



Tropical agricultural country with diversity and dynamism

MATCHMAKING: ADDED VALUE IS INCREASED THROUGH DIRECT TRADE



Côte d'Ivoire once owed its reputation as Africa's economic miracle country to cocoa exports – until the fall in cocoa prices, civil war and ongoing political unrest led the country into crisis. Since 2012, the political situation has stabilised, and the economy has recorded annual growth rates of around nine per cent. Today, Côte d'Ivoire is once again one of the most dynamic economies in West Africa. Agriculture is the engine of economic development, and agricultural products also play a key role in exports.

Funded by

Implemented by

IPD PRODUCT GROUPS

+ Fresh fruit & vegetables

(tropical fruits such as mangos, pineapples, papayas and coconuts, tropical and subtropical vegetables such as cassava, ginger and turmeric)

+ Natural ingredients for foods

(dried tropical fruits, e.g. mangos and pineapples, and processed cocoa-based products, e.g. cocoa butter, cocoa powder, cocoa paste)

+ Natural ingredients for cosmetics (e.g. essential and fatty oils such as shea butter, cashew oil)



IPD ENGAGEMENT FOR CÔTE D'IVOIRE

In 2018, Import Promotion Desk (IPD) added Côte d'Ivoire to its programme. The import promotion initiative prepares small and medium-sized enterprises in the agricultural sector for the demands of the European market and mediates contacts between Ivorian producers and European importers.

In Côte d'Ivoire, agriculture contributes 22 per cent of the gross domestic product, and about 50 per cent of national export earnings come from agricultural products, particularly cocoa. More than half of the population is now directly dependent on agricultural production. IPD's goal is to strengthen the agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire through resilient business relationships between producers and traders, thereby promoting productive employment and incomes in rural areas. In doing so, IPD supports the export of fresh fruit and vegetables and natural ingredients. By trading directly with European partners – and dispensing with middlemen – producers can increase their added value and strengthen economic structures in rural regions.

CHALLENGE: HIGH QUALITY REQUIREMENTS AND LACK OF ADDED VALUE

In Côte d'Ivoire, climatic conditions are good for agriculture and the cultivation of a wide variety of products. However, high quality requirements must be met for trade with the EU. Ivorian producers often have a shortage of knowledge about export requirements, such as the GLOBALG.A.P. standard for fresh fruit and vegetables. Furthermore, they do not have solid contacts to European traders. Export of fresh fruit and vegetables is hampered by long distribution structures with multiple middlemen.

Another challenge is improving the value chain. Côte d'Ivoire is a major global supplier of cashews, but only a small proportion is processed locally for consumption. Improvements in post-harvest practices and quality control, and higher local processing rates can significantly increase revenues for Ivorian producers.

Political turmoil in the past has set the country back and the aftermath is still being felt in economic development. For example, necessary investments for the modernisation of production facilities are not possible in many places.

IPD advises companies on how to improve their production, processing and marketing methods and provides them with valuable business contacts to potential customers, for example, at trade fairs. This direct networking with European importers and the elimination of intermediaries allows the full value-added potential to be exploited.



Madigbè Diaby
General Manager
at ADF Agro

»We greatly benefit from the IPD program. We have been able to win new trade partners and we are in the process of expanding our production. Above all, we have received important impulses to further develop our business, improve quality and offer new products.«



OPPORTUNITIES: HIGH DEMAND FOR TROPICAL FRUITS

Traditionally, Côte d'Ivoire is best known for cocoa. However, the Ivorian agricultural sector offers much more. With nutrient-rich soils, a favourable climate and abundant water resources, the conditions in the country are ideal for a variety of agricultural products. As well as processed cocoa-based products and cashew nuts, tropical fruits are particularly in demand. Ivorian producers can benefit from the popularity of these flavourful fruits. For example, the potential for exporting mangos is very high. The climate in the north of the country is well-suited to mango cultivation, the season is different from that of major Latin American exporting countries, and the distances to Europe are short. In addition, European demand for dried fruit as a healthy snack is growing. Estimates predict stable growth for tropical dried fruit of around five per cent. Ivorian producers can also serve this trend.

The Interim Economic Partnership Agreement between Côte d'Ivoire and the EU, which guarantees duty-free and quota-free market access, has been in force since 2016.

PROMOTING EXPORTERS: PREPARING FOR THE EUROPEAN MARKET

IPD experts work closely with local Ivorian companies to prepare them for the specific needs of the European market. In training courses, for example, the requirements of the GLOBALG.A.P. standard as a prerequisite for the export of fresh fruit and vegetables to Europe are taught in great detail. Moreover, IPD shows exporters the potential for organic products in Europe and advises them on quality, specifications and the certification process. But the IPD experts also provide support with their expertise on topics such as cost accounting and pricing as well as logistics and marketing.

Exporters are intensively prepared for their appearance at European trade fairs and B2B meetings so that they can successfully present their products to the European market.

OVERVIEW: IPD ACTIVITIES

- + Regular **sourcing missions** in Côte d'Ivoire to select and evaluate small and medium-sized exporters
- + Provision of **market information** on various products
- + **Workshops** and **sales coaching** for exporters for trade show preparations, market orientation **study trips** to Europe and support in the **follow-up process** with business contacts
- + **Training courses** on export-related topics (digital marketing, corporate social responsibility [CSR], export marketing planning, etc.)
- + **B2B matchmaking activities** at European trade fairs, e.g. Fi Food ingredients Europe since 2019, FRUIT LOGISTICA since 2020, BIOFACH since 2020, etc.
- + Organisation of **virtual B2B events** for networking with suitable importers in Europe



IPD COMMITMENT SINCE 2019 IN FIGURES

+ Number of examined producers in Côte d'Ivoire:	47
+ Number of IPD companies in Côte d'Ivoire:	10
+ Mediated business contacts:	141
+ Export turnover to Europe in million euros:	1,2

COOPERATION WITH LOCAL PARTNERS: SUSTAINABLE STRUCTURES FOR EXPORT PROMOTION

In Côte d'Ivoire, Import Promotion Desk works closely with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and the Conseil National des Exportations de Côte d'Ivoire (CNE). It assists the Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in improving existing export promotion structures and in introducing new services in the field of trade promotion.

Together with the CCI, for example, IPD has introduced a programme on the GLOBALG.A.P. standard. Chamber of Commerce and Industry staff received in-depth training to establish a dedicated advisory service on GLOBALG.A.P. In addition, agricultural consultants were introduced to the implementation details of the certification. As a result, more and more service providers are available to provide intensive advice on the GLOBALG.A.P. standard, paving the way for Ivorian producers in the fresh produce sector to export to Europe.



Caroline Moraza
IPD Expert
Sourcing + markets

»The GLOBALG.A.P. standard is the ticket to Europe for exporters of fresh fruit and vegetables. Thanks to our initiative, the GLOBAL.G.A.P. organisation has now also made the training materials available in French. This allows more service providers to be trained locally, so that Ivorian companies are prepared for this certification.«

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