
(1) Country Officers

Country officers are responsible for liaising with borrowers and for strategically overseeing the Bank's lending portfolio in a specific country. These officers can provide firms with an overview of the Bank's country assistance strategy and its development objectives in a specific country. (A country officer located at Bank headquarters in Washington is assigned to each borrowing country.)

(2) Disbursement Officers

These officers are responsible for setting-up financial contracts once a Bank loan is approved, and establishing links for payments from the proceeds of a loan.

(3) Sectoral Technical Specialists

Task Managers are supported by sectoral specialists usually housed in regional technical departments. These specialists provide advice to Task Managers on technical elements of their projects, and often help Task Managers interpret applicable Bank guidelines. Firms with new technologies or innovative approaches to development problems should include these specialists in their roster of Bank contacts.

The Potential for Bank Influence on Procurement

Generally speaking, the potential for Bank influence on procurement will depend upon the overall capacity of the borrower, the Bank's level of confidence in the executing agency, and the latter's willingness to accept Bank advice. As a general rule, the greatest potential for Bank influence lies in the earlier phases of the project cycle wherein the Bank is most involved.

For consulting assignments, the identification, preparation and appraisal phases of the project cycle are often the most critical. It is important to note that when retaining consultants, the Banks' preference is focused on technical ability. As a result, price is not the principal factor in winning contracts, but is negotiated after a contractor has been selected, within the terms of the assignment's budget.

However, for manufacturers and suppliers of goods and equipment, the primary consideration *is* price. Winning bids are typically those which fulfil the necessary technical requirements at the lowest cost. Although it is useful for manufacturers and goods suppliers to be involved in the early