

## **Project Update: January 2014**

The role of bees in enhancement of crop pollination, in maintaining of biodiversity and in sustainable livelihoods and food security has been widely demonstrated. Nevertheless, the potential of beekeeping is far too often not exploited in many nature conservation activities and development programmes, because the benefits of bees and beekeeping are not well known to many.

### **Purpose of the Training**

The organizers (TEEP) having realised the need to conserve the ecological biodiversity in Gombe sub/county, Wakiso district, invited stakeholders for a 1-day sensitisation meeting on bees. The purpose of the meeting was to provide farmers/stakeholders interested in conserving nature with information and arguments to convince them to view beekeeping as a viable commercial and protective measure that should always be considered and integrated into nature conservation programmes and other development strategies.

### **Objectives of the Training**

By the end of the training, participants were able to:

- Mention the importance of beekeeping.
- Identify the naturally occurring materials which may be used to make beehives.
- Construct a beehive from some of the identified local materials.

### **Methodology**

The training was conducted on participatory basis. The participants were allowed to learn by sharing their knowledge with the trainer. Participants were free to discuss the subject in light of their indigenous knowledge, experiences and what they learnt through trainings in various workshops. This was helpful because they were able to know their potential in regard to integration of beekeeping in any conservation programmes. The trainer used lectures, discussion, and question/answer methods for more understanding of the subject. To communicate with full essence of understanding, wall charts showing diagrams of different types of hives were used. Farmers then went into a practical session of construction of a beehive from naturally available materials.

### **Importance of Beekeeping**

- Crop pollination.
- Conservation of natural resources.
- For income generation.
- For honey as food.
- For medicinal purposes (beeswax, honey, propolis).
- For cultural purposes (during weddings, bees as a weapon for defence, honey as cosmetics and for embalming the dead, as food during honey moon etc.).
- Api-tourism and research.
- Apitherapy.
- As hobby.

- Beekeeping is a cheap undertaking as it doesn't involve feeding of bees, availability of inputs in the environment and no requirement of owning large pieces of land.

### Natural/Locally Available Materials Used to Construct Beehives

Through a participatory approach, the following materials were identified as suitable and available in construction of local beehives: papyrus; bamboo; *jerengesa*; *lukindukindu*; *kibowabowa*; *oluga*; *olweeyo*; fibre; sticks; cow dung/ soil/clay for smearing and grass/banana fibre leaves as cover. The durability of the hive depends on the materials used and management

### Practical Session

The session involved construction of a local beehive by using sticks, papyrus, soil, and banana fibres. The hive had one end closed with a circular cover; the other end completely closed, bearing four holes of diameter 8 mm in a circular design. The hive had a length of 100 cm and a base diameter of 30 cm, slanting towards the end with holes.

### Observations by the Trainer

- While stakeholders are aware of the pollination function of bees, they have not put in place measures to protect bees.
- There is reduction in the ecological biodiversity in the area because of the limited number of bees.
- Beekeeping has been left out in government development programmes of the sub/county.
- Stakeholders lack adequate knowledge in beekeeping.

### Conclusion

- Need for more sensitization on beekeeping.
- Integration of beekeeping in ecological conservation activities.



Participants use papyrus reeds and sticks to construct a bee hive.



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Anthill soil used in making a bee hive. It is mixed with water