



APIMONDIA

Standing Commission

Beekeeping for Rural Development

Thursday afternoon
22 September
Room Europe
14.00-18.00

Symposium 1
Cooperatives and producer organisations

Friday afternoon
23 September
Room Asia
14.00-18.00

Plenary Session
Beekeeping for Rural Development

Sunday morning
25 September
Room Europe
9.00-13.00

Symposium 2
**Management of product quality and
relationship with markets**

Tuesday – Thursday
27-29 September
Tucuman Province

Symposium Tucuman
Beekeeping as a tool for development



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APIMONDIA

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Beekeeping for Rural Development*



Bees *for* Development, UK
DIRECTOR



Beekeeping development in 2011

- Most of the world's poorest people practise subsistence agriculture
- Many of these people are beekeepers or honey hunters



Global problems in 2011



Poverty and
unemployment



Climate change



Urban sprawl



Deforestation



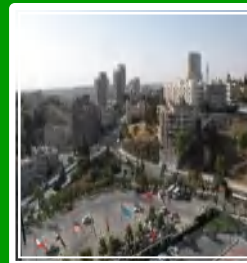
Rising fuel costs



Biodiversity loss



Loss of security



Water shortage

Aid – is a quick fix

For example:

- Giving cash
- Food in times of famine
- Replacement hives for those lost in earthquake

Development – is long term change

For example:

- Access to credit
- Ensuring food security
- Developing honey market systems

Development – is slow, long term assistance

Helping
beekeepers to
move from
subsistence
beekeeping ~
to significant
income generation



Subsistence beekeeper



- Poor and remote
- Honey provides a 'safety net' in times of need
- How to change this into beekeeping creating significant income?

What is the best way to help these beekeepers?

Top-bar hives

Refractometer

A place to store honey and beeswax

Smokers

Frame hives

Build a road

Internet access

Buckets

Bee suits

Honey jars

Training

Micro-credit

HACCP regulations

A bee house

Bicycles

Access to a honey buyer



Bees for Development Journal



Bees *for* Development 's

Top 10 recommendations to achieve sustainable growth by means of beekeeping

Recommendation 1

Identify the true constraints facing
beekeepers

1. Biological?
2. Technical?
3. Institutional?
4. Financial?
5. Market?

**And find out what
interventions have
taken place already**



Recommendation 2

**Use local bees
wherever possible
because:**

1. Local bees are adapted to their environment
2. No risk of importing pathogens



Recommendation 3

**Gain knowledge of local
bee biology and
behaviour**

Learn about local bees'
nesting, swarming, migration
and absconding behaviour



Honey bees have varying biology and behaviour according to the environment where they have evolved



Recommendation 4

Never ignore local apicultural skills

Understand and appreciate the knowledge of local beekeepers: their management of bee colonies may be excellent



Recommendation 5

Understand the issues around technology choice

Consider:

1. The paradigm shift you may be causing
2. Poor people's need for risk minimisation





Bees for Development



Technology choice - the best hive is:

- appropriate for the biology and behaviour of bees being housed inside it
- appropriate for the resources available to the beekeeper
- facilitates good care of the colony
- enables efficient honey and beeswax harvest
- takes into consideration the behaviour of local pests and predators
- is suitable for the prevailing climate

There can be good business in hive and equipment provision to projects



The developing world is full of honey processing plants like this - not in use



- Emphasis on “modern” , imported technology
- Emphasis on increasing production per hive
- Packing plants remain empty - honey volumes remain low, because market systems do not work

Nobody likes a failure



- Unsuccessful projects tend not to be reported
- It is only after the project has closed that the lack of success is evident - to those who are interested
- Often the beekeepers are blamed
- Many donors have become fatigued with beekeeping projects

Many beekeeping projects have failed.
Too often – donated hives remain empty



Project planners, donors, government departments

- It is not easy to assist people who are poor and remote
- PMAs [Plans for Modernisation of Agriculture]
- Capital inputs are easy to deliver, and provide fast, tangible, visible evidence of support
- Globalised methods appear easy to provide – standard inputs (bees, equipment, know how)
- And one bee can look much like another..



Why do projects persist in focussing on equipment delivery?

This approach rarely brings significant benefits.

- Poor situation analysis – planners believe (wrongly) that provision of equipment is the key intervention point for 'commercialising' and 'modernising' apiculture



First response usually to recommend change to a 'modern' movable comb hive.

Rationale is to enable:

- More honey
- Better quality honey
- Keep bees healthy by inspecting them
- Keep colonies strong by manipulating them
- Allow to rear queens, make splits



You are making the beekeeper change from an extensive beekeeping system to intensive beekeeping.

Extensive beekeeping

This system may seem unproductive and unreliable at the level of a single hive



Extensive beekeeping in tropical Africa



viewed as part of an extensive system they are:

- efficient
- low risk
- cost-effective
- And the bees are healthy





Crucial characteristics in this step:

1. Change in focus – from the whole honey bee population, to individual colonies in hives
2. Change in strategy – from minimal management, to more intensive colony management.



Crucial characteristics in this step:

3. Change in hive type – from low cost to expensive - each colony must pay its way
4. Hive type enables intensive colony management

AND Further 'hidden' consequences for bee health

Recommendation 6

Be prepared to invest in training and follow-up support

1. It takes two years to train a beekeeper
2. Trainers must know far more than beekeeping.
They must provide business skills to create and run apiculture enterprises



Recommendation 7

Consider issues of market access

Producer organisations are crucial for beekeepers to engage profitably in the market chain

They must be:

- Business focussed
- Main objective is collective marketing
- Producer owned and managed

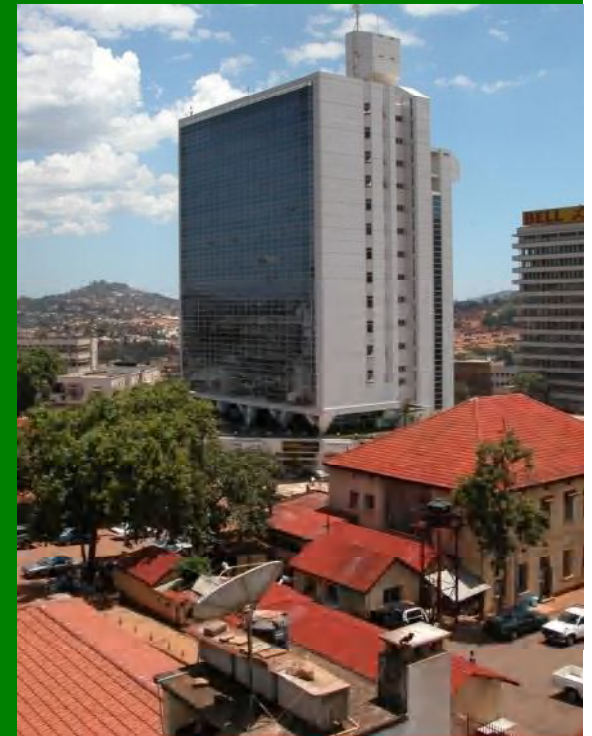
BUT costs must be kept low or the organisation will fail



Market access challenges

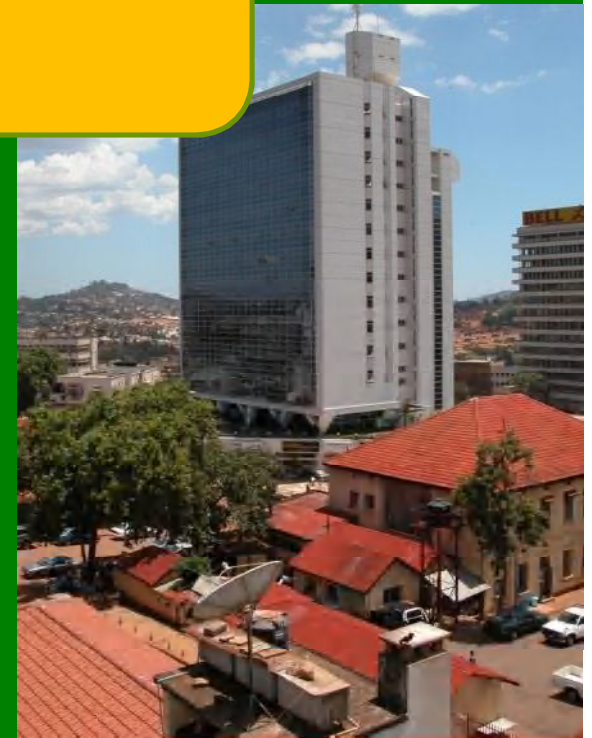


**I can produce honey,
but there is no market**



Market access challenges

I could sell local honey, but there are no supplies

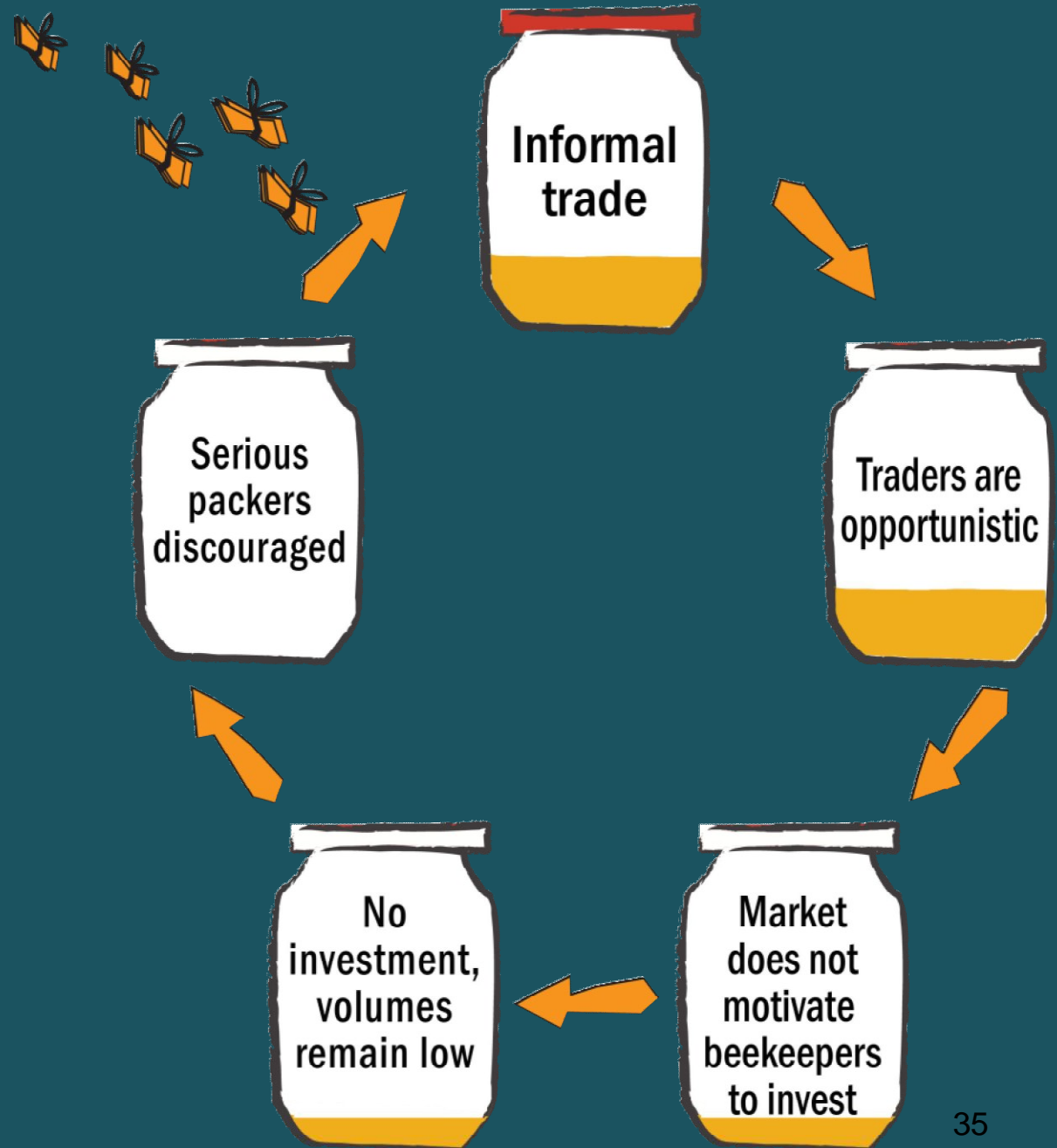


The problems are perceived to be:

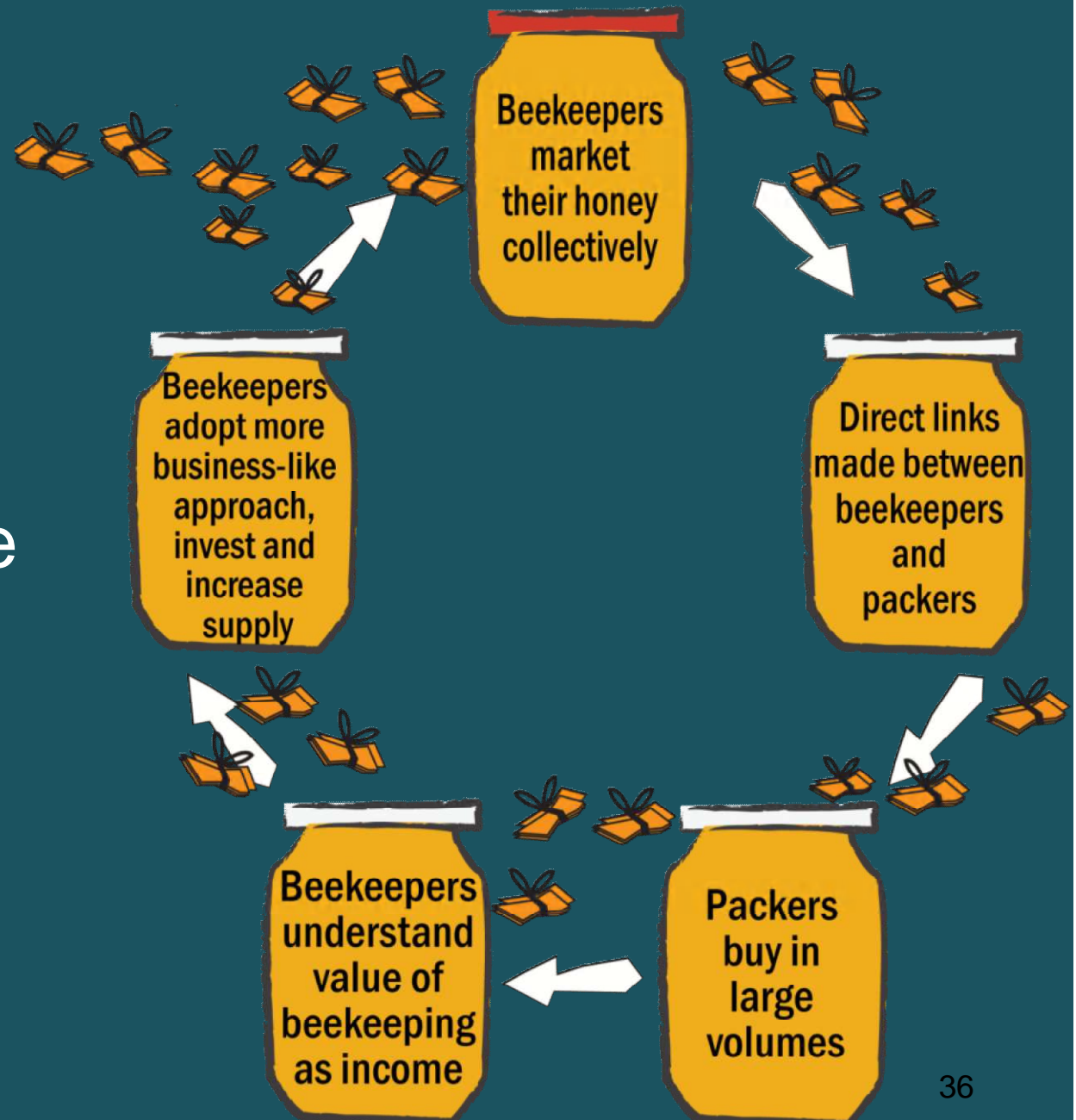
- By beekeepers: no market
- By traders: no supplies –
- This is interpreted as 'low production'

The real problem is lack of a functioning market chain.

Negative feedback cycle



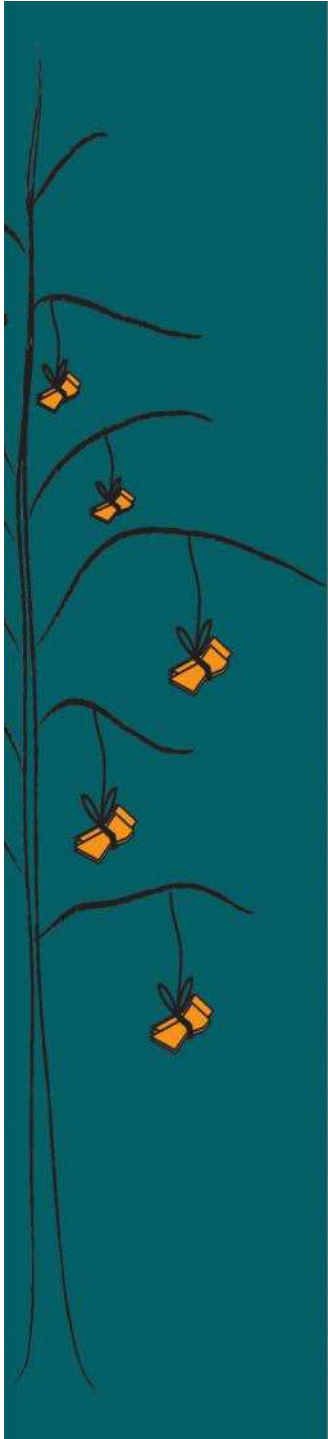
New supply chain links are needed to build a positive cycle





STRENGTHENING TRADE – THE FUTURE

- Work to develop direct to packer supply route
- Develop commercial collection centre systems
- Build the business skills of beekeepers
- Build trading groups of beekeepers
- Invest in relationship building
- Enable financial investment for packers



Sustainable supply chains, based on business principles and good relationships between producers and packers, are the key to scaling up the industry

Selling more honey means finding new markets.

This places new demands on beekeepers to organise and meet market quality expectations.



Recommendation 8

Understand the issues around honey quality

1. The best quality honey is in the bees' nest
2. Excellent handling is of utmost importance



Honey *quality* means different things:

The principle of maintaining honey just as the bees perfected it, *or*

- 'Quality' according to defined standards and market criteria, e.g. national or EU criteria
- 'Quality' according to the consumer's personal preference: taste, colour, consistency
- 'Quality' of the shelf product: good packaging and labelling

Recommendation 9

Fully explore and saturate the domestic market before considering export.

Add value to products.

Create niche products by telling the story of their production, and create secondary products



Recommendation 10

Aim to build a business that is sustainable in every aspect



Beekeeping projects must not subsidise honey production or trade



BfD's ten recommendations for successful beekeeping development

1. Identify the true constraints facing beekeepers
2. Use local bees wherever possible
3. Gain knowledge of local bee biology and behaviour
4. Never ignore local apicultural skills
5. Understand the issues around technology choice
6. Be prepared to invest in training & follow-up support
7. Consider issues of market access
8. Understand the issues around honey quality
9. Add value to products. Fully explore and saturate the domestic market before considering export
10. Aim to build a business that is sustainable in every aspect

What was the best way to help these beekeepers in Kyrgyzstan?



The image shows two men sitting inside a tent. The man on the left is older, with grey hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt and has his arms crossed. The man on the right is younger, with dark hair, wearing a dark blue t-shirt with a graphic of a group of people. They are sitting on a light-colored cloth or rug. The tent's interior is visible, with wooden poles and a light-colored fabric wall. A white hat hangs on the wall behind them. Various colored boxes with text are overlaid on the image, representing different ways to help beekeepers in Kyrgyzstan.

Top-bar hives

Refractometer

A place to store honey and beeswax

Smokers

Frame hives

Build a road

Internet access

Buckets

Bee suits

Honey jars

Training

Micro-credit

HACCP regulations

A bee house

Bicycles

Access to a honey buyer

Bees *for* Development Journal

Access rights to pastures





Thank you!

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