

RLI INVESTMENT SNAPSHOT	
KECHI BEE SOURCE FARM	
Reason for Selection	<p>Kechi Bee Source Farm is a for-profit and environmentally sustainable apiary farming company that works with out-grower beekeepers in the refugee host communities of Arua, Yumbe, and Kaberamaido.</p> <p>Kechi operates across the value chain by i) providing bee keeping starter kits, ii) training out-growers who are typically rural farmers, refugees, and women, iii) purchase and aggregation of honey produced, iv) processing and value addition, v) packaging, sales, and marketing to premium markets.</p> <p>This operational model empowers the out-growers to establish small businesses that benefit from higher income because of off take, value addition and other value chain linkages.</p>
Location:	West Nile, with head office in Kampala Uganda
RLI Business Category:	R3
Company Background:	<p>Kechi Bee Source farm, established in 2019, is a socially and environmentally sustainable for-profit company engaged in apiary farming and the honey value chain with beekeepers in densely populated refugee host communities in Arua, Yumbe, and Kaberamaido. Their current capacity is 500 colonized beehives, and their target is 2,000 beehives by the end of 2024. With the aim of transferring as much margin previously taken by intermediaries back to rural farmers, especially refugees and women, Kechi operates an out-grower model which includes providing beehives, set up, training, purchase, and aggregation of honey produced and processed for sale.</p> <p>Vision: “Make Kechi a leading Ugandan honey brand. Mission: To provide quality and authenticity-certified local raw honey for our customers by partnering with local beekeepers and communities to ensure a quality, continuous supply.”</p> <p>Strategic differentiator: Value addition and high-income generation for farmers through selling authentic and certified Ugandan raw local honey that supports Ugandan beekeepers’ local communities and empowers rural women.</p>
Industry/Sector:	Agribusiness - Apiculture
Products and Services:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural extension services for honey farmers. - Value addition and access to markets for final honey products. - Training and capacity building of honey farmers.
Management Team:	<p>Kechi Bee Source Farm has a team of experts in apiculture each with over 10 years in the beekeeping sector and business management combined.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richard Kyorakunde-Founder/CMO/ Entrepreneur and Marketing expert. 2. George Mugula- Technical expert, sustainable apiculture. 3. Jessica Valerie Tusiime – Expert in business financial structuring, planning and management, financial analysis, and modelling.

Employees:	Full time employees: 5 Part time employees: 15
Market Overview and Trends:	<p>Ugandan honey is rated as one of the best honeys in the world. Uganda has a production potential of over 500,000 metric tonnes of honey annually but produces only 5,000 metric tonnes. With an opportunity to create employment opportunities and capitalize on the supply of labour within refugee communities, Kechi plans to tap into the limited but growing value addition in the honey market by collecting bee products from farmers and adding value to them at the production, processing, and packing stages of honey, propolis, venom, and wax, which all require employees at each stage. Byproducts such as beeswax and honey wine present additional opportunities in the food and cosmetics industries.</p> <p>Refugees are allocated small pieces of land by the Government of Uganda, which tend to have low agricultural yield. Bee keeping and production of related products is in many cases a more reliable source of income. Apiary further provides opportunities to save and trade unlike other food crops that are typically subsistence based.</p>
Estimated Investment Needs:	USD 600,000 - To grow operations size from 500 beehives to 2,000 over the next 3 years.
Target Funding Source(s):	Agribusiness investment funds
Investment Opportunity:	With more investment, Kechi will be able to fund their growth plans and operations, thus building their network to 2,000 beehives, which would in turn lead to an increase in honey production and sales. The advancement and inclusion of technology and/or digitization into the financial world has also created an opportunity to introduce new payment processing mechanisms such as mobile money, which creates a convenient way for small-holder farmers to have money transfers done while building a credit history. The beekeepers could be organized into SACCOs and connected to micro-lenders.
RLI Social Impact Opportunity:	<p>Kechi Bee Source Farm will organise beekeepers, particularly refugees, into 66 productive farmer groups of 30 people that can support the 2,000 beehives within the West Nile region honey value chain by 2024. Through this, Kechi targets to create 1,500 part-time jobs for refugees and indirectly impact 2,500 refugee host community members within Yumbe, Omugo, Bidi Bidi and Maaji, thus elevating and enhancing the standard of living in West Nile Uganda.</p> <p>Kechi intends to pay farmers in the most convenient and easy way, allowing them to cash within 48 hours through accounts such as MFIs and SACCOs.</p> <p>Kechi is developing a mobile phone application in both in English and local languages that will provide critical information to farmers in the Kechi business ecosystem. This will help Kechi take their farmer engagement to scale, which Kechi hopes will contribute to increased and diversified household incomes, development of social capital, and greater savings through VSLAs and SACCOs.</p>
RLI Strategy:	Support Kechi to grow in scale and to qualify for investment from agribusiness investors such as AgDevCo - who have invested in both Great Lakes Coffee and Gulu Agricultural Development Company-, and Pearl Capital Partners who could provide both financing for growth and working capital and technical assistance to support their growth plans.