FANRPAN POLICY BRIEF

Helping farmers to better manage climate related risks to Postharvest Handling in Malawi

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SCOPE

- Status of Postharvest Handling in Malawi
- Effects of Climate Related Risks on Farmers’ Postharvest Handling
- Ways of improving Postharvest Handling
- Policies and Institutional Frameworks Affecting Postharvest Handling in Malawi
- Recommendations for improving post-harvest handling in Malawi
Status of Postharvest Handling in Malawi

- Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for more than 70 percent of the population.
- Common beans, groundnuts, and maize are widely grown in the country.
- Food Security Policy (2006) for Malawi recognize the role that postharvest handling play in causing postharvest food losses.
- African Postharvest Losses Information System (APHLIS) estimates 13.5 percent PHL.
Effects of Climate Related Risks on Farmers’ Postharvest Handling

- Climate related risks to farmers’ postharvest handling include cloudy skies, drought, floods, strong winds and pest infestations.
- Policies to deal with PHL are largely concerned with the political economy.
- There are a wide range of initiatives aimed at reducing aflatoxin contamination in groundnuts to meet international market demands.
Ways of improving Postharvest Handling

- Arrangements for institutional grain marketing e.g. ACE, NASFAM, AHCX
- Promoting use of airtight grain storage systems, like silos and triple plastic bags
- Use of synthetic grain protectants, such as Actellic, for grain storage at household level
- One Village One Product (OVOP) initiative
Policies and Institutional Frameworks Affecting Postharvest Handling in Malawi

- *Vision 2020*, sets to reduce postharvest losses to less than 5%
- Food Security Policy (2006) states the need for pest infestation management
- Malawi has a liberal trade policy which affect the regulatory powers of the Government on cereal grain trade
Recommendations for improving post-harvest handling in Malawi
- The Ministry of Agriculture should develop guidelines on good postharvest handling practices for all major crops grown in the country.
- Aflatoxin certification and food quality testing laboratories should be established in the three regions of the country. Currently there is only one certification unit located in Lilongwe.
Need to enhanced human resource capacity in various aspects of pest management (entomologists, pathologists, food quality, bioinformatics and food microbiology) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security should be trained in.

Research should be carried out for effective shelling and small scale food processing equipment.
- Postharvest handling should be integrated into agricultural policies.
- Postharvest handling capacities of service providers and agricultural extension department should be strengthened.
Thank you very much for your valuable time and attention!