Annual Report
Summary of Projects Undertaken
January–December 2013

Patrons
Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
Jimmy Doherty (Jimmy’s Farm)
Martha Kearney (Broadcaster and Journalist)
Michael Badger, MBE (Past President, British Beekeepers’ Association)
Brian Sherriff (BJ Sherriff International)
Bill and Paula Stevens (National Bee Supplies)
Eric Hiam (Maisemore Apiaries)
Introduction

Bees Abroad’s mission is to support farmers’ groups and NGOs with capacity-building training and identification of funding sources. Our main focus is on building skills that will empower communities and local organisations in beekeeping, environmental awareness and business development. We provide in-country support, as well as free Internet-based advice. Our project managers are all volunteers and offer project design services, technical training, organisational skills and monitoring of funds to groups that we have undertaken to partner in order that they may develop sustainable self-help programmes and a business-based ethos that will allow long-term economic viability.

Using a step-by-step approach, Bees Abroad volunteers make a commitment to each project we adopt for as long as the project manager feels necessary for a successful outcome. Bees Abroad’s special focus is practical ‘farmer-to-farmer’ support to develop the group to a point where they are able to run their enterprise as a sustainable business. At this point, a decision is taken either to leave a completed project or to scale it up into a larger project or business. Some groups only require training or project design that can be completed after one or two visits, while others may have a more comprehensive and long-term programme. We have also started to partner established NGOs which undertake the in-country practical work but which need a Western partner for funding purposes.

Currently, Bees Abroad is involved with 19 projects in various stages of development, though one of them, the Maigana project in Nigeria, is, temporarily we hope, ‘on hold’ because of a difficult political situation in that country. In the course of the year, we acquired six new projects. Three of these are in Kenya: the MWAITA Women’s Group, Save the Elephants and the major DfID-funded project, Sustainable Bee Product Enterprise Development. One of our project managers began working with the Canadian Universal Outreach Foundation to deliver training in Liberia. We are now supporting a ‘train the trainers’ programme with the beekeepers at Jorafarm and Associates in Nigeria. We are also providing technical advice for a beekeeping venture in Yemen. Details of all these new projects will be found below.

In 2013, we considered more than 40 requests for help, nearly all of them project proposals. Given our limited resources, we could pursue only a quarter of them but, often, we were able to offer the remaining proposers technical advice through e-mails, together with Pam Gregory’s excellent manuals. Of the six new projects listed above, all but the major one financed by DFID in Kenya resulted from enquiries we received in 2013. In addition, a Ugandan proposer was visited when one of our project managers was in that country and training was provided, though the project itself could not be adopted. At least four such ‘assessment’ visits are scheduled to take place in 2014 and it is possible that we shall decide to support some of the projects concerned.

Although it is clear that the ever-increasing number of applications we receive for technical support and funding is greater than can be met, it does show that the work Bees Abroad is undertaking is much needed. We are also accumulating a good deal of detailed evidence that the special mentoring and training approach taken by Bees Abroad is extremely effective.
### Registered Long-term Projects in 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
<th>Name of project</th>
<th>UK Project leader</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>1 established project</td>
<td>Akwaya</td>
<td>Jo Hiscox</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Ghana     | 3 established projects networked for funding and support purposes
  | ADRUCOM Resource Link Foundation (RLF)
  | Beekeeping Learning and Honey Marketing Centre (BLHMC)
|          |                    |                                       | Brian Durk                  |
| Kenya     | 4 established projects | Wings of Mercy
  | Sinyati Women's Group
  | Kerio Valley
  | SMART
|          | 3 new projects
  | MWAITI Women’s Group
  | Save the Elephants
  | Sustainable Bee Products Enterprise
|          |                    |                                       | John and Mary Home          |
| Liberia   | 1 new project       | Liberia Training (in collaboration with the Universal Outreach Foundation)
|          |                    |                                       | Brian Durk                  |
| Malawi    | 1 established project | Nkhata-bay Honey Producers Co-op
|          |                    |                                       | John Gregory                |
| Nigeria   | 1 project on hold   | Maigana                                 | Brian Durk and Adebisi New  |
|           | 1 new project       | Jorafarm and Associates
|          |                    |                                       | Adebisi New                 |
| Uganda    | 2 established projects | BISUDEF Women’s Groups
  | OYAG Rural Youth Integrated Beekeeping skills
|          |                    |                                       | Roy Dyche                   |
| Yemen     | 1 new advisory project | Mahra Youth Unity Association
|          |                    |                                       | Pam Gregory                 |
| Zambia    | 1 established project | Monze Women’s Project
|          |                    |                                       | Roy Dyche                   |
Projects Undertaken

CAMEROON

AKWAYA (090406.BD.AKW.03)

The Akwaya project is based in a small village called Ote in Akwaya subdivision, South West Province, Cameroon. This is a village of subsistence farmers who grow basic crops and hunt animals for their livelihood. Among traditional practices is honey hunting, so the project aims to support the local people to keep bees more sustainably in Kenyan Top Bar hives. We are doing this by carrying out training and education to support the villagers to transfer to beekeeping over honey hunting. The overall aim is to improve income streams in the village through beekeeping and to support the locals to produce and market honey. The project is being run in conjunction with Food and Rural Development Foundation (FORUDEF), a local NGO working to improve living standards in Akwaya.

This area is extremely deprived and is only accessible between January and March, outside the rainy season, by a rough track. Even with a specially adapted 4x4, the 52-mile trip takes about 7 hours. With such poor access, the beekeepers trek long distances through the forest with their honey and cannot get it out at all during the wet season and have to store it for months before they can gain an income from it. Therefore considerable encouragement needs to be given to keep them engaged with the new practice of beekeeping.

Since our visit in 2012, the village has been beset by problems. The chief, who was a truly inspirational leader of his people, seeking out all sorts of initiatives to help the villagers gain sustainable income, died suddenly. He was the lead beekeeper, heading a group of five elders who have an apiary of seven hives. Then, shortly afterwards, two further members of the beekeeping group also died. The village lost three stalwarts of the community who, between them, led and inspired the people to strive to make a better existence for themselves while maintaining their traditions and culture. Our host of last year was among those who passed away and I still have the image of him in my mind, squatting on the floor and making a basket from palm leaves to transport some chickens to market, without a moment’s thought for the beauty of this everyday object or to the skill and dexterity of his weaving. These losses also emphasise the fragility of life, and the consequences of a lack of medical supplies, with the nearest medical assistance being 52 miles away, accessible only in the dry season, or 23 miles trek through the forest with a half-day climb out of the rainforest basin to the plateau above.

The FORUDEF apiary in Ote is doing well and producing honey, though this has also been beset by problems since the climate is so harsh in the rainforest that hives readily get knocked over by falling trees in storms. This causes the bees to abscond and any honey to be lost. The village group apiary is being maintained by the remaining two...
beekeepers but, as yet, no honey has been harvested. Jo continues to support the FORUDEF team via e-mail and they relay messages to the villagers on their visits. Next year, the visit will hopefully encourage them further and keep them in beekeeping. The Bees Abroad extension worker, James Assam, has also identified that the yields of honey from the rainforest are much lower than from the savannah and semi-forest areas and this is thought to be because of the lower amount of flowering plants in the forest. This is another area that we are interested in investigating because it may be that we can help the rainforest beekeepers to sell their honey at a premium since it is rarer.

During the year, James Assam has trained a further 80-100 beekeepers in the villages around the rainforest. Some are already keeping bees, while some are working to raise the funding required to demonstrate their commitment to the activity and thereby to gain support from ourselves and FORUDEF. Because of the dispersion of the village and the difficulties of travel, we remain convinced that the project would benefit from a honey collecting station in Ote. This would enable locals to sell their honey at the time of production, for it to be stored in appropriate containers until it can be transported out to market in the dry season.

From our initiation last year, FORUDEF has started collecting and processing the honey produced, but farmers who seek a quicker income still sell locally, rather than wait nine months for the roads to open again. Shipping out all the produce at the same time will achieve economies of scale and help overcome transport difficulties. The team still believe that our goal of increasing farmers’ incomes through honey will create a greater security for beekeeping and protection of the forest area. These village people want to stay in the area of their heritage and yet, in Cameroon, like so many other developing countries, life on the land is a constant struggle and the pull of the city life is strong, even though it usually leads to poverty and struggle. We aim to help them to gain a good income from their land and so keep this and their way of life intact.

In 2013, honey purchases again increased owing to a further injection of funds. Again, transportation costs amounted to 15% of purchase costs which is deemed to be an acceptable level to make the activity worthwhile. However, we anticipate that these costs will be reduced if a larger quantity of honey was being transported. With storage facilities in the rainforest and the ability to purchase at time of delivery, this would drive such
costs down and give economies of scale. We are hopeful that this will happen and that it will make beekeeping in the rainforest be seen as a viable economic activity, so further increasing production. The administration and running costs of FORUDEF have been funded from profits from the honey trading and from undertaking other work, such as contracts from the Cameroon government, including delivery of mosquito nets, education of local people on how to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes, as well as nutrition and health programmes which are being undertaken in conjunction with a Canadian organisation.

Our extension worker, James, has now been taken on permanently by the Akwaya regional government as an advisor to farmers in the area. Thankfully he is not lost to us but is now training beekeepers as part of his job, funded by Cameroon. He has been given a government house just 11 miles from Ote, so is still in the heart of the area. It is as a result of his new role, and his continued commitment to the work of Bees Abroad, that there are now about 14 villages with beekeepers, compared with only 10 last year, and more to come on stream in the next year.

While it has been a very difficult year for the project, we have seen many positives and have further positive things in the pipeline. We will not be discouraged by this year’s setbacks as the prospects for the future look good and the local people are so hopeful and enthusiastic. With increasing numbers of beekeepers coming on-stream in the rainforest area, more people have been inspired by our work and assistance and we will work to help them become productive bee farmers. An interim chief has been appointed in Ote and we look forward to a profitable and stable year to allow the existing beekeepers to have their hives colonised and, hopefully, to produce their first honey.
GHANA

Brian Durk continues with the work in Ghana, concentrating on the group in Twifo Praso but also continuing to support the other groups through training sessions at Twifo Praso.

The partner organisations are now:

- Agents for Development for the Rural Community (ADRUCOM), a Community Based Organisation (CBO) centred in Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region of Northern Ghana.
- Beekeeping Learning and Honey Marketing Centre (BLHMC), an NGO based in Twifo Praso, Central Region, very near Cape Coast.
- Resource Link Foundation (RLF), an NGO based in Wenchi, Brong Ahafo, in the west of the country.
- Royal Bees Society, a grouping of 19 beekeeping groups in the Ho-Hohoe area of the Volta Region and based at Goviefe Kowu.

**Adrucom Ghana (041004/BD/ADRU/04)**

Of the four organisations, Adrucom was initially given first priority as it was working in the place where there appeared to be the greatest need. This has been put on hold until there is a replacement for Elias Ayeebo, the local project leader who sadly died, and proper communication channels are put into place. Victor Ayeebo, Elias’s son, received extra training in Twifo Praso during the 2013 training sessions and during the 2014 visit, his capability to take over the project will be assessed.

**Beekeeping Learning and Honey Marketing Centre (BLHMC) (P10/BD/BLHMC)**

This is now the focus of the work in Ghana. A ‘Train the Trainers’ session took place between 25 February and 1 March 2013 in the BLHMC building and at a local village apiary, where local students and invited visitors took part.

This ‘Train the Trainers’ will be repeated in 2014 with further trainees from the local association and guests from other NGOs that have contacted ‘Bees Abroad’ asking for help. The training will be carried out by local trainers and observed by the UK project Manager.

The development of beekeeping training at the BLHMC centre at Twifo Praso into a working Training and Honey Processing Centre progressed during 2013 and should be continued during 2014.

**Resource Link Foundation (RLF), Wenchi, Brong Ahafo (130105.BD.RLF.01)**

One of the project members from RLF attended the training at Twifo Praso, The other was unwell and not able to attend. During the year, they have identified a group of cashew farmers who would like to expand into beekeeping, firstly to improve the pollination of their cashew trees and secondly to give an additional income. Brian Durk intends to visit some of them during his 2014 visit.
Royal Bees Society

Based at Goviefe Kowu, this group has been designated the fourth beekeeping centre to complete the Bees Abroad Ghana Beekeeping Network. Godwin Kodua, from Acrudev in Hohoe, was given further training at Twifo Praso during 2013 and afterwards successfully applied to a staff organisation at the Brussels EU headquarters for funding to train three village groups in the Hohoe area. Brian will visit this project during his 2014 visit.

Victor Ayeebo building a catcher or 10 top-bar hive at BLHMC
KENYA

Finally, after much work, Bees Abroad received approval for a three-year project in Laikipia from the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID). This is a milestone achievement for our charity and a positive endorsement for the way that our projects are run in developing countries. We issued a press release which is reproduced in full opposite.

In August, Mary and John were accompanied by David Evans, whose skills had enabled them to put the budget together, and his wife Roz, to set up this new project. Unfortunately, things did not run as smoothly as we wished because of a breakdown in the relationship with the Kenyan NGO partner where a change in management and reorganisation had taken place. Nevertheless, there was light at the end of the tunnel as the next day the Bees Abroad team was fortunate to meet with the Governor of Laikipia and his agriculture minister, who were interested to help. This resulted in meeting a new in-country NGO which we were able research and get to know before returning to the UK to explain the situation to the DFID staff and seek their approval for a change. After due diligence approval was given, we able to go ahead and start the project in October.

Before leaving Kenya in August, the team took the opportunity to interview and select the Kenyan Project Leader and potential field staff from the various areas within Laikipia which meant that they could be offered the posts as soon as approval was granted.

In November/December the project was started with training by the Executive Project Manager and four officers attending training in value addition at the National Beekeeping Station in Nairobi. Motor bikes were purchased so that the field officers could start work in their districts to identify the communities and groups wishing to register with the project. To our delight, by the end of the year over 48 groups had been recruited, made up of 1044 men and 1363 women.
Three-year Bees Abroad project in Kenya wins Government Funding

Bees Abroad has secured major funding from the UK Department for International Aid (DFID) for a three-year project to alleviate poverty through advancing beekeeping skills and supporting bio-conservation and bio-enterprise in the arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) in the Kenyan district of Laikipia.

The Bee Products Enterprise Development (BPED) aims to raise incomes of 900 pastoral households through beekeeping, providing for improved production, value addition, trade and profit-sharing. It will also increase opportunities for women and marginalised members of society to engage in sustainable economic activity and increase control of their income.

International Development Minister, Lynne Featherstone, said: ‘This project will change the lives of over 5000 people in Kenya, half of whom live below the poverty line and are dependent on food aid. DFID funding will help Bees Abroad give people the skills and support they need to learn a trade which can increase their independence.

‘Beekeeping is a potentially vital source of income for these rural communities. As well as teaching beekeeping skills, the project will provide vital training in business and marketing, to help rural communities run successful enterprises. This is going to help generations of families increase their income and become self-sufficient. I hope Bees Abroad can create a real buzz around this worthwhile project.’

The project will be implemented for Bees Abroad by John and Mary Home, assisted by David Evans. John and Mary already act as volunteer project managers for several of the charity’s projects in Kenya. As well as helping community groups improve their beekeeping skills, they have been responsible for teaching beekeepers how to make value-added products such as hand creams and beeswax polish.

Another of their innovations is the ‘A-maizing’ beesuit which can be made for less than £1 by utilising waste maize sacks and the sound parts of damaged mosquito nets. This application was made possible with help and encouragement from those in Bees Abroad and much support from family and friends.

Support for the project also comes from Bees Abroad patron and television personality, Jimmy Doherty. He commented: ‘This is a major achievement for Bees Abroad, which is a small and growing solid charity, with a core of very experienced beekeepers who really care about helping communities in the developing world. It’s wonderful to think that 900 households will be given beekeeping skills that can be used straight away and then handed on to future generations. It’s sustainability at its best.’

Commercial and community-owned bee product enterprises with a sound ethical, environmental and business base create new economic opportunities for pastoralist men and women. This project will increase economic returns from beekeeping and provide economic incentives for the sustainable use of indigenous natural resources. Product branding and market links will help communities to access rewarding local, national and East African regional markets.

Creating livelihood diversification will take pressure off water and grazing available in the wider Laikipia ecosystem, contributing to protection of natural resources, particularly in the water catchment areas. An improved ecosystem will lead to wider livelihood improvements such as reduced tension and conflict between communities, greater resilience to drought and greater gender equity within households.

Bee products are culturally and socially acceptable. Honey and beeswax are already sold in the targeted areas, but at a low and disorganised level. The project proposes to expand existing knowledge and practices, implementing business-based systems to ensure economic viability.

Introducing low-cost beekeeping equipment, often made from locally sourced materials, enables producers to expand to commercial levels. Community cohesion will be supported by the democratic decision-making and participation in the enterprise, especially under fair trade standards.

Better bee colony management also increases the stability of local food supplies through the bees’ pollination activities. Understanding the need to preserve natural resources for honey production promotes care for sustainable natural resources.

The development of the national organic market will increase awareness among consumers and the farming community of environmental issues, helping to make the value of Kenyan natural resources better understood and appreciated.

- The Department for International Development (DFID) leads the UK’s work to end extreme poverty. They’re ending the need for aid by creating jobs, unlocking the potential of girls and women and helping to save lives when humanitarian emergencies hit.
- The Global Poverty Action Fund (GPAF) is DFID’s main central funding mechanism for civil society organisations. It’s a demand-led fund that allows DFID to support a wide range of projects focused on poverty reduction and pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Projects must deliver tangible changes to poor people’s lives through one or more of the following objectives: service delivery, empowerment and accountability, work on conflict, security and justice.
John and Mary were not able to visit their other projects in Kenya during the year, but they were able to keep in touch at long range with the groups. We have always been grateful and privileged to have the support of David Njuguna, our Kenyan Bees Abroad Volunteer, who, in his own time and with support from Bees Abroad helping to cover transport and accommodation costs, visited the other projects to encourage and continue training where it was needed.

**Cheptebo Rural Development Centre (CRDC)**

In June 2013, CRDC in the Kerio Valley, where Bees Abroad has helped to introduce beekeeping, was chosen to be the national host for the global day to combat desertification. This was a convention initiated by the United Nations, of which Kenya is a part, and its objectives were to educate communities in environmental conservation. The event drew many people from various parts of Kenya, including senior government officials led by the Environment Secretary, and including the Deputy Governor, dignitaries from the United Nations, NGOs and stakeholders.

The key speech was given by Dr Alice Akinyi Kaudia, the Environment Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. The theme of the year is, ‘Don’t let our future dry up’. Her speech, and those of others, emphasized the intention of the day; this is a world day initiative to combat desertification, to support local communities to adapt and build resilience by seeking to:

1. Increase food security through enhancing drought resilient of local agricultural practices.
2. Reduce poverty through diversification of enterprises to improve livelihoods.
3. Facilitate the integration of adaptation of drought into Kenya’s sustainable development plans and policies.
4. Undertake measures to reduce the vulnerability of inhabitants of arid and semi-arid areas to the vagaries of drought.
5. Illustrate how national policies through NAP (National Action Programme) may be influenced and modified, based on lessons learned from the field.

Bees Abroad has been invited to help with a beekeeping module in the Agriculture course CRDC hopes to commence in 2015, looking particularly at farming in arid and semi-arid lands.

Their training apiary has four hives donated by Bees Abroad. The good news is that all the hives are colonised and farmers who come for short courses are taken there for practical training in beekeeping.

Bees are also playing a very vital role in pollinating the crops and fruits such as citrus, mangoes, avocados and paw paws, grown in the CRDC farm and surroundings farms. There is a live hedge fence surrounding the apiary which is really good at preventing the bees from attacking people passing nearby as they visit the centre.

**Chepsigot Sekemiat Women’s Group**

The members of this group attended the desertification event, having a stand with...
their added-value products as well as a sample of their A-maizing beesuits. They impressed the judges and were awarded a certificate in recognition of their efforts contributing to food security. This is a great achievement, resulting from the knowledge Bees Abroad has shared with this group over the past few years.

The group is working well together making hive products which they are marketing, along with their fruit, on the stalls along the main road out of the valley to Eldoret.

**Chepsigot School**

The school has continued to develop its Young Farmers Club. The pupils from this school and even students from the neighbouring secondary school are using the apiary for training and demonstration purposes, learning skills on basic apiary management and bee husbandry in general.

Both schools are thankful to Bees Abroad for providing and supporting the school. The three hives in this demonstration apiary have been colonised.

Please note, the apiary now serves both the secondary and the primary schools and everybody here is happy that their children can now learn and do practical work in beekeeping near their schools.

Bees are also pollinating the fruits and another crops planted in the school farm and have provided some honey, adding nourishment to the meals for the children. The school has also benefited from a donation from the Junior School in Southam in the UK, which they used to buy additional hives and an irrigation pipe for the school farm.

**Sinyati Women’s Group**

These women still have considerable challenges from tribal unrest but are benefiting from being able to make the added-value hive products to supplement their income. Caroline Lentupuru, one of their members who has joined the Baringo County Government as Minister Responsible for the Environment and Natural Resources Group, harvested honey which they have sold for 8000 Kenya shillings (£54).

The group made body creams in 100 g containers. These cost 50 Kenya shillings (34 p) to make and they were able to market them at 75 Kenya shillings (51 p). They are now...
exploring packing the creams in smaller containers. They have also made soap which they
distributed among themselves to see how it works.

**Mwaita Women’s Group – Njoro**

This group is situated in the foothills of the Mau Escarpment and started as an offshoot of
the Bees Abroad NELBEM project, which has been completed. They are receiving support
to establish a business providing value addition to the products from their hives. Technical
guidance has been given in business record keeping, etc, together with Bees Abroad
recording tracking tools.

David Njuguna has also led discussions on the possibility of obtaining funding from the
social service ministry and others. Equity business micro-finance is also a way forward for
obtaining equipment and ingredients. The group has had a small loan of 3500 Kenya
shillings (£24) to buy small-size containers for body creams.

**Konza Group**

The Konza group, near Machakos, has been restricted by a lack of nectar sources. They have
started to plant trees and shrubs to overcome this problem although it will take a few years
for these to become established. They received training in value addition to hive products and
they can now purchase ingredients and make body creams and soaps to take to market.

**Mutini Group**

The Mutini group, in a more westerly location, is in a much more favourable forested
environment and so has been able to continue to progress independently, with an
experienced leader.

John and Mary have continued to remain in close touch with the National Beekeeping
Station and the deputy minister responsible for beekeeping in the Government Agricultural
Department. They appreciative being informed of the progress being made and delighted to
hear about the DFID grant to help their beekeepers.

**Save the Elephants (E13/19)**

In August, John and Mary Home met Dr Lucy King who has been pioneering the use of bee
hives to deter elephants from raising crops. She has found that elephants are aware of the
buzz from a hive and will avoid contact with the bees. She has had success in helping
communities reduce the damage done to crops by elephants by surrounding fields
with bee hives.

As part of the visit, John and Mary introduced Dr King to Peter Paterson, a very
experienced beekeeper who has lived in Kenya for many years. He was able to make
several useful suggestions. He introduced Dr King to a local beekeeper who may be
able to help her project and she was advised of the support available from the National
Beekeeping Station in Nairobi. Dr King has been making good use of Pam Gregory’s
beekeeping manuals.

Dr King will stay in touch and BA will give
further help if required.
Liberia

Brian Durk and Idris Muhammad Barau from ‘Beekeeping Extension Society’ in Zaria, Nigeria, were invited to Liberia by Kent Bubbs, Jnr, of the Universal Outreach Foundation (UOF), a Canadian/Liberian NGO which he runs. They would pay all expenses and also pay Idris a fee. Brian would not ask for a fee.

Brian and Idris presented a six-day workshop to improve the group’s beekeeping. During e-mail correspondence with Kent, it emerged that the members all did their honey harvesting at night and after discussion with a small group prior to the start of the training, it appeared they knew very little.

The training took place at Ganta in Nimba County on the Liberia/Guinea border in the beekeepers’ honey collection and extraction house. During the six days, the course covered the manufacture of cheap Kenya Top Bar (KTB) hives with wooden ends and bamboo, raffia and sticks for side panels. Kent was able to supply top bars produced on a small saw bench at his home. Each of the students produced a beesuit from locally procured woven plastic sacks. They even had a treadle sewing machine which Kent’s driver was very good at operating.

All the students were taken in small groups to various apiary sites to look into the colonies. By the end of the week, they were all familiar with opening and inspecting hives during daylight. All 12 participants were assessed during that week and four were given Assistant Trainer certificates.

Brian and Idris have been asked to go back in 2014 to continue training this group. Brian introduced Cecil Wilson, the Liberian Project Manager, and Kent to a group in Liberia called the Sean Devereux Children’s Education and Agricultural Programme. They have promised to pass on their training to this group.

When harvested, the honey is taken to Monrovia where it is stored and then bottled as required. The only problem seen was that honey was removed from the comb by the use of a solar melter.
NIGERIA

Because of the continuing uncertain political situation in Nigeria, travel in-country is unadvisable and uncertain. However, Bees Abroad continues to support development work through the Bees Abroad Nigeria Beekeeping Network (NBN).

As a result of previous engagements and project work completed, Bees Abroad has two accredited local trainers in-country who manage enquiries, carry out training and support the BA network in-country. We continue to receive enquiries for beekeeping training and support and, where appropriate, these enquiries are passed to Bees Abroad’s Nigerian trainers, Mr Alhaji Idris M B Zaria (based in Zaria, Northern Nigeria) and Oreyemi Babatunde Adenola (based in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, South West Nigeria).

This policy is the most cost effective way to continue to deliver support to Nigerian beekeepers. Bees Abroad’s Nigerian trainers act locally, with support from Bees Abroad’s UK-based Nigeria Project Managers, Brian Durk and Adebisi New. Bees Abroad pays fees to our local contacts for assessments, training and expenses.

Nigerian Beekeepers Network (NBN)

Since 2006, Brian Durk and Adebisi New have been working to set up a national network (NBN) of beekeeping trainers and extension workers. This is particularly important in areas where there is no beekeeping training provision but a lot of interest in developing beekeeping as an income-generating activity. A network of interested groups and NGOs has been developed throughout most areas of Nigeria, representing around 12,000 potential beneficiaries. The network represents a great resource for dealing with enquires from Nigeria.

Training regimes have been developed under the guidance of the two Bees Abroad project managers and local trainers from the NBN. Development and extension activities are based on business development and training in medicinal and secondary products, which helps to support local income beyond the honey harvest season.

These training modules are now being disseminated through the NBN network which also supports diversification into the supply of queens and colonies and value-added products, in addition to honey production, beekeeping training services, manufacturing beekeeping equipment and pollination services.

Bees Abroad is seeking funding in 2014/2015 to allow further development for the network. New objectives under discussion with NBN for funding are:

- to grow the network with representation in all states in Nigeria
- to deliver the first Nigerian National Honey Show
- to deliver the ‘Train the Trainers’ module in three new States.

Bisi New and Brian Durk continue to offer support and guidance to help NBN attain...
these ambitions. They remain in contact by e-mail and telephone, with occasional meetings in Cameroon as part of visits to other projects.

Two projects were initiated/completed in 2013.

**Bees For Employment (P12/BD/BFE)**

Beekeeping training was delivered by Mr Alhaji Idris M B Zaria and the enquirer networked with the NBN to enable network members to assume responsibility for ongoing support. Consequently, further project-specific input from Bees Abroad is no longer required and we have recorded this as a completed project.

**Jorafarm and Associates Beekeepers (P13/BN/JAB)**

This is a year-long project to be delivered in 2014/2015 in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. Project outcomes will be five beekeepers trained as beekeeping trainers under the BBKA Tropical syllabus. These new trainers will be able to train young people in this area as new beekeepers. Mr Adenola will deliver training in modern beekeeping techniques from management to harvesting, hive making (top-bar hives), making beesuits and smokers, and production of secondary products for sale locally.

Jorafarm and Associate Beekeepers, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, has 13 members (nine men, four women). The members are students of Obafemi Awolowo University, with two graduate assistance lecturers who serve as coordinators of the association. The Association is run as a non-profit organisation with the aim of promoting the sales of unadulterated honey and encouraging youths of the area to show an interest in beekeeping as a means of reducing unemployment.

**Challenges**

The Association is faced with a lot of challenges which are hindering its progress. Thus, membership keeps decreasing and the remaining members are getting frustrated.
The challenges are:

- Members lack technical knowledge in making basic beekeeping equipment. They travel far to the next state (Oyo State) to buy this at a very high price.
- They are not aware of bait hives or have used baiting as a means to lure bees into empty hives. They simply wait and this prolongs the time taken before colonisation.
- They don’t have direct control on those selling the equipment, thus this is not standardised.
- They never use hive tools.
- They make use of kerosene to light the smokers which may have adverse effect on the bees and hive products.
- The hive stand is not protected against attack by soldier ants.
- Honey is extracted from the combs by hand. This increases the rate of contact with the honey and may bring contamination.
- They are not aware of secondary hive products.

**Training Dates**

It was agreed that the training will be over a beekeeping season (one year). It will be carried out in four phases to correspond with the beekeeping activities during the year in June, August, October and December.

**Training Venue**

It was initially planned to hold the training in Ijebu-ode, Ogun state. However, the Association was unable to pay for all the trainees for the four phases. Therefore, the first, second and third phase of the training will be held in Ile-Ife and the fourth in Ijebu Ode, Ogun state. The training will use the Association apiary and equipment while providing standard equipment where correction is necessary.
UGANDA

The BISUDEF Women’s Beekeeping Project, Hoima (P11/RD/BIS)

Phase One

The first twelve-month phase of this project ended in May 2013 and we were very happy with what had been accomplished. One-hundred-and-eight women, nearly all subsistence farmers and many of them widows or single mothers struggling to support large households on meagre resources, had been taught how to make and manage modern hives. Already half of them had begun to see an income from their beekeeping. They had sold 390 kg of honey, which had earned each of them an average of £14.50 – hardly wealth beyond the dreams of avarice but a promising start and, in the context of their poverty, a significant contribution to the household economy.

The implementation of the project is being undertaken by our Ugandan partners, the Bigasa Sustainable Development Foundation (BISUDEF), a small organisation with a reputation for efficiency and reliability. Interestingly, however, although BISUDEF’s field officer is a qualified beekeeper, the bulk of the training has not been conducted by him.

The women had formed themselves into ten groups and, a few months before the project got under way, Roy Dyche, the Bees Abroad project manager, had arranged some preliminary beekeeping training for the group leaders (GLs). He had been so struck by their keenness and confidence that it was decided that they, rather than the field officer, should be entrusted with the training of their members. To equip them for this task, they attended a four-day train-the-trainers workshop immediately prior to the project launch.

By the end of the first phase, the GLs had taught their members the fundamentals of modern beekeeping and how to harvest and process the honey and wax from their hives. These they constructed for themselves from freely available local materials – an aspect of their training which they clearly found inspiring. In the course of the twelve months, they improvised well over 350 hives, far more than we had anticipated.

In addition to the training, the GLs had assumed other key responsibilities. They kept their members motivated by visiting each of them regularly, usually once a month, and they were largely responsible for monitoring the project. Every two months they met BISUDEF staff in Hoima town to present reports on how their members were faring and suggest ways in which any problems they were experiencing could be tackled. All ten of them attended every one of these meetings, which is remarkable given the long distances many of them had to cover on roads that were nigh on impassable during the rainy seasons.

The BISUDEF field officer and the programme co-ordinator also defied death by frequently negotiating these roads on a motorbike to deliver ‘moral support’, technical advice and any supplementary training that was needed. Towards the end of 2012, the field officer had helped the groups to set up and manage nurseries at which they grew saplings of the Calliandra.
shrub, which produces an abundance of nectar throughout the year. At the start of 2013, about 2000 of these saplings were planted around the members’ hives.

So that the women can be sure of a ready and fair market for their honey, BISUDEF has set up a purchasing operation, in which the GLs played another important part by devising a collection centre system. This made the field officer’s work much less difficult. Back in Hoima town, using very basic equipment, the honey bought from the members and other beekeepers in the district is strained, bottled and sold to local retail outlets. The profit BISUDEF makes from these sales not only increases the pot of money available for further buying but will allow them to make a financial contribution to later phases of the project.

Phase Two

In May 2013, Roy and Bees Abroad’s vice-chairman, Stuart Andrews, helped launch the second twelve-month phase, the aim of which is to consolidate the earlier achievements and to extend the project to two more women’s groups.

Because it had become increasingly obvious that the GLs were crucial to the project’s long-term sustainability, in Phase Two we wanted to maintain our support for them and to foster their growing sense of ‘project ownership’ – their conviction that this is theirs and their members’ project, not BISUDEF’s or Bees Abroad’s, and that it is up them to make it succeed.

At the start of the second phase, they were issued with bicycles to make it easier for them to visit their members, something they have since been doing as frequently as ever. Also, the regularity of their attendance at the two-monthly monitoring meetings has been as impressive as it was during the first phase.

In September, they made an excursion to the beekeeping section of an agriculture research station, some 20 miles from Hoima town, and a large private apiary nearby. This ‘exposure’ trip appears to have been very worthwhile and they returned with new ideas which they were eager to discuss among themselves and with their groups.

By the year’s end, they were already mobilising their members in preparation for the honey harvesting season, which usually begins in February, and they will again administer the collection-centre system they initiated last year.

BISUDEF has continued to process the honey it bought at the end of Phase One and sell it on to local retailers, many more of whom are now keen to stock our product. Between the start of BISUDEF’s accounting year on 1 June and 31 December 2013, they sold over 1350
500 g jars of our ‘Family Life’ honey and are therefore on track to market over one tonne of honey during the phase. For a fledgling business, this is extremely encouraging.

The two groups which joined us in May 2013 brought the number of direct beneficiaries to 128 and has added about 110 more household members to the 600 or so which were already standing to gain indirectly from the project.

The new GLs have been most enterprising and, even before the phase began, they set up training apiaries without drawing on the project's budget. Assisted by the two Phase One GLs acting as their mentors, they have now completed the training of their members, who, by the end of 2013, made 56 hives for themselves. When some of these hives are well established, practical training in honey and wax harvesting will be conducted with the help of the field officer.

The groups have received the same material inputs as their Phase One colleagues: a smoker, gloves, food-grade buckets and enough material to make three sets of protective gear. Their leaders have each been given a bicycle. In addition, each individual member was provided with hive ends to enable her to construct two modern hives; for each hive she completed she has been given plastic roofing material and a set of top-bars, which are difficult to improvise.

The situation in Hoima is certainly reassuring. Judging from the detailed reports Roy has been receiving from BISUDEF's director since the launch of Phase Two, the success indicators they agreed together at the start of the phase have been, or are well on the way to being, achieved.
Oluwa Youth Activity Group (OYAG), Mbale, Uganda (P12/DB/RYE)

Dave Bonner, the project manager, visited the OYAG group in March 2013. The purpose of the visit was to conduct a one-week ‘Train the Trainers’ course, the trainers then going into the community to train their group members.

There is already some beekeeping in the area and a few of the OYAG group have beehives, so there is some resident experience for the wider group to call upon.

The bee hives that are currently used comprise all kinds of containers in which the bees have been encouraged to take up residence. However, the plan is to use top bar hives as that standardisation will have benefits across the whole group, in training, flexibility and improved quality of the honey and wax extracted from the hives. This is not to mention the huge benefit of being able to extract the honey without destroying the brood nest.

Prior to the visit, the students had committed to attend class for five days. This is a large commitment of time and effort for people who have to spend their days tending livestock and/or labouring to earn money to keep food on the table. In return, they were provided with lunch and some drinks. At the end of the five days, the class register showed 100% attendance by all the students. This in itself is a huge achievement and demonstrated a commitment to the project.

The training covered:

- making beesuits from maize sacks
- making a top-bar hive from local wood
- a class in the basics of extracting wax from old comb and making candles.

An integral part of any visit is, prior to the start of any training, to visit the local markets and shops to buy the materials need to support the training. This can be frustrating and time-consuming, but most of all is great fun.

Three maize sacks are required for each beesuit: one for the trousers, one for the top and one for the sleeves and hood. The cutting and sewing instructions are detailed in the Bees Abroad Beekeeping manuals and we had two or three copies of this for reference by the trainers. What we did was to use flip chart paper to draw out the pattern for cutting and then stuck these to the wall of the classroom. From these large pictures, the students were able to follow the instructions and, working in pairs, produce a beesuit. Each beesuit cost about £1 to make.

The material for the top-bar hives was more difficult to source at a good price. The wood that was offered to us was quite expensive and we had to search to get an acceptable price, especially as we wanted to have the top bars cut accurately at the saw mill. Dave had taken several pieces of wood had been cut accurately at home to the width of a top bar. The intention was that each trainer
would have, in their tool kit, a ‘template’ they could use to check the accuracy of top bars as they were produced after Dave had left.

The group were taught how to measure the wood to make the ends of a top bar hive, so that the shape was correct. Simple hints, such as using a double-folded piece of paper to form a right angle, helped the students and demonstrated that they did not need to buy a ‘set square’ to get right angles.

The sides were made from branches from local shrubs/trees, strung together with rope and then nailed to the ends, using bottle tops as washers. The insides were then covered in mud.

The lesson on wax rendering was quite basic, demonstrating how to use two pans as a bain-marie to melt wax then strain it through some old cloth.

At the end of the training, the students had to demonstrate various aspects of what they had learnt to the whole class. They also sat a ten-question exam. All student passed and were awarded a certificate to show their progress.

At the end of the week, discussions took place with the OYAG Committee to agree the plan for the coming months. These discussions were documented in a series of agreements and signed by both Dave Bonner, on behalf of Bees Abroad, and Officers of the OYAG Committee. In the absence of photocopying facilities, old-fashioned carbon paper comes in very handy.

Since March, there have been difficulties in communicating with the OYAG group; e-mail contact has been very intermittent. In the most recent report they tell me that OYAG has:

- harvested and sold 20 litres of honey
- continued to maintain the hives they had
- given six hives made by the trainers to people in the local community.

They have also made contact with the District Entomologist Officer and have received further support and training from him.

This progress may appear slow but is quite significant considering it has been achieved within the relatively small monies left with OYAG as part of our first agreement.

The next step is to establish what the OYAG plan is for the coming 12 months and agree how Bees Abroad is able to support that plan. The future visit will be planned in the context of the plan.
ZAMBIA

**Empowering women through environmentally sustainable beekeeping, Monze (P10/RD/EWTB)**

This project, designed to alleviate the poverty of women in Zambia’s Monze District, has been running since September 2011. By the start of 2013 our local partners, Sustainable Rural Development Agency (SRDA), the small NGO responsible for implementing the project, had helped four women’s co-operatives to set up their own apiaries, each of which had been equipped with at least ten modern hives. A further apiary was constructed at a fifth co-op in September 2013.

Most of the strenuous work needed to erect these apiaries and suspend the hives securely from stout poles was done by the women themselves and whenever Roy Dyche, who is overseeing the project for Bees Abroad and visits Monze every September, has inspected the results of their labours, he has been most impressed. He always finds the fences surrounding the enclosures are being well maintained so that animals and children cannot get close to the hives, the ground inside is being kept clear of vegetation to reduce the risk of insect pests and the women are ensuring that the bees have sources of water close to the hives.

Each of the five co-ops has made sets of protective gear for its members and been issued with gloves, two smokers and food-grade, airtight buckets in which to store the honey. The 124 co-op members have received basic training in apiary and hive management, honey and wax harvesting and adding value to their wax by using it to make lip balms and candles. Roy has taken part in some of this training and been struck by the women’s keenness and quickness to learn, but most of the training was delivered by SRDA’s field officer, who is a skilled communicator and obviously knowledgeable on beekeeping matters.

Opinions are divided on whether it is better to install hives in a group apiary – as in this project – or to disperse them around the beneficiaries’ individual homesteads. Certainly there are advantages to the group apiary, perhaps the main one being that it is more likely the hives will be properly cared for when the co-op’s members are undertaking the work as a team. However, there is one very real possibility which can derail a project: the management of the apiary may be left to a few committed and conscientious members and the others, though contributing little or nothing, may expect to gain financially from the sale of honey and wax. Not only would this be unfair but it could also cause damaging dissension within the group.

Happily, only one of the five co-ops has experienced this problem and it has been made very clear to its members that a careful record is now being kept by their group leader of who is actively participating in the project and can therefore look to benefit from it.

By the middle of 2013, small plant nurseries had been established at the four apiaries in existence at that time. Last September, Roy discovered that the plants had been well tended and a large number of healthy saplings were ready to be planted around the apiaries when the rains began in November, the intention being, of course, to provide the bees with an additional source of nectar and pollen.
Throughout the year, SRDA’s field officer – often accompanied by the NGO’s director – has paid monthly visits to the co-ops to offer the women technical advice, provide any additional training they need and help with the honey and wax harvesting.

However, it must be said that, as yet, the project has done little to relieve the women’s poverty. During the year, the four established apiaries earned only £71 from honey sales, a very modest sum, even when we bear in mind that in an African village the equivalent of £71 buys a good deal more than it would in the UK. However, the money the women earned was handled very sensibly. None of it was simply distributed among the members, which would have given each of them a trifling amount; instead it was either banked for later income-generating enterprises or to start up a loan scheme for members, or, in the case of one co-op, it was used to buy two pigs to add to the four it already had in its piggery and buy feed for the animals.

The fact that, to date, the project has not yielded the results we had expected certainly cannot be blamed on SRDA, which has done everything that could be asked of it; and the women – most of them at least – have shown themselves to be fully committed to the project and keen to do what they can to make it succeed. The truth is that because of unusual weather conditions during the past two years, all beekeepers in the area have had a difficult time. They complain that colonies have been slow to build up and this has meant reduced honey harvests. It has also resulted in less swarming, which is bad news for our members since it largely explains why only 14 of their 46 hives have been colonised by passing swarms.

Despite these disappointments, the morale of the women remains high and we all hope that the weather is kinder to the bees in 2014 and our members begin to see significant income from their beekeeping.