



MA-SHEP NEWS LETTER

January 2018

Market-oriented Smallholder Horticulture
Empowerment and Promotion Project (MA-SHEP)

vol. **1**



REPORT PERIOD : April 2017 to December 2017

What is MA-SHEP?

In 2014, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) invited Malawian officers to “Training Program for Market-Oriented Agriculture for Smallholder Farmers”. This programme aims to promote the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (SHEP) Approach to the countries which wish to promote market-oriented agriculture for increasing income of smallholder farmers. The characteristics of SHEP approach is to stimulate motivation of small scale farmers along with the promotion of agriculture business.

After the training in Japan, Malawian officers started to implement the pilot project in Ntchisi and Mchinji districts. In the course of the pilot project implementation, considerable positive changes were observed among the target farmer groups, such as embarking upon collective marketing and improving bargaining power.

The Government of Malawi (GOM) and the Government of Japan (GOJ) started the technical cooperation project to support GOM in promoting and scaling up market-oriented agriculture for smallholder horticulture farmers based on the experience in the pilot project. (For further information, please visit our website or contact with our project office indicated in back side below)

Follow-up visit to SHEP pilot sites (May to July 2017)



In order to confirm achievements and identify challenges of SHEP implementation in pilot sites to learn lessons, follow-up visit and interview with district officers, extension workers and farmers was carried out at 8 SHEP pilot sites in Ntchisi district, Mchinji district. Through these visits, some achievements and impacts were observed: Farmers’ mindset has changed to “grow to sell”, started group purchasing of inputs and group selling, improved production techniques, Farmers increased income from horticulture.

Gender Survey in SHEP pilot sites (August 2017)

In order to formulate future activities for mainstreaming gender in MA-SHEP, the project invited a JICA senior advisor in charge of gender and development and started a gender survey. We interviewed gender officers of the Ministry and development partners. In addition, we visited SHEP pilot sites in Ntchisi, Mchinji and Salima districts to conduct interviews with district officers, extension workers and farmers.



MA-SHEP Package* was approved in Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) Meeting !

*MA-SHEP Package is the particular series of market-oriented agricultural activities customised in Malawi based on the SHEP Approach

MA-SHEP Package (Version 0)	Proposed MA-SHEP Package
Essential Steps	
1. SHEP selects target beneficiaries and the implementers and beneficiaries share the vision/goal.	1.1 Sensitization Meeting at ADDs
	1.2 Sensitization Workshop at Districts
	1.3 Confirmation/Selection of Implementing Districts
	Courtesy Call to DCs
	1.4 Organizers' Training for ADD & District staff
	1.5 Selection of target Farmer Groups
2. SHEP helps the farmers discover new knowledge and opportunities.	1.6 Sensitization Workshop for Extension Staff & target Farmer Groups
	2.1 Baseline Survey
	2.2 Gender Mainstreaming Training using Household Approach (Visioning & Gender Balance Tree)
	2.3 Stakeholder Meeting
3. SHEP helps the farmers formulate a plan.	2.4 Market Survey (Training for Staff, Actual survey)
	3.1 Crop Selection
	3.2 Crop Planting Calendar
4. SHEP facilitates the realization of the plan by providing technical solutions to the farmers.	3.3 Action Plan Making
	4.1 ToT (Technical training for Extension Staff)
	4.2 In-field Trainings for Farmers
	Monitoring and Evaluation

After 6 months of field study, MA-SHEP team developed an initial version of MA-SHEP Package.

On 27th September 2017, the 1st MA-SHEP JCC Meeting was held and the MA-SHEP Package was approved.

These activities started from October 2017, and will be reviewed every year to improve our MA-SHEP Package.



The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development is pleased to officially start implementation of Market-oriented Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion Project and release first edition of MA-SHEP newsletter.



The smallholder horticulture farmers have serious marketing challenges that directly affect their income levels. The Market Oriented Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion Project (MA-SHEP) will attempt to address these challenges so that farmers benefit from their farming. The Project made follow up visits to pilot sites in Ntchisi, Mchinji and Salima districts, which gave clear evidence that the SHEP Approach was being internalized amongst farming communities. **The "grow to sell attitude" as opposed to "grow and sell" culture** was evident during the discussions. The gender study which was conducted to understand appropriate gender mainstreaming approaches in MA-SHEP proved that household approach, commonly used in Malawi was effective and should be adopted to be incorporated into MA-SHEP Package. It was also pleasing to observe strong relationships and trust among smallholder farmers and extension workers. During the period the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) was instituted and conducted one meeting to provide policy and technical guidance on implementation of the project. It is pleasing to note that all planned activities during the April-December, 2017 period were successfully implemented.

Story

from

Field

Strengthened mutual trust between extension worker and farmers



Mlonyeni EPA, Mchinji District
Mr. Austine Simfukwe (AEDO)

In SHEP Approach, extension workers and farmers work together, like we go to markets together to do market survey. So our mutual trust was strengthened through these activities. I gave only technical instruction to farmers so far, but now I can advise farmers on marketing issue. After SHEP, farmers often call me and ask for some advice, so I get busy. But it does not bother me. Farmers rely on me, I can satisfy farmers, that makes me very happy.

Comment from JICA Experts:

He haven't been trained on horticulture production, but he learned from his colleague, who participated in the SHEP training course for extension worker in Japan. In SHEP Approach, we consider that motivating farmers is an essential element of the Approach. We need to motivate extension workers as well, since they play a key role to produce great change on farmers behaviour.

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