

ACTION POINT / Unit 7: Soil and Water Conservation (SWC)

EMG Training of Trainers, July-September 2024
Got questions? Reach out: OasisToT@outlook.com



Background: Soil and water conservation (SWC) is critical for enhancing agricultural productivity, improving water security, and restoring degraded landscapes. It plays a vital role in addressing the interconnected crises of climate change, land degradation, and biodiversity loss. Practical measures include

- Conservation agriculture: minimal soil disturbance (for example using simple modified ploughs, see [here](#) and [here](#)), establishing permanent soil cover, using crop rotation.
Why? To improve soil structure, enhance water infiltration, reduce erosion.

- Manuring, composting: layer animal dung, crop residues, ash, covered with straw and watered.
Why? To improve soil fertility and structure, enhance water infiltration.

- Vegetative Measures: establish vegetative strips and cover crops, use perennial grasses, shrubs, trees. Read more on how they can be established [here](#).
Why? To provide shade, improve yield and soil health.

- Water Harvesting Techniques: collect runoff and use for crop production through techniques like half moons, [read more here](#).

- Gully Rehabilitation: structural barriers like dams stabilised with permanent vegetation, between dams gullies slowly fill up with eroded soil that can then be used as narrow fertile terraces for growing crops.
- Terracing: transform steep land into a series of flat steps.

Why: To address erosion, improve water retention.

- Grazing Land Management (*more in Unit 7.1 with Dr. Stephen Mureithi on Sep 5th*)



Your task:

Identify features of Livestock cafés that you could use to support SWC. Additionally, make and test a list of SWC techniques that can be implemented in the area you are working in. The rainy season is coming up soon!



Duration: 2h in the peer group, 2-5h with the EMG members



Purpose of the task: This task should serve as a basis for helping EMGs implement suitable soil and water conservation techniques and for them to understand why they are crucial.



Implementation steps: all the boxes should be checked by the end of the exercise!

1) Peer Group

☐ Read about the [Livestock cafés here](#) and [here](#), or a longer paper [here](#). With the Peer Group, identify at least **5 key points** from this method that you could adapt and use for your fieldwork. **(Output 1)**

☐ Investigate the existing SWC techniques in your area. Write them down and add at least **1 shortcoming and 1 advantage of each technique**. **(Output 2)**

2)With your EMG members

☐ Use Output 1 to plan a session with the EMGs and use Output 2 as a basis information for discussions in the EMGs.

☐ Ask the EMG members about the current measures they are taking to protect their soils and conserve water (if you have already collected that data, then refer to that).

☐ Share the measures and techniques you have identified in your peer group that could be useful. Discuss these techniques with the EMG members. With the EMGs, identify
1) resources they need to establish each of the SWC techniques,
2) potential disadvantages and advantages of each of these techniques.
(Output 3).

☐ **In our Sunday Check-In, present the three Outputs. If you are able to do this Action Point before the Scenario Planning exercise, you can use them as an additional data source.**

Materials needed (these are suggestions; not all might be needed!):

General recommendations for meetings can be found in [Unit 2](#).



☐ Papers and pens for drafting the replies

☐ Your phone for documenting the potential areas for implementing SWC techniques

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____