



Mid-Term Training (MTT) in all the Six Target Provinces

The COBSI Promotion Unit (CPU) and the JICA Project Team completed the Mid-Term Training (MTT) in all the six target provinces (Muchinga, Luapula, Northern, Copperbelt, North-Western and Central Provinces) in July 2019. The main objective of MTT is to share progress and challenges faced in the implementation of activities conducted after the Kick-Off Training (KOT). Also, recommendations and advice were presented by the participants. In addition, new technology was transferred through classroom lectures and practical training. This article reports an overview of the MTT.

●Overview of MTT

Kick-Off Training (KOT) was conducted in all the six target Provinces from March to May 2019. After that, the participants having been equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge for the implementation of E-COBSI conducted on-site activities with their target farmers on the respective irrigation sites.

Following the KOT, the CPU and the JICA Project team held the MTT aiming at; 1) the participants share the progress, challenges and their countermeasures with the others and 2) the Project transfers additional new knowledge and skills/technologies particularly necessary for horticulture development, SHEP approach and nutrition improvement. Therefore, the same participants trained during KOT were invited. Besides, since the MTT is the training opportunity organized by the Project before Annual Evaluation Work (AEW) which will be held at the end of this year, the CPU and the JICA Project team emphasized on the importance of monthly report to monitor on-going activities in the target sites for the so far trained officers for the remaining project period.

1) Sharing progress of activities among the participants by each district

In the first session of the MTT, representatives from each district presented their progress of on-site activities such as the number of constructed weirs, conditions of each weir, SHEP activities, etc. and shared the challenges they are facing. After finishing all the presentation, the Provincial CPU gave feedback and suggested the countermeasures to be taken.



Representatives from each district presented their progress for 10 min. After presentations, participants gave valuable comments to improve on-site activities. (MTT in Northern Province)

2) Intensive training on horticulture

After sharing the progress, various training modules targeted for the MTT were conducted. Regarding the horticulture session, Mr. Benjamin Kayama from Zambia Center for Horticultural Training-Chapula was invited as a trainer. He has acquired experience with the center for more than 20 years. During the MTT, he gave a series of lectures on nursery bed making, cultivation method, organic farming, and many more. During practical training, he demonstrated appropriate cultivation methods such as nursery preparation and furrow irrigation, and this deepened the participants' understanding.



Mr. Kayama, a trainer of horticulture, implemented not only a theoretical lecture but also practical one. He demonstrated cultivation method and explained key points of each work. This picture shows of nursery bed making.

3) Key Topics in the FU Provinces and the New Target provinces

Key topics of the MTT program was different between the Follow-Up (FU) provinces and the New Target provinces. The MTT program in the FU provinces focused more on horticulture, while in the New provinces focused on the SHEP approach.

During the MTT program in the FU provinces, the participants visited COBSI sites engaged in horticulture production and observed the farmers' fields and crops cultivated together with farmers. The participants and the farmers also discussed how to grow vegetables, challenges, etc. The participants also acknowledged that some farmers gain enough profit from an understanding of market demand and cooperating with district officers.



During the Field visit, farmers took the participants to their farmland and explained every crop and answered question when being asked. They mainly discussed marketing and cultivation techniques. (MTT in Muchinga Province)



The participants demonstrated furrow irrigation at the visited farmland. At the same time, they experienced water flow survey at water course nearby. (MTT in Muchinga Province)

In addition to site visiting, the participants had hands-on practical lessons in technics such as BOKASHI fertilizer, compost and nursery bed making. These technics are useful to conduct organic farming and improve soil fertility. The participants leaned step-by-step procedures of every technique by discussing with the trainer.



The trainer shows BOKASHI seed made by mixing molasses and rice. After the BOKASHI seed has been fermented, it is mixed with plant residue, virgin soil and manure to make BOKASHI. (MTT in Muchinga Province)

In the New Target provinces, the training modules focused on SHEP approach which is key to boost farmers' profit. After learning the concept of the SHEP approach in the classroom session, the participants conducted a market survey at the local market. Based on the result, they practiced on the selection of potential crops and crop calendar making.

4) Training of Nutrition Education for Farmers

Nutrition education was a part of the MTT module. To improve nutrition status and combat malnutrition, there is a need to consider various topics, for example, food diversity, water sanitation and hygiene, gender issues, etc. To achieve that, it is necessary to raise awareness of nutrition improvement among community and people should understand issues of nutrition properly. Therefore, the district officers and CEOs should be equipped with knowledge of nutrition education for farmers and we incorporated the topics into a training.

●Activities in the future

As mentioned above, the CPU and the JICA project team plans to hold Annual Evaluation Workshop (AEW) at the end of this year. During this planned workshop, the participants from each district will present their activity progress of E-COBSI in 2019. To make a good achievement until that time, we expect all of you to transfer what you learned during the KOT and the MTT to farmers and try to find countermeasures for the challenges encountered in the implementation of the project activities.

The project continues monitoring of activities such as O&M of weirs and canals, water management, SHEP activities, nutrition improvement, etc. from now on. Thus, submission of monthly report is very important to understand the current condition of target sites and share at Provincial and HQ level. If some problems are revealed (e.g., maintenance of facilities and malfunction of farmer organization), proper activity plans should be formulated.

The CPU and the Project team also distributed baseline survey formats for the existing COBSI sites during the MTT, which clarify the current condition of the irrigation sites developed by COBSI study and T-COBSI.



**Congratulation for completion of the MTT!
See you again in AEW!**