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ANGOLA

SUCCESS STORY

Finally Making Money Making Honey

Community mapping gives villagers insight on how to tap local asset



Photo: USAID/Angola/Alison Bird

Through the assistance of a USAID-funded program, residents of communities such as Andulo, Angola, have found ways to use their knowledge of producing honey to generate income.

“Before, we just made the honey and did not think about how to exploit it. Now, having worked together, we have managed to get not only someone to buy it all from us in bulk, but a contract with them to protect our agreement,” said Maria Henda, a peasant woman in Cassumbi, Angola.

The communities in Bié Province’s commune of Cassumbi have been producing honey for a number of years. They perfected their methods to produce good quality honey, but had no way to sell it. It was a wasted resource.

“We spend a lot of time and have a lot of skills in producing honey, but the problem is we don’t know who to sell it to. The roads are so bad here that even if there were people who were interested in buying it, it is hard for us to go to market to sell it,” said Domingos Cassinda.

However, when a USAID-funded program in the municipality of Andulo (where Cassumbi is located) did a community mapping exercise with the villages, some interesting results emerged. After villagers identified the honey as a local asset, the project team helped them think collectively about ways to use this asset for income-generating activities. With a bit of collective brainstorming and the insights in Andulo, a new solution was found.

Rather than thinking that they themselves had to go to market, the community members found that they can get the market to come to them. They decided to seek businessmen who already had capital and contacts the community didn’t have. The communities looked into linking with local businessmen in Kuito, Bie’s provincial capital, to see if they would be interested in working with the community.

“Before, we just made the honey and did not think about how to exploit it. Now, having worked together, we have managed to get not only someone to buy it all from us in bulk, but a contract with them to protect our agreement. And better still, they can come to us and we do not even need to go anywhere! We hope now that this will increase the standard of living in the community and we can start to invest for our future and that of our children,” said Maria Henda, a peasant woman in Cassumbi.