



# MA-SHEP NEWS LETTER

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

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## Voice from MA-SHEP team

Distinguished colleagues, I would like to welcome you to the second volume of the MA-SHEP Newsletter. The period under review shall remain memorable in the history of MA-SHEP implementation.

This is the period when together we have managed to implement 11 out of 16 activities in the MA-SHEP Package. This is an exciting achievement.

All concerned frontline staff are now fully equipped with knowledge, skills and training materials for conducting in-field trainings for our distinguished farmers. It is our hope that the in-field trainings will have great impact on improved horticulture production and the much needed empowerment for smallholder horticulture farmers.

It is time to change mindset of both staff and farmers from "grow and sell" to "grow to sell" Thank you, and keep the momentum.



## The Ambassador of Japan visited SHEP pilot site in Ntchisi District (1st March 2018)

On 1st March 2018, the Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Madam Kae Yanagisawa, visited a SHEP pilot site in Ntchisi District. Dr. Changaya, the Controller of Agricultural Extension & Technical Services (CAETS), also participated in this visit from Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development.

During the interaction, the Ambassador of Japan asked farmers, "Besides the results that you could repair the roof, purchase a motorcycle, and pay school tuition fees, what kind of change has been made inside of yourself?". One of the female farmers raised her hand and replied that "Before starting the SHEP activities, we just sold harvested crops. But, we now have linkages to dealers and know how to grasp market information. We consider farming as business and changed our mind to "Grow to Sell" rather than "Grow and Sell".



The onion farmer gained MWK500,000 after harvesting the onion

At the end of the field visit, the Ambassador of Japan commented that "I'm glad to hear the success stories of farmers with their real voices. It was wonderful that all the ex-participant who participated in the SHEP training course in Japan carried out the pilot activities without sufficient resources."

## The 4th SHEP Approach International Workshop was held in South Africa (24th & 25th April 2018)

The 4th SHEP Approach International Workshop was held in Johannesburg, South Africa by JICA Headquarters. This workshop aims to;

- (1) brush up and deepen understanding on the SHEP Approach and its concept among the colleagues who are not ex-participants of JICA training on "Market-oriented Agriculture Promotion for Executive Officer in Africa " and;
- (2) share knowledge, experiences and challenges of the current SHEP activities implemented in each country.

2 agribusiness officers, namely Mr. Pearson Jasi-Soko from the headquarters of the MoAIWD and Ms. Lusayo Msiska Kalulu from Salima district, participated in the workshop. The progress and achievement of MA-SHEP was presented by Mr.Soko.



## Information sharing through WhatsApp started (6th June 2018 ~)

In order to share information among Officers, MA-SHEP WhatsApp group was created. This WhatsApp group is used for sharing information not only from MA-SHEP team but also from Extension Officers.



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Story

from

Field

## "Challenges for Market are Opportunities for Farmers"



After the Market Survey ToT, one of the extension officer of Kasungu district commented that "I've been working as an extension officer for 30 years, but I have never seen such a tool like this. The ministry has been keeping this tool? This is good. This is a good tool. Now, farmers can stop claiming that, "There is no market!"

Some extension officers in Mchinji district commented excitedly after the market survey exercise.

"So many vegetables are sold in the Mchinji market, but we found that the most of them came from other districts. Buyers go to other districts to purchase vegetables despite high transport cost, because Mchinji farmers don't produce so much vegetables. Buyers want to buy commodities in Mchinji. This is a business chance for Mchinji farmers! "



Comment from JICA Experts: As the Project Coordinator mentioned during the training, challenges for market are opportunities for farmers. To find out marketing opportunities motivate farmers to learn agricultural technique and to collect market information voluntarily. That is the key to improve more sustainably their agricultural technique and their income as well.



## Activities from January 2018 to July 2018

### Organizers' Training for ADD and District Officers was carried out (23rd & 24th January 2018)

On 23rd and 24th of January 2018, MA-SHEP held two-day Organizers' Training on Basic SHEP Approach for officers from Agriculture Development Divisions (ADDs) and District Agriculture Offices (DAOs) of the 1st Batch target areas (Kasungu ADD, Salima ADD, Kasungu DAO, Ntchisi DAO, Mchinji DAO, Dowa East DAO, Dowa West DAO, Salima DAO and Nkhotakota DAO). The purpose of the training was to train the participants on how to organize the important events of the "MA-SHEP Package" as well as how to select target Farmer Groups based on "Group Selection Criteria".



### Stakeholders Workshop was carried out (7th & 8th February 2018)



On 7th and 8th February, The Two-Day Stakeholders Workshop on MA-SHEP was held. The purpose of the workshop was to introduce the participants on background/history of the SHEP Approach, progress/result of the SHEP pilot activities in Malawi, outline of the MA-SHEP as well as plans/achievements of activities of "MA-SHEP Package". We invited more than 100 people, not only officers from Agricultural Development Divisions (ADDs) and District Agriculture Offices (DAOs), but also Universities and Development Partners to share how SHEP pilot activities were concretely implemented (e.g. tips for utilize limited resources) and what outcomes and challenges were observed at the field level.

### Sensitization Workshop for Extension Staff and Farmer Group Representatives was carried out (12th to 16th March 2018)

The Sensitization Workshop for Extension Staff & Farmer Representatives of Target Farmer Groups was held by the District MA-SHEP Management Team of 7 DAOs in the 1st Batch target areas from 12th to 16th March 2018. Each District MA-SHEP Management Team selected 5 target farmer groups. In this workshop, Agriculture Extension Development Coordinators (AEDCs) from Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) where the selected target farmer groups are located, Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) who are in charge of the groups, and two farmer group representatives (1 male and 1 female) were invited in order to share the concept of SHEP and aims of MA-SHEP.



### Baseline Survey ToT (17th & 19th April 2018)



The baseline survey provides opportunities for the target farmers to clearly identified areas to be improved from the viewpoint of their current agricultural situations such as production, income and farming techniques. In this training, the purpose, survey tool and implementation method/procedure of MA-SHEP Baseline Survey were explained so that the extension staff can smoothly carry out the baseline survey with the farmer groups in the future. Mr. George H. Kapelemera, Programme Manager of Kasungu ADD offered to give opening remarks to motivate extension staff. He inspired extension staff by saying, "If you want to change someone, you have to change yourself first. And, if you want to change yourself, you have to work hard."

### Gender ToT (8th & 9th, 10th & 11th May 2018)



MoAIWD puts importance on dialogues/discussions among family members for achieving gender equality within the household, and recognizes Household Approach (HHA) as an effective tool to facilitate dialogues/discussions among family members to make a family vision and find ways to achieve the vision and as a result, realize gender equality within the household. In MA-SHEP, we took "Visioning" and "Gender Balance Tree" among various HHA tools into MA-SHEP Package. Through these tools, we aim that the household members, both female and male should participate in farming helping each other. In the workshop, the participants worked in groups to make Visioning Map and Gender Balance Tree.

### Stakeholder Meeting & Market Survey ToT ( 22th May to 1st June 2018)

Stakeholder Meeting and Market Survey Training (ToT) were conducted in Implementing District Agriculture Offices (DAOs) were conducted in 7 DAOs.

The Stakeholder Meeting had two purposes to achieve: (1) it shows farmers a business opportunity which horticultural farming can bring to them, and (2) it helps farmers to establish business linkages with a variety of market actors involved in horticulture business. 4 farmer group representatives from each target farmer group participated in the meeting and those farmers and stakeholders exchanged information through business talks.



In the next day of the stakeholder meeting, the District Management Team conducted Market Survey ToT in order to explain how to conduct market survey, how to select crops based on the information which is collected through the market survey, and how to make action plan. The extension officers visited the local market to do an exercise of market survey and interviewed to vegetable sellers about their requirement for commodities and their prices and so on. In the stakeholder meeting and market survey ToT, the participants found a business chance and looked excited.



### Technical Training (ToT) (24th to 27th July 2018, 31st July 2018 to 3rd August 2018)



The purpose of the training was to train the extension staff on general horticultural crops production techniques and specific production techniques for the selected crops based on needs/demands from market. By this time, each farmer group has selected target crops after they conduct market survey, it means they are already convinced of the market opportunities of the target crops. Although the number of officers who are in charge of horticulture is limited, other officers who have knowledge about horticulture production took on the role of facilitator in this training. They had facilitator's meeting every single night. They gave many ideas or knowledge on the contents.