



MTT was conducted in New Target Provinces

Mid-term Training (MTT), one of the significant training of COBSI training package, has been implemented in New Target Provinces in August 2020. To avoid the spread of COVID-19 through close contact, participants in Copperbelt and Northwestern Provinces were divided into 2 groups. By using the online meeting system, the training was monitored partially by the Japanese experts who are currently in Japan, though at times internet connection was poor sometimes.

Preparation of MTT in New Target Provinces

As Japanese experts couldn't travel to Zambia due to the COVID-19 since March 2020, the preparation of MTT in the new target provinces was carried out by the CPU in respective Provinces. To prepare the MTT, Japanese experts and CPUs had a preparation meeting through the online system a few weeks before MTT. The experts explained the contents of MTT, how to prepare the MTT, proceedings of the MTT and other requirements to enable them submit the reports and the receipts after the training. CPU carried out the MTT last year together with Japanese experts, thus it gave the CPU a better understanding to conduct the MTT.

Implementation of MTT in New Target Provinces

The table below shows the training schedule and the number of participants in MTT. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the participants for Copperbelt and Northwestern provinces split into 2 groups and carried out the same training.

Provinces	Date	Participants
Central	17 – 19, Aug	25 (F:6, M 19)
Copper Belt (1)	19 – 21, Aug	38 (F:12, M 26)
Copper Belt (2)	26 – 28, Aug	36 (F:8, M 28)
North Western (1)	18 – 20, Aug	31 (F:7, M 24)
North Western (2)	24 – 26, Aug	30 (F:5, M 25)



To prevent from COVID-19, All the participants wore masks and taking distances more than 1m between participants. (Northwestern Province)

The topics of the MTT included, 1) Cultivation technic of selected crops by the market survey, 2)

Nutrition Improvement, 3) Report of the progress of E-COBSI activities so far, 4) Entry planning for the E-COBSI activities after the MTT, and 5) group work of COVID-19 impacts for the E-COBSI activities.



The number of participants of Copperbelt province was the biggest but the participants kept the social distance during the training. (Copperbelt Province)

During the training, Japanese experts monitored it every day via online, though the connection was not so good on some days due to the network problem.



This picture is the screenshot of the online monitoring. Although it was hard to connect every day due to the network problem, Japanese experts and the CPUs tried to connect every day. Trough the online monitoring, the Japanese experts had some discussion with the CPU and gave some suggestions to them about the implementation of MTT.

One of the highlights of the MTT was combination training, theoretical and practical, of cultivation training. Extension officer should understand the agriculture both theoretically and practically to be able to transfer the cultivation technics to the farmers. Participants had theory training in the classroom followed by practical training outside (farm institute demo fields). In the practical sessions, participants

made a nursery bed and compost manure at the training site.



Mr. Nawa Mulope, Senior Land Husbandry Officer of Northwestern Province, is making a presentation on the compost making. (Northwestern Province)



Participants are sowing seeds carefully on the nursery bed. The seeds were sown with proper spacing between seeds. This method can contribute minimize the cultivation cost of the seed by growing healthy seedlings. (Central Province)



Participants learnt how to make a compost manure and *Bokashi* compost through practical training. (Copperbelt Province)

MTT of 2020 was carried out without the full participation of Japanese experts. CPU submitted the training report on a daily basis to the Japanese experts. Some findings to be improved included in the reports will be discussed in the forthcoming annual evaluation meeting and National CPU meeting thus to improve the E-COBSI training package.

(1) Difficult to manage the training time because the number of topics is a lot.

(2) The progress presentation template should be edited for future use to include totals column for achievement part on number of constructions of simple weirs.

(3) There is need to invite District Agricultural Coordinators (DACOs) in future meetings so that they have enough information on E-COBSI activities.

(4) All practical sessions should be placed end of daily schedule because some are time consuming which might result in loss of time and concentration once participants return for other presentations.

(5) Ensure the alternative source of power (genset) is on standby before the meeting starts.



The participants are receiving the certificate. As countermeasure of COVID-19, hitting fists instead of shaking hands. (Copperbelt Province)

Impact of COVID-19 in Follow-up Provinces

In the KOT&MTT in FU provinces, which was done in July 2020, there was a group work session to identify the effect of COVID-19 on the daily work of district officers, CEOs, and farmers. The identified impacts of COVID-19 are as follows.

- 1) Agri-show and Field day could not be carried out.
- 2) Social gatherings and meetings were restricted. And some extension activities could not be carried out.
- 3) Farmers could not receive extension services effectively.
- 4) Difficulties selling of farmer's produce.
- 5) Small businesses were negatively affected by reduced customer turnout.
- 6) Farmers could not sell the agricultural produce to far marketplaces due to the restriction of movement.

The same group work was carried out in MTT in the New Target Provinces. These results of the impacts of COVID-19 will be shared in the following COBSI activities, Annual evaluation workshop, and National CPU meeting.

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 BACKNUMBER: https://www.jica.go.jp/project/zambia/020/new_sletter/index.html (JAPANESE SITE)