Along the supply chain selected in the region of Boucle du Mouhoun main critical loss points (CLP) are found at the steps of harvesting, transportation of the panicles to homestead, threshing, transport and storage at the wholesaler’s place. Indicative loss levels are reported as follows: 5.4% at harvesting, 0.47% during threshing/winnowing, 0.3% during transportation and 0.02% during farm storage (after five months). Sorghum is well preserved in the form of panicles up to two or three years in clay granaries. In the Boucle du Mouhoun region, annual losses are estimated at 16500 tons/year, which is equivalent to about USD 3.5 million/year (year of reference 2015).
MAIZE
CLPs along the selected supply chains in the region Hauts-Bassins are the stages of harvesting, drying, shelling, storage at the producer’s warehouse, transport to the wholesaler and milling (flour and semolina).
Indicative loss levels are reported as follows: 3.5% at harvesting, 5.6% during shelling, 2.7% after five months’ storage at the producers’ and 0.3% during the transportation to the wholesalers’. Losses have been estimated at 20% during processing of maize into flour; it mainly occurs during dehusking. Maize is very sensitive to the storage duration (increasing grain quality deterioration and high insect infestation).
In the Hauts-Bassins region, food losses are estimated at 71 500 tons per year, which is equivalent to an economic loss of about USD 20 million/year (year of reference 2015).

RECOMMENDATIONS
The below recommendations have been identified as solutions for reducing food losses along the selected grains studied in Burkina Faso.

- Promote hermetic storage techniques (bags, metal and/or plastic silos, other containers of different volumes according to market availability, economic and technical accessibility for both men and women).
- Raise awareness on the importance of quantitative losses and their economic value at all levels as well as their impact on food availability.
- Provide training on good harvesting and post-harvest systems management.
- Develop selected value chains by building stakeholder capacity to assess the feasibility and profitability of different possible solutions in their contexts and supporting microfinance and credit institutions to facilitate access to efficient equipment and facilities.
- Promote advocacy for quality control of all post-harvest equipment, including polypropylene woven bags at the national level.
- Raise awareness on the importance of capacity development, and, take into consideration the specific needs of both sexes in the promotion of post-harvest equipment, mainstreaming gender in the development of food loss reduction’s policies.

WOMEN’ ROLES IN POST HARVEST ACTIVITIES
Gender relations are a primary component of the social and economic context which influences how women and men participate in and benefit from food value chain activities.
Gender inequalities in access to and control over productive resources and participation to decision-making process are an underlying reason of the inefficiencies of food value chains and subsequently of food losses.
By recognizing the link between gender and food losses, the FAO Methodology for Food Loss Analysis looks at the different roles played by women and men in Critical Loss Points, by collecting sex disaggregated data and identifying specific constraints and opportunities for women and men to reduce food losses.
In Burkina Faso, the sorghum’s shelling, delegated to men, is now done by tractors, while winnowing, a women’s task, remains manual whatever the quantity. Several factors such as limited participation in decision making or access to grains have increased the risk for losses further. Granting women equal access to equipment, productive resource and decision making will help reducing losses.

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