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Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa

Improving food security, health, and trade

Aflatoxin contamination has wide ranging impacts on health, trade and food security throughout Africa. Prevention and control of aflatoxin requires a comprehensive, systematic and integrated approach, involving a broad range of stakeholders in Africa and globally. Stakeholders have endorsed the creation of a Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) under the leadership of the African Union Commission. Participants in the seventh Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program's (CAADP) Partnership Platform (PP) in March 2011 urged that the AUC to oversee the establishment of a Continental SPS Working Group to mainstream SPS matters in the CAADP framework and establishment of an Africa-led Partnership for Aflatoxin Control. Participants in the PACA Workshop, 3-4 October 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya hosted by the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) recommended the creation of an interim Steering Committee and broad PACA membership to guide the formation of PACA in 2012.

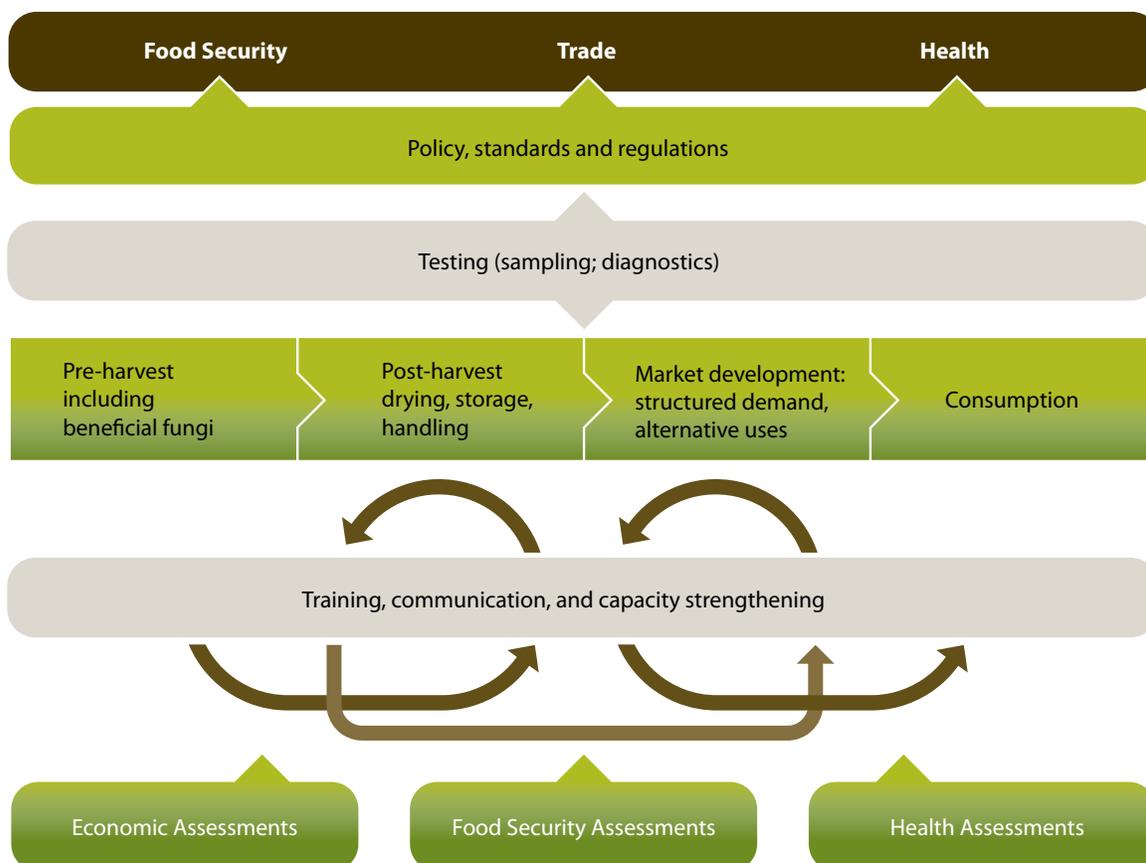
Aflatoxin is a highly toxic substance caused by fungi. The toxin is linked to cancer, immune-system suppression, growth retardation, liver disease, and death in both humans and domestic animals. Already, governments, private companies, farmers' organizations, research organizations, international institutions, donors, civil society organizations, and others are investing in and implementing key elements of solutions to better manage aflatoxin in Africa. As these areas for action are interrelated, actions need to be implemented in a holistic and integrated manner.

Overview of PACA

Within the general framework of a continent-wide effort on SPS issues, PACA aims to provide consistent coordination and coherent leadership to the continental efforts on aflatoxin control, acting as the *de facto* clearing house on information, communication and control on aflatoxin in Africa. While the exact activities and shape of PACA are still being developed and will be informed by input from wide-ranging African and international partners, some initial short and long term objectives have been identified:

- **Establish a PACA network and information sharing platform:** The Partnership will provide tools for communication and coordination between the many organizations and individuals working on aflatoxin control throughout Africa.
- **Engage high level leadership:** PACA will seek endorsement of aflatoxin control by the highest political leadership in Africa, and a launch event has been proposed for November 2012 to engage the wide-ranging partners and stakeholders interested in and working on aflatoxin control.
- **Create durable structures and transparent governance:** The Partnership will be guided by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from a diverse array of interested parties that were identified during the AU-IBAR meeting and appointed by the AU. During the first year, the Steering Committee will establish fair and transparent governance processes, identify priorities for aflatoxin control, and create three initial sub-committees: health, agriculture and food security, and trade.
- **Implement effective aflatoxin control projects:** Beginning in its first year, PACA will execute on-the-ground projects to assess aflatoxin prevalence and economic impacts; prevent contamination; reduce exposure; and improve health, food security, and trade.
- **Mobilize resources and develop a funding mechanism:** One of the long-term objectives of PACA is to provide a coordinated funding mechanism, modalities for submitting proposals for aflatoxin related activities, and a process and criteria for evaluating proposals.

PACA Comprehensive Program



Needs and Areas of Interest

Through interviews and meetings with stakeholders, PACA has identified a need for multiple, inter-related areas of action, required for a comprehensive approach to aflatoxin control. Research and assessments provide the foundation upon which science-based interventions will be designed and refined. These interventions will include approaches designed to prevent aflatoxin contamination pre- and post-harvest, reduce exposure, and direct contaminated crops to alternative uses. New information from studies, along with the results from field trials and grower experience, will inform policies, standards, and regulations that will drive scaling up of on-the-ground control activities and require testing at various points along the value chain. Simultaneous to all of this, education initiatives will be designed to raise awareness about the dangers of aflatoxin, as well as how to successfully implement proven aflatoxin control strategies.

Overview of Existing Aflatoxin Research, Prevention, and Control Activities

Numerous public and private funders are supporting aflatoxin research, prevention, and control projects around the world. The PACA has begun to catalogue existing and planned activities on aflatoxin control in



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Africa. These encompass over fifty individual projects that are supported and led by a wide range of parties and span continental, regional, and country scales. Examples of the type of work that is ongoing or planned include:

- Building an increased understanding and knowledge-base of Aflatoxin's prevalence and impacts through literature reviews, country assessments, economic analyses, health impacts studies, **and a baseline (ex-ante) digital mapping of aflatoxin prevalence and control interventions.**
- Building capacity to implement aflatoxin prevention and control activities in an integrated manner. These activities include **development of low cost diagnostic tests, training for farmers, construction of testing facilities, technical assistance, establishment of regional standards, and exploration of alternative uses.**
- Further developing and scaling up existing and new technologies for preventing aflatoxin both pre- and post-harvest. Examples projects include **variety improvement, food processing techniques, scaling up biological control, and improving and implementing low-cost storage and drying technology.**



More information about PACA:

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Partnership
for Aflatoxin
Control in Africa

Partenariat pour
lutter contre
l'aflatoxine en Afrique

Parceria para o
Controle da
Aflatoxina em África

الشراكة من أجل مكافحة
الافلاتوكسين في أفريقيا