

Companies who track the progress of these projects on a regular basis will generally be in a better position to act and react at such time that bidding opportunities arise. It is important to recognize that the lines between the various stages of the project cycle are blurry ones, the duration of project preparation is dependant on multiple factors, and delays are frequent; however, diligent tracking of the project, and patience with the delays inherent to the development business will positively contribute to a company's preparedness and ultimate success.

Project programming begins with requests from the borrowing country further to established sectoral priorities based on multi-year development plans prepared by the countries, detailed economic analyses undertaken by the AfDB (and other IFIs), and takes into consideration the AfDB's resource allocation constraints and its own sectoral priority orientations. Prospective projects for consideration for AfDB financing are compiled into a pipeline of projects and studies, discussed and prioritized, and then individually developed through a several-stage process, often requiring a few to several years before the actual loan is approved.

The earliest available list of projects in the pipeline for each country is the **Indicative Lending Programme** which, in essence, constitutes a master wish-list containing upcoming projects for a country by year of expected approval, including those in the very earliest stage of consideration and development. Though technically not publicly available, companies can obtain the lists through the Canadian Embassy in Abidjan.

Once a project begins to formally evolve through the project cycle it is published in the **Quarterly Operational Summary** of the AfDB, available by subscribing to the UN publication, **Development Business**, and available electronically through the Electronic Bulletin Board Service of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. (The AfDB also plans to develop a World Web Site for access to this and other information.)

While the listings and other printed sources of project information are useful, companies should always augment their project tracking by reconfirming the information and developing additional intelligence on a project's timing, content and scope directly from contacts in the executing agencies of the projects, from relevant AfDB project officers, and from OLIFI-Abidjan.

The four main stages of the project cycle can be summarized as follows:

Identification: This preliminary stage of project conceptualization and early planning is the responsibility of borrowing country officials and AfDB staff, who generally undertake a mission to the country to discuss the goals and objectives of the project, assess potential problems and major issues, and begin defining the need for studies and other preparatory work. Prefeasibility and other initial studies often commence during this stage; consulting firms and individual consultants interested in feasibility and other studies will have already expressed interest and established contact with AfDB staff and executing agency personnel by this point. Financing for consulting work at this stage can come from a wide array of sources: bilateral grant funds (IE-CIDA's Industrial Cooperation Program), AfDB technical assistance funds, bilateral technical assistance trust funds, the UNDP, proceeds from prior loans to a country in the same sector of activity, and from project preparation grants or loans from the AfDB or World Bank.