

MANAGING FOR CHANGE

This edition of the newsletter highlights the Task Force program of technical assistance and recent developments in Poland as part of an ongoing series of profiles on countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Under Communism, economic planning in Poland meant carrying out orders from a centralized bureaucracy. Now Canadian management experts are showing Poland's budding entrepreneurs what planning means in a competitive market — capitalizing on opportunities. "Essentially we were changing mind set," says Raymond Chauvet, former

Now the company is helping the mill update and prepare data to attract foreign equity partners.

"We started off small but the work has increased in scope over the last year," says Buzz Knott, manager of banking and finance at H.A. Simons. "The Russian forest industry's potential for growth is very significant." Knott believes the company's current work together with other initiatives sponsored by the Task Force will lead to more opportunities for the Canadian forest industry to sell its world-class equipment and skills.

Emerging Markets

Other companies continue to explore opportunities in countries of the former Soviet Union where Canadians have proven strong players in a number of working joint ventures. A sampling of projects supported by Renaissance Eastern Europe ranges from a study on the technology and equipment necessary to expand oil field production in Kazakhstan, to work on a possible joint venture for the manufacture of snowmobiles in Western Siberia, to a feasibility study on the construction of a business centre and hotel complex in Kiev.

As the vast and largely untapped markets of Central and Eastern Europe continue to open up, trade and investment opportunities for Western companies are growing and diversifying. With the help of REE, innovative Canadian firms are already benefitting from the new business renaissance sweeping across the region. ■

Vice-President of Eduplus Management Group Inc. The Ottawa consulting firm conducted a four-month business management training course for the Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe.

Twenty-four Polish managers and executives from newly privatized enterprises completed the course, which included in-house training with 102 Canadian companies. "By the end we were all speaking the same language of business," Chauvet says.

Canadian Assistance

This was one of more than 50 projects of technical assistance to Poland launched since the Task Force's establishment two years ago. The aim is to help Poland and other countries in the region reform their economies, strengthen their fledgling democracies and foster Canadian trade and investment. The Task Force grew from an earlier program of cooperation with Poland and Hungary initiated in 1989.

Canada has already launched \$12 million worth of technical assistance projects in Poland and has participated with other governments

in special international efforts to stabilize the Polish economy.

In addition, using the proceeds of Canadian food aid to Poland, an \$8-million Canadian Counterpart Fund Account (CFA) was established to improve the rural economy. To date, the CFA has contributed to numerous local initiatives including installing telephones lines, providing clean water and linking homes to gas lines. The CFA is also an ongoing source of local cost funding for the full range of Canadian projects in Poland.

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