

# Pursuing New Courses: International Education and Training

**T**he histories of education and civilization go hand in hand. From the earliest known civilizations in Mesopotamia and China, through the flourishing of the Maya and Aztec ones to those of the present day, education — ranging from formal theoretical study to the practical acquisition of technical skills — has been a critical force. In fact, so key is education to the development of society, that the United Nations recognized it as a fundamental human right in 1948.

Today, in a world of rapidly increasing and ever more complex knowledge, education and training are linking more cultures than ever before. As a result, more international students are studying in foreign countries; teachers are increasingly working abroad; universities and colleges have established a myriad of linkages; and technology and private enterprise are assuming a growing role in educational projects.

## Coming to Canada

Approximately one million students are currently receiving their education outside their home countries, and Canada is among the world's top six host nations. Drawn from every region of the globe, 35 000 post-secondary international students enrolled in Canadian universities and colleges in 1986-87, with Hong Kong, Malaysia, the United States, China, Singapore and the Philippines figuring as the leading source countries.



Bell Canada International has provided communications training around the world.

The students' fields of study are as diverse as the students themselves, ranging from high concentrations in mathematics, engineering, and the social and physical sciences, to lesser numbers in the humanities, agricultural sciences, health and education, and fine and applied arts.

Why are students choosing to study in Canada? Many are drawn by the world-class professors, advanced facilities, and the diversity of academic and vocational courses at Canadian universities and colleges. Others are familiar with Canada's multicultural heritage or have learned of the educational opportunities through former international students. Whatever the reason, there are now record numbers of international students studying at Canadian graduate schools where they make a major contribution to advanced research.

Recognizing the importance of international students, the Canadian government recently extended their and their spouses' eligibility for employment opportunities. Granted greater access to temporary jobs, they are now better able to finance their studies and gain practical experience.

Vocational and short-term specialized training is also a growing trend in Canadian education. Increasingly, students and trainees are enrolling in Canadian institutes of technology, colleges, and professional training programs. And through the co-operative efforts of both the private and public sectors, Canada has recently established two prototype training centres offering highly advanced instruction in aviation and telecommunications to African, Asian, Caribbean and Latin American managers. The International Aviation Management Training Institute (IAMTI) in Montreal is the world's first centre devoted entirely to the training of aviation managers.

Most of its students come to the Institute on special fellowships to gain access to Canadian expertise and instructors.

In a similar fashion, Canadian telecommunications companies, government departments and universities banded together to found the Telecommunications Executive Management Institute of Canada (TEMIC) in 1987. By broadening the experience of managers from the Third World, TEMIC will help spread the benefits of telecommunications technology around the world.

## Canadians Overseas

Canada, however, is not only host to some of the world's brightest students; for many years Canadians have also been active in educational projects abroad, often as a component of the country's international development assistance program. And with the March unveiling of an updated Canadian aid