

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



News Letter No.3, April 2019



Follow-up Provinces have launched Field Activities with Farmer Groups

After successful completion of the KOTs in Northern, Muchinga and Luapula Province, provincial, district officers and CEOs in charge have started implementing their E-COBSI activities with farmer groups in District Model Sites, Camp Core Sites and other irrigation schemes of COBSI simple and permanent weirs. Most of districts are now implementing Sensitization Meeting of E-COBSI in their target sites. Besides, Food and Nutrition Officers from each province and district completed the Nutrition Baseline Survey of E-COBSI in 15 selected districts. This article will share such on-going E-COBSI field activities in the Follow-up Provinces.

●Sensitization Meeting with Farmers

Since CPUs and JICA project team have completed the KOTs in the Follow-up provinces, JICA has started provision of operational fuels for CEOs, provincial and district in order to encourage the officers to carry out field activities with farmers and for future effective monitoring of farmers' activities on E-COBSI. Therefore, the officers in the respective provinces and districts, CEOs in charge of the Model Sites and the Core Sites, those who are equipped with techniques learnt from the KOTs, can start their planned activities in their target sites and in most of sites Sensitization Meeting of E-COBSI have been conducted since April 2019.

In the Follow-up provinces, SHEP approach is a core pillar of E-COBSI activities being promoted simultaneously with Water management and O&M of irrigation facilities, nutrition improvement and Gender mainstreaming. Therefore, the CEOs start with "Sensitization Meeting" as a first step of SHEP approach. Purpose of the Sanitization Meeting is for farmers to acknowledge the SHEP approach and overall activities of E-COBSI, SHEP vision and goal and understand E-COBSI technical assistance (there will be no financial or material assistance directly given to farmers). Then, the Project tries to encourage the farmers on the concept thus participation of the E-COBSI activities.

Since the respective districts in the Follow-up provinces have shared their plan of Sensitization Meeting with the JICA Project team, the team has started monitoring of the meetings. Below are pictures from some of the monitoring meetings at Model Site and Camp Core Sites.

The project has observed active participation of provincial and district officers in the Sensitization Meeting, although the CEOs are the main implementers of the E-COBSI activities in respective Camps. Their support is very much appreciated and the Project further encourages the provincial and district staff to fully support the CEOs in conducting various field E-COBSI activities.



Sensitization Meeting in Musanda Irrigation Scheme (District Model Site), Kasama District, Northern Province. Marketing Development Officer from Kasama District explained SHEP approach, schedule of SHEP activities coming, etc. Not only farmers from the District Model Sites but also those from same Camp joined the Meeting and discussed about marketing calendar and linkage, further survey for weir construction, nutrition of their children, etc. On that day, seventy farmers participated in the meeting.

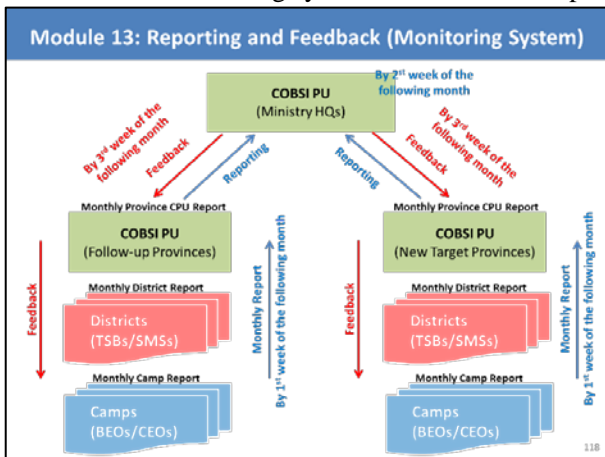


Sensitization Meeting in Bulimi Tabupwa Irrigation Scheme (Camp Core Site), Mpika District, Muchinga Province. In this irrigation scheme, the farmers are facing a challenge of irrigation water allocation among farmers and effective use of the water as a group. After discussing such issues on the water management, CEOs have started Sensitization Meeting of E-COBSI.

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Following Figure shows Reporting and Feedback system of E-COBSI. Since the provinces and the districts in the Follow-up provinces have started on-going field activities, the E-COBSI team expects they will start this monitoring system from month of April.



•Nutrition Survey in the FU provinces

In Northern, Luapula and Muchinga Province, Food and Nutrition Officers of the Provincial CPUs and the JICA Project team have completed Nutrition baseline Survey of E-COBSI in April 2019. District Food and Nutrition Officers and CEOs from 15 selected districts conducted the survey with supervision from the Senior Food and Nutrition officers from

respective provinces. The survey administered a questionnaire survey about food consumption and dietary diversity by using Food Consumption Score and Coping Strategies Index, challenges on nutrition and family issues, women and men roles in a household and actual measuring of children’s height and weight. The CPUs and JICA Project team successfully collected 75 samples in the 15 selected districts from 3 provinces and will analyze the data and share the results in coming Newsletter.



Food and Nutrition Officer from the respective provinces and districts conduct Nutrition Survey with CEOs. In most of cases, a mother brings their children to the survey place. The officer politely explained the purpose of survey and carefully listened to farmers about family challenges on food, Nutrition and sometimes agriculture.

E-COBSI Team Members



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The COBSI approach is a relevant, necessary and sustainable Innovation to promoting Irrigation among the small-scale farmers in Zambia. By fact that it is simple, it makes it easy to implement using local materials and nowadays local Staff. This has now been demonstrated through the attainment of 950 he during the last phase of the T-COBSI, which ended in 2017.

COBSI concept contributes towards National and Household Food and Nutrition Security Aspirations of the Second National Agriculture Policy (SNAP, 2016-2020). This I believe could be achieved by being Climate Smart all the time.

It follows that the COBSI Concept apart from the promotion of irrigation it is complementing to the aspects of Climate adaptation through Irrigation.

The COBSI Concept is also contributing to ensuring that farmers consider farming as a Business through the incorporation of the Agribusiness concepts as well such as the SHEP approach.

It is important to mention that this is being realized through the establishment of the COBSI Promotion Unit (CPU) in the Department of Agriculture. The CPU is multi-disciplinary unit comprising, namely: Irrigation Engineering, Agribusiness, Food and Nutrition, Crops and Policy and Planning members.

It is also true, that the COBSI approach is continued pursuing continuous Skills transfer as well as capacity building among the new entrants especially staff from North western province, Central and Copper belt Provinces in line with the Seventh National Development Plan (7th NDP) without leaving anyone behind. Further, it is encouraging to see our Zambian Staff taking up more responsible positions in the Training of Trainers (TOT) as well as Kick off Training (KOT) for the new Provinces. This will indeed enhance the sustainability of the COBSI Concept.

I look forward to a more robust COBSI Team.
Thanks.