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Gender dimension in the postharvest loss analysis and recommended solutions in Burkina Faso: sorghum, maize and cowpea

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Outline

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Context/rationale

- **Project title:** Mainstreaming food loss reduction initiatives for smallholders in food-deficit areas
- **UN's agencies:** FAO, WFP, IFAD based in Rome
- **Financial partner:** Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- **Period of Study:** October 2015-April 2016
- **Reference policy:** Commitments taken by African Heads of State in Malabo, in 2014.
- **Study's regions:** Boucle du Mouhoun (sorghum); Hauts Bassins (maize) and Nord (cowpea)



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Gender dimensions

- ✓ Women playing a key role in agriculture, especially in the activities associated with harvest and postharvest. Yet, their work is often ignored ;
- ✗ Gender inequalities limit women's potential and negatively affect the economic performance of the chain and resulting in increased food losses;
- ✓ Recent study results and project experiences are increasingly revealing situations where the underlying reasons of food losses are connected to specific socio-cultural and gender dimensions;
- ✗ Additional food loss reduction strategies have tended to focus on technological and economic solutions, hence disregarding the relevance of other underlying reasons for food loss, such as social and gender issues.

Aim of the study and methodology

Aim of the study

- Analyzing the causes of postharvest losses sorghum, cowpea, maize in supply chains in three regions,
- identifying key losses,
- identifying feasible solutions,
- formulating recommendations.

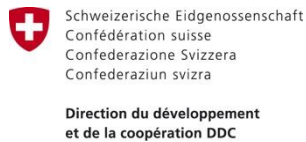
Methodology:

FAO methodology “Food Loss Analysis: Causes and Solutions, Case Studies in the Small-scale Agriculture and Fisheries Subsectors”

- ✓ gender sensitive language
- ✓ both sexes considering during the study
- ✓ collecting and analyzing quantity/quality data according to gender
- ✓ involving FAO, WFP and SDC Gender focal points.



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Critical Loss Points (CLP) identified according to producers perception

Sorghum:

Harvest , panicle's transport at home, threshing/
winnowing, storage, transport to wholesalers

Maize:

Harvest, drying , threshing/winnowing, storage producer,
transport, primary transformation

Cowpea:

Harvest, drying, threshing/crushing/winnowing, storage
producer

Women, men and children roles in harvest and post harvest

Le Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS) study

Opérations	Actors	rate		
		Maize	Sorghum	cowpea
Threshing	Men	28,9	17,7	32,7
	Women	9,4	34,5	50,4
	Other	1,8	2,3	0,0
	All categories	59,9	45,4	16,8
Winnowing	Men	4,6	3,7	1,3
	women	89,0	96,2	92,0
	children	4,4	0,2	0,8
	All categories	2,0	0,0	5,9
Transformation	Men	2,5	0,8	0,0
	Women	97,3	98,8	92,6
	Others	-	0,4	5,3
	All categories	0,2	0,0	2,1

Men prevail in national trade of cereals: retailers (52,6%), collectors (62,2%), semi-wholesalers (70%), wholesalers (100%).

Maize harvest

Maize harvest by the women



This operation (Removing maize husks) is often performed either by older women or women's groups. Here, a women's group





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Sorghum harvest



Spikes are removed by men



Panicle cutting by women who group them in small batches that are afterwards transferred to the bigger batch



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Cowpea harvest



The harvesting of this cowpea was mainly carried out by women and sporadically by girls and boys...

Here a cowpea 's batch

Cowpea threshing/crushing/winnowing/sorting



- women are the ones mostly involved in the shelling of cowpea pulses by crushing them.
- Crushing best practices could help avoid losses known but scarcely applied due to lack of time.
- Winnowing, sorting by women



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Maize shedding/winnowing



Several operations carried out by men and women. But a finding of higher workload among women than among men.



Winnowing by the women



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Sorghum threshing/winnowing



sorghum threshing is ensured either by men or women, although large quantities are men's responsibility



At present, tractors are only used for threshing greater volumes;



women are exclusively in charge of winnowing, manual task, regardless of quantity



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Gender causes of post-harvest losses

Sorghum, maize, cowpea (cross-cutting causes)

TIME CONSTRAINTS,

- climate hazard,
- pest,
- postponement of cutting operations with drier panicles favoring the fall of the grains,
- cowpea's crushing best practices don't applied due to lack of time...

NON PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING,

- priority of family activities over personal ones (cowpea)
- no access to food stock or selling products : (1) adopt bad practices to obtain more cowpea for their needs (2) demotivated women, in the North women refuse to collect cowpea (3)...

LACK OF ACCESS TO ADAPTED TECHNOLOGIES (sorghum)



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Measures reducing postharvest losses

- ✓ Recognize that gender inequalities are among the underlying causes of FL
- ✓ Distribution of work on maize shelling operations more equally between women and men;
- ✓ Awareness raising/training of all actors, governmental services, organizations and producers regarding causes, effects, range and best practices to reduce losses;
- ✓ Consideration of the specific needs of both sexes concerning postharvest equipment;
- ✓ Documenting and lobbying on postharvest losses in order to raise awareness on public opinion and decision makers on this theme.

Measures reducing postharvest losses



Thresher-winnower for maize, millet and sorghum:

little used, proposed solution for the reduction of post-harvest losses of sorghum to threshing / winnowing



Gender inequality considered as usual business is one of the main causes of postharvest losses.



Gender equality considerations must be integrated into all policies in order to reach the expected outcomes



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THANK YOU

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