



# ALL ACP AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES PROGRAMME

Newsletter No. 7

March 2010

## EDITORIAL

The second  
tranche is  
launched



Dear Readers,

Building on the Mid-Term Review carried out in May 2009, the All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (AAACP) is now set on higher gear. Substantial refocusing has been achieved by the Steering Committee in collaboration with the Coordination Unit. This will guide the implementation of the second tranche by partner international organizations (IOs).

The activities identified under this second tranche will be based even more heavily on increased collaboration and coordination among partners. They will constitute as many opportunities to deepen the learning process among development partners through hands-on implementation characterized by coordination and capitalization of synergies in the framework of our shared fight against poverty. The Coordination Unit of the Programme will continue to play its role of facilitator in attaining set objectives through actively supporting the combined efforts of stakeholders.

The alignment of our processes has been one of the key success factors in the management of the programme. Some of the tools include: the harmonization of the format of the biannual reports provided by the five partner International Organisations, and the design of a common working framework which allows for a more stringent monitoring of the programme in terms of goal achieved and optimization of expert input from IOs.

Regional focal points have been identified

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## Programme Focal Points Deepening regional ownership

Five ACP regional organizations have accepted to be the Programme's Focal Points (FPs). Representatives from these organizations were in Brussels end of February to take part in the Programme Steering Committee and allied meetings. They have shared progress achieved in concluding the "twinning arrangements" and outlined activities being planned.

The setting up of FPs in the wake of the Spring 2009 MTR seeks to increase the involvement of ACP stakeholders in the programme and to anchor the latter in the regions. FPs will ensure that programme activities are in coherence with national and regional policies, as well as with other development projects being implemented in the country or region. They will see to it that appropriate synergies and relevant contacts are developed. FPs will also be tasked with disseminating AAACP-related information broadly, so as to enlist wide interest from stakeholders. They will contribute to sharing of knowledge generated by the Programme, and to the dissemination of lessons learnt and know-how stemming from programme implementation.

The setting up of the FPs is progressing well. Representatives present at the Brussels meetings have reported on work in progress and introduced communication activities that will be undertaken soon. These activities will be detailed in a work plan covering the first six or twelve months, and which will be communicated by FPs shortly. Activities undertaken will be the subject of a quarterly report, while a mission report will cover each activity in which the FP will have been involved. The participation of the FPs in the February meetings provided



The five FP Representatives. From left to right: Bruce Lauckner (CARDI), Fred Kongongo and Angela Mwape Mulenga (COMESA), Ousseini Ouedraogo (ROPPA), Carlos Bonfim (ECCAS), Tim Martyn (SPC).

## UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES

### Belize **Risk Assessment for the Agricultural Sector**

In 2009, as part of the AAACP programme for the Caribbean Region, a World Bank team finalized a Risk Management Assessment at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Cooperatives. Through a process of ranking risks in terms of its potential to cause losses and the frequency of identified risks, the exercise concluded that the agricultural sector is primarily vulnerable to outbreak of pest and diseases, heavy winds and rainfall associated with tropical storms, and food safety risks from informal cross border trade.

The programme is advising the Ministry to design a risk management strategy that includes mitigation, risk transfer mechanisms, and risk coping, for the major identified risks.

The risk assessment conducted in Belize was timely in informing an Inter-American Development Bank lending operation of US\$5.0 million, approved in January 2010. The operation aims to promote agricultural innovation, and includes an Animal and Food Safety Risk Management component. Similarly, the findings of this exercise are being useful for the design of further World Bank technical assistance on country-wide social protection and agricultural risk management.

opportunities to discuss and clarify the role devolved unto them as well as the associated tasks and expected results.

CARDI has been selected as FP for the **Caribbean region**. Bruce Lauckner ([blauckner@cardi.org](mailto:blauckner@cardi.org)) CARDI's representative at the Brussels meeting, wishes to get the AAACP better known in the region: " *I intend to introduce the programme to project leaders and government officials at the meeting scheduled for early April in Trinidad, as well as during a forthcoming CARICOM meeting on agriculture. We shall also cover the programme in CARDI's Newsletter and website ([www.cardi.org](http://www.cardi.org))*".

For the **Pacific region**, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), represented by Tim Martyn ([timm@spc.int](mailto:timm@spc.int)), signed a twinning agreement with FAO in December 2009. This has enabled the SPC to take up its job as FP since January. " *Disseminating programme-related information throughout the region will be our priority task as Focal Point. We have already identified tools and channels for information exchange. These will include bulletins, web sites, meetings, etc*", added Tim.

In **West Africa**, the Focal Point is the "Réseau des organisations paysannes et producteurs agricoles d'Afrique de l'ouest" (ROPPA), which was represented at the Brussels meeting by Ousseini Ouedraogo ([ousseini.ouedraogo@roppa-oua.org](mailto:ousseini.ouedraogo@roppa-oua.org)). Ousseini says: " *To disseminate information to farmers, ROPPA will rely mainly on face-to-face meetings, newsletters drafted in local languages and rural and community radios*". In discharging its duties, ROPPA will benefit from FAO's support as twinning partner.

COMESA has been selected as FP for **eastern and southern Africa**. The twinning agreement is being finalized with ITC. " *We will seek to maximize synergies with COMESA programmes and will share information using existing tools and channels. We will also add a page dedicated to the AAACP on our website ([www.comesa.int](http://www.comesa.int))*" said Angela Mwape Mulenga ([amulenga@comesa.int](mailto:amulenga@comesa.int)) who will be the main contact point within COMESA, with Fred Kongongo ([FKongongo@googlemail.com](mailto:FKongongo@googlemail.com)) in charge of cotton issues.

For the **Central Africa** region, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS/CEEAC) has been selected as focal Point, with ITC as twinning partner. The ECCAS representative remarked: " *Regarding our region, the AAACP should align itself on the common agricultural policy and regional food security policy that ECCAS is developing*". The organization will strive to give higher visibility to the AAACP in the region, especially with producer organizations. ECCAS is also the FP for the cotton component of the AAACP.

## Promoting the eco-pulping technology in Cameroun's coffee industry

Production of coffee in Cameroun has seen a marked decline in recent years, dropping from an average of 90,000 tons in the early 1990's to about 35,000 tons in 2009. Arabicas in particular, which accounted for more than 20,000 t are down to below 4,000 t. At the same time quality, which depends for the most part on good agricultural practices and primary processing, has suffered.

In the framework of the Government's decision to launch the revival of the coffee sub-sector, and based on the results of the ITC-facilitated Strategy, AAACP funding was mobilized by the World Bank to study the feasibility of introducing in Cameroun the eco-pulping technology pioneered in Brazil and Colombia and successfully introduced in Kenya and Rwanda. The feasibility study, conducted by Café Africa, a Swiss-based specialized consultancy firm, was produced late in 2009. It recommended the introduction of the eco-pulping technology to be used in small Central Washing Stations more adapted to Cameroun's specificity of widely spread-out coffee farms. An interesting feature will be the introduction of the technology to produce washed Robustas, a relatively recent innovation to specialty coffee market, and which has potential as a partial substitute in blends for expensive washed Arabicas.

The encouraging findings revealed by the feasibility study triggered another example of cooperation between AAACP and Bank operations: a World Bank-funded agricultural programme in Cameroun (Programme d'Appui à la Compétitivité Agricole - PACA) will purchase the necessary equipment to run four pilot operations in testing the technology in four different coffee growing regions in the country, two for robusta and two for arabica. On its side, AAACP will finance a comprehensive programme of technical assistance that will ensure (i) that adequate technical support is brought to the four chosen coffee cooperatives in installing and operating the coffee pulping equipment, and (ii) that farmer organizations receive the proper training in crop husbandry practices to help them deliver quality coffee cherries to be processed - with the improved technology - into quality green coffee that will find its place in the most demanding gourmet coffee market niches for both washed Arabica and washed Robusta coffees. The equipment should be imported and installed in time for the 2010 coffee season starting in September.



Coffee Pulping Unit installed in Rwanda.  
(Courtesy of J. Schluter)

## UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES

### Strategies

#### Strong synergies on the ground

The harmonization, with other ongoing programmes, of strategies that are being developed and implemented under the AAACP are creating interesting opportunities for partnership and collaboration. This convergence also contributes to greater coherence among the policies of the different actors.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, the strategy for cotton, developed jointly with COMESA, is perfectly articulated with the *Competitiveness and Trade Expansion Program (COMPETE)*, launched by USAID in April. COMPETE seeks to facilitate enhanced competitiveness and the expansion of trade in regional and international markets. The objectives of the programme, which are to reduce trade barriers and support firms in complying with international quality standards, tally very precisely with the concerns of the Cotton Strategy which focuses on the need for the cotton industry to adjust its products to the exigencies of importing countries.

In Burkina Faso, the development of a strategy for Arabic gum cultivation, which is being facilitated by ITC, concurs with the objectives of the programme for the expansion of Arabic gum in the Sahel region. This initiative was introduced under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) to encourage the reforestation of arid areas and carbon capture.

In the Pacific region, the Samoan Strategy for Fruit and Vegetables, elaborated with inputs from ITC and FAO, has won the attention of the government and of the European Commission which in turn provided extra funding to develop strategy implementation activities. Similarly, UNDP, as well as the Dutch and Australian governments, have expressed interest to support the implementation of the Fruit and Vegetables sector strategy.

## Mango Processing in Burkina Faso and Mali

Both Burkina Faso and Mali produce large quantities of mangoes of many different varieties. However, only a small proportion of these varieties is exportable. The remainder is sold on the local and regional markets, or it can be processed into dried mango products. Burkina Faso has been particularly successful in developing a mango drying "cottage industry" over the last 15 years. Mali has become involved more recently, mostly as a sub-contractor for Burkinabé exporters of organic and fair trade dried mango. However, Burkina Faso has recently lost its competitive edge in traditional markets for Mango exports.

AAACP funding helped finance an extensive study commissioned by the World Bank to survey main consumer markets (Europe, the USA, and the Middle East), and to investigate technologies used for drying mangoes in Mali and Burkina Faso, with an aim to explain the loss of market share.

In the study, produced by the Dutch Royal Institute for the Tropics (KIT), a number of shortcomings were revealed in the main drying technology used in both countries. It was concluded that this was the primary cause for the loss of market share in Europe.

The main outcome of the study was a recommendation to change the technology and diversify the range of processed mango products targeting the local market. Special focus is given to the potential for mango bars, made from pressed mango pulp, which could be manufactured by a Burkinabé factory that already produces mango pulp and juice on an industrial scale.

Restitution workshops were held in Bamako and Ouagadougou early March to present the main recommendations of the study. Although many findings were hotly debated by a large audience of stakeholders, it was largely acknowledged that implementation of the recommendations will likely help improve the industry's competitiveness.

Two World Bank financed agricultural programmes (PAFASP in Burkina Faso and PCDA in Mali) have committed to finance implementation of the study's recommendations with an aim to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the mango processing industry in both countries over the next three years .

## Commodity Exchanges Creation of an African Commodity Exchanges Forum

**UNCTAD's efforts to nurture Commodity exchanges in Africa begin to show success.**

One of the recommendations made by representatives of Commodity Exchanges participating in the Capacity Building Workshop on "Improving the Functioning of Commodity Markets in Eastern and Southern Africa through Warehouse Receipt Systems and Market-based Interventions", has culminated in the creation of an African Commodity Exchange Forum on February 25, 2010. This workshop was jointly organized by UNCTAD, COMESA and the Eastern African Grains Council (EAGC) in October, 2009 in Lusaka, Zambia, and financed by the ALL ACP AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES PROGRAMME and USAID. The other stakeholders which helped to midwife the Forum, whose objective is the improvement of existing exchanges in the region, are UNDP Ethiopia and the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX).

ACEF is an independent Pan-African organization. It was launched in Addis Ababa in the presence of 13 African exchanges and exchange start-up initiatives from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana, and Ethiopia, and representatives from COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa), UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), the Eastern African Grain Council, and USAID.

It is the ambition of the forum "to foster the establishment and growth of commodity exchanges in Africa". Its specific objectives are to promote mutual learning and knowledge sharing, to enhance capacity building, and to engage in policy advocacy.

The Forum is expected to be constituted of African exchanges, with a rotating chairmanship and secretariat. Chairmanship shall be on a two-year basis and the secretariat shall host a website and organize annual conferences as well as other activities. The Forum will also have Associate Members made up of exchange start-up initiatives as well as Observers, such as regional projects and others. The assembled representatives unanimously voted the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX) as its first chair. It is expected that the Secretariat will be set up soon.



Improved treatment of malian and burkinabé mangoes will give them better outlets .

## Strengthening smallholder-agribusiness relationships

### Camerounese oil palm coops are improving their production and marketing practices.

Through a Letter of Agreement signed between FAO and IITA in March 2009 and supported by the AAACP, business models in three oil palm cooperatives in the Centre and South West Regions of Cameroon were appraised. The following obstacles for the upstream chain actors were identified:

- A lack of professional management skills ;
- A lack of know-how to add value to produce, including improved production practices, processing technologies and supply chain management.
- The absence of market information and transparency in business operations.



*Mambine Coop members showing proudly their products*

The appraisal enabled the cooperatives, in collaboration with the Sustainable Tree Crop Programme (STCP), to design upgrading activities aimed at improving their interaction with chain actors and at adding value to their products. FAO has reviewed the appraisals and strategies. With AAACP funding, it is currently supporting the following activities in Cameroon:

- Capacity Building for cooperative management to improve their market and advisory services to members
- Training in supply management and processing technologies to improve value addition and capture
- Trust building and facilitation of solutions between business partners to strengthen business to business coordination.

The satisfaction of coop partners was obvious during a visit of the AAACP Coordination Unit to the MAMBINE site of the "Société Coopérative Agro Pastorale" (SOCOAP) mid-March. Building on technological upgrading funded by USDA, the AAACP is improving the production and managerial skills of coops, thereby contributing to improved livelihoods through the premium that farmers' oil is already fetching on the Yaoundé market.

## The Fight Against Fruit Flies in West Africa

AAACP funding has been instrumental in establishing the West African Fruit Fly Initiative (WAFFI), a partnership forum that brings together stakeholders to examine challenges and potential solutions to mitigating the fruit fly. Over the past several years, infestations of fruit flies have increasingly affected fruit production in West Africa.

Together with IITA and CIRAD of France, the AAACP has co-financed this collaborative programme to develop applied research protocols aimed at the surveillance and control of fruit fly populations in eight West African countries. From 2008 to 2010, WAFFI identified 15 separate agro-ecological zones of economic importance across those eight West African countries, and selected three pilot orchards in each zone on which to apply the chosen protocols. Applications are based on the use of Spinozad, an attractant and toxicant that has shown promising potential in trial tests run by IITA at its field research station in Parakou, Northern Benin. Local WAFFI-trained focal points have delivered capacity-building workshops in 45 pilot orchards throughout the region to train plant protection personnel and producer associations in surveillance, trapping, and area treatment techniques using Spinozad.

AAACP financing has been leveraged by co-funding from the WTO's STDF. WAFFI 2008 (US\$ 300,000) programme was financed entirely by the AAACP; WAFFI 2009 (US\$600,000) was financed jointly by the AAACP and STDF; and WAFFI 2010 (US\$600,000) will receive US\$100,000 from AAACP and US\$500,000 from STDF. Sustainability is being further enhanced by World Bank projects in the region. These are funding training workshops in Burkina Faso and Mali. The results of the three WAFFI programmes will provide a basis for the design and implementation of ECOWAS' five years €25 Million West African Regional Action Plan to control Fruit Flies.

## Annual Congress of the African Cotton Association (ACA)

ACA held its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress from 11 to 13 March 2010 in Yaoundé. Mr Bachir Diop, Managing Director of SODEFITEX (Senegal) has been re-elected as President of a new Management Committee whose composition has been enlarged to include representatives of eastern and southern Africa, thereby underlining the continental scope of the association.



During a press conference held at the end of the event, Mr Diop disclosed the decision of the ACA to revisit its strategy and objectives in the light of changes that have occurred in the sector since the setting up of the organization in 2002. This strategic planning process

will be guided by a framework note approved by the new bureau. Thus, it will be undertaken on a regional basis in accordance with the Abuja Treaty (June 1991) which considers regional economic communities as the basis for the continent's economic integration. The regional plans that will stem out of this process will be consolidated into a continental plan which will be submitted to the General Assembly of 2011 for approval. The AAACP contributes to this process through the ITC which has allocated part of its budget in support of the planning exercise.

In its Newsletter of February last, APROCA informs stakeholders that it is embarking on a similar process with regards to its 2007-2011 Action Plan. The objective is to assess the institutional, structural and economic evolution of cotton value-chains and to adjust national and regional multi-annual plans accordingly. National platforms will hold workshops to that end over the April-May 2010 period.

It is hoped that the foregoing initiatives will take into account the recently revised "Action Framework" of the EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton, while also feeding into the ongoing updating of the "Agenda Coton Textile" of West Africa. To recall, both ACA and APROCA are executive members of the "Comité d'orientation suivi-coton" (Cos-coton) set up to monitor implementation of the EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton.

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(General Secretariat of the Pacific Community, CARDI, ECCAS, ROPPA and COMESA) and will from hence be supported by IOs with a view to pool information and ensure an enhanced ownership of programme activities by the regions. Their attendance at the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee last February, is evidence of the boost given to the programme. Its extension by one year, as recommended by the mid-term review, will allow for finalisation of the activities validated by the steering committee, provided efforts are upheld.

By favouring a new start, the refocusing of the programme, combined with its extension, will benefit all actors of the relevant value chains in ACP countries. Programme success will be highly dependent upon the active participation and involvement of ACP partners in the regions.

**Denis Salord**  
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