

Once it has the information required on the desired project or projects, the company can concentrate its market development efforts on the executing agency involved. Direct contact with the particular executing agency will give the company an opportunity to introduce itself, to gather information about progress on the project, to initiate a dialogue about supplies, and to put itself in a good position for future tender calls. Meanwhile, the ADB project liaison officer at the Abidjan Embassy can brief the Bank experts on the company's history and can officially inform the Bank of the interest taken by the company in the project.

When visiting the executing agency, your representative will make a technical presentation on the company's professional qualifications and its experience related to the project under discussion. The purpose is to create the most favourable image possible for your company and to leave explanatory brochures detailing your firm's technical qualifications. This interview should be followed up immediately with a letter to the executing agency itself and one to the Canadian trade mission accredited to the borrowing country — the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) field representative in embassy offices such as Kigali, Niamey, etc. You should send copies of your materials to the commercial division of the Embassy at Abidjan, so that the ADB authorities may be reminded of your interest in the project when they are visited by a liaison officer from the embassy. Finally, it is recommended that you meet with the project officers and experts in the executing agency as often as necessary in order to keep up to date with the latest developments in the project and to make yourself a familiar and respected visitor. You should certainly not neglect the personal-relations aspect which is essential to your success on the African continent.

In the course of their visit to the executing agency, the representatives of the consulting engineering companies should identify and evaluate the various avenues for co-operation and association with their local counterparts. More and more African consulting firms are wishing to participate in ADB projects. Some of them are already enjoying considerable success. The Bank and the recipient countries have for some time been expressing this preference in their criteria for selecting companies. An association can certainly contribute toward reducing the many expenses related to the cost of preparing and following up tenders.