



Partnership
for Aflatoxin
Control in Africa

Partenariat pour la
lutte contre les
aflatoxines en Afrique

Parceria para o
controlo das
aflatoxinas na África

الشراكة من أجل التحكم في
الإفلاتوكسين في أفريقيا

Aflatoxin Partnership Newsletter *Special Edition*

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Message from PACA Program Manager

Dear PACA Community Members,

The PACA Secretariat is pleased to present Issue 4 of your quarterly newsletter in 2014. This Issue covers a number of important topics. There is a special coverage of the First PACA Partnership Platform Meeting (PPM) which was held on 7-9 October 2014 at the African Union commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The PPM was a great success by many measures including diversity of participants, quality and relevance of discussions, cementing of the strategic direction of PACA as well as achievement of objectives set. PACA's PPM marks the maturity of the organization, and heightened aflatoxin awareness and action in Africa. It also helped identify action areas for immediate uptake by different players.

The PPM was made possible, first and foremost, through the support of PACA community members. We are particularly grateful to the high level government and AU officials, the session moderators, rapporteurs, speakers and panelists, who are many to list here, who were willing to volunteer their time and energy and share their ideas with the PPM participants. The task team established by the PACA Steering Committee (SC), composed of SC Members IITA, Consumers International, PanAAC, and USAID who guided the planning of the PPM for months deserve special thanks. The organizations and individuals who set up exhibition stands in the gallery market place at the PPM showcased products and knowledge that could form part of our arsenal in dealing with the vexing aflatoxin problem. The market place participants are listed in this newsletter. My sincere thanks go to all of them. I also thank the PACA staff at AU Commission, the Meridian Institute and partners who made the PPM possible.

Three months ago, I reported the progress made in PACA Strategy Refinement process. I am delighted to share with you that a refined Strategic Direction has been crafted for PACA Secretariat through a rigorous process of stakeholder consultation followed by review and endorsement by the PACA Steering Committee in August 2014. The recommendations are aligned with the overall PACA Strategy and chart directions to make PACA Secretariat more focused and impactful.

Thank you for your continued partnership towards achieving an Africa free from the harmful effects of aflatoxins!

Kind regards,
Amare Ayalew (PhD)

The First Partnership Platform Meeting of PACA Convened Under the Theme “Working Together to Accelerate Actions to Reduce the Harmful Effects of Aflatoxin in Africa”



The first Partnership Platform Meeting (PPM) on aflatoxins was held from 07-09 October 2014 at the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The PPM was conveniently organized during the Africa Year of Agriculture and Food Security which marks 10 years since the adoption of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) from which PACA was born. The PPM featured plenary sessions, presentations, roundtable and panel discussions, and breakout group sessions. Moreover, in an elaborate Gallery Market Place and Poster Session, a number of organizations showcased their work

which collectively would definitely advance aflatoxin control efforts in Africa to a great extent.

The PPM was officially opened by H.E. Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission who emphasized the need for collaboration and partnerships to tackle the aflatoxin problem and increase food security. She said “This is an important time for PACA and the entire community where great partnership against aflatoxins will be formed and synergies created. I trust that PACA will strive hard to contribute to food security, increased health and trade in Africa

through aflatoxin mitigation.”

Hon. Mrs. Janet Mbeni, Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry of the United Republic of Tanzania, delivered a Keynote address calling for sustainable solutions for the aflatoxin problem on the continent. She stressed that “This partnership across all sectors and institutions is what we need to achieve sustainable change.” She also encouraged and commended the work of the PACA on the continent.



PACA PPM — continued

Mr. Jeff Hill, Director of Policy Unit for the Bureau of Food Security, U.S. Agency for International Development in his keynote speech stated that “PACA’s work in aflatoxin control through the CAADP framework, poverty reduction and trade processes are key to achieving the goals set forth in the Malabo Declaration”, at the Malabo Summit where Heads of states and Government met and adopted many declarations, but most importantly commitment related to accelerated agricultural growth and transformation as well as achieving nutrition security.

The opening session witnessed high levels of commitments in the fight against aflatoxins.

In a press briefing, H.E. Commissioner Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Hon. Dr. Seif Seleman Rashid, Minister of Health and Social Welfare, United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Mrs. Janet Mbene, and Mr. Jeff Hill emphasized the importance of the aflatoxin challenge to Africa and the urgent need for concerted efforts and joint actions.

Through facilitated discussions in 18 working sessions, the first PPM stimulated and facilitated sharing of experiences and

lessons learned across sectors and food value chains, and helped identify systemic challenges to aflatoxin prevention and control and enabled co-creation of sustainable solutions. The meeting also generated consensus on the most efficient and effective ways to collectively advance PACA’s agenda, by reviewing and enriching the strategies and action areas of PACA Secretariat’s refined strategic areas for the mid-term period. The meeting adopted an approach that encouraged full engagement from all participants, as a means to harnessing the knowledge and experience of all the delegates.

For more information about the PACA Partnership Platform Meeting 2014 and meeting materials, please visit our website: <http://aflatoxinpartnership.org/?q=meetings-and-workshop-materials>.



The Fifth Meeting of the PACA Steering Committee Approves a Refined Strategy for PACA Secretariat

The PACA Steering Committee (SC) met in Entebbe, Uganda on 27-28 August 2014. As is customary, the Budget, Finance and Administration Subcommittee and the Technical Subcommittee met prior to the meeting of the full Steering Committee.

In this biannual meeting, the SC reviewed progress in implementation of planned operations and budget for the first half of 2014. The SC also deliberated on PACA Secretariat's strategic direction. The meeting benefited from an elaborate presentation from the management consultants Monitor Deloitte, who undertook the "strategy refinement" for PACA.

After thorough review and deliberation, the SC approved the new direction for the PACA Secretariat and gave guidance on the next steps for its implementation. On the margins of the SC meeting, PACA organized a stakeholder



consultation workshop on 26 August 2014 where delegates from Member State government ministries, private sector, academia, research institutions, development partners and the African Union Commission enriched the strategic recommendations, proposed by Monitor Deloitte, prior to the SC review and endorsement of the Secretariat's strategic direction.

The PACA secretariat will strategically focus on supporting governments in Africa while forging strong partnerships with other key stakeholders to improve

governments' effectiveness in playing their central role in aflatoxin control. The Secretariat will have continental, regional, and country-level activities playing specific roles as convenor, knowledge manager, and planning and implementation support provider. To read more about the PACA Secretariat Strategic Direction, please visit: http://aflatoxinpartnership.org/uploads/PACA%20Secretariat%20MidTerm%20Strategic%20Direction_0.pdf

PACA Concludes the First Phase of Trainings on AfricaAIMS

PACA finalizes training on the Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS) in all five pilot countries, namely, Gambia, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda. AfricaAIMS is an electronic data management system that serves as a 'one-stop' information hub for aflatoxin and related topics. Countries will now be able to collect and manage relevant data for major value chains that had been identified by the respective country. As part of the AfricaAIMS

capacity strengthening effort, PACA provided and installed sampling and aflatoxin testing equipment. The training consisted of two days of hands-on exercise on aflatoxin analysis in food and feeds (including sampling and detection techniques) and further three days workshop on data collection, submission and management on the system. Pilot countries and PACA Secretariat identified focal institutions to follow-up on the implementation of data collection and submission into AfricaAIMS.



AfricaAIMS—Lab Training

AfricaAIMS follows the ARIS 2 model and allows different levels of access by users while providing a platform for sharing knowledge and information. PACA Secretariat will continue to support countries in AfricaAIMS and provide technical backstopping in the laboratories as needed. Information and experience sharing will be an important function of AfricaAIMS.



Opening Session of AfricaAIMS - Senegal

PACA Publishes Two New Policy Briefs

PACA has published two new Policy Briefs. The Briefs provide concise, high-level summaries of key information on aflatoxins in Africa. PACA's policy briefs will be available in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic.

One of the Briefs, "10 Facts You Should Know About Aflatoxins" provides a short, easy to read overview of aflatoxin, impacts on staple crops and negative human health and economic impacts, and the range of options already available to address the problem through accurate detection, good agricultural practices, policies and regulations, and other measures to reduce exposure. The brief includes a call to support and expand the impact of work already being done toward an Africa free from the harmful effects of aflatoxins.

The brief is available at: http://aflatoxinpartnership.org/uploads/PACA_10facts_v2.pdf.

"The Relationship Between Aflatoxins and Stunting: A Summary of Current Research" describes the work being conducted to better understand and show the linkages between aflatoxin exposure and childhood growth faltering. Childhood stunting, a chronic form of malnutrition, is potentially associated with many health problems, including an increased rate of infectious illnesses, impaired learning capabilities, and reduced work productivity. Stunting in children under five has decreased in the past 20 years, yet still remains a significant public health challenge in much of the developing world despite steady improvements in

maternal and child nutrition. Several studies have shown a potential correlation between aflatoxin exposure and childhood stunting. Because of the lifelong health and developmental problems associated with childhood stunting, clarification of the relationship is important. This brief provides a summary of some of the major research currently underway that is exploring the relationship between mycotoxin (including aflatoxin) exposure and childhood stunting. The brief is available at: <http://aflatoxinpartnership.org/uploads/PACA%20Stunting%20Policy%20Brief.pdf>

News and Information on Aflatoxins

The 41st Session of the UN Committee on Food Security Entertained Major Events on Aflatoxin Control

The United Nations (UN) Committee on Food Security (CFS) convened its 41st session at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Headquarters in Rome, Italy, on 13-18 October 2014. The Session, themed “Making a difference in food security and nutrition”, was attended by more than 350 Participants from all over the world.

On the margins of the UNCFS meeting, a side event on Food Safety and Quality was co-organized by Mars Inc., PACA, FAO, and World Food Program (WFP).

The side event aimed at increasing awareness of food safety and quality problems; demonstrating the direct linkages of food contamination to food and nutrition insecurity and their serious human and economic impacts; and showcasing the problem solving capabilities, commitment and added value that the private sector offers with solutions to help eliminate these challenges and achieve food security. PACA presented on the prevalence of aflatoxins in human food and animal feed in Africa and the exposure levels and consequences of contaminants especially for mothers

and consequently children. The main focus of the side meeting was to address the food safety challenge due to aflatoxins and other mycotoxins. The role of partnerships in dealing with the aflatoxin challenge was articulated by all panelists. Another important side event at the CFS focusing on aflatoxin was organized by the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, where impact of food safety on food security was thoroughly discussed.

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development Organizes a Meeting of Experts on Food Safety

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, a network of 38 bilateral and multilateral donors, international financing institutions, inter-governmental organizations and development agencies, organized an experts meeting on food safety on 01-02 October 2014 at the Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) in Berlin, Germany. Nearly 40 experts attended this meeting in the interest of addressing the theme “Food Safety for Nutrition Security” focusing on aflatoxin. The

meeting’s main objectives were to gain a better understanding of the specific nutritional effects and the impact of consuming small or moderate levels of aflatoxin over a long period; identifying the gaps in knowledge on appropriate solutions for aflatoxin control to achieve higher quality food and improve food and nutrition security; and finally to prioritize potential innovative and effective strategies for the Platform’s involvement to address the multiple threats of global food safety and its impact on human health, food

and nutrition security, agriculture, and economic development based on existing evidence. PACA, represented by Dr. Amare Ayalew, Program Manager, participated in the meeting and contributed to a panel discussion on:

“Aflatoxins in food systems and impact on health and nutrition.” The meeting made several recommendations on food and nutrition security and food safety. For additional information, please visit:

[http://
www.donorplatform.org/
calendar/eventdetail/1121/-/-](http://www.donorplatform.org/calendar/eventdetail/1121/-/-)

AgResults’ Pull Mechanism to Reducing Aflatoxin in the Maize Value Chain in Nigeria

AgResults, a project that supports smallholder farmers through aflatoxin awareness programs, training of implementers and identification of potential market linkages, works on a ‘pull mechanism’ to reduce aflatoxin contamination in maize. The project creates awareness on the harmful effects of aflatoxin as well as importance of

investing in control measures for better quality grains for greater profit. The project also links farmers to markets for premium prices. At an innovative platform workshop held on 26 August 2014 in Lagos, Nigeria, several presenters demonstrated the effects of aflatoxin on human health, animals such as poultry, trade and businesses in Nigeria and

its impact on the country. The AgResults Aflasafe Pilot Project manager, Dr. Adebowale Akande, in his remark said that when using *Aflasafe* in maize, “the outcome last year showed a reduction of aflatoxin in cultivated maize below the European Standard”. The *Aflasafe* product was praised by many farmers at the workshop.

FAO and AU-IBAR Organized a Food Safety Training Workshop to Build Early Warning Surveillance Capacity in East Africa

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) co-organized a workshop on enhancing Early warning Systems for Food Safety in Eastern Africa on 27-31 October in Nairobi, Kenya. The FAO and AU-IBAR have been working with other international organizations to support country and regional capacities in order to implement AU decisions on establishing an African Union Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism and Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).



Picture from AU-IBAR website

The workshop enabled discussions on AUC's Food safety initiatives and perspectives, food safety issues including aflatoxin, control and prevention in East Africa and an overview of the new FAO draft handbook on early warning systems. The meeting also included panel discussions on rapid alert networks at all levels. Participants were tasked to develop orientations for Early Warning

Systems at national level for four East African countries and one at the regional level. The meeting was attended by various experts in food, agriculture, public and veterinary health from Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. Representatives from various organizations such as -IBAR, AU-PACA, FAO, ILRI, OIE, and WHO were also present. For additional information, please visit: <http://www.au-ibar.org/2012-10-01-13-08-42/press-releases/417-pan-spsso/609-enhancement-of-early-warning-systems-for-food-safety-in-eastern-africa>

"AFRICA FREE FROM THE HARMFUL
EFFECTS OF AFLATOXINS"

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Gallery Market Place Participants at PACA PPM 2014

AflaSTOP, Kenya

BLESS Laboratory, Ethiopia

**CAADP Non State Actors Coalition,
Cameroon**

CORAF/WECARD

Ekwa Farms CIG, Cameroon

**Food, Agriculture and Natural Re-
sources Policy Analysis Network
(FANRPAN)**

**Ghana Federation of Agricultural Pro-
ducers (GFAP) National Farmers
Platform**

GrainPro, Inc.

Helica Biosystems, Inc.

**International Institute for Tropical
Agriculture (IITA)**

**International Livestock Research
Institute (ILRI)**

Kenya Bureau of Standards , Kenya

Mobile Assay, Inc., USA

**National Agency for Food and Drug Ad-
ministration And Control (NAFDAC),
Nigeria**

**Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Service
(NAQS)**

**Nigerian Women Agro Allied Farmer's
Association (NIWAAFA), Nigeria**

**Peanut & Mycotoxin Innovation Lab,
University of Georgia, USA**

**Society for Empowerment and Self
Reliance (SESER)**

Texas A&M AgriLife Research, USA

US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

PACA in 2014



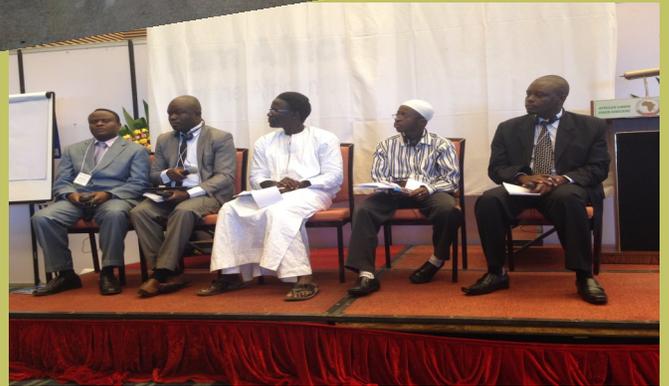
PACA



AUC



RECs



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Pilot countries



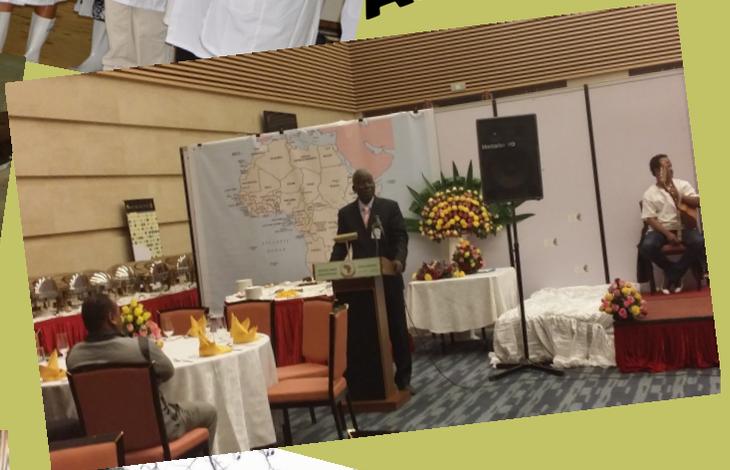
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P
P
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AfricaAIMS



Farmers

