



WEST AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT HUB (WATIH)

West Africa is home to many of the world's fastest-growing economies and a rapidly expanding middle-class consumer base.

West Africa is ripe for doing business. With agriculture as the base of the economy, a youthful population, women at the forefront of various economic activities, and having one of the fastest growth rates in the use of mobile phones and digital technology, the stage is set for economic growth. A few challenges, however, prevent West African countries from achieving their full economic growth potential. Notable among these are limited access to affordable financing, limited access to international markets and poor competitiveness of regional products in the global marketplace, coupled with a limited adequately skilled labor force, inequalities in employment opportunities, and low productivity.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH) is USAID's flagship project that is designed to address the above issues, thereby allowing West African businesses to unlock their full potential and thrive. WATIH is a five-year \$140 million trade and investment activity which seeks to catalyze sustainable economic growth and improve food security in the region by increasing competitiveness through building strategic partnerships with the private sector using a market-based approach. Specifically, WATIH aims to:

- Generate new private investments in key growth sectors in West Africa through a co-investment fund and technical assistance.

- Create new sustainable private sector jobs with at least 50 percent dedicated to women.
- Increase the value of regional and international exports, particularly to the United States through the American Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- \$306 million in new investments
- 40,000 new jobs
- \$240 million in exports

Since 2019, WATIH has awarded ten West Africa Regional Mission funded grants to private sector partners.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

INVESTMENT FACILITATION

WATIH is leveraging private sector investments in key growth sectors in the region through the:

- **Co-Investment Fund:** A \$96 million co-investment fund to leverage private sector funds. \$36 million of this co-Investment fund is dedicated to the urgent demands of businesses impacted by COVID-19.
- **Virtual Deal Room (VDR):** The VDR will help connect current and potential co-investment partners with investors using an online platform managed by Asoko Insight.

U.S. EXPORT FACILITATION

WATIH works to increase the volume and value of exports from West Africa to the United States by facilitating linkages with U.S. buyers, and helping them navigate AGOA procedures and regulations.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH

WATIH provides firms with tailored support through training and technical assistance to enable them to plan, integrate, and implement gender and youth strategies in their activities.

Program Information

Life of Program:

2019 – 2024

Total USAID Funding:

\$140 million including buy-in from the following Missions - Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sahel Regional Office, Senegal, and West Africa

Geographic Scope:

West Africa with primary focus on Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria and, Senegal

Implementing Partner:

Creative Associates International in association with: Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), Connexus Corporation, Dalberg Global Development Advisors, and Fraym, Pragma Corporation

Offices:

Abuja-Nigeria (Main Office), Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, Accra, Ghana, and Dakar, Senegal

Website:

<https://westafricatradehub.com/>

www.usaid.gov/west-africa-regional