PACA Regional and Country Activities Report - Eastern and Southern Africa (*Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania)*

# Background

The PACA Secretariat Mission is to “improving the effectiveness and efficiency of governments to tackle the aflatoxin challenge in Africa”. This mission requires the Secretariat to forge strong partnerships and work jointly with other key stakeholders involved in aflatoxin control (including RECs, private sector actors, NGOs, and development partners) to comprehensively support the governments of Africa in addressing aflatoxin on the continent. Thus, the Secretariat will strive to achieve this mission by directly supporting governments, and working with other aflatoxin control stakeholders to enable them to operate more effectively in the efforts to tackle the aflatoxin issue through Continental, Regional and Country activities.

# Highlight of Achievements

This report highlights progress and challenges in implementing PACA activities in the east and southern part of Africa, particularly in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda. The period August 2014 to date has been characterized by PACA Secretariat’s continued efforts at laying the foundation for implementation of the new strategic direction that was approved by the Steering Committee in August 2014.

## Regional Activities

Below are the activities that the PACA Secretariat implemented from July to December 2015 with RECs in the tripartite region (the East African Community - EAC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa - COMESA and the Southern African Development Committee - SADC).

### COMESA Region

Based on the PACA-COMESA Regional Workshop on Aflatoxin Challenge in Eastern and Southern Africa held in Lilongwe, 11-13 March 2014, efforts at developing a regional plan for aflatoxin control continued. The following achievements have been realized since June 2015

* COMESA re-advertised the call for consultants to support the development of the regional plan and Expressions of Interest were screened. The advertisement was made on the COMESA Website, PACA Website as well as circulated on the PACA Community Listserve.

PACA Secretariat will continue to work with COMESA to expedite the selection of qualified consultants to complete the work in quarters one and two of 2016. PACA and COMESA Secretariat will work closely toward mainstreaming the regional aflatoxin control action plan into the COMESA strategic documents.

###  EAC Region

PACA Secretariat reengaged EAC on the margins of the Inaugural Conference of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October 2015. PACA Secretariat will continue working with EAC to ensure that aflatoxins are adequately mainstreamed into CAADP aligned Regional Agriculture Investment Plan (RAIP) of EAC.

## PACA Pilot Country Activities

PACA has been implementing three umbrella activities for aflatoxin mitigation in its six Pilot Countries (Gambia, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda) as highlighted below:

1. ­­­­Activity 1: Establish Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS);
2. Activity 2: Support Country-led Situation Analysis and Action Planning (C-SAAP); and
3. Activity 3: Mainstream Food Safety and Aflatoxin Control through the PACA initiative.

Implementation at pilot country level in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda was marked by the finalization of C-SAAPs and efforts to mainstream validated action plans into the government led and stakeholder aligned planning while implementing AfricaAIMS continued.

### Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS)

The PACA has established the AfricaAIMS which will serve as a “one stop” information harbor for aflatoxin information in the health, trade and agriculture sectors. Data on the AfricaAIMS will be “home-grown” owned by AU Member States and respective RECs. The information on the AfricaAIMS will serve policy makers, regulatory bodies, technical agencies (health, trade and agriculture), researchers, farmers, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector partners along the value chain and other interested parties. PACA Secretariat continues to provide technical backstopping for the establishment of AfricaAIMS in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda. Sample collection for analysis began in Uganda and Tanzania through the Makerere University and the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology AfricaAIMS partner labs. Additionally, Malawi Chitedze Agricultural Research Station (CARS) explored partnership with IITA to jointly collect data for analysis and upload on the AfricaAIMS portal. For more details, see the report on progress of implementing AfricaAIMS **(PACA/SCM/Mar16/D6)**.

### Country-led Aflatoxin and Food Safety Situation Analysis and Action Planning (CSAAP) and Mainstream Food Safety and Aflatoxin Control (Mainstream FoodSAC) into NAFISPs

1. **Country-led Aflatoxin and Food Safety Situation Analysis**

The PACA Secretariat provided support in the Pilot Countries including Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda in externally reviewing C-SAAP reports for consistency and highest technical standards of the C-SAAP documents. Therefore, the C-SAAP documents for Uganda and Tanzania, and the draft Economic Impact Assessment of Malawi were reviewed. National consultants from Tanzania and Uganda are in the process of working through and finalizing of the C-SAAP documents based on the recommendations from the external reviewers (Abt Associates). Malawi is in the process of identifying consultants to engage for review and finalization of the document based on Abt Associates recommendations.

For results of the C-SAAP in the three countries, please refer to the report on salient findings of C-SAAP **(PACA/SCM/Mar16/D6).**

1. **National Aflatoxin Control Action Plan (NACAP)**

PACA Secretariat is supporting its Pilot Countries to develop NACAPs based on the outcomes of the situation analyses. On completion, the NACAPs will be mainstreamed into National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs) of each Pilot Country.

**Uganda** has identified priority thematic areas within their aflatoxin control action plan as indicated below

* Harmonize dissemination of aflatoxin information
* Increase awareness of aflatoxins by all stakeholders along the value chains
* Reduce consumption of aflatoxin contaminated foods and feeds
* Improve compliance to aflatoxin regulations and standards
* Strengthen food safety control systems
* Monitoring and Evaluation

**Tanzania** has identified priority thematic areas within their aflatoxin control action plan as indicated below

* Risk Assessment Institutional framework established
* Improve regulatory system for Aflatoxins in food
* Enhance research on aflatoxin prevention strategies
* Enhance awareness on aflatoxin issues
* Enhance stakeholder knowledge of aflatoxin mitigation options

**Malawi** Is awaiting the selection of new consultants to finalize the economic impact assessment which was initiated by consultants from the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). Once consultants have been identified, Malawi will revise the aflatoxin control action plan in the first or second quarter of 2016. Malawi is currently implementing the Malawi program for aflatoxin control in Africa (MAPAC) which was developed in line with the PACA 2013-2022 strategy. The following are priority areas of the action plan:

* Mainstream (integrate) good practice and technologies in maize and groundnuts value chains (and possible expanded to other commodities)
* Strengthen the capabilities of Malawian organizations and stakeholders for diagnostic, sampling and testing of aflatoxins, update relevant standards, provide a supportive regulatory policy framework for the application of aflatoxin control measures, and advocate for the integration of aflatoxins as a critical component of relevant policies.
* Create broad awareness about the implications of aflatoxin exposure and how to minimize risks of Malawian consumers (urban and rural)
1. **Mainstreaming Action Plans into NAFSIPs**

**Uganda** is in the process of ensuring that aflatoxins are adequately reflected and mainstreamed in the Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP). Through this process, PACA engaged a consultant in Uganda in order to engage relevant stakeholders in the Country to form a functional SC that will advise the implementation of the NACAP. The Uganda Mycotoxin Mitigation Steering Committee (UMMSC) was convened on December 4, 2015 in Kampala, Uganda with representatives from the various line ministries and development partners to discuss and approve suggestions for composition of the SC and review ToRs for the SC. A functional SC was formed and an institution to host the PACA Country Officer who will coordinate the implementation of the NACAP was agreed upon.

**Tanzania** has successfully embedded aflatoxin control in the Tanzania Agriculture Sector Development Plan (ASDP 2) and reads *“The threat posed by aflatoxin contamination at pre- and post- harvest systems requires focused intervention throughout the practical value chain of particularly highly vulnerable crops in order to avert its negative impact to human and animal health and trade locally and internationally”.*

**Malawi** Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, MoAIWD, (CAADP Focal point) confirmed plans to review Malawi’s NAFSIP – the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach in 2016.

### Other Country Updates –PACA Country Hire Process

In order to execute the country plans mainstreamed into the NACAPs, PACA will hire Country Officers in each of the Pilot Countries. The Country Officers will play key roles especially in aligning stakeholders around the country plans. They will also play a unique role in accelerating the institutionalization of country plans as part of national strategies (mainstreaming into NAFSIPs and other frameworks). The same is true with getting the commitments of government in the form of in-kind and financial support for plan implementation.

In this regard, the Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania working closely with PACA Secretariat and Aflatoxin Technical Working Groups selected potential candidates for the country officer position. PACA initiated the development of Memoranda of Agreement (MoA) between AUC and the countries. The MoA will facilitate the institutionalization of the Country Officer and are critical to be in place before the hiring is completed.

* The MoA for Malawi and Tanzania are under review by AUC Legal Counsel.
* Uganda’s MoA will be initiated in January 2016 upon receipt of a report from the UMMSC stating the host institution of the Country Officer.

All Country Officer hiring in the three Pilot Countries will be finalized in the first quarter of 2016.

# Planned Activities and Achievements, July-December 2015

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| PACA’s Annual Target | Achievements | Challenges | Way Forward |
| 1. Continental/regional support for aflatoxin control
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| Support to RECs |  |  |  |
| Develop COMESA Regional Action Plan | More transparent process for re-advertisement for consultants and shortlisting conducted. Consultancy posted on COMESA website, PACA Community and PACA website  | Long time in selecting the final consultants through the COMESA HR rules  | Continued engagement with COMESA and finalization of the action plan |
| Engage SADC | Concept note developed in previous Semester | Need for cost saving | To be continued in 2016 |
| Engage EAC | PACA reached an agreement with EAC to mainstream aflatoxins into the EAC’s regional aflatoxin food security investment planEAC accepted to join the PACA Steering Committee  |  | Continue engaging EAC through the PACA SC meetings and other platforms to ensure aflatoxins are adequately addressed in the region |
| 2. Pilot country Support |  |  |  |
| Country plan implementation support  |  |  |  |
| Evidence generation to inform plans and interventions – situational analysis in the three countries | Tanzania and Uganda CSAAPs and Malawi Economic Impact Assessment externally reviewed by Abt. Associates for technical accuracy and consistency | In Uganda and Tanzania – challenges faced in getting consultants to understand why the technical review was done after the validation of the studies in Country – therefore support and enthusiasm from consultants was low and had to be built over continuous engagementsMalawi – challenges to identify new consultants to revise and finalize the document | Engage a new set of consultants in Malawi to conduct the C-SAAPFinalize the documents in Tanzania and Uganda by addressing the comments from Abts. Associates |
| NAFSIPs reviewed incorporating aflatoxin control in two countries |  Tanzania has concretely mainstreamed aflatoxins in the Tanzania Agriculture Sector Development Plan (ASDP 2) as seen in section 3.3 of the Tanzania Agriculture Sector Development Plan (ASDP 2) “The threat posed by aflatoxin contamination at pre- and post- harvest systems requires focused intervention throughout the practical value chain of particularly highly vulnerable crops in order to avert its negative impact to human and animal health and trade locally and internationally”.Malawi and Uganda have articulated in writing their willingness to mainstream aflatoxins into the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp) and the Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP) respectively. | Translating commitments into concrete and tangible actions in Uganda and Malawi – i.e. mainstreaming the action plans into ASSP in Uganda and finalizing the economic impact assessment to inform the action plan for mainstreaming in ASWAp in Malawi. | Targeted efforts and continued engagement with the Pilot Countries. |
| Steering Committees established and functional for cross-sectoral coordination to oversee NACAP implementation | ATWGs have been established and functional in all PACA Pilot countries. Uganda and Malawi established their Steering Committees and are now functional  | Tension among ministries in Uganda on which institution would house UMMSC and the PACA Country Officer and a ????? | Continue engaging the Steering Committees and ATWG to ensure that they are functioning effectively |
| Business meetings and approval of funding strategy for NACAP implementation in five countries | Consultants engaged (TORs and deliverables have been agreed upon) and preparations underway in Uganda and TanzaniaConsultant ToRs includes a clear deliverable to develop templates for a resource mobilization strategy that will be used in all the PACA Pilot Countries  |  | Continue engaging ready countries towards convening the business meeting. |
| Hiring of PACA Country Officers in 6 countries | Malawi, and Tanzania have selected candidates and waiting for memorandum of hosting agreement between the host institution and AUC.Uganda MoA will be submitted in the first quarter of 2016 | Legal clearance of MOAs takes long | Planning with long lead time for all countries  |
| Establishing the Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS) | Tanzania and Uganda have signed LoAs with AUC which will enable the countries to start collecting AfricaAIMS data for agriculture, health and trade. Data collection has been initiated in these two countries.Malawi is in the pipeline of signing the LoA with AUC. Data collection will start in the first quarter of 2016. |  | Complete data collection, analysis and submission AfricaAIMS in all 3 countries. |

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