

# Improving agricultural water productivity in Eastern and Central Africa

## The Problem

- Rainfed agriculture is the mainstay of the region's economy and livelihood for nearly 85% of farmers
- Lack of water is a critical constraint to agricultural production under rainfed conditions
- Rainwater is the only source of water and variability in rainfall leads to erratic supply
- Climate change is predicted to further exacerbate the situation
- Prudent management of water is an important first step in buffering the impact of climate variability and change and in improving agricultural productivity

## Project Approach

- Water management at plot and small watershed scales that links production, conservation and livelihood objectives
- Involvement of multiple stakeholders in all aspects of project implementation from planning to outcome assessment
- Focus on constraints to adoption especially on risk and profitability associated with investments in water
- Develop/adapt/promote low cost low risk technologies
- Role of gender in adopting soil and water conservation
- Better understanding and management of impacts of climate variability and change through studies at analogue sites

## Expected Outputs

- Gender responsive integrated water management (IWM) options to improve water productivity and to cope with impacts of climate variability and change promoted
- Capacity of stakeholders to develop and implement integrated water management at farm and watershed scales enhanced
- IWM policy options and institutional arrangements to minimize smallholder farmer's vulnerability to climate uncertainties piloted
- Learning alliances and knowledge exchange systems for scaling up technologies and sharing information on improved water management strengthened

## Overall Objective

Increase income and improve livelihoods of smallholder farmers living in water stressed environments through integrated water resources management at plot and catchment scales by strengthening forward and backward linkages between soil, water and crop resource use and commodity value chain

## Opportunities



- Many technologies to manage rainwater are available but their adoption by smallholder farmers is limited
- Increased availability of water alone cannot produce the required benefits
- Productivity of water can be improved substantially when used to produce commodities with market demand and by adopting appropriate production technologies



Fig. 1. Location of Project Sites