

ADF invests over \$6m to develop the pharmaceutical sector in Southern and Eastern Africa

The Board of Directors of the African Development Fund (ADF), the concessional lending arm of the African Development Bank Group on 2 November 2022 in Abidjan, approved a \$6.63m grant to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa) to develop the pharmaceutical sector in the sub-region.



Source: [Pexels](#)

The project, which will be implemented over three years (2023-2025), is institutional support to develop the region's pharmaceutical industry.

In particular, it will build the capacity of pharmaceutical regulatory bodies, product quality control and management systems, and research and development institutions.

The aim is to achieve the manufacture and marketing of safe, quality pharmaceutical products, for Covid-19 and other diseases.

The project will support the sub-regional body in implementing continental strategies on pharmaceutical manufacturing and assist it in streamlining and harmonising drug registration processes, as well as ensuring access to essential medical products and technologies.

An information platform for pharmaceutical manufacturers, importers and exporters will also be created.

The project will directly benefit public institutions responsible for the pharmaceutical industry's development, such as national drug regulatory authorities, quality control laboratories, regional pharmacy training providers, universities, and research centres.

"The aim is to empower them to support the pharmaceutical sector so that they can produce safe essential medicines locally for the needs of the population, especially women and children," said Leila Mokaddem, the African Development Bank's director general for Southern Africa.



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"Most countries within the region have a weak and underdeveloped pharmaceutical industry.

"The region is heavily dependent on imports for most of its medical supplies. Furthermore, due to the low local pharmaceutical production, there is a high prevalence of counterfeit pharmaceutical products in circulation, which has serious consequences for the welfare of the region's people," she added.

While the project is intended to directly benefit the ADF eligible countries of Comesa, other Bank group member countries will be allowed to participate in project activities and events, but at a cost.

Comesa is a regional economic community comprising 21 countries: Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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