Southern Perspectives on Technical Cooperation

Analytical Review and Annotated Bibliography

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Acknowledgements

Contents

This paper is divided into two parts. Part A is an Analytical Review which synthesises findings on Southern perspectives from the post-2000 literature on technical cooperation (TC). Part B is an Annotated Bibliography which provides reference details, internet links and summaries of the key resources on this topic.

Part A: Analytical Review

What is technical cooperation?

Technical assistance (TA) and technical cooperation (TC) are forms of foreign aid, where expertise is provided to developing countries in the form of personnel, training, research, and associated costs. Typically, it is associated with the placing of consultants in positions where they can advise and support counterparts in developing countries.
The OECD definition is commonly used:

> 'Technical cooperation encompasses the whole range of assistance activities designed to develop human resources through improvement in the level of skills, knowledge, technical know-how and productive aptitudes of the population in a developing country.' (ECDPM 2006, p. 5).

TC has become the more popular description of this sort of knowledge and skills transfer in recent decades, as 'co-operation' is deemed to describe a more collaborative approach between equal partners than 'assistance'. Sometimes agencies use the terms interchangeably, at other times TC refers to the overall strategy and is broader in scope than TA, which is seen to refer more narrowly to the personnel involved in the provision of TC services.

Because of the divergence in the way the terms are used, this paper will use the term TC to relate to all types of TC and TA work. It is worth noting that both terms are now increasingly being replaced with the phrase 'capacity building'. This term is preferred because it emphasises that the primary aim of TC is not to complete a task, but is to build the individual and institutional capacity of the organisation in which the consultant is working.

What are 'Southern perspectives'?

In attempting to identify 'Southern perspectives on Technical Cooperation' we must, at the outset, recognise that there is a problem with the idea of a 'Southern perspective'. Clearly, perspectives from the South are diverse, multifarious and defy neat categorisation. However, the whole concept of 'Southern' is also questionable. What defines someone as Southern? Is it where they are born? Or where they are educated, or where they work? Is a Nigerian, educated in the United States and working for the World Bank going to express more of a 'Southern perspective' than an Canadian who has lived and worked for various local NGOs in Sub-Saharan Africa for over 30 years? Our perspectives are constituted by more than just our nationalities, our place of education or the location of the institution in which we work. However, in reviewing the literature on TC, it is striking that there are very few publications from Southern institutions or resources authored by Southern nationals. This paper therefore plays an important role in combating that marginalisation by attempting to present a consolidated picture of various Southern views on TC via the analytical review, and by profiling selected key resources on the topic via the annotated bibliography. For the purpose of this paper, we have taken a fairly broad definition of 'Southern' and included material on TC written by individuals based in institutions located in Southern countries, resources published in the South and resources which contain sections that specifically articulate the views of Southern nationals who were interviewed during the course of the research. Finally, a few documents analysing particular cases of Southern-led (i.e. demand-driven) TC have also been included.

TC within the aid effectiveness literature

There has been an increase in publications on aid effectiveness generally since 2005 and the Paris Declaration. The 2008 Accra Agenda for Action focused international attention once again on the issue of aid effectiveness and resulted in a flurry of publications, blogs and agency reports that have generally tended to re-emphasise the inadequacies of the current aid architecture. A key focus

recently has been on the issue of 'ownership' of aid by recipient country governments. This issue of ownership emphasises the importance of researching, understanding and profiling Southern perspectives on aid; to build an aid architecture that is authentically 'owned' by Southern partners, there must be mechanisms to hear Southern views. In contrast to this, several authors feel that Southern views are largely excluded from the literature. Sneyd (2007) even talks about an 'obscuring' or 'marginalisation' of Southern voices. It is certainly true that the literature on aid effectiveness predominantly originates from Northern institutions or individuals based in Northern countries. However, there are signs of change, for example there have been significant research projects in the last few years that specifically aim to promote Southern perspectives on aid. Examples include the Overseas Development Institute's (ODI) programme on 'Southern Voices for Change in the International Aid System' (2005-06) and the subsequent, ongoing Forum on the Future of Aid, or the North-South Institute's 2006-07 programme on 'Southern Perspectives on Reform of the International Development Architecture'. Much of this general literature on aid effectiveness is indirectly relevant to TC. However, this review will focus on resources that specifically discuss TC.

The literature on TC is a small subset of the aid effectiveness discourse. Over the last 10 years academics and experts have broadly been critical of TC, with repeated claims that it is costly, largely ineffective and donor-driven. Southern contributions to this literature are very limited, and information on Southern perspectives tend to be buried deep within broader reports. It is worth noting that during the course of this review, no single resource was found that specifically focused on presenting Southern perspectives on TC. This paper aims to fill that gap.

Emerging themes

The analysis that follows draws on a wide range of papers and case studies from all over the world and aims to synthesise the articulation of Southern perspectives. Whilst there are obviously diverging views and an extremely broad range of concerns, several themes consistently emerge across the literature, regardless of geographical continent or level of aid dependency. These themes are expanded further below.

Judging the impact on capacity building

There is a broad consensus amongst the Southern literature that capacity building is the most important aim of TC and that all TC should be linked to capacity building (Godfrey et al). There is unfortunately less consensus over whether TC has achieved that aim. Most authors seem to think that, with a few notable exceptions, TC has not generally achieved that aim (Wangwe and Madete, Culpeper and Morton, Kelegama and de Mel). Several authors complain that decades of TC has 'left nothing behind' as it has not been designed with capacity building as its primary mandate. This lack of connection with a broader sense of capacity building leads to the erosion of ownership. Godfrey et al. comment that often TC does have positive capacity building effects on an individual level, where individuals are trained and have their skillset enhanced. However, this can ironically often further reduce the capacity of government as those individuals therefore leave the civil service to seek more lucrative employment outside the public sector. This highlights that without civil service pay reform, TC can have unintended negative impacts on government capacity.

Preference for National or South/South TC

By far the most oft cited complaint against TC is the use of international consultants above national or regional counterparts. There are repeated expressions of preference for national or South/South TC, even to the point of respondents saying they would rather a reduction in TC than have Western consultants. There is a strong belief that regional TC is more culturally appropriate and relevant and that national TC can improve the local labour market, reduce 'brain drain' and improve value for money. Several authors specifically criticise donors for their preference for hiring expensive expatriate consultants in locations where local equivalents could be found. This practice is seen as displacing rather than complementing local resources. There is also a feeling that donors 'rush' to bring in an international consultant without first considering the options. Perceptions of why this occurs mainly centre around a belief that donors are primarily interested in protecting their domestic labour markets and that TC is mainly about promoting donor's interests abroad (Wangwe and Kasumba, ECDPM 2006, Singh, Ajayi and Jerome, Sneyd, Culpeper and Morton).

In writing on Uganda, Wangwe and Kasumba comment that:
> "Some donors have been pushing for consultants / experts from their own countries. One reason that has been put forward is that some donors view the employment of TA from their own countries as one way of providing employment to their nationals. This is viewed as one way of meeting the expectations of the taxpayers at home… For these donors the first preference in engaging TA is given to the home labour market and if the appropriate skills cannot be found there, then they look at the global market (p.15)."

Singh comments that:
> "the domination of TCIs [technical cooperation initiatives] by expatriates can significantly compromise the sustainability of TCIs and raise other problems, among them donor credibility. This often happens when donors prescribe cuts in government expenditure and insist upon greater equity in distributing resources, but send in consultants who are paid 20 to 30 times the national salary… Expatriate consultants not only seem to take jobs from nationals, but often have their own ideas of how things should be done that clash with the way their hosts would like them done. This creates friction, compromises the initiative and often raises the questions of ownership – the more so when payment for expatriates strain other elements of the national budget" (p.64/5).

So, what are the key reasons for this intense dislike of the use of international consultants? The main cause appears to be salary differentials – international consultants are paid far more than local consultants, and phenomenally more than local government officials with whom they work on a daily basis. ECDPM reports that interviewees 'complain bitterly about the salary differentials between nationals and expatriates' (p.29). The bad feeling created by these vastly differing pay scales should not be underestimated – criticism of international consultants pay is a repeated complaint across the literature. To make matters worse, international consultants are largely seen as incompetent and are often judged to be too young, inexperienced, culturally insensitive and completely lacking in knowledge of the local context in which they have arrived. Amis et al. note that "Having repeatedly to explain the same point to different sets of consultants [and] having to deal with non-country based staff who need briefing on local situations, was a frequently heard complaint from officials" (p.375).

Southern reports request TC consultants with substantive technical skills but also with 'softer' skills in interpersonal relationships. For example, skills in communication, team-working, capacity building and cultural sensitivity are all requested. Tellingly, the ability to 'listen' and to 'remain humble' are also included in the list (Land). These allusions to consultant arrogance in the attitudes of international consultants can be found across the literature, for example, a quote from a government official in Bangladesh: "donor is high – government is low" (Amis et al, p.375).

Some authors and interviewees recognise that there is a role for international consultants purely because of the constrained capacity of national or regional TC, and studies on countries like Vietnam and Tanzania show an appreciation amongst nationals for varied international input from a range of countries when national / regional TC is not an option. However, international assistance is welcome only within an agreed framework that it should be focused on capacity building and is therefore only needed until national expertise can replace it (Watson et al, Hauck and Bana).

Improve TC provision

Another key complaint in the literature is against TC 'bundling' where TC comes as part of a package of foreign aid. This is in-keeping with the broader Southern literature on aid effectiveness where the bundling of all aid and the attachment of various conditionalities is heavily criticised. Specifically in relation to TC, recipients complain of the 'opaqueness' of donors practices in relation to TC, arguing that the system of bundling TC prevents them from being able to make informed choices and identify the different types of cost related with different types of TC. This obviously has an impact on ownership. Instead, the literature clearly shows that governments prefer unbundled, un-earmarked TC that can be processed through their own systems. (ECDPM 2006, Watson et al., Wangwe and Madete, Ajayi and Jerome).

TC Pooling

A mixed picture emerges over the question of TC pooling arrangements where donors 'pool' their resources and governments therefore only have to deal with one mechanism for TC, rather than multiple donors with differing agendas and processes. There is evidence that amongst recipient governments pooling is sometimes resisted, sometimes disliked and sometimes welcomed. Wangwe and Kasumba note that in Uganda there is resistance to pooling and that "many government officials still prefer to have project approaches because these are perceived to provide opportunities for getting improved remuneration and conditions of work including TA-related equipment and facilities" (p.15). Also there is a perception that relating to individual donors will allow greater flexibility and faster recruitment processes. Other concerns with pooling include a fear amongst government officials that they will face a 'united front' from donors giving them less bargaining power, that they will lose established contacts with individual donors that they have built up over time and that there will inevitably be longer, more drawn-out negotiation processes under a pooled arrangements, for which they do not feel they have the energy (Wangwe and Kasumba, Wangwe and Madete, ECDPM 2006). However, other countries are keen to move to pooled arrangements as they view it as an opportunity to increase their control over TC funding (ECDPM 2006). There is therefore no consensus amongst Southern voices on this topic. However, it is clear that the willingness to accept or reject harmonised approaches centres on how it will effect power relations between donors and governments and therefore, ultimately, whether it will enhance or cause a deterioration in ownership.

Government leadership of TC

There is a clear desire articulated across the literature for governments to be able to take a lead in all aspects of TC initiatives, for example, needs assessment, selection of TC options, design of TC projects, management and monitoring and evaluation. This is particularly strongly voiced by the Government of Cambodia in their country-generated policy 'Guideline' on all TC in the country, and by the Government of Vietnam. Vietnamese government officials view 'ownership as a right' (Watson et al) and have argued that they have been inadequately consulted by donors over the type, role and selection of TC in the past (Amis et al).   They even assert a desire that TC personnel should take more narrowly technical roles, leaving all aspects of project management to Government of Vietnam officials. The general perception across the literature then, is that demand-driven TC largely does not exist and that government leadership of TC is theoretical rather than practical. Donors are seen to strongly 'guide' the process, even if they do not explicitly lead on it. (See, for example, Kelegama and de Mel's discussion of Sri Lanka).

Control over the recruitment and selection of TC personnel was probably the most frequently discussed aspect of TC management which governments wanted to exert greater control over. This is probably because of a perception that they would be more able to select preferred national or regional TC consultants rather than having to work with international consultants who have been selected by donors (see the section above on national / regional TC). Land notes that whilst there is a strong desire for greater control over TC processes amongst country governments, this is not extended to the area of procurement processes.

Alignment with government processes

A further frequently mentioned aspiration, which links with the paragraph above, is the desire for TC to be aligned with government priorities and processes. The need for alignment is obviously a well-documented issue in both the Northern as well as the Southern literature on aid effectiveness. However, what is interesting about the Southern literature on TC is that more emphasis is paid to aligning with government processes than to aligning with government policy priorities. The latter is not mentioned with anything like the frequency of the former; it seems that donor's lack of fit with government practices is a greater cause of grievance. Amis et al. come to a similar conclusion on the importance of aligning with processes and practices with their finding that 'recipient governments find the lack of fit of donor approaches with their own to be more burdensome than the administrative costs of dealing with multiple donors.' (p. 373).

A particular point of contention is the issue of timetabling. Several authors identify this as a cause of grievance. "Developing countries would… like to see ODA in general and TA in particular arrive on their timetables not those of donors. This implies using the fiscal year of the partner country and not

that of the donor, and designing assistance so that it matches the general financial flows of the partner as opposed to establishing a project-only system" (ECDPM 2006, p.30). Amis et al. note the comments of one Government of Bangladesh official: "…they [donors] tell you when they are coming and you have to clear your diary, regardless of your previous commitments…" (p.375).

There is a further perception in the literature related to time – several authors note a different cultural relationship to the concept of time which leads to friction between donors and governments. Donors are perceived as wanting everything to be done as quickly as possible, with efficiency and speed as key criteria of success. Government officials tend to articulate this as an over emphasis on quick results whereas, in contrast, country recipients are more concerned with ownership and control (Wangwe and Madete, Singh). It is this core difference in the perception of time that causes Wangwe and Madete to argue that alignment of processes and procedures is actually the hardest part of the TA harmonisation and alignment agenda.

Accountability

The literature also highlights a strong desire for TC consultants to be accountable primarily to government rather than to donors (Land, Wangwe and Kasumba, ECDPM 2006). Authors argue that the threefold nature of the TC relationship (i.e. client / donor / provider) confuses accountability systems and perceptions and leads to consultants showing greater accountability to donors rather than to the ministry in which they are working. This obviously impacts on ownership and leads to friction and confusion. Some authors also note that it is bad for 'downward' accountability of the government to citizens. Instead, a preferable model would be that TC consultants should answer to the government, who in turn are answerable to their citizens. If TC consultants are only accountable to donors, then citizens are excluded from the process. Further on this theme, there are also perceptions that there is too much emphasis within TC on external experts working exclusively with the executive. There is criticism that this also closes down spaces for public participation and accountability.

TC is a 'free good'

There is mention in a few of the resources (notably Ajayi and Jerome and Watson et al) that there is a widespread perception amongst Southern nationals and government officials that TC is a 'free good' – i.e. it has no effect on the government budget as it is funded by donors. Within this line of thinking, there is an uncritical assumption that it doesn't matter whether TC performs badly because it has not cost the government anything anyway. Watson et al show that TC is perceived of as 'free', because the government does not fund it from national budgets, and 'good' because of the benefits of computers and salary supplementation. Other authors also mention that the 'real' perceived benefit of TC is in the equipment such as photocopiers and computers, cars and additional jobs that it brings. Ajayi and Jerome attempt to combat this concept of TC as a 'free good' by arguing that the opportunity costs of TC are vast in that it creates a distorted market that is biased against local resources.

Northern dominance of development knowledge

Another concern that is picked up by a few authors is the fundamental principle that TC is based on an inherent assumption that Western knowledge is somehow paramount and superior to Southern, regional or indigenous knowledge (Sneyd, Culpepr and Morton). Because TC is based on the idea that techniques, practices, principles and institutions can be lifted from Northern contexts and applied directly to Southern environments without difficulty, TC necessarily reinforces the idea that knowledge is exclusive, development is a straight-forward, non-collaborative discourse and that there is only one meaning of and route to 'developed' status.

Enabling Southern-led TC

During the time allowed for this review, very few examples of Southern-led, or 'demand-driven', TC programmes were identified. This may be because few exist, or it may be that successful examples have not yet been written up or are not currently available online. There is also ambiguity around who exactly gets to determine whether a TC initiative has been authentically 'led' or 'driven' by the recipient government, and what incentives there might be for governments to claim that TC was 'Southern-led'

when in fact it was heavily influenced by donors, possibly via informal mechanisms. Case studies were found citing Botswana and Bhutan as examples of Southern-led TC. Cambodia are the only country for whom we were able to find a final, published version of a government policy paper, although other countries are reported to be developing similar documents. Reports and case studies on Vietnam seem to indicate a growing capacity and willingness in the government to lead on TC matters, particularly as the country becomes less and less aid dependent, and therefore theoretically less beholden to donors. Tanzania is another example of this.

So, what are the factors that emerge as success criteria in enabling Southern-led TC? The following emerge from the literature as enabling features:

- A willingness on the part of the government to say 'no' to donors and to actually turn down funding if they feel it is in relation to an initiative on which they could not take the primary lead role.
- A conducive political environment with strong political leadership and conviction, and with good policy, planning and budgeting processes. This is obviously vital for successful project management, but it is also vital that donors have confidence in country systems so that they take a 'hands off' approach and Southern leadership is able to develop.
- A competent, adequately paid civil service who operate with integrity. Without this there is inadequate capacity for TC management, donor trust is eroded and government capacity is never systematically built, as civil servants are attracted to better paid jobs outside the public sector.

Policy recommendations

Strengthening ownership is a key issue that is currently dominating the aid effectiveness policy agenda. Researching, listening to and profiling the views of Southern nationals and governments are clearly actions that need to take place within donor policy circles for ownership to be enhanced and developed. It is ludicrous to talk of 'ownership' when Southern perspectives are currently so overlooked and disregarded.

Our review of the literature on TC has identified several areas of concern to Southern nationals and recipient governments. There are a few that particularly stand out as key, either because of the frequency with which they are mentioned, or because of the depth of criticism they have evoked. The following policy recommendations have been based on these key findings.

- Donors should prioritise using national or regional consultants wherever such local resources are available. Donors should develop policies in line with this guidance and should conduct political economy analysis of their own institutions to further understand the attitudes and incentives that lead to a bias towards using international consultants for TC work.

- TC aid should be unbundled from other types of aid, and be accounted for and presented to country governments in a transparent format.

- In situations where donors have to use international consultants, they should prioritise cultural awareness, collaborative approaches to working and strong communication and interpersonal skills alongside technical skills and qualifications. Organisations supplying TC international consultants should be made aware that these skills are highly valued and they should adjust the personal development plans of their staff accordingly.

- TC consultants should be required to undertake regular training in cultural sensitivity and capacity building techniques and approaches.

- Donors must begin to understand that TC reform is deeply linked with the need for civil service pay reform. Without reliable, adequate pay, civil services in Southern countries will always be lacking in capacity and there will always be a reliance on TC for 'gap-filling' rather than for

more developmental capacity building. Donors need to fund more research on pay reform and the links with TC reform.

- There needs to be a development of forums in which Southern perspectives on TC and other aid modalities can ongoingly be heard.

- Country governments should follow the example of Cambodia in developing public policy papers detailing how they want TC to be conducted in their country. They should be willing to turn down TC that does not conform to these guidelines.

Part B: Annotated Bibliography

Southern perspectives on Technical Cooperation

- ECDPM / ACE Europe, 2006, 'Changing Minds and Attitudes: Towards Improved Belgian Technical Assistance', Belgian Technical Cooperation: http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/19BFB9C0D2D7B3E9C125724C00448AC2/$FILE/btc%20report%20-%20final%20final%20version%20as%20published%20on%20BTC%20website%2022122006.pdf

  This study for Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC) was carried out by ECDPM. It synthesises current best practice and thinking on technical assistance (TA) and makes recommendations for how BTC can improve their practice and policy in this area. There is a specific section detailing Southern perspectives on TA (see page 29 onwards), which argues that recipient countries want less TA, unbundled and un-earmarked TA. The authors argue that without clear moves in this direction, Southern countries are unlikely to be committed to TA reform. Other concerns include pooling arrangements, the accountability of donors and timetabling of TA.

  The report identifies key innovations in TA provision, including South-South cooperation, untying of TA, reform of PIUs and pooling arrangements. It calls for a move to demand-driven TA, arguing that instead of TA being a tied instrument of donor policy it should be market-driven and integrated into national systems. The authors assess that there has so far been poor progress towards these goals and assert that ownership will remain impossible whilst capacity is so weak. They also emphasise the impact on accountability of the 'triangular' relationship of TA where the client / provider relationship becomes a client / donor / provider nexus.

  Case studies of 7 donor countries are included which explore how TA personnel provision could be improved, and trends in the provision and financing of TA are discussed. Later chapters explore the specific institutional context of BTC and make recommendations for improvements.

- Culpeper, R. and Morton, B., 2008, 'The International Development System: Southern Perspectives of Reform', North-South Institute http://www.nsi-ins.ca/english/pdf/Southern%20Perspectives.pdf

  This paper presents findings from the North-South Institute's research programme exploring Southern perspectives on reforming the aid architecture. Three areas of the development paradigm were identified as particularly concerning:
  - The Northern bias in how development knowledge is produced, disseminated and used to inform policy;
  - The lack of policy coherence caused by differences between donor and country government priorities;
  - The geo-politicisation of aid during the 2000s.

  Country studies were undertaken in Burundi, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Bolivia. The synthesis of the studies questioned the concept of 'ownership' and the importance of the Paris Declaration at a country, operational level. They also emphasised the importance of non-aid flows to national economies and the need for better 'division of labour'. A major policy implication identified by the authors is the need to address the lack of legitimacy held by the development architecture in the eyes of many country governments and Southern civil society. The report calls for 'deep reform' of technical assistance (TA). TA is particularly criticised for:
  - Favouring expatriate resources at the expense of local expertise;
  - Eroding ownership;
  - Not focusing enough attention on capacity building.

- Sneyd, A., 2007, 'Southern Perspectives on Reform of the International Development Architecture', Report on Wilton Park Conference WP887, 18-22 May 2007: http://www.nsi-ins.ca/english/pdf/WiltonParkConferenceReport.pdf

  A Wilton Park conference was held in 2007 to discuss the findings of the North-South Institute's research programme on Southern perspectives on aid. This report synthesises conference participants comments. Whilst it is not possible to identify an homogenous 'Southern' perspective, the report emphasises that Southern voices are often marginalised in the current aid architecture. Concerns include the need for Southern information and research to become the dominant knowledge in the development field, the 'securitization' of aid and the need to acknowledge the multiplicity of potential routes to 'development'. Specific references to technical assistance (TA) are made, including a general call for reform of TA and the development of mechanisms to assist in the alignment of donor / government priorities. Concerns are also raised over the lack of demand-driven TA and the tendency for TA to produce donor 'project enclaves' within ministries. The paper summarises several case studies, including one on Nigeria which specifically questions why TA has remained so donor-dominated in a country with abundant local capacity?

- Land, T., 2007, 'Joint Evaluation Study of Provision of Technical Assistance Personnel: What Can We Learn From Promising Experiences? Synthesis Report', Discussion Paper no. 78, ECDPM: http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/483DE3933D95FDC3C125736B002B4AC6/$FILE/Synthesis%20report%20TA%20DP78e_FINAL.pdf
  This review of 3 country case studies (Vietnam, Mozambique and the Solomon Islands) finds that country management of TA personnel is a key determinant of TA effectiveness. The report also argues that better understanding of how TA can support capacity development is needed and good design of TA programmes is essential. The authors recommend that donors 'let go' of TA management and that country governments develop better systems for planning and managing human resources.
  Chapter 2 specifically considers TA demand and concludes that demand is very varied, especially at a sub-national level. Other findings on 'Southern' preferences from the case studies include:
  - There is a strong demand for TA despite the criticisms of TA over the last 30 years.
  - There is a preference for local or regional TA personnel over international consultants.
  - Country governments want TA personnel with substantive skills but also cultural sensitivity, the ability to 'remain humble' and skills in communication, capacity building, team-working and listening.
  - Country governments aspire to fuller management responsibility for TA. Whilst they are not keen to take full control of procurement, they do want greater voice and choice over selection of TA options and recruitment and they want TA personnel to be accountable to them rather than donors.

- Watson, D. Minh Thong, N. and J. Zinke, 2007, 'Provision of Technical Assistance Personnel in Vietnam: Cooking Pho, Peeling Potatoes and Abandoning Blueprints', (ECDPM Discussion Paper 77), Maastricht: ECDPM http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Navigation.nsf/index2?readform&http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Content.nsf/0/8381F1D24D9EF492C1257376002B8754?OpenDocument
  This study focuses on TA personnel in Vietnam and explores the nature of future demand for TA and how TA can best be deployed, used and managed. Section 3 focuses on TA demand and provides views collected from numerous interviews with Government of Vietnam officials. These include:
  - Clear dismay at a perceived lack of donor transparency in TA budgets and over the respective costs of different types of TA personnel. Officials want more information and dislike 'bundled' TA which does not allow GoV to make an informed decision.
  - A strong perception that TA is a 'free good', and reluctance on the part of GoV to pay for TA from national budgets. The authors note that it is very difficult to gauge real

demand for TA because the government does not pay for any part of it. Also GoV is in the position that donors compete to fund TA.

➢ A high valuation on ODA and TA that 'provides a window on comparative international practices', particularly relating to Vietnam's obligations under various conventions or international systems (e.g. WTO and international trade).

➢ Dislike of TA provision as a condition of financial aid packages.

➢ A strong perception of their 'ownership of TA as a right'. Interviewees emphasised that GoV should have final control over quantity, quality, type and selection of TA.

➢ Occasional reluctance in officials to admit that they needed assistance.

➢ Awareness that provincial governments may want to perpetuate dependency of lower levels of government, to allow continued provincial control over resources. This may reduce demand for TA from the district and commune levels.

➢ A lack of mechanisms to collect views on TA requirements at provincial or sub-provincial levels.

➢ A desire for TA personnel to play a more technical, specialist role, allowing government officials to fill project managerial roles.

➢ Preference for a range of international sources for TA personnel with particular preference for regional or national TA personnel over long-term international TA.

➢ A desire for international TA all the time that those capacities are deficient within the GoV and a strong view that TA must build capacity rather than result in increased dependency.

- Hauck, V., and Bana, B., 2009, 'National Expertise in International Development Cooperation: The Case of Tanzania', report to Belgian Technical Cooperation. Not currently available online.

  This report is a study of national technical assistance (NTA) in Tanzania. The authors note that there is a growing call within Tanzania for NTA and a general perception that it will improve the domestic labour market, reduce the brain drain and improve TA value for money. There is little data on NTA demand but qualitative evidence that it is increasing, although there are severe supply constraints. The report notes that NTA, like international TA, is often used for 'gap-filling' rather than capacity development. Tanzanians interviewed during the research tended to emphasise that the country cannot rely solely on NTA and that international TA also has a role to play.

- Amis, P., Green, L. and Hubbard, M., 2005, 'Measuring Aid Costs: What Has Been Learnt and What Still Needs to be Leant?', Public Administration and Development, vol. 25, pp. 373-378. http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/112142468/abstract?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0

  This short article explores recipient perceptions of aid transaction costs. The authors conclude that recipient governments find a lack of fit between donor approaches and their own more burdensome than the administration costs of dealing with multiple donors. The ranking of perceived burdens was similar regardless of geography or aid dependency. 'Donor driven priorities and systems' and 'difficulties with donor procedures' were repeatedly perceived as the main problems by government respondents. The former refers to a poor fit between donors' activities and national priorities and systems, donors' poor understanding of the local context and their tendency to set up parallel management units. The latter phrase refers to restrictions in procurement (particularly tying), inappropriate technical assistance (TA) and the problem of donors' frequently changing staff, systems and policies. The authors note that donors' procedures in relation to TA and procurement can reduce ownership, for example in Vietnam where the government felt there had been inadequate consultation on the type, role and selection of TA.

Southern research on TC

- Wangwe, S. and Kasumba, G., 2002, 'Study on Pooling of Technical Assistance in the Context of Sector-Wide Approaches: The Case of Uganda', ESRF Discussion Paper 31, The Economic and Social Research Foundation, Tanzania: http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/4B9E490D46485A17C1256E5800489B78/$FILE/ESRF%20Uganda%20Case%20Study.pdf

  This paper from the Economic and Social Research Foundation in Tanzania discusses the pooling of technical assistance (TA) in Uganda. The authors conducted interviews with key individuals from donor agencies, Government of Uganda and civil society organisations. The study states that coordination of TA is improving but cites the following constraints to progress:
  - ➢ Slow change in donor practices and procedures
  - ➢ Perceptions amongst Ugandans that donors use TA to promote the employment of nationals from their own countries
  - ➢ Donors' perceptions that recipient accountability systems are weak
  - ➢ Resistance to TA coordination from recipient institutions
  - ➢ Weak government capacity to coordinate and define TA needs

  The paper includes nine factors that are likely to improve the effectiveness of TA pooling in Uganda.

- Wangwe, S. and Madete, L., 2002, 'Pooling of Technical Assistance in the Context of Sector-Wide Approaches in Tanzania', ESRF Discussion Paper 32, The Economic and Social Research Foundation, Tanzania: http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/16215F1649DBD537C1256E580048AA16/$FILE/ESRF%20Tanzania%20Case%20Study.pdf

  This paper from the Economic and Social Research Foundation in Tanzania discusses the pooling of technical assistance (TA) in Tanzania in the context of SWAps. The study finds that pooling of TA is taking place at various levels in Tanzania, but mostly outside the context of SWAps. The authors argue that there are 3 types of TA pooling; pooling of financial resources, pooling of knowledge and finally, pooling of processes and procedures. The authors argue that the latter is the hardest to achieve as donors are concerned about the realisation of objectives and recipients are concerned about loss of autonomy and representation. The report calls for the development of a sound TA policy guideline in Tanzania and notes that this has not been achieved in the past. Several individuals from both donor institutions and the government were interviewed during the course of the research. Pages 10 and 11 specifically highlight recipient government concerns relating to accounting for TA, effectiveness of TA, multiplicity of TA and the level at which TA pooling would be deployed.

- Godfrey, M., Sophal, C., Kato, T., Piseth, L. V., Dorina, P., Saravy, T., Savora, T. and Sovannarith, S., 2002, 'Technical Assistance and Capacity Development in an Aid-dependent Economy: The Experience of Cambodia', World Development vol. 30, no. 3, pp.355-373 https://ex1.bham.ac.uk/exchange/scottzc/Inbox/Technical%20cooperation-2.EML/Godfrey%202002%20TA%20Cambodia.pdf/C58EA28C-18C0-4a97-9AF2-036E93DDAFB3/Godfrey%202002%20TA%20Cambodia.pdf?attach=1

  This paper presents the findings of research carried out by the Cambodian Development Research Centre. Donor and government staff were interviewed and there was broad agreement that the most important aim of Technical Assistance (TA) is capacity development. The paper argues that TA in Cambodia has had a positive impact on developing individual capacity but identifies that there are many structural problems relating to ownership. Most Cambodians interviewed felt that the government has a role in identifying and designing

projects, and in selection of TA personnel. However, the authors conclude that they found few examples of demand-driven TA. The paper asserts that 'government underfunding is the fundamental obstacle to the development of the capacity of government through TA'. Whilst TA has been generally good at developing individual capacity, these individuals often ultimately leave government for more lucrative non-government jobs. Corporate capacity is therefore ultimately diminished.

- Ajayi, A. and Jerome, A., 2002, 'Opportunity Costs and Effective Markets', Development Policy Journal, Special Issue on Technical Cooperation, vol. 2.
  http://www.jica.go.jp/cdstudy/library/pdf/20071101_27.pdf

  The authors of this paper, from the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, argue for a number of market oriented reforms designed to improve the effectiveness of technical cooperation (TC). The paper highlights that although many developing countries view TC as a 'free good', this overlooks the idea of opportunity costs, for example, the overuse of TC leading to a bias against local resources. Other market distortions are explored, including bundling of TC packages and donor preferences for expensive ex-patriates over cheaper local personnel. Major imperfections to the TC market are explained and the paper closes with ten proposals of market-oriented innovations for effective TC delivery.

- Singh, S., 2002, 'Technical Cooperation and Stakeholder Ownership', Development Policy Journal, Special Issue on Technical Cooperation, vol. 2.
  http://www.jica.go.jp/cdstudy/library/pdf/20071101_27.pdf

  This paper, from the Indian Institute of Public Administration, explores the concept of ownership in relation to technical assistance (TA). Ownership is defined as 'the acceptance of responsibility through the process of stakeholder participation, empowerment and consensus'. The author emphasises the multiple stakeholders involved in TA, particularly resisting the idea that ownership is just about national governments. Instead, the importance of local community beneficiaries and participatory practices is emphasised. Various characteristics of 'ownership friendly modalities' are explored, including participation, M&E, transparency and answerability.

- Kelegama, S. and de Mel, D., 2007, 'Southern Perspectives on Reform of the International Development Architecture: Sri Lanka Country Study', The North-South Institute, Ottawa.
  http://www.nsi-ins.ca/english/pdf/southern_persp_srilanka.pdf

  This paper from the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka outlines the country's new aid path: away from international financial institutions towards commercial borrowing and emerging bi-lateral donors. The thematic issues of 'leadership' and 'legitimacy' emerge throughout the paper and the authors conclude that government ownership is predominantly theoretical. In reality, donors guide, and ultimately control, the process. A key finding is the low awareness of the Paris Declaration throughout Sri Lanka. Technical assistance (TA) is discussed from a Sri Lankan perspective on page 35. The authors argue that TA is donor-driven but has had mixed results. It is suggested that governments should be in charge of personnel selection and would then be able to select local TA consultants.

Southern-led programmes and evaluations

- Land, A., 2002, 'Taking Charge of Technical Cooperation - Experience from Botswana: A Case of a Country in the Driver's Seat' (ECDPM Discussion Paper 34). Maastricht: ECDPM.
  http://www.ecdpm.org/

  This case study explores the pooling of technical assistance (TA) and highlights Botswana as an example of a successful country-led approach to TA. Key features of aid management in Botswana that enabled this success are identified as:

> ➢ Integration of aid into the national planning and budgeting system
> ➢ Integration of TA into the public service establishment
> ➢ Centralised coordination and bilateral negotiations
> ➢ An attitude of seeking compromise, but willing to say 'no'

The paper argues that the normal problems associated with TA (including lack of ownership, parallel structures, multiple stand-alone projects, lack of coordination and burdensome procedures) were avoided in Botswana. Instead the conducive political environment and strong sense of government ownership enabled TA to make a positive contribution to local institutional capacities.

- UNDP, 2003, 'Bhutan: A National Vision Guides Progress and Technical Cooperation', in UNDP, 'Ownership, Leadership and Transformation: Can we Do Better for Capacity Development?', UNDP / Earthscan, New York. http://www.energyandenvironment.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=1348

  This short case study highlights the modernization and developmental progress made in Bhutan over the last 40 years and attributes it primarily to success with demand-driven technical assistance (TA). Critical success factors are identified as:
  > ➢ The government retaining full control of TA to the extent that they had turned down offers of ODA or TA when they felt they wouldn't be able to retain authentic ownership.
  > ➢ A sound policy and planning environment.
  > ➢ Low corruption.
  > ➢ An emphasis on building a small but highly qualified, efficient civil service that were adequately paid.
  > The role played by South-South cooperation is also emphasised as the authors underline the pivotal involvement of the Prime Minister of India from 1958 and the subsequent assistance provided by that country.

- Government of Cambodia, 2008, 'A Guideline on the Provision and Management of Technical Cooperation', Cambodia: http://www.cdc-crdb.gov.kh/cdc/aid_management/Technical%20Cooperation%20Guideline%20(September%202008).pdf

  This Guideline paper from the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) details their policy for the future development of technical cooperation (TC). The paper emphasises that TC should always be linked to capacity development and gives detailed recommendations for:
  > ➢ Institutional arrangements for capacity development and management of TC
  > ➢ Management of TC in externally financed programmes and projects (including needs assessment, project design, project appraisal, management arrangements and M&E)
  > ➢ Implementation and monitoring arrangements for the Guideline.