

Maximising economic potential

Mike Phamba is an Agricultural Extension Officer for JCM Power. He works with communities close to the **Golomoti Solar PV & BESS Project** in Malawi. Mike attended JCM's beekeeping training as part of his continuous professional development.

Mike participated in JCM's beekeeping training to gain skills which he hoped would complement his work as an Agricultural Extension Officer. "I hoped to gain experience in beekeeping. This new knowledge will be used to train farmers and anyone who would like to keep bees."

At 31 years old, Mike has two children, and he is not new to beekeeping. He has practiced traditional methods of beekeeping and honey extraction over many years. He said, "Previously, we used to extract all the honey frames from the beehive together with the brood. This reduces yield per year as it disturbs the process of making more honey. The bees must start rebuilding the frames all the time if we harvest like that."

Of the training he said, "The most surprising thing I have learnt today is the modern way of honey extraction. We have learned that in modern beekeeping we use Langstroth hives which have a brood box and super box – this means that we can harvest honey from the super box without disturbing the brood. The result is a top-quality honey and higher yield per annum (30-50kg per box)."

Mike concluded, "I feel quite good after receiving the training. This will help me to transfer the knowledge of modern beekeeping to farmers in the area."

