Consultative Meeting on a Mechanization Strategy: New Models for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in sub-Saharan Africa

Abstract:

The large potential for agricultural production in sub- Saharan Africa (SSA) has still not been realized. One of the key development paradigms for long-term increased agricultural production in SSA is sustainable agricultural mechanization (SAM). The benefits are multi-faceted ranging from reducing drudgery, improving the timeliness of agricultural production operations, increasing the efficiency of input use, to facilitating the implementation of sustainable intensification of production systems, and making agriculture more resilient to increasingly extreme and unpredictable climatic events. Sustainable agricultural mechanization (SAM) can also be applied to the development of improved post-harvest, processing and marketing activities, enabling more timely, and concise operations, with value added to primary products. This can foster the delivery of more nutritious foods and higher value products to final consumers. Moreover, SAM has the capacity to contribute to entrepreneurial activities in rural and remote areas, through hire services that can provide much needed mechanization services to those involved in the agri-food sector. In addition, farm-based sustainable mechanization hire services can also contribute to wider development efforts, such as rural-urban transport of goods (and people), rural feeder road construction and maintenance, power for irrigation water pumping, provision and distribution of drinking water as well as the collection of bio-waste in rural, peri-urban and urban areas.