Supporting African countries through a global food crisis:
The African Development Bank’s African Emergency Food Production Facility

About the African Emergency Food Production Facility

Ukraine and Russia supply 30% of the world’s wheat, 20% of the world’s potash – a key fertilizer to help plants use water and resist drought, and nearly 50% of blended fertilizer. Following Russia’s war in Ukraine, wheat prices have soared by 50%, and fertilizer is three to four times more expensive than in 2020.

The African Development Bank Group’s African Emergency Food Production Facility is a short-term intervention to raise the production of wheat, maize, rice and soybean to compensate for the supply deficit due to the war in Ukraine. The plan will result in the production of 37.6 million tonnes of these staple food crops, an increase of about 30% in local production. Through the African Emergency Food Production Facility, the African Development Bank Group continues to assist African countries to boost food and nutrition security.

The Facility draws on lessons learned from the Bank Group’s Feed Africa Response to Covid-19 program and the success of its Feed Africa flagship, Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation.

Financing

The African Development Bank Group is investing $1.5 billion in the African Emergency Food Production Facility. This comprises $1.3 billion from the African Development Bank and African Development Fund resources, with the remaining funds being mobilized from partners globally.

Structure

The African Emergency Food Production Facility focuses on three areas:

- Delivering certified seeds, fertilizer and extension services to 20 million farmers, using innovation as well as internet and communications technology platforms. Supporting post-harvest management and market development.

- Providing financing and credit guarantees for the large-scale supply of fertilizer to wholesalers and aggregators.

- Supporting policy reform facilitating modern inputs getting to farmers, including strengthening national institutions overseeing input markets.

Building on success

The African Development Bank has experienced remarkable success supporting Africa’s quest to reduce dependence on food imports. Launched in 2019, the Bank Group’s Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation platform delivered heat-tolerant wheat seed varieties to 1.8 million farmers in seven countries. It increased wheat production by 2.7 million tonnes, with a value of $840 million.
The platform helped Sudan produce 65,000 tonnes of certified seeds of five heat-tolerant wheat varieties. These climate-adapted wheat varieties helped Sudan produce a record harvest of 1.1 million tonnes and reach 50% self-sufficiency in wheat production. Yields of irrigated lowland wheat increased, on average, from 2 to 3.5 tonnes per hectare.

**For the immediate and mid-term**
The *African Emergency Food Production Facility* aims to increase food production by 30% through 2024, including:
- Scaling up wheat production with heat-tolerant varieties.
- Scaling up maize production with water-efficient maize.
- Scaling up rice and soybean production.
- Creating information and communications technology-based systems that deliver transparency and inclusion support to farmers, especially for women and youth.

The African Development Bank Group builds its short-term response around Africa’s next four crop production seasons. The Bank Group will also work with fertilizer manufacturers, seed companies, commodity exchanges, large aggregators, and Regional Member Countries to deliver 3.54 million tonnes of fertilizers and 383,875 tonnes of certified seeds to smallholder farmers during the same period. Where possible, the program will promote the use of innovation as well as information and communication technology platforms for the delivery of these inputs and technology to farmers.

**In total, the Bank Group initiative’s $1.5 billion investment is expected to support the production of 37.6 million tonnes of food, worth an estimated $11.5 billion.**

**Leverage Convening Power**
Africa faces reduced availability of affordable fertilizer for the agriculture sector. The African Development Bank Group sees this challenge as an opportunity to leverage its convening power for discussion and political engagement with industry players, including key fertilizer manufacturing, importing, and blending companies, to bridge the supply gap. Other areas to address include collaborating with coastal countries to remove logistics bottlenecks; encouraging governments to prioritize special berths for fertilizer clearance and reduce cargo dwelling times at ports; and government-African Continental Free Trade Area coordination to allow rapid movement of trucks to landlocked countries and transport costs.

**Partnerships**
The Bank Group is executing the African Emergency Food Production Facility in collaboration with the African Union, regional economic commissions, multilateral development banks, Rome-based United Nations agencies, and other partners, including private foundations. The African Development Bank will coordinate and potentially fund other entities with expertise in food procurement or subsidies, such as the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization.