anywhere in the world they might arise. [42]

- Getting as many invitations to bid as possible – *"they are a valuable commodity. Once one has an invitation one can recruit high quality partners."* [42]

- Having good databases with which to identify experts to include in the proposal. [One database lists the member institutions' experience by country and topic; and another enables the association to communicate efficiently with the International Offices at member institutions.] [42]

3.3 Targeting and Country Knowledge

Very few of the companies we interviewed took an opportunistic approach to marketing to the IFIs and to IFI-financed projects. Virtually all were convinced that specific and deep knowledge of both the Banks and the borrower countries is necessary for consistent success.

Given the size and diversity of the market, this means that all but the largest companies must specialize to be competitive. In fact even the largest companies we interviewed approach this market in a very targeted fashion, through specialist subsidiaries.

The message we received was that both specialist capability and in-depth country knowledge were generally necessary to be competitive.

This is a barrier to entry. It is obviously difficult for a company that is new to a market to meet these requirements – getting the first work for an IFI and in a country is a challenge. It is also difficult to offer not just competent services, or good products, but services and products that are clearly better than the competition.

<u>Comments by Interviewees</u>

General comments on targeting and country knowledge:

- Language capabilities can be important – for example, in South America where bids are submitted in Spanish or Portuguese. The company tries to avoid translation, and can generally do so by having employees who speak the language in question [an advantage of a very large parent company]. [102]

- The market has become tougher as countries have modernized - specific experience in this field and in this country is necessary, not just some general experience in this country or specific experience in other countries. [10]

- CIDA work can introduce a company to a new country/market or help position a company to bid for IFI work. [10]

- Careful selection of countries in which to work. Triage approach – some countries are high priority; in some the firm will pursue a good opportunity if it arises, and in other