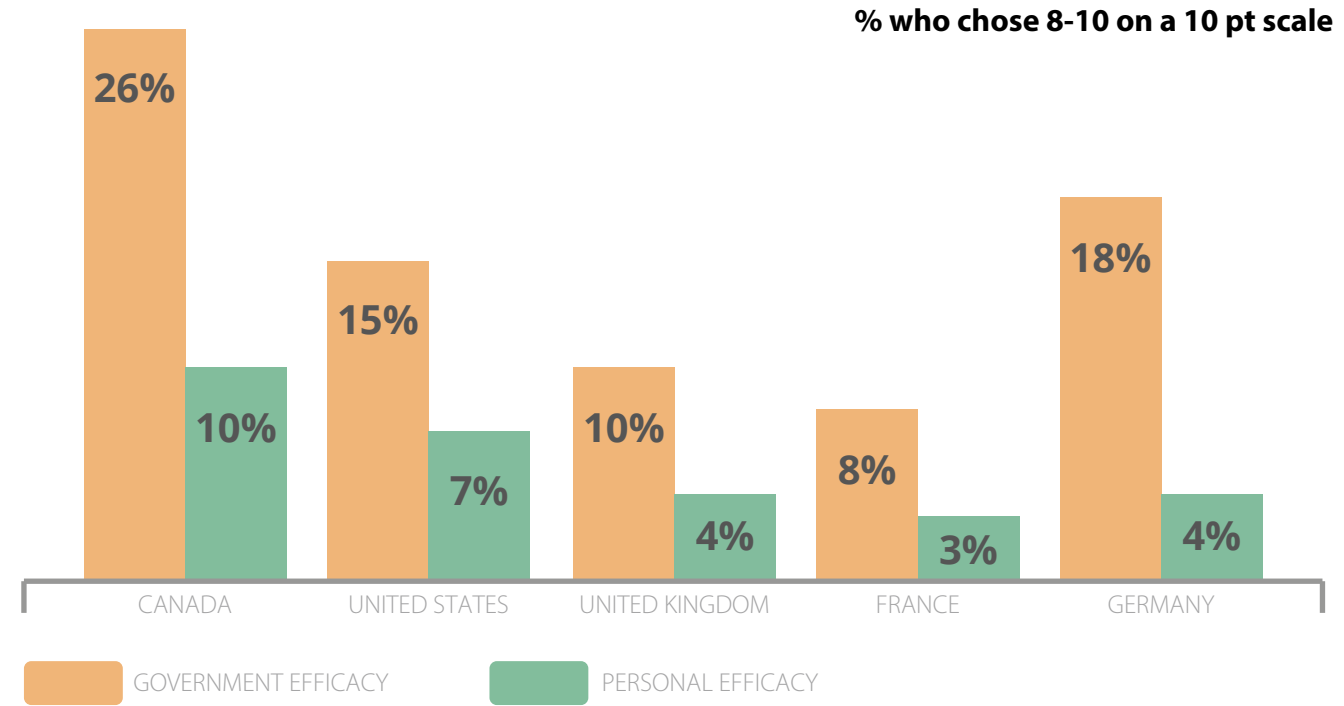
Most Canadians regularly follow and talk about global political and social issues

How closely do you follow news related to major issues and topics such as poverty, energy, the environment, global health and development or education?



Canadians are the most optimistic about the ability of governments and individuals to make a difference in reducing global poverty

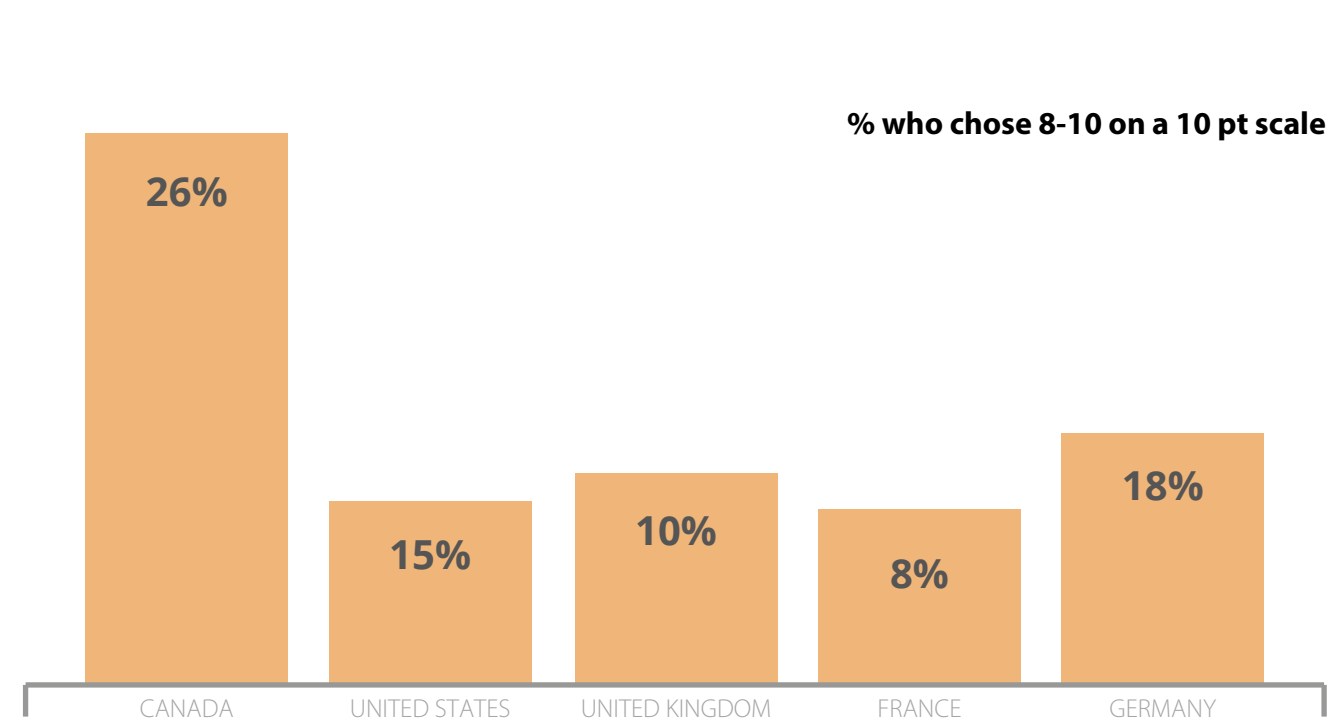
Thinking about the Canadian government / you personally, how much of a difference do you think it / you can make to reducing poverty in poor countries? Please use the following scale where 0 means that the Canadian government / you 'can't make any difference at all' and 10 means that it / you 'can make a great deal of difference'.



Base: Canada, US, UK, France, Germany (all adults) sample.
Sample size 1,000+ in each country. Online. Canadian fieldwork January 22-27 2015.

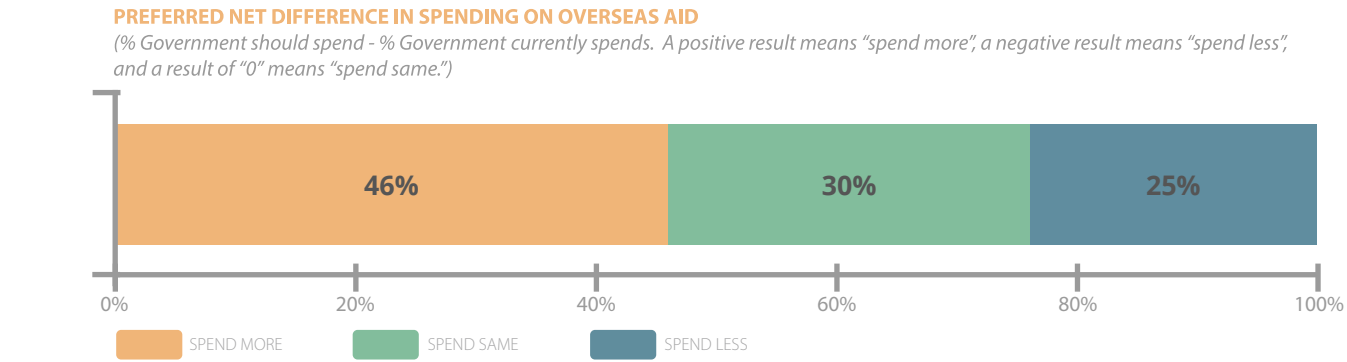
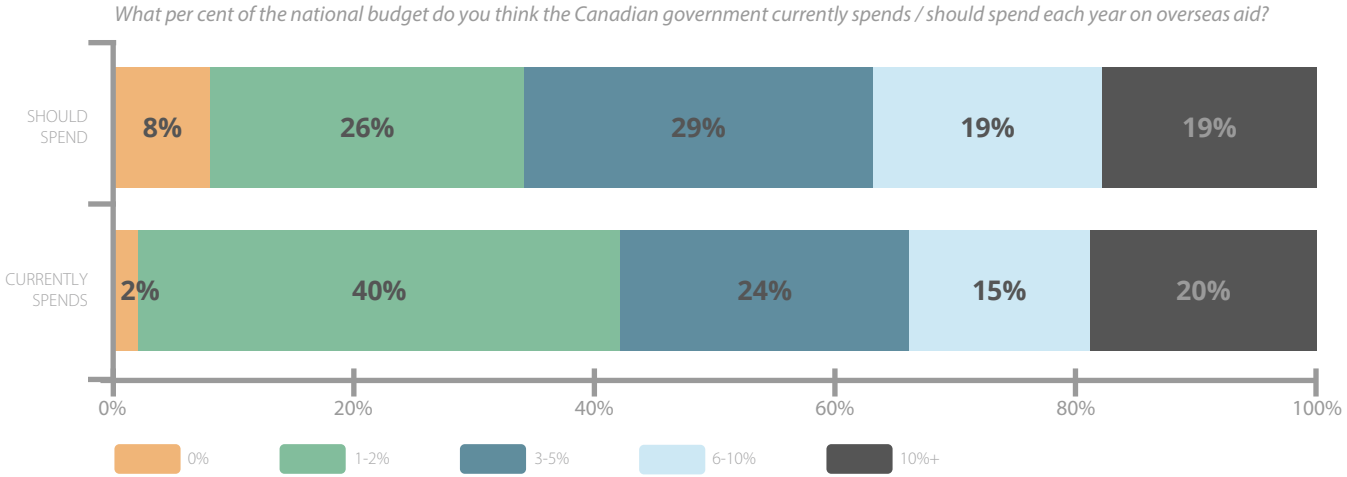
Canadians are also likely to call for high levels of government leadership in reducing global poverty

Thinking about overseas aid to poor countries, please indicate the extent to which you think that the Canadian government should give overseas aid, where a score of 0 means that it ‘should not give aid at all’ and a score of 10 means that it ‘should give aid generously’.



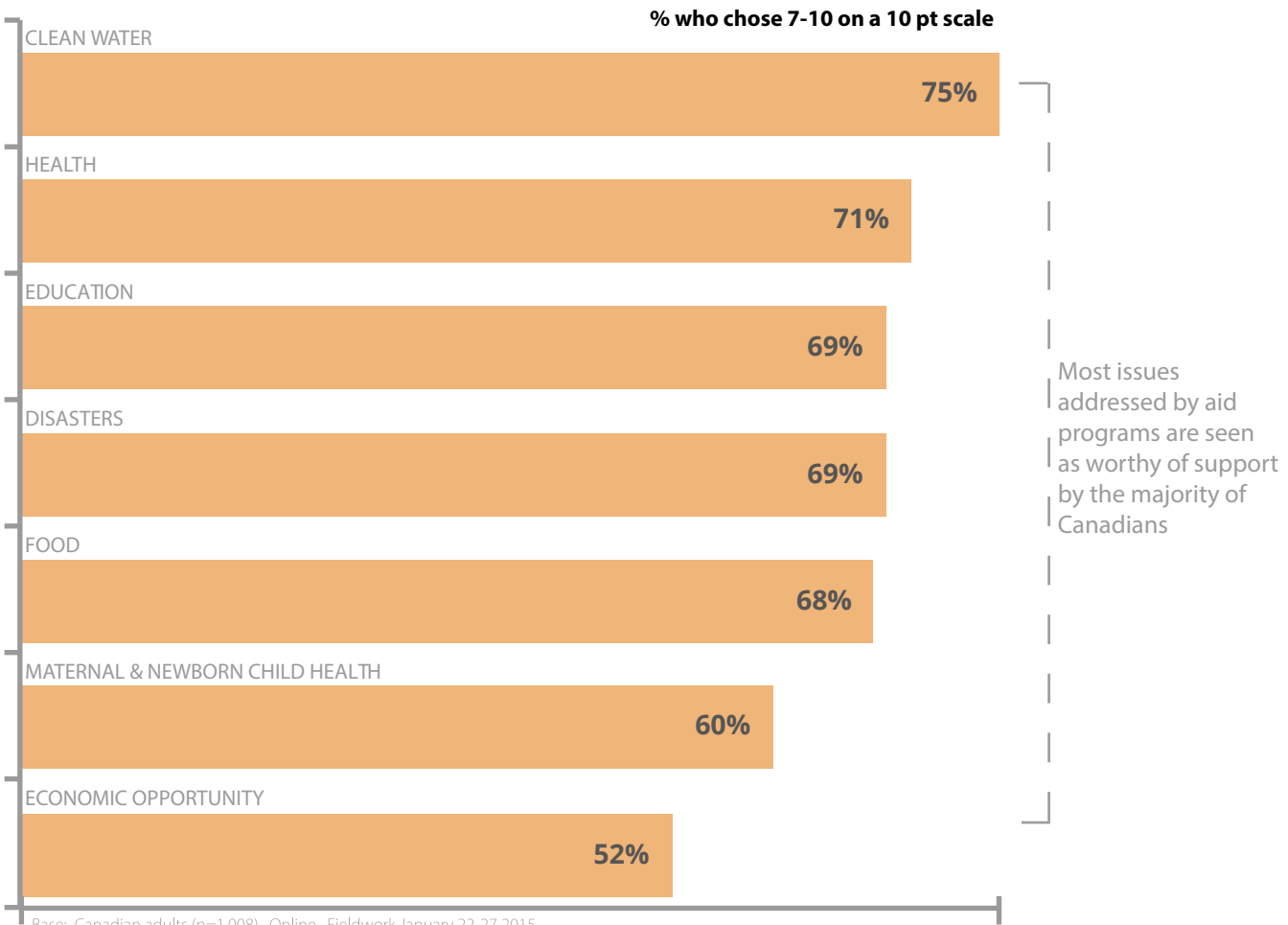
Base: Canada, US, UK, France, Germany (all adults) sample.
Sample size 1,000+ in each country. Online. Canadian fieldwork January 22-27 2015.

Most Canadians have a good grasp of how much the Government of Canada currently spends on international development, and call for spending increases. In 2013 (the most recent available data) Canada spent \$5.4 Billion on ODA, or 1.9% of the country’s 2014 federal budget ([The Canadian International Development Platform](#)).



Canadians support most aid program types

As you may know, there are a variety of issues which can be addressed through international aid. On a scale from 0 to 10, where 1 means ‘strongly oppose’, 10 means ‘strongly support’, and 5 means ‘neither support nor oppose’, please tell me how strongly you would support or oppose Canada providing aid in each of the following areas.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study demonstrate that the majority of Canadians are aware of and concerned about global poverty. Canadians want their country to play a leadership role in improving health, education and economic opportunities for citizens of world’s poorest countries.

There are three key steps that the Government of Canada can take beginning with the 2015 Federal Budget, to enhance this country’s leadership on the global stage:

- 1 Commit to immediately return to an Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget at least on par with the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\)](#) average total in the 2016 Federal Budget (0.29% of GNI in 2014).
- 2 Aspire to surpass Canada’s 2010 Official Development Assistance (ODA) levels of 0.34% of gross national income (GNI) before the end of the 42nd Parliament, as a step toward meeting the United Nations’ target of committing 0.7%.
- 3 Commit to maintaining the principal focus of Canadian ODA on poverty reduction for the poorest, by refocusing on sub-Saharan Africa and increasing funding to the world’s poorest countries.



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