



Foreword

In 1990, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) published *Cross-Cultural Effectiveness: A Study of Canadian Technical Advisors Overseas*, which presented the findings of a two-year study of Canadian technical advisors posted to 20 developing countries. That research focused on the professional, personal, and family factors associated with overseas performance and determined that only about 20 per cent of Canadian advisors were highly successful at facilitating the acquisition of skills and knowledge by national counterparts.

Other research has confirmed the limited success of technical cooperation (TC) in terms of skills assimilation and institutional development, often emphasizing structural reasons, such as inappropriate objectives and organizational or environmental obstacles. As a result, the effectiveness of TC has become a significant concern within the aid community. The present study is a follow-up to the 1990 study and is intended to help clarify why so few succeed on development assignments. By examining the wider literature on technical cooperation and similar collaborations, the authors attempt to reconcile the organizational/contextual and the individual factors explaining the performance of such efforts. The goal is to identify the ingredients from both the structural and personal sides that would, together, beget more effective North-South cooperation.

This study examines the experience of technical cooperation as well as other North-South (N-S) collaborations which have potential for local skills acquisition, and attempts to identify the individual, organizational, and