



WORKSHOP HELD ALONGSIDE THE “SALON INTERNATIONAL DE L’AGRICULTURE ET DES RESSOURCES ANIMALES (SARA)”

*"Investing in good practices and innovative technologies to reduce
post-harvest losses and contribute to improving food security and
nutrition"*

23-24 November 2019, Radisson Blu Hotel

Final Report



COMITÉ PERMANENT INTER-ÉTATS
DE LUTTE CONTRE LA SÉCHERESSE DANS LE SAHEL
Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel



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1. FINAL COMMUNIQUE

At the end of the two-day workshop and in the light of the undermentioned key highlights from the different statements and sessions, a final communiqué emphasizing the key messages and general recommendations was read.

1.1. Key messages

1. The scale of post-harvest losses and its economic and social costs constitute major challenges to the development of agriculture and rural areas. They also represent key obstacles to food security and nutrition in developing countries. Africa remains the most affected continent. In light of the current progress, Africa is apparently not on track to reach the SDG12.3 and the Malabo and Maputo Declarations targets. Despite a renewed commitment, the current situation requires a serious reflection on strategies, policies and means of implementation to meet the Malabo Declaration targets: halving post-harvest losses by 2025, and ending hunger and malnutrition in Africa by 2030.
2. Post-harvest losses management entails the transformation of food systems, as the inefficiency of food systems is one of the main causes of post-harvest losses. To do this, it is crucial to better understand and develop a common and broader definition of post-harvest loss management which should not be limited to some components of the process, but take value chain as a whole.
3. An effective post-harvest losses management encompasses the development of standards and regulatory frameworks that promote a favourable environment and strengthen institutional capacity at local, national and regional levels.
4. While significant progress has been made, production of reliable post-harvest loss data and its access remain a challenge due to its high costs, lack of a systematic approach and insufficient financial resources dedicated for high-quality assessments, documentation and dissemination of a global strategy for sharing good practices and lessons learned. Nonetheless, positive initiatives involving many universities, research institutes and networks across the African continent or in collaboration with African entities are underway and there are real opportunities that should be promoted.
5. Although post-harvest solutions exist, they are fragmented, and remain mostly isolated and poorly integrated into the entire food system. The needs and resources of various stakeholders, whether industrial or smallholders, are different. Flexible approaches and solutions should be adapted to contexts, learning and absorption capacities. Furthermore, appropriate support are required to ensure that smallholders are not left behind.
6. Managing post-harvest losses and their impact on food and nutrition security is a complex and dynamic process, starting from farm to fork. Improving post-harvest losses management will therefore require an inclusive and holistic approach which encourages the participation of all stakeholders along food value chains in a multidisciplinary and multi-sectorial manner. Rapid population growth, increased urbanization and climate effects call for an urgent reflexion on food systems and new models.
7. Africa is full of good practices and endogenous solutions which deserve to be better recognized and valued. The identification, dissemination, replicability and scaling up of good practices offer real opportunities by investing in research and expertise and in the development of knowledge management platforms and their easy access, networks of specialists and communities of practice that meet the needs of different stakeholders.
8. Industrialisation and modernisation of agriculture are indispensable and constitute real opportunities to generate techniques, technologies and practices, providing solutions not only for post-harvest losses management but also for the development of local and national economies. Steps must be taken to ensure that adequate measures are in place to benefit smallholders and

make agriculture appealing to young people by rebuilding it as a promising, innovative sector, which create jobs and wealth and are socially acknowledged through appropriate communication and marketing techniques.

9. Smart and innovative technologies should be made more available and accessible, taking into account local specificities and realities and ownership capacities of communities that benefit from support measures by taking into consideration their learning and absorption capacity. Harmonization of good practices and innovative technologies is necessary.
10. South-South cooperation and the opportunities offered by the centres of excellence such as CERFAM and the China's Centre of Excellence should be strengthened. Opportunities include providing support and facilitation mechanisms and tools to strengthen governments' capacities, and the sharing of resources and the promotion of innovative solutions tailored to their needs and contexts.
11. China's successful experience in reducing post-harvest losses and transforming its agriculture – through ambitious reform policies, promotion of technological innovations, massive investments in infrastructure and machinery and establishment of supervisory and support institutions at national, regional and local levels – is a convincing illustration of public-private partnerships and a holistic approach. The partnership between China and the African Union offers real opportunities for exchanges, sharing of experience and knowledge, technology transfer and deployment of experts supporting the efforts made by regional and national authorities and development partners. Institutions dedicated to South-South Cooperation and capacity building, such as CERFAM and the China's Centre of Excellence, play a leading role as catalyst and facilitator in their operationalization.

1.2. General recommendations

At the end of the workshop, the following recommendations were presented and discussed with the participants:

1. Governments are encouraged to intervene, direct and invest significantly in order to effectively manage post-harvest losses, given their huge human, economic and social costs and their negative impact on the food security and nutrition of rural communities, which rely mainly on agriculture. This requires concerted actions, a renewed and significant support from partners to governments for the formulation of required policies and the implementation of adequate measures as well as for capacity strengthening at all levels.
2. Development partners are encouraged to support the ongoing efforts led by governments and regional organizations such as the African Union, ECOWAS, and CILSS in monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Malabo Declaration and the SDGs' targets.
3. It is urgent to shift from "business as usual" towards exploring catalytic and innovative solutions which go beyond reforms to achieve a real transformation of food systems all along the value chain, including production, processing and consumption processes.
4. Given the global awareness on the devastating effects of food loss and waste, poorly controlled demographic growth, rapid and massive urbanization and migration crises, the transformation of food systems in Africa must take into account political, economic, social and cultural challenges and dimensions and their long-term effects on climate change, ecosystems and people's wellbeing.
5. Africa is full of endogenous good practices and expertises related to post-harvest losses management and agriculture – adapted to local contexts and realities – which should be better recognized, scaled up and shared. Governments will benefit from joining force with development partners to mobilize required and adequate human, technical and financial resources to improve and sustain post-harvest losses management.

6. Governments and development partners are called upon to promote the scaling up of affordable post-harvest technologies and techniques in Africa, enabling smallholders, traders and agro-processors to benefit from them. Simple and accessible technical solutions should be identified and promoted, capitalizing on the promotion of communities of practice that facilitate access to knowledge at local level. Local conditions, learning and absorption capacities should be taken into consideration to develop engaging and inclusive participatory methods which facilitate ownership and sustainability of new technologies and techniques, especially by women, young people and the disabled.
7. National governments and development partners are encouraged to invest in improving information and knowledge management, capitalize on the potential of technology by leveraging the potential of digital solutions and recognize that promoting agro-digital solutions can be a means of attracting young people to agriculture.
8. There is an urgent need to step up efforts to improve post-harvest losses management at global, continental, regional and national levels through enhanced coordination and collaboration. Concerted and related efforts are encouraged to develop necessary partnerships that could accelerate post-harvest losses management in Africa. Governments are encouraged to take advantage of South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
9. Governments, regional institutions and partners would benefit from investing in initiatives aimed at filling the gap in data collection and developing reliable methodologies and tools to identify constraints and bottlenecks related to assessment of qualitative and quantitative losses, and their links with food security and nutrition. Resource mobilization is crucial for fully capturing all types of losses and generating solid evidence-based assessments on the impact of post-harvest losses on food security and nutrition.
10. There is an urgent need to generate evidence to support decision-making on policies, programmes, resource allocation and other investments by prioritizing crops and food value chains, where post-harvest losses of crops are high, and by facilitating and expanding research on other crops across the African continent.
11. There is a need to broaden countries' post-harvest policies and strategies by adopting market-based approaches. The market-based approaches explore added value while taking into consideration support measures to small producers who should not be left behind by non-inclusive industrialization and modernization.
12. It is necessary to attract investments from the private sector to contribute to developing and implementing sustainable and effective post-harvest solutions in Africa, which promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, facilitate and expand trade and markets, and strengthen the productive workforce while making profits. To do this, it will be critical to mobilize not only resources from the private sector, but also from market forces to enhance and support socio-economic development and better articulate the opportunities that attract private sector actors.
13. There is an urgent need to invest in education and increase public awareness, including our future generations, on post-harvest losses, food waste and waste management in order to raise awareness of their harmful impacts on income, nutritional status and well-being and promote the adoption of behaviors that do not jeopardize ecosystems.

2. WORKSHOP OPENING AND KEYNOTE HIGHLIGHTS

2.1. Introduction

On 23-24 November 2019, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) and the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in China – in partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) – co-organized a two-day workshop under the theme “*Investing in good practices and innovative technologies to reduce post-harvest losses and contribute to improving food security and nutrition.*”

The event, held , on the side the “*Salon international de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Animales (SARA)*”, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire brought together 70 representatives from governments, international organizations, regional economic communities, financial institutions, development partners, non-Governmental Organizations, networks including youth and women associations, farmer organizations, universities, research institutes, media, and the private sector.

The workshop aimed to foster discussions and sharing of experience among various stakeholders involved in the search of innovative technologies and good practices to strengthen post-harvest loss management as well as their impact on smallholder farmers' productivity and food security and nutrition at large.

Specific objectives of the workshop are as follows :

1. Present and exchange on different models of good practices on post-harvest loss management and their impact on nutrition, food security and farmers' productivity.
2. Share lessons learned and opportunities to improve value chain and thus increase the production and productivity of smallholder farmers.
3. Promote and disseminate techniques and technologies aiming to optimize post-harvest loss management.

2.2. Welcoming remarks

In their welcoming remarks, **Mr. Issa SANOGO, Director of CERFAM** and **Mr. Sixi QU, WFP Representative and Director of the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in China** welcomed the participants and set the tone for the workshop. Mr. SANOGO and Mr. QU emphasized the very high expectations of the workshop and the importance of undertaking concrete actions to reduce post-harvest losses which should lead to opportunities for collaboration.

Mr. SANOGO reminded the audience that at a time of global awareness and mobilization to fight against food loss and waste, it is urgent to make food systems more efficient and sustainable. There is a need to leverage high-quality policies and interventions to ensure that the investments made are transformed into tangible results for the most vulnerable groups, especially smallholder farmers. Africa is full of innovative experiences that are not systematically exploited. Therefore, a better access to information and expertise are very important cornerstones for the continent. The fight is imminent and South-South Cooperation can play a crucial role in promoting opportunities for strategic partnerships and alliances. CERFAM aims to be a catalyst for good practices, promoting innovative solutions and seeking concrete partnerships.

Mr. QU highlighted China's successful experience in fighting food insecurity and malnutrition and stressed the determination to share China's experience and know-how with African countries and build a strategic partnership with CERFAM.

2.3. Opening remarks by the Vice-President of Côte d'Ivoire

In his opening remarks, **H.E. Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan, Vice-President of Côte d'Ivoire**, underlined that Côte d'Ivoire takes great pride in hosting this event and in co-founding CERFAM. He highlighted some contextual elements by insisting on the seriousness of food insecurity and malnutrition in Africa, which remains the most affected continent. He then presented the achievements made by Côte d'Ivoire with key data : reduction in the prevalence of moderate food insecurity to 10.8% in 2018, the eradication of severe food insecurity, reduction of the prevalence of stunting in children under 5 from 29.8% in 2012 to 21.6% in 2016. He also emphasized that coordinated multisectoral action, policies, frameworks and mechanisms have been critical in advancing these achievements at national level.

H.E. Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in fighting hunger and malnutrition in collaboration with the countries in the sub-region in order to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the SDG 12.3 by 2030 of the Malabo Declaration of the African Union and the United Nations 2030 Agenda on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He recalled that Côte d'Ivoire is also facing post-harvest losses which vary between 20 and 40%, depending on the food categories. Before announcing the opening of the workshop, H.E. Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan pointed out that the current challenges require more concerted efforts and collaboration. In his conclusion, he highlighted that CERFAM could be an important player in strengthening regional capacities by compiling and disseminating good practices and lessons learned, facilitating synergies and interactions between partners for innovative regional solutions regarding post-harvest loss management.

2.4. Statement by the African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture

H.E. Ambassador Joséphine Mayumba Kala, Representative of the African Union (AU) in Côte d'Ivoire made a statement on behalf of **H.E. Ambassador Josefa Sacko, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture**. H.E. Ambassador Mayumba Kala provided an overview of the AU's context and strategy on post-harvest loss management and an update on ongoing activities and actions across the continent. She highlighted enormous economic and social costs deriving from food loss and waste. She urged AU member states to put an end to "business as usual" by leveraging catalytic alternatives that allow tangible gains in all areas. She called upon all partners to help the AU Commission (AUC) to transform the strategies adopted by its member states into reality and build a consensus on the partnerships critical to advancing the implementation of the post-harvest losses reduction strategy across the continent. In addition, the AUC looks forwards to the outcomes, the recommendations and the means of implementation from the workshop. In conclusion, the African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, proposed to the participants the below five solutions:

- Develop high-yielding varieties of crops through increased investments in research to develop plant varieties adapted to the African ecosystems;
- Invest in irrigation development to increase farm-level productivity;
- Promote access to fertilizers to address soil erosion and fertility degradation;
- Improve access to markets through policies, regulations and good governance that promote the development of infrastructures including roads, storage systems and strategic food reserves that reduce losses and post-harvest costs;
- Capitalize on the benefits offered by enhanced information management and digital technology to facilitate the selection of improved crops, fertilizers and pesticides, and foster access to data and financial inclusion

2.5. Statement by the Director of the Department of International Cooperation and Organizations, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China

Mr. Wu LIFENG, Director of the Department of International Cooperation and Organizations at Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China, dedicated his speech to "food security

in China and rural transformation.” He presented China’s experience in food security and the different stages undergone in the process of rural transformation over the last forty years, marked by a constant long-term vision with a strong support from the central Government through policies, institutions and measures supporting agriculture at all levels (national, regional and local). In his speech, Mr. LIFENG also drew attention on the success factors that have enabled to achieve food security and contribute to rural development in China. Concrete measures have been taken to increase production capacity and productivity through policy reforms and adequate supportive measures including selection of new crop varieties, dissemination of technology and mechanisation, introduction of subsidies to farmers and easier access to credit. A better management of post-harvest losses has been made possible through a reform of food distribution systems: supply chain, transportation, storage and processing. After reducing its dependence on imports, China became a food aid donor in 2002. The aforementioned factors could stimulate innovative solutions for African countries to develop regional and national policies and programmes in partnership with CERFAM and other regional institutions to significantly reduce post-harvest losses and thereby achieve food security and nutrition.

3. SESSIONS AND PANELS : KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The opening remarks and statements were followed by a series of presentations and a deep dive questions and answers session on the different thematic areas.

3.1. *Session 1: Post-harvest losses: scale, causes, challenges and opportunities.*

After the review of the scale, the causes and the challenges as well as the opportunities related to post-harvest losses, different presentations showed that very little progress has been made in Africa towards the achievement of the 2030 agenda post-harvest loss reduction target (SDG12.3). More need to be done also to ensure the concrete implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. To date less than 20% of African countries have allocated at least 10% of their national budget in agriculture.

The “Inaugural Biennial review Report on the Implementation of the Malabo Declaration” revealed that among the 47 countries which provided information, only 20% are reported to be on-track for achieving the commitments by 2025. Among the top 10 best countries, Rwanda ranked first with a score of 6.1, followed by Mali (5.6), Morocco (5.5), Ethiopia (5.3), Togo (4.9), Malawi (4.9), Kenya (4.8), Mauritania (4.8), Burundi (4.7) and Uganda (4.5). The report sets the 2017 benchmark at 3.94 out of 10 as the minimum overall score for a country to be considered on the path to meeting the Malabo commitments by 2025. At the regional level, East Africa had the highest score of 4.2, followed by Southern Africa with a score of 4.02.

There is, indeed, an urgent need to transform African food systems, which is inefficient and dysfunctional, to reduce high-level post-harvest losses. Reliable data and harmonized methodological approaches are also required to allow comparisons and inform decision-making.

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