



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 December 2017

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-sixth session

31 January–7 February 2018

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social
Development and the twenty-fourth special session
of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies
for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable
development for all**

Statement submitted by Poverty Alleviation for the Poor Initiative, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

A logical solution to underemployment, low income and hunger, is for people to engage in activities that increase their earnings and one of such is beekeeping.

Beekeeping also known as Apiculture is the management of honey bee colonies, commonly in man-made hives, by human in order to collect their honey and other products that the hive produces (including beeswax, propolis, pollen, and royal jelly).

Depictions of humans collecting honey from wild bees date to 10,000 years ago. Beekeeping in pottery vessels began about 9,000 years ago in North Africa. Domestication is shown in Egyptian art from around 4,500 years ago. Simple hives and smoke were used and honey was stored in jars, some of which were found in the tombs of pharaohs such as Tutankhamun. It wasn't until the 18th century that European understanding of the colonies and biology of bees allowed the construction of the moveable comb hive so that honey could be harvested in the same hive without destroying the entire colony.

Beekeeping provides an effective opportunity for men, women, youth and people with disabilities alike because it requires a very low cost to establish, as beehives and other equipment can be made locally. Also, the bees feed themselves and beekeeping activity does not disturb normal work.

Where there are beekeeping activities, other people in the community generate income from making and selling beekeeping equipment, and bee by-products as well as making and selling other secondary products. This means that beekeeping provides opportunities for many members of a community to use natural resource means to enhance their earnings.

Using Beekeeping to Eradicate Poverty:

Beekeeping is a vehicle to sustain the environment and improve earning capacity of poor rural people as well as a great source of employment creation.

Depending on the part of the country and other environmental factors, a typical colony of bees can produce 80–120 pounds of surplus (harvestable) honey, 10–18 pounds of pollen and 12 kilogrammes of beeswax in an average year.

Besides selling honey and other bee by-products; such as beeswax, pollen, royal jelly, propolis, and bee venom, beekeepers can also provide pollination services (hive rentals) to crop farmers and orchardists, as crops yields are improved if bees are kept nearby; the fruits are larger and better formed, therefore more profitable. When beekeepers plant trees that provide a source of nectar for bees, they also help to prevent soil erosion and landslides. Keeping bees also encourages people to value and preserve the forest.

Entrepreneurs earn additional income as they make use of bee by-product like Beeswax to produce candles, shoe polish, body creams and ointments, also propolis is used to make mild anaesthetics for toothaches, sore throats, wounds and internal infections. These products when sold provides more income to the entrepreneur.

In many societies, honey is regarded as an important ingredient in diet and is also used as medicine. Honey and other hive products have high market demand because of their useful properties and applications in a wide range of industries.

Poverty Alleviation for the Poor Initiative (PAFPI) an NGO in Ughelli, Delta State Nigeria, promotes Apiculture under its sustainable livelihood programme in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria the programme is implemented by PAFPI Beekeeping Resource Centre established with support from Bees Abroad (A UK

Charity that supports Beekeeping activities in developing countries). As modern beekeeping is relatively new in this region, PAFPI's plan is to make modern beekeeping practice popular and an effective means of job creation and poverty eradication in the Niger Delta.

In 2004, the Resource Centre with technical and financial support from Bees Abroad, selected and trained 40 rural farmers experiencing extreme poverty and established four bee farms each with 20 hives in four communities. Each of the beekeepers received two bee hives and other beekeeping equipment. Today the story has changed for 30 of those farmers, who now earn more income from their own bee farm (with 50 to 170 working hives).

Among the 30 farmers is Mr. Ikuru Godspower, an indigenous person from the Effurun Otor community. He owns 170 working bee hives and produces an average of 3,400 litres of honey and 1,020 kilograms of beeswax annually. With his wealth of experience, Mr. Ikuru also earns additional income by providing services to young beekeepers around his community.

Beekeeping does not compete with other enterprises for resources as the bees use nectar and pollen grains of plants. It is an important activity that has predominantly remained rudimentary and unexploited in this region, yet it has tremendous potential for widening the GDP of the country.

Rather than using scarce resources to import bee by-products, there is need for Nigerians and other underdeveloped countries to exploit the local beekeeping resources nature has provided to sustain the environment, and at same time resolve rising unemployment and poverty conditions.

There is urgent need to raise awareness about the importance of honey bees as pollinators and as an income generator in Nigeria and other developing countries. People should be encouraged to undertake beekeeping training so that more poor people can generate income and contribute to sustainable rural development.

Highlight on the Benefits of Beekeeping:

1. Pollination; Bees pollinate flowering plants, this helps to make your crops/plants produce better yield the activity is vital for life on earth.
2. Useful Product; Honey is valued by all society as healthy food or medicine, Beeswax is used in cosmetics and candles and many other uses, pollen and propolis can also be harvested from bees.
3. Land Use; Bees visit flowers everywhere. Beekeeping does not use up land that could be used for crops
4. Low Cost; Hive and other equipment can be made locally.
5. Income Creation; Beekeeping easily generates profit, with good market access.
6. Sustainable; beekeepers are friends of the natural environment, willing to collaborate to conserve forests and vegetation where bees live.
7. Benefits for several sectors; where there are beekeeping activities, other people in the community generate income by making equipment, and selling bee products.
8. Comparative advantage; in areas of developing countries where there are natural resources and healthy bee populations, there are good possibilities to market organic-certified honey.
9. Resilient Income; Beekeeping is resilient when disasters happen. The displaced community can make hives and gain benefit in a relatively short time.
10. Gender and Age inclusive; Bees can be kept by women and men of all ages. Bees do not need daily care and can be attended to as other work allows.