

Beevelop



Honey+Candles=Financial Independence

Beeveloping Ghana

The University of Nottingham SIFE team first began their Beevelop program in 2006 by helping ten families in the small village of Agomeda establish their own beekeeping business. Each family was provided with ten beehives and extensive business training, which they used to increase their annual incomes by 80%. Based on this success, the SIFE team planned to grow the Beevelop program and expand it to help additional families throughout Ghana.

Expanding the Beevelop Colony

To take Beevelop to the next level, SIFE Nottingham expanded the scope of their work to provide consulting services to existing beekeeping operations. The team made two trips to Ghana to hold training conferences, providing more than 65 existing beekeeping cooperatives with training and solutions to existing business problems such as low productivity and poor access to markets. Many of these beekeepers had been selling their honey at local markets but failed to make a sufficient number of sales. As a result, they were resorting to selling their honey in bulk to peddlers for a fraction of its cost.

Success as Sweet as Honey

After learning how to better package, price and prepare their honey for market, these beekeepers tripled their earnings on the local market. The SIFE team has continued working with the original beekeeping farms in Agomeda village where the farms are now twice as productive as the national average and the farmers' incomes have more than doubled. The SIFE team also discovered that most of the Ghanaian beekeepers were discarding beeswax as a byproduct of their operation. By helping them learn how to convert this waste product into scented candles, the beekeepers have created a brand new income stream with minimal cost.

Bee Wise, Bee Better

In a mere 15 months, SIFE Nottingham reached out to 1,800 beekeepers in Ghana through their business education programs "Bee Wise" and "Golden Opportunities". By teaching these farmers better business methods, SIFE Nottingham helped them improve the quality of their products and find new customers. While they sell honey on a local or national level, the new scented candles are exported to European markets where they are highly valued. The candles escape the sting of burdensome import regulations that would hamper similar efforts to sell their honey internationally. Production of improved honey and new candles has transformed the lives of these Ghanaian beekeepers, creating a buzz of excitement in their homes, community and nation.

