



## U.S. Country Commercial Guides



2017

# Burkina Faso

# Doing Business in Burkina Faso: 2017 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

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# Doing Business in Burkina Faso

## Market Overview

Burkina Faso's economy grew on average 6.3 percent during the decade 2006–2016. In 2017 the African Development Bank forecasts growth of 5.9 percent, surpassing the 5.0 percent rate of 2016, mainly due to the recovery of the mining sector and the return to democratic institutions following the presidential election of November 2015, which ended a period of political instability.

Gold is the chief export, having surpassed cotton in 2009. The first of nine industrial-scale gold mines (there are 11 today) came on line in 2008. Also, there are more than 200 traditional gold panning sites. The sector directly employs over 7,000 workers and produced approximately 40 tons of gold in 2016, with an export value of about USD 1.7 billion. In that year, it contributed 1.02 trillion Community of Francophone Africa (CFA) francs to total export earnings. Gold reserves are currently estimated at 260 tons, with a lifetime ranging from 6 to 15 years. Manganese and zinc deposits have also attracted significant interest from international mining firms.

Burkina Faso is the largest cotton producer in Sub-Saharan Africa, producing both conventional and organic cotton. The country formerly produced significant genetically modified (GM) cotton, but since 2015, the country abandoned that experiment and has returned to conventional cotton. Cotton represented 13.9 percent of the country's exports in 2015. It is critically important to the economy, as roughly 25 percent of the population derive their income from it in some way. Virtually all cotton is produced on small-scale, family-owned or communal plots.

Eighty percent of the country's 19 million people are engaged in small-scale, rain-fed subsistence farming. Burkina Faso's per capita gross national income was USD 1,640 in 2015, when adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity, making it one of world's poorest countries. Forty-seven percent of the population lives below the poverty line of USD 1.90 per day per capita.

Burkina Faso was the United States' 175th largest goods export market in 2016. U.S. goods exports to Burkina Faso in 2016 were USD 35 million versus USD 54 million in 2015. The top export categories for 2016 were Chemicals, Machinery, Vehicles, Transportation Equipment, Cereal (rice), and Electrical Machinery.

U.S. goods imports from Burkina Faso totaled USD 5.26 million in 2016, against USD 3.59 million in 2015. The top import category for 2016 was: Agricultural Products.

## Market Challenges

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country and relies on neighboring countries, particularly Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo, for access to ports and to some extent its energy supply. Lomé (Togo) surpassed Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) in the 2000s as the most important port for trade with Burkina Faso, as a result of civil strife in Cote d'Ivoire. Since peace was restored in 2011, however, Abidjan has regained importance as a trading hub for its neighbor to the north. The port in Abidjan is 712 miles from Ouagadougou, and goods arriving in Abidjan take on average 7 days (not including time taken for formalities at the port or export control) to reach Burkina Faso's capital. The port of Tema in Ghana is the third-most important port for imported goods.

Though the government has made great strides in improving the regulatory environment for doing business in Burkina Faso, an unskilled and uneducated workforce, poor transportation infrastructure, periodic shortages of water and electricity, high energy costs, and a weak judicial system pose challenges for potential investors.

Burkina Faso's official language is French, and English is not widely spoken. U.S. companies seeking to do business in Burkina Faso often seek interpreter services.

## **Market Opportunities**

Burkina Faso offers the potential to exploit the large West African francophone market. Burkina Faso is a member of the West African Monetary and Economic Union (WAEMU), which is also headquartered in Ouagadougou, and its currency is the Community of Francophone Africa (CFA) Franc. The CFA Franc, backed by the French treasury, trades at a fixed rate with the Euro, and is fully convertible.

Foreign investment in the gold mining sector has boosted Burkina Faso to become the fourth-largest gold producer in Africa. Companies involved in mining equipment manufacturing, finance and investment, geophysical mapping, and consulting are well placed to benefit from the revitalization of Burkina Faso's mining industry.

After being ranked 142<sup>th</sup> in 2016, Burkina Faso is listed as the 146<sup>th</sup> best place to business in the 2017 World Bank "Doing Business" report. This is based upon the country's political, economic, and legal institutions, and the relative efficiency of its regulatory processes. Effective in 2010, Burkina Faso reduced the corporate income tax rate from 30 percent to 27.5 percent (this rate is progressive both for public corporations and limited liability companies but it is unique for physical persons). The tax on dividends went from 15 percent to 12.5 percent. Investment and mining codes permit full repatriation of profits, 100 percent ownership of companies, and many tax exemptions.

Competitively priced necessities such as generic pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, transportation services, electric machinery, fuel, cereals, and cotton-related services are also well positioned to enter the market.

It is also worth mentioning that Burkina Faso is currently in the process of developing a second Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact. While it is too early to know which sectors of the economy may be affected by this program, it is possible that U.S. exporters may find some targeted opportunities for investment in the near future.

The government of Burkina Faso publishes information on investment opportunities on its [Presidential Council for Investment](#) website.

## **Market Entry Strategy**

If not physically present in the country, a U.S. business should consider carefully selecting a local agent who speaks French and is familiar with local customs. Having a skilled and dedicated local agent on the ground that can follow up on business proposals and seek out business opportunities is imperative for doing business in Burkina Faso. A hard-sell approach to promoting products or services, without taking the time to build relationships with potential customers or partners, will likely be seen as aggressive and backfire.

U.S. firms are encouraged to submit competitive bids as government tenders become available. Some foreign firms, primarily European consulting, building, and engineering

contractors, have established offices in Burkina Faso. However, the establishment of a local branch office is not required to do business in the country.

Investors or exporters can also contact the U.S. Embassy's Economic and Commercial section to ask about commercial services, including Gold Key Services which arrange meetings with government officials and the private sector for companies visiting Burkina Faso. The Embassy can also assist with an International Partner Search and obtain information on a particular company with an International Company Profile (ICP). Please refer to the [U.S. Embassy's Business Tab](#) for more information.

## **Political Environment**

For background information on the political and economic environment of the country, please click on the link below to the U.S. Department of State Background Notes.

[U.S. Department of State](#)

## **Selling US Products & Services**

Using an Agent to Sell US Products and Services

There is no law in Burkina Faso requiring retention of an Agent/Distributor, but this is recommended. Selecting a capable local agent could be critical to the successful introduction of U.S. products into a market traditionally dominated by French and Chinese goods.

There are a limited number of businesspeople in Burkina Faso with the practical experience and financial capacity necessary to form a partnership with a U.S. firm. Most are active in import/export or local commerce. When selecting a local agent or business partner, keep in mind that many are involved in a wide range of business activities and often put less immediate demands aside. U.S. businesses are advised to speak with and, when possible, visit with their local agents regularly to ensure that agents understand their companies' expectations.

### **Establishing an Office**

According to the 2017 Doing Business report prepared by the World Bank, it takes 13 days and three procedures to register a limited liability company, known in French as a Société à Responsabilité Limitée (SARL). The process includes the deposit of USD 25,000 capital in a local bank; having a notary public notarize the declaration of capital subscription and depositing the two acts with the notary office; and registering at Centre des Formalités des Entreprises (CEFORE) for company registration, tax number (IFU), labor, and social security. Once the business is registered, the money is returned to the business owner.

Burkina Faso's regulations governing the establishment of businesses include most forms of companies admissible under French business law. These include: public corporations, limited liability companies, limited share partnerships, sole proprietorships, subsidiaries and affiliates of foreign enterprises. With each of these options, there is a corresponding set of related preferences, duty exceptions, corporate tax exemptions, and operation-related taxes.

### **Franchising**

There are franchising opportunities in Burkina Faso. There are U.S. car rental, car dealership, and freight forwarding franchises operating in Burkina Faso.

### **Direct Marketing**

Direct marketing is a possible tool, especially for selling to wholesalers (e.g. pharmaceutical), but it is used infrequently in Burkina Faso. In the case of foreign party bids, a competing U.S. firm should hire a local contact for direct follow-up.

## **Joint Ventures/Licensing**

The Burkinabe business community is very open to joint ventures with foreign investors in the food processing, construction, tourism, and cosmetics industries.

## **Selling to the Government**

Many governments finance public works projects through borrowing from the Multilateral Development Banks. Please refer to “Project Financing” Section in “Trade and Project Financing” for more information.

## **Distribution & Sales Channels**

Distribution and sales channels are concentrated in Burkina Faso's two largest cities – Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. Secondary urban areas could be considered for distribution of consumables such as dairy products, edible oils, and batteries, although they are already well served by the country's two largest cities. Distribution and sales entities operate under various forms, ranging from modern mini-markets, shops, and warehouses to informal sector market stands.

Most goods imported into Burkina Faso arrive via truck from one of three ports: Lomé, Togo; Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire; or Tema, Ghana. The country's only rail line runs from Abidjan to Kaya, 65 miles northeast of Ouagadougou. Goods traveling by rail from Abidjan take on average seven days to reach Ouagadougou.

## **Express Delivery**

Express delivery service is provided by companies like DHL, Chronopost, UPS, and Fedex.

## **Selling Factors & Techniques**

Burkina Faso has a very low literacy rate. While French is the spoken language, much of the population outside the major cities speaks only local languages. It is therefore important that the product distributors, if the target market is the population at large, be knowledgeable about the product and be able to help the customer understand how it is used, in the local language.

## **eCommerce**

The use of electronic commerce for business purposes is not common in Burkina Faso because Internet availability is relatively new and the country lacks the technical expertise required, though the government has recently made efforts to promote it. Mobile phone density, however, is at 60 percent, and the use of mobile phones to receive data is on the rise.

## **Trade Promotion & Advertising**

Local newspapers are published daily and weekly in French in Ouagadougou. Several radio stations broadcast news and music in French and in local languages. Radio broadcasts in local languages are the best way to reach an audience in rural areas. There are many private TV stations, although government TV offers the widest national coverage. Finally, French channels such as TV5 Monde and France24 are widely available in Burkina Faso and other countries in West Africa via satellite.

Local Newspapers:

### Sidwaya

01 BP 507 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 30 63 06; fax: (+226) 25 31 03 62

Contact: Rabankhi Abou-Bâkr Zida, Director General of Editions Sidwaya

### L'Observateur Paalga

01 BP 584 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 33 27 05 / 25 30 55 75; fax: (+226) 25 31 45 79

Contact: Edouard Ouédraogo, Director General

E-mail: [lobspaalga@gmail.com](mailto:lobspaalga@gmail.com)

### Le Pays

01 BP 4577 Ouagadougou

Tel: (+226) 25 36 20 46 / 25 36 17 30; fax: (+226) 25 36 03 78

Contact: Beldh'or Cheick SIGUE, Director General

E-mail: [ed.lepays@cenatrin.bf](mailto:ed.lepays@cenatrin.bf)/[lepays91@yahoo.fr](mailto:lepays91@yahoo.fr)

### L'Economiste du Faso

03 BP 7138 Ouagadougou 01

Avenue John Kennedy, Koulouba

Tel: (+226) 25 33 33 50; fax: (+226) 25 33 22 88

Contact: Dominique Ducret, Director General

### Reporter

01 BP 4636 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 45 62 77

Contact: Boureima Ouedraogo, Director

E-mail: [reporterbf@reporterbf.net](mailto:reporterbf@reporterbf.net)

### Bendré

11 BP 1256 Ouagadougou 11

Tel: (+226) 25 33 27 11

Contact: Inoussa Ouedraogo, Director

E-mail: [younouss73@gmail.com](mailto:younouss73@gmail.com)

### Le Quotidien

Tel: (+226) 25 41 99 71

Contact: Souleymane Traore, Managing Editor

E-mail: [lequotidienbf@yahoo.fr](mailto:lequotidienbf@yahoo.fr)

### L'Express du Faso

01 BP Bobo-Dioulasso 01

Tel: (+226) 20 96 09 86 / 25 33 50 27

Contact: Jacques Bama, Managing Editor

E-mail: [lexpress.faso@yahoo.fr](mailto:lexpress.faso@yahoo.fr)

### Courrier Confidentiel

01 BP 4636 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 41 18 61

Contact: Hervé Taoko, Managing Editor

E-mail: [contact@courrierconfidentiel.net](mailto:contact@courrierconfidentiel.net)

## **Pricing**

Burkinabe consumers are very price-sensitive and price will likely be the most important competitive factor. Most transactions are subject to an 18% value-added tax (VAT).

The Burkina Faso government implements price controls on staple goods like rice and cooking oil, administered and enforced by the Inspection Générale des Affaires Economiques (IGAE). This agency is also in charge of regulations relating to quality and standardization and in maintaining an effective competition regime.

As a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, Burkina Faso observes the WAEMU common external tariff. The ECOWAS common external tariff also took effect on January 2015. It is planned that trade in goods and services throughout the region will be further liberalized.

## **Sales Service/Customer Support**

The concept of customer service and support is not well-established, but because most businesses are small, consumers expect some sort of informal customer support.

## **Protecting Intellectual Property**

Legal protection exists for intellectual property, patents, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, and semiconductor chip design. Burkina Faso belongs to the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which provides access to a registration system for trademarks, patents, and industrial

designs. Patents are valid in member countries for 20 years, with licensing possible three years after issuance of the patent. Trademarks are valid for 20 years and are renewable.

In Burkina Faso, the national investment code guarantees foreign investors the same rights and protection as Burkinabe enterprises for trademarks, patent rights, labels, copyrights, and licenses. The [Bureau Burkinabe du Droit d'Auteur](#) (BBDA) is charged with administering a system of copyrights, while the Directeur Général de la Propriété Industrielle within the Ministère de Commerce, Industrie et l'Artisanat handles patent and trademark affairs.

Contact: Wahabou Bara

Director General BBDA

Phone: (+226) 25 36 04 42 / (+226) 25 30 06 80

Fax: (+226) 25 30 06 82

Email: [bbda@liptinfor.bf](mailto:bbda@liptinfor.bf)

Contact: Jocelyne Claire Ky

Director General de la Propriété Industrielle

Phone: (+226) 25 30 09 41

Email: [info@mica.gov.bf](mailto:info@mica.gov.bf)

IP Attaché Contact: John Corrao, Economic/Commercial Officer

U.S. Embassy, Ouaga 2000, Avenue Sembene Ousmane

Telephone: (+226) 25 49 56 90

E-mail: [CorraoJC@state.gov](mailto:CorraoJC@state.gov)

## **Due Diligence**

It is important to carefully investigate all business ventures before entering into any kind of transaction. This is particularly true as the number of advance-fee gold scams has multiplied in recent years. Also, as Burkina Faso is an emerging market, there are few private Burkinabe companies with the level of experience and expertise often sought by U.S. companies.

To help American exporters formulate sound credit policies applicable to local markets, credit information on individual Burkinabe firms can be obtained by requesting an International Company Profile (ICP) through the [U.S. Foreign Commercial Service](#).

## **Local Professional Services**

A local attorney and/or notary may be required to secure or close a contract. There are about 30 practicing law firms and eight public notaries registered in Burkina Faso. The Embassy Consular Section maintains a list of registered lawyers who have indicated that they would like to work with American clients.

Most lawyers do not speak English, but translation services are available. Upon request, the Embassy can provide the names and addresses of the most experienced bookkeepers, notaries public, engineering consulting offices, and translation services. Such inquiries can be made by contacting the Embassy Economic and Commercial Section by phone at (+226) 25 49 53 00, or by e-mail at amembouaga@state.gov.

### **Principal Business Associations**

American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham)

Chambre de Commerce et D'Industrie (CCI) de Burkina Faso

Limitations on Selling US Products and Services

There is no limitation on selling US products in Burkina Faso.

### **Web Resources**

[The Government of Burkina Faso](#)

[The World Bank](#)

[AGOA](#)

[Burkina Faso Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)

[Chambre des Mines de Burkina Faso](#)

[U.S. Embassy in Burkina Faso](#)

[USAID West Africa Trade Hub](#)

## Leading Sectors for US Exports & Investments

US principal exports to Burkina Faso in 2016 were generic pharmaceuticals, chemicals, machinery, food, and transportation equipment.

### Generic Pharmaceutical

There is a market for competitively priced generic pharmaceuticals in Burkina Faso. France has traditionally supplied the nation with brand-name pharmaceuticals, but Burkina Faso has also started to substitute imported drugs along with local and traditional medicines. Pharmacies are allowed to substitute brand-name goods with generic products, as long as the product is cheaper and of comparable quality.

Following the “Bamako Initiative” designed to make generic drugs available for the population, Burkina Faso created CAMEG (the central purchasing of medicines and essential generics) in 1992. CAMEG is the country’s major supplier of affordable generic drugs and other health commodities to publicly owned health facilities and non-profit private agencies. After a recent management crisis, the government transformed CAMEG into a state corporation, and appointed a provisional Director General in April 2017. [CAMEG](#)

### Fertilizers

There is a high demand and strong sales in the chemical and fertilizer market. U.S. companies should explore this potentially lucrative opportunity. Farmers have adopted the use of fertilizers in their farms both for cotton and food crops. Since the volume of cotton production is increasing, there is a real market for fertilizers. The three cotton companies (Sofitex, Faso Coton and Socoma) as well as the Union Nationale des Producteurs de Coton du Burkina (UNPCB) have recently expressed an interest in importing fertilizers from the United States.

[Association of African Cotton Producers](#)

[U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)

### Transportation Services (Vehicles and parts)

Burkina Faso, a landlocked country, has always given great importance to the development of transportation infrastructure. Significant efforts have been made to improve the road system. Primary roads linking Burkina Faso to neighboring countries (Benin, Togo, Ghana, Cote d’Ivoire, Mali, and Niger) are paved. The country’s single railway connects Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso to Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire.

Service from the international airport of Ouagadougou to major African and European cities is provided by major airlines, including Air Burkina, Air Algeria, Air France, Ethiopian Airlines, Brussels Airlines, Royal Air Maroc, Air Tunisia, Air Cote d’Ivoire, Turkish Airlines, ASKY, and Air Sarada International.

Ongoing road construction projects will create a demand for heavy equipment. The completion of several major roads under the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact has opened up trucking routes to areas of the country that were previously inaccessible. Also, aviation equipment remains a key export prospect for U.S. firms.

Railway Project Opportunities:

The rail links Ouaga/Niger, Ouaga/Ghana.

The strategic rail project AFRICARAIL was initiated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with the goal of linking the cities of Ouagadougou, Niamey, Cotonou and Lomé (according to the linear Kaya-Cotonou-Parakou-Niamey-Lomé-Ouagadougou-Blitta plan) over 1915 miles, with 740 miles in Burkina Faso.

Air Transportation Project Opportunities:

After the refurbishment of the existing airport of Ouagadougou, the government is also planning a new airport in Donsin, some 20 miles outside of Ouagadougou.

[Ministry of Transport](#)

[CartEau-BF](#)

[Economic Community of West African States](#)

## **Electric Machinery and Power Generation**

Electric machinery imports are growing. The mining sector, the medical sector, and road construction industry all have high demand for such machinery.

Local companies usually contract assistance from foreign companies through government tenders. American suppliers of used equipment can directly sell their products to civil engineering companies.

Opportunities exist both for construction contracts and for provision of heavy equipment. Large infrastructure projects now on the drawing board include solar and biomass power plants, electric transmission lines, road construction and irrigation projects in Bage and Samendeni -- areas the government has designated as "growth centers".

[Burkina Faso Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)

## **Mineral Fuel**

Burkina Faso does not have its own oil production. Fuel is imported to run many types of machinery, from transportation engines to power generation plants.

The mineral fuel market is dominated by the presence of the [Burkinabe National Hydrocarbons Corporation](#) (SONABHY). It is the official fuel importer. Individuals and companies distribute fuel, most of the time through franchising well-known oil companies like Total and Shell. Also, gas distribution is weak, as bottle refilling capacity is limited. However, the oil distribution sector is open to competition.

## **Cereals**

As a Sahelian country, agricultural production is not always sufficient to feed the entire population. As a result, Burkina Faso imports an important quantity of cereals each year, mostly rice, wheat, and corn. Importation of rice and wheat are potential areas for investment.

[Burkina Faso Department of Agriculture](#)

## **Cotton**

Burkina Faso is one of the greatest cotton producers in Africa, and it is the second source of income for the country (after gold). Opportunities reside in the fertilizer, pesticide, and seed improvement domains. Moreover, the country has expressed interest in transformation of raw cotton to textile products.

[SOFITEX](#)

[UNPCB](#)

# Trade Regulations, Customs, & Standards

## Import Tariffs

Burkina Faso is a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), which imposes a Common External Tariff (Tarif Extérieur Commun) with four rates: 0 percent, 5 percent, 10 percent, and 20 percent. The average applied tariff in 2016 was 11.5 percent for non-agricultural products, and 14.6 percent for agricultural products.

## Trade Barriers

Non-tariff barriers take the form of supplementary taxes on imports, targeted import bans, licensing requirements, and other miscellaneous barriers. A certificate of conformity and payment of an associated fee is required to import some products, including rice and batteries. The fact that the fee is based on the quantity imported gives this the character of a protectionist measure.

## Import Requirements & Documentation

Importing and exporting goods to Burkina Faso is free unless the good is subject to an import title or authorization as determined by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Handicrafts. Authorization must be acquired beforehand, is valid for six months for imports, and three months for exports, and may be renewed. Special authorization is required for imports of: pharmaceuticals, arms, ammunition, uniforms, and products classified as toxic. The export of ivory is strictly forbidden.

The pre-shipment inspection of imports over FCFA 1,500,000 (USD 3,000) by the Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS), an international verification and control service, is still required.

## Labeling/Marking Requirements

Burkina Faso has no special regulations for product labeling and marking. Only products imported from WAEMU and ECOWAS regions and registered for Common Preferential Tax are subject to marking.

## Temporary Entry

Burkina Faso grants Normal Temporary Entry to raw materials imported for the processing, manufacturing or assembling of finished products. Burkina Faso also grants Exceptional Temporary Entry to products that are temporarily imported for maintenance, trials, or exhibitions, as well as empty packing materials intended to be re-exported, research material, and all machines intended for public works.

## Prohibited & Restricted Imports

Burkina Faso has removed most import/export restrictions and streamlined taxation and other administrative procedures. Restrictions still remain on the importation of drugs, asbestos, and other products considered dangerous to public health and security.

## Customs Regulations

[Direction Générale des Douanes](#)

01 BP 506 Ouagadougou 01 - Burkina Faso

Tel: (+226) 25 32 47 56/57/58

Fax: (+226) 25 31 42 13 and (+226) 25 31 12 04

E-mail: dg.douanes.bf@cenatrin.bf

## **Trade Standards**

Burkina Faso has no special regulations except those on import tariffs. In 1994, Burkina Faso issued a decree that instituted a national conformity certificate for products intended for consumption in Burkina Faso. There is no organization in charge of conformity assessment, and Burkina Faso has no special certification, accreditation, technical, or labeling/marketing regulations. There are no standards organizations in Burkina Faso.

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries. Notify U.S. is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at [Standards Coordination Office USA WTO TBT Entry Point](#)

## **Contact Information**

[Direction Générale des Douanes](#)

01 BP 506 Ouagadougou 01 - Burkina Faso

Tel: (+226) 25 32 47 56/57/58

Fax: (+226) 25 31 42 13 and (+226) 25 31 12 04

E-mail: dg.douanes.bf@cenatrin.bf

## **Trade Agreements**

Burkina Faso is a member of the World Trade Organization and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).

## **Web Resources**

[The National Office of Foreign Trade](#)

[Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Handicrafts of Burkina Faso](#)

[World Bank](#): The following link provides information about tender offers by the Bank; one can register for alerts by specific industry

# Investment Climate Statement

## Executive Summary

Burkina Faso welcomes foreign investment and actively seeks to attract foreign partners to aid in its development. It has partially put in place the legal and regulatory framework necessary to ensure that foreign investors are treated fairly, including by setting up a venue for commercial disputes and streamlining permitting and company registration requirements. More progress is needed on diminishing the influence of state-owned firms in certain sectors and enforcing intellectual property protections. Burkina Faso scored 58.6 out of 100 in the 2015 Heritage Foundation Economic Freedom Index, and ranked 85 out of 175 countries in Transparency International's 2014 Corruption Index.

The gold mining industry has boomed in the last seven years, and the bulk of foreign investment is in the mining sector, mostly from Canadian and U.K. firms. Moroccan, Indian and UAE companies control local subsidiaries in the telecommunications industry, while foreign investors are also active in the agriculture and transport sectors. The Government of Burkina Faso (GoBF) offers a range of tax breaks and incentives to lure foreign investors, including exemptions from value-added tax on certain equipment. Effective tax rates as a result are lower than the regional average, though the tax system is complex and can be burdensome to comply with. Opportunities for U.S. firms also exist in the energy sector, where the government has an ambitious plan for the installation of new power capacity in both traditional and renewable sources.

Recent political events have strained the social fabric and introduced more risk into the business climate. In October 2014, huge protests erupted after President Blaise Compaore's government scheduled a vote in the National Assembly that would likely have allowed Compaore to run again for a third consecutive term. On October 30, thousands of protesters marched and stormed the National Assembly. Compaore resigned on October 31 after 27 years in power and left the country.

During the protests, homes and businesses believed to belong to those close to Compaore were attacked and looted in several cities, including in Ouagadougou two prominent hotels, motorcycle and car dealerships, and food warehouses. With few exceptions the violence was targeted at allies of the Compaore regime. Under the transition government that followed, labor disputes multiplied in several sectors of the economy and the mining sector became beset with problems stemming from complaints from workers and surrounding communities.

A Transition Charter to guide Burkina Faso's transitional government was adopted and signed on November 15, 2014, by representatives of civil society, political parties, religious and traditional leaders, and the military. Presidential and legislative elections are scheduled to take place on October 11, 2015.

## Openness to and Restrictions upon Foreign Investment

### Attitude toward Foreign Direct Investment

The government wishes to attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) and continues to implement reforms to make Burkina Faso more attractive to international investors. For instance, the World Bank cited Burkina Faso in its "Doing Business 2013" report as one of ten economies that made the largest strides in making their regulatory environment more

favorable to business, and ranked it fourth for countries “narrowing the distance to frontier between 2005 and 2011.” (Note: “Frontier” is a synthetic measure based on the most business-friendly regulatory practices across nine areas of business regulation that range from starting a business to resolving insolvency.)

### **Other Investment Policy Reviews**

There have been no investment policy reviews by the WTO or UNCTAD in the past three years. The most recent UNCTAD review of Burkina Faso is from 2010.

In July 2014, the organizations Réseau Africain de Journalistes pour l’Intégrité et la Transparence and the Natural Resource Governance Institute published a report entitled «Impact of Tax and Customs Regimes on the Mining Sector and on the EITI Reports in Burkina Faso».

### **Laws/Regulations of Foreign Direct Investment**

The investment code, revised in 2010, 2012 and 2013, demonstrates the government's interest in attracting FDI to create industries that produce export goods and provide training and jobs for its domestic workforce. The code provides standardized guarantees to all legally established firms, whether foreign or domestic, operating in Burkina Faso. It contains four investment and operations preference schemes, which are equally applicable to all Greenfield investments, mergers, and acquisitions.

Burkina Faso's regulations governing the establishment of businesses include most forms of companies admissible under French business law, including: public corporations, limited liability companies, limited share partnerships, sole proprietorships, subsidiaries, and affiliates of foreign enterprises. With each scheme there is a corresponding set of related preferences, duty exceptions, corporate tax exemptions, and operation-related taxes.

Under the investment code, all personal and legal entities lawfully established in Burkina Faso, both local and foreign, are entitled to the following rights: fixed property; forest and industrial rights; concessions; administrative authorizations; access to permits; and participation in state contracts.

Burkina Faso’s National Assembly passed a law in 2012 establishing a special tax and customs regime for investment agreements signed by the state with large investors. This scheme provides significant tax benefits. Burkina Faso further strengthened the legal and institutional framework for investment through the adoption in May 2013 of general investment guidelines. This included the creation of a deposit institution that provides financing for small and medium-sized enterprises, public-private partnerships, and real estate investments, among others.

To further encourage business and investment, the GoBF created the Presidential Council for Investment which met for the first time in 2009. It is an advisory body, chaired by the head of state, whose mission it is to make recommendations on the development and implementation of policies to stimulate investment and economic growth.

In March 2013, the GoBF created Burkina Faso Investment Promotion Agency (API-BF). This and the establishment of the Presidential Council fulfilled recommendations of a 2009 UNCTAD Investment Policy Review. The website is [investburkina.com](http://investburkina.com).

To simplify the registration process for companies wishing to establish a presence in Burkina Faso, the government created eight enterprise registration centers called Centres de Formalités des Entreprises, known by their French acronym as CEFORES. The CEFORES are one-stop shops for company registration. On average a company can register its business in 13 days with three procedures. The CEFORES are located in Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso, Ouahigouya, Tenkodogo, Koudougou, Fada N’Gourma, Kaya, Dedougou and Gaoua.

In 2014, Burkina Faso strengthened protections for minority investors by enhancing access to shareholder actions and by increasing disclosure requirements on related-party transactions. This helped Burkina move up 14 places to 122 of 189 in the World Bank rankings on Protecting Minority Investors.

Other websites of interest are:

[Chambre des Mines du Burkina Faso](#)

[AmCham Burkina](#)

A description of tax and administrative procedures can be found at [Burkinafaso eRegulations](#)

### **Industrial Promotion**

The investment code provides additional incentives for investments in the areas of agriculture, silviculture, animal breeding, and fish farming and for companies investing at least fifty kilometers outside of the cities of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso.

In the mining sector, the former government proposed a revised Mining Code, which remains under review by the National Transitional Council. The new draft strikes a good balance by ensuring that Burkina Faso derives maximum benefit from its mineral resources while maintaining an attractive climate for investment. The current mining code is more favorable to companies than elsewhere in the region, but the industry argues that is appropriate because of lower yields and higher energy costs in Burkina Faso versus neighboring countries. The revised mining code would impose a new tax on surplus production and increase from 0.25% to 1% the portion of revenues that must be deposited in a Community Investment Fund.

The government also established a Center for Construction Facilitation (CEFAC) to improve the construction permitting process. The CEFAC has made it possible for companies to obtain and process all the paperwork required for construction permits from one office, reducing the average number of procedures from 46 to 12, and the average amount of time from 226 days to 98 days. As a result, the World Bank ranked Burkina Faso 60th worldwide for dealing with construction permits in Doing Business 2014.

### **Limits on Foreign Control**

There are no laws or regulations specifically authorizing private firms to adopt articles of incorporation or association that limit or prohibit foreign investment, participation, or control.

### **Privatization Program**

GoBF announcements for privatization bids are widely distributed, targeting both local and foreign investors. Bids are published in local papers, international magazines, mailed to

different diplomatic missions, e-mailed to interested foreign investors, and published on the Internet on sites such as [dgMarket Tenders Worldwide](#)

Foreign investors receive the same treatment and timetable as local investors in the bidding process. Bidding criteria are established and enforced by the government tenders regulation authority, l’Autorité de regulation de la commande publique (ARCOP, formerly known as l’Autorité de regulation des marches publics, or ARMP). Bid requirements are the same for all bidders. ARCOP, which was reorganized in May 2014, advocates for free access to government tenders, equality in the bidding process, and transparency of procedures.

#### Screening of FDI

The government of Burkina Faso does not screen foreign direct investment.

#### Competition Law

Competition matters are reviewed by the Commission Nationale pour la Concurrence et la Consommation. Some competition matters are under the remit of the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

#### Investment Trends

Not applicable.

Table 1

Measure	Year	Index or Rank	Website Address
TI Corruption Perceptions index	2014	85 of 175	<a href="#">TI Corruption Perceptions index</a>
World Bank’s Doing Business Report “Ease of Doing Business”	2015	167 of 189	<a href="#">Doing Business Rankings</a>
Global Innovation Index	2014	109 of 143	<a href="#">Global Innovation Index</a>
World Bank GNI per capita	2013	670	<a href="#">World Bank GNI Per Capita</a>

#### Millennium Challenge Corporation Country Scorecard

The Millennium Challenge Corporation, a U.S. Government entity charged with delivering development grants to countries that have demonstrated a commitment to reform, produced scorecards for countries with a per capita gross national income (GNI) or USD 4,125 or less. A list of countries/economies with [MCC scorecards](#) are available. Details on each of the [MCC’s indicators](#) and a guide to reading the scorecards are available.

## Conversion and Transfer Policies

### Foreign Exchange

Burkina Faso is a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU, or UEMOA when referred to by its French acronym), whose currency is the CFA franc (XOF), or FCFA. The FCFA is freely convertible into euros at a fixed rate of 655.957 FCFA to 1 euro. Investors should consider the advantages offered by the WAEMU, which allows the FCFA to be used in all eight-member countries including: Senegal, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Benin, Guinea Bissau, Niger, and Burkina Faso.

Burkina Faso's investment code guarantees foreign investors the right to the overseas transfer of any funds associated with an investment, including dividends, receipts from liquidation, assets, and salaries. Such transfers are authorized in the original currency of the investment. Once the interested party presents the request for transfer, accompanied by all relevant bank documents, Burkinabè banks transfer the funds directly to the recipient banking institution. Foreign exchange is readily available at all banks and most hotels in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso.

#### *Remittance Policies*

The GoBF is not expected in the foreseeable future to change its current remittance policy concerning purchasing foreign currency in order to repatriate profits or other earnings.

As a member of a regional currency union (WAEMU), Burkina Faso does not engage in currency manipulation.

Burkina Faso is a member of the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-style regional body.

## **Expropriation and Compensation**

The Burkinabè constitution guarantees basic property rights. These rights cannot be infringed upon except in the case of public necessity, as defined by the government. This has rarely occurred. Until 2007, all land belonged to the government, but could be leased to interested parties. The government reserves the right to expropriate land at any time for public use. In instances where property is expropriated, the government must compensate the property holder in advance, except in the event of an emergency.

In 2007, Burkina Faso drafted a national land reform policy that recognizes and protects the rights of all rural and urban stakeholders to land and natural resources; clarifies the institutional framework for conflict resolution at a local level; establishes a viable institutional framework for land management; as well as strengthens the general capacities of the government, local communities and civil society on land issues.

A 2009 rural land management law, 034/2009/AN, provides for equitable access to rural lands in order to promote agricultural productivity, manage natural resources, encourage investment, and reduce poverty. It enables legal recognition of rights legitimated by traditional rules and practices. In rural areas, traditional land tenure rules have long governed land transactions and allocations. The 2009 law reinforces the decentralization and devolution of authority over land matters, and also provides for formalization of individual and collective use rights and the possibility of transforming these rights into private titles.

In 2012, the government has revised the 2009 law, marking the end of exclusive property of the state on all lands. It includes instances and acts to recognize local land use practices.

The new law provides conciliation committees to resolve conflicts between parties prior to any legal action. There are several property rights recognition and protection acts, such as land charters, individual or collective land ownership certificate and a loan agreement which governs the nature, duration and counterparties for transfer rights between land owner and a third party.

The 2010–2014 Millennium Challenge Compact supported the establishment of local authorities and the issuance of titles as part of the land tenure reform process. USAID continues to support the decentralization of land policy, through the establishment of the National Land Observatory charged to produce/collect/distribute information on national/local land tenure issues to aid in government decision making.

## **Dispute Settlement**

### **Legal System, Specialized Courts, Judicial Independence, Judgments of Foreign Courts**

The Civil Code protects property and contractual rights. Government interference in the court system is not frequent, and judgments from foreign courts are accepted and enforced by local courts. It should be noted, however, that the World Bank ranked Burkina Faso as 153rd out of 188 countries in 2014 for its ability to enforce contracts because of high fees, the number of required procedures, and the amount of time needed to resolve disputes.

Burkina Faso's 1995 Code of Commerce contains all applied commercial law used by the Burkinabè business community. In 2006, Burkina Faso introduced specialized commercial chambers in the general courts and in 2007 opened the Arbitration and Commercial Dispute Resolution Center (Centre d'Arbitrage et de Règlement des Litiges Commerciaux) under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

### **Bankruptcy**

Burkina Faso has a bankruptcy law, and ranks 115 out of 189 countries for Resolving Insolvency in the World Bank's 2015 Doing Business report.

### **Investment Disputes**

Over the last several years, Burkina Faso has not been involved in investment disputes with U.S. or any other foreign investors or contractors.

### **International Arbitration**

Burkina Faso is a party to the Washington Convention of 1958 on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards and outlines arbitration procedures in its investment code. Burkinabè courts accept international arbitration as a means for settling investment disputes between private parties. Longstanding disputes that remain unresolved after administrative jurisdictional hearings are required to be submitted to arbitration. Burkinabè courts recognize and enforce foreign arbitral awards.

### **ICSID Convention and New York Convention**

In the event that an amicable settlement of a dispute between the government and an investor cannot be reached, the investment code requires that arbitration procedures be submitted to international arbitration under the rules outlined by the 1965 Convention of the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), of which Burkina Faso is a member.

In cases where the enterprise of a national does not meet nationality conditions stipulated by article 25 of the Convention, the code specifies that the dispute be resolved in accordance with the dispositions of the supplementary mechanisms approved by ICSID in September 1978.

## **Performance Requirements and Investment Incentives**

### **WTO/TRIMS**

Burkina Faso has never notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of inconsistent Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs). The GoBF does not require investors to purchase materials from local sources or to export a certain percentage of output. Foreign investors' access to foreign exchange is not limited to their level of exports. The GoBF does not impose "offset" requirements, which dictate that major procurements be approved only if the foreign supplier invests in Burkinabè manufacturing, research and development, or service facilities in areas related to the items being procured.

### **Investment Incentives**

All investment specific incentives are outlined in the revised investment code, act number 007-2010/AN and two other acts including number 025-2012/AN and number 023-2013/AN. The incentives are applied uniformly to both domestic and foreign investors. Additionally, all companies that use at least 50 percent locally supplied raw materials are exempted from trading taxes and receive a 50 percent reduction in customs taxes in addition to the elimination of other duties. These companies are also eligible to waive excise duties on production equipment and spare parts.

### **Right to Private Ownership and Establishment**

The rights of foreign and domestic private entities to establish and own enterprises and engage in all forms of remunerative activities are guaranteed by the constitution and the investment code. Businesses can be freely established and sold. Some public enterprises continue to enjoy a monopoly in their markets – including the electric and water utilities, the national lottery, and the fuel importer.

### **Protection of Property Rights**

#### **Real Property**

Since the 2009 land tenure reform law, the government of Burkina Faso has been engaged in an effort to issue titles recognizing land ownership rights. The Millennium Challenge Compact focused on beginning this process in 47 communes, with plans for the government to expand the effort throughout national territory.

Only about 5,000 land titles have been granted countrywide since 1960, according to the National Land Observatory, and the majority of those were issued pursuant to the MCC project. Obtaining a title is the last step in the process of land acquisition, and is preceded by obtaining a use permit or an urban dwelling permit, developing the land, and paying applicable fees. The title-holder becomes the owner of the surface and the subsoil.

Mortgages exist in Burkina Faso both for land and structures. Rules governing mortgages are set at the regional level by the West African Economic and Monetary Union, specifically

under the Organisation pour l'Harmonisation en Afrique des Droits des Affaires (OHADA). Liens are not widely used, if at all.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

Burkina Faso has a legal system that protects and facilitates acquisition and disposition of all property rights, including intellectual property. Legal protection exists for intellectual property, patents, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, and semiconductor chip design. In practice, however, government enforcement of intellectual property law is lax. Burkina Faso is a destination point for counterfeit medicines, which can readily be purchased on the street in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. The government was congratulated in 2012 by Interpol for its cooperation in an effort to seize illicit medicines and catch traffickers.

Burkina Faso is not cited in the USTR's Special 301 report.

Burkina Faso is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the African Intellectual Property Organization (AIPO). The national investment code guarantees foreign investors the same rights and protection as Burkinabè enterprises for trademarks, patent rights, labels, copyrights, and licenses. In 1999, the government ratified both the WIPO Copyrights Treaty (WCT) and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT). In 2002, Burkina Faso was one of 30 countries that put the WCT and WPPT treaties into force. The government has also issued several decrees and rules to implement the two treaties.

The implementation of WTO Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreements is under the remit of two ministries:

- Concerning copyright and related rights, the Office of Copyrights (le Bureau Burkinabè des Droits d'Auteurs, or BBDA), under the Ministry of Art, Culture and Tourism, has the lead.
- Concerning industrial property, it is the National Directorate of Industrial Property under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Handicrafts, has the lead.

These two authorities have the technical competence to identify needs. Arrangements are underway to assess the needs for the implementation of the TRIPS Agreement in Burkina Faso.

Statistics on the seizure of counterfeit goods are available upon request from the relevant agency. For example, if it pertains to artistic material, from the BBDA, if it pertains to pharmaceuticals, from the National Directorate of Industrial Property.

For additional information about treaty obligations and points of contact at local IP offices, please see [WIPO's country profiles](#).

*Resources for Rights Holders*

Embassy point of contact:

Martin Vaughan  
Economic and Commercial Officer  
+226 2549-5690  
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[Local attorneys list](#)

## Transparency of the Regulatory System

The government of Burkina Faso aims for transparency in law and policy to foster competition. According to Law No 15-94, prices of products, goods, and services must be established according to fair and sound competition. The government believes that cartels, the abuse of a position of superiority, restrictive practices, refusal to sell to consumers, discriminatory practices, unauthorized sales, and selling at a loss are practices that distort free competition.

At the same time, the price of some staple goods and services are still regulated by the government, including: fuel, essential generic drugs, tobacco, cotton, school supplies, water, electricity, and telecommunications.

The government has no history of using tax, labor, environmental, health and safety standards, or other laws and policies to impede entrance of foreign investors into the marketplace. However, the tax schedule is complex. In Burkina Faso, informal sector businesses and other small businesses with an annual turnover of FCFA 15 million (USD 30,000) or less pay a unique tax called the contribution du secteur informel or CSI. The maximum CSI tax is FCFA 100,000 (USD 200) per year. Businesses qualifying for CSI tax status are prohibited from bidding on state tenders.

Individual enterprises and companies in Burkina Faso with an annual turnover exceeding FCFA 15 million (USD 30,000) are subject to a separate tax regime. These include an annual tax on industrial, commercial, and agricultural profits (IBICA), set at 27.5 percent, and a forfeit tax (IMPFIC) paid in advance each year. There is also a 25 percent tax on interest income (IRC) and a 25 percent tax on investment income (IRVM). Businesses must also pay an apprenticeship tax (TPA) on the salaries of all national and foreign employees (4 and 6 percent, respectively), and a licensing tax, which has two components: a fixed amount based on gross revenues and an 8 percent tax based on the rental value of company buildings and the value of the production equipment. Upon incorporating, companies must pay a registration tax equal to 3 percent of the company's capital. Since 1993, businesses have been required to apply a 15 percent value-added tax to products.

Non-IBICA profits are taxed at 27.5 percent. Private sector employees and civil servants pay a tax (IUTS) on salaries and tips, usually by payroll deduction.

Burkina Faso's legal, regulatory, and accounting systems are transparent and consistent with international norms. Burkina Faso adheres to the West African Economic and Monetary Union's accounting system, (Système Comptable Ouest Africain or SYSCOA). Introduced in 1998, SYSCOA allows enterprises to use a common accounting system. SYSCOA complies with international norms in force and is a source of economic and financial data.

Burkina Faso is a member of UNCTAD's international network of transparent investment procedures [UNCTAD eRegulations](#). Foreign and national investors may be able to find detailed information on administrative procedures applicable to investment and income generating operations including the number of steps, name and contact details of the entities and persons in charge of procedures, required documents and conditions, costs, processing time, and legal bases justifying the procedures at [Burkina Faso eRegulations](#).

## **Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment**

The government of Burkina Faso is more focused on attracting FDI and concessionary lending for development than it is on developing the capital markets. Net portfolio inflows were estimated around 0.2% of GDP in 2013, while FDI was about 1.0%, according to Standard & Poor's. While the government does issue some sovereign bonds to raise capital in the WAEMU regional bond market, in general availability of different kinds of financial investments is extremely limited.

### **Money and Banking System, Hostile Takeovers**

The financial health of the banking system is sound. The traditional banking sector is composed of nine commercial banks and three specialized credit institutions called établissements financiers.

### **Competition from State-Owned Enterprises**

Private enterprises are allowed to compete with public enterprises on the same terms and conditions. The bidding process is considered to be open and fair. In practice, SOEs enjoy monopoly control of the segments in which they are active.

State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) or “strategic companies” are active in four primary areas: service providers, commercial enterprises, enterprises of a specific nature, and social security. The primary SOEs are in the areas of: oil imports and distribution (SONABHY), water (ONEA), lottery (LONAB), mail (SONAPOST), rail equipment (SOPAFER-B), electricity (SONABEL), and social security benefits (CNSS).

Every year, all of the SOEs meet to report to the Prime Minister. While this meeting is covered in the press and top-line revenue and profit figures are announced, detailed SOE budgets are in most cases not publicly available. The list of all SOEs with their basic financials is published by the government.

The transitional government in 2015 announced it would open to private competition the market for refilling bottles of cooking gas, until then controlled by SONABHY, and further open up cooking gas distribution to additional players.

### **OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of SOEs**

Each SOE has a board of directors that is appointed and also has a parent ministry. For example, CNSS is under the Ministry of Civil Service, Labor and Social Security. The most powerful SOE is SONABHY, and its board is appointed by the President. Board members of the other SOEs are primarily appointed by the appropriate minister.

### **Sovereign Wealth Funds**

Burkina Faso does not have a sovereign wealth fund.

### **Responsible Business Conduct**

There is a general awareness of corporate social responsibility among both producers and consumers. The GoBF requires mining companies to invest in social infrastructure, such as health centers and schools, and other projects to benefit the local populations in the areas of their mining operations. A common practice for many companies is to provide food supplies, typically rice or millet, to their workers often at the end of the year. Larger private businesses, such as civil engineering firms, sponsor sport events like Tour du Faso and

donate sporting equipment to disadvantaged communities. SOEs such as SONABHY and LONAB frequently undertake social projects.

### **OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises**

The government has not officially adopted the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. However, it is evident that CSR is viewed favorably by the population and that many corporations engage in socially responsible projects. These projects are covered in the local press. [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#)

### **Political Violence**

During and immediately after the October 2014 uprising, groups of people targeted and destroyed government buildings, private property, and residences they believed belonged to political leaders of the former ruling majority and individuals close to former President Compaore's family or inner circle in Ouagadougou and other major cities. Several warehouses containing food stocks for commercial and humanitarian purposes were also looted in Ouagadougou. A governmental committee estimated that a total of 14 public buildings and more than 260 private properties were attacked.

Clashes between protestors and security forces between October 30 and November 2 resulted in 19 deaths and 625 injured, according to the government.

A charter to guide Burkina Faso's transitional government was adopted on November 15, 2014, by civil society, political parties, religious and traditional leaders, and the military. The charter represents a working compromise between the military and civilian actors, and is designed to lead the country to elections in 2015 as well as advance a process of national reconciliation. Key bodies established by the charter include:

A civilian president of the transition unaffiliated with a political party, to be selected by a college that will include representatives of political parties (five members), civil society (five members), security and defense forces (five members), traditional and religious leaders (eight members). The college chose retired diplomat Michel Kafando as President.

A legislative National Transitional Council, to include 30 representatives of the former opposition, 25 representatives of civil society, 25 representatives of security and defense forces, and 10 representatives of other political parties (mainly the former ruling majority). Members elected journalist Sheriff Sy as president of the Council.

A government of the transition, to be led by a prime minister named by the president, comprising 25 ministries and a majority of civilian ministers. Lt. Col Yacouba Isaac Zida, who took over power after the resignation of President Compaore, was subsequently appointed Prime Minister and Minister of Defense by President Michel Kafando.

A Commission for National Reconciliation and Reform to address truth, justice, and national reconciliation as well as political, institutional, and electoral reforms. The Commission was established through a presidential decree in December 2014 and members were sworn in on March 13, 2015. Archbishop Paul Ouedraogo was chosen as president of the Commission.

The October 2014 events were not the first instances of political violence the country had seen. In February 2011, a student died in police custody in the town of Koudougou. His death prompted violent protests throughout the country until a court found three policemen guilty of manslaughter and accessory to manslaughter in August.

Military mutinies took place in several cities between March and June 2011 over the payment of certain benefits. The military fired shots in the air, looted, and destroyed public and private properties. The GoBF restored order in June. More than 600 soldiers were dismissed since July 2011, and more than 300 were prosecuted and remain detained for participating in the mutinies. Emergency loans and financial compensation mechanisms were also established for victims of looting and destruction.

Burkina Faso's commercial viability is closely linked to the stability of its neighbors. The ports of Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) and Lome (Togo) serve as key shipping points for Burkina Faso's imports/exports, with Lome growing in importance since the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire erupted in 2002. The ports of Cotonou (Benin) and Tema (Ghana) have also become increasingly important as alternative transshipment points for Burkinabè goods

## **Corruption**

Transparency International (TI) indicates that corruption remains a problem. Burkina Faso ranked 72th out of 176 on TI's 2016 Corruption Perception Index. The World Bank rating for control of corruption for Burkina Faso has declined since 2003 from the 56th percentile to the 33rd percentile. This means that while Burkina Faso was once rated much more favorably than its regional peers for limiting corruption, it is now closer to the average for sub-Saharan African countries.

The main challenges the country currently faces are poor access to information, a weak judiciary, limited enforcement powers of anti-corruption institutions, misappropriation of public funds, and the lack of an effective separation of powers.

According to public perception, civil servants who most commonly engage in corruption include: custom officials, members of the police force and gendarmerie, justice officials, healthcare workers, educators, tax collectors, and civil servants working in government procurement.

One of the main governmental bodies for fighting official corruption is the Superior Authority of State Control (ASCE), an entity under the authority of the Prime Minister. ASCE has the authority to investigate ethics violations and mismanagement of public funds in the public sector, including state civil service employees, local and public authorities, state-owned companies, and all national organizations involved with public service missions. ASCE publishes an annual report of activities, which provides details on its investigations and issues recommendations on how to resolve them.

Transition authorities appointed law professor Luc Marius Ibriga as the new State Comptroller on November 23, 2014. Professor Ibriga was an influential member of a coalition of civil society organizations advocating for better governance. Following his appointment, he published the financial disclosure forms he had submitted to the Constitutional Council, a first in the country.

On March 3, 2015, Burkina Faso's interim parliament, the National Transition Council, adopted a new anti-corruption law. The new legislation greatly expands the list of officials required to declare their assets. Government officials, including the president, lawmakers, ministers, ambassadors, members of the military leadership, judges and anyone charged with managing state funds, must declare their assets as well as any gifts or donations received while in office. Infractions will be punishable by maximum jail term of 20 years

and fines of up to FCFA 25 million (USD 41,666). The new law also deals with international cooperation regarding asset recovery and mutual legal assistance in corruption cases. Among other changes, the law shifts the burden of proof on potential defendants to prove that their assets and properties were acquired legally. It punishes "whoever cannot reasonably explain an increase in his lifestyle beyond the threshold set by regulation in relation to his/her lawful income." Offenders risk imprisonment for two to five years and a fine of FCFA 5 to 25 million (USD 8,333 to 41,666). In addition, the court can order the confiscation of the unjustified part of the assets.

The Autorité de Régulation de la Commande Publique (ARCOP), established in July 2008, is the regulatory oversight body that ensures fairness in the procurement process by monitoring the execution of all government contracts. ARCOP may impose sanctions, initiate lawsuits, and publish the names of fraudulent or delinquent businesses. It also educates communities benefiting from public investment monies to take a more active part in monitoring contractors. ARCOP works with the media to strengthen journalists' capacity to investigate suspected fraud cases. Since 2012, the media has noticeably increased its coverage of high-profile corruption cases.

In December 2011, the National Assembly established two commissions of inquiry into corruption: the first on the award of public contracts, the second on public subsidies in the health sector. These commissions were proposed by the Network of Parliamentarians engaged in the fight against Corruption (BURKINDI).

Private citizens have also established a non-governmental organization (NGO) called Réseau National de Lutte Contre la Corruption (REN-LAC). This NGO looks broadly at the management of private and public-sector entities. It publishes annual reports on the state of corruption in the country and has established a wide range of anti-corruption initiatives and tools. REN-LAC has a 24-hour hotline that allows it to gather information on alleged corrupt practices anonymously reported by citizens. The group also annually releases a report on the state of corruption in Burkina Faso. African Parliamentarians' Network against Corruption also has a local chapter in Burkina Faso and cooperates with REN-LAC.

As part of a plan to establish anti-corruption committees within the police, the Directorate of the National Police held training seminars in April 2014 for police officers exercising control, management or operational command functions. Anti-corruption NGO REN-LAC assisted the police with the training and praised the initiative.

A January 2015 REN-LAC study on perceptions of corruption in the mining industry found that 64 percent of respondents (direct actors in the sector) had heard of or were aware of instances of corruption. Survey respondents said the greatest beneficiaries of this corruption were politicians, high-ranking government officials and mining company executives. The main points of entry identified were the granting of permits and mining claims, and the management of these claims (exploration, negotiation and signing of conventions, etc.)

The government has an 11-member anti-fraud squad (BNAF) that seeks to curb fraud in the marketing of gold.

As a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Burkina Faso has agreed to enforce a regional law against money laundering and has issued a national law against money laundering and financial crimes.

Burkina Faso has taken steps to fully adopt regional and international anti-corruption frameworks and the country ratified the UN Convention against Corruption in October 2006.

*Resources to Report Corruption*

REN-LAC hotline: (+226) 80 00 11 22

Or contact:

Claude Wetta

Executive Secretary

REN-LAC

Telephone: (+226) 25 36 32 15

Luc Marius Ibriga

Contrôleur Général d'Etat

Autorité Supérieure de Contrôle d'Etat et de la Lutte contre la Corruption (ASCE-LC)

Telephone: (+226) 25 30 10 91 or (+226) 25 33 60 39

## **Bilateral Investment Agreements**

Burkina Faso is a member of ECOWAS. In August 2014, the United-States signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with ECOWAS during the US-Africa Leaders' Summit in Washington.

In 2002, the United States signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with the WAEMU. The framework agreement establishes a forum for discussion of trade and investment matters between the United States, the WAEMU Commission, and the eight member states of WAEMU. Outside of these regional accords, Burkina Faso has no investment agreement with the United States.

Burkina Faso has investment cooperation agreements with France and Switzerland, providing for free transfer of corporate earnings, interests, dividends, etc., between the two countries. Burkina Faso has also signed and ratified investment promotion and mutual protection agreements with Germany, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Belgium, Guinea, Ghana, Benin, and is in the process of negotiating agreements with Canada and Italy.

The Burkinabe investment code provides the right to transfer capital and revenues secured by alien personal and legal entities, which invest in Burkina Faso in foreign currencies. Foreign investors have the right, subject to foreign exchange regulations, to transfer dividends, any returns on the capital invested, the liquidating or conclusion proceeds of assets, in the same currency used in the initial investment.

Burkina Faso has signed various multilateral investment agreements including provisions in the Lome Convention and the WAEMU Treaty.

Burkina Faso does not have a bilateral taxation treaty with the United States.

## **OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs**

To date, Burkina Faso has not benefitted from any OPIC programs. Burkina Faso is a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

## **Labor**

Burkinabe workers have a reputation as hardworking and dedicated employees. There is a scarcity of skilled workers, mainly in management, engineering, and the electrical trades. While unskilled labor is abundantly available in Burkina Faso, skilled labor resources are limited. Construction, civil engineering, mining, and manufacturing industries employ the majority of the formal labor force.

Burkinabe law allows workers, except for essential workers such as magistrates, police, military, and other security personnel, to form and join independent unions without previous authorization, and to bargain collectively. Although public servants are entitled to freely engage in bargaining, in practice, very few collective agreements have been negotiated or concluded in the public sector. One exception to this was the case of the magistrates' union, with which the government concluded a settlement in early 2016. The law provides for the right to strike, but also limits this right with pre-strike requirements or restrictions (including notice submission and government's requisition power to secure minimum service in essential services). In President Kabore's first year in office, various unions went on strike to request better living and working conditions. These unions argue that if the government could find a solution for the magistrates, they should also be able to satisfy the other unions. The strikes are still ongoing as the government attempts to solve the different requests. To date, Burkina Faso has approved and ratified 43 conventions of the International Labor Organization, including conventions on Freedom of Association and the Right to Organize, Abolition of Forced Labor, and the Worst Forms of Child Labor. The labor code is enforced mainly by the Ministry of Civil Service, Labor, and Social Security and a labor court. Unions are well organized, are independent from the government, and defend employee interests in industrial disputes. Workers know their rights and do not hesitate to seek redress of grievances.

The resignation of President Compaore in October 2014 and the political transition that followed gave rise to a spate of industrial disputes, as workers became emboldened to fight for better pay and working conditions. Labor unrest was particularly acute in the gold mining industry, leading to strikes, work stoppages, and in some cases destruction of property. Strikes also occurred at Brakina, a private company that is the only bottler of beer and soft drinks in the country, road transport companies, and several government ministries. There were also two days of general strikes by labor unions and the Coalition Contre la Vie Chere (Coalition against the High Cost of Living) to call for a reduction in the price of gasoline along with demands related to working conditions. These strikes have slowed business and could threaten the GoBF's fiscal health. Despite the government's substantial efforts to reduce child labor in the past few years, 42 percent of children in Burkina Faso continue to engage in child labor, particularly in agriculture and in mining. Cotton and gold are included on the U.S. government's Executive Order 13126 List of Goods Produced by Forced and Indentured Child Labor.

The 1982 Commercial Sector Collective Agreement divides employees (laborers, craftsmen, and senior staff) into eight categories with minimum basic pay rates from FCFA 25,000 (USD 42) per month. Conditions for the employment of workers by enterprises are

provided in Decree 98 of 1967. An employer should ask all job candidates for their job-seeker registration card issued by the Office of Employment Promotion, which is part of the Ministry of Civil Service, Labor, and Social Security.

It is the GoBF's policy to increase employment opportunities for Burkinabe workers. Therefore, in professions where there are too many registered and unemployed Burkinabe, a job-seeker card will not be issued to non-nationals. When non-nationals are hired, the Director of Labor authorizes their employment contract. According to the 1967 decree, statements must be made to the Regional Inspector of Work and Social Rules before the start-up of any new enterprise.

Burkina Faso has undertaken reforms of labor policy to make the labor market more flexible while ensuring workers' rights, including workers' safety and health.

In the event of a reduction in personnel, the labor code requires the employer to first dismiss employees with the least training and seniority. The employer must advise employees of termination at least 30 days in advance. Workers terminated in a general workforce reduction have re-employment priority over other applicants for a two-year period. Employees terminated for reasons other than theft or flagrant neglect of duty have the right to termination benefits.

To promote local employment, the government has established several financing instruments targeted at firms interested in obtaining start-up funds. These include:

- Fonds National d'Appui à la Promotion de l'Emploi – FONAPE (Employment Promotion Support Fund)
- Fonds d'Appui au Secteur Informel – FASI (Informal Sector Support Fund)
- Fonds d'Appui aux Activités Génératrices de Revenus des Femmes – FAARF (Women's Income Generating Activities Support Fund)
- Fonds d'Appui aux Initiatives des Jeunes – FAIJ (Youth Initiative Support Fund)
- Fonds Burkinabe de Développement Economique et Social – FBDES (Burkinabe Fund for Social and Economic Development)

### **Foreign Trade Zones/Free Ports/Trade Facilitation**

There are no foreign trade zones or free ports in Burkina Faso. The Burkinabe investment code prohibits discrimination against foreigners. American firms not registered in Burkina Faso can compete for contracts on projects financed by international sources such as the World Bank, U.N. organizations, or the African Development Bank.

### **Foreign Direct Investment and Foreign Portfolio Investment Statistics**

*Key Macroeconomic Data, U.S. FDI in Host Country/Economy*

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Economic Data	Year	Amount	Year	Amount

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<b>Host Country Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$M USD)</b>	NA	NA	2015	\$10.62 billion USD	<a href="#">World Bank</a>
<b>Foreign Direct Investment</b>	<b>Host Country Statistical source*</b>		<b>USG or international statistical source</b>		<b>USG or international Source of data: BEA; IMF; Eurostat; UNCTAD, Other</b>
<b>U.S. FDI in partner country (\$M USD, stock positions)</b>	NA	NA	2015	NA	<a href="#">BEA data available</a>
<b>Host country's FDI in the United States (\$M USD, stock positions)</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	<a href="#">BEA data available</a>
<b>Total inbound stock of FDI as percent host GDP</b>	NA	NA	2016	2.9	Standard & Poor's

*Sources and Destination of FDI*

## Burkina Faso

### Direct Investment from/in Counterpart Economy Data 2015

#### From Top Five Sources/To Top Five Destinations (*US Dollars, Millions*)

Inward Direct Investment			Outward Direct Investment		
Total Inward	Amount	100%	Total Outward	Amount	100%
Canada	743	46%	France	6	26%
Barbados	234	14%	Mali	5	23%
France	202	12%	Cote d'Ivoire	4	16%
Morocco	105	6%	Togo	3	15%
Cote d'Ivoire	71	4%	Niger	2	9%

"0" reflects amounts rounded to +/- USD 500,000.

## **Contact for More Information on the Investment Climate Statement**

John Corrao

Economic and Commercial Officer, U.S. Embassy

Avenue Sembene Ousmane, Rue 15.873

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

(+226) 25 49 56 90

Econouagadougou@state.gov

## **Trade & Project Financing**

### **Methods of Payment**

The preferred method of doing business for day-to-day purchases is in cash, in CFA Francs. Most businesses in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso do not accept payment cards or personal checks. More and more companies are accepting electronic funds transfer and mobile cash payments (using the mobile phone network). Although there are many companies offering these services, the most popular one is Orange Money.

For larger transactions, a letter of credit may be used. Suppliers may expect 50 percent to 75 percent payment in advance, with the balance due upon delivery.

### **Banking Systems**

Though Burkinabe banks continue to have high levels of cash reserves, their credit financing is limited to short-term credit, which constitutes about 60 percent of their financing portfolio. Thus, few manufacturing and trading companies benefit from long-term financing, which impedes economic growth. Small to medium-sized entrepreneurs still have difficulty accessing credit.

The traditional banking sector is composed of 14 commercial banks and three specialized credit institutions. A network of microfinance institutions and credit unions has also grown rapidly.

Three specialized credit institutions finance the majority of home, furniture, car, and moped acquisitions: la Société Burkinabe d'Équipement (S.B.E.), la Société Burkinabe de Crédit Automobile (SOBCA), and la Financière du Burkina (FIB). Two additional credit institutions make specialized loans to small and medium-scale enterprises: the "Projet d'Appui à la Création des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (PAPME)" and Fidelis Finance Burkina Faso, formerly known as Burkina Bail. These institutions finance the acquisition of equipment by lease.

Questions and inquiries regarding Burkina's banking system can be addressed to:

Association Professionnelle des Banques et Établissements Financiers du Burkina (APBEF-B)

01 B.P. 6215 Ouagadougou 01, Burkina Faso  
Tel: (+226) 25 31 20 65; Fax: (+226) 25 31 20 66  
E-mail: [apbef-b@cenatrin.bf](mailto:apbef-b@cenatrin.bf)

## **Foreign Exchange Controls**

The Burkinabe investment code provides the right to transfer capital and revenues secured by foreign personal and legal entities, which invest in Burkina Faso in foreign currencies. Foreign investors have the right, subject to foreign exchange regulations, to transfer dividends, returns on capital invested, and the proceeds from liquidation of assets, in the same currency used for the initial investment.

## **US Banks & Local Correspondent Banks**

Burkina Faso's main commercial banks are linked to [Citibank](#) in the U.S.:

Citibank N.A. 111 Wall Street, 28th Floor, Zone 4 New York, NY 10043

Local correspondent banks are:

Banque Atlantique

Avenue Kwame N'Kruma

01 BP 3407 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 49 24 46

Fax: (+226) 25 49 24 51

[Sainteanne.tiendrebeogo@banqueatlantique.net](mailto:Sainteanne.tiendrebeogo@banqueatlantique.net)

Banque Commerciale et Agricole du Burkina (BACB)

2, Avenue Gamal Abdel Nasser, Secteur 3

01 BP 1844 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 33 33 33

Fax: (+226) 25 31 43 52

E-mail: [bacb@bacb.bf](mailto:bacb@bacb.bf)

Banque Commerciale du Burkina (BCB)

653, Avenue du Docteur Kwame Nkrumah, Secteur 4

Tel: (+226) 25 30 12 66

Fax: (+226) 25 31 06 28

E-mail: [bcb@fasonet.bf](mailto:bcb@fasonet.bf)

Banque Internationale pour le Commerce, l'Industrie et l'Artisanat du Burkina (BICIA-B)

479, Avenue du Docteur Kwame Nkrumah, Secteur 4

01 BP 8 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 31 19 55

Fax: (+226) 25 31 11 16

E-mail: [info@biciab.bf](mailto:info@biciab.bf)

Banque Internationale du Burkina (UBA)

69, Avenue Dimdolobsom, Secteur 3

01 BP 362 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 30 00 00

Fax: (+226) 25 31 00 94

E-mail: [bibouaga@fasonet.bf](mailto:bibouaga@fasonet.bf)

Bank of Africa

770, Avenue de la résistance du 17 mai, Secteur 3

01 BP 1319 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 30 88 71

Fax: (+226) 25 30 88 74

E-mail: [boadg@fasonet.bf](mailto:boadg@fasonet.bf)

Banque Sahelo-saharienne pour l'Investissement et le Commerce (BSIC)

Av Kwame n'Krumah

10 BP 13701 Ouagadougou 10

Tel: (+226) 25 32 84 01

Fax: (+226) 25 30 21 22

E-mail: [bsicburkina@bsic.bf](mailto:bsicburkina@bsic.bf)

Ecobank Burkina

633, Avenue de la Resistance du 17 mai, Secteur 4

01 BP 145 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 31 89 75

Fax: (+226) 25 31 89 81

E-mail: [ecobankbf@ecobank.com](mailto:ecobankbf@ecobank.com)

Société Générale de Banques du Burkina (SGBB)

4, Rue de l'Hôtel de Ville, Secteur 1

01 BP 585 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: (+226) 25 32 32 32

Fax: (+226) 25 31 05 61

E-mail: [sgbb@liptinfor.bf](mailto:sgbb@liptinfor.bf)

## **Project Financing**

Several U.S. government agencies offer financing and insurance options to assist U.S. exporters with business relations in Burkina Faso.

The most notable is the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank), the official export credit agency of the United States. Ex-Im Bank's mission is to assist in financing the export of U.S. goods and services to international markets.

## **Financing Web Resources**

[Export-Import Bank of the United States](#)

[Country Limitation Schedule](#)

[OPIC](#)

[Trade and Development Agency](#)

[SBA's Office of International Trade](#)

[USDA Commodity Credit Corporation](#)

[U.S. Agency for International Development](#)

[African Development Bank](#)

# Business Travel

## Business Customs

Business is conducted very formally in Burkina Faso. Greetings and titles are part of the formalities. No verbal transaction between two people takes place unless greetings have been exchanged, including the shaking of hands. It is polite to greet an official or send correspondence using a title rather than a proper name. Proper attire for men is suit and tie regardless of the weather. Business cards are normally exchanged in initial meetings. Establishing a personal relationship with business partners is a critical factor in the successful negotiation of major projects, government procurement, or in developing long-term business relationships.

Most business transactions are still conducted face-to-face. Meetings may involve a large number of people who speak formally and at length on a given subject. Organizational hierarchies are widely respected, and accomplishing a task or getting information quickly requires knowing the appropriate person to approach.

## Travel Advisory

There is a travel warning currently in effect for travel to Burkina Faso. Visitors can consult this warning at the [State Department's advisory website](#)

Visitors are also encouraged to enroll their trip with the Embassy using the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#)

## Visa Requirements

Visas and proof of yellow fever inoculations are required for entry. A valid U.S. passport is required for a visa application, and the application process costs USD 140 for a standard five-year, multiple entry visa.

U.S. companies that require travel of foreign business persons to the United States should be advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links.

[State Department Visa Website](#)

[United States Visas.gov](#)

[U.S. Embassy Ouagadougou](#)

[U.S. Embassy Ouagadougou visa unit](#)

## Currency

Burkina Faso is a member of the West African Monetary and Economic Union (WAEMU), which is also headquartered in Ouagadougou, and its currency is the Community of Francophone Africa (CFA) Franc. The CFA Franc, backed by the French treasury, trades at a fixed rate with the Euro, and is fully convertible.

## Telecommunications/Electric

Telephone and internet service providers are relatively reliable, but the cost of utilities is high and speeds can be slow. Hotel Wi-Fi is not always available, and may be spotty even

at the most prominent business hotels. A number of cyber cafes are located in Ouagadougou and increasingly in secondary cities.

Cellular service is widely used throughout the country, and prepaid cards can be bought at kiosks throughout the country. International calls to most countries can be dialed directly. The country code for Burkina Faso is +226.

## **Transportation**

Ouagadougou's international airport is served by several weekly domestic and international flights. Public transportation, even in the capital, is unreliable since buses and taxis are in poor condition. Rental cars and all-terrain vehicles are expensive but available, usually at hotels that cater to business people and tourists. Two passenger trains leave Ouagadougou each week for Cote d'Ivoire, and freight trains leave daily.

Primary roads between main towns in Burkina Faso are paved. Domestic air service and flights between Africa are relatively limited. As of 2017, there were 11 airlines servicing the capital city, Ouagadougou, with approximately 50 commercial flights per week.

## **Language**

French is Burkina Faso's official language. Some well-traveled businessmen and government officials are proficient in English, but most are not. The local language, Moore, is widely spoken in Ouagadougou, with Dioula being widely spoken in Bobo-Dioulasso.

## **Health**

Local medical services are limited. Unwashed fruits and vegetables and undercooked meats are not safe to eat. Tap water is not potable. Bottled mineral water is available at hotels, restaurants, and some retail shops. Chloroquine-resistant malaria is prevalent in Burkina Faso, and malaria suppressants should be taken prior to arrival in country. Vaccinations and precautions against other illnesses are recommended for travel in rural areas.

Useful information on medical emergencies abroad, including overseas insurance programs, is provided in the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs brochure, *Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad*, available via the Bureau of Consular Affairs home page.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)'s (CDC's) hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747), fax 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or internet at

## **Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays**

Burkina Faso is on GMT. Many local businesses and government offices close at 3:00 pm and most businesses are closed on Sunday. The following local and international holidays are observed each year:

January 1: New Year's Day

January 3: National Day

March 8: Women's Day

(Variable): Easter Monday

May 1: Labor Day

(Variable): Ascension

(Variable): Aid-El Fitr (Ramadan)

August 5: Independence Day

August 15: Assumption

(Variable): Aid-El Kebir (Tabaski)

November 1: All Saints' Day

(Variable): Mouloud

December 11: Proclamation of the Republic/National Day

December 25: Christmas Day

## **Travel Related Web Resources**

[Burkina Faso Embassy USA](#)