

Business briefing runs alongside SAITEX

In order to enable the private sector to fully access the increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) opportunities in Africa, a dedicated business briefing will take place on 27 July 2010 alongside the Southern African International Trade Exhibition (SAITEX) at Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand, South Africa.

Entitled 'Projects and Products for Selected Southern and Eastern African Countries', the event will feature speakers from seven key African nations - Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The session aims to provide an opportunity for suppliers of goods and services as well as potential investors to learn of upcoming development projects in key Southern and East African markets, and to identify specific supply needs.

Practical and business-orientated

"We have put together a business intelligence event that is both practical and business-orientated", says Paul Runge, spokesperson and MD of Africa Project Access. APA is a consultancy that specialises in providing early alerts of projects in sub-Saharan Africa. The company also monitors major funding agencies operating in Africa such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank. "SAITEX is a buy-and-sell portal, and we want to give funders, contractors and suppliers the opportunity to learn about upcoming investment projects in Africa."

"This business briefing is great for companies, consultants, exhibitors and suppliers at SAITEX to learn about products that will be needed for specific projects, which range from agriculture, water and sanitation, transport and infrastructure, to mining, construction and health services. We want to connect projects with products, and SAITEX is the ideal place to do this.

"We are targeting as wide an audience as possible to benefit each and every member of the various industries represented at SAITEX. We have focused on these specific African countries because they are the major markets for export volumes, and thus the most relevant for the kind of goal we are trying to achieve.

Challenges in doing business in Africa

"There are many challenges inherent in doing business in Africa, but probably the most crucial is the flow of in-market intelligence. In order for suppliers to properly tender, they need to know about projects very early on, and this is often not achievable. The briefing will address this by giving suppliers a heads-up about what projects are in the pipeline, so the process of intelligence-gathering can be improved.

"Although there are many large corporations involved in African projects such as Nampak, MTN and certain retail giants, there are also many opportunities for small businesses to provide for niche markets. For example, companies providing

specialised glass products for hotels and other construction projects, particularly in Zimbabwe, are doing very well because of briefing in-market intelligence. In terms of sector growth, we are seeing a dramatic increase in agriculture-focused projects, particularly those which are donor funded.

"Ultimately, we hope that this business briefing will let companies know what is actually happening in the relevant regions in Africa, and how they can benefit from these projects. There is also a lot to be said for prioritising markets - in order for companies to target the project that will be most profitable for them, they desperately need the in-market intelligence and knowledge that this briefing will give them."

Botswana-Morupule B Generation and Transmission project

One upcoming project is the Botswana-Morupule B Generation and Transmission project. The objective is to assist the Botswana Power Corporation to develop a reliable and affordable supply of electricity, provide energy security; promote alternative energy resources for low-carbon growth and build institutional capacity in the energy sector. The combined funding allocation is US\$379-million. In-market intelligence on many more opportunities in the region will be discussed at the business briefing.

The Southern African International Trade Exhibition (SAITEX) once again provides a vast showcase of thousands of products from hundreds of suppliers sourced from all over the world. SAITEX takes place at Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, near Johannesburg, South Africa from 25-27 July 2010.

For more information on the event, contact Heather Hook of Fair Consultants on tel: +27 (0) 11 8039362, email or heather@fairconsultants.com. For more information on SAITEX, contact Anina Hough at EMS on tel: +27 (0) 11 7837250 or email saitex@exhibitionsafrica.com.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>