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UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division

PROJECT SUBMISSION DATA

IMPROVEMENT OF FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

THROUGH

PREVENTION OF POST-HARVEST FOOD LOSSES

Project Title: Prevention of Post-Harvest Food Losses

Project Number: 9.214.21A

Duration: 36 months (1990-1992)

Scheduled Start: January 1990

Scheduled Completion: December 1992

Government Counterpart Organizations: Extension Services of African Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations involved in Agriculture and Rural Development

Executing Agency: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Donor's Contribution: US\$ 969,963.75

SIGNATURE

For the United Nations
Economic Commission for
Africa

For the Government of
the Federal Republic of
Germany

(Date)

(Date)

1. Project Title: Prevention of Post-harvest Food Losses
2. Background and Justification

Besides its low performance due mainly to the very low yields if compared to the achievements in other developing regions, the African agricultural sector remained very vulnerable to diseases and various pests which still contribute to huge losses both at the pre- and post-harvest stages.

With the food crisis affecting Africa for the last ten years, increasing food availability through preserving what has been harvested is becoming as important as operations aiming at increasing the output. Also, it is noteworthy that losses are particularly high in those regions where the need for food is the greatest. The magnitude of post-harvest food losses in developing countries has been largely documented and has been of great concern to International Organizations, Development Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations involved in the fight of hunger and rural development in the developing regions including Africa.

The issue has been given right consideration by the Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1975 which adopted resolution 3362(S.VII), calling for, inter-alia, a concerted efforts of all involved parties for a drastic reduction of such losses.

In the African context, post-harvest food losses estimated here and there through pilot projects are as high as 5 to 10 per cent for cereal and legume grains and 40 to 50 percent for perishables such as roots and tuber crops, and fruits and vegetables.

In view of this intolerable situation amidst chronic food shortages and severe famines, the African Governments adopted in 1980 the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) in 1985 which endorse the recommendations adopted by the UN General Assembly and suggested specific actions aiming at reducing post-harvest food losses.

Measures taken by african member countries to tackle this preoccupying problem included mass-media sensibilization campaigns, the establishment of institutions charged with the responsibility of supervising the implementation of post-harvest loss-reduction programmes. At the subregional level, some inter-governmental organizations initiated collaborative programmes for improving post-production operations. In support to member countries efforts; many international organizations and development agencies contributed both financially and technically. In the African context, the roles played by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) are worth mentioning. More especially, GTZ

besides its bilaterally funded programmes for post-harvest loss reduction in many African countries, funded a regional project on "Prevention of Post-harvest Food Losses", implemented by the ECA from January 1986 to December 1989.

The Agreement reached by the donor Government (Federal Republic of Germany) and the ECA included:

- (i) a Trust Fund agreement for the funding of project activities of which ECA has been responsible for the management; and
- (ii) a non-reimbursable loan agreement for technological improvement of post-harvest operations, through which the donor provided ECA with the services of an Expert in post-harvest operations initially for the duration of two years and extended to three years.

During the three-year period of implementation, the achievements under project activities included:

- (i) General assessment of nature, causes and magnitude of post-harvest food losses in main food crops in the subregion of Great Lake Countries (Burundi, Rwanda and Zaïre), of Central Africa and of Eastern and Southern Africa. All studies included practical proposals for improving the prevailing situations;
- (ii) Formulation of follow-up project profiles and feasibility studies for member countries which expressed a particular interest, within this framework, ECA undertook a feasibility study on tuber crops processing in Rwanda. It also assisted Cameroon, Central African Republic and Chad in the formulation of specific projects to be submitted to the donor Government on a bilateral basis;
- (iii) Organization and servicing of subregional workshops/seminars.

Under the project activities, the ECA organized the following workshops:

- (a) The subregional workshops on the reduction of post-harvest food losses, intended to decision-makers, respectively in Lomé (Togo) for the West Africa subregion, in Nairobi (Kenya) for Eastern and Southern Africa and in Yaoundé (Cameroon) for central Africa;
- (b) An Objective Oriented Project Planning (ZOPP) intended for selected ECA staff members;
- (c) Two regional seminars on Techniques to reduce post-harvest food losses intended for senior

extension personnel, respectively in Nairobi (Kenya) for English speaking countries and in Niamey (Niger) for French speaking countries;

- (d) Two regional workshops on Project Planning and Analysis (including a one-week ZOPP workshop) for senior agricultural planners, respectively in Nairobi (Kenya) and Niamey (Niger) (Project Planning workshops were organized in tandem with regional seminars for extension personnel cited in (c) above)

Although the initiatives of African Governments, significantly backed by Development Agencies and International Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations have had an impact in improving some aspects of the post-operations system, it is noteworthy that most of the efforts went to improving central storage structures keeping cereal stocks and few have been done for preserving other important food crops such as roots and tubers or to improve village or farm levels granaries.

Despite this bias in favour of central stores and cereals, the requisite knowledge on how to prevent post-harvest food losses in other important crops and improve granaries at village and family levels have been gathered. The issue is how to properly channel such valuable information to the target groups and mainly to traditional farmers.

Also, the ECA regional project on "Prevention of Post-harvest Food Losses" have had quite a good impact as it significantly contributed to increasing the awareness of decision makers of the importance of reducing food losses as part of the strategy of increasing food availability. It also promoted the exchange of views among some African experts involved in food losses reduction activities.

Most important, the ECA executed project (funded by GTZ) contributed in identifying core problems including the most single important one which is the inadequacy of the information dissemination channel to the farmers and to rural food traders. Having a cause/effect relationship with these core problems are the facts that:

- the inadequate organization and equipment of extension services
- the density of the extension service is very low,
- the efficiency of the extension system is questionable in most cases;
- the farmers are not involved in food loss projects implementation which in many cases have been stopped at the experimental level.

- Many farmers' groupings and non-governmental organizations involved in related activities have not been associated in national programmes;
- The message when disseminated, is passed in a form hardly understandable by the majority of farmers;
- Some proposed packages do not take into account the constraints at farmers' level to adopt them.

Solving some of these problems will require important financial resources. However, it is unlikely that the efficiency of the extension service will be hardly expanded in the near future. In fact, the lack of means and motivation of the extension personnel are important constraints which could hardly be removed within a reasonable time frame.

In view of these findings, the achievable alternative in the short term is to put selected and appropriate technical packages in a form of message which would reach the farmers, using not only the channel of the official extension service but all other bodies and especially the farmers' groupings and the NGO's. The dissemination system could encompass leaflets, posters, radio broadcasts which can be translated into the main local languages.

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Development objectives

The development objectives of the project remain identical to those of the on-going project and include:

- (i) higher levels of food self-sufficiency at national and regional level;
- (ii) increased food availability and especially in the rural sector; and
- (iii) improved farmers' income, nutritional status and standard of living.

3.2 Immediate objectives

Based on the core problem and associated prevailing constraints, the immediate objectives of the project include:

- (i) identification of acceptable technological packages which has proven successful in reducing post-harvest losses and which fits to the knowledge of the farmers;
- (ii) availability of material easily channeled to farmers and farmers' groupings;

- (iii) increased operational efficiency of information channeling system; and
- (iv) increased knowledge of field workers in methods and techniques to reduce post-harvest food losses at village and household levels.

3.3 Specific objectives of project

The project will concentrate on achieving the following specific results:

- (i) establishing efficient communication channel which will enable, in six selected countries (two in West Africa, two in Eastern and Southern Africa and two in Central Africa) the existing extension service, Farmers' Groupings, Co-operatives, Non-governmental Organizations to improve the dissemination of technical packages for reducing post-harvest food losses at farmers' level
- (ii) Training extension workers from both government and non-governmental bodies involved in related activities;
- (iii) Making available technical packages on food losses in main local languages.

4. Activities and Workplan

The project duration is 3 years starting January 1990 and planned activities will include the following:

- (i) To select six counties in which the communication system will be established. Priority will be given to such countries where farmers' groupings are being promoted;
- (ii) To identify the most appropriate methods and techniques already tested in small-farming system aiming at improving post-harvest operations and reducing losses;
- (iii) To translate the technology application into a message easily understandable by farmers;
- (iv) To design the physical support of the message to be transmitted to farmers (leaflet, radio broadcasts, posters etc...);
- (v) To train farmers' leaders as well as senior extension personnel both in Government and Non-governmental institutions involved in rural development;
- (vi) To evaluate the impact of the project in the selected countries and make proposals for its expansion

to other countries.

5. Expected Outputs

The successful implementation of the above mentioned main activities will contribute to the achievement of the following results:

- (i) increased efficiency of the extension system;
- (ii) available reference material which could be easily updated or re-adapted;
- (iii) effective involvement of farmers, farmer's groupings and non-governmental organizations in the reduction of post-harvest food losses;
- (iv) reduced magnitude of post-harvest food losses within a little span of time.

6. Project Inputs

6.1 Donor Inputs

(i) Personnel

The implementation of project will require the services of an Expert in communication and an Associate-Expert in post-harvest operations. Besides the technical personnel, project will require the services of a secretary throughout the time of its duration.

(ii) Equipment

The specificity of project activities brings about the need of specialized equipment including:

- a computer (PC with hard disk, color monitor and a laser printer)
- a plotter
- audiovisual equipment
- consumables

(iii) Subcontract

It is anticipated that originals of leaflets, posters and video cassettes and radio broadcasts cassettes will be prepared using the services of specialized companies either in donor country or in countries where pilot activities are implemented. Reproduction of originals for dissemination purposes will be at the expense of project;

(iv) Travel

Provision for travel for the project personnel is made in the project budget.

6.2 Member Governments' Inputs

Governments of selected countries for project activities will provide project, free of charge, with the following:

- access to mass-media used to channel information to farmers and related facilities;
- the services of a national project co-ordinator and of required extensionists;
- assistance in the translation of messages into selected languages. Also, NGOs or Farmers' Groupings will contribute to project activities on a voluntary basis.

6.3 ECA Inputs

The Economic Commission for Africa as implementing agency, will provide the project with the services of a Project Officer and relevant expertise available within its Divisions. ECA will provide project with office, communications (telex, telefax, telephone) facilities. ECA will, either from its Headquarters or through its sub-regional offices (MULPOC's) facilitate contact between project personnel and officials in countries where project activities will be implemented. The Director of the Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division will provide the project with overall supervision. The budget of project is attached to the present submission.

7. Reporting and Evaluation

7.1 Progress and terminal reports

The project officer, in collaboration with the technical personnel will prepare and submit to the donor through the established channel within ECA, semi-annual progress reports. Financial reports showing expenditures in line with budgeted amounts will be issued half-yearly by the ECA Finance Section and submitted to Donor through the established channel.

A final report giving an account of activities implemented and final expenditures (when all obligations have been liquidated) will be submitted to the donor Government.

7.2 Evaluation

The project will be subject to evaluation by ECA, in accordance with the policies and procedures established for this purpose by the United Nations, in consultation with the donor Government. Six months before the project ends, a review will be made and if need be, immediate follow-up activities will be recommended and assistance for further funding will be requested to the donor.

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ESTIMATED BUDGET
(in US\$)

Budget Line	Element	1990		1991		1992		TOTAL	
		n/m		n/m		n/m		n/m	
11.00	PROJECT PERSONNEL								
11.01	Communication Expert *	12	100000	12	100000	12	110000	36	310000
11.02	Associate Expert (PHFL) *		50000	12	50000	12	55000	36	155000
11.03	Project Officer	4	0	4	0	4	0	12	0
11.04	Secretary	12	11000	12	11000	12	12000	36	34000
16.00	MISSION COSTS		25000		30000		25000		80000
32.00	TRAINING		0		35000		35000		70000
42.00	EQUIPMENT								
	Computer set		6000		2000		0		8000
	Plotter		0		3000		0		3000
	Audio-visual		0		8000		8000		16000
	Consumables		1500		7500		7500		16500
52.00	SUBCONTRACT								
	Printing		0		30000		25000		55000
	Audio-visual		0		40000		30000		70000
	SUB-TOTAL		193500		316500		307500		817500
53.00	MISCELLANEOUS		9675		15825		15375		40875
	TOTAL		203175		332325		322875		858375
54.00	PROGRAMME SUPPORT COSTS		26412,75		43202,25		41973,75		111588,75
99.00	GRAND TOTAL		229587,75		375527,25		364848,75		969963,75

* Funds directly managed by Donor