

EvSum321

MAJOR ISSUES IN GRAIN STORAGE: AN OVERVIEW OF EVALUATIONS

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The Evaluations

Grain Storage is a key element in food security policies which seek to stimulate production, facilitate distribution and ease crisis management. The overview study is based on evaluations in four African and four Asian countries; Sri Lanka (EvSum324); Nepal (EvSum323); Indonesia (EvSum322); Bangladesh (EvSum319); Mali, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia (EvSum320).

Overall Conclusion

Despite problems and some reverses the evaluations revealed considerable success. In the Storage Department of the Tropical Development and Research Institute (TDRI formerly the Tropical Products Institute TPI) the UK possesses an institution of high reputation world-wide.

The Main Findings

- Capital expenditure on grain storage projects requires more rigorous appraisal.
- Cost-effectiveness considerations are sometimes overlooked.
- Capital projects are often delayed by local planning and project management capacity and by the restricted abilities of small contractors.
- Project monitoring and management have been very varied in frequency and effectiveness.
- Project review procedures exist but have not been used.
- Project sustainability was limited by the sudden withdrawal of Technical Cooperation Officer (TCO) support; the failure to provide continuing finance; loss of key personnel; and a failure to bring new institutions to a self-sustaining condition within the period allotted.
- Planning is often poor in grain storage organisations.
- Potential beneficiaries of grain storage are very numerous.
- Private sector grain storage appears to have benefited little from UK aid.

Lessons

- TDRI should be asked to review the literature so that values for grain losses and non-economic performance indicators can be identified.

- Costed alternatives should be examined even for small on-farm projects.
- Building materials should not be hauled long distances.
- Thorough examination of the planning and implementation capacity of local institutions is necessary prior to project approval.
- Active central management of specialist TCO's by TDRI Slough should be increased.
- The obligation to report significant project changes should be drawn to the attention of project managers, ODA development divisions, or other implementation agents and should be included in the aid agreement.
- The need for re-appraisal following project re-design should be made explicit.
- Aid Agreements should define quantified goals and list necessary source commitments beyond those provided by aid.
- The skill base of the Storage Department of TDRI might require expansion with new emphasis on managerial and planning support.
- TDRI should investigate the potential for offering training and research results to the private sector.

Related Studies

EvRpt085 evaluated TPI's programme of research, advice and training for storage projects in Kenya. The success of this programme was attributed to the continuity and competence of TPI staff. The Storage and Infestation Control Survey is highlighted as an important element; but whose coverage needs maintaining and strengthening by permanent survey and legislation. The Kenyan authorities are criticised for the lack of a coordinated approach to aid, and a clear policy on the marketing and storage of cereals.