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**Assessment of the Contribution of Beekeeping to People's Livelihood: A Case Study of Masindi District**

Assessment of the contribution of beekeeping to people's livelihood was conducted in Masindi district, Western Uganda. The purpose was to assess the contribution of beekeeping to people's livelihood. Specifically, the study focused on determining the status of beekeeping, identifying and documenting indigenous knowledge used in beekeeping, identifying benefits of beekeeping to the people of Masindi district and challenges faced by beekeepers in the district. There was no clear information and documentation on the contribution of beekeeping in Masindi district. A case study design was used for this study. Three parallel methods for data collection were used. Questionnaires were administered to seventy-eight beekeepers and key informants that involved development partners, technical staff and leaders in the district. Focus Group Discussions and personal observations were used. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in form of Bar charts, Pie charts and frequency tables. The study established the honey production levels. Beekeepers were found to be using more of the traditional hives than modern ones although modern bee hives had a higher colonisation rate. The study also found out that beekeepers have not yet received adequate information and skills to exploit all bee products as some required expensive equipment. The study further revealed the existing indigenous knowledge that farmers use to practice beekeeping like the traditional log hive. The beliefs followed during the practice of beekeeping are the means used to conserve the environment, increase honey yields and gain skill to make beekeeping a dependable farming practice. It was also established from the beekeepers that people value beekeeping in terms of facilitating increased agricultural crop yields through pollination and have the belief that modern technology will go some way to improve their capacity in greater skills in farming. Although most beekeepers and discussions reported the deterrent factor of stinging bees, many of them are willing to carry on beekeeping for increasing household incomes. The study identified benefits in beekeeping and these involved getting the honey product that is commercial and of a financial benefit, employment benefits as some people can get involved in honey trade and distribution of beekeeping equipment. Aesthetic values were also identified. Other benefits included medicinal and ecological benefits, Nutritional and security benefits. Despite the benefits accruing from beekeeping, beekeepers faced a multitude of challenges that cut across from apiary establishment especially stinging bees, high cost of farm inputs like the modern hives, unfavourable weather changes. The contribution of beekeeping to people's livelihood was found to be substantial in that the guiding questions of establishing the status of beekeeping in Masindi district, identification of indigenous knowledge and the benefits in beekeeping were answered. The researcher made the recommendations of increasing sensitisation campaigns, technical trainings and establishing demonstration sites for technologies like queen rearing and commercial colony multiplication in the area and at zonal agricultural research centres for greater improvements in beekeeping.

Key words: Bee keeping, Livelihood, Sensitization