



INCAA - INnovative Conservation Agriculture Approaches:

Food Security and Climate Action through Soil and Water Conservation

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Background

Conservation Agriculture (CA) is promoted in Africa

- to increase food production on the basis of more sustainable farming practices,
- to address the problems of soil degradation resulting from agricultural practices (e.g. organic matter, nutrient content),
- To increase crop yields and lower production costs.

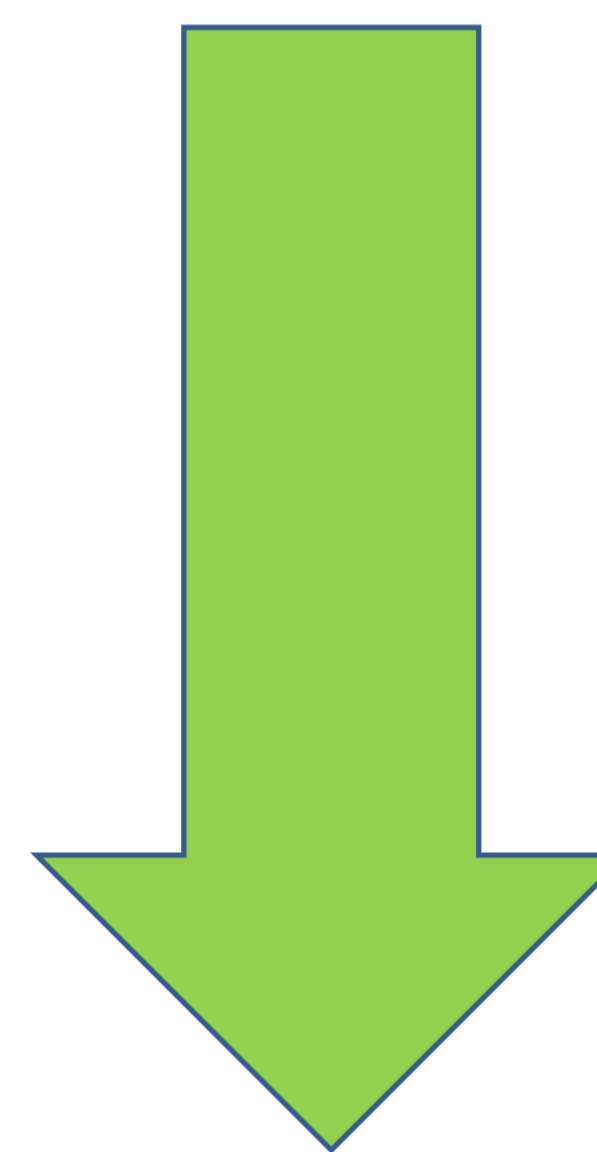
Yet, success with adopting CA on farms in Africa has been limited.



CA field preparation with ripper; Kalalu, Kenya

Reported constraints for adoption

- Lack of information, education and training
- Economic factors rank far ahead of other considerations
- Hindrances by government legislation, incentives and subsidies
- Using crop residues for soil cover or as feed for cattle in arid regions
- Poor physical access and affordability of CA services (e.g. for direct seeding; cover crop seeds; herbicides applications)
- Farmers are not adequately involved in the development of new technologies
- **Gender related obstacles for women**



Discussions with CA farmers in Laikipia district, Kenya

Objectives

- to mentor and analyse a trans-disciplinary learning process that supports innovation of CA in **Kenya** and **Burkina Faso**,
- to assess the benefits and adaptations of CA in innovation systems around partner projects involving smallholder farmers,
- to integrate institutional and individual dimensions into tools that assess the applicability of CA,
- to design a learning process involving all stakeholders towards innovation of CA as a strong basis for future transnational partnership.



Left: CA farmer with hand rippers; Right: animal drawn direct seeder

Preliminary results from Kenya

Qualitative interviews in Laikipia county among farmers:

- Farmer field schools often mainly attended by women.
- Women practising CA are considered “lazy farmers”.
- Only ploughing means “real farming”.
- Rather strict gender division between social or professional activities - “We only go to church together”.
- Decision-making regarding the adoption of CA is ultimately validated by men.
- Men are largely in control of cash.
- Livestock raising and milk selling represent important sources of income.
- Farm residues are perceived as important to sustain this income.

Outlook

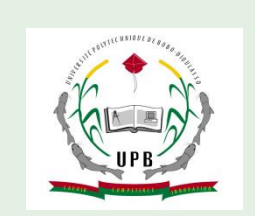
- Based on field studies in Kenya and Burkina Faso new insights on adoption obstacles will be generated.
- Analyze institutional influence on CA adoption.
- Compare Kenyan experience to Burkina Faso.



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- Universidade de Évora, Instituto de Ciências Agrárias e Ambientais Mediterrânicas (UE/ICAAM), Évora, Portugal
- BOKU-University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Centre for Development Research, Vienna, Austria
- Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), Nairobi, Kenya
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