Introduction

- Beekeeping is increasingly promoted in developing countries as a promising option for income diversification in rural areas.
- Despite its economic potential and the ecosystem services offered, the beekeeping and especially the honey production is underperforming in Benin.
- The study investigates two honey value chains – “honey harvested in wild” and “honey from apiaries”.
- Analyze functioning and profitability, in order to identify strategies for sustainable promotion of beekeeping in Benin.

Methods

- A survey was conducted across Benin from October to November 2016.
- First stage: an exploratory stage that consisted of identifying all the honey value chains in Benin, and the agents involved in their functioning.
- Second stage: in-depth survey, focused exclusively on the direct agents (honey producers, middlemen, and consumers), 406 in total.
- Data were collected on their functioning, operation and profitability through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and face-to-face administered questionnaires.
- Data processing and analysis include: the (i) mapping of honey value chains, (ii) analysis of the governance, (iii) analysis of the institutional environment, and (iv) analysis of performance of chains.

Results

1. Mapping of honey value chains

2. Value chains governance

- Value chain of honey harvested in wild:
  - Market coordination was low; generally, each link in this value chain fixed the price of honey at its level.
  - Lack of professional organization.

- Value chain of honey from apiaries:
  - Networks are the main coordination mechanism in the value chain.
  - Existence of honey producers’ associations at the village or district level; producers sold their produce to honey houses.
  - Market coordination was low; generally, each link in the value chain fixed the price of honey at its level.

3. Institutional environment

- Lack of specific policy for beekeeping in Benin.
- Taxation level of honey is relatively affordable in the value chains.

4. Performance of the chains

- Both value chains were financially profitable to the various stakeholders.
- The value chain of honey from apiaries had the highest value-added (XOF 3,154 per liter).
- Honey producers and honey traders in the value chain of honey from apiaries had the highest value-added compared to that honey harvested in wild (Figure 4).

Conclusion

Policy implication to improve the performance of the honey value chains in Benin:

- Conversion of honey hunters and traditional beekeepers to beekeepers;
- Training of beekeepers and the facilitation of access to finance for agents;
- Promotion of partnership between potential beekeepers and honey houses, through the development of horizontal coordination among honey producers;
- Development of a platform of innovation for exchange and collaboration.