

Association (IDA) and IFAD. The KFAED collaborates with several national, regional and international development institutions with the objective of co-ordinating efforts and participation in the financing of projects. Accordingly, the Fund has co-financed 261 projects in 1996 with such institutions. Co-financing is estimated at about 44% of the total amount of KFAED's financial assistance.

Twice a year, the Coordinating Group of the National and Regional Development Institutions meets. The Group comprises the Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Saudi and Arab Funds (the latter being the Secretariat) as well as the OPEC Fund for International Development (based in Vienna) and the Islamic Development Bank. The KFAED being the longest established member (1961), and recognized as the best staffed, often takes a lead role. It would therefore be advantageous for Canadians seeking joint regional financing to attempt to interest the KFAED in seeking co-financing from its sister institutions.

In addition to project financing, the Fund provides funding for pre-investment and feasibility studies under its technical assistance mandate. Some Canadian consulting firms have made use of this facility, but there is much scope for increased participation. It is the Fund's policy to convert the technical assistance loan into a project loan in the event of the project materializing, otherwise it is considered a non-repayable grant.

The Fund is entrusted with the management of grants directly extended by the State of Kuwait and as such is an arm of the State's foreign policy, with the proviso that a project to be considered must be deemed viable. This has opened new opportunities for Canadian companies since many Caribbean countries, for example, within easy reach from Canada, are now encouraged to seek project financing. Since they do not have a long established history of receiving funds from KFAED, Canada's chances of successfully taking advantage of these new opportunities is as good as the competition's.

The project cycle is similar to that of the the World Bank, but faster and less complex. The project appraisal is done mostly by a resident specialist, with outside support where needed. Again, this is an advantage to Canadian companies that are familiar with World Bank procedures and the various parties that are responsible for each phase of the project cycle. A roster of consultants (not suppliers), kept by the KFAED, can be referred to directly or may be used by the recipient country which normally has a say in the selection process. Registration is a must. Information and curriculum should be sent directly to the Fund. Copies of the registration forms are available either at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade or at the Embassy in Kuwait. Information on pre-pipeline projects is also available. Canadian firms experienced in