

In so doing, Canada hopes to foster sustainable development by encouraging economic reform, promoting good governance, and increasing social spending in these countries.

## **Human Capital Development**

Undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges countries face as a result of globalization is to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to participate fully in an increasingly knowledge-based society and workplace. Meeting this challenge requires governments, the private sector, learning institutions and individuals to work together to ensure that all citizens are aware of and have access to increased knowledge, learning, skills development and technical know-how. All of these elements, taken together, are the basis of Canada's approach to investing in human capital development, a concept which will be discussed and promoted at the Cologne G-8 Summit.

Investment in human capital is crucial for stimulating economic dynamism, adapting to globalization, employability, and reducing inequalities between people. Individuals must have the skills to participate in a changing economy and to adjust to shifting workplace needs. That is why Canada has made investing in its people a key government priority as part of its integrated growth and employment strategy.

Globalization's broad impact has dramatically altered traditional concepts of learning. G-8 nations have been rapidly transformed into learning and knowledge-based societies. Canada has embraced the concept of lifelong learning as a cornerstone of economic and social development across government, private sector, labour, and civil society. This is meant to include continual access to knowledge, learning, training and skills development throughout a person's life.

The pace of technological change demands adaptability. Individuals who are multi-skilled, who avail themselves of opportunities to upgrade their knowledge and keep pace with new ideas, technologies, practices and businesses, are the ones who will most likely succeed.

Promoting the use and development of information technology in fields such as education, health care, distance learning, and business and commerce is an integral part of Canada's approach. Partnerships have been developed to advance projects such as Industry Canada's Schoolnet and Community Access programs, Technology Partnerships Canada, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, and work on electronic commerce. These partnerships are not only Canadian but international as well, such as through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Canada's cutting-edge technical expertise has led it to champion distance learning as a tool to enhance access to learning and knowledge not only for the G-8 countries, but for people in developing countries and economies in transition.