

## Sustainable Buzz

Zambia, in central Africa, is home to a form of traditional beekeeping in which hives are built from bark from the slow-growing miombo tree. So prevalent is the practice that almost 7.5 million of the trees are being felled every year, leading to biodiversity loss, soil erosion and negative impacts on local agriculture and the economy.

That's where Harry Malichi comes in. His company, Wuchi Wami, trains farmers in sustainable beekeeping and provides sustainable beehives made from pine, which is easy to plant and grows quickly.

“Unsustainable traditional beekeeping has been a way of life for most of my local people in Mwinilunga [northwest Zambia],” Malichi, 30, says. “Many of my schoolmates who dropped out of school due to a lack of financial support resorted to early marriage and traditional beekeeping.”

It takes the destruction of three miombo trees to build one hive in conventional Zambian beekeeping. With more than 25,000 beekeepers in his region with an average of 100 bark hives each, that's a huge strain on local ecosystems. Malachi says that sustainable beekeeping, conversely, creates sustainable livelihoods.

“It brings social inclusiveness because, as it's less labor-intensive, women, young people and the elderly are able to practice it. Traditional bee farming is labour intensive and can only be done by strong men,” he explains.

Wuchi Wami then markets and distributes the raw and organic honey produced by a cooperative of 2,500 beekeepers.

Now, the company is ready to go international. “Winning this award means that our eco-inclusive enterprise will scale up our work to promote equality, social inclusiveness and preserve the environment,” Malichi says. “We hope through these platforms that international buyers will partner with us to sell our organic honey and wax, which will continue to give us the much needed financial capacity to empower more farmers.”



**Beekeepers with the Kwasha Indimi Cooperative in Zambia work on sustainable beehives with the support of Wuchi Wami. WUCHI WAMI**