

BEES FOR DEVELOPMENT



When we started work in 1993, beekeeping was considered a marginal activity and we struggled to get our point across. We knew the importance of bees in helping to make marginal livelihoods more resilient and successful. Yet not everyone shared our vision!

Things have changed. Today, the importance of bees for global food security is widely appreciated. Since we started, many development organisations have embraced beekeeping as a tool for poverty alleviation. Yet despite this, there is no other organisation like Bees for Development! Here's what sets us apart...

First, we are a specialist beekeeping organisation with a specific purpose. All of our work is aimed at promoting beekeeping to change people's lives for the better while supporting ecosystem integrity.

Beekeeping is not just one of our areas of expertise – it is what we all do, all day, every day. Most of us are beekeepers, we talk to beekeepers, we implement beekeeping projects; we read the research, follow global developments and question, puzzle and think about what really works, for whom and why.

We have learned for example, that simple, low-cost and local styles of beekeeping work best in many of the places where we work. We are probably the only international beekeeping organisation which often promotes local-style, fixed-comb hive beekeeping above frame hive systems, for example. Why? Because the former is accessible to the poorest people, whilst the latter isn't. You can read more about our stance on inappropriate frame hive projects [here](#).

Another unique feature of Bees for Development is the way we keep to the principles of natural beekeeping. We recognise that for poor people, nature is wealth. In beekeeping this means using the natural behaviour and immune responses of bees to keep them healthy. More intensive beekeeping, while appearing to yield greater honey harvests, is risky – and when things go wrong, they can go very wrong. High-input, capital intensive beekeeping systems do not make poor people less poor.

Above all, we recognise that beekeepers in difficult environments need to be empowered with access to skills, knowledge, information and connections. Bees for Development started life as an organisation delivering information, and this aspect of our work remains at our core.



Our full range of information services can be accessed through our Resource Centre. Here you can find all the past issues of Bees for Development Journal and how to subscribe to future editions – free of charge to beekeepers in poor nations, and you can search our online library, access our manuals, guides and fact sheets. Users' enquiries will be answered by our team of specialists. There is no other organisation in the world that will answer enquiries from beekeepers in Bangladesh, Barbados and Burundi all on the same day!

Our emphasis on building local capacity permeates every aspect of our work. We always work with local partner organisations and this partnership working is effective, lasting and impactful. We have worked with so many beekeeping associations and groups over the years it is impossible to mention them all. At present we are particularly proud to be working closely with our partners in Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda.

Our staff have well over 60 years of accumulated work experience focused on the poorest nations. Our work areas include environmental issues, trade, research and technical aspects of apiculture, feasibility studies, training and extension work, market analysis, as well as project design, planning, implementation, management, and evaluation. Since Bees for Development was established, our day to day work has brought us into contact with countless stakeholders, projects and businesses, with working experience in more than 50 nations. We know a lot of stuff! You can find out about our Consulting Services here.

Bees for Development staff are all passionate about their work. We recognise the rich and powerful benefits of bees and beekeeping – income for poor families, pollination services, biodiversity conservation, an economic incentive for forest maintenance. It is an utterly compelling story – one that we are excited about and want everyone else to be excited about.

To find out more visit <https://www.beesfordevelopment.org>