Inception Workshop

on

**PACA Pilot Country Activities - 2014**

**Venue: African Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**28-29 May 2014**

# Introduction

Aflatoxins are naturally occurring fungal metabolites produced by strains of *Aspergillus flavus* and *A. parasiticus,* which are acutely and chronically toxic, immunosuppressive, mutagenic and carcinogenic compounds that affect diverse foods and feeds. Due to these health risks, aflatoxins have therefore proven to be a major barrier in linking African farmers to markets as they prevent commodities from meeting international, regional and local regulations and standards governing agricultural trade and food safety.

Cognizant of these problems, in March 2011 at the 7th CAADP Partnership Platform, the African Union Commission was urged to oversee the establishment of a Continental SPS Working Group to mainstream sanitary/phytosanitary matters in the CAADP framework and establish an Africa-led Partnership for Aflatoxin Control. It was through this call that the Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) was established. PACA is therefore an innovative consortium aimed at coordinating and supporting aflatoxin mitigation and management across the health, agriculture and trade sectors in Africa. PACA’s overall aim is to support agricultural development, safeguard consumer health and facilitate trade by catalyzing, coordinating and increasing effective aflatoxin control along agricultural value chains in Africa.

In line with its Mid-Term Strategic Plan (2014-2017), PACA will, in 2014, initiate three major activities in five pilot countries. The activities are:

1. Establish Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS);
2. Support country-led aflatoxin situation analysis and action plan;
3. Mainstream aflatoxin control through the PACA initiative in CAADP NAFSIPs.
4. **Establish** Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS)

One of the major challenges in mitigating aflatoxin in Africa is the lack of adequate information and harmonized data collection on the subject. Yet information is needed to inform policy and interventions; inform prioritization of resource allocation; promote country capacity and awareness on the aflatoxin issue. Through the PACA initiative, the African Union Commission will establish the Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS) that will serve as a “one stop shop” information harbor for aflatoxin information in the health, trade and agriculture sectors. Data fed to 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, CSO, NGOs, private sector along the value chain and other interested parties.

**1.1. Type of Data to be Made Available on AfricaAIMS**

Data on the AfricaAIMS will be made available from the three most affected sectors (health, trade and agriculture). Examples of such data from the three sectors are listed in the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Information to be Made Available on AfricaAIMS** | | |
| ***Health*** | ***Trade*** | ***Agriculture*** |
| Liver cancer records | Aflatoxin standards in countries | Production levels of aflatoxin prone crops |
| Aflatoxin levels in humans / bio-marker data | Volume of export and imports | Grain moisture content |
| Rate of childhood stunting | Existence of free trade areas/ border control, customs regulations | Drying, storage, processing and packaging |
|  |  | Aflatoxin control interventions |

**1.2. Advantages of AfricaAIMS:**

The AfricaAIMS will:

* Facilitate trade through transparency
* Make evidence readily available to inform policy and interventions as well as to inform prioritization of resource allocation
* Promote harmonized data collection and Africa owned information generated through country leadership
* Serve as a tool for evidence planning and evaluating impact
* Promote country capacity through training, infrastructure and technical backstopping and through implementation of investment plans
* Promote awareness on aflatoxin issues

1. **Support country-led food safety system and aflatoxin situation analysis and action plan**

For countries that have not yet conducted situational analyses, PACA will support its pilot countries in conducting country-led food safety system and aflatoxin situation analysis and action planning. Such analyses would generate ‘blue prints’ of empirical evidence on existing aflatoxin prevalence, legislation, policy and regulation, management practices and other existing control mechanisms that can effectively inform interventions as countries prepare to tackle the aflatoxin problem . PACA will work with national consultants and Aflatoxin Technical Working Groups to conduct the analyses in alignment with the guidance of the political and technical leadership of the country.

The country-led analysis will: catalyze strategic action in countries affected by aflatoxin by informing country leadership across stakeholder groups about necessary actions they can take; identify existing programs that can integrate aflatoxin control measures; and avoid duplication of effort. It will also provide the necessary input to align aflatoxin control with broader food safety and SPS issues within countries.

1. **Mainstream food safety/aflatoxin control through the PACA initiative in CAADP NAFSIPs**

The aflatoxin challenge can be addressed effectively and in a more sustainable and comprehensive fashion if it is mainstreamed in existing frameworks and structures, such as CAADP National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs). Other frameworks that can be used for mainstreaming aflatoxin issues include, *inter alia*, the African Health Strategy, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), national food safety laws and regulations, and local agricultural extension and community health programs. In 2014, PACA will support its pilot countries’ efforts to mainstream aflatoxins and other food safety challenges into their CAADP NAFSIPs and relevant health and nutrition frameworks. By so doing, countries will:

* Ease the process of identifying gaps for aflatoxin and food safety interventions in country policies;
* Increase national investment in aflatoxin and other food safety issues and attract other funds for relevant country initiatives;
* Facilitate the alignment of aflatoxin interventions and projects with country priorities through NAFSIPs;
* Ensure that political leadership and ownership of aflatoxin and food safety issues at country level is established.

# 2. Objectives and Areas for Potential Discussion

PACA with the leadership of respective RECs, will convene an inception workshop on 28-29 May 2014 with the following objectives:

1. Sensitize pilot countries on the activities planned for in 2014 and kick-start the implementation process
2. Agree on the methodology for the implementation of AfricaAIMS;
3. Agree on a timeline for the implementation of all three pilot-country activities

## Potential Areas for discussions:

**Country-Led Situational Analysis:**

1. Establishing/linking Aflatoxin Technical Working Groups within the CAADP and National Food Safety structures
2. Setting up database on food safety and risk assessment experts who can be tapped into for conducting and reviewing country situational analysis
3. Scope of the country-led situational analysis
4. Procedures for review and endorsement of situation-analysis report

**Review of National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans**

1. Reviewing NAFSIPs within the SPS or Food Safety umbrella
2. Advantages of reviewing NAFSIPs for the mainstreaming of aflatoxin, food safety and control
3. Potential NAFSIP review steps and timelines at country level

**Establishment of the Africa Aflatoxin Information Management System (AfricaAIMS)**

1. Highlight the objectives and importance of the AfricaAIMS
2. Review AfricaAIMS methodology and compatibility with national structures
3. Gauge capacity needs at country level for the implementation of AfricaAIMS
4. Agree on concrete steps for implementing AfricaAIMS in each pilot country

**Regional Economic Communities Action Plans and activities for 2014**

* COMESA to share experience on draft regional action plan
* EAC to give updates on regional action plan and harmonization of aflatoxin standards
* ECOWAS to share lessons on action plan and development of rapid alert system for food and feed
* RECs to encourage countries to develop national plans on aflatoxin (e.g. MAPAC)

# Agenda

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8:30 am -9:00 am | **DAY I**  **Registration** | **Time allocation**  (30 mins) |
| 9.00 am- 9:35 am | **Opening Session**  ***Welcome note:*** Dr. Janet Edeme, AUC  ***Opening remarks:***   * Dr. David Wafula – EAC Secretariat * Mr. Ernest Aubee -ECOWAS Secretariat * Ms. Martha Byanyima, COMESA Secretariat * Mr. Chiluba Mwape | **(10 min)**  **(10 min)**  **(10 min)** |
| ***Meeting Objectives:*** PACA Secretariat | **(5 min)** |
| 9:35 am-10:35 am | **Session I: *Technical Briefs:***   * Overview of PACA (PACA Strategy and Strategic Plan) – Dr. Amare Ayalew * PACA Pilot Country Activities for 2014 – PACA SC Member/PACA Secretariat   **Introduction to AfricaAIMS**   * AU-IBAR’s ARIS II and how it works – Dr. Ibrahim Geshash   *Questions and discussions* | **(20 min)**  **(20 min)**  **(20 min)** |
| 10:35 – 10:50am | **Coffee/Tea Break** | **(15 min)** |
| 10:50 am-12:30 pm | **Session II: AfricaAIMS**  • AfricaAIMS   1. *Importance of establishing an Africa Owned informaiton system supporting aflatoxin control* 2. *Methodology and Implementation Plan* 3. *Using existing structures for implementing AfricaAIMS – experience of WHO (INFOSAN)*   Questions and Discussions | **(10 min)**  **(50 min)**  **(10 min)**  **(30 min)** |
| 12:30 pm- 1:30 pm | Lunch |  |
| 1:30 pm-3:30 pm | **Session III:REC and Country Breakout Sessions**  **Parallel Group 1: REC meeting**   1. Experience sharing on ECOWAS, EAC, and COMES Aaction plans   **Parallel Group 2: Member States Discussions**   1. Mechanism for implementing the AfricaAIMS (using the draft methodology as reference) 2. Review of AfricaAIMS methodology to fit with country contexts 3. Gauge country capacity gaps for implementing AfricaAIMS[[1]](#footnote-1) 4. Propose candidates to be trained in AfricaAIMS data submission in country | **(120 min)** |
| 3:30 pm-3:45 pm | Tea/coffee | 15 min |
| 3:45pm – 5:00pm | **Session IV: Continue Breakout session discussions**  Wrap Up and Closing Session | (75 min) |
|  | **Day II** |  |
| 9:00 am-9:10 am | **Recap of Day 1** | 10 min |
| 9:10 – 10:30 | **Country and RECs report from breakout sessions**   * REC s presentation * Gambia * Senegal * Malawi * Uganda * Tanzania   Discussions and questions | (10 min)  (10 min)  (10 min)  (10 min)  (10 min)  (10 min)  (20 min) |
| 10:30: 10:45 | Launch of PACA Website | (15 min) |
| 10:45 am -11:00 am | Coffee/ tea break | (15 min) |
| 11:00 am -12:10pm | **Country-led situational analysis**  Sharing lessons with past methodologies used for country analysis --- (PPT) Martin Kimanya  **Presentation: FAO technical support available at country level- Jean Kamanzi**  **Guided group discussions**  Available country capacity for aflatoxin policy reviews and analysis   * *ATWG and their role in facilitating country activities* | **(30 min)**  **(10 min)**  **(30 min)** |
| 12:10pm- 12: 30pm | **NAFSIP Reviews**  Proposed methodology/steps for NAFSIP reviews (PPT)  Group discussions | (20 mins) |
| 12.30 pm-1.45 pm | Lunch |  |
| 1:45 pm -3:05 pm | **Presentation on Proposed timeline for agreed country activities**  **Country Group Breakout Sessions –**  Discusss and amend proposed timeline for implementing activities (with names of responsible persons) | (20 min)  (60 min) |
| 3:05 pm -3:45 pm | **Plenary Presentation of agreed timelines and next steps**  Uganda  Senegal  Malawi  Uganda  Tanzania | (10 mn)  (10 min)  (10 min)  (10 min)  (10min) |
| 4:30pm-5:00pm | Wrap up and logistics | (30 min) |

# Invitee List

For the successful launch of AfricaAIMS and other actions at country level, the following participants will be invited to the workshop:

1. **REC representatives:**
   1. 1 or 2 ECOWAS Representatives
   2. 1 or 2 EAC Representatives
   3. 1 or 2 COMESA Representatives
2. **Pilot Country Representatives:**

From each country 4 representatives from the following list would be invited

* 1. Director- Ministry of Health (to input on data submission processes in health sector for AfricaAIMS)
  2. CAADP Focal person/ Director- Ministry of Agriculture (to input on data submission processes in agriculture sector for AfricaAIMS)
  3. Food Safety Focal Person
  4. Director – Ministry of Trade (to input on data submission processes in trade sector for AfricaAIMS)
  5. Representative of PACA ATWG or Academia or Food Safety Authority

**Resource Persons**

* 1. **AUCDREA Representative**
  2. Abt. Associates
  3. Meridian Institute
  4. One AU-IBAR ARIS II specialist
  5. AUC Finance Officer (mandatory)
  6. FAO
  7. WHO-INFOSAN
  8. NEPAD
  9. PACA Secretariat: PACA PM, TO and lead PO

# Post Workshop Side Meeting

The PACA Secretariat will, on 30 May meet with AU-IBAR to:

1. Finalize the AfricaAIMS methodology based on workshop outcomes
2. Finalize the development of the AfricaAIMS training manual

1. using template submitted by country before workshop [↑](#footnote-ref-1)