The Moldova Young Women’s Beekeeping Project

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Abstract

Moldova has experienced economic difficulty since it’s beginning after the break up of the Soviet Union in 1991. The poor economy has lead to problems including citizens looking for work outside the country, widespread poverty, trafficking of women, and nutritional deficiencies. The Organization for Reform and Development of the Educational System (ORSDE) began a beekeeping development project in 2001 to train young rural women as beekeepers. They targeted this group because of the high rate of trafficking women and the poverty this group was experiencing. The goal of the program is to give the young women life skills so that they do not have to take desperate measures to support themselves. In addition, this program creates new jobs for the women, rehabilitates apiaries, and increases the honey production in Moldova.

The women involved in this program complete 500 hours of beekeeping classes and receive a certificate when they complete the program. The courses are taught by professors at the country’s agriculture university. The ORSDE supplies the young women with materials to start their apiary and they also send experts to help them at home when they start the project. The organization has also produced textbooks and learning aids for the women to use during training.

The ORSDE project has trained 40 women in beekeeping and 25 of these women have obtained employment in beekeeping. These women have produced over 20,800 KG of honey in their apiaries, and expanded to over 720 bee colonies. The ORSDE would like to train 360 women through this program and place 150 in beekeeping employment. The organization also hopes to form beekeeping societies and a beekeeping college in the future.

Key words: Moldova, beekeeping, development project, trafficking