



Hives Save Lives

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Africa is the only continent poorer now than it was twenty-five years ago. In many African countries, life expectancy is now less than thirty-three years. There are 34 million orphans in Africa, 30 million people are facing starvation, and 30,000 children die from largely preventable diseases daily. Statistics on this scale take humanity out of the equation, and contribute to the “compassion fatigue” of potential donors. They create a sense of helplessness in terms of effecting any real change. Individual human beings are overlooked in the debate raging around debt relief, trade barriers, and corrupt governance.

But what do the men, women and children suffering under the burden of poverty see as a solution? Many of them simply need, and want, the opportunity to earn their own living. A sustainable solution for Africa is to provide support directly to those who need it most by creating self-employment.

Driving the economy from the bottom up. Replacing aid dependency with economic activity.

Hives Save Lives—Africa (HSLA) works toward the creation of self-employment and income generation through apiculture. We believe that debt relief will only be effective if translated into development, driven internally. The raising of trade barriers is only effective if the people have something of value to trade. The demise of corruption will only occur when marginalized communities have the education and the voice to speak out against it.

Beekeeping can be a very powerful tool in income generation. It is a traditional activity in many parts of Africa and is culturally and environmentally appropriate. Income is generated not only from honey and hive products, but also from increased crop yields as a result of the pollination activities of the bees. Beekeeping can also be practiced by the most marginalized communities in Africa because it does not discriminate in terms of age, gender, or disability.

HSLA is currently working in Uganda, where we provide a “package” of hives, training, and equipment to groups prepared to take a commercial approach to beekeeping, to maintain records, and to repay the cost of the hives over a five-year period. Training and support therefore are focused on helping people with business as well as beekeeping skills.

The hive we are using has been designed for use in Africa to improve the quality and quantity of honey produced. A prototype was shipped to Uganda, and is now being made by local contractors, along with the protective clothing, to boost local employment. A single hive costs \$60.00 to make and can generate over \$70.00 every year from honey and other hive products.



Beekeeper lifts a frame from hive.

A typical beneficiary project is the Uganda Gospel Rehabilitation Centre (UGRC), a three-hour drive from Kampala. The centre was started in the aftermath of the civil war to give shelter to hundreds of orphans, and has developed today into a school which serves a large parish. It still supports orphans, although now they are more likely to be the victims of HIV/Aids than armed conflict. The school is typical of many rural schools with no electricity, water that has to be pumped daily from the borehole, and basic necessities such as books and bedding in short supply.

Initially, they were given twenty hives, and two staff members attended a seven-day training course. There were many teething problems to overcome, such as ants invading the hives, but every setback created a learning opportunity. They persevered until the hives were colonized and productive. They have now trained three more staff members and have taken delivery of another forty hives. The long-term plan, proposed by the school itself, is to extend the project to families in the parish and to use the school as a collection point during harvesting periods.

News & Views

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The entire community will ultimately benefit.

The children are learning a life skill that they can take with them when they leave. The school can plough income into basic necessities without being dependent on hand-outs. Crop production is on the increase; and local farmers are seeing firsthand the benefits of diversifying into bee farming, rather than "honey hunting."



Challenges remain.

There are logistical problems because roads are in poor condition posing substantial transport difficulties. There are security concerns in some parts of the country, and this very fact makes these the areas most in need of alternative income streams. Above all, there is the need to generate funds to keep the manufacturing and training on track.

While current production levels are too low to make export viable, there is plenty of capacity on the domestic market to guarantee a ready market for the honey produced, and when production levels rise there is excellent potential for organic certification to boost the market value. Above all, however, there is the determination of the people themselves to seize the opportunity to work their way out of the poverty spiral.

For more information, and to find out how you can support the work of HSLA, please log on to www.hivessavelives.com, or email info@hivessavelives.com.

Hives Save Lives—Africa Inc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations to HSLA are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. EIN: 30-0202601



CiS/ASA Meeting Field Trips August 2, 2007

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh was founded in the seventeenth century as a "Physic Garden," growing medicinal plants. This first Garden was in St Anne's Yard, part of the Holyrood Palace grounds, and occupied an area the size of a tennis court. It now extends to four sites and is the second richest collection of plant species in the world. Wear comfortable shoes, waterproof coat.

www.rbge.org.uk/rbge/web/visiting

The Falkirk Wheel

Almost 100 years ago, a series of eleven locks was used to connect the Forth & Clyde Canal, running from Glasgow, to Edinburgh's Union Canal. To encourage waterway usage, the Falkirk Wheel was designed and constructed to provide a twenty-first century solution to join the canals.

www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk/index.asp

The Royal Museum

The Royal Museum houses the outstanding international collections of Decorative Arts, Science and Industry, Archaeology and the Natural World and contains an extraordinary range of material. Thirty-six galleries of varying sizes present artefacts from around the globe and natural history specimens.

www.explore-edinburgh.com/museum.html

Scottish Seabird Centre

Perched on a rocky outcrop at North Berwick Harbour, overlooking the islands of the Firth of Forth and sandy beaches of East Lothian, the Scottish Seabird Centre is a world leader in remote wildlife viewing. With cameras located on these wildlife rich islands, visitors can pan and zoom to see the tiniest details (like the ID ring on a bird's foot) and observe thousands of nesting seabirds and marine mammals, without disturbing the animals in any way. Bring warm waterproof clothes, hat, non-slip shoes.

www.seabird.org

Arthur's Seat—Geology

Hutton's Section at the south end of Salisbury Crags is a prominent landmark on Arthur's Seat and the cityscape of Edinburgh. It was here in the late eighteenth century, that James Hutton, the father of modern geology, found evidence that Salisbury Crags was once molten rock. The evidence drawn from this locality was instrumental in Hutton's *Theory of the Earth* (1788).

www.scottishgeology.com/outandabout/classic_sites/location/huttons_section.html

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