

developing knowledge of the political, economic, legal, social and cultural environment of target countries; assessing the likely competition as well as availability of local representation; determining what level of financial and human resources will be required to execute the strategy; and becoming familiar with all key sources of project information and intelligence.

*An appropriate overall marketing strategy for pursuing development project work in the African market should envision taking an integrated and country-focussed approach and will likely include the World Bank and CIDA as key components of that plan. Once a strategy is developed and the company has become fully familiar with the role of the Bank and its policies and procedures, firms should be prepared to take the following specific actions with respect to AfDB-funded business opportunities:*

- Investigate sources of provincial and federal government assistance, including programs to assist in financing business development costs and project preparation studies (IE- Program for Export Market Development, Professional Services Programs of CIDA-INC). These programs can greatly assist in helping firms position themselves in the market and in "getting into the game".
- Identify AfDB projects of interest from sources of information such as the Quarterly Operational Summary, the Indicative Lending Programme, and through personal contacts established at the Bank and in countries of interest.
- Assess potential opportunities in projects by obtaining additional information on the timing, scope and content of the project from AfDB loan and project officers and identify the names and coordinates of key personnel in the executing agencies of the projects. Endeavour to also learn about current political, economic and social conditions in countries of interest, and whether a country is in arrears with the AfDB. (Projects in countries with arrears problems may experience critical delays due to possible suspension of new loan approvals and/or loan disbursements.) The Canadian Embassy in Abidjan, as well as Canadian embassies and consulates accredited to target countries can greatly assist in this process.
- Contact the executing agency of the project in the borrowing country (normally in writing first) to express interest in qualifying for anticipated procurement in the project. Include detailed statement of firm's qualifications. Let relevant Canadian trade officers aware of your interest.
- *Visit the target countries and meet with executing agencies of specific projects and other key actors.* There is no substitute for face-to-face contact with the borrowing agencies, particularly for consulting and engineering firms. Ordinarily it is not effective to do business in Africa only by fax, mail and telephone. Be certain who the key decision makers in the project are (AfDB officers can usually confirm names) and be prepared to make follow-up visits.
- It is essential to plan a visit to AfDB headquarters as part of any trip, ideally en route to target countries. Give sufficient advance notice to Canadian Embassy in Abidjan and to Canadian embassies or high commissions in target countries as Canadian trade officers can be a valuable source of assistance in facilitating contacts and meetings and in providing information and advice on the local scene.