

Towards a private sector enabling environment

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Investing in the health sector

The national medical board – Ordre National des Médecins – of Côte d'Ivoire has spearheaded efforts to boost private sector development in health.

The project aims to galvanize stakeholders in the health sector in Côte d'Ivoire, notably by tabling for discussion issues and actions to boost the private sector in health. While addressing immediate key concerns of private operators in this sector, the project also attempts to create the conditions for a sustainable growth in the health sector where the private sector plays a significant role. The project has been spearheaded by the medical board - Ordre National des Médecins de Côte d'Ivoire - in partnership with the Ministry of Health, the trade union of private doctors and the association of private clinics.

A kick-off workshop took place on January 31st 2008 that gathered about 30 representatives of a large spectrum of stakeholders in the health sector. The results of an in-depth study have been presented at a national Forum that took place on May 28-30, 2008. More than 200 participants to the Forum came out with

concrete and detailed recommendations on how to support private sector development in health. Also representatives of private sector organisations from other West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) countries and from WAEMU Commission took active part in the Forum, as well as representatives from the donor community.

Closing the health care gap

The 18.9 million of inhabitants of Côte d'Ivoire are faced with a dire health situation, with life expectancy at birth of just 50 years for male and 55 for female. On this scale and that of mortality rates under 5 years, the country ranks 23rd out of 46 African countries. This situation is mainly the result of low expenditures per capita. On this scale and using PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) international dollars, Côte d'Ivoire takes the 25th position out of 46 African countries. Total health expenditures are just about 3.9% of GDP.

The ACP Business Climate Facility (BizClim) provides technical assistance that is essentially about improving regulations, legislation, the institutional set up and financial measures (the rules of the game) relating to the enabling environment of the private sector in ACP countries or regions and to the reform of SOEs - and to do so by focusing on possible support to ACP governments or regional institutions.

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➤ A recent International Finance Corporation (IFC) report highlights the critical role the private sector can play in meeting the need for more and higher-quality health care in Sub-Saharan Africa. It also identifies policy changes in five areas¹ that governments and international donors can make to enable the private sector to take on an ever more meaningful role in closing Africa's health care gap.

Faced with a dire health situation, the private sector must be enabled to take on an ever more meaningful role in closing Côte d'Ivoire's health care gap.

Detailed and concrete action plan

The project has deepened the analysis and made detailed and concrete recommendations in at least two of the five areas, namely:

- Fostering risk pooling programs.
- Modify local policies and regulations to foster the role of the private sector.

In addition, the project has led to the formulation of recommendations in other important areas. These include issues of sound management of health establishments, enhancing collaboration between stakeholders and public-private partnerships and streamlining the private health sector policy into the overall country's macroeconomic, social and health policies. It's noteworthy that the project has taken into account the regional dimension. All in all, the project has led to the formulation of a detailed action plan that is conducive to making Côte d'Ivoire a better place for the private sector to invest in the delivery of health services. ■

1 - (i) Develop and enforce quality standards; (ii) Foster risk pooling programs; (iii) Mobilize public and donor money to the private sector; (iv) Modify local policies and regulations to foster the role of the private sector; and (v) Improve access to capital.

NEW REQUESTS UNDER EXAMINATION

Country/Region	Beneficiaries	Title
COMESA	Regional Investment Agency (RIA)	One stop shop practices
COMESA	Regional Investment Agency (RIA)	Workshop on validating the Investment Guide
COMESA	Regional Investment Agency (RIA)	PPP Workshop
Central African Republic	Ministry of Commerce	Boosting Investments- Review of the investment code

Workshop on boosting private sector delivery of health services

As part of the BizClim's series of workshops in Brussels, a workshop on the role of the private sector in reducing Africa's health care gap will take place in September at the ACP Secretariat.

Discussions will be based on IFC's recent report entitled "The business of health care in Africa: partnering with the private sector to improve people's lives", as well as the work supported by BizClim in Côte d'Ivoire. The main objective of the workshop is to sensitize participants, and ACP countries at large, on the need to create a favorable environment where the private sector can thrive within limits and frameworks defined by governments to meet the pressing needs of health care in Africa.



The workshop will gather representatives from a large spectrum of stakeholders in the health sector. In particular, donors and financial institutions will be encouraged to take part in the discussions.

An estimated \$25–\$30 billion in new investments in Africa will be needed to meet demand between now and 2016—of which \$11–\$20 billion is likely to come from the private sector. BizClim is eager to encourage reflection on how to facilitate the realization of such investments, notably using its experience in Public-Private Partnerships, financial sector development and improving the business environment.