



Training on designing, construction and maintenance of permanent weirs conducted for New Target provinces

The E-COBSI project is a smallholder irrigation development project whose one of the project purposes is to increase the irrigated area in the target areas. This is possible by providing smallholder irrigation infrastructure and enhancing management skills for farmers in the target areas.

Therefore, a simple weir constructed using grass, twigs, and wooden poles is used as an entry point to irrigation agriculture under the project. Once farmers get used to irrigating farming through simple weirs, there is a need to upgrade to a permanent weir constructed using stone masonry and cement to achieve irrigation development successfully.

Eng. Nobuaki Chiba, the E-COBSI project team's irrigation engineer, arrived in Zambia on 8th October, in order to carry out two-time training for Irrigation Engineers and Technical Officers regarding designing, construction, and maintenance of permanent weirs in the New Target provinces (Central, Copperbelt, and North-Western provinces). Also, he has invited two master trainers, Eng. Maison Saila, Senior Irrigation Engineer in Luapula province, and Eng. Sifaya Mufalali, Senior Irrigation Engineer in Northern Province, for this training. They have experience of a permanent weir construction during previous JICA's project, called T-COBSI, project period and after the project.

The first training was carried out from 18th to 22nd October 2021 and was held at Masaiti Farm Institute in the Copperbelt province. It focused on; Irrigation planning, Outline designing, field practice on-site investigation and Practice on designing.

Sixteen (16) Officers from the New Target provinces were successfully trained and then tasked to conduct field surveys in their provinces to identify a suitable site for upgrading to the permanent weir in each province. A site identified will be upgraded in 2022 with support from the E-COBSI Project Team.



Participants during theory and practical sessions of the training on designing, construction and maintenance of permanent weirs conducted for follow-up provinces

Mid-Term Training conducted in Follow-Up and New Target provinces

E-COSBI program has three training in a year namely; Kick-Off Training (KOT), Mid-Term Training (MTT) and Annual Evaluation Workshop (AEW).

This year the Mid-Term Training (MTT) were delayed due to high cases on COVID-19 in July and the country holding general elections in the month of August.

After the return of E-COSBI Project Team members; Mr. Tatsuya Ieizumi and Dr. Yoshihiro Sagawa, an online preparatory meeting for MTT with CPUs from Follow-Up and New Target provinces was held on 29th September 2021.

Thereafter, all the provinces set the dates to conduct MTT between 4th and 30th October 2021, and it was focused on; Cultivation techniques, nutrition improvement and monitoring of E-COSBI activities and entry planning.



Group photo for Copperbelt MTT at Masaiti Farm Institute



Group photo for Muchinga MTT at Isoka Farmer Training Centre



Group photo for Northern MTT at Kasama Farm Institute

Mufulira district conduct E-COSBI field day at District Model Site

To enhance the skills of district model site farmers, the E-COSBI Project Team supported all-district model sites in Follow-Up and New Target provinces to establish crop demonstration plots. The crop demonstration plots were set up following all the SHEP approach, COBSI approach and Cultivation techniques under E-COSBI.

Mufulira district was the first to conduct a field day on the Copperbelt province on 21st October 2021 at Twalubuka (Munisa) district model site located 25km from Mufulira town in the northeast.

The field day was officiated by Mr. Thomas Mukubwe – DACO (Mufulira) under the theme “Irrigated farming for improved livelihood” with over forty (40) neighboring farmers to the site attending.



Banner for the E-COSBI field at Twalubuka district model site



Farmers attending the field day



Mr. Mukubwe – DACO (L) officiating at the field day