

Abstract

This study was designed to examine the impact of KAMAKI Farmers Cooperative Society interventions on forest conservation and beekeeping in five locations within the South Eastern part of Kitui County, Kenya. The locations included Kalivu, Athi, Maluma, Kasaala and Ikutha, collectively abbreviated as KAMAKI for the purposes of this study. Cooperative interventions empowered and provided trainings to KAMAKI bee farmers on beekeeping activities, facilitating knowledge sharing and exchange on beekeeping activities with natural resource conservation among bee farmers in KAMAKI. The specific objective of the study was to determine awareness level on the link between forest conservation and beekeeping among bee farmers in KAMAKI. Data were collected on the perception of bee farmers on the link between forest conservation and beekeeping, how bees linked to forest that enhance beekeeping, perception of KAMAKI bee farmers on the ability to plant and identify forest tree types and bee forages for beekeeping. The study adopted a purposive sampling with a sample size of 215 household respondent bee farmers across KAMAKI. Data were gathered through field explorations and observations, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews. The data collected was analyzed through descriptive statistics by use of frequency tables. Out of the 215 household respondents bee farmers, 170 trained household respondent bee farmers (79.1%) demonstrated a better understanding on the link between forest conservation and beekeeping compared to 45 untrained household respondent bee farmers (20.9%) who had less awareness on this link. Therefore, the in-depth of the study recommends to KAMAKI Farmers Cooperative Society and Community Based Organizations to continuously provide more trainings that support beekeeping with forest conservation in order to increase household incomes of KAMAKI bee farmers.