



Executive summary

Mid-term Review of the Beekeeping Value Chain Support (BEVAC) Programme in Tanzania

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1 Presentation of the evaluation

This Mid-Term Review (MTR) seeks to assess and present the extent to which BEVAC results (output, outcomes) are in the process of being reached or are likely to be reached, and the quality of the overall implementation process. The intervention is evaluated as a whole and over its entire implementation period to date, running from the start of the specific agreement in September 2021 till the MTR mission in September 2023. It addresses the classic evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. In addition, the terms of reference set out a specific evaluation question that requires particular attention.

In addition, in line with the assessment, the MTR draws a set of initial conclusions, corresponding lessons learnt and recommendations for the strategic and operational steering of the next stage of project implementation and project finalisation. It also aims at contributing to learning by analysing the development process and identifying what works, what does not work and why, drawing lessons for other interventions or for the elaboration of new policies, strategies and programmes.

The assignment comprised 4 phases: an inception phase, a data collection phase, an analysis and drafting phase, and a reporting phase. The inception phase provided an opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the context of the projects and their issues, as well as to specify the evaluation questions and priority issues. The data collection phase in the field was then launched on the basis of a 12-day programme. Individual and group semi-structured interviews were conducted with institutional players in all 7 regions of the project's implementation area (Tabora, Kigoma, Katavi, Singida, Shinyanga and Pemba Island), as well as in Dodoma and Dar-es-Salam. The evaluation team comprised a European expert and a senior Tanzanian expert.

Following the field phase, the evaluation team carried out a more in-depth analysis of the results and drafted the preliminary final review report. In a final phase, the work was presented to Enabel in Brussels. Bibliographical work completed each phase.

2 Results and conclusions

Overall, this report shows that, despite initial delays, the project remains on track and has established important foundations for further progress towards set objectives. The granting of a no-cost extension has been vital in recovering lost implementation time and allowing adequate time for the project to consolidate its results and implement an exit strategy.

2.1 Performance criteria

The relevance of BEVAC is rated as good. The project is aligned with Tanzanian and Belgian policies and strategies. It corresponds to the needs of honey value chain stakeholders but could benefit from a more granular understanding of production system dynamics and livelihood strategies of beekeepers to tailor its support to them more specifically and better prioritise some of their needs.

The coherence of BEVAC is rated as very good. Both internal and external coherence are very good with significant synergies developed both between the different components and

other Government of Tanzania (GoT) actions, as well as with actions of other development partners.

The effectiveness of BEVAC is rated as good. Although work is still in progress, results are significant in terms of increased honey production and productivity, as well as in terms of improved quality of honey. Productivity is reported to have risen at least 40% and possibly well over 100%. Processing is estimated to add between 45-90% value to honey. The diversification of products is effective, particularly in relation to beeswax. Beekeeping territories are being secured. Moreover, beekeeping groups and cooperatives have increased in size and numbers and been strengthened, networks of actors have been developed, and market linkages created. It appears that producers are selling their honey at a higher price and that value chain actors are improving their income, though effects are only beginning to show. Job creation also appears to be a reality.

As part of this output, BEVAC has reached 10,371 (8603 group members of 495 beekeeping groups, and 1768 individual beekeepers), 16 processors, 38 traders and 100 carpenters. The number of beekeepers mobilized and registered exceeds the project target by 3%.

Despite these successes the rate of adoption of modern beehives (Top Bar Hives) is limited, and strong margins of improvement remain within all segments of the value chain. In addition, although BEVAC is the biggest project within the honey sector and clearly deserves some credit for these results, attributing them to its specific action can be complicated as there are many parallel initiatives underway within the sector from both public and private institutions which all provide training, advice or equipment.

The efficiency of BEVAC is rated as problematic. The processes implemented often limit costs and effectively implement activities over a large project area but at the expense of result quality and sustainability. Moreover, despite a satisfactory rate of disbursement at mid-term, the action has suffered some delays; and more importantly, it is unlikely that BEVAC will be able to consolidate all its actions within the project timeframe even though it has been lengthened. Indeed, the initial timeframe was unrealistic, and the project suffered from low quality at entry and high staff turnover. It also suffers from a lack of field presence in relation to market access and trade support.

Sustainability of BEVAC effects can only be roughly estimated at the MTR stage. They are still uncertain but nonetheless appear good. Technical, financial, and environmental sustainability are good, as well as ownership, and though institutional sustainability still needs consolidation, it remains satisfactory. However, it is necessary to underline that the short timeframe of the project is not a positive factor in terms of sustainability. Even with the recently agreed extension to 54 months, there will be limited time to capitalise on experience and consolidate project effects. More generally, one notes that no clear exit strategy appears to exist for BEVAC.

Time will be needed to consolidate results and the decision to extend the project to a duration of 54 months has been a good one.

2.2 Cross-cutting and horizontal issues

The BEVAC gender approach has been centred around sensitisation, increasing gender awareness, and strongly engaging women (and youth) in processing and by-product production related activities. It mostly revolves around affecting quotas to women participation in activities and numbers of woman beneficiaries, and conducting events in ways which favour their participation. It has not developed a clear gender strategy which tackles the root causes of gender inequity in a gender transformative way.

Environmental conservation is inherent to beekeeping. Beekeeping contributes to sustainable environmental management by providing an economic incentive for the conservation of the forests and woodlands.

Despite the collection of a significant quantity of information, indicators are too activity-orientated and do not describe expected higher level project results well enough. As a result, there is a difficulty in following the state of project progress. Moreover, budget monitoring is too general.

A wider understanding of beekeeper livelihoods system and the added value creation along the various segments of the value chain is needed to interpret the project's results better and develop strategies adapted to the variety of value chain stakeholders.

3 Lessons learned

The main lessons learned from the BEVAC project concern:

- The long timeframe necessary to consolidate value chain development, particularly i) to foster lasting trustful institutional relationships, build market linkages and strengthen a network of independent actors; ii) to strengthen higher level producer organisations and ensure they are representative of producers, offer a relevant set of services and can advocate for their member's interests.
- The need for strong actors and policies to ensure a conducive business environment, implying i) Organising value chain actors to facilitate access to services; ii) ensuring autonomous institutional resource generation; iii) building networks, and iv) an enforced regulatory environment.
- The importance of field interaction and detailed knowledge of stakeholder livelihood strategies to ensure support is relevant and tailored to their needs in an actor specific way. This implies a detailed analysis of contexts, value chains and value chain stakeholder logics before launching a project, as well as a detailed microeconomic value chain analysis.
- The necessary participation of local stakeholders, both technically and financially, for an effective, efficient, and sustainable action, at the level of national authorities, as well as producers and all other value chain actors.
- Project organisation, the lack of field presence and the lack of effectiveness of the training of trainers (ToT) approach. ToT has not allowed for effective passing on of knowledge whereas lack of field presence limits linkage creation, brokering relationships, and building trust between actors, as well as the understanding of the specificities of their socio-economic and cultural contexts. Pooled staff has however been conducive to efficiency.
- The excessively large size of the area of intervention, which spreads the project team out too thin, limits synergies and reduces the quality and sustainability of results.
- The lack of quality at entry, resulting from too rapid a project preparation and launching process.
- The limited gender approach which works on the basis of quotas and proportion of women

4 Recommendations

The mission proposes 16 recommendations for the second half of the project and beyond. They concern the following:

At a strategic level:

1. To reflect on the relevance and feasibility of a second phase of the support to the beekeeping value chain.
2. If an additional phase is contemplated, to invest in more detailed knowledge of the context and microeconomy of the beekeeping value chain.
3. To support more intensely the definition of norms and standards for speciality honey
4. To enforce more rigorously the policy and regulatory environment
5. To integrate Enabel within BEVAC's steering Committee

At an operational level:

6. Strengthen ITC's staff presence in the field to maximise its effectiveness.
7. Tailor more specifically training programmes to the needs of each actor.
8. Prioritise development processes rather than deadlines and avoid a subsidy-driven approach.
9. Ensure Pemba office has necessary equipment.
10. Analyse the relevance of a marketing strategy oriented towards the tourist market in Zanzibar.
11. Develop further marketing based on forest, mangrove, and biodiversity conservation.
12. Develop action research in relation to insect pests and beehive hygiene.
13. Adapt, the Beekeeper to Beekeeper (B2B) -ToT- approach or develop alternatives.

In relation to cross cutting or horizontal aspects:

14. Define a transformative gender strategy based on an analysis of the structural determinants of gender inequity.
15. Revise the M&E system, i) Integrating more outcome indicators to the M&E system; ii) Integrating more thoroughly the Enabel and ITC M&E systems; and iii) identify issues to capitalize experience around and link them to the M&E system.
16. Evaluate more precisely the carrying capacity of a beekeeping territory.