

- Ensure that meetings with AfDB officers and with executing agency personnel are productive by being prepared and professional. Prepare specific questions on project timing, scope, and content in advance of meetings. Be prepared to make brief technical presentation of firm's competence and capabilities, highlighting in particular the firm's relevant work experience in the developing world.
- Seek out local representatives or partners. Include this important activity as one of the objectives of the first trip(s) to Africa. Strategic partnering with local or regional firms can be a key cornerstone of a successful business development strategy. Locals have the intimate knowledge of the political, social, cultural and legal environment of their country, not to mention personal and professional contacts, and both the AfDB and borrowing governments encourage local content. Prepare lists of potential local representatives/partners in advance by seeking advice from Canadian trade officers accredited to the country, contacting business associations in the region, and through word-of-mouth referrals from AfDB or World Bank project staff about respected local or regional firms.
- Regularly track progress of project through stages of the project cycle using published and electronic sources of project information and by maintaining contact with Bank staff, executing agency personnel and local contacts. Watch for formal notifications of prequalifications or bid tenders. Consider subsequent trips to stay informed, re-express interest, strengthen relationships and demonstrate commitment. *The initial goal is to get on short lists (for consultants) or to become well-positioned to prequalify or submit bids (for suppliers).*
- When prequalifying or bidding, follow AfDB procurement guidelines to the letter and ensure submissions comply strictly to terms of reference and deadlines set out in bid documents. Seek clarification when uncertain about specific issues or requirements. *Avoid outright disqualification by submitting bids on time.* If procurement problems or irregularities are suspected or unreasonable delays in decisions or payment are encountered consult with OLIFI-Abidjan at the Canadian Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire.
- Be patient and persistent and maintain commitment to approach before revising or expanding strategy. If unsuccessful, analyze reasons why and learn from the experience for subsequent attempts. When making a short list or winning a contract, make the Canadian Embassy in Abidjan and the Canadian Executive Director at the AfDB aware, both as a courtesy and in the event additional assistance is required during bidding or project work.
- Finally, after winning a contract, endeavour to do an outstanding job and to fully meet or exceed the objectives and expectations of the project. Firms who demonstrate competence and reliability will be well-positioned for winning future bids, possible continuation of services contracts and other subsequent work.