



Apiculture Scaling-up Programme for Income and Rural Employment

ASPIRE: Reducing poverty through beekeeping business

At a Glance

The goal of the **Apiculture Scale-up Programme for Income and Rural Employment (ASPIRE)** is to contribute to poverty reduction in rural areas of Ethiopia, through establishing a dynamic and sustainable apiculture sector. The project aims to increase the incomes of 30,000 smallholder beekeepers and establish the country as a significant exporter of apiculture products, specifically honey, beeswax, pollen and propolis. SNV is implementing ASPIRE in a consortium with the Ethiopian Apiculture Board, Enclude and ProFound, building on the results of SNV's Business Organisations and Access to Markets (BOAM) project.

Coverage	Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray (52 woredas)
Duration	2013-2017
Donor	Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands
Persons benefitting	30,000 beekeepers, 40 input suppliers (direct); 30,000 'copy beekeepers' (indirect)
Implementing Partners	Ethiopia Apiculture Board, Enclude, ProFound
Clients/Partners	Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Bureaus of Agriculture/DAs, Sector Associations, private companies and SMEs

The Development Challenge

Poverty and food insecurity are concentrated in rural areas in Ethiopia, where the poorest people are chronically reliant on social safety programmes and food aid. National programmes being implemented in response, such as the Agricultural Growth Programme (AGP), promote value chain development and private sector participation and have selected apiculture as a priority subsector. Despite Ethiopia's diverse agro-ecology and unique natural flora, which is well suited for beekeeping, honey production levels are only around 10% of the potential and the market is not developed.

SNV Solutions

Sustainable markets: ASPIRE follows a pro-poor value chain development approach to support the transformation of subsistence beekeeping into a commercial apiculture subsector. The project is building the technical and financial capacity of producers, promoting flexible and innovative business linkages and strengthening processing and exporting companies.

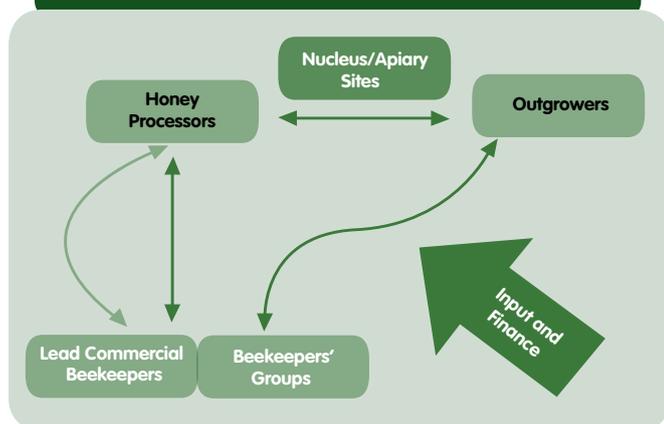
Food and nutrition security: Beekeeping can reduce the vulnerability of rural households, providing off-season income and creating employment opportunities in the input and service markets. The increased income for all value chain actors enables them to purchase more goods, including food.

Climate smart agriculture: Improved beekeeping practice demands more bee forage plantation and conservation of the environment, and provides an alternative income to the sale of forest products. Pollination by the bees is an environmental benefit.

Gender and youth: ASPIRE encourages the participation of women and youth at different levels of the value chain and promotes modern apiculture which can be practised by women and young people, unlike traditional beekeeping.

Systemic change: Overall sector development is a critical element of ASPIRE, including creating and strengthening service providers, local networks and producer organisations, to enable businesses to grow and contribute to poverty reduction.

Beekeepers' Transformation and Linkage Model





How is ASPIRE supporting change?

Business Development: Apiculture has the potential to achieve inclusive transformation and growth across all the rural household categories. ASPIRE contributes to this change through strengthening private sector companies to create market opportunities for beekeepers as commercial partners, and enhancing linkages between producer groups and honey processors and other purchasers, including international buyers. Grants are provided through a competitive process to honey processors, associations, cooperatives and others, to contract, organise, train, equip and monitor beekeepers. Cooperatives and unions, processors and exporters are being strengthened to improve their marketing strategies and competence in the export market. Beekeepers receive a commercially provided 'starting package' for modern beekeeping, including access to credit and technical support, either as 'outgrowers' around a nucleus farm or model apiary, or through beekeeper organisations, lead beekeepers or other value chain promoters. Each beekeeper is expected to train 'copy beekeepers' for scaling up. Training of trainers on modern beekeeping and business skills is being provided to extension workers and the private sector.

Innovative Finance: To facilitate access to finance for the value chain participants ASPIRE has signed MOUs with financial service providers, such as the Cooperative Bank of Oromia (CBO) and Buna International Bank (BIB), and set up the ASPIRE Guarantee Fund (AGF) for loans. ENCLUDE continues to explore options for the project to reach more value chain participants with innovative financing mechanisms.

"I used to spend my day hanging out with my neighbours. After the modern beekeeping training by ASPIRE I have started to spend each day in my apiary" Mohammed Seid, Chairman of Lege Dema Cooperative.

Sector Development: To maintain momentum in the honey value chain scaling-up process, and to keep the sector self-steering and competitive in a dynamic value chain environment, ASPIRE is facilitating improved presence in the regions of institutions such as the Ethiopian Apiculture Board (EAB), Ethiopian Honey and Beeswax Producers and Exporters Association (EHBPEA), and Ethiopian Beekeepers Association (EBA), and using coordination groups as a connecting mechanism. Woreda visioning workshops pull together apiculture sector actors and stakeholders to design means of collaboration and integration, and build synergy towards a shared vision of sector development.

Knowledge Development: ASPIRE facilitates learning and knowledge development at all levels of the value chain. Research has been conducted on local and European markets for bee products. Preliminary results were shared during the ApiExpo Ethiopia in May 2014, at which ASPIRE sponsored 35 participants to share experience and gain additional exposure. The project facilitates technical research, such as a study by Holeta Research Centre on the effects of Euphorbia ("Keye Abeba") on honey bees. Learning includes visits to trade fairs, such as the visit organised by ProFound for Ethiopian companies to BIOFACH 2014 in Germany, including a study tour of competitor businesses, to learn more about the European market and business ethics.



ASPIRE heavily invests on capacity enhancement to create a dynamic sector in Ethiopia. The project has supported landless youth in Tigray to apply environment friendly beekeeping through area closure while generating income. In Oromia and SNNPR regions, the project has succeeded in piloting linkage with financial institutions for beekeepers. So far, ASPIRE has trained more than 28,000 direct beekeepers who have reached more than 100,000 copy beekeepers. As a result, significant production increase of honey and other bee products has been achieved. To enhance Ethiopian agri-food laboratories honey quality testing capacities, ASPIRE has also trained laboratory technicians in full honey, residue and elemental analysis.