LEADERSHIP FOR AGRICULTURE FORUM: From Policy to Action

Hosted by
The African Development Bank Group

November 28th, 2017
African Development Bank HQ
Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire

Concept Note

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture and agribusiness together are projected to become a US$ 1 trillion industry in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) by 2030. Furthermore, African agriculture and agribusiness will be vital to job creation, particularly for youth, as 310-350 million new entrants are expected to enter the African labor force over the next 15 years.

The development of a competitive agribusiness sector can help Africa stimulate agricultural growth through the provision of new markets and the development of a vibrant input supply sector. In addition, the past decade has witnessed an unprecedented interest in African agribusiness by the private sector in Africa and beyond.

Despite the tremendous potential of agriculture and agribusiness in Africa, total investment in these sectors still falls short of the levels required to deliver fundamental change and prosperity.

According to the African Development Bank’s Feed Africa: Strategy for Agriculture Transformation in Africa 2016-2025, the scale of resources required to transform 18 of Africa’s most promising value chains is $315-400 billion over the next ten years. As a result of the underinvestment in the agriculture and agribusiness sectors, developing countries, such as Brazil, Indonesia, and Thailand export more agricultural products than all of SSA combined.

Africa’s poor performance in the agriculture and agribusiness sectors is exacerbated by rapidly growing local and regional markets, burgeoning urbanization, and buoyant global commodity, all of which have led to an upsurge in Africa’s imports of many food products. A trend which will only continue with increased growth in domestic demand: net food imports are expected to grow from US35 billion in 2015 to US 110 billion by 2025.

Constraints to the development of the agribusiness sector in Africa include: low yield; an unsupportive enabling environment; insecure land tenure; insufficient/inadequate hard and soft infrastructure; poorly developed marked linkages; limited value-added processing capacity; high post-harvest losses; insufficient inclusion of youth and women; and limited access to technologies, information, skills, and finance.
Notwithstanding these obstacles, research has demonstrated that good policies, a conducive business environment, and targeted support from governments can help agribusiness reach its full potential. The Feed Africa Strategy emphasized the importance of African agriculture leaders’ collaboration in setting the strategic direction, creating the right policies and providing the right support to drive growth in the agriculture and agribusiness sectors.

In this vein, the Strategy encouraged the Bank to support programs such as the Leadership for Agriculture (L4Ag) Platform which seeks to assemble influential leaders—policy makers, technical experts, private sector actors and community champions—for dialogue, advocacy and policy formulation to tackle the obstacles to Africa’s agriculture transformation. L4Ag was established by five African Ministers of Agriculture and Finance, the Rockefeller Foundation and the African Union Commission. The AfDB has already secured support from the Rockefeller Foundation for the establishment of the Platform.

The AfDB’s Agriculture and Agro-Industry Department in collaboration with Grow Africa and the Initiative for Global Development (IGD), is organizing the first-ever Leadership for Agriculture Forum on 28th November 2017 at the AfDB headquarters.

Guided by recent analysis and findings from the World Bank’s 2017 Enabling the Business of Agriculture (EBA) Report and the African Centre for Economic Transformation’s 2017 Africa Transformation Report, the focus of this first Forum will explore how agribusiness can be the engine of economic transformation in Africa. Recent analysis, findings and recommendations from these two reports will guide conversations among government, private sector and civil society leaders on concrete actions to address constraints and drive agribusiness development in the Bank’s regional member countries (RMC).

The expected outcomes of the Forum are as follows:

- Agriculture and agribusiness champions are provided an opportunity to engage in dialogue on growing the agribusiness sector in Africa
- Government leaders are provided an opportunity to seek support for policy reforms that will drive agribusiness growth in their respective countries
- Private sector leaders are provided with agribusiness investment opportunities in participating RMCs
- The Bank is availed of a prospection opportunity to expand its business and lending program

**DATE, VENUE AND PARTICIPANTS:**

The L4Ag Forum is scheduled to take place on November 28th 2017 at the African Development Bank in Abidjan, Côte D’Ivoire. This event will take place in the margins of the Africa Union – European Union (AU-EU) Summit scheduled to take place on November 26th-29th 2017 in Abidjan. A maximum of 70 participants are expected to make the conversations real and engaging.
Participants will be limited to AGRF champions including Ministers of Finance and Agriculture, Heads of Chambers of Commerce, Central Bank Governors, business leaders; as well as influential community mobilizers.
DRAFT AGENDA: LEADERSHIP FOR AGRICULTURE FORUM: *From Policy to Action*
FACILITATOR: Mima Nedelcovych

November 28 2017: 10h – 17h

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS:

A. From Government:
   a. Ministers of Agriculture – at least 8 countries, representing different
      regions, experiences and strength of economies
   b. Ministers of Finance for 8 countries
   c. Heads of key Agri-related public institutions

B. Private Sector:
   a. Agricultural firms in key VCs
   b. SME in input, processing, transportation and marketing firms
   c. Farmers – small, medium and large
   d. Transport/logistics firms/etc.
   e. ICT/other agro-service sectors
   f. Banks/impact investors/VCs

C. Civil society/Others:
   a. Farm associations
   b. Agricultural universities/colleges/farmer training institutes
   c. Agriculture research/development/extension firms
   d. Policy/advocacy organizations
   e. IFIs –AfDB, World Bank, IFC, AFC,