



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

**EAC AFLATOXIN PREVENTION AND CONTROL STRATEGY
NATIONAL VALIDATION WORKSHOP**

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA -
Laico Regency Hotel Nairobi**

9th -10th June 2016

REPORT OF THE MEETING

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Aflatoxin contamination of food and feed poses a serious threat to human and animal health. The contamination also contributes to heavy post-harvest and trade-related losses. Aflatoxin exposure through dietary consumption has been linked to human morbidity and mortality. The burden of Aflatoxin exposure in the EAC is also reflected in the frequent outbreaks of acute aflatoxicosis in some EAC Partner States.

Existing efforts to mitigate Aflatoxin at national level are inadequate technically and financially. In order to address this challenge in a holistic manner, the 27th Meeting of the EAC Council of Ministers held in August 2013 directed the Secretariat to adopt a multi-sectorial approach that encompasses Agriculture, Health, Environment, Trade and Industry sectors in the implementation of the EAC Aflatoxin interventions in order to enhance coordination and cooperation at the national and regional levels. Subsequently, the EAC regional project on Aflatoxin prevention and control was designed and launched in 2014 with the aim of preventing and controlling adverse impacts of Aflatoxin along the food and feed value chains. The overall goal of this project is to contribute to Food Security and Safety in the EAC and Protect Human, Animal and Plant Health. The objectives of the project are to:

- a) Develop EAC Regional Strategy and Action Plan on Prevention and Control of Aflatoxin
- b) Establish the foundation for a Regional Biocontrol Program in the EAC
- c) Build Capacity of the region on Aflatoxin Control and Prevention in the Region
- d) Enhance Levels of Awareness on Aflatoxin Control and Prevention in the EAC Region

Development of a Strategy on Aflatoxin Prevention and Control is one of the key activities under the project.

1.1 Convening of the Meeting

In January and April 2016, the EAC Secretariat convened meetings of experts to develop the EAC Aflatoxin Prevention and Control Strategy. In order to complete the development of the draft strategy for adoption, validation at the national and regional levels is an important requirement to ensure ownership and buy-in.

In view of the above, the EAC Secretariat convened a validation workshop in the Republic of Kenya on 9-10 June, 2016.

1.2 Objectives of the Meeting

The objectives of the validation workshop were to:

- a) Provide a forum for internalization and ownership of the proposed EAC Aflatoxin Prevention and Control Strategy; and
- b) Validate and contribute to the improvement of the document by identifying gaps and suggesting inputs for improvement.

1.3 Participation

The workshop was attended by a wide range of stakeholders including government line Ministries and institutions (Ministries responsible for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Health, Labour and East African Community Affairs and Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute). Regulatory agencies that participated include the National Environment Management Authority, Department of Veterinary Services, the Kenya Bureau of Standards and the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service. The private sector was represented by the Cereal Millers Association of Kenya, Feed miller and Kemin). Other key stakeholders were the Center for Disease Control and Texas A&M Agrilife. The EAC Secretariat was also represented. The list of participants is hereto attached as *Annex I*.

1.4 Management of the meeting

The meeting was Chaired by Mrs. Mary Mwambia, Deputy Director Livestock Production State Department of livestock, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. Ms. Brendah Obura, Chief Public Health Officer, Ministry of Health was Rapporteur.

2.0 Opening Remarks

2.1 Opening Remarks from the Chair

The Chairperson welcomed stakeholders and thanked the EAC Secretariat for convening the workshop. She appreciated the diverse composition of stakeholders represented at workshop and wished them fruitful deliberations.

2.2 Remarks by the EAC Secretariat

Mr. David Wafula, EAC Secretariat, thanked all the stakeholders for taking time from their busy schedules to participate in the workshop. He conveyed greetings from Hon. Jesca Eriyo, the EAC Deputy Secretary General in-charge of Productive and Social Sectors (DSG-PSS). Mr. Wafula informed the participants that the Aflatoxin Prevention and Control project is one of the flagship initiatives implemented by the EAC Secretariat. He further informed them that the Aflatoxin Prevention and Control Strategy has been drafted by a team of experts from EAC Partner States. The main focus of the validation workshops is to provide a forum for stakeholder consultations at the national level to internalize and contribute to finalization of the strategy. Mr. Wafula pointed out that comments and inputs received from all the Partner States will inform improvement of the draft Strategy prior to validation at the regional level.

3.0 Overview Presentation on Effects of Aflatoxin

The overview presentation was given by Mr. Phinius Nyaga, Head of Plant Protection Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. The presentation was aimed at enhancing a common understanding of aflatoxin and its impacts and effects along the food and feed value chains. It was noted that Aflatoxins are toxins produced by *Aspergillus, flavus*, fungi naturally occurring in the soil. Aflatoxin contamination is a perennial concern in warm climates with temperatures ranging from 12°C to 48°C and at latitudes between 40°N and 40°S of the equator. By nature of its geographical location, Africa is predisposed to Aflatoxin contamination.

David *Wafula*

Mr. Nyanga highlighted the impacts and effects of aflatoxin contamination on human and animal health. In human beings, large doses of aflatoxin contamination can lead to acute illness and death, usually through liver cirrhosis. Chronic low doses have nutritional and immunologic consequences. All doses have a cumulative effect on the risk of cancer (bioaccumulation). In animals, the effects of aflatoxin on the liver is greater at a much lower concentration than that for humans.

Mr. Nyanga concluded his presentation by recommending a wide range of interventions and best practices at pre and post harvest levels, deployment of appropriate technologies, enhance awareness creation, and the need to conduct more research to establish correlations between consumption of aflatoxin contaminated food and feeds, morbidity, and mortality in humans and animals.

4.0 Presentation of the Background Paper

The background paper was presented by Mr. David Wafula, the EAC Secretariat. He observed that prevalence of Aflatoxin is one of the challenges likely to undermine achievement of global, continental and regional development goals including Sustainable Development Goals and the Malabo Declaration. He highlighted the progress made in implementation of the EAC Aflatoxin Prevention and Control project, key achievements and the process followed in the development of the strategy. Mr. Wafula informed the participants that experts from EAC Partner States were instrumental in the drafting of the strategy. The 11 multi-sectoral technical papers on aflatoxin prevention and control were the main reference documents that informed development of the Strategy. He outlined the objectives of the meeting and expected outputs. The background paper is hereto attached as *Annex II*.

5.0 Presentation of the proposed EAC Aflatoxin Prevention and Control Strategy

The presentation was made by Mr. David Wafula, EAC Secretariat. He outlined key sections of the EAC Aflatoxin Prevention and Control Strategy. The Strategy is organized around 7 clusters; agriculture, animal health & feed standards, human health & food standards, trade, communication, environment, research and technology for advancement of aflatoxin control. He highlighted the broad thematic/strategic areas of the strategy, strategic objectives, strategic actions and results for each cluster. An overview of implementation arrangements, logical frameworks and action plans for each cluster were also presented. The Vision of the strategy is 'An Aflatoxin safe East African Community' while the Mission is 'to promote agricultural production, trade and consumption of aflatoxin safe products through enhanced capacity building, awareness, advocacy, research, technology and innovations, strengthening regulatory, health and extension systems along the value chains in the EAC'. The overall goal of the strategy is to 'contribute to Food Security and Safety in the EAC and Protect Human, Animal and Plant Health'.

The Strategy is aligned to global and continental developmental goals including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the 2014 AU Heads of State Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. The Strategy is also aligned to Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) led by the African Union Commission. The presentation is hereto attached as *Annex III*.

B. Wafula *D.*

6.0 Review and Validation of the Draft EAC Aflatoxin Prevention and Control Strategy

Guidance on the group work in line with the objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting was given. The meeting validated the draft EAC Aflatoxin and Prevention Control Strategy in three breakout groups. The groups were constituted based on the following clusters

- Agriculture, environment, animal health and feed standards;
- Human health and standards for food, and trade; and
- Communication and research and technology for advancement of aflatoxin control.

The comments and inputs generated by the groups were presented and discussed in plenary. The detailed Republic of Kenya comments and inputs are attached as *Annex IV (a, b & c)*.

6.1 General Comments

- A cost-benefit analysis of the proposed interventions should be undertaken
- Need to demarcate and prioritize prevention and control interventions
- Ensure uniformity and consistency in the flow of the document
- Have two separate documents : 1. Strategy
2. Action Plans

7.0 Observations and Recommendations

7.1 Observations

The meeting made the following observations.

- i. Kenya has documented cases of morbidity and mortality associated with aflatoxin exposure.
- ii. Some of the maize supplied to the millers in Kenya is contaminated with aflatoxin and this has led to rejection of the maize and an increase of maize flour prices due to scarcity of good maize.
- iii. Regulation has mainly focused on the commercial millers (approximately 30%) and not on maize used by posho millers (approximately 70%)
- iv. Some of the maize originating from neighboring countries is contaminated with Aflatoxin
- v. Aflatoxin binders are being used by animal feeds manufacturers in Kenya to reduce aflatoxin effects in animals however there are no regulations on the use of binders.
- vi. The need to empower consumers to demand for safe food

7.2 Recommendations

The meeting made the following recommendations

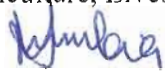
- a) **The Kenyan government to strengthen mechanisms for ensuring traceability, and accountability for both locally produced and imported agricultural commodities to ensure food and feed safety**

- b) **The EAC Secretariat and Partner States to undertake a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed interventions in the Strategy and prioritize prevention and control components in Action Plan**
- c) **Implementation of the EAC communication strategy should pay special attention to empowering consumers to demand for aflatoxin safe food**
- d) **The Kenyan government to develop regulations on the use of binders.**

Signed on this 10th day of June, 2016.

Signed by:

Ms. Mary Wambui MWAMBIA
Deputy Director Livestock Production
State Department of livestock
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries



Ms. Brendah Nakhumicha OBURA
Chief Public Health Officer
Environmental Health/Food Safety Unit
Ministry of Health