

Moroccan pharmaceutical firm Sothema mulls east African plant

Morocco's largest pharmaceutical company Sothema is looking for partnerships to set up a plant in east Africa as part of its expansion strategy on the continent, Sothema chief executive officer Lamia Tazi said on Monday, 10 October.



Source: [Pexels](#)

The east Africa plant would be the second for the Casablanca-listed company outside Morocco after Senegal, where it manufactures a range of products including anti-malaria drugs.

"The next step is east Africa. We started prospecting two years ago... we have some opportunities to build something new," Tazi noted on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank annual meetings in Marrakech.

She did not name the potential partners Sothema is in talks with but said the new plant would focus on "high added value products," linked to oncology and diabetes, among others.

Sothema is expected to proceed to raising capital once it seals the partnership deal, she said.

Morocco's pharmaceutical industry, the second largest in Africa, is bracing for an expansion at home on the back of Morocco's plan to generalise health insurance and the ensuing rise in demand for medicine.

Sothema is currently developing cannabis-based treatments focusing on pain management and epilepsy.

Putting these products in the market would take up to two years, she said.

Sothema is part of Moroccan public and private companies including banks, telecom, fertilizer maker and airlines that rolled out investments in Africa.

Despite the impact of inflation on production costs, Sothema's profit grew 9.3% last year to 282 million dirhams (\$27.2m)

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