

## CSLP EMPOWERS FARMERS TO HARVEST OVER 10 - YEAR OLD COLONIZED BEEHIVE

The USAID-funded Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP) has supported farmers to successfully harvest a colonized beehive after 14 years of being abandoned in a half hectare secondary forest. The hive was established by a farmer, Kwesi Nyamekye with support from a Dutchman, Allan Van Abros in 1998 at Krobo in the Shama District of Ghana's Western Region. Due to inadequate equipment and know-how, it was left in the forest after harvesting in 2003 by Abros. According to the farmers, the agreement with Abros was for the farmers to provide land space for the hives and be paid some money after harvesting. This informal arrangement received community support and 30 hives were established on farmlands (mainly woodlots) of fifteen farmers. Unfortunately, the dreams were dashed as Allan passed away in 2003 and that marked the beginning of the collapse of the enterprise. Due to the fact that the apiaries were no longer managed, most of them were lost to bushfires and termites. Later, the Non-Formal Education Unit of the District Assembly provided basic beekeeping training but that did not help the farmers to fully manage their apiaries because they did not have the necessary protective clothing and equipment. Eventually, all the hives were destroyed by termites and bush fires except one. The hive, with an active honeybee colony, was not been harvested, again because none of the farmers had the appropriate tools and protective clothing to undertake the rather risky activity.

In late 2014 the CSLP identified the apiary as an untapped potential for a win-win sustainable livelihood activity in a landscape that needed to be developed. Between 2015 and March 2017 the CSLP built the capacity of nine interested farmers in the community as active beekeepers and supported them in establishing their own apiaries. With hands-on trainings and coaching, the project provided start-up materials such as beehives, beehive stand, bee wax (attractant) and protective clothing (bee suit with attached veil, bee gloves). This effort also resulted in the successful harvest of honey from the 10-year old Kenyan top-bar hive. The harvested and processed honey is currently selling at US\$10 per litre in Shama District. This has not only generated excitement among others in the community but also enhanced motivation among farmers to reconsider beekeeping as a viable, additional livelihood; it is and also an important climate change mitigation activity as it helps to avoid deforestation and/or encourages sustainable management of woodlots.

The US Forest Service-managed CSLP has supported over 230 farmers in the six coastal districts of Ghana's Western Region in the setting up of apiaries and continue to promote the activity in its geographic areas of operation.



CSLP Specialist, Kwame Appiah Owusu, demonstrates simple packaging style to beekeepers in Krobo

[www.feedthefuture.gov](http://www.feedthefuture.gov)