



All the annual events in 2022 were completed!

E-COBSI's December had several events and the CPUs and JICA project team had a fruitful discussion with many participants. All the target districts reported the progress of the year in 2022 and shared the findings, the good practices, the challenges, etc. of the activities among the participants. After that, COBSI Promotion Unit (CPU) members in the six provinces gathered in Lusaka to share the results of each AEW at a 4th National CPU Meeting. Finally, the aggregated annual report, the implementation plan for next year, and the modification of the Project Design Matrix (PDM) were presented in a 5th Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) Meeting.

Each target province held AEW

All six provinces held AEWs respectively inviting officers who implemented E-COBSI activities in 2022. The program was composed of 1) annual reports of 2022 and action plans for 2023 in all the target sites, district model sites, and province, 2) progress of *Tebakari-Eiyouhou*, fish cultivation, and online reporting system, 3) group discussion of main COBSI activities and newly introduced activities.

According to the reports, newly irrigated areas expanded by E-COBSI in the New Target Provinces in 2022 were 38 ha in Copperbelt Province, 33 ha in North Western Province, and 16 ha in Central Province respectively. The cumulative irrigation areas during the project implementation period up to now are shown in figure 1. The annual expanded areas were highest in 2019 then the values descend afterward. This may be because COVID-19 caused stagnation of activities. Another possible reason is that high-potential COBSI sites with good conditions tend to be developed at the initial time when the E-COBSI started.

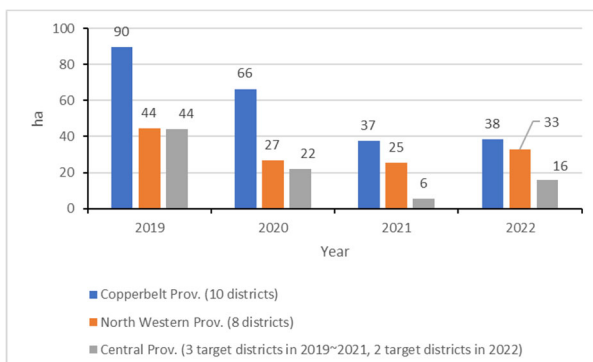


Figure 1. Annual irrigation area expanded by E-COBSI in the New Target Provinces (JICA project team)

Regarding simple weir construction, some districts argued that the water level in the stream was extremely low compared to the average year. And this made it difficult to construct simple weirs. Mr. Ieizumi, team

leader of E-COBSI, advised that we can deal with this issue by constructing simple weirs earlier around February or March so that farmers can harvest before the water level becomes low.

As for the nutrition component, some CEOs highly evaluated a newly introduced tool “*Tebakari-Eiyouhou*” because it was easy for farmers to understand necessary amount of each food group. However, there were cases that farmers received a wrong message that they cannot eat more than the recommended amount though the amount is just a “standard requirement”. Thus, it is necessary to improve the manual or the training contents to convey the correct message to farmers.



During the group works, challenges, counter measures, lessons learnt, etc. were discussed (North Western province).

Overall progress was shared in the CPU meeting

On 15th December, a 4th national CPU meeting was held in Lusaka with the attendance of CPU members. During the meeting, representatives of the target provinces presented each annual report. Also, the overall progress of 2022 and a plan for 2023, modification of PDM, results of nutrition monitoring in 2022, and Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment & Promotion (SHEP) in Zambia were presented.

Regarding SHEP in Zambia, E-COBSI requests JICA office to present the progress and the findings at the SHEP international workshop to be held in March 2023. Before that opportunity, Mr. Henry Daka (PAP in Northern Province) presented achievements, reactions from farmers and CEOs, lessons learnt, and way forward of SHEP approach, which were collected from relevant marketing officers including Senior Marketing District Officers (SMDOs).

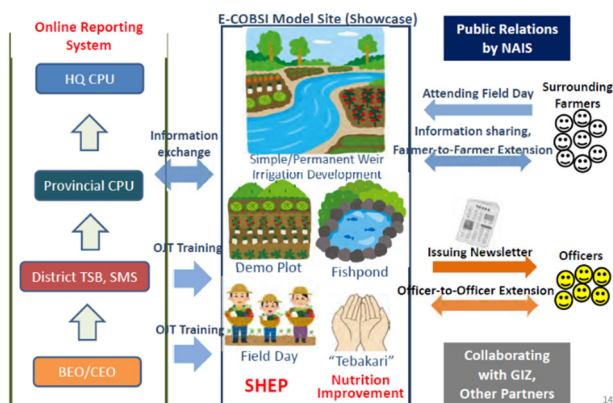


Mr. Malumo Nawa, a project manager of E-COBSI moderated the meeting as a chairperson.

E-COBSI PDM indicators were approved in the 5th JCC Meeting

During a 5th JCC meeting, Mr. Nelson Phiri, a SIE in Muchinga Province, presented the progress report of the Follow-Up Provinces, and Ms. Mudenda Senkwe Cheelo, a SIE in Central Province, presented that of the New Target Provinces. Then, Mr. Ieizumi presented a plan of the 5th project year, and Dr. Adachi, a co-team leader of the JICA project team, presented modification of the PDM.

Because year 2023 is the last implementation year of E-COBSI, topics to ensure the sustainability of the project were emphasized in the 5th project year’s plan such as 1) set up of “Tree-years action plan (2024-2026)”, and 2) enhancement of “farmer-to-farmer” or “officer-to-officer” extension system through field day, etc.



Summary of the Activity 2023 “Centering the Project Activities at the District Model Sites, the Camp Core Sites”

Relating to topic 1), the E-COBSI concept is expected to be incorporated into policy documents in Zambia such as an Irrigation Master Plan. An Irrigation Master Plan shows policy of irrigation development in Zambia and it will be formulated with budget support from World Bank. Regarding topic 2), PR activities will be promoted in 2023 such as involving NAIS to all the E-COBSI training and broadcast them, holding a field day at the COBSI sites, and participating Agri-show to disseminate the E-COBSI activities to farmers, other development partners and organizations, etc.

The important topic in the 5th JCC meeting was to decide an indicator of the PDM. Particularly, that of “Project Purpose” was important. Considering the achievement so far, the indicator was decided as follows: 1) Irrigation area is expanded by **500** ha in the New Target provinces (Copperbelt, North Western, and Central), 2) Agricultural income of farmers is improved by **70%** in the model sites in the Follow-Up provinces (Luapula, Muchinga, and Northern) by virtue of irrigation and marketing approach. To surely achieve the PDM indicators, the responsible officers at each level are expected to communicate well each other to exchange information in terms of progress toward the achievement. All the modifications of the PDM were agreed upon by all the participants.

Closing remarks were stated by both Mr. Malumo Nawa, and Mr. Keita Izumi, a Senior Representative of JICA Zambia Office. Mr. Nawa emphasized that it is important to fully utilize the infrastructures made by E-COBSI. He also mentioned the importance of collaboration with other organizations to add more value on E-COBSI. Mr. Izumi stated that Zambia can be the center of excellence of COBSI in African countries. In fact, the Mozambique government has delegated E-COBSI sites to know how COBSI has been implemented. Then, he emphasized that it is very important for the project to have an active discussion with MoA about post E-COBSI and implement necessary actions to normalize the COBSI approach in Zambia.



The participants of 5th JCC meeting