

ZAMBIA

To Create a Platform for the School Councils and Prefecture Bodies to Work in Harmony in Three Schools on the Copperbelt Province

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1. Introduction

This report refers to activities carried out in three secondary schools on the Copperbelt province under the batch 18 project. Copperbelt province has seen unprecedented development of school council activities since the first team from the province was trained in Sweden in 2007. The introduction of school councils has increased participation of learners in decision making both at school and regional levels. It is against this background that batch 18 carried out a number of activities to promote child participation.

2. Frame of Reference

The Republic of Zambia signed the United Nations Convention on Children's Rights (CRC) in September 1990 and ratified it in December 1991. Since then, the Zambian government has been committed to the promotion of the rights of children through formulation and implementation of policies, programmes and activities. Therefore, the Zambian Constitution addresses and upholds issues of human rights in general and rights of children in particular.

According to Education policy of 1996, *Educating our Future*, the Mission statement of the Ministry of Education is....."to guide the provision of Education for all Zambians so that they are able to pursue knowledge and skills, manifest excellence

in performance and moral uprightness, defend democratic ideas, and accept and value other persons on the basis of their personal worth and dignity, irrespective of gender, religion, ethnic origin, or any other discriminatory characteristic.” The document has in essence recognised the right to education for all children which is a very important component. The policy document has further highlighted the importance of democratic tendencies in the provision of education in the country.

The domestication of child rights and school councils in the Education Act of 2011 expedited the setting up and recognition of school councils in all the learning institutions in the country. The act made provisions that are very relevant to the protection and development of children in the education environment. The provision for the Learners Representatives Council (Article 29) in the act is expected to increase meaningful child participation in school affairs and foster a culture of dialogue and mutual respect between learners and school authorities.

The current scenario is that the Copperbelt Province is one region in the country where school councils exist in all the secondary schools. In recent years, the school councils were introduced in primary schools and one college of education on the Copperbelt Province by batch 14.

The national curriculum in recent years has also brought about the introduction of Civic Education as a teaching and examinable subject in secondary schools in the country whose main objective is to broaden the understanding and appreciation of democratic values in the governance of the country.

The Zambian government introduced free education from grade one to seven in 2003 and has been providing free teaching and learning materials for all primary schools. It also offers bursaries to orphaned and vulnerable children in primary and secondary schools.

In 2003 and 2010, government abolished examination fees for national examinations for Grades 7 and 9 respectively in an effort to enhance the provision of free education up to secondary level. Therefore examination fees are only paid for grade 12 national examinations.

Government has further introduced ‘Re-entry Policy’ which allows girls who fall pregnant while at school to go back and continue with their education. The policy has helped to attain the goal of education for all.

A feeding programme was introduced in schools called ‘School Health and Nutrition (SHN) in order to increase access to education for all children. Head teachers in schools are advised to enrol without asking questions as well in order to increase access. In recent years, we have seen the government embark on construction of more primary and secondary schools in the country.

The Copperbelt Province has seen unprecedented development in Child Rights activities. Many people have undergone training in Sweden and implemented different projects. Batch 7 piloted the formation of school councils on the Copperbelt province.

The team in batch 10 evaluated the impact of school councils in schools on the Copperbelt Province. It was observed that school councils were well established and performing quite well while the team in batch 14 rolled out school councils to primary

schools and one college of education. In these institutions sensitisation of staff and students was done before establishing the student councils.

The team in batch 16 explored the roles and relationships, power and assignments of school councils and student administrative bodies in selected secondary schools on the Copperbelt province. The project was based on article 3 and 12 of CRC which enhances provision, protection and participation.

The prefecture bodies work to enhance provision of education and protection of children. Generally, the Zambian school system follows the UK type which traces back to the missionary education in the colonial time. Prefects hold administrative responsibilities and are appointed by the administrators from senior classes. Therefore, prefects coordinate and organise discipline of the school on behalf of their appointers to whom they pay their allegiance.

Prefects not only enforce the school rules but are also expected to be examples to others in terms of maturity, conduct and work. Among the duties and responsibilities of prefect are: enforce dress code; monitor given area; protect school property; act as student leaders and report any violators of school rules to the administration. It should be noted that the said responsibilities for prefects were not supported by any written instructions. Furthermore the role of the prefects in school had not been captured in the Education act of 2011. The functions and roles of the prefects could be said to be a traditional practice.

However, the batch noted that very little was done to enable prefects participate in the school decision making process and then, the situation in Zambia was that school councils and prefects worked in isolation. This was noted to create misunderstandings as regards roles and responsibilities between school councils and student administrative bodies (prefects). The change project for batch 16, therefore, explored roles and relationships, power and assignments of student administrative bodies in selected schools on the Copperbelt.

Therefore, the choice of our project titled, “ To create a platform for the school councils and prefects bodies to work in harmony in three schools on the Copperbelt province ”, has come at the right time when policy makers are pushing for the enactment of the new education act which has recognised the existence of child rights and school councils in schools. Our observation is that the link between the school councils and prefecture bodies is weak which has therefore created conflicts in their operations.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to create a platform for increased cooperation and collaboration in the operations of the school councils and prefecture bodies founded in CRC.

Target Groups

Three schools on the Copperbelt Province have been chosen: Chingola Secondary School, Chililabombwe Secondary School and Kitwe Boys Secondary School. The same schools have been included in the batch 16 project.

1. Pupils

- Prefects: Head boys/girl and 12 other pupils per schools
- School councilors – 12 per schools.

2. Teachers

- Head teachers from the selected schools
- Link teachers – 2 per school
- Patrons for the prefects

3. Stakeholders

a) Authorities

- The Provincial Education Officer (PEO)
- The Principal Education Standards Officer (PESO)
- District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS)
- Administrators of selected schools Head teachers)
- Head teachers' Association (Copperbelt province)
- All change agents (Copperbelt)

b) Parents

- PTA chairpersons for the selected schools. The parents were sensitized on the project together with school administrators of the selected schools.

Activities

Reporting back in home country

The team arrived safely in Zambia on 25th May 2013. Their next task was to report back to the Provincial Education Officer. Due to a tight programme that the Provincial Education Officer had, the team finally met with him three weeks after coming back home from Sweden. A written report was submitted about the training in Sweden. The PEO seemed to have welcomed the project plan for batch 18 and pledged his support for the project.

Planning Meeting by Batch 18

The team had a planning meeting in preparation for the launch of the project plan. The team also invited some members of batches 16 and 14 to the planning meeting.

Below, change agents from different batches (Valentine Yumba batch 14) and (Elizabeth Ngonga batch 16) give support to members of batch 18 during the planning meeting.



During the planning meeting, members shared the topics for presentation during the launch of the project plan. The planning meeting took place on 21st June 2013 at the Provincial Office.

During the planning meeting, a programme for the launch was done. Below is a programme;

The guest of honor at the launch of batch 18 project plan was the Provincial Education Officer (PEO). Also present at the launch was the Principal Education Standards Officer. Others present were; change agents: Maambe Hamududu, K.K. Mwale, Valentine Yumba and Elizabeth Ngonga. The rest included the head teachers for Kitwe Secondary School, Chililabombwe Secondary School and Chingola Secondary School. The Education Officer for Teacher Education was also in attendance.

The PEO read a moving speech and set the tone for the meeting.

The team for batch 18 then followed with presentation of the project plan. It is also important to mention that other batches had given a background to CRC on the Copperbelt Province in particular and the Country in general. The response from the invited guests was quite encouraging.

Sensitisation of Participants/Target Schools on CRC and the Project Plan

This was regarded as the most important activity of the project plan. On 13th August 2013, the team invited the stakeholders from the three schools where the project would be launched. The meeting was held at Kitwe Boys Secondary School. The team oriented the stakeholders and got their views. In attendance for the meeting were head teachers, deputy head teachers, patrons/matrons for prefects, link teachers for school councils, three prefects and three school council members and one parent representative.

Plenary

The team engaged the participants by way of a plenary session. Schools were made to form three groups comprising prefects, school counselors, patrons and matrons for prefects and school council link teachers.

Each group was asked to come up with activities that they thought would be done together in school. Below are some of the proposed activities from the participants:

- Monitoring of pupils together.
- Working in the Production Unit together.
- Counselling Pupils together.
- Undertaking fundraising ventures together.
- Making school rules together.

The team provided guidance to the participants on the rights of child in a school set up. The participants were informed that education must be provided in a way that respects the inherent dignity of the child, enables the child to express his or her views freely in accordance with article 12(1) and to participate in school life in compliance with the values recognized in article 29(1) clearly requires that schools should be child friendly. Against that background, all the participants felt that making school rules together would increase participation of both prefects and school councilors in decision making. The methods of formulating school rules were left to individual schools.

Feedback

The following was the feedback from the participants:

- The stakeholders welcomed the project plan and pledged their support.
- One of the parents' representatives felt that the participation of pupils in the formulation of school rules was long overdue.

- The prefects and the school councils pledged to work together in the formulation of school rules and subsequently in the management of the affairs of all pupils in Schools.
- Both parents and the School administration called for sensitisation of all stakeholders in the Schools on the Project plan.
- The formulation of the school rules would start immediately but come into effect by January 2014

Method of formulation of school rules

The method of formulating school rules was left to individual schools. The common features in all the schools involved sensitisation of fellow pupils by the school council and the prefects on the importance of participating in decision making in the management of the school through formulation of school rules by all stake holders.

Stage 1

Sensitisation exercise by the prefects and school council to the fellow pupils on formulation of school rules

Stage 2

Submissions of proposed school rules by classes to the committee of prefects and school council. These were additional rules and amendments to the old rules proposed by each class council.

Stage 3

The proposed school rules are submitted to the school administration for further guidance and later returned to the class councils for further debate .Then the final submission was done.

Stage 4

The school rules are submitted to the parents for adoption and later to be institutionalized.

Appendix 2 and 3 show the old and new school rules at Kitwe boys Secondary School.

Stages 1 up to 3 were done between December 2013 and March 2014. The last stage, stage 4 was finalized between April and July 2014.

During the mentor's visit from 8th March to 12th March, 2014 schools made a presentation on what they had done.

Below is the picture showing the mentor's visit (Bodil) at one of the project schools 2014.



International Seminar

Zambia hosted the international seminar of Child Rights, Classroom and School Management for batch 19 in 2014. It was held from 16th to 26th March 2014. The Copperbelt Province was host to the seminar. The seminar was graced by deputy minister for Ministry of Education. Their dignitaries present were the Deputy Permanent Secretary for Education, the Provincial Education Officer for Copperbelt Province and Southern Province and all the change agents from members of batch 1 to members of batch 18.

The Zambian chapter did make a presentation on the progress made from 2007 to 2014. It was quite interesting to hear the minister making a declaration that the country would do away with the traditional prefecture body and replace it with the school council which was already enshrined in the Education Act of 2011.

The school council representative of the Zambian chapter made a presentation where they highlighted their achievements. The most catching one was the increased participation of learners in decision making at school level.

Follow up Visits

Follow up visits were made to the project schools on different and many occasions. During these visits, change agents gave guidance and suggestions on the process. In the process, change agents also learnt on the methodologies used to formulate the school rules.

In all the project schools, 'wh' questions were asked in order to understand the root each school had taken to get to new school rules such as: How was it done? Who did it? What change has the project brought? When was it done? And at what points were different target groups involved in the process?

From the discussions, it came out clearly that there was interference as the pupils formulated the rules, pupils were excited about the project as they never thought such a thing would happen, the administrators respected children's opinions while they advised, it has brought about a sense of ownership and pride, it has enhanced the sense of responsibility in the pupils and it has helped develop leadership qualities in the pupils.

Appendix 4 is an example of the proceedings of the follow up visits.

Despite using different methods in the process of formulating the rules, all the schools finished the process and the new rules are in force.

INDABA

The indaba was held in Chingola town on 15th August 2014. The guest of honor during the indaba was the Principal Education Standards Officer. In attendance were all change agents based on the Copperbelt province, the target schools and representatives from the parents.

During the indaba, all the three project schools made presentations of their projects. Also in attendance were pupil representatives from all the secondary and primary schools in the province.

From pupils' presentations, the attendants heard that all the three schools had finalized the formulation of school rules and the new or amended rules were in force; students did not have much problem following the rules because they formulated them on their own; on the other hand, students feared to break some the rules because of the heavy penalties which were attached to the rules; students had become responsible as they could even make programs of action for themselves and the school environments had generally improved as students had stopped throwing litter anyhow. In addition, results in the three schools had also improved since batch 16 started its project.

There was a sense of pride among the students and the presence of each body was appreciated by all students as the two bodies were now working together all the time.

Despite using different methods in the process of formulating the rules, all the schools finished the process and the new rules are in force.

It was noted that pupils had developed their public speaking skills, leadership skills, management skills, togetherness, maturity and sense of ownership. The pupils had also become more articulate of their rights and responsibilities. Students expressed happiness that such an opportunity had been given to them and had culminated into peace as well as harmonious collaboration between them. This emanated from formulating school rules together.

These are some of the photos for the indaba proceedings:





The three schools in the batch 18 project made their presentations. It was quite delighting to see both prefects and the school council working together in harmony and more so having a common goal of participating in decision making in the management of the school. The guest of honor was delighted to hear that the prefects and the school council had come together and formulated the new school rules together. It was a new dawn as it had never happened anywhere in the schools. The guest of honor praised the members of batch 18 for coming up with such a progressive project plan which had created a platform for the two bodies of students working together and in harmony. She mentioned that the conflicts that had existed in schools would be a thing of the past. She further urged the members of batch 18 to roll out the project to other schools in the province and country wide.

Results

The purpose for which the project was undertaken had to a greater extent yielded fruits through the activities are ongoing. The project had created a platform for both prefects and school councils in the three schools to work in harmony and with increased cooperation. The students have realized that they had a greater role to play in making the schools child friendly. The platform has increased the space of action for their participation in decision making. The students are contemplating forming one leadership body of students. They were proposing a lot of names such as "students council" with its foundation based on CRC norms. The project has also created awareness of the Child Rights to all stakeholders, especially to the parents.

Class councils and prefects in all the three project schools have formulated school rules together. All the pupils were governed by the new set of school rules. There was unity of purpose in the schools and the divisions that had rocked the schools on the basis of administrative superiority were no longer obtaining in schools. The level of responsibility in the pupils had increased and thus less work for the school administration. Pupils in the process had developed various skills. There was openness between pupils, teachers and administrators.

Discussion and Reflections

- The project plan had progressed according to the schedule of activities on the time chart.
- Participation in decision making by the prefects through formulation of school rules was a great achievement.
- Support from the parents was encouraging. The parents were eagerly waiting for a full implementation of the project in their respective schools.
- The School administrations were equally delighted with the project as they felt that all stakeholders would own the school rules through their involvement in formulating them.
- Pupils had developed a lot of skills, such as managerial, public speaking, sense of responsibility, self-motivation.
- The schools were becoming conducive for learning all life skills other than just curricula activities, in line with CRC norms.
- It was incumbent upon the members of batch 18 to take a lead in the role out of the project to all the schools in the province.
- The two student bodies operate together. When dealing with offenders, both bodies are represented; prefects now use friendly language to offenders. Generally all tasks are performed together.
- They have started forming committees through which the bodies work – academic and disciplinary committees,
- Both prefects and school council are represented on the school governance body.
- There is mutual understanding between the two bodies.
- Pupils with disabilities are also actively involved in CRC activities.

Challenges

- It will take some time for both teachers and school authorities to come to terms with the changes that were taking place in the students' governance system.
- The transition period from prefecture system of governance to the proposed student council needs support from all the stakeholders especially the production of supporting materials which require financial support, otherwise may delay its implementation.
- Despite the fact that all have started working together and they are enjoying the harmony in operating almost as one, both pupils and teachers are skeptical about having one student body. Many people feel more time and education needs to be given for the idea to sink and to find a better way of evolving. At the moment, both bodies are enjoying the harmony in their operations.
- The project was running as a pilot project in three secondary schools out of 100 secondary schools on the Copperbelt province. There is need to roll it out to all secondary schools.

Way Forward

The project has achieved its purpose of creating a platform for the two bodies to operate in harmony. With the teamwork among change agents on the Copperbelt, the project can be rolled out to all other schools. CRC work is quite advanced on the Copperbelt Province because it is supported overwhelmingly by all head teachers of schools. They have taken it as their responsibility and they budget for it every year.

A combined team of prefects and school councillors from the target schools would embark on a project to sensitize other schools on the need to participate in decision making and champion the rights of a child through participation in decision making.

The change agents in the Copperbelt province should continue collaborating in order to strengthen the change projects. However, the collaboration should cut across the country in order to strengthen the change projects at national level. The Copperbelt province would be used as a model province due to its advanced stage in child rights activities.

The Deputy Minister, during the launch of batch 19 International Training Program did mention that he was delighted with the progress made by Copperbelt province and urged the province to be a model to other provinces. The change agents in the province would draw up a program to reach out to the entire nation.

List of references

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- Lund University (2014) Change Project from the international training programme.Final Reports for batch 16.Lund University Commissioned Education,Lund Sweden.
- UNICEF (2007).*Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, UNICEF, Geneva: Switzerland.
- Ministry of Education,(1996).*Educating our future*, Government Printers: Kitwe, Zambia.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Programme for the Launch of Batch 18 Project Plan-9th July 2013

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESOURCE PERSON
09:00 HOURS-09:30 HOURS	ARRIVAL OF INVITED GUESTS	BATCH 18
09:30 HOURS-09:40 HOURS	PRAYER/INTRODUCTION	PRCC (KITWE)
09:40 HOURS-10:00HOURS	OFFICIAL OPENING	PEO
10: 00 HOURS-10:15 Hours	OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING	BATCH 18
10:00 HOURS-10:30 HOURS	PRESENTATION	BATCH 16
10:30 HOURS-10:40 HOURS	PLENARY	PRCC (KITWE)
10:40 HOURS-11:00 HOURS	EXPERIENCE FROM BANGKOK CONFERENCE	SESO-ODL
11:00 HOURS-11:10 HOURS	PLENARY	PRCC (KITWE)
11:00 HOURS	OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF BATCH 18 PROJECT PLAN FRAME OF REFERENCE PURPOSE SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	BATCH 18 (TERRY) BATCH 18 (MISOZI) BATCH 18 (SHELLY)
	PLENARY	PARTICIPANTS
	REMARKS	PESO
	CLOSING REMARKS/PRAYER	PRCC (KITWE)

Appendix 2

Kitwe Boys Secondary School old school rules

1. Fighting,Bullying,Mockery insulting language and dodging are prohibited.
2. Bars and other drinking places are out of ounce. No Pupil is allowed to drink beer or any other form of alcohol.
3. Smoking and use of intoxicating drink are strictly prohibited.

4. Insubordination to members of staff, prefects and monitors and any person in authority are forbidden.
5. Pupils must attend all lessons for which they are time tabled for. Absence from lessons or truancy is an offence which is punishable. Permission to leave school can only be granted by the school deputy head teacher or the head teacher.
6. Prep is compulsory and silence must be maintained.
7. Punctuality must be observed in all school activities.
8. No furniture shall be removed from the classrooms.
9. Damage, breakage or theft of Government property must be reported to the school authority.
10. All illness and accident must be reported to the teacher on duty immediately.
11. Writing (or sticking Pictures) on walls, desks and chairs without the authority of school is forbidden.
12. No pupil should temper with electrical fittings and apparatus anywhere in school.
13. No pupil is allowed to bring a radio, camera, electronic material or cell phone in the school premises.
14. All correspondence to Government departments must pass through the head teacher's office.
15. All pupils must sing the national anthem.
16. Pupils must put on school uniform at all times.
17. The administration block was out of bounce to pupils. The head teacher must be seen only when it is necessary.
18. Pupils must be clean and smart at all times. Classroom and the entire school must be kept clean at all times.
19. All pupils must conduct themselves in a manner which is morally and highly conducive to learning.
20. Lack of common sense is punishable.
21. All pupils must sign the anti-riotous behaviour pledge form.

Appendix 3

New School Rules

1. All pupils should belong to a club of their choice.
2. Pupils found breaking school rules will be subjected to counselling by a group of fellow pupils.
3. The use of electronic gadgets in school is not allowed unless one gets permission from the Head teacher.
4. Punctuality should be observed by all pupils.

5. All teachers who fail to report for work should be reported to the School authority.
6. A pupil's hair must not be cut in class. The culprit should be asked to apply corrective measures.
7. The administrative block is out of bounce during lessons.
8. Pupils should learn to be responsible by refrain from stealing school books and other property.
9. Pupils must not be punished during lessons.
10. Pupils must be accorded a chance to explain reasons for being in conflict with school rules.

Appendix 4

Batch 18 minutes of school follow up visit

DATE OF MEETING: Wednesday 12th February 2014

TIME: 1300 HOURS – 14 30 HOURS

PRESENT: MISOZI, SHELLY AND ELIZABETH

PURPOSE OF VISIT: To follow up on the project implementation, to understand what the two student bodies are doing together.

DETAILS OF THE MEETING

A good number of questions were asked and below is the progression of the meeting. Misozi called the house to order and asked the student class and school representatives about what they remembered about batch 16

Pupils responded that batch 16 tried to help the two bodies work together as one. Misozi asked Elizabeth, a batch 16 member to give an update of their project. Elizabeth gave the update

The meeting went on with questions and answers as follows:

1. What is batch 18 trying to do?

They are trying to help the two bodies to make decisions together.

2. How did you proceed to formulate the rules?

Each class council was given a task to identify problems, then the rules to help solve the problems. For example the Drama club performed on the rules and this was the Launch. The suggested rules were then given to the administration.

3. Were the parents involved?

Parents were given a slip for new school rules on the open day so that each got the rules. Parents had a place to sign together with the pupil. The parents signed if they agreed with the rules. The school called for openness.

4. When formulating the rules, was there a teacher to give guidance?

No. For total ownership, we formulated the rules ourselves.

We even have penalties for each rule. For example: if you jump over the security wall, you buy a pocket of cement, if you graffiti, you buy a tin of paint.

5. Who ensures that all rules are followed?

All pupils are on duty and should be punished for not reporting offenders.

6. Where you involved in the last part of the formulation of the rules?

Each pupil was given copy and all the rules submitted by pupils were taken on.

7. Did every rule go through?

Only one girl complained that their rule was not taken. This was a rule concerning the wearing of earrings.

As pupils, they were happy with what was picked and what was dropped.

8. The Link teacher explained that the rules went through stages as follows:

- (i) Submission
- (ii) Scrutiny
- (iii) Adoption
- (iv) Returned to pupils
- (v) Implementation

The rules were effected in the 3rd term last year.

9. Are there changes since the rules were put in place?

Yes. There is no graffiti and girls stopped treating their hair.

10. How is the relationship between teachers and pupils?

Pupils behave because they fear to be chased if they break the rules.

Teachers know that they do not have to use abusive language to pupils.

If the teacher is absent, the school council makes a follow up.

Teachers communicate their programme and leave their work with colleagues.

The monitor keeps the period register.

11. What was the reaction from teachers?

We have not had any challenge from them

12. Was there a stage, when parents were involved?

The rules were given out to pupils to take to their and they agreed and signed them.

13. Has there been a meeting with the parents to discuss the rules?

28th February has been set for the Annual General Meeting. The head boy and the president will attend and we shall discuss the rules.

14. What could be the reason in the improvement of results from 50% to 84.2%?

Because of the rules, pupils do not come drunk, do not dodge and smoke. Previously the rules were only given at grade 10, but now with the formulation of schools rules, pupils are frequently reminded about the rules. There is enforcement. We read through the school rules every Friday.

Grade 8 and 10 had a meeting; they came with their parents, where the school rules were explained. School council oriented them, and the school head teacher mentions the school rules at every assembly.

15. TERM ONE 2014 WORK PLAN

The students had a work plan in place as below:

DATE	ACTIVITY	COMMENT
27/01/2014	Formulation and distribution of pass cards per class	Done
3/02/2014	Grade 8 sensitisation about the school council	Done
4/02/2014	Grade 8 class council elections	Done
7/02/2014	Grade 10 sensitisation about the school council	Done
8/02/2014	Grade 10 selection of class council	Done
14/02/2014	First School Council Meeting	Done
7/03/ 2014	Careers/Talent Show to fundraise for the School Council	Not yet done

Shelly commended the pupils on their ownership of the rules. Shelly and Misozi, thanked the school representatives and class representatives for their hard work and commitment, especially that they were able to scrutinise the rules and keep only what was useful. Misozi further commended them on their responsibility and the good results. She informed them about the mentor's visit in March.