

IMPROVING THE ZAMBIAN HONEY SECTOR THROUGH AN INCLUSIVE MARKET DEVELOPMENT MODEL AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES

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CHALLENGE

Before the Zambia Honey Partnership, a national industry platform emerged, propelled by SNV capacity development services, uncoordinated approaches limited prospects for growth in the honey industry. Actors worked independently with resources into the sector limiting impact of interventions. Interventions by different actors did not seem to achieve coherence in addressing issues and bottlenecks for the kind and scale of impact required to make the sector competitive. Compounded by a lack of policy framework to govern the sector, an enabling environment was virtually non-existent.

SNV Zambia's value-chain approach sought to change the unproductive market dynamics and promote the notion of taking a broader view of the value chain before the self interest of individual positions. These complex problems required innovative solutions. The industry has responded to these challenges and solutions are being created with diverse stakeholders being able to meet, share experiences, learn together and contribute to decisions. Ultimate success towards outcomes has been in developing the collective commitment and capacity to turn ideas and plans into action.

CLIENTS

The Zambia Honey Platform

The Zambia Honey Partnership (ZHP) has been developed as a coordination framework that is providing a rational approach, by both the public institutions and the private sector actors involved in promoting sustainable social and economic growth of the honey sector. The platform has emerged through a series of stakeholder meetings and consultations catalysed by SNV Zambia. The need for the platform emerged as a result of realisation that small individual impacts achieved in different geographic locations could significantly be up scaled if coordination among actors was achieved. One of the results of this process is an MOU signed by 25 actors in the honey value chain and the establishment of a secretariat which function has been assumed by the Agribusiness forum, a member based organisation established to serve the interests of agribusiness in Zambia.

METHOD / SNV INTERVENTION

The purpose of ZHP's Public-Private Partnership approach is to break down mistrust and improve cooperation between value chain actors. Each partner agreed to participate in ZHP because they see an advantage for their organisation and recognize that the partnership will not work unless all partners are prepared to look beyond their own immediate interests and see the whole system, and the workings of the entire value chain. Partners also recognize that this requires respect for others in the partnership.

Under the Partnership, roles and responsibilities were defined through a pragmatic process based on the capacity of each partner to deliver specific operational outputs in the field.

Implementing the approach and methodology for the multi-stakeholder process in Zambia has involved a combination of the following activities and events:



A work group deliberating at the ZHP secretariat

1. Preparation and planning meetings involving SNV Zambia and national based actors for initiating, organizing or facilitating the process.
2. Small group meetings with key people whose support and influence has been critical to the process.
3. Meetings of a steering or advisory group established to help guide and support the overall process.
4. Multiple meetings of sector actors at national level for engaging in the overall process.
5. Meetings of working groups that have undertaken specific organizational, research and communication activities to support the process.

OUTCOME

Since the launching of ZHP, there is evidence to suggest that there has been positive qualitative improvement regarding how the participants relate to achieve benefits that support the industry.

- The ZHP is succeeding as a platform for identifying sector wide issues and it has developed a vision based on consensus on how the sector should be supported to achieve competitiveness and scale of impact.
- There is a direct market linkage established with Honey Central of Norway for Zambian Honey which has resulted in up scaling activities in Chiawa; increase in private sector led investments as well as committed funds from Norad with an inception phase totalling US\$197,000 to make this private sector led initiative possible. More than 200 bee keepers are set to benefit with modern skills of bee keeping and a ready market.
- Establishment of an innovative fund facility amounting to USD 250,000 through the Zambia Honey partnership that will allow bee keepers Associations, service providers and private sector actors address key value chain constraints in an innovative way.
- The result of the dialogue processes has allowed support from the market trade and enabling policy project and SNV Zambia for the participation of active entrepreneurs and exporters in the honey sector to regional and international trade fairs where export readiness training have allowed Mpongwe Beekeepers to increase exports to South Africa from 5 MT to 22 MT; Mesh to improve its packaging and compete on the domestic market with an increased market share and the emergence of tread leads for potential export to the region.
- A gradual but consistent increase in network and partnership approach has resulted in intensification for honey actors' commitment and stronger private sector involvement whose support base is on demand articulated by bee keeper associations and cooperatives. The ZHP is becoming stronger, membership is increasing and important players in the sector see it as a priority to be present at meetings.
- New alliances are being established including one with the alliance for commodity exchange in East and Southern Africa and ApiTrade.

IMPACT

Through the partnership, the establishment of a supply base of 12,800 bee keepers has been achieved subsequent to which their production rose from 500MT to 1,252MT with total revenue of €776,240 paid to producers. The marketing systems have improved tremendously in all the three regions where SNV is providing support. Where there were previously two buyers, six (6) more buyers have entered the honey sector, thereby creating a very competitive environment, pushing up prices from previous €0.45 to €0.62 and stimulating production.

LESSONS LEARNED

The advantages that have accrued including lessons learnt are that regular meetings have been able to take place with the forum applying peer pressure on each other for pending actions. Mandatory participation, either physical or via communication media (phone), during meetings has helped the platform to succeed in applying collective responsibility for actions and delivery on work programmes. Information sharing has been key to get institutions working together to bring about a common vision. In addition, through an analysis provided by SNV, each industry player has recognized where the benefits of working together accrue without them losing their position in the market and industry and in this scenario actors are accountable to each other for any responsibilities that fall within their domain. The logic that has been presented is that the results of collective action together are far greater than individual achievements added together.

While this platform offers an opportunity for the actors in the sector to resolve industry issues that ultimately could impact on poor producers participating more effectively in the value chain, resistance among some actors presents a huge challenge in terms of change management. One of the key lessons in the process has been the need to recognize different levels of economic and political power, differing interests and conflict and the varied capacities of different stakeholders. Bringing people together does not resolve all conflicts and differences in an industry but a shared analysis of issues, using a unifying analytical framework, gives a greater chance of finding common ground and making the process a real vehicle for change. The partnership design has great potential for growing into a chain partnership with good coordination levels.

SNVs role has been to nurture the processes at the MSP, bringing actors to agree by consensus and to support the capacity of the platform to interact with Government and other actors outside this forum who also add value. By facilitating agenda setting, building consensus, researching on issues that affect or are demanded by the platform, the overall result is that industry actors are now working together on common issues regarding policy, regional market access and industry coordination stimulated by peer pressure for follow up action. At the same time a ZHP programme has been made possible to address bottlenecks to the sector.

The MSP has brought coherence and joint action to the industry drawing on role clarity and complementarity between actors in the honey constellation.

SUSTAINABILITY

Since MSPs are loose network of like minded actors who come together to understand and solve specific constraints within the value chain, the skill in



*Zambian Stand at the AB7 Exhibition
Johannesburg, S.A*

designing an effective multi-stakeholder process is essential to combine various events in a way that builds trust and understanding, enables rigorous analysis and discussion and establishes a basis for concrete action with minimal bureaucracy. Time spent, either in meeting or performing a transaction with multiple benefits, should be sought and be rewarding; time value of money should be emphasized.

The alliances that the MSP has created will enhance the ability of private sector (including members of the Zambia Honey Council) to be able to compete with everyone else, regardless of geographic constraints, by keeping abreast with tools and techniques that ensure best practice and allow for minimal risk shocks as a result of a fast changing agribusiness landscape.

Through the documentation of cases and an up to date information network, quick member feedback on products and services is anticipated and in the long term, the power that members will assume through the collective voice provided by the lobbying capacity of the ZHP will make their views known and the desire to have them respected. The Zambian Government responsiveness to support the work of the platform around market access is one case in point.

To this end, there is a demonstrated impact of the SNV product application to achieve value in upgrading the honey value chain following a systematic approach that has included a thorough analysis of the value chain. Applying this systematic approach has resulted in significant changes among value chain participants.