



Rooftops Canada has worked in

Argentina	Kenya
Bolivia	Latvia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Lithuania
Cameroon	Mexico
Chile	Mozambique
China	Nicaragua
Colombia	Philippines
Cuba	Russia
Czech Republic	Rwanda
Egypt	Senegal
Estonia	South Africa
Ghana	Tanzania
Guatemala	Thailand
Haiti	Turkey
Honduras	Uganda
India	Uruguay
Indonesia	Zambia
Jamaica	Zimbabwe

Get to Know Rooftops Canada

Rooftops Canada was founded in 1984 as the international development program of the Co-op Housing Federation of Canada. Today it also works on behalf of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, the Ontario, New Brunswick and British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Associations and la Confédération québécoise des coopératives d’habitation.

As a registered non-profit, we work in partnership with community-based housing groups, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, local and senior levels of government and the private sector.

Our programs help low-income communities create sustainable and practical housing solutions—providing thousands of families with secure, affordable shelter.

Rooftops Canada currently works in **Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**. In the past, we have also worked in Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin American and the Caribbean.

Why Does Rooftops Canada Need Ambassadors Like You?

It’s simple – Ambassadors are an integral part of Rooftops Canada. You help us spread the message of **affordable housing for all**. You engage Canadians and tell the stories of those whose lives have been impacted by our work.

Your work as a Rooftops Canada Ambassador helps Canadians relate more closely to development issues, encourages others to become more involved in the international housing sector and furthers our efforts in the field.

What Can I Do As a Rooftops Canada Ambassador or Volunteer?

There are many ways to be involved, including:

- Speaking on behalf of Rooftops Canada at meetings and events
- Representing Rooftops Canada at event display tables
- Informing others about ongoing Rooftops Canada campaigns
- Hosting visitors from our overseas partner organizations
- Organizing fundraising events like silent auctions, bake sales and sporting events
- Signing and distributing action letters
- Helping out in our Toronto office



“It is very satisfying to work for an organization that is both a recognized leader in global housing development, and a cost-effective agency.”

Deryl Thompson, Rooftops Canada Volunteer

info@rooftops.ca

www.rooftops.ca

416-366-1445



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What Makes a Great Rooftops Canada Ambassador?

Punctuality and Reliability Finalize the details of the date, venue, contact info and any directions with the respective Rooftops Canada staff members. Arrive at least 25 minutes before your presentation. If you may be late, call your contact to let them know.

Commitment and Enthusiasm Attitude is contagious, especially a positive one. Showcase your interest in Rooftops Canada's work openly – your enthusiasm will win the hearts of your audience and inspire them to be volunteers and donors.

Professionalism and Respectfulness You may be the very first impression someone has of Rooftops Canada. Respect your audience and anyone you meet while being a Rooftops Canada Ambassador.

Knowledge and Awareness Before your event, read through Rooftops Canada's communications materials and website to update yourself with our latest work. This will help you answer questions from your audience.



Public Speaking & Presentations 101

Before

Practice, Practice, Practice There is no such thing as over-rehearsing. The best preparation is practicing your presentation as much as possible. When you are familiar with the content, rehearse aloud with your slides. If it helps, ask a friend to watch.

Prepare a short version You can never guarantee that you will have all of the allotted time to present. An audience member may have many questions, the group might want to discuss urgent matters or there is a technology glitch and as a result – your time is cut in half. If you know your presentation well, you can decide what to cut and what to keep when you're short on time.

Get to Know Your Audience Creating rapport with your audience allows your presentation to resonate much more. Here's how to do it:

Research before you present When speaking to a particular organization, look at their website beforehand. Draw any common themes into your presentation.

Get to know the to the crowd If you have time, introduce yourself to each audience member before the event starts (or you can ask everyone to share their names/roles before you speak). Remember that building rapport is a two-way street. Present yourself openly and allow your audience to get to know you. Sharing common ground with your audience builds trust and holds attention while you present.

Some Excellent Resources

Harvard Business Review Guide to Persuasive Presentations (2012)
Resonate: Present Visual Stories That Transform Audiences (2010)



The Three-Second Rule

- Inhale slowly through your nose for three seconds
- Hold your breath for three seconds
- Exhale slowly through your mouth for three seconds

Repeat as needed

During

Overcome Stage Fright Stage fright is a natural fight-or-flight instinct. Here are some ways to get past the jitters:

Slow down and breathe Find a place where you can be alone. Quiet your mind and try the three-second rule.

Laugh Look at a funny picture or website just before you speak. Laughter distracts you from fear and releases nervous tension.

Meet your imperfect audience Let go of the idea that your audience holds all the power. Remember that they –and you– are just human.

Be your most sincere yourself You will be most comfortable when you allow our personality to show through.

Communicate with Your Body

Use your face Project emotion with your face. Smile, laugh and show disbelief where needed.

Open up your posture Step away from the slides and uncross your arms. Open body language creates a welcoming attitude for your audience.

Communicate with Your Voice Flat, dispassionate tones bore your audience. Show expression through your voice with volume, pace and enunciation.



After

Entice with a Call-To-Action Leave your audience with a hook – something that they can do, see or give after your presentation. For example, they can visit the website, volunteer with or donate to Rooftops Canada.

Solicit Questions Always allow audience members to ask questions during or at the end of your presentation. Do your best to answer or direct them to more information.

Stick Around If possible, stay until the event is over (instead of leaving after your talk). Some audience members prefer to connect in person rather than ask questions in front of the group.

Say Thanks Send a thank you email to the organizer for inviting you to their event. It goes a long way.





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Top Five Myth-Busting Questions for

Rooftops Canada Ambassadors

A guide to handling tough questions

We have been supporting international development for decades – how come people are still poor?

Fifty years ago, the world's countries were largely separated into two groups, the “developing” countries and the “developed” ones. Today, thanks in part to long-term aid and development programs, over a billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty – and countries like China, Brazil and India have seen a large increase in incomes. China and South Korea (once aid recipients) have now become aid donors. The notion that the world is “still poor” is quickly dwindling. Across the globe, people are living longer and healthier lives.¹ But many are still extremely vulnerable, and ongoing development programs like those through Rooftops Canada help to address these problems.

Why should I support housing project overseas when the Canadian housing sector is facing cutbacks?

It is true that all Canadians should support local initiatives to ensure affordable housing here in Canada. But social justice doesn't have to stop at our borders. It can be both local and global.

Loans and funds provided in Canadian dollars go a long way in securing local materials and expertise for housing in developing countries. By supporting international efforts we are re-enforcing the idea that affordable housing is a universal human right for all people, regardless of their geography, or any other factor.

“We can't afford so much of the Canadian budget on foreign aid.”

In 2012, Canada's foreign aid spending totaled CAD \$5.67 billion. While this sounds large, this was only about 0.32% of Gross National Income.² That is to say, Canada spends less than 1% of our GNI on foreign aid. Foreign aid helps to lift vulnerable people out of poverty and curbs human rights violations. But aid is more than just a hand out – it encourages strong diplomatic relations and fosters solidarity with recipient countries around the world, working in Canada's interest over the long term.

Doesn't saving lives lead to over population?

No, it does not. In fact, the opposite is true. In many developing regions, where child mortality rates are high, women have multiple children to ensure that at least a few of them will survive into adulthood. A high fertility rate is a kind of natural insurance policy against high child mortality rates.

But we have seen over and over again in countries that have industrialized that when children live longer, women have fewer children – because they know they will live long and healthy lives.³ Healthy environments are a key determinant in helping children live longer – and Rooftops Canada aims to provide safe and adequate housing to help meet this need.

Should housing be our priority? Aren't other things like hospitals more important?

Imagine having unlimited access to all the health care you need – but not having a kitchen to cook your food or a bed to sleep in at night. Would you be healthy? Housing is one of our most basic human needs. Around the world, housing is part of a multi-pronged approach to saving and improving the lives of the world's poorest populations. Safe, affordable housing improves health outcomes for people facing health problems like HIV and AIDS or other diseases.

^{1,3} Gates, B. & M. 2014 Gates Letter. Retrieved from <http://annualletter.gatesfoundation.org/>

² Bhushan, A. Canada's Foreign Aid 2012. Retrieved from <http://cidpnsi.ca/blog/portfolio/canadas-foreign-aid/>