

V. Suppliers of Goods and New Technology

The procedure used by suppliers of goods does not differ noticeably from that for consulting engineering firms. Registration on the Bank's list of equipment suppliers is only the first step. As a manufacturer interested in the vast potential offered by the ADB, you should begin by systematically identifying projects that may require your products. Then, you should meet the project director in the executing agency and the consulting engineer who is drawing up the project's technical specifications. Such meetings will serve as an expression of your interest and introduction to your product and your manufacturing capability.

The battle for ADB contracts is fought in the field, and a Canadian supplier is well advised to associate with the commercial section of the Canadian Embassy responsible for the borrowing country, to find a local representative who will promote the product at the proper moment and will watch carefully over developments in the call for tenders.

Because European companies already have well-established distribution networks in Africa, Canadian manufacturers should double their efforts to make their products known and have them accepted, and also to build a reputation for quality and professional service with African customers.

For newer types of technology, ADB contracts represent a good opportunity to introduce new technology to the African continent. Very few Canadian firms are using their technological advantage to make themselves known at the ADB and the executing agencies. It is always possible for the commercial section in Abidjan to assist in organizing a meeting with the ADB to introduce new equipment, procedures or methods that can improve the cost-benefit position of a given project.

A concrete example of technology transfer appropriate to Africa in the field of energy transmission is the system of capacitive coupling developed by a Montreal firm.

This technology enables towns and villages along the electrical transmission lines to draw enough electricity for their own needs without significantly increasing project costs. Other new technology could be integrated into ADB-financed projects, thus increasing their immediate profitability, in the fields of health, telecommunications, or transportation, for example.