Under its special initiative “One World, No Hunger” (SEWOH), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is prioritizing efforts to deliver food security and enhance the management of natural resources. The protection and rehabilitation of agricultural land managed by smallholder farmers are central to this dual agenda and form the objectives of a GIZ programme implemented in five countries. Seeking to explore new forms of development cooperation, SEWOH mandated the Global Soil Forum (GSF) to accompany the work of the GIZ through transdisciplinary research. The accompanying research project focuses on the socio-economic and cultural factors that constrain the uptake of sustainable land management (SLM) technologies by smallholder farmers. The GSP’s approach stresses co-development and the pursuit of research themes with local partners, including researchers, policymakers, actors of development cooperation, civil society organizations, and farmers.

### IASS ACCOMPANYING RESEARCH: SOIL PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION FOR FOOD SECURITY IN KENYA

**Objective:** Learning from past experiences with SLM promotion in western Kenya  
**Partner:** Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology  
**Guiding question:** What were successes and challenges in past SLM promotion projects in western Kenya? What lessons can be learned?  
**Focus areas:** Selection of target groups; selection of SLM technologies; approaches to diffuse SLM technologies; enabling conditions for enhancing adoption; results, constraints and success of SLM technology diffusion  
**Method:** Inventory of 20 projects with significant SLM components; close analysis of 10 selected projects through interviews with project implementers and key informants and FGDs with farmers  

**Findings:**  
**Selection of SLM technologies**  
- SLM technologies identified before project implementation/interaction with beneficiary farmers  
- Uniform SLM technologies promoted over a wide area without consideration of unique circumstances of specific areas  

**Lessons Learnt Workshops**  
**Objectives:** Jointly drawing lessons from past SLM projects with the stakeholders and farmers that were involved  
**Setting:** Two stakeholder workshops: one with SLM projects beneficiary farmers; the other with project implementers and other institutional stakeholders in western Kenya  
**Guiding question:** What works and what does not work in SLM promotion?  
**Method:** Close analysis of four to six projects through participatory workshop methods (break-out groups, World Café, etc.)  
**Outcomes:** Research themes co-identified by the mix of stakeholders as essential for successful SLM promotion; to be pursued over the project period  
- Making extension services work for food insecure farmers  
- Local innovations for youth in agriculture  

**Approaches to diffuse SLM technologies**  
- On-farm demonstration hosted by model farmers is the most common approach; model farmer perceived by neighbor farmers with mixed reactions; outreach and adoption beyond them remains constrained  
- Farmer-to-farmer extension based on volunteerism is not working  
- Farmer groups as entry points of interaction with farmers; self-selection or working with existing groups sometimes has exclusionary outcomes  

**Enabling conditions and adoption of SLM technologies**  
**Agricultural extension:** Reaching resource-poor farmers remains a challenge. They are not always covered through the group strategy; they don’t reach out for assistance  
**Market inputs:** Limited access to specialized SLM inputs (high cost; physical availability) hinders SLM adoption, e.g. Biofix, lime, Conservation Agriculture equipment  
**Youth, SLM and agriculture:** Without security of access and control of land resource, reaching youth to SLM remains a mirage  
**Farmer organizations:** Are indispensable in promotion and adoption of SLM. But they are short-lived without well-thought institutional and economic viability  
**Market outputs:** SLM crops without immediate household consumption demand must have a viable market/sale outlet for higher level of adoption. e.g. soya beans