

**Expansion of Community-Based Smallholder Irrigation Development Project
(E-COBSI)**



News Letter No.2, March 2019



Series of Trainings have been conducted in Follow-up Provinces

E-COBSI has started trainings targeting field officers in the follow-up provinces (Northern, Luapula and Muchinga provinces). A Training of Trainers (TOT) and Kick-Off Training (KOT) are the “Backbone” of COBSI to spread the project activities to COBSI farmers. This article shares the activities conducted so far.

•TOT (Training of Trainers)

A 3-day TOT was conducted from 6th to 8th of March, 2019 at Kasama Farm Institute, Northern province. A total of 27 officers from the 3 provinces and two COBSI Promotion Unit (CPU) members from MoA HQs were invited.

The officers (participants) obtained COBSI knowledge, techniques and experiences in: market oriented agriculture management through the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment & Promotion (SHEP) Approach, water management, operation and management of irrigation facilities (O&M), pest control management, environmental and social consideration, farmers’ organization, gender mainstreaming, nutrition improvement, etc.

Above all, SHEP Approach is the main pillar of the project for the follow-up provinces, and the participants learnt about its method and activities necessary for dissemination of SHEP Idea to the farmers of COBSI irrigation schemes theoretically and practically by carrying out market survey and analyzing its results as group exercise based on the SHEP essential four (4) steps

On Day-1, 6th of March, the participants debated enthusiastically and particularly on the efficient use of irrigation water, O&M and water fee collection, water permitting procedure, pest management of field, better organizing of farmers’ group and gender, and nutrition awareness.

Day-2, focused on the “Concept of SHEP” with emphasis on the statement from the Government of Japan; *“We would like to transition away from agriculture “that enables the farmer to eat” to agriculture the farmer to earn money.”* Thus, by the end of the day the participants learnt of SHEP approach and procedures to implement market oriented agriculture.

On the third day of training, “Reporting and Feedback Mechanism” was deliberated. E-COBSI emphasizes on establishment of a functional monitoring system to grasp project on-going progress and issues arising. Through discussions, the officers agreed on a monthly reporting and feedback timeline.

Essential Four Steps	Activities
1. Selection of targets and sharing vision / goal	- Sensitization Workshop for Target Site’s Farmers Group
2. Farmers’ awareness of current situation and new information	- Participatory Baseline Survey - Market Survey
3. Decision making by Farmers	- Target Crop Selection - Crop Calendar Making
4. Provision of technical solutions	- In-field Trainings
Follow-up and Monitoring	

“SHEP Essential Four (4) Approach”. SHEP activities follow the flow above and the participants obtained all the knowledges and the skills necessary to disseminate the SHEP ideas for farmers’ group who have established irrigation scheme by using COBSI techniques with their self-effort.



As practical training, the officers (participants) asked market retailers about good season for farmers to sell their agricultural commodities, needs of market, and so on. (Chanbeshi Market, Kasama)



After coming back to classroom, the officers tried to analyze the results of market survey practice from the perspective of farmers. Based on this, SHEP takes the officers to next exercise of “Target crop selection” and “Crop Calendar Making” which are decided by farmers themselves on field level.

●KOT (Kickoff Training)

Following the TOT, the provincial CPUs and the JICA project team hold a five-day Kickoff Training in the follow-up provinces; from 18th to 22nd of March in Kasama, Northern province and in Mansa, Luapula province simultaneously, and from 25th to 29th of March in Mpika for Muchinga province. This is the first KOT implemented by E-COBSI and therefore the officers needed learn and well understand E-COBSI activities very well in order to support effectively the District Agricultural Offices with the project implementation.

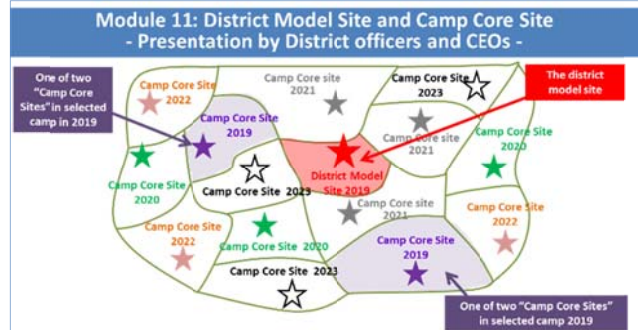
Thus, the provincial CPUs and the project team invited five officers from the respective target districts in each province, namely a SAO (Senior Agricultural Officer), a TSB/ irrigation officer, and three SMSs (Subject Matter Specialists) i.e. Marketing Development Officer, Food and Nutrition Officer and Crop and Horticulture Officer.

In addition, three CEOs (Camp Extension Officers)/BEOs (Block Extension Officers), in charge of target irrigation sites as front-line officers of agriculture extension in Zambia were also invited. The project team explained the selection criteria of District Model Sites and Camp Core Sites of E-COBSI at the Inception Workshop which was held in January and the respective target district offices selected the respective candidate sites i.e.: One (1) District Model Sites and Two (2) Camp Core Sites based on the criteria circulated prior to the KOT. Thus, the participant CEOs and BEOs will be in charge of those District Model Sites and Camp Core Sites of E-COBSI.

In total 217 participants joined the KOT, of which 79 from Northern province, 73 from Luapula province and 65 from Muchinga province. Since the KOT in Muchinga province was scheduled after the Northern/Luapula province training, two CPU members (SIE and SFNO) from Northern province joined to supported the KOT in Muchinga province and shared their experiences of the training management in order to improve its implementation.

In addition to theoretical lesson, the participants of the KOT also briefly reviewed and learnt practices such as simple weir construction and use of weight and height scales on nutrition survey to be conducted by E-COBSI in April, 2019. Particularly, since SHEP approach is the most important component of E-COBSI activities in the follow-up provinces, the participants were subjected to an intensive two-day session of SHEP approach out of a 5-Day training.

On the last day of the KOT, the participants formulated respective annual activity plan (Entry Planning) of the coming dry season (irrigation period) for their respective offices at provincial, district and camp level. Thus, the KOT participants will implement their activity plan formulated by themselves from now on.



E-COBSI establishes model sites to promote SHEP approach and other COBSI skills efficiently and effectively. So far, the project nominated 24 district model sites and 48 camp model sites. In addition the officers are supposed to deal with "Other COBSI Sites" and "Site to be revamped" for applying SHEP approach and other skills the officers learn in KOT.



Ms. Elizabeth Nakamanga, a CPU member of Northern Province, practically showed how to use height scale with a small boy. The Provincial CPUs and the project team carried out Nutrition Survey in April with the District Food and Nutrition Officers and CEOs. We will share results of the survey in a coming Newsletter.



Participants from Muchinga Province with Mr. leizumi, a team leader of E-COBSI JICA Project team. The participants asked many questions of the CPUs and the Project team and exchanged a fruitful discussion among them. We hope they teach their target farmers what they learnt at the KOT.