

Nigeria to implement special agro-industrial processing zones

The African Development Bank, in collaboration with the government of Nigeria, held a workshop in Abuja from 17 to 18 February to discuss details around the categorisation and location of special agro-industrial processing zones (SAPZ).



Image source: [AfDB](#)

Speaking at the event, Nigeria's minister for agriculture and rural development Alhaji Sabo Nanono called for all hands to be on deck in the sustainable implementation of the initiative.

"I am proud that the SAPZ project is taking off, with strong collaboration with the African Development Bank. The project is indeed a promising one for the future of agriculture in Nigeria," he said.

The forum presented all stakeholders with the opportunity to follow up on outcomes of previous design interventions. The workshop was attended, among others, by Afreximbank, the International Finance Corporation, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Development Bank of Nigeria and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria.

Developing key value chains

Senior special adviser to the president of the African Development Bank Oyebanji Oyeyinka-Oyelaran outlined the strategy for Nigeria, saying it would focus on developing key value chains and select the most promising agricultural clusters.

“The strategy will also promote inclusivity, have a positive multiplier effect in the zones of influence, by increasing yields through the use of modern technologies – improved seed, fertilisers, mechanisation, digitisation, irrigation and maximise positive engagement of youth and women,” he said.

He further explained that value addition through better handling of post-harvest losses and processing of the commodities would be a key feature of this programme in order to boost competitiveness.

Concentrated agro-processing activity

SAPZ are integrated development initiatives designed to concentrate agro-processing activities within areas of high agricultural potential to boost productivity, integrate production, processing and marketing of selected commodities.

These zones enable agricultural producers, processors, aggregators and distributors to operate in the same vicinity to reduce transaction costs and share business development services for increased productivity and competitiveness. By bringing adequate infrastructure (energy, water, roads, ICT) to rural areas of high agricultural potential, SAPZs attract investments from private agro-industrialists/entrepreneurs to contribute to the economic and social development of rural areas.

“The establishment of SAPZs in Nigeria will boost the structural transformation of the economy by providing opportunities for public and private sector investment in agriculture,” said Ebrima Faal, senior director for the African Development Bank in Nigeria.

“When fully operational, the SAPZs will enhance national food and nutritional security, optimise the export of value-added agricultural commodities and improve the quality of livelihoods through wealth creation for rural farming communities,” he added.

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