

By Joseph Mudingu & Steven Nsamaza

The New Forests Company has so far supported four cooperatives in different areas by providing them with 50 modern bee hives to each cooperative plus harvesting the equipment including honey extractors, a store and fencing for the hives.

According to Nsengumuremye Theophille, President of CODAPE (Development of Apiculture and Environment Protection Cooperative) that deals in bee keeping says that NFC has helped transform the lives of the cooperative members.

The cooperative started its operations in Nyugwe in 2010 and comprises of 125. The New Forests Company has gave them 50 hives, bee hive keeping gear, honey extraction equipment plus constructing for them a Honey collection center.

“The funding from NFC helped us to increase our production and last year, we managed to harvest eight hundred and seven kilograms (807KG) of honey that we sold to UBWIZA BWA NYUGWE Union where all cooperative are members,” explains Emmanuel Bikorimana, the president of KOVUKA (Koperative yabaVunvu muri Karambi).

He also says that, NFC has greatly benefited his cooperative by giving them 50 modern bee hives, harvesting gear and honey extractors among other things.

“We only had 60 traditional bee hives, meaning now we will more than double our production in the next season,” Bikorimana happily states.

Modern bee hives raise the production by 150% as compared to the traditional hives; therefore KOVUKA is looking at harvesting 1.5-2 tones of honey compared to 500-800kgs they have been harvesting before.

“Honey collected this region that surrounds the Nyungwe forest is rated among the best,” emphasizes Bikorimana.

“Therefore we are expecting to triple our incomes very soon,” he exclaimed optimistically. KOVUKA cooperative is situated in Karambi Sector in Nyamasheke District; it has 30 members including 12 women.

Following the support, The New Forests Company helped fencing a new apiary within the concession with metal and barbed wires. KOVUKA is now in the process of moving all their hives to the fenced apiary which is more secure and will ensure

more production.

The fenced land can accommodate up to 500 hives, more secure and is environmentally appropriate for pollination. “We will not be worried for the security of our hives anymore,” emphasizes Bikorimana.