



International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations

Regional Commission for Africa

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APIMONDIA REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

CYCLONE IDAI ASSESSMENT REPORT

COUNTRY: MOZAMBIQUE

a. Introduction

Apimondia, the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations, is the world organisation representing the interests of apiculture. It facilitates links between beekeepers, scientists and all those involved in beekeeping and represents apiculture at international level to many bodies, for example General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO), consumer and agricultural interests.

Apimondia stems from the Standing Committee of the International Apicultural Congresses created in 1893 holding the first congress in 1897 in Belgium. Apimondia in its current status as a federation was founded in the Netherlands in 1949.

Apimondia consists of the General Assembly, represented by its members (currently more than 110 beekeepers' associations and apicultural institutions from 80 countries), the Management Board, seven Scientific Commissions (Apitherapy, Beekeeping Economy, Beekeeping for Rural Development, Beekeeping Technology and Quality, Pollination and Bee Flora, Bee Health and Bee Biology) and five Regional Commissions (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania).

Apimondia General Secretariat in Rome, Italy, provides a focal point for locating information on bees and beekeeping and co-ordinates the organisation of Apimondia international congresses and symposia.

The activities of Apimondia are coordinated at regional level (Continent) by the Regional Commissions. One of the major activities of the Regional Commission is analysing the needs of local beekeeping communities and co-ordinating the relief actions in case of natural disasters in their respective Regions. In the case of the African Region, Cyclone Idai is one such case where the Regional Commission President, Mr David Mukomana, formally raised the need for relief for communities in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe as part of these communities affected are engaged in beekeeping activities as their sources of livelihoods. Apimondia gave the greenlight for the assessment to be done and a report provided that will detail the nature of intervention required with the hope of engaging partners to assist in the rebuilding of the beekeeping initiatives in the affected areas.

b. Assessment – Mozambique Visit

Based on the Regional Commission Mandate, a formal communication on behalf of Apimondia was sent to the Mozambican government by the Regional Commission President through the Embassy in Harare, expressing solidarity with the people of Mozambique about the disaster visited on many communities especially in the Manica Province as well as the intention to visit these affected areas to carry out an assessment of the effect of the cyclone on beekeeping communities with the intention of raising assistance.

The Regional Commission managed to get support from Solidaridad in order for the assessment visit to be undertaken in Mozambique.

A meeting was held on the 25th July 2019 between the Regional Commission President, the Office Responsible for Disaster Response in Chiomi, represented by Mr Borges Viagem – Chief of Technical Department – National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC) and Solidaridad representatives in Manica to advise of the visit and seek guidance on how the areas to be assessed can be reached. The President provided an overview of Apimondia, the role of the Regional Commission and the purpose of the visit.

Mr Viagem appreciated the efforts by Apimondia to identify, visit and provide possible assistance to the Mozambican communities that desperately need such assistance as the

government has been overwhelmed by the disaster and the extent of the devastation which they cannot address without external intervention. He advised that it will be important to go the District Offices and get assistance from the Agriculture Division responsible for Apiculture.

The team proceeded to Sussundenga District Offices on the 26th July 2019 where they were assigned the Technical Apiculture Officer, Mr Judah Alberto who is responsible for the district to coordinate and visit the affected areas. He suggested that the team visits two villages where beekeeping activities are very prominent and affected by the cyclone. Mr Alberto managed to coordinate the communities of Nyanguzwe village and Zombe area which were then visited with his guidance. He indicated that many villages also doing beekeeping were affected and not accessible due to the road infrastructure damage and the limited time for the visit.

c. Beekeeping activities

The two villages indeed confirmed that there has and is beekeeping activities based on the apiary sites visited where a number of hives were identified including wild nests. The beekeepers are using traditional hives as well as the Kenya Top Bar hives including provision of stands on which the hives were mounted. The other apiary sites in the Chimanimani area could not be visited as they are inaccessible due to the damages on the road infrastructure.

d. Beekeeping Associations / Groups

Both villages visited has formal groups of beekeepers. In Nganguzwe Village under Chief Jose Chire, there are two formal associations namely:

- i. Mutiipfuma Nhaka Yedu (Trees, our wealth and inheritance). This association has 60 members, 50 female beekeepers and 10 men. The main reason why it was formed was to empower women for them to be able to look after their families especially the widows and abused.
- ii. Chasimba Fruit Multiplication (translated from Portuguese) with 45 members. The number of women were not provided as the leaders of the group could not reach the meeting due to logistics issues.

In the Zombe Village in the Chimanimani area, there are many groups of beekeepers with very pronounced beekeeping activities. There are five associations that were identified though a number of them were not represented due to logistics challenges as well. The five groups are:

- i. Zombe Central that has 45 beekeepers, 15 women and 30 men.
- ii. Zombe Muranga
- iii. Zombe Muriro
- iv. Mapira
- v. Chisawo

The total number of beekeepers of the other 4 groups was not readily available. However, it was confirmed that these areas are very active in beekeeping and honey collections have been done in those communities by the buyer who have been collecting honey from the Zombe Central beekeepers.

e. Cyclone effect

The damage caused by the cyclone were in three parts. In order to capture the actual effect, the team sought to record the damages on apiaries of the members that were at the respective meetings.

- i. Hives were destroyed by the massive winds that caused trees to fall and completely destroy many hives that were within their proximity. There is no record of hives washed away as they were mounted in apiaries generally on higher grounds such as by the hill sides. The hives are no-longer usable and some colonies were lost due to inhabitable hives. From the members that attended the meetings, the number of hives that were destroyed are in excess of 100. The number of hives lost from the other 5 groups could not be quantified as the members could not attend the meeting due to accessibility and failure to contact them in good time by the Technical Officer.
- ii. The cyclone destroyed homes and washed away belongings of a number of households. Included were food stores and beekeeping equipment especially in the Chimanimani area where a number of households are now sheltered at the Muwawa – Darwe township and schools as they no-longer have homes. Development partners are helping with all the necessities for these families to

eat, cloth and be sheltered until they are able to rebuild their homes, a process that will take time and resources.

- iii. Part of the destruction was on the various forms and means of survival of the communities leaving them with virtually no form of livelihoods to feed their families and send their kids to school.

Based on the interviews, the extent of the damage on beekeepers especially the hives in the district can be estimated to be in excess of 700 hives in the Chimanimani area alone, covering all the 5 groups / associations. This number could be more if all the villages of Sussundenga were visited and information collected.

f. Beekeeping potential

The province of Manica and the Sussundenga District is unbelievably rich with flora and flowering plants / trees that can support beekeeping to commercial levels that will not only see the communities supplying the local market but massive volumes of export.

The first meeting in Nyanguzwe was held by the edge of thick bushveld where we were greeted by the buzzing of bees in almost every plant that we could see. The bee population is incredible. The visit to some of the hives belonging to the family provided enough proof of the abundance of bees in the area. Even some colonies are in wild nests and it is all the sound of bees in the bush.

Such is the potential that before the cyclone, the Macheal Foundation made efforts donating hives to a number of beekeepers as well as providing basic training on honey handling so they can collect the honey for packaging in Chimoio and Beira. However, the hives were not adequate as individuals got on average 5 hives, which did not make much difference given the massive potential in the area based on the bee colony population and forage throughout the year.

Realising the potential, many groups were formed and a number of them have been waiting for assistance with hives so they can start beekeeping in order to earn a living without having to resort to cutting trees for sale as firewood or charcoal.

g. Community Requests

Having gone through the questions and discussions around the Apimondia, the role of the Regional Commission and the challenges of Cyclone Idai, the community members asked

if they could register their wishes with the Commission for consideration. The following items were their kind requests for assistance in order for them to start rebuilding their lives again, both the existing beekeepers and the new members seeking to start beekeeping in order to start a new life:

1. Hives

The community members in the two villages are not asking for food even though it is very necessary. They are asking for hives fully aware that they have massive potential to earn a living from their bees. The hives they have were donated years back and some of them were poor quality and disintegrated with the cyclone. And those who were lucky got on average 5 hives which were not adequate for them to maximise on their honey production capacity then.

2. Capacity building on hive making

The hives provided were produced outside the district thus the reason why they did not get as many. Their request is to be capacitated to be able to produce their own hives, with their local timber that is in abundance. This will ensure that many hives are produced at a low cost and many community members can access as many hives as they desire for them to have apiaries that can produce honey at commercial levels.

3. Protective clothing

Protective clothing is needed. One of the community members in Nyanguzwe had a swollen face with the left eye literally closed and upon investigating, I was advised he was stung by bees. Some of the community members lost their bee suits they had when their belongings were swept away and finding it difficult to go and try resuscitate their hives resulting in the bees absconding as some of the hives needed a bit of repairs and cleaning after some were filled with sand.

4. Training

The beekeepers in Nyanguzwe and the other groups are in need of training and retraining. The groups in Chimanimani area were fortunate to have a commercial beekeeper from Zimbabwe who offered to train them beginning of July (2019). Such assistance is greatly appreciated and the other communities need similar training so they are able to invest their energies in beekeeping as their income generating project after the cyclone.

This training is also required for the community members who were not beekeepers before but have turned to beekeeping as the best alternative to earn a living post the cyclone

devastation. The training need to cover hive production, beekeeping practices and general business management so they can graduate from subsistence / traditional type of beekeeping to proper beekeeping as a business.

5. Processing Centre

As a medium to long term solution, the communities are asking for a processing centre to be provided so they are able to sell their honey which will be processed and packaged in the district, thus creating jobs and value addition to their honey. Currently, their honey is being bought raw, processed and packaged outside the district.

6. Market

The current buyer of the honey from the district is Macheal Foundation who have provided hives to the communities. However, the challenge is that the honey collection / buying is not consistent leaving them with no option but to sell locally or not harvest the honey even though the hives are full of honey.

Further, the communities feel the prices being paid for the honey is much lower than the market price hence having an alternative market will result in them realising descent returns from their honey. Having their honey processed locally and marketed with a local brand will also expand their market as they will be able to sell to the retail shops and also explore the export market, thus creating an upward demand for more honey from the district.

h. Recommendation

The extent of damage in the Mozambican Province of Manica and especially in the Chimanimani area is beyond the physical damage that has been reported and seen by the eyes. The situation in the area requires urgent intervention to quickly restore the livelihoods of the people in the affected areas and equally to fully restore their dignity as human beings who have the right to live a normal life.

The immediate intervention required is the assurance to the communities affected that the rest of the world identifies with them and they are making effort to make their lives better. Thus the visit by the Regional Commission brought hope to the beekeepers and equally those that are looking at any alternative project they can quickly do in order for them to be back on their feet. And beekeeping is such a realistic option, hence the need to urgently

seek help to mobilise resources to engage the communities to do beekeeping as a source of livelihood for the following reasons:

- i. The major requirements are there – bees and massive forage
- ii. Cost to start beekeeping project is very low
- iii. There are technical extension officers who can help with the project from the government side
- iv. The communities can be offered basic training and improve their beekeeping skills whilst the project is in full swing.
- v. There are not much overheads that will require the communities to spend money before realising their harvests and sale of the honey.
- vi. The level of deforestation is alarming with people trying to earn a living from selling firewood and charcoal. Beekeeping can be an immediate intervention measure to provide alternative source of income for many rural communities currently depending on charcoal and firewood.

As a medium term intervention, there is need for many rural communities beyond those in the cyclone – hit areas to be trained and capacitated in beekeeping and proper honey harvesting and processing so that the quality of the honey sold both on the formal and informal market is of good quality. This should be accompanied by community driven processing facilities with proper honey processing equipment so as to fully capacitate the communities to process their honey, brand and sell at local and export markets.

i. Special Thanks

The Regional Commission President would like to make special mention and appreciation to Solidaridad for facilitating the visit to Mozambique and ensuring the right offices are visited for permission to access the affected areas, hoping the relationship established will continue to the levels where beekeeping will be a strategic sector in the rebuilding of communities in Manica as well as other districts with potential to do honey production in Mozambique. Beekeeping has massive potential to transform rural Mozambique to levels of export earnings and partners such Solidaridad will help communities fully exploit their natural forests and bees in a sustainable manner.

Special thanks also goes to the Mozambican government officials who facilitated the smooth movement of the team to reach to the affected areas. Without their guidance and support, the visit will not have been successful.



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