

## **Project Update: February 2012**

The main activity for this project was training and providing equipment to beekeepers organised into cooperatives. The equipment has been distributed and the training has been organised in order to increase the level of the beekeepers in modern beekeeping techniques. The beneficiaries were 60 members representative of six beekeepers cooperatives, gathering 328 members. These 60 members has been trained as trainer of trainers (ToT), the practical demonstration has been done at apiary level where every cooperative members has actively participated.

The topics of that training were:

- i. The value of beekeeping
- ii. The composition of colony
- iii. The tools and equipments of beekeeping
- iv. The calendar for beekeeping activities
- v. The beekeeping constraints
- vi. The honey harvest

The theories have been given by exchanging the experience of the beekeepers and we gave the scientific skills. The beekeepers adults are used to practising the traditional methods and we tried to change and adopted the modern beekeeping method. The practice was realised in the demonstrative apiary constructed by the project in order to better complete the theory acquired during the training.

### **Pollination**

The greatest value of the beekeeping lies in the fact that bees pollinate agricultural and horticulture plants. When a bee has found the flowers of a certain kind of plant she will encourage her hive mates to use this source. The bees will visit these flowers as long as food (pollen and nectar) is available. This flower constancy makes bees exceptionally valuable to plants which need to be cross-pollinated. If there are enough bee colonies in the area at flowering time the plants will give higher yield and the quality of the fruits will also be improved.

In the Volcanoes region the importance of pollination by bees has been demonstrated and appreciated by the communities for the following crops: aubergine, beans, sunflower, passion fruits and pyrethrum

### **Tools and equipment of beekeeping**

During the training two demonstrative apiaries have been constructed and the following materials were demonstrated: hives, queen excluders, wire entrance guards, smokers, queen cage, veils, and bee brush.

## The honey harvest

In Rwanda, we have two seasons of honey harvesting and since we received funds from Rufford Small Grants Foundation, we organised the beekeepers working around Volcanoes National Park into cooperative, trained them and equipped them, now they have harvested two times, for the first time they harvested in Feb 2011 and the second time in September- October 2011 and 800 kg and 1200 kg of honey have been harvested respectively.

