

# Eight Global 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, ONTARIO, CANADA, September 20, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Eight successful global health innovations will transition to scale with major funding from the Canadian Government-funded [Grand Challenges Canada](#) program and international partners.

A formal announcement will be made Wednesday, Sept 21 at the [Every Woman Every Child](#) luncheon, United Nations General Assembly, New York City.

The innovations include:

\* A low-cost, portable device to test for iron-deficiency anemia without needles

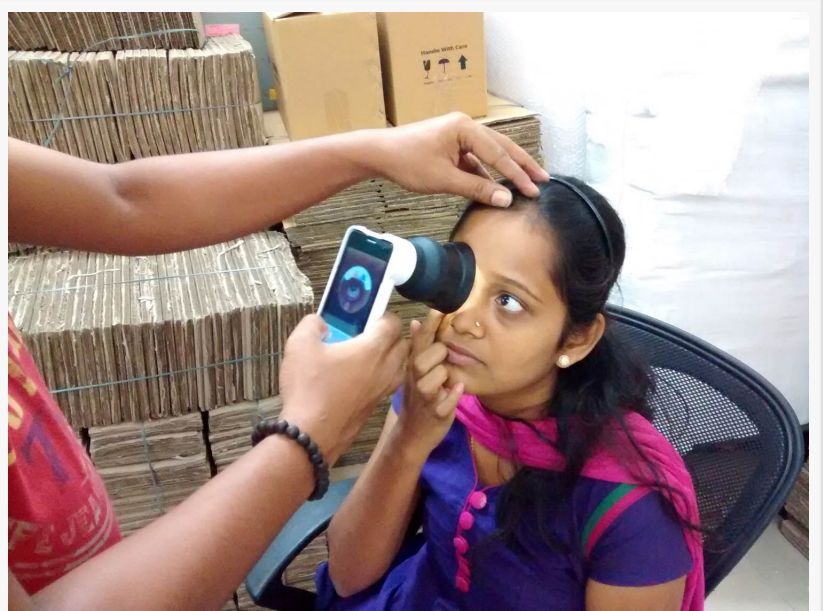
The screening tool, TouchHb, is the size of a smart phone and reduces the need for time-consuming lab analysis, providing instant, reliable results from a scan of a patient's eyelid.

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.



Using the TouchHb device. Photo credit - Biosense



**Grand Challenges Canada**  
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GCC logo



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.

*Dr. Peter A. Singer, CEO,  
Grand Challenges Canada*

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

\* An enterprise to promote the use of toilets in India, where an estimated 600 million people practice open defecation.

For a small monthly fee, users get unlimited 24/7 access to safe, clean toilets, TV subscriptions and financial services such as bill payment and mobile phone top-ups.

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.

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

The other innovations transitioning to scale, in brief:

India

\* Providing life-changing health kits for mothers and newborns

Kenya

\* Micro-clinics to expand access to health care in Nairobi's slums

\* Providing high-quality maternity care through public and private facilities

Haiti

\* Microfinance to improve access to affordable, reliable healthcare

\* Eco-friendly sanitation services for Haiti's urban slums

Peru

\* A program to improve the brain development of children experiencing or at high risk of developmental delay

Grand Challenges Canada's investment of CAD \$5.7 million will be doubled by partners.

The full release is online here: <http://bit.ly/2cKXRGB>

Photos: [bit.ly/2cF4MO4](http://bit.ly/2cF4MO4).

Contacts:

Liam Brown, Press Officer  
Grand Challenges Canada  
+1 (416) 673-6542 / +1 (647) 328-2021 (m)  
[liam.brown@grandchallenges.ca](mailto:liam.brown@grandchallenges.ca)

Terry Collins  
Grand Challenges Canada  
4168788712  
[email us here](#)

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