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Kaizen Mentors of Kassala State Government introduced their successful Kaizen experiences through Kaizen Training at Continuous Professional Development Center in Federal Ministry of Health



One of the Kaizen Mentors, Dr. Omer Suliman, Director of Planning and Human Resource, State Ministry of Health is explaining the Kassala State Kaizen Logo.

On 19-20 March 2014, at Continuous Professional Development Center (CPDC) in Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH), Khartoum, two-days Kaizen Training was organized with the cooperation between CPDC, FMoH and K-TOP.

Since 2011, K-TOP has introduced Japanese productivity tool *Kaizen* (Japanese word meaning “continuous improvement”) to Kassala State Government, in order to improve its public services with the bottom-up initiatives from all government staff. In Kaizen, the government will organize Work Improvement Team (WIT) in each office and WIT will discuss and find out what they can do to improve their own work environment or work process with their own ideas, manpower and existing budget in a short time. Most Kaizen activities do not cost big money, and can be implemented easily. While one Kaizen activity looks very small and simple, if WIT continues Kaizen activity one after another, the accumulated changes in their workplace will be very significant in the end.

Convinced by the successful experiences in K-TOP, Kassala State Government is committed to spreading Kaizen to all ministries and localities in the state, as well as to other states and the federal government, if there is any request. During these 2-day Kaizen Training at CPDC, three Kaizen mentors from Kassala State Government (Mr. Gamal Alhassan, DG, Directorate of Planning and Development, State Ministry of Finance; Dr. Omer Suliman, Director of Planning and Human Resource, State Ministry of Health (SMoH); and Mr. Abdelgader Abdelwahab, Public Health Officer, Reproductive Health Unit, SMoH) and one assistant (Mr. Akram Ismail) from JICA K-TOP instructed the participants on what is Kaizen, introduced examples of good Kaizen practices in Kassala, and taught how to plan Kaizen Step-up Project using 9-sheet Kassala Step-up Project Planning Formats. They also facilitated the groups of the participants to discuss the problems in their workplace, identify the root causes for the problems, and formulate their own Kaizen actions using existing human and financial resources.

As a result of this Kaizen Training, about 30 participants from FMoH have organized WITs in their workplace and ready to implement small Kaizen actions one after another.



Planning Cluster

Raising awareness of the benefit of Evaluation (Impact Survey)

On 2nd February 2014, K-TOP Planning Cluster conducted “Workshop on Evaluation (impact survey).” In the workshop, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit in General Directorate of Economic Planning and Development (DPD) staff reported the result of the evaluation survey on the K-TOP activities in Health cluster and Vocational Training cluster. Participants were from DPD, State Ministry of Health, and JICA team and discussed the benefits of the evaluation and how to institutionalize it.

M&E Unit staff is in charge of monitoring the proceeding of all development project activities in Kassala State including the one funded by government and the one funded by the other international aid organizations. Their “monitoring” is mainly for managing the payment. Although the name of the unit is “Monitoring and Evaluation,” they had less experience in the “evaluation,” especially in the field. Thus, as the K-TOP activity, M&E Unit staff and JICA team conducted together the evaluation on the K-TOP clusters’ activities.

In the second year of K-TOP, in collaboration with K-TOP Water cluster and Agriculture and Livelihood cluster, M&E Unit staff step by step deepened their experience of the evaluation survey. Concerning the Water cluster activity, M&E Unit staff participated in conducting questionnaire in the evaluation survey on the rehabilitation of the well in Wad El Helew, and also examined the result of the impact survey on the rehabilitation of the well in Banard village, Girba. Regarding the Agriculture and Livelihood cluster, M&E Unit staff started to join from the planning of the evaluation survey as the first trial. Discussing together with M&E Unit staff of DPD, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Administration (PME) of State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Irrigation, Animal Resources (SMoA), and JICA team, they compared the monitoring formats of each organization and decided the survey design including objectives and questionnaires of the survey.

In the third year, M&E Unit staff, in collaboration with K-TOP Vocational Training cluster and Health cluster, experienced the whole process of the evaluation including the selection of the survey theme, drafting the questionnaire, collecting the information and analyzing it, and filling in the reporting format. In Vocational Training cluster, M&E Unit staff and Kassala Vocational Training Center (KVTC) staff have searched whether the motivation of the KVTC staff has increased or not. In the Health cluster, M&E Unit staff and M&E Unit staff in Ministry of Health have surveyed how the women in the two pilot areas, Girba and Wad El Helew, recognized the reproductive health service from the village midwives and hospitals.

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“Workshop on Evaluation (Impact Survey)” on
February 2nd, 2014.



Ms. Mei Obead, M&E Unit staff, and Mr.
Abulgasim Eltahir, Head of M&E unit in
Ministry of Health, discussed together the
content of the questionnaire.



Mr. Idris Ali, M&E Unit staff in DPD,
conducted the questionnaire to the KVTC staff.



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During the Workshop on Evaluation which M&E Unit staff presented the results of the evaluation in Vocational Training cluster and Health cluster, there were many comments from DPD staff and Ministry of Health staff to confirm the benefit of the evaluation. At the end of the workshop, Mr. Gamal Mohammed, Director General of DPD, said that this joint evaluation survey is important because it will enhance the relationship between the government and beneficiaries. Thus, he announced that DPD would like to conduct the same kind of survey for the other projects too.

Now, M&E Unit staff and JICA team are drafting the Guidance on Evaluation. After the finalization of the Guidance, M&E Unit staff is planning to conduct the evaluation of the development project by themselves.



Joint M&E team with DPD, SMOA and JICA, and interviewed farmers.

<Voice from Ms. Mei Obead Abbas, Planning and Development Inspector, M&E Unit in DPD>



Ms. Mei Ahmed Abbas, Planning and Development Inspector, M&E Unit in DPD

As the Planning and Development Inspector, I am in charge of monitoring the development projects and the aid-management. I visit the project sites and check the proceeding of the implementation.

Q: What did you participate in the K-TOP evaluation activity?

Through K-TOP activity, I participated in two evaluation surveys, Agriculture and Livelihood cluster and Health cluster. In the survey, we make an evaluation team with the other clusters' staff who are in charge of M&E in the Ministry. By using the questionnaire, we collect the necessary information directly from the beneficiaries in the field, analyse the results, and fill in the reporting PowerPoint format.

Q: In your opinion, what is the benefit of the evaluation?

The benefit of the evaluation is that we can know the strong points and weak points of the certain projects through the beneficiaries' voices. For example, in Wad El Helew, we conducted questionnaire to women, including those who are pregnant, to know the impact of the K-TOP Health cluster activity regarding reproductive health. We could confirm from the beneficiaries that VMWs' skills have upgraded and the reproductive health service of Wad El Helew Hospital has improved through K-TOP activities such as the provision of equipment, capacity building of health cadres and improving the health management. However, on the other hand, there were some voices claiming about the shortage of the numbers of doctor in the hospital. I think one doctor in Wad El Helew hospital is insufficient because the other hospitals are far away and people living there depends on the Wad El Helew Hospital.

Q: What does motivate you to work as M&E staff in DPD?

As one of the citizens in Kassala, I am happy when I feel I am working for my country. On the other hand, through the job here, I can earn many kinds of experience and can enhance my skills.



Conducting questionnaire to the women in Wad El Helew.



Health Cluster

Taking three years, the changes occurred in the In-service Training for VMWs

From 11th to 13th and from 23rd to 25th February, 2014, K-TOP Health Cluster conducted two refresher batches of the village midwives (VMWs) training. In these refresher trainings, the participants were selected from the VMWs who have received the in-service training in the last two years with K-TOP, but their understanding of some of the training topics were not sufficient at that time.

Since the K-TOP started its implementation in 2011, Reproductive Health Unit staff and JICA team have conducted nine batches of in-service trainings for the VMWs who work in five selected localities including Girba Locality and Wad El Helew Locality. Taking three years, the in-service training has dramatically changed. After the refresher training, both Health Visitors and VMWs said there were a lot of changes comparing to the past trainings.

<Voice from Ms. Fathiya Abaid Zaid, Health Visitor>

Q: What were the challenges you found in the past in-service training?

In the past in-service training, we faced with the challenges in making the training understandable and memorable for VMWs. Through the training, we found that the understanding level of VMWs tended to be low. Most of the VMWs could not read or write and that made them difficult to memorize the training content correctly. Moreover, although facilitators were following the same textbook, the content of each subject and the way of teaching were different among the facilitators. These differences also made the VMWs to be confused.

Q: What kind of things has done to overcome the challenges?

First of all, we, facilitators received a coaching workshop and learned the new method of teaching, using visualized materials such as PowerPoint, flip chart, role play and so on. Furthermore, we developed a job sheet which includes all key-points to be taught for each subject in the in-service training. During the development of the job sheet, we discussed again and again, and succeeded in making the certain standard of the midwifery service (according to the Federal Ministry of Health guidelines) which every facilitator agreed.

Q: What is the difference between the past in-service training batches and the recent training batches which you use the new teaching materials?

There are changes in both VMWs and facilitators. Regarding VMWs, they seem to be more concentrated and interested in the training. During the training, there were many interactive conversations between VMWs and facilitators. Facilitators asked VMW the reason of certain process, the next step to be done, etc., and VMWs answered one after another. This change was reflected in the high-score result of the post-test. We can say that VMWs' understanding has greatly improved.

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By using a flip chart and asking many questions to VMWs during the in-service training, Health Visitor is making the training more interactive and memorable.



Each Health Visitor has a teaching manual for the in-service training.



Ms. Fathiya Abaid Zaid, Health Visitor, Former State Supervisor



Concerning facilitators, all facilitators feel each other as one team. In the past, each facilitator follows her own way and knowledge for teaching midwifery service, and each of us could not accept the others' way easily. However, after we started to use the new teaching material, we are complementing each other based on the same standard for the way of teaching. Since we developed the teaching materials together, our work became as teamwork and feel togetherness. We are more confident about what we have to teach and how to teach it. Using the training manual, we can cover the whole key points of each topic.

Q: What does motivate you to work as a health visitor?

I feel happy when I could provide a service toward the pregnant women. When I train VMWs, I feel that I am helping women in the community. I hope I can improve my midwifery service to provide quality service toward people in Kassala.

<Voice from Ms. Siham Abdo alghani Atta alla, VMW from Girba>

I participated in the in-service training in April 2013, and this refresher training in February 2014. Compared to the training in 2013, in this refresher training, I could learn new method for infection control, urine test and postpartum care. Especially regarding urine test, in the previous way, since there is no proper equipment or tool in home, women need to go to the hospital to take the urine test. But, using urine test strips, we can conduct antenatal care in their homes, and we can pay attention more carefully to the women and easier to recognize the danger signs.

Furthermore, the training became much easier to understand because of the visualized way of teaching which use role play and flip chart. We benefit a lot from the visualized hand-out too. The hand-out includes all necessary steps for the midwifery service with many photos. With this hand-out, I can introduce to the women in my community what kind of things I learned here. At the same time, they will know the VMWs are learning to improve the midwifery service.

I love my work as VMW and I appreciate facilitators for teaching us to improve our service toward the women.



Ms. Siham Abdo alghani, VMW from Girba

Wishing more and more farmers will use the terrace making service in Traditional Rain-fed zone

Agriculture and Livelihood Cluster

<Voice from Mr. Mohammed Elameen, Extension Officer>

My name is Mohammed Elameen, working as an extension officer in Technology Transfer and Extension Administration, so-called TTEA, under State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Irrigation, Animal Resource and Fisheries (SMoA). I am in charge of offering the agricultural extension services in the area called "Traditional Rain-fed zone."

Q: Traditional Rain-fed zone, what kind of place is it?

Traditional rain-fed zone is placed in the east side of Atbara River, consisted of five villages. Although the place is usually described as the east side of Atbara River, it is too far from the river to use the river water for farming. There is no underground water too. Thus, farmers in that area can only depend on the water from rain fall, which is less than 200 ml per year. This limited amount of water causes less productivity of the farms and the area is said as one of the poorest areas.

In this area, I support the farmers to increase their productions through introducing the agricultural technique. For example, how to select the good seeds, how to cultivate well, how to use the specific agricultural tools, how to rehabilitate a "terrace" and so on.

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Mr. Mohamed Elameen, extension officer in
TTEA, MoA



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Q: What is a "terrace"?

Terrace is one of the agricultural methods for harvesting water. Since the traditional rain-fed zone is broad and flat, it is crucial for the farming to collect and keep more rain water inside the soil of a farm. Therefore, farmers make a small bank around the farm like a square, leaving one side open. Although the area seems to be completely flat, the ground slopes gradually. Once the rain falls, the water moves according to the slope. Here, it is important to know from which direction to which direction the water will move. You must leave the side where the water will come open so that the water can be collected in the farm.

Traditionally, farmers have made a terrace by using manpower and agricultural tools. However, this traditional way may cost a lot of labour fee and the time. Moreover, the terrace made by the traditional way tends to be weaker than the one made by using the agricultural machine and the water may leak out easily.

Q: Concerning the terrace, is there any service MoA is offering?

Yes. Land use in SMOA offers the terrace making service using the agricultural machine. This service will benefit the farmers in the following aspects: 1) the time for making the terrace will be shorter, 2) the strength of the terrace will be stronger, and 3) the cost for making the terrace may decrease.

In order to make the service sustainable, K-TOP introduces the cost-sharing idea. Now, through the K-TOP activity, SMOA makes a terrace by sharing the cost among K-TOP, SMOA, and farmers. More and more farmers receive the benefit of terrace making service and apply for it. In the future, we will gradually increase the percentage of the cost sharing of SMOA and farmers and, in the end, the cost-sharing will be without K-TOP, so that SMOA can continue the service even after the completion of K-TOP.

Recently, in collaboration with Media Department and Land Use in MoA, we started the video-showing to introduce the service to more farmers, especially in the area far from the demonstration farm or the extension center. The video introduces the basic information and benefit of the terrace making service. After showing the video, we explain the farmers how to apply for the service.

Q: What does motivate you to work as an extension officer?

Sorghum is an essential crop for the daily meals in Sudan, especially in the countryside. This is why I decided to work in this field to help the farmers to increase their productivity. Farmers are facing with the poorness and the scarcity of food because of the limited water and geophysical challenges. I just simply want to help them. I hope more and more farmers will receive the extension service from SMOA and increase their income and have a better life.



Terrace making by using the agricultural machine in SMOA



After the rain season, sorghum grows inside the terrace.



The video showing starts after the sunset when farmers finished their farming works.



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Water Cluster

The way to make the increased water to reach each house

<Voice from Mr. Isam Eldin Khogali, SWC>

My name is Isam Eldin Khogali, Project Manager in Kassala State Water Corporation (SWC). As Project Manager, my main tasks are designing of the water network, the construction of new water yard, and the future plan of the water project in Kassala, including all localities. Recently, I am in charge of the project for replacement of the water pipeline implemented by SWC. This project is for replacing the existing old asbestos type pipe to high-density polyethylene (HDPE) type pipe which is much stronger than asbestos.

Q: Why the replacement of the water pipeline is necessary?

In Kassala, there are two kinds of projects implemented by JICA: 1) technical cooperation project, Capacity Development Project for Provision of the Services for Basic Human Needs in Kassala (K-TOP) and 2) grant aid project, Improvement of Water Supply System at Kassala City. The latter project aims to solve the problem of the shortage of water in the Khatmiya area. Although Kassala city seems to be flat area, Khatmiya area is located in an elevated area of mountainside. Since the existing water pipeline network is distributing the water from lower place to higher Khatmiya area, it is difficult to make the water to reach each house in the Khatmiya area sufficiently. Thus, the grant aid project constructs new boreholes, and at the same time, changes the water distribution network which makes the water to be stored in the new water station and start to be distributed from higher Khatmiya area and to the other surrounded lower areas.

As a result, after the completion of the grant aid project by JICA, the accessible water amount is expected to greatly increase. However, even the accessible water amount increases, if we continue to use the old asbestos type pipe, we will face with a lot of water leakage problems and we cannot benefit from the new water distribution system. Therefore, we decided to conduct the replacement of the pipeline by ourselves. With the technical support from K-TOP Japanese experts, we planned the replacement of water pipeline, designing the pipeline network, listing up the necessary materials and costs, developing the execution scheme and so on. Here, we learned many things from the K-TOP Japanese Experts regarding how to design better project plan, and also had a benefit from the existing pipeline network map in Kassala using GIS which we made through K-TOP activities. At last, we succeeded in getting a loan from Farmers Bank and started the implementation in January 2014. After we complete the replacement work, people in Kassala city can earn much more consumption of water.



Mr. Isam Eldin, Project Manager in SWC



Commencement ceremony for the water pipe replacement work.



SWC staff visits the water pipe replacement site and collecting the data using GIS.

Q: What does motivate you to work as SWC staff?

What motivate me to work as SWC staff is that I feel I am working for the people living in my country. Water is essential thing for people lives. Without water, people cannot live. If I can improve my work, the water situation and the life of people may be better too.



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Enhancing the training capacity of the instructors on food processing and raising awareness of the women business

Vocational Training Cluster

From 16th to 25th February 2014, K-TOP Vocational Training Cluster conducted Training of Trainers (TOT) for the women section's instructors in Kassala Vocational Training Center (KVTC). This TOT aimed to train the instructors to be able to make more efficient and better quality training. For this purpose, the TOT includes the trainings 1) to understand the role of the instructor and the concept of the plan-do-check-action (PDCA) cycle, 2) on how to make Lesson Plan, 3) on how to evaluate the trainees and make the exam, and 4) on how to make Job Sheet (teaching material of the practical training). Three instructors from KVTC women section and four extension officers from TTEA participated.

Since 2011, KVTC women section has offered sewing and textile painting courses for six times, and each course achieved the full numbers of trainees. However, concerning the food processing course, since the training facility and equipment have been ready in March 2013, the conducted training course was only one (making a cake and candies). Therefore, in order to activate the food processing training course, K-TOP Vocational Training Cluster conducted TOT for the ice cream making and cookie making as the training subjects to enhance the training capacity of the instructors.

For developing the Job Sheet, K-TOP invited two Japanese Volunteers from Khartoum as lecturers of making new types of cookies such as a sesame taste cookie, a ginger taste cookie, a coffee taste cookie, macaroon, etc. The development of the Job Sheet needs the following three steps. First, the lecturers demonstrate the cookie making promptly and well without explaining. The process will be taken in video and its total time will be the proper time to be trained. Second, watching the video, participants ask the lecturers and analyze the each step, key point and the reason for the key points. Third, participants fill in the Job Sheet format according to the analysis.

On the last day of the TOT, Japanese Volunteers and the training participants discussed on how to make the proper price for the production and how to make the food processing as profitable business. Based on the discussion, they invited relevant stake holders of women business in Kassala, and organized a forum to introduce the new types of cookies and discuss on how to utilize the people trained on making new types of cookies and the training facility and equipment on the food processing for the development of Kassala State. The forum was called "cookie meeting" and around 23 people participated. After the forum, some stake holders mentioned the importance of the collaboration between KVTC and the community, and showed their interest in providing the training in KVTC. K-TOP Vocational Training Cluster believes that the raising awareness of women business through continuance of these kinds of workshop or forum will promote the women activities in Kassala.



Taking video for developing the Job Sheet



New types of cookies introduced by Japanese Volunteers



Practical training on how to make the new types of cookies

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