



Rwanda



Rainwater Harvesting in Rwanda

Rwanda – Plastic lined ponds to fight against climate change

Hans Hartung, Weikersheim, Germany

The Ministry of Agriculture in Rwanda has embarked on an innovative project of building small water storage ponds for supplementary irrigation. This is an important step towards

- **mitigating the effects of climate change (erratic rainfall)**
regular rainfall patterns get more erratic in many regions of the world due to climate change
- **using the available land to its full potential**
agricultural production reserves can be realised if additional water for agriculture is made available.

I have visited several of these ponds in February 2008:

The open ponds are dug into the ground in a trapezoidal shape and lined with a PVC based tarpaulin, procured from Kenya. The material is used in the flower industry in Kenya on a large extent and apparently the manufacturers give a guarantee of 10 years on a 0,8 mm sheet.

The ponds have a rectangular shape with a volume of roughly 120 m³ according to the information got. They are filled with water collected from rural roads and led into the tanks via a small settling basin. For water abstraction, rope and washer pumps are fitted on a wooden frame in order to pump the water out into a small tank from where it will gravitate to wherever it is needed. A drip irrigation system was installed on one plot.

The photos give a good impression of the tanks.

