



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP



FEED AFRICA RESPONSE TO COVID-19

BRIEF

Prepared by the Department of Agriculture and Agro-Industry (AHA) and the Department of Agricultural Finance and Rural Development (AHFR).



Background to the Feed Africa Response to COVID-19 (FAREC)

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented global crisis that has paralysed most economic sectors, including agriculture. The restrictions that many African countries have imposed on movements across internal and external borders are adversely impacting food production systems, as many processing plants shut, slowing or halting the food processing chain. Food safety, already precarious in many African countries, is likely to be further compromised.

As part of its COVID-19 Response Facility (CRF), the African Development Bank designed a *Feed Africa* Response to COVID-19 (FAREC) to address specific issues faced by the agriculture sector.



What is the FAREC?

The *Feed Africa* Response to COVID-19 (FAREC) is the Bank's road map to ensure continuing food and nutrition security pre, during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategy will guide the Bank's rollout to affected countries of projects and programmes targeting the nutrition and food security aspects of the COVID-19 crisis in the immediate, short, and medium-term.

FAREC Goals

Building on lessons learned from previous food security crises in Africa, notably a 2008 food crisis, FAREC aims to:

- Build resilience, sustainability and self-sufficiency in food production and distribution and minimize COVID-19-related disruptions to the agriculture value chain.
- Support African governments, farmers, and the private sector, including small and medium enterprises in their efforts to mitigate the pandemic's impacts on food systems.

Strategic priorities

FAREC's strategic interventions are anchored around eight priority areas that will have a significant impact on people's lives:

1

Supporting Food delivery for the poor and vulnerable:

The Bank will work with governments and partners to mobilize delivery of safe and nutritious food for the poor and vulnerable.

2

Stabilization of food prices:

The Bank will contribute to the stabilization of food prices through the targeted release and replenishment of food reserves. It will also support policies to build effective and responsive national food reserve systems.

3

Extension of support services:

To reduce disruptions to on-farm activities, safety, advisory and other production support will be provided to farmers.

4

Promoting localized food production:

Via targeted provision of agricultural inputs (fertilizer, improved seeds and agro-chemicals), the Bank will promote localized food production through smart input subsidies targeting farmers.

5

Optimization of food processing and storage capacity:

Interventions will support the processing of highly nutritious food and staple products that can be stored for longer periods, reducing post-harvest losses.

6

Provision of Policy support:

The Bank will promote policies that advance the free flow of food and inputs distribution ("green channels") and increased food production.

7

Establishing Food security task forces:

The Bank will assist African countries and regions in setting up and operationalizing food security task forces as a support to their COVID-19-related food security responses.

8

Supporting regional initiatives:

In collaboration with continental bodies and regional economic communities, the Bank will coordinate and monitor regional initiatives.



Key interventions

The Bank will implement FAREC through immediate, short, and medium-term plans.



Immediate Response (0-3 months):

The Bank will deploy the budget support instrument created under its COVID-19 Rapid Response Facility (CRF) to accelerate the disbursement of resources to governments, enabling them to import food to mitigate food shortages. Other key immediate response activities include:

- Creation of green channels to promote free flow of agricultural inputs
- Provision of safe storage facilities
- Development of support mechanisms to facilitate access to food markets and food supply chains
- Provision of safe labor measures and equipment to farmers
- Monitoring of food markets and dissemination of markets information
- Provision of emergency food relief to the most vulnerable

Short-Term Response (3-6 months):

This will entail the re-structuring and realignment of ongoing Feed Africa portfolios, including the use of loan/grant balances on completed projects in addition to unused resources from the African Development Fund's fourteenth Replenishment. Other key activities will include:

- Scaling up provision of key agricultural inputs
- Use of appropriate financial tools to extend comprehensive assistance to the sector
- Support government efforts to set up strong food processing systems
- Promote agriculture digitalization and e-commerce
- Upgrade sanitation and coordinate safe practices at marketplaces.

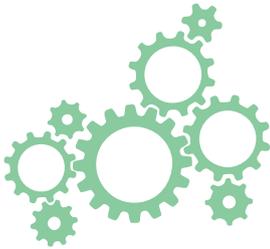
Medium-Term Response (6-12 months):

The Bank will fast track the processing of loans under the fifteenth Replenishment of the African Development Fund (ADF-15). Resources will be dedicated to: regional member countries ineligible for concessional resources; the Transition Support Facility; approved grants under the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme and other bilateral and multilateral grant resources. Key activities under this response include:

- Provision of financial instruments to facilitate the movement of inputs downstream and guarantee output markets for crops.
- Support the development of policies to scale up food production technologies
- Fast-tracking of the deployment of relevant digital agriculture solutions.

FAREC Enablers

Adopting a country-led and Bank-supported, systematic approach



To facilitate the implementation of FAREC requires prioritizing budget support and other Bank operations. FAREC will build upon each country's priorities to efficiently support the implementation of their action plans and strategies.

Building strategic partnerships



The Bank will prioritize partnerships with actors on the ground, including, but not limited to the African Union Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agriculture Development, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, Multilateral Development Banks and other development partners.

For more information on the Feed Africa Response to COVID-19, please contact:

Philip BOAHEN, Chief Agriculture Policy Economist
Email: P.boahen@afdb.org