Reducing losses and improving actor incomes in Bangladesh's postharvest rice value chains: Initial assessment results and recommendations for the future

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Abstract

In recent years, rice production in Bangladesh has made significant gains as a result of the introduction of modern agricultural methods, intensified cropping systems, and enabling public policies. However, gains in post-production processing and management have not kept pace thus jeopardizing these gains while depriving marginal and poor farm households and other post-production chain actors of enhanced food security and income. As such, this paper will present recent findings from a post-harvest chain assessment and Literature Review conducted under the recently announced Feed the Future USAID-funded Innovation Lab for Reduction of Post-harvest Loss. This new initiative focuses on rice value chains in Bangladesh and adaptive research and piloting of improved technologies for reducing both physical and quality losses in the chain. The Project's initial assessment includes farm household surveys, in-depth interviews, and a literature review. Hence, we will summarize these findings while taking a look back at past research and development projects that dealt in some way with post-harvest in rice so that gaps and opportunities for improved options can be identified for piloting and evaluation under this new initiative. The paper will conclude with recommendations, entry points for improved options, and suggested strategies for reducing losses and improving livelihoods that adoption of improved postharvest technologies could provide.

Keywords: postharvest, rice, losses, post-production technologies