

EXPLORING EMERGING MARKETS:

Senegal & Côte d'Ivoire

May 13–17, 2024 | West Africa

Registration Deadline | Friday, February 23, 2024

Join the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), the U.S. Commercial Service, and Prosper Africa on this first-of-its-kind mission for Virginia companies to explore business opportunities in the public and private sectors in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, two gateway markets for the West Africa region. Understanding the unique challenges Virginia companies face in navigating and pursuing business in Africa, VEDP and its partners will equip mission participants with valuable knowledge and support in these two key emerging markets.

Africa is home to the world's largest free trade area, growing economies, and a young and increasingly urban and digitally connected population. While each region on the continent is unique, Africa offers valuable growth opportunities that can benefit Virginia companies, as well as economies on both sides of the Atlantic.

Why these markets?

West Africa is demographically and economically one of the world's fastest-growing regions. Consisting of 15 countries with almost 400 million people, West Africa is projected to represent roughly 15 percent of the global population growth over the next two decades. The region's unfulfilled demand for goods and services presents important opportunities for Virginia companies in industries such as technology, cybersecurity, ports, education, manufacturing, agriculture, and infrastructure.

What can I expect?

Your company will participate in B2B meetings with potential customers and sales partners in each country. In addition, trip participants can capitalize on participating in B2B meetings



Dakar, Senegal





Abidjan Plateau, Côte d'Ivoire

with potential customers and sales partners in each country, trip participants can capitalize on US-funded infrastructure and development projects in the region and benefit from opportunities to network in-country with stakeholders such as the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), and the African Development Bank, among others. These stakeholders will engage with mission participants to explain how to do business with them directly, where applicable, and financing products and services that are available to secure export sales to African customers.

Prosper Africa is a strategic partner of the VEDP in delivering this exploratory trade mission. This is the U.S. government's flagship national security initiative aimed at strengthening the strategic and economic partnership between the United States and countries throughout Africa. Mission participants will benefit from Prosper Africa's ability to navigate U.S. government services and initiatives available to companies doing business in Africa, help identifying investment opportunities and closing deals, and their important relationships with complex government and private sector leaders. Networking receptions will take place in each country and will serve as a valuable opportunity to make further connections with potential customers and U.S. and local government officials.

Côte d'Ivoire Overview

Côte d'Ivoire, also known as Ivory Coast, is experiencing one of the fastest sustained economic growth rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2022, the country's Vision 2030 was announced to transform the economy of Côte d'Ivoire by revitalizing the private sector and investing in infrastructure, education, and technology. Côte d'Ivoire plays a central role as a regional economic hub for West African nations and is a receptive market for American goods and services.

The Ivorian government's major investments in education and transportation are leading to large infrastructure projects related to school construction, education management and teacher training; road construction and traffic management and safety; and port efficiency and security. Select examples of where U.S. businesses operate successfully include agriculture and value-added agribusiness processing; power generation and renewable energy; IT services and cybersecurity; ports digital economy; banking; insurance; and infrastructure.



National Park Nikolo Koba, Senegal

Senegal Overview

Senegal is the African continent's westernmost point, and through its geography and participation in the Economic Community of West African states (ECOWAS) can serve as a gateway to the region. Senegal has experienced continued economic growth over the last decade – roughly 6.6 percent from 2014-2019 and is projected to rebound from global economic shocks and grow 5.3 percent in 2023. The country has ambitious goals to generate private investment and address barriers to social and economic growth through the President's Emerging Senegal Plan (PSE), generating a number of market opportunities for Virginia companies. With a population of nearly 18 million people, Senegal offers an attractive location for companies looking to serve the West African regional market.

Top sectors with potential for U.S. companies include oil and gas; power generation; automobiles and automotive parts; aircraft; equipment for construction, agriculture, and telecommunications; cybersecurity and customized software; and computer equipment. Additionally, several major infrastructure projects planned will require support for roads, electrical distribution, fiber optic cables, construction, and hospital and healthcare services and equipment.

Objective

The objective for this trip is to arrange and conduct quality meetings between you, our VEDP client, and potential sales partners (agents, representatives, or distributors), and/or customers in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire. Our goal is for these meetings to help you generate new sales to customers in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire and to provide you with market intelligence only attainable by an in-country visit. In addition, this exploratory mission will connect you with important U.S. government organizations, including aid and development and export finance agencies, that are funding and supporting projects in both countries so that you can understand how these programs work and how to capitalize on them.

TRADE MISSION DETAILS

Trade Mission Dates | May 13–17 , 2024

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Schedule

In setting up participants' individual meetings, we will focus on potential partners and customers who are relevant to your company. Our in-country partners will ensure that your meetings are scheduled with the best contacts. We will keep you apprised as your itinerary develops, offer opportunities to provide input and feedback, and suggest travel and logistics options for your itinerary.

The schedule is planned as follows and is subject to change:

Date	Day	Activity
February 23, 2024	Friday	Last day for registration
May 11, 2024	Saturday	Last day to depart the U.S. for Dakar, Senegal
May 12, 2024	Sunday	Mission briefing and welcome dinner in Dakar
May 13, 2024	Monday	Individual meetings; networking reception
May 14, 2024	Tuesday	Individual meetings
May 15, 2024	Wednesday	Travel to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; mission briefing
May 16, 2024	Thursday	Individual meetings; networking reception
May 17, 2024	Friday	Individual meetings
May 18, 2024	Saturday	Return to the U.S.

Eligibility

Participating companies must (1) be a U.S. exporter, as defined by the U.S. Commercial Service; (2) be headquartered or have operations in Virginia; and (3) export or seek to export a good or service that is of U.S. origin or at least 51% U.S. content, which is defined here and includes information on how to calculate U.S. content on the "fee-based export promotion assistance" tab.

Registration

Please visit west-africa-exploratory-mission-interest.eventbrite.com to express your interest in the trade mission and provide information about your company for the U.S. Commercial Service to confirm market suitability. Once market suitability is determined, your company will be invited to formally register for the mission and pay the trade mission registration fee.

Contacts

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