



# SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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*Côte d'Ivoire's drive for Sustainable Urban Transportation  
Opening for Swedish companies*



# DRIVING OPPORTUNITIES IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE'S URBAN MOBILITY SECTOR

*Facing increased urbanisation, Côte d'Ivoire's main cities are experiencing severe road congestion and air pollution. This report delves into the country's urban transport challenges, explores governmental initiatives, and underscores the pivotal role Swedish companies can play in providing innovative and sustainable solutions.*

Côte d'Ivoire is undergoing rapid economic growth and is also experiencing increased urbanisation, with more than half of the population now living in cities. However, urban transport systems remain inadequate, unable to meet growing demand for mobility, while further exacerbating air pollution from road traffic.

Improving urban mobility, therefore, becomes an economic and social imperative. As the government sets a new vision for urban transport, Côte d'Ivoire presents a promising landscape for sustainable business ventures in the transport sector and offers Swedish companies' ample opportunities to promote their solutions while contributing to the country's development.

Côte d'Ivoire is the second fastest-growing economy in West Africa and the fourth fastest-growing economy in the world, with a GDP growth of almost 7% in 2023. Over the past decade, the country has experienced robust economic growth driven by political stability, its strategic location in West Africa, a growing consumer market, and a diversified economy.

The country also aims to be the hub for West Africa, ensuring that the French language is not a barrier to business and its growth. The results can be seen in its outstanding growth thanks to the utilisation of both French and English as well as its success in bringing in major organisations to create their West regional hubs in Côte d'Ivoire i.e. African Development Bank (AfDB), European Investment Bank (EIB), etc.



**ANTHONIA ADENAYA HUARD**

Regional Manager West Africa & Transport Practice Lead Africa

[Anthonia.adenayahuard@business-sweden.se](mailto:Anthonia.adenayahuard@business-sweden.se)



**ALEXIS VINETTE**

Project Manager

[Alexis.vinette@business-sweden.se](mailto:Alexis.vinette@business-sweden.se)

# Addressing urban mobility challenges in Côte d'Ivoire

## Improving mobility – a national economic and social imperative

Urban mobility is a major challenge for Côte d'Ivoire. More than half of its 29 million inhabitants live in cities, 7 million of them concentrated in the country's four most important urban hubs – Abidjan, Bouake, Korhogo and San Pedro.

A significant share of the country's population is dependent on public transport, accounting for around 84% of all urban motorised trips. Bottlenecks in the cities' public transport systems are a major obstacle to growth and exacerbate environmental challenges. The transport sector alone is responsible for 15% of the national GHG emissions.

Abidjan, with over 5 million inhabitants, is experiencing rapid urbanisation, placing significant pressure on its public transportation infrastructure. The city's public transport system remains mostly informal and is characterised by the lack of coordination and inadequacy to meet increasing demand.

Under a new national agenda, the government is calling for private sector development and investment to address the long-neglected infrastructure and transport system.

This represents a great opportunity for Swedish companies to provide sustainable transportation solutions to support Côte d'Ivoire address these

challenges while fostering economic development, improving citizens' quality of life, and reducing emissions.

## Key areas of focus for a sustainable urban transport system



### Public transportation systems

The Ivorian population faces mobility challenges in urban transport, which is controlled by private transport operators in an informal system.

In Abidjan, despite the fleet renewal program launched a few years ago, the Abidjan Transport Company's (Société des Transports Abidjanaise, or SOTRA) current fleet of 1,600 buses remains insufficient to meet mobility needs.

The authorities have launched several projects involving mass transport, including the construction of the 37 km-long Abidjan Metro line and the construction of bus rapid transit (BRT) lines in Côte d'Ivoire's most populated cities, Abidjan and Bouake.

Swedish companies with expertise in designing and implementing efficient and sustainable public transportation systems, such as buses, trams, and light rail, can contribute to improving urban mobility in the country. This includes providing solutions for vehicle electrification, intelligent transportation systems, and integrated fare collection systems.



## **Sustainable and innovative transport solutions**

Côte d'Ivoire also presents significant opportunities for the integration of alternative fuels and electricity in the transport sector.

With a thriving agricultural sector and rapidly growing urban centres, the country has the potential to produce both compressed natural gas (CNG) from urban waste and biofuels from locally sourced feedstocks and agricultural by-products/waste.

Authorities are also exploring opportunities for harnessing solar power to produce clean electricity, which can then be utilised in power electric vehicles (EVs) and charging infrastructure. The goal will be a gradual transition towards blending these fuels into a multi-fuel multimodal transport system with positive social, economic and environmental impact.

Swedish companies specialising in sustainable and innovative transport solutions can play a crucial role in integrating renewable energy sources into the transport sector. This includes implementing biofuel and biogas-powered public transportation systems, installing solar panels for EV charging stations, and deploying energy-efficient solutions for infrastructure.



## **Digital technologies and smart mobility**

Côte d'Ivoire's digital economy is rapidly expanding – driven by increasing internet penetration from 8% in 2010 to over 45% in 2023 – propelling digital solutions for transportation and smart mobility.

By leveraging data from sensors, GPS trackers, and real-time traffic monitoring, authorities gain insights into traffic patterns, demand forecasting, and asset maintenance needs. These initiatives not only alleviate congestion but also contribute to road safety and reduced carbon emissions.

Furthermore, local transport agencies are looking into implementing mobile applications to ease the way people navigate cities and access transportation services as well as smart ticketing solutions to ease revenue management for transport operators.

Swedish firms at the forefront of digital innovation and smart mobility technologies can offer solutions for optimising transportation networks, improving traffic management, and enhancing passenger experiences. This encompasses developing mobile applications for ridesharing, real-time tracking systems, and digital payment platforms for public transportation services.

## **Key factors for successful market entry growth in Côte d'Ivoire and West Africa**

**Business opportunities in the region should be approached with a tailor-made strategy**

Business Sweden can support Swedish investors in identifying and implementing a defined set of proactive steps aimed at shortening their time to market, finding new revenue streams and minimising risk by leveraging our key capabilities:

1. **Do your homework:** Target markets based on growth needs, capital requirements, and time horizon. Be aware of regional variations and conduct due diligence with the support of local expertise.
2. **Define and develop your strategy:** Be asset light in order to maintain responsiveness to fast-paced changes in market conditions. Iterate a go-to-market approach as your market position evolves and plan to scale long term.
3. **Adapt your business model:** Turn the rapid pace of change into a competitive advantage by adapting existing products and services to meet specific needs. Go beyond 'quality' as a unique selling point and focus on relationships and knowledge exchanges.
4. **Ensure local integration:** Collaboration with local stakeholders is key to unlocking the full potential of opportunities. In the region, personal relations are often key for business. Invest in your local presence via greenfield,

alliances or partnerships, and hire locally whenever possible.

## Leveraging Team Sweden for success in Côte d'Ivoire and beyond

To attain these opportunities, companies can count on a trade-oriented transport sector in Sweden where financiers, private companies and government agencies – all together, Team Sweden – have a tradition of collaboration:

- **Swedfund**, via its “project accelerator grant”, can finance pre-studies, feasibility studies and ESIA studies to make projects bankable and pave the way for Swedish exports.
- **EKN**, the Swedish Export Credit Agency, offers guarantees for payment and financing in export transactions, providing attractive financing terms for international buyers while mitigating risks for Swedish exporters and commercial banks.
- **SEK**, the Swedish Export Credit Corporation, offers long-term funding for export-related operations within Sweden, leveraging its strong credit rating to provide advantageous loans for supporting export transactions.
- **NIR**, the International Council of Swedish Industry, creates enabling environments as needed for a sustainable

development of mobility solutions i.e., institutional capacity building, training of drivers and mechanics etc.

- **The Embassy of Sweden and Business Sweden** can support companies with the overall engagement with ministries and or government entities when these are the targeted stakeholders.

By harnessing the power of relevant Team Sweden members, to complement innovative technologies and solutions, companies can ensure better positioning and an improved probability of success in the identified opportunities in Côte d'Ivoire as well as the West African region.

If you're interested in knowing more about specific opportunities for your company, contact Business Sweden to start your growth journey in Côte d'Ivoire and West Africa.



*We help Swedish companies grow global sales and international companies  
invest and expand in Sweden.*

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BUSINESS-SWEDEN.COM

*BUSINESS SWEDEN Box 240, SE-101 24 Stockholm, Sweden  
World Trade Center, Klarabergsviadukten 70  
T +46 8 588 660 00 F +46 8 588 661 90  
[info@business-sweden.se](mailto:info@business-sweden.se)*



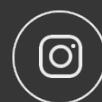
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