

EvSum320

EVALUATION OF ODA AID TO CROP STORAGE UNITS IN AFRICA

[The Projects](#) - [The Evaluation](#) - [The Main Findings](#) - [Lessons](#)

The Projects

A series of projects costing an estimated £2.01m in 1985 prices were undertaken to assist in the establishment of crop storage units in Mali, Malawi, Swaziland, and Zambia during the 1970s. The objective of the cooperation was to create viable scientific units that could help reduce grain losses on the farm and in storage systems. Improved harvesting, drying, and pest control were other objectives. The programme offered technical cooperation, training, scientific research, and equipment.

The Evaluation

The evaluations were made early in 1985 by a three-man team of a storage specialist, an entomologist, and an economist. A key objective of the evaluation was to discover the vitality of the scientific units created by the projects.

The Main Findings

- The main findings of the evaluation were that in Malawi, Mali and Swaziland the units survive and function. In Zambia severe financial constraints have rendered the unit virtually moribund.
- Generally the preventive measures introduced to combat crop loss were seen to be uneconomic, and hence not widely adopted, but should prove useful in future as more vulnerable hybrid crops spread.
- Technically excellent manpower and training had been provided by the Tropical Development and Research Institute (TDRI), but aid support had been withdrawn prematurely, before the units were fully viable. Information systems had atrophied.

Lessons

- TDRI Storage Department should take greater account of financial and economic factors in storage procedures.
- Follow-on support should be given to recipients of long-term technical cooperation. This should include short term technical cooperation, training, and help with recurrent costs.
- TDRI Storage Department needs to expand the range of its specialisms and ensure that younger staff gain experience.

- Geographical concentration by TDRI Storage Department Headquarters' staff is desirable.
- Grain storage units require advice on information systems.
- More effective monitoring of field work is needed.
- Greater involvement of non-governmental organisations is desirable.
- Use should be made of third country training funds to enable exchange between Study Fellows from different developing countries.