
In this issue:

- [NEPAD to help SADC meet its agriculture priorities](#)
 - [Calendar of events](#)
-

NEPAD to help SADC meet its agriculture priorities

NEPAD has been asked to become involved in efforts to strengthen the agricultural performance of members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the challenge to move from dialogue to action.

This follows a Council of Ministers Summit on agriculture and food security held on 14 May 2004 in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania, where it was noted that priorities identified by the SADC are in line with NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

NEPAD cited the following priority areas of potential cooperation with the SADC:

Nepad is mobilising funding for

centres of excellence.

Tracking national budgetary allocations of 10% to agriculture within a period of five years.

NEPAD with the support of its cooperating partners could facilitate the development of a tracking system to monitor this commitment. NEPAD could also explore the feasibility of developing an effective peer review mechanism through the establishment of a team of permanent secretaries to monitor both this commitment as well as the overall implementation of SADC priority agriculture and food security related programmes.

Harnessing the role of science and technology in agriculture and food security.

NEPAD is currently working with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and the World Bank on the Multi-country Agriculture Productivity Programme (MAPP) with national governments, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and sub-regional organisations.

Centres of Excellence in agriculture

Linked to the need for harnessing the role of science and technology in agriculture development and the promotion of food security is the need for establishing centres of excellence as drivers in technology development, dissemination and adoption. NEPAD is in the process of mobilising funding to identify centres of excellence in agriculture and food security in the RECs with a view to exploring how best to facilitate the implementation of the CAADP.

Agriculture productivity programme

NEPAD is committed to capitalising on emerging African agriculture successes. While facilitating the implementation of MAPP an effort will be made to target key successful commodities which have the potential of being up-scaled rapidly. One such commodity is cassava, a staple to 200 million Africans, which has made marked significance to the food security circumstances of small producers in Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Angola and Zimbabwe, among other SADC countries. NEPAD is also exploring the prospects of adopting NERICA rice varieties from West Africa to SADC rice-growing countries.

Looking at the potential of cassava and rice.

Empowering farmers associations

NEPAD is developing a programme to empower farmers associations in the RECs. In working with farmers associations the focus will be on significantly increasing the prosperity of African farmers, and the market share of African-based products in the high-value Northern Hemisphere and other markets for African food and fibre products.

Regional strategic food reserve systems

In consultation with the World Food Programme, World Bank and other organisations NEPAD is conducting a continental review of strategic food reserves and disaster preparedness systems which are necessary to mitigate

**Water and
irrigation
development
priority number
one.**

the effects of drought and other disaster-induced food shortages, and seasonal fluctuations in food availability.

Management of water and irrigation resources

Within the framework of CAADP, NEPAD is working with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and member states to develop a set of bankable investment projects. It is noteworthy that many member states have identified water and irrigation development as priority number one in their lists of bankable projects, citing the advantages of irrigation in food security, productivity growth and export and employment creation. There are many partners that would want to join hands with NEPAD and the SADC in mobilising resources and strengthening technical capacity for irrigation development especially for the smallholder sectors.

Fisheries

The Council of Ministers endorsed natural resources, such as fisheries, as one of the sectors with the potential for sustainable food security. The burgeoning population growth and declining natural sources of fish make it imperative that aquaculture should make substantial contributions to fish supply on the continent. The SADC region is the only one in the world where per capita fish consumption is declining and is projected to decline further. At the same time, however, new opportunities exist that brighten the prospects for aquaculture development.

- *The Summit in Dar-es-Salaam was attended by the Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee, Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, and NEPAD staff.*

[Back to top](#)

Calendar of Events

- **31 May - 4 June**, Experts Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, Johannesburg, South Africa
- **2 - 4 June**, World Economic Forum, Maputo, Mozambique
- **8 - 10 June**, G8 Summit, Sea Island, USA
- **25 - 26 June**, NEPAD Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (**postponed to October 2004**)

[Back to top](#)

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[Back to top](#)