



## What's COVAMS?

The project for Community Vitalization and Afforestation in Middle Shire (COVAMS) is implemented by Forestry Department, Malawi Government with technical assistance from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to conserve catchment area in order to mitigate siltation into the Middle Shire River. COVAMS started in November 2007. Project period is for 5 years until November 2012.

## COVAMS Project Area

COVAMS project area is in two T/As, T/A Kuntaja and Kapeni, which are located to the north of Blantyre city. For the first year of the project, seven target villages were selected for implementation.

## Critical Situation of Farming Gardens in Project Area

Almost all of villagers are longing for good harvest of maize in every year. However, they are losing fertile soil due to poor farming practice in their garden. Picture1 shows that top soil was washed away from the garden due to heavy rain. The Picture2 and 3 show severe condition of gullies which were consequences of soil erosion. Eroded soils flowed into streams, finally it silted in the power generation dam in the Shire River.



Location of Project Area



1. Condition of Garden during Heavy Rain fall



2. Large Gully in the Project Area



3. Maize Garden (Upper) and Large Gully

## Siltation affects Hydro Electric Power Generation in the Shire River

To mitigate siltation is crucial issue for stable electricity supply because siltation reduces water volume of a dam and damages a power generation plant. 98% of hydro electric power of Malawi is produced from the Shire River. Especially, there are three dams in Middle Shire, Nkula A, Nkula B and Tezani. The northern end of project area is the place where these Nkula dams are.

## COVAMS Approach

Without the villager's soil conservation practice, it is impossible to reduce siltation in the Shire River. COVAMS provides technical training courses of soil conservation to support villager's practice. At the same time, to attract villagers, COVAMS provides various kinds of training courses for productive activities, based on villager's needs. The theme of conducted training courses from March 2008 to March 2009 appeared on the right box.

## Features of COVAMS Training

To maximize villager's opportunity for participation, all of COVAMS training courses are held in their villages. COVAMS training is opened to everyone even mothers with babies and elders. Then, training can be repeated as long as there is demand. As the lecturer, extension officers or local resource person are utilized to make technical follow up easy. On top of that, COVAMS provides various knowledge and skills for villagers through training courses but not inputs. COVAMS only provides villagers with necessary materials for practice purpose of training. There is no allowance or lunch provision nor soft drinks.



4. Fish Farming (Measurement)



5. Bee- Keeping (Lecture)

### Conducted Training Courses

In Mar. 2008/ Mar. 2009

#### PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

- Vegetable Growing
- Tree Growing
- Small Business Management
- Improved Stove Making
- Fish Farming
- Bee Keeping

#### SOIL CONSERVATION

- Contour marker ridge making
- Gully Control
- River bank Afforestation

No. of Training 115 times

No. of Participants

Total 2,759 villagers

## Project Implementation Structure

COVAMS office is located at District Forestry Office Blantyre. The project implementation structure consists of multi sectors by collaborating with District Agricultural Office, and District Community Development Office. On the field, 12 extension officers from the above mentioned three sectors are working as Project Implementation Unit (PIU) to bridge villagers and COVAMS office.

## Resource Coordination

In Malawi, there are already many of prospective resource providing organizations for villagers such as private companies, NGOs, donors and other government programs. However, to access or link to resource providing organization is difficult for villagers. To improve this situation, COVAMS collects information about resource providing organizations and provide it to villagers.

→ NEXT News Letter : Scene of COVAMS Training (Productive Activities)



For further information and Questions, please contact

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