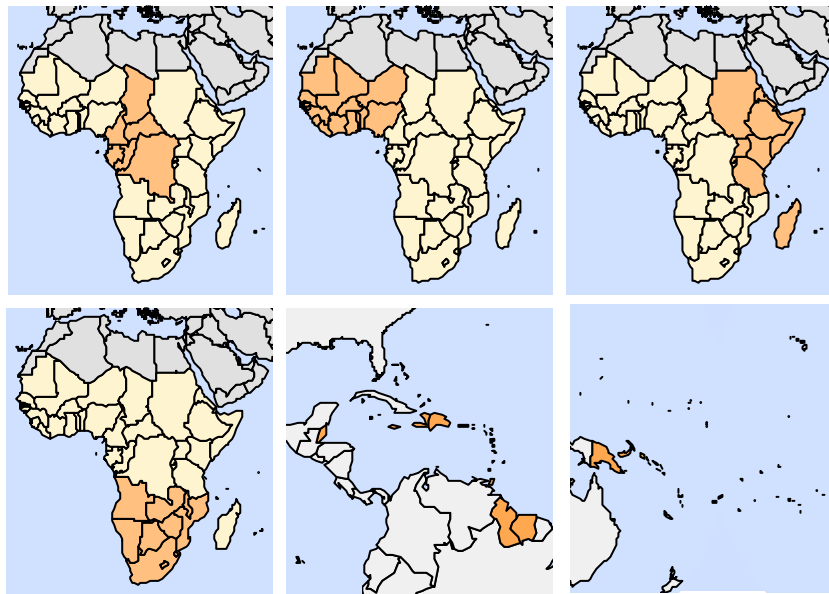




The CDE's ACP Network at the service of its
European Institutional Network (EIN)





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1. The CDE's ACP Network

1.1. Decentralisation strategy: rationale and objectives

The CDE has recently set in place a decentralisation strategy whose main objectives are proximity to ACP enterprises and relevant intermediary organisations and an enhanced knowledge of their structural and operational environment.

Through this decentralisation, the CDE intends to transfer part of its know-how and delegate some operations to its Regional Offices, and to explore and coordinate activities with local programmes and other partner agencies active in the field of private sector support. The Centre is also seeking to reduce administrative costs and to improve efficiency by shortening response times.

1.2. The CDE's decentralised network: components and respective responsibilities

The decentralised network in the ACP regions currently comprises:

- Regional Field Offices (RFOs), and
- Technical Intervention Offices (TIOs).



1.2.1. Regional Field Offices (RFOs)

An RFO is usually managed by a senior CDE staff member, who is assigned to this post for a number of years. Other staff include local experts, support staff and, in some cases, experts seconded from other cooperating institutions (both ACP and EU).

The RFOs have been set in place gradually over the last few years and are currently operating in four regions; namely:

- West Africa (Dakar)
- East Africa and Indian Ocean (Nairobi)
- Southern Africa (Gaborone)
- Caribbean (Santo Domingo)

It is planned to set up RFOs in Central Africa and the Pacific in due course.

The main functions of an RFO are to:

- represent the CDE and coordinate its activities in the region
- manage and supervise the regional network and identify requirements and potentials in terms of assistance
- provide decentralised support, especially to enterprises, on the basis of ad hoc requests; (since January 2008, powers have been delegated to the RFOs to manage interventions up to a maximum of 20,000 euros per intervention).



1.2.2. Technical Intervention Offices (TIOs)

The TIOs are usually private consulting firms selected on a competitive basis. Their main task is to help enterprises to prepare their requests for assistance in accordance with the Centre's procedures and eligibility criteria. Their other activities are to:

- identify and prepare interventions to assist enterprises and intermediary organisations (such as employers' associations, sector federations, chambers of commerce, etc.)
- manage interventions and other operational tasks
- provide advice on business potentials, key sectors and relevant cooperation programmes in their respective countries.

An updated list of the CDE's RFOs and TIOs can be found on the CDE's website.

Services that the ACP Network can provide to the European Institutional Network (EIN)

2.1. General information

One of the main tasks of the TIOs is to help promoters and companies to prepare their requests for assistance. The CDE requires submission of a pre-request form, in order to assess whether a request meets its eligibility criteria. Examples of pre-request forms



and detailed information on the eligibility criteria are available on the CDE's website.

The ACP Network can also provide on-site support during implementation of the technical assistance (studies, training, etc.) approved by the CDE. In this case, the CDE covers the cost of the services provided by the TIOs.

2.2. Specific services

The ACP Network can also provide additional services, such as:

I. Supplying information on the private sector and business environment in the ACP countries

Both the RFOs and the TIOs provide periodic reports on the country or countries for which they are responsible. In addition, thanks to the various activities undertaken by the CDE and Pro€Invest, the Centre has compiled a wide range of sector studies. All these reports can be consulted free of charge by the members of the EIN.

Similarly, EIN members can receive information about the availability of studies being undertaken in the context of a programme or project.

The CDE does not usually finance market studies or general reports on a country's economy for a specific company. If no information is



available, however, and if a specific company or institution belonging to the EIN wishes to have this type of study or report, they can contract the services of the relevant TIO directly, bearing in mind that they will have to cover the cost of the studies or assistance requested.

II. Identifying specific opportunities in ACP countries, and searching for, selecting and assessing possible ACP partners for European companies

The information available in the ACP countries can be obtained free of charge from the ACP Network, as is the case for reports on sector studies (mentioned above).

Another of the CDE's activities is to search actively for European companies wishing to cooperate with ACP enterprises on the basis of concrete business proposals. The TIOs may be asked not only to identify ACP partners, but also to examine and assess whether they are suitable for the proposed project. These services are usually provided in the framework of a business meeting organised by an EIN member in Europe or in an ACP country.

III. Assisting and, if necessary, organising business trips for European entrepreneurs to ACP countries

The CDE's assistance in this domain focuses on group business trips, particularly those involving the Centre's priority sectors. In this case,



the CDE may request the TIO to provide on-site assistance, identify and assess local partners, undertake promotional activities, contact other organisations and carry out an initial monitoring of the event. With the CDE's approval, this service can be provided free of charge.

Although the CDE does not usually assist exploratory trips by a single European company, a company may contract the services of the relevant TIO directly to provide assistance.

However, provided that there is a clear intention on the part of the European company to invest in a specific ACP country, the CDE may request the TIO to identify partners free of charge.