

Grain Postharvest Loss Prevention



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



Project full name:
Grain Post-Harvest Loss Prevention (GPLP)

Domain:
Employment and Income

Phase I:
2013-2017

Total budget:
CHF 5'634'000

Implementing partner:
HELVETAS Swiss
Intercooperation (HSI)

Main partners:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Cooperatives (DAICO)
- Agriculture Non State Actors Forum (ANSAF)
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
- SEDIT and VICOBA Groups
- Agro Dealers

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Project overview

In Tanzania, more than one third of the population living in rural areas is poor. Eighty five percent of them are smallholder farmers who rely on agriculture as their main source of income and livelihood.

Tanzanian smallholder farmers lose up to 40% of their harvests due to poor handling and storage methods. Postharvest losses (PHL) are high for different crops, but are of particular concern for grains, especially cereal and pulses which form the base for food and income for the majority.

Switzerland is supporting postharvest management of food grains to increase rural household food security and incomes through the promotion of better storage methods, using metal silos and other improved postharvest storage technologies.

Overall goal

To reduce postharvest losses in food grains, improve food security and incomes for targeted farming households, and increase employment through appropriate technology, capacity building and informed policy.

Challenges and opportunities

Past agriculture strategies have not paid adequate attention to PHL issues in efforts to increase food and income security. Although currently the policy environment is more receptive to the importance of grain PHL, the household level, where the greatest losses occur, is still neglected.

It is estimated that farmers lose between 15 and 40% of their grains every year. The most significant losses occur during storage at household level, caused by insects and pests.

To avoid postharvest losses, small-scale farmers often sell their grains immediately after harvesting at the lowest price in the season. As

a consequence, they have to purchase food grains at a higher price when their stock is finished

The project aims to reduce postharvest losses in food grains, leading to an increased availability of quality food for home consumption and income for smallholder farmers in the Central Corridor of Tanzania. The promotion of silo technology, along with other improved postharvest storage technologies, has the potential to reduce post-harvest losses, contribute positively to agricultural productivity and grain markets and to increase food security, incomes and employment.

At the end of the phase sustainable markets for metal silos and alternative post-harvest technology markets will be established; smallholder households will have better knowledge and capacity on handling storing grains; and post-harvest policies and framework conditions in Tanzania will be improved.

This project replicates and adapts a similar Swiss-funded project in Central America to the Tanzanian context. A feasibility study conducted in 2012 recommended the approach highlighting the benefit of increased access to finance for poor farmers. The project will be implemented in two phases. The first phase will focus on developing supply and demand for quality storage facilities. The second phase will further advocate for policy change and upscale the approach to various additional stakeholders.

Main results

- A solid multi-stakeholder dialogue and a coordination platform are in place and operational
- An increase in awareness and knowledge of male and female postharvest technology users
- Successful coaching of artisans and support given to metal silo manufactures and distributors
- Access to alternative short-term and affordable postharvest technologies and related training is facilitated for poorest households
- Research and monitoring activities are well documented

Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries are small-scale farmers producing grains and pulses in the Central Corridor. Other beneficiaries include tinsmiths, hardware suppliers, and local training institutions.