

Post-harvest management improves food security: UNIDO



By Jale Richard

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) says good post-harvest management and storage can help to improve food security. Mr. Ram Kishore Prasad Singh, Chief Technical Advisor at UNIDO said the organization's programme to improving food security in in greater Bahr-el Ghazal has recorded success in reducing post-harvest loses that improves food security. "By preserving gain quality and quantity through adopting best post-harvest practices, farmers will not only have more food to eat but also more surplus to sell," Kishore said.

"They will be able to store crops longer and decide when to sell in order to fetch higher price."

He said due to poor handling and storage practices at the household level, within the first three months, most farmers loose up to 40% of their harvest to insects, pests, mould and moisture.

"Simple and affordable steps like proper drying, improving storage and marketing infrastructure and adopting best post-harvest practices can drastically reduce food losses and increase availability of food at household and local level. This

also means improved food security and increase resilience to shocks for small scale farmers." Kishore explained.

He said UNIDO recently trained 475 farmers from 19 villages in the greater Bah-el-Ghazal region on improved post-harvest management and storage of food grains. He said they have also trained tutors who will later train the local farmers with post-harvest practices to increase food security.

"We are giving them seeds, tools and extension services to improve their production so that food security is increased," Kishore said.

"It is not just about production because about 30 to 40 percent of food when not stored properly it will go as on waste."

He added that UNIDO distributed 500 PICS bags and 200 metallic bins to the targeted farmers that will significantly reduce their post-harvest lost.

The UNIDO chief technical advisor said a new project will soon be launched in the greater Equatoria that to help the people suffering from food insecurity to save up to 40% of food losses by practicing best post-harvest measures.