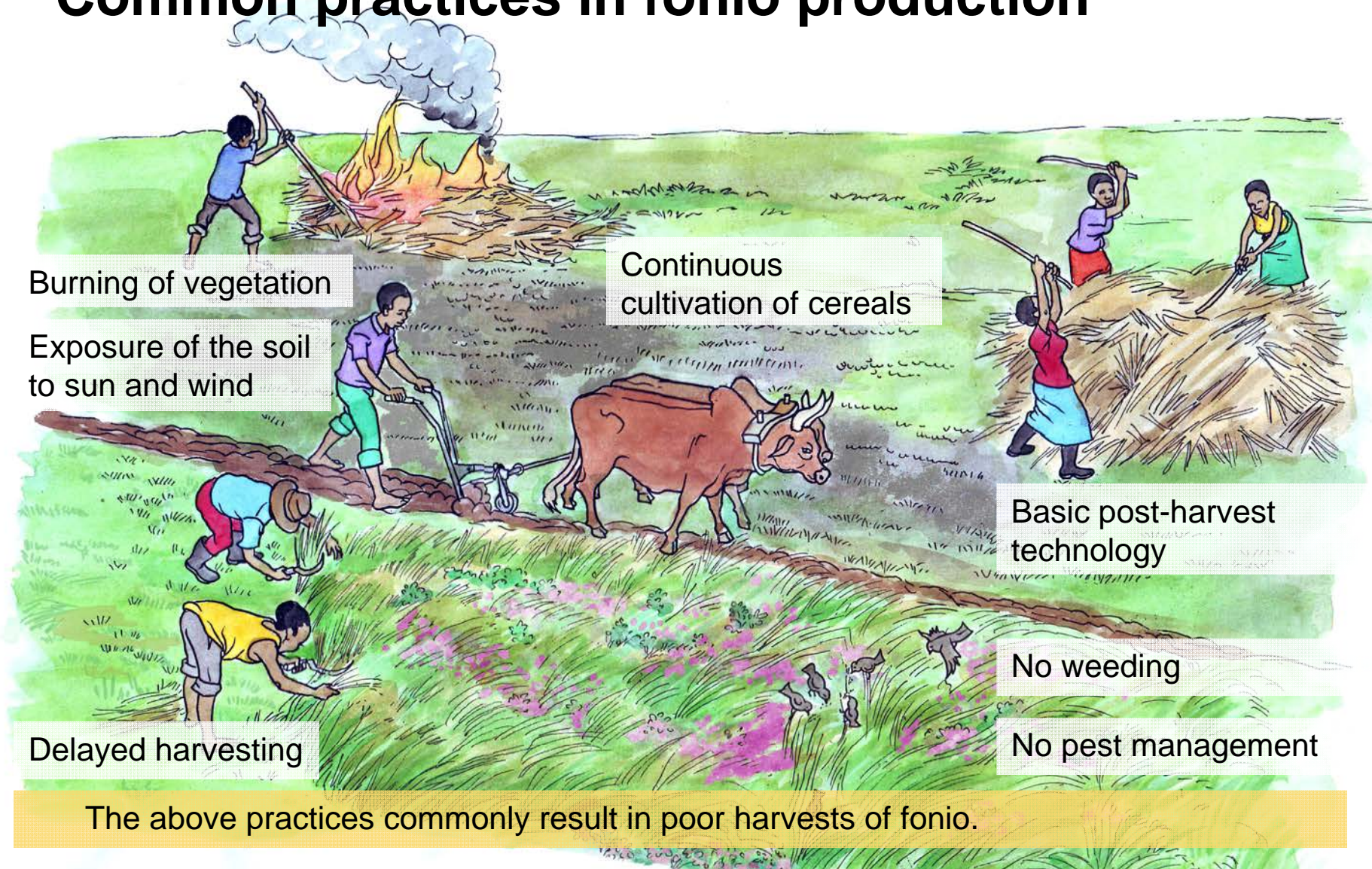


Common practices in fonio production



Burning of vegetation

Exposure of the soil to sun and wind

Continuous cultivation of cereals

Basic post-harvest technology

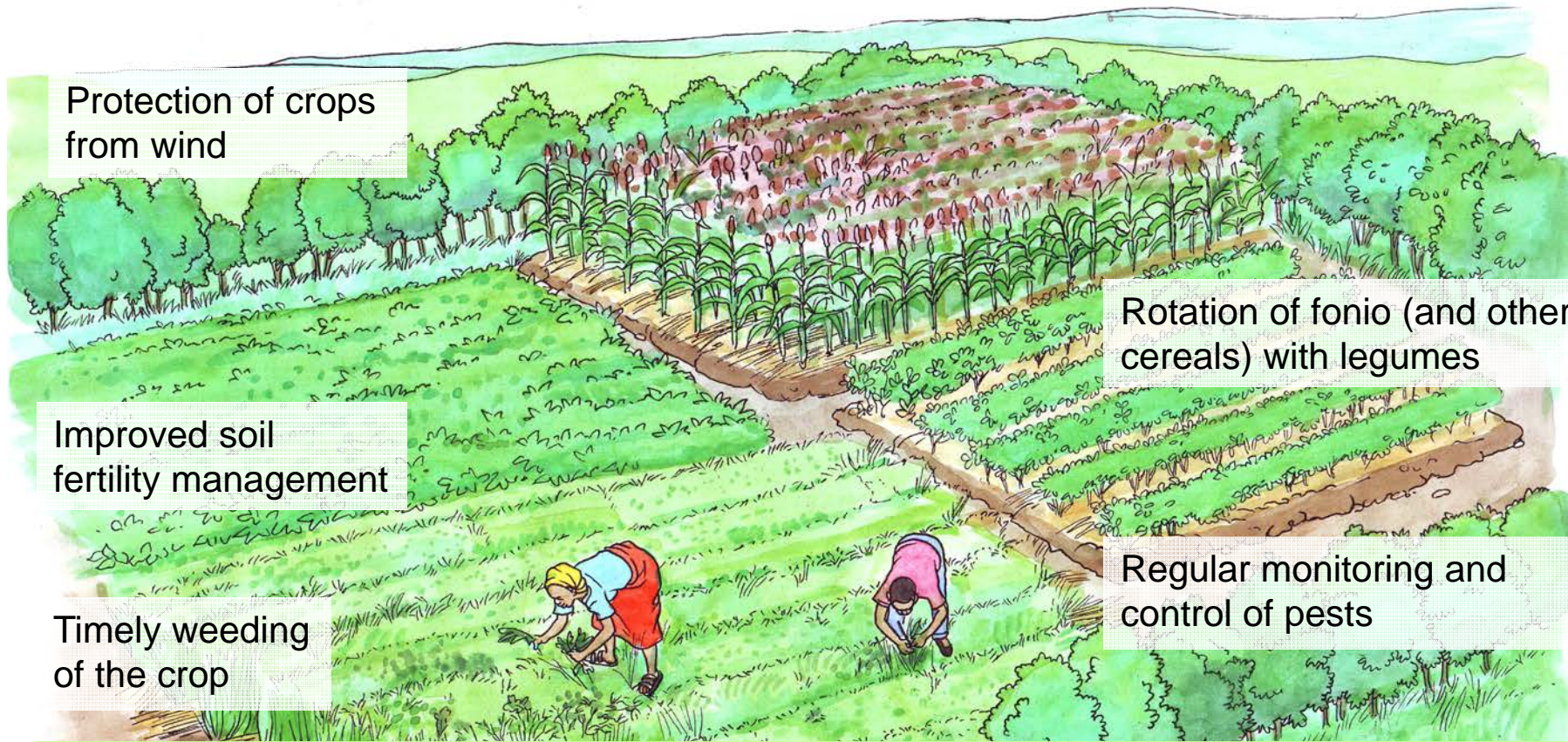
No weeding

No pest management

Delayed harvesting

The above practices commonly result in poor harvests of fonio.

Improved management of fonio



Protection of crops from wind

Rotation of fonio (and other cereals) with legumes

Improved soil fertility management

Regular monitoring and control of pests

Timely weeding of the crop

The above practices together with the use of improved fonio cultivars, integration of animals into the farming system, reduced tillage for water conservation, timely harvest before shattering, and efficient post-harvest technology result in better harvests and lower grain losses.



Criteria for selecting fonio cultivars



- › High adaptability to local conditions
- › Appropriate length of growth cycle
- › Tolerance to local pests and diseases
- › Resistance to lodging and shattering
- › High yield potential



Different ways of sowing fonio

Broadcasting

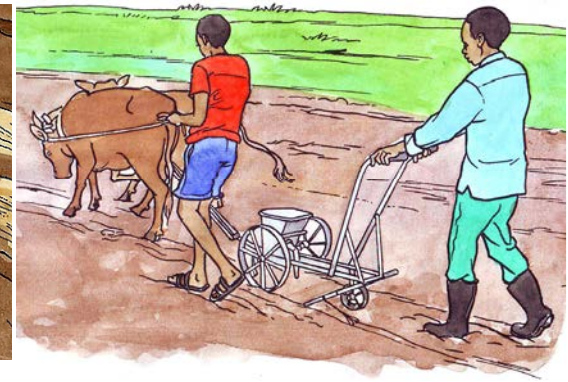
- › Easy to apply
- › Requires more seeds
- › Results in uneven stands
- › Allows weeding by hand only

Sowing in rows

Manually



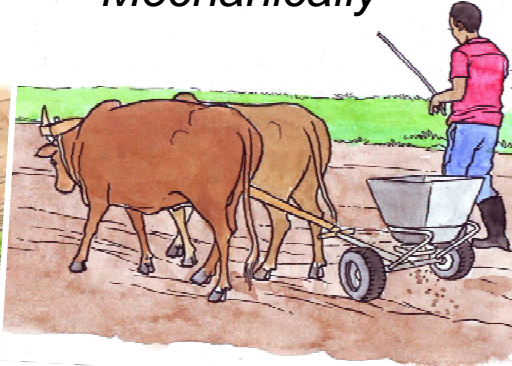
Mechanically



Manually



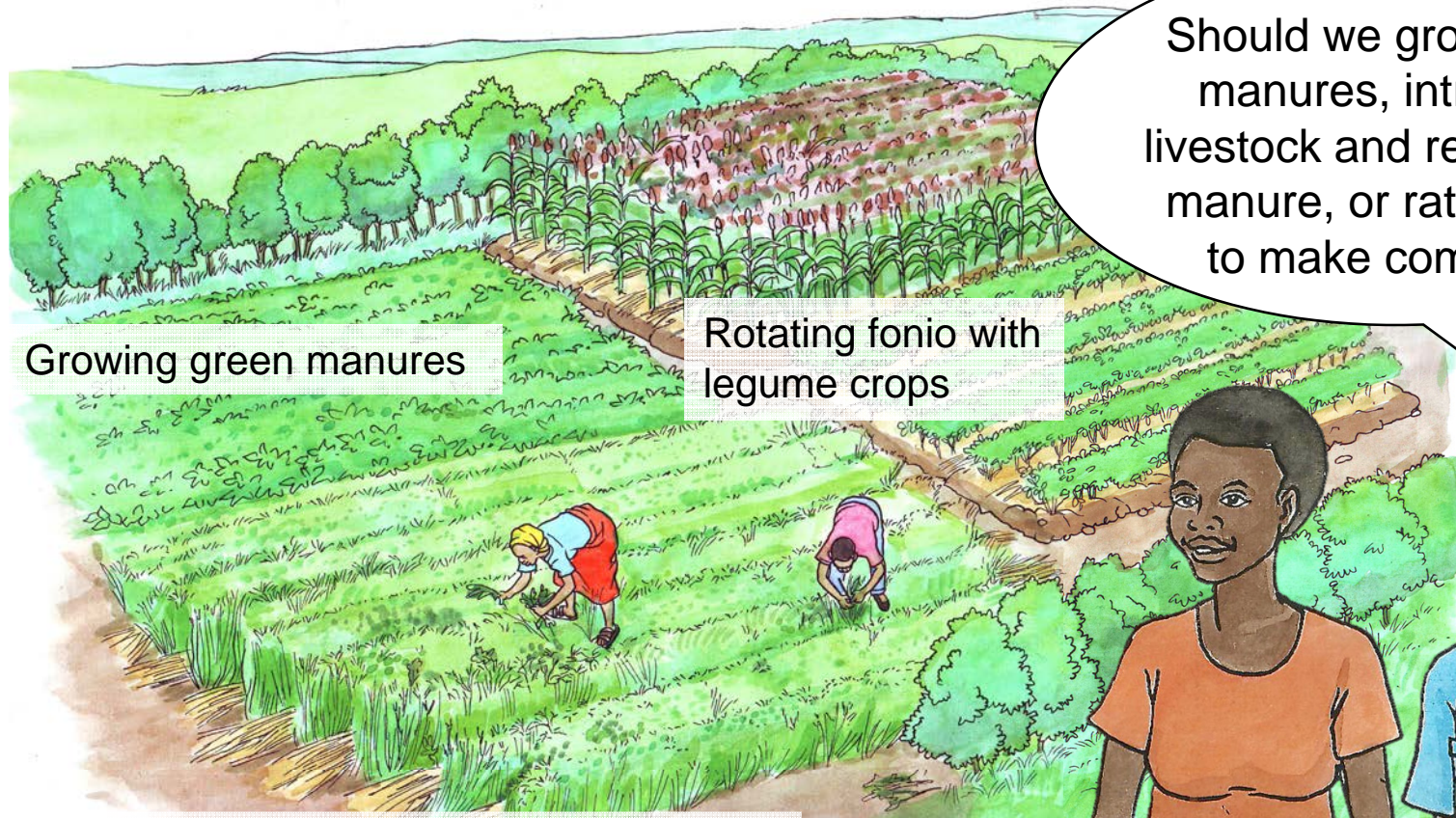
Mechanically



- › Done manually or better mechanically
- › Requires less seeds than broadcasting
- › Results in more even stands
- › Allows mechanical weeding between the rows



How to further improve soil fertility



Growing green manures

Rotating fonio with legume crops

Should we grow green manures, introduce livestock and recycle the manure, or rather start to make compost?

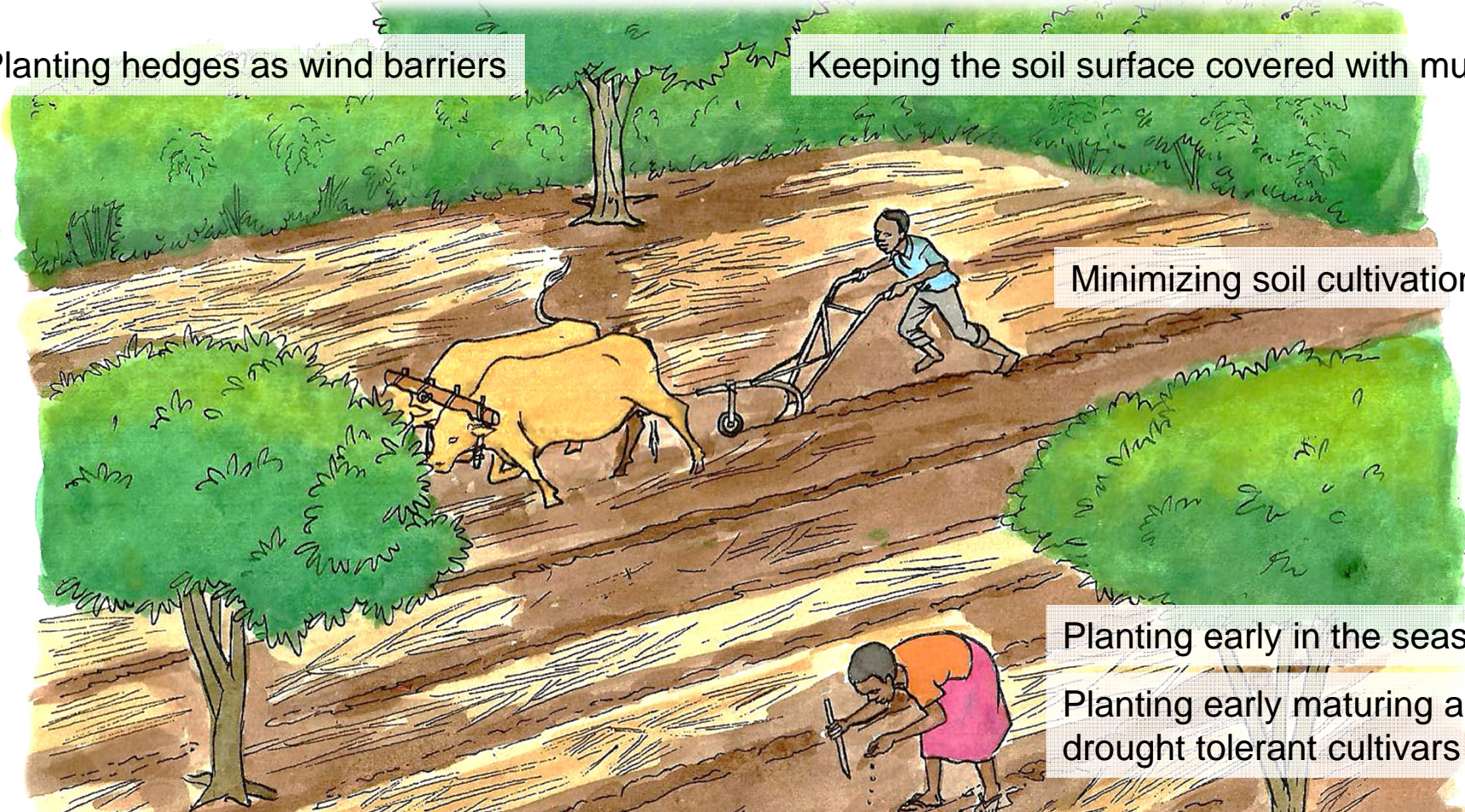
Application of compost or animal manure



How to improve water use efficiency of fonio

Planting hedges as wind barriers

Keeping the soil surface covered with mulch



Minimizing soil cultivation

Planting early in the season

Planting early maturing and drought tolerant cultivars

The above practices together with the collection of water in trenches or ditches, and weed control improve availability of water in the soil, and result in better harvests.



Managing weeds in fonio



1 Reduce weed pressure with a suppressive crop, before growing fonio. Sanitize *Striga* infested fields.



2 Sow immediately after land preparation.



3 Remove weeds 4 to 7 weeks after sowing. A second weeding may be necessary at flowering.

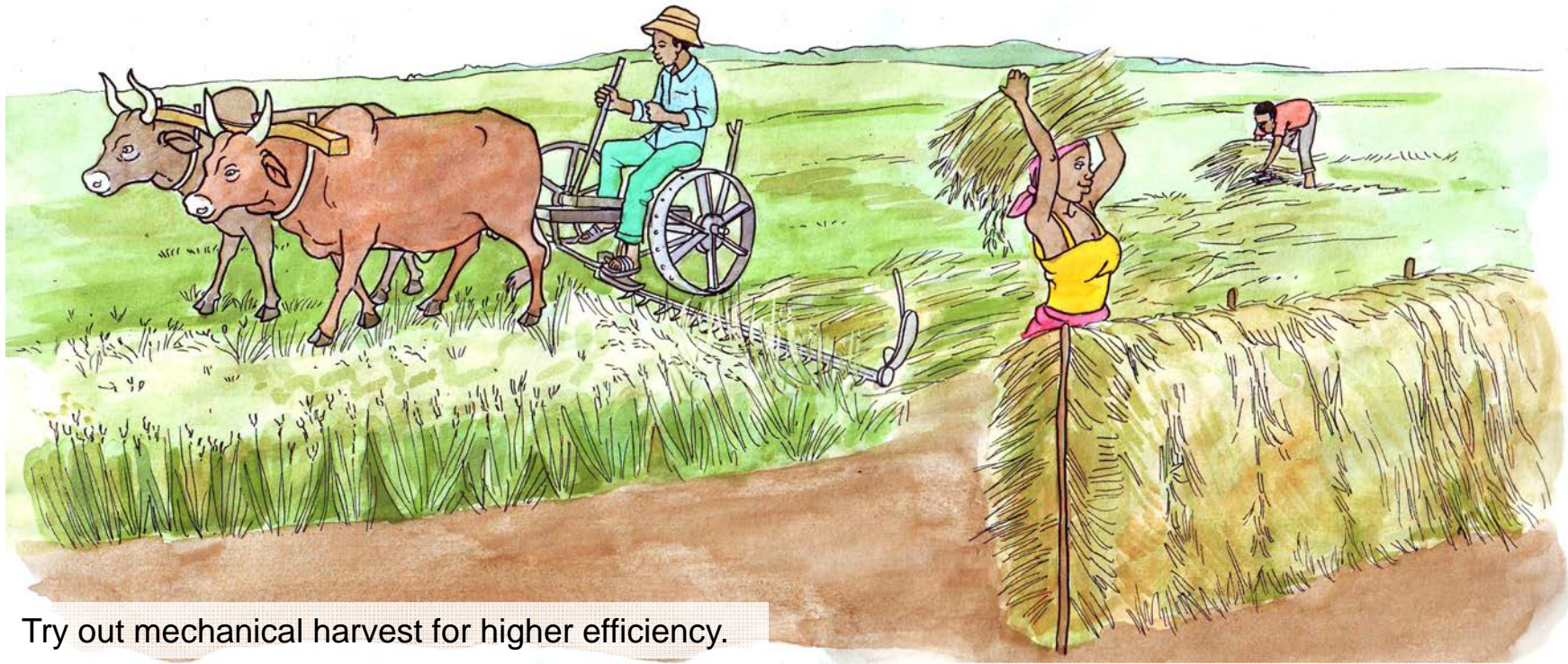


4 Avoid dispersal of weed seeds during harvest of fonio.



Harvesting fonio

Harvest as soon as the grains are ripe to avoid shattering of grains



Try out mechanical harvest for higher efficiency.

Pre-dry the fonio sheaves on well-aerated heaps until the straw is dry. Control heaps regularly for heat.



Post-harvest handling of fonio



1

After harvest allow the fonio sheaves to dry for one or two weeks on well-aerated heaps.



2

If possible, thresh, sift and wash the grains mechanically to reduce work.



3

Dry the raw fonio in the sun on canvas or plastic sheets for 4 or 5 days before storing. Avoid pollution from dust or animals.



4

Store in bulk or in bags in a dry place.

Processing of fonio

