

YOUR LOCAL PARTNER

Benin

Do you want to expand your business? Are you looking for the right partner to support you? Societe Generale Benin is the partner you are looking for when doing business in Benin. Societe Generale Benin will work with you to achieve your business objectives, including your international trade transactions.

ABOUT THE COUNTRY

Benin is a country that welcomes investments:

- a stable political environment: the “model of democracy in Africa”,
- a government committed to economic development,
- a Member State of the OHADA (Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa),
- a good education system and regulatory framework
- trade channels with other countries comprising the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- an economy based on port activity (entry to the hinterland and Nigeria) and cotton and cashew nuts/sheas.

IDENTITY CARD

Capital : Porto-Novo

Area: 114,763 sq. km

Population: 12.1 million

Local currency: CFA franc (XOF)

GDP/Capita: \$1,259/hab

Growth rate: 2.0%

Inflation rate (average): -2.5%

Budget balance/GDP: -3.7%

Current account/GDP: -5.5%

External deficit/GDP: 29%

Rating: B+ by S&P, B2 by Moody's

Economic sectors (as % of GDP):

Services 48%, Agriculture 26.9%, Industry 16.3%

Export partners:

Bangladesh 26.9%, India 14.2%, Vietnam 10.4%, China 7.4%, Nigeria 5.7%

Import partners:

India 13.7%, China 11.1%, Togo 10.9%, France 8.8%, Thailand 5.4%

Time zone: UTC/GMT +1 h

Language(s): French, English

For more information:
www.import-export.societegenerale.fr

SOCIETE GENERALE BENIN



Since 2003, Société Générale Benin has established itself in the Beninese banking sector as the only international bank and now has seven branches, including two located in the provinces.

The close collaboration between the bank's customers and its teams is built on core priorities such as quality customer relations, team spirit and business development.

It will be able to support you in all your projects and day-to-day operations, whether local or international, thanks to a wide range of commercial services adapted to all your needs.

With its Global Transaction Banking (GTB) system, you benefit from the assistance and advice of its business experts in flow management, international trade financing, correspondent banking and related foreign exchange operations.

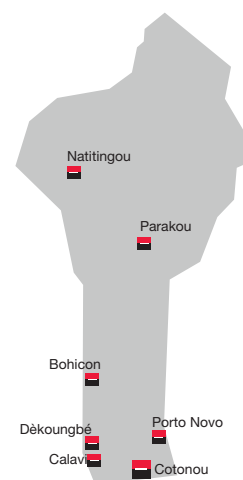
7 BRANCHES

35 ATM

39,000 CLIENTS with

1,000 CORPORATES

162 EMPLOYEES



YOUR CONTACT:
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SOCIETE GENERALE BENIN PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

DAILY BANKING

- CURRENT ACCOUNT in local currency
- DOMESTIC MEANS OF PAYMENT: transfers, commercial papers, cheques
- INTERNATIONAL PAYMENT SERVICES: forex transactions, transfers, cheques, commercial papers, documentary collection/credit, stand-by letter of credit, international guarantees
- ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SERVICES: corporate cards, payroll cards, withdrawal and/or payment cards, electronic payment terminals
- REMOTE BANKING AND CASH MANAGEMENT:
 - MESSALIA, SMS alert on mobile
 - SG CONNECT, remote management of your domestic accounts
 - SOGECASH NET, e-banking cash management solution for companies (account-statements consultation, online payment, automatic account reconciliation, etc.)
 - VIREXPRESS, mass transfers, automatic handling of payroll and supplier payments
 - End of day MT940 statements
 - Intraday MT942 statements (provisional account situation before end of day processing)
 - Direct debit solution.
- OTHER: safe deposit box rental

SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

- TERM DEPOSITS, INTEREST-BEARING ACCOUNTS, SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

FINANCING SOLUTIONS

- FUNDING THE OPERATING CYCLE: overdraft facilities, Loan facility convention, commercial paper and documentary credit discounts, stock financing, spot credit, campaign credit, ahead market, endorsements, deposits, financial guarantees
- INVESTMENT FINANCING: medium- and long-term loans in local currency (financing of capital goods, the means of production, real estate and expansion work)
- structured finance, project finance and syndication

STAFF BENEFITS

- STAFF CONVENTIONS: preferential rates on loans, attractive conditions on products and services for staff

SME HOUSE

- - CONSULTANCY : Creation, Development, Upgrading, Exportation
- - TRAINING : Coaching, Networking, Mentoring
- - FINANCING : Conception, Start-up, Growth, Expansion

WHAT TO KNOW

STARTING A BUSINESS IN BENIN?

The Investment and Export Promotion Agency (APIEx) has set up a digital platform to create a business online. This tool complements the Guichet Unique de Formalisation des Entreprises (GUFE) which has its own publication journal. The deadline for the formalities of creation and exercise now varies between 3 hours and 3 working days.

There are different types of companies: Limited Liability Companies or Public Limited Companies (minimum share capital of CFA Franc 10 million).

A foreign company may open a non-resident account. As operating constraints can be considerable, it is better to set up a branch office. Companies can operate in this way for a maximum of 2 years. At the end of the 2 years, they must either close the non-resident account (unless it is extended by the Ministry of Finance and the Economy as an exception) or set up a new entity under Benin law.

Foreign investment regime: incentives (5 investment schemes) have been set up to foster industrial investments. These measures, which mostly comprise tax breaks, may be spread over a maximum of 10 years.

IMPORTS OF GOODS AND SERVICES?

Foreign exchange controls on international transactions are fairly strict and are the same for all WAEMU countries.

A number of documents justifying the economic interest of a transaction (invoice, transport document, record of contract, etc.) are required to settle the import of goods and services in a foreign currency.

Proof that the goods and services were consumed on Benin soil must be provided (e.g. a customs document), and the prior authorisation of the Ministry of Finance and the Economy must also be obtained.

Any capital, legal profits and income from the sale of a business may be transferred after all local taxes and duties have been paid.

INTER-COMPANY PAYMENTS?

Benin's finance laws stipulate that a payment instrument must be used for transactions of more than CFA Franc 0.1 million. However, cash-based transactions are widespread given the size of the informal sector.

A range of instruments is available to businesses for their transactions. Cheques and transfers are paid electronically and are automated on a regional and national scale which means transactions are processed within 48 hours.

Foreign payments must comply with foreign exchange controls.

Societe Generale Benin is there to help, so ask advice from your direct contact on how to accomplish your international projects.

YOUR DIRECT CONTACT AT SOCIETE GENERALE BENIN:

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