

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

- Payment problems can have serious results [this firm was bankrupted by a combination of bad overseas contracts and over-ambitious foreign expansion]. Dealing with joint ventures in countries that have low standards of business law and property rights can be very risky. [104]
- The company has a strong integrity policy that governs what it does in marketing and proposal writing. [102] Being part of a very large well-known company helps make that stick.
- Corruption is a problem. Partly for this reason the firm does not stress personal contacts and relationships too much. Quality and price, and the international reputation and name recognition of the firm are more important to its strategy. [15]
- Corruption is a major problem. *"It is important to find out whether the project has already been bought and sold"* or the company can waste a lot of time and money in a futile bid. The interviewees noted that Canada does not have laws that govern bribery overseas but the USA does and *"its attitude of zero tolerance is making a difference"*. [23]
- Corruption is so pervasive that *"business relationships can be undependable. If the freebees dry up too early and a competitor is still wet while you are dry then you can lose the contract at the last minute."* [23]
- Corruption is a problem. [24]
- False short listings can be a problem. One has to be careful to ascertain whether the company really has a chance for the work or is just included to "pad out the short list with a token Canadian company". [25]
- "Freebees [which become corruption at some point] are a "cost of doing business" in these markets. [26]
- Corruption is a major problem. Some of the pension agencies in developing countries and emerging economies are manipulated for personal gain. The company is reluctant to agree to work without financial guarantees up front. [27]
- A major problem in these loan-financed projects is determining whether the prospect of a project is real and is worth a marketing investment. Even if financing is approved by one of the IFIs the project might still not go ahead or might be delayed for a long time. There tends to be a *"lot of political infighting"* among the decision makers in-country. [28]
- Getting paid can be a problem with developing-country public sector clients. [29]
- Avoiding many kinds of *"rip-offs"* in country environments that are not familiar to the firm. [29]