


**SOGEA SATOM**

# ANATOMY OF A SUPPLY CHAIN





A wide-angle photograph of a modern, multi-lane asphalt road that curves through a lush, hilly landscape. The road is flanked by green grass and rocky terrain. In the distance, there are dense forests and misty mountains under a cloudy sky. A single white car is visible on the road, driving away from the viewer. The overall scene conveys a sense of infrastructure and natural beauty.

WE FIND OUT ABOUT THE PROCUREMENT  
INFRASTRUCTURE THAT ALLOWS SOGEA  
SATOM TO MAINTAIN ITS POSITION AS A  
CONSTRUCTION LEADER.

# ANATOMY OF A **SUPPLY CHAIN**



**Sogea Satom is of the key companies inside VINCI, the construction-concession worldwide leader that employs over 180,000 people across five continents. Belonging to VINCI Construction, Sogea Satom acts as a gateway for VINCI to the African Continent. From their headquarters in France, Sogea Satom employs 12,500 people across 21 countries all the way from Morocco to South Africa, with more than 90 years of experience on the continent and over 100 ongoing projects in field, ranging from transport and hydraulics infrastructures to buildings and renewables.**

**A** quick browse of their recent portfolio reveals projects such as the double Wouri bridge in Douala, Cameroon, a water treatment plant in Kampala, Uganda, the Ouagadougou northern interchange, Burkina Faso, and the port of Cotonou, Benin.

These operations are backed up by a well-maintained fleet of over 8,000 machines and a number of plants covering the whole range of the company's activities, maintained by expert teams of internal technicians and engineers.

The same is true for the company's logistics and procurement operations, as Strategic Procurement Manager Matthieu Lasserre explains, "Each agency, in

network, Sogea Satom has invested heavily in building a strong local footprint in each of the countries where it operates.

"We are proud to claim the strongest local footprint for a foreign construction company, with a constant emphasis on the local content of our operations, based on win-win approach with our suppliers, sub-contractors or freight forwarders," Lasserre explains. "In essence, Sogea Satom has always been considered a locally rooted company."

Talking to Lasserre it becomes clear how important it is for Sogea Satom to tailor their procurement solutions to each project.

"Our success is essentially rooted in a no compromise approach, always on the lookout to evaluate the risks at stake, as well as going the extra-mile in terms of service," Lasserre says. "I believe it translates the team's ability to adapt to changing conditions, and respond specifically to complex requirements with a full package: competitive prices, quality control, financial risk assessment, time and logistics management."

However, while the company is committed to flexibility and adaptability, there are some areas where it will not bend, particularly with regards to the environmental impact of their operations. >>

**"EACH AGENCY, IN EACH COUNTRY, IS SUPERVISED BY ITS LOCAL TEAM OF EXPERTS"**

each country, is supervised by its local team of experts. Most of these operations are closely monitored and coordinated by our head office support services, based in Rueil-Malmaison. Each year, 4,000 shipments are managed by this network over sea, air and road."

**THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL**

In order to strengthen their vast and impressive international





“SUSTAINABILITY IS PARAMOUNT, AS A REFLECTION THAT WE HAVE THE RIGHT SET OF STRENGTHS TO ORCHESTRATE OUR PROCUREMENT PROCESSES”

Currently they are looking to shorten their logistics chains to limit gas emissions and provide their sites with cleaner packaging options whenever possible.

“Sustainability is paramount, as a reflection that we have the right set of strengths to orchestrate our procurement processes,” Lasserre says.

The company’s procurement strategy is built upon the foundation of a continuous improvement strategy that can be summarised in flexibility, dedication and progress, but the most essential element of that strategy is their people.

“The key component that supports the whole sustainability

motion of our procurement processes is undeniably the people,” Lasserre says. “It’s even more obvious as we work on projects-based operations, which will depend to a greater extent upon our people’s skills and knowledge. In our vision to build up stronger models, we put a great deal of emphasis upon training our staff, keeping them updated on the evolution of international and local regulations, contract practices, trade and legal aspects.”

**DEVELOP, REINFORCE, REVIEW**

This is a pivotal year for Sogea Satom, with a number of sizeable projects in their initial stages

while the economic and political environments are showing many signs of volatility.

To support this, the company is gearing up to develop their local footprint and help local suppliers develop their capacities, reinforcing their own internal networking capabilities and review their suppliers’ screening and contracting processes to ensure high standards and due diligence run throughout the supply chain.

“On sizeable projects, where we handle large supply agreements, specific processes are put in place, involving our procurement office as early as possible in the decision making,” Lasserre explains. “Apart from the usual tendering, negotiation and contracting stages, the procurement office coordinates the monitoring of fabrication and appraises, together with >>



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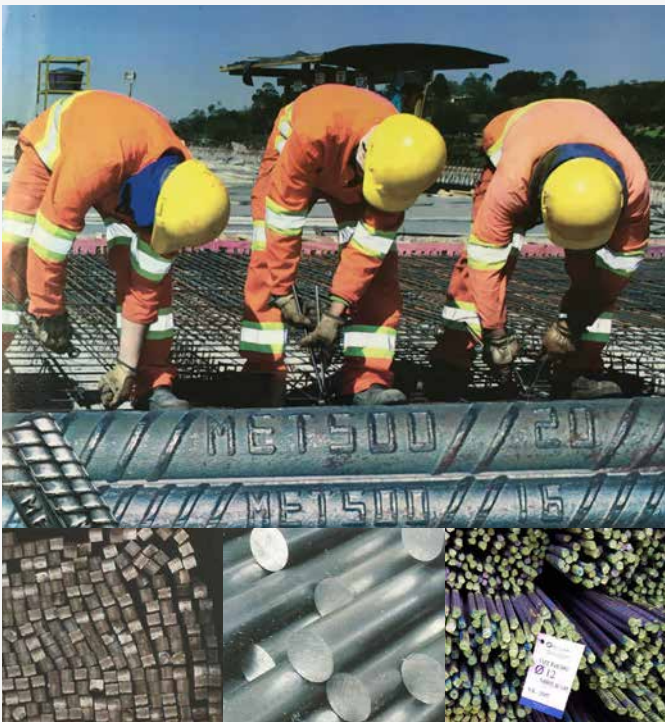
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“ON SIZEABLE PROJECTS, WHERE WE HANDLE LARGE SUPPLY AGREEMENTS, SPECIFIC PROCESSES ARE PUT IN PLACE, INVOLVING OUR PROCUREMENT OFFICE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN THE DECISION MAKING”

the operational management, all risks involved and adequate supervising tools to be used. In terms of logistics, we have a strong know-how internally regarding all logistics aspects. We have our hands on most of the processes very directly, and we supervise very closely every step of the chain. This is never a smooth process, but it's one where you can save or lose a lot of time and money. This is the reason why meeting the challenges to come implies a constant training of our logisticians and buyers on the

ground, in order for them to be able to coordinate their local actions and get ahead of on any potential issues.”

Lasserre considers the goal of procurement to not necessarily be one of cost cutting, but of having a precise grasp on what those costs are.

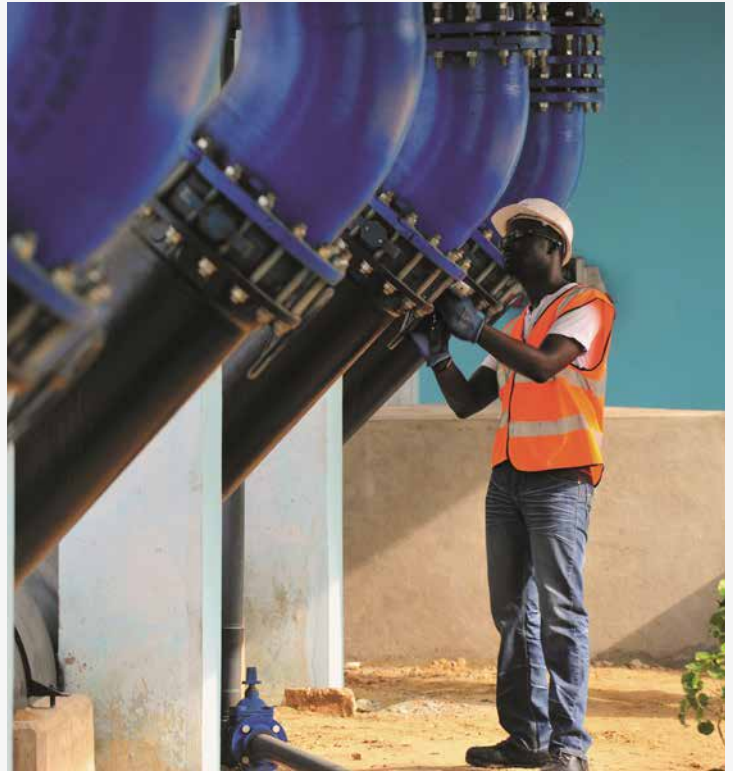
“All in all I would not talk so much of money saving but of precise budgets and schedule management; this is absolutely key in our field,” he explains.

In order to achieve these targets, it is essential to have strong, reliable relationships with suppliers, especially on large projects.

“The global focus on Africa in the last ten years has made this evidence even more true, as there has never been so many suppliers interested in a piece of the cake,”

**Human skills are at the core of our long run efficiency**

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Lasserre says. “Throughout the last 15 years or even longer for some, we have maintained strong relationships with historical suppliers. As time has passed and the global economic environment has changed, and our sourcing has spread simultaneously, our sourcing strategy has become a mix of global market knowledge, and a particular focus on the regional development of the market, with increasing manufacturing and distribution actors on the ground.”

Lasserre describes these local partnerships as a win-win for Sogea Satom and their suppliers alike.

“We help those companies grow their business and participate in large projects, they’re dealing on our behalf with importation, storage,

after-sale, and contribute in making our organization leaner while reinforcing our local anchorage,” he says.

In the end it all comes down to people, whether they’re with Sogea Satom’s suppliers, or the teams of experts within their own company.

“Whatever the developments of the procurement and logistics organization, nothing can be achieved without our teams of experts in their fields. In most countries, we are proud to operate with experienced people, who have been alongside Sogea Satom for numerous years or decades,” Lasserre says. “Training them and new comers will be key in improving the supply chain. Human skills are at the core of our long run efficiency.” ☺

**“IN ESSENCE, SOGEA SATOM HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONSIDERED A LOCALLY ROOTED COMPANY”**





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