

**DESIGN MANAGEMENT GROUP (DMG)**, an engineering consulting firm based in Gander, Newfoundland, successfully completed a CIDA INC-funded feasibility and preliminary design project for Malawi's National Water System in mid-1997. But how did a small company from Gander end up doing business in Malawi?

DMG began focusing on the international market as early as 1989, and now fully 46% of its revenue comes from outside Canada. Experience in the Bahamas and Mexico helped pave the way for ventures further afield and whet the appetite for more overseas work.

DMG's Terry Parson's, Manager of Business Development, emphasizes that "success in Africa was the culmination of a focused marketing effort which began in January 1995 and resulted in the award of the CIDA INC contract in May 1996." As democratization and liberalization swept across Eastern and Southern Africa during the early 1990s, extensive market research showed a number of countries in the region needed the company's services.

Project leader Suzanne Hurley, P.Eng, led exhaustive research and travel efforts during August 1995 that resulted in a shortlist of 4 promising regional projects – from a preliminary list of 22 – including the Malawi water project. Once a local partner was found, and discussions with the World Bank showed its commitment to downstream financing, a formal submission was made to CIDA INC to support the feasibility and design phase. Now that this phase has been completed, DMG is in position to play a major role during implementation.

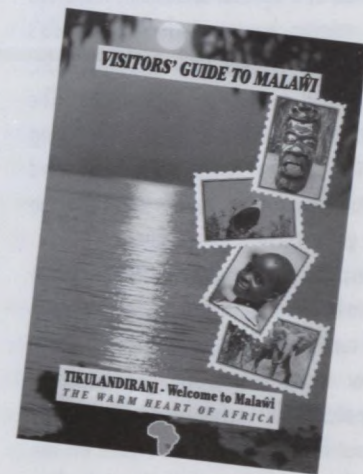
"Working with CIDA INC, CIDA Bilateral, the Trade Commissioner Service, and the IFIs has provided DMG with the additional background necessary to tackle the international marketplace," says Hurley. Professionalism, focus, extensive market research, and knowledge of the region are all necessary precursors, however, to benefiting from the services and programs of CIDA, DFAIT, and IFIs.

And what about working in Malawi? DMG staff have nothing but good things to say about their local partner and the National Water Department, and Hurley adds "there is a general feeling that the country has tremendous potential, as indeed do a number of surrounding countries."

As the company prepares to implement its feasibility and design work, DMG's commitment to market research has definitely paid off.

the offering. In fact, the Commercial Bank of Malawi recently introduced some online banking services, the first Malawian institution to do so.

Other areas of emerging opportunity include the mining sector – with reserves of coal, bauxite, graphite, uranium, vermiculite, phosphates, and glass sand, etc., almost completely undeveloped – tourism, and export-oriented agri-food processing and manufacturing.



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