



Water Conservation Techniques in Zimbabwean Rural Communities: Comparative Effect on Land Degradation Prevention Over Three Years in Mali

Issa Traoré¹

¹ University of Bamako (consolidated)

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Correspondence: itraor@aol.com

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Author notes

Issa Traoré is affiliated with University of Bamako (consolidated) and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.

Abstract

This study examines water conservation techniques in Zimbabwean rural communities, focusing on their impact on soil degradation prevention over a three-year period compared to similar efforts in Mali. A comparative case study approach was employed, analysing primary data collected from interviews with farmers and analysis of existing literature on soil conservation practices. In Zimbabwean communities, the adoption of mulching showed a significant reduction (25%) in soil erosion compared to Mali where no such technique was implemented. This suggests that mulching could be an effective soil protection measure in similar contexts. The study highlights the importance of adopting proven water conservation techniques for sustainable land management and underscores the need for further research into local adaptation strategies. Local governments should promote the adoption of proven water conservation methods such as mulching to mitigate soil degradation. Future research should focus on identifying additional effective practices in different climatic conditions. Soil Degradation, Water Conservation Techniques, Small-Scale Irrigators, Zimbabwe, Mali

Keywords: *African geography, Smallholder agriculture, Soil conservation, Terracing techniques, Participatory approaches, Sustainable land management, Watershed management*

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