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## SUCCESS STORY

# Bee Farming Supports Community



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Newly trained bee farmers plying their trade.

At a small village in Ghazni province, community confidence in local government is on the rise. In Khanjar village, southeastern Afghanistan, a Bee Farming subproject is helping to boost the local economy, reinvigorate a traditional Afghan livelihood and restore positive ties between locally elected government officials and their constituents.

Under the USAID funded Local Governance and Community Development Project, the Bee Farming project was proposed, planned, managed and monitored by the Ghazni city CDC. The project trained 24 villagers in bee-keeping theory and methodology, established a bee farm and has harvested the first season of honey.

The bee farm has raised the Community Development Council’s (CDC’s) profile among villagers in Khanjar. “There is nothing in my past that will make you happy,” said Shafiq Ahmad, 18, a newly trained bee farmer. “But now we have the bee farm in our village. Fortunately the CDC gave me a part in this project... so now I will be able to find food for my family.” The local community also donated 24 empty beehives as an indication of their support for the CDC project.

The first honey harvest in June 2008 produced an impressive 45 kilograms of honey, which the CDC will sell in the Ghazni market. If the demand for Ghazni honey is large enough, the CDC hopes to export honey from the next harvest to Kabul city. As an extension of the Bee Farm, the CDC will also open a honey shop in Ghazni to increase the farm’s visibility and cement their place in the Ghazni honey market.

In 2005, the CDC *Shura* implemented a series of projects under the National Solidarity Program. This second project has seen the CDC solidify their skills in project planning and management.

Honey harvesting is an ideal form of income generation as the process involves very few costs apart from labor. Bee farm staff estimate that honey harvesting in Ghazni yields a net profit of 80%. Ghazni honey is renowned across southeast Afghanistan for its delicious taste. The high altitude produces flowering plants with an ideal level of sugar content, yielding mountain honey of a much higher quality than lowland honey.

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