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companies to demonstrate the quality of their goods and services. As a result, Canada is gaining a very positive reputation throughout West Africa.

Infoserv, a Laval-based information technology firm, has had its share of success in this market. "For those of us working in the information technology field, our Canadian identity is a major asset," says Jean-Pierre Lemire, President of Infoserv. "Canadian know-how and pragmatism in this area are recognized and appreciated, and sharing French as a means of communication is also an advantage."

An example of West Africa's vitality can be found in the infrastructure sector, where national and regional initiatives are underway to rehabilitate some of the failing infrastructure.

Energy

Burkina Faso is a land-locked country that relies heavily on its neighbours for its goods and energy needs. Its government has initiated an extensive rural electrification program—funded

by the ADB—by commissioning power plants and creating a national grid connected internationally to Ghana and its other neighbours. Consulting opportunities also exist in the privatization of its national oil and electricity companies, as well as in the creation of a regulatory body to oversee the energy industry.

Canadian expertise is being solicited in Senegal and in Cote d'Ivoire to help those countries with the liberalization of their downstream energy sectors. Senegal's national electricity company, SENELEC, is to be privatized by December 2004. Both countries have engaged in rural electrification projects, resulting in large purchases of electrical equipment, and both have embarked on extensive programs to rehabilitate their infrastructure. Also, the successful privatization of Mali's energy sector has meant an increase in demand for metering instruments and other equipment to replace older infrastructure.

To read more about Canada and Africa, see Issue 21 of **Canada World View**, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's quarterly foreign policy magazine, on-line at www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canada-magazine.

Transportation

Anyone who has been to Africa knows that its transportation infrastructure is inadequate. The World Bank has lent \$1.6 billion to sub-Saharan African countries in the last three years for transportation projects, and much of this has gone to West Africa. And Canadian companies have been involved in these initiatives: Ottawa-based **CPCS Transcom** was hired to privatize the 1,200-kilometre Dakar-Bamako railway, and Montreal-based **CANAC** won a 25-year concession to manage and operate it.

In Cote d'Ivoire, a number of Canadian firms have tendered or expressed interest in various highway programs, including the extension of the northern highway and rehabilitation of three national highways—contracts worth \$137 million.

For transportation projects, Burkina Faso has an envelope of \$1.1 billion, of which \$185 million comes from the World Bank. Opportunities there are expected in the areas of professional expertise, periodic and routine maintenance, road rehabilitation, management capacity building, road safety and the privatization of the Ouagadougou and Bobo airports' management.

For more information, go to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's (DFAIT) West Africa Web sites: www.infoexport.gc.ca/bf (Burkina Faso), www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire), www.infoexport.gc.ca/ml (Mali), and www.infoexport.gc.ca/sn (Senegal), or contact DFAIT's Sub-Saharan Africa Trade Division, e-mail: ggtt@dfait-maeci.gc.ca. ❖

Southern Africa teeming with opportunity

While South Africa is a familiar market for Canadian businesses, its neighbours like Zambia, Mozambique and Botswana are less so. However, the entire southern African region presents real opportunities for Canadian companies willing to move into these new and developing markets. Heavily dependant on imports, the region represents untapped markets for Canadian products and services in a variety of sectors.

Consultancy services, mining and energy, transportation, and information and communication technologies (ICT) are but four sectors that illustrate what southern Africa has to offer to Canadian exporters.

Consultancy services

Mozambique and Botswana represent growing markets for consultancy services. In Mozambique, the focus is on the mining and mineral resources sector, water and sanitation, and infrastructure development. Largely funded by international financial institutions (IFIs), these sectors represent excellent opportunities for Canadian companies.

In Botswana, the country's technological infrastructure, ICT, the privatization of government institutions, and the modernization of the air transport sector are key areas for growth. Similarly, Malawi's economic reforms, which have received \$120 million to-date in support from the African Development Bank and the World Bank, are focussed on the restructuring and privatization of state-owned companies. There are also opportunities in that country's water and sanitation infrastructure.

Mining and energy

Throughout southern Africa, but particularly in resource-rich countries like Mozambique and Angola, governments have made mining and energy



Knowledge through technology: a doctor in Lusaka, Zambia, teaches children about HIV and AIDS.

top priorities for national development and economic expansion.

With a combined investment exceeding \$10.5 billion, Angola's state oil company, Sonangol, and its international oil partners are significant potential consumers of Canadian products and oil expertise.

The upward trend in the price of copper, on which Zambia's economy depends, is expected to trigger purchases of equipment and services by local mining houses to increase production levels. Zambia's Copperbelt Environmental Project, and World Bank-financed Mineral Resources Management Capacity Building Project in Mozambique, will increase demand for the supply of equipment and mining services.

Transportation

The transport sectors in Angola and Mozambique are underdeveloped and infrastructure requires rehabilitation. Mozambique has IFI-funded opportunities for the rehabilitation and construction of transport infrastructure, and there are also potential opportunities for the supply of locomotives and related parts to the railway companies of these two countries.

Botswana is currently upgrading its airports, and Angola plans to build a new international airport in its capital, Luanda.

ICT

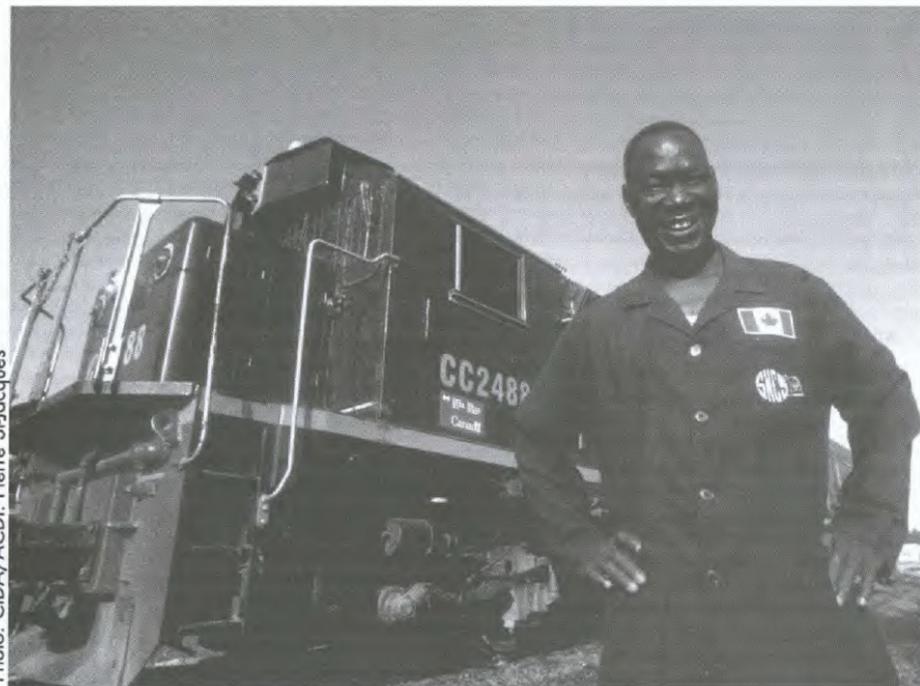
Like in many African countries, ICT is a growing sector. The governments of Botswana and Mozambique have demonstrated their commitment to expand this industry through the development of national ICT strategies. Botswana's government is currently soliciting tenders for the provision of software, hardware and networking services. For more information, go to www.gov.bw/business/tenders.html.

In Angola, Malawi and Mozambique, the ICT sector is still in its infancy. Canadian companies can gain a foothold—and the resulting downstream comparative advantage—by introducing their products to those markets now.

Advice

When doing business in southern Africa, be proactive. Make contacts with decision makers and send them information on your products and services. Also, find a local partner or agent who knows the language and business culture of the markets you wish to explore.

For more information, go to DFAIT's Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe Web sites: www.infoexport.gc.ca/mz, www.infoexport.gc.ca/zm, and www.infoexport.gc.ca/zw. ❖



The Dakar-Bamako railway renewal: Canadian companies are helping Mali and Senegal reshape their national railways into commercially viable transnational enterprises.

Photo: CIDA/ACDI: Pierre St-Jacques

Photo: CIDA/ACDI: David Tratiles