**TOWARDS THE BUSINESS MEETING**

**Background information**

In May 2015, Tanzania stakeholders in aflatoxins mitigation, validated an Aflatoxin Mitigation Action Plan which was developed by consultants commissioned by the African Union through the Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) for the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The consultants updated the 2012 status of aflatoxin prevalence for maize and groundnuts, assessed aflatoxin contamination in rice, collected information on food safety systems in place for mitigation of the problem, formulated recommendations and specific investment options for aflatoxin mitigation and suggested that the recommendations be mainstreamed into the Tanzania Food Security Investment Plan (TAFSIP).

A stakeholders meeting which was held from 20 -21 May 2015, reviewed and adopted the situation analysis and recommendations, with minor changes. The changes include, improving the Action plan by identifying Lead institutions/ministries in addition to responsible ministry/institution, rewording of the actions and indicators to make them crispy and concise and separating the M&E component from the Action Plan.

With regard to mainstreaming of the Action Plan, the stakeholders recommended that the it be mainstreamed into the Agriculture Sector Development Plan (ASDP II), through which TAFSIP is implemented. The stakeholders, also, agreed that in order to mobilize resources for implementation of the Action Plan, PACA should work with the United Republic of Tanzania to host a business meeting.

The following next steps were determined to achieve the objectives of mainstreaming the Action Plan into the ASDP II and mobilizing resources for its implementation**:**

1. PACA to submit a synopsis of the meeting with a covering letter from Africa Union Commission to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives (MAFC) requesting to make a presentation on the Aflatoxin Mitigation Action Plan, at the Agriculture Consultative Group (ASCG).
2. PACA to share the Action plan with Donors (national, regional and international) to get input and to sensitize them on the business meeting envisioned.
3. The consultants to present the Action Plan to the Meeting of the Agriculture Sector Consultative Group (ASCG) to share more insights on the Aflatoxin Mitigation Plan.
4. When agreement on funding has been reached, the MAFC to ensure incorporation of the fundamental aspects of the action plan into the ASDP II for implementation through the TFSIP
5. The Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Cooperatives to take lead in ensuring that implementation progress is tracked through the annual joint reviews.

**Progress in the follow up actions**

In view of the next steps decided by the stakeholders meeting, we had to incorporate their comments into the Action Plan immediately after the meeting. Among other things, the Action plan was improved by identifying Lead institutions/ministries in addition to responsible ministry/institution and rewording of the actions and indicators to make them crispy and concise.

In June 2015, AUC wrote a letter to the Permanent Secretary of MAFC informing him of the stakeholder’s resolutions and submitting the Action Plan for incorporation into the ASDP II. Reports from the ministry shows that discussions are underway to agree on the meeting date for the ASCG to which the consultants will be invited to present the plan.

PACA has already shared the Action Plan with a number of development partners and some of them have already sent feedback on how to improve the plan or mainstream it in the ASDP II.

**Strategy to hasten the follow up actions**

1. **Develop a clear and separate M & E framework**. Some of the actions in the stakeholders validated Action plan are long term (may take longer than 3 years to be finished). We recommend to identify in the Plan actions that can be finished in three years and prepare a 3 year implementation plan and an M&E framework for them. The M& E framework will be based on the CAADP results framework.
2. **Incorporate comments from the development partners**. Some donors who were reached through PACA secretariat have already sent comments to improve the Action Plan. These comments will be addressed in the course of preparing the 3 year implementation plan.
3. **Prepare a Marketing Plan**. In order to ensure effective participation in the business meeting we propose to sensitize more development partners, government officials and private companies in Tanzania. This can be achieved through production a very concise information, based on the Action Plan, which can be disseminated to stakeholders, in form of a leaflet and through the media.

Dissemination of the information can be done by a team composed of one consultant, a PACA secretariat member and or a PACA Steering Committee member, accompanied by the Director of Food Safety of TFDA (he has accepted to join the team as PACA country Officer hosting institution). This team will sensitize, TFDA, TBS and some private companies such as the IPP Media (owned by a famous business man, Dr. Reginald Mengi) and the Said Salum Bakheressa and Co Ltd (the Azam Company) to pledge their contributions for implementation of the Action plan. With the pledges from the Government and private sector, the team can approach donors who are based in Tanzania such as USAID and request them to also pledge or participate in the business meeting. My preliminary discussions with the TFDA DG indicate that TFDA is willing to set aside USD 50,000, annually, for three year, for the aflatoxin plan. We can also reach out more institutions such as the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI) and the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF).

1. **Mainstreaming of the Action Plan into ASDP II**. According to the stakeholders views, the Action Plan needs to be mainstreamed into the ASDP II for implementation through TAFSIP. The Tanzania CAADP Focal Point has indicated that MAFC has already received a letter from AUC-PACA informing them of the Action Plan and decisions of the stakeholders meeting. The CAADP focal point indicated further that she has already talked with the Permanent Secretary and Director of Policy and Planning of MAFC about the need of convening a meeting of the ASCG to discuss the Action Plan. Efforts are underway to get the ministry approval for the meeting. One of the consultants will present the Action Plan to the ASCG meeting as needed with expectation that it will be approved for mainstreaming into the ASDP II. Once approved, the consultant will work with the focal point (Mrs Margareth Ndaba) and the Assistant Director for Plant Health (Mr. Cornelius Mkondo) to incorporate the Action Plan into the ASDP II document as appropriate. Both Mrs Ndaba and Mr Mkondo attended the Stakeholders meeting and provided useful guidance on how the mainstreaming should be approached.

Recently I met with Mrs Simkanga who is the Director for Policy and Planning, in presence of the CAADP focal point and Assistant Director for Plant Protection. Mrs Simkanga was well informed about our desire to present the aflatoxin action plan to the ASCG but informed me that the ministry does not have any budget for meetings of the group. Her plans were to request international partners such as FAO and USAID to support this particular meeting as these are the usual supporters of the ASCG meetings.​ We, however, observed that awaiting for a possible support from the international bodies can put our plans to a risk of failing. I therefore requested them to prepare a budget for the ASCG meeting which I can share with PACA for consideration. . I received a budget of about USD 7000 which I incorporated in the review budget for my work.

The agriculture sector consultative group (ASCG) is composed of government - sector related ministries (including those responsible for health, trade, livestock and fisheries development, finance and local government administration), private sector, development partners, civil society (NGOs/CBOs) and farmer representation. Normally the number range from 70- 80 but for the purposes of budgeting in consideration of the aflatoxin subject, new joining development partners and civil society organizations the number may increase to 100.

1. **Develop a resource mobilisation strategy**. Using the business meeting we are likely to get funds for starting implementation of the Action Plan. There is need to design a strategy to ensure sustainability in funding of the three year plan and subsequent plans. We can identify a few actions that can strategically be implemented to ensure sustainability of funding for the Aflatoxin Action Plan.

Table 1 shows the deliverable that are expected from implementation of the recommendations for effective participation in the business meeting and mainstreaming of the Action Plan into ASDP II.

**Table 1: Timed deliverable for preparation of the Business Meeting and Mainstreaming of the Action Plan into ASDP II**

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| **No.** | **Deliverable** | **Due Date (on or about)** |
| 1. | Incorporate comments from the Development partners who were reached through PACA secretariat and agree with the MAFC on the meeting date for the ASCG. | 17th August, 2015 |
| 2 | Develop a 3 year implementation plan and clear M & E framework for the 3 year implementation plan using the CAADP M&E framework document. | 24st August 2015 |
| 2 | Prepare leaflets for use in sensitizing donors, private sector and government agencies about the importance of the Action Plan and participation in the business meeting. | 29th August 2015 |
| 3 | Using the leaflets and the Action Plan engage more donors and private companies in Tanzania to ensure their effective participation in the Business meeting | 31th August 2015 |
| 4 | Work with the PACA secretariat in preparing a concept note for the Business meeting | 31st August 2013 |
| 5 | Develop a resource mobilisation strategy | 4th September 2015 |
| 6 | Sensitize TFDA, TBS and Private Companies such as Said Salum Bakheressa and Co Ltd, IPP Media to pledge their contributions for implementation of the plan | 7th September 2015 |
| 7 | Present the Action Plan to the ASCG meeting | 15th September 2015 |
| 8 | Present the Action Plan to the Business Meeting | 21th September 2015 |
| 9 | Work with the CAADP focal point and the Assistant Director for Plan Health Protection to incorporate the Action Plan in the ASDP II | 29th September 2015 |
| 10 | Submit final report to the PACA Secretariat | 15th October 2015 |