



(Photo Hadush Abrha)

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## Young entrepreneurs in Silk , Honey project launched

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

ADDIS ABABA -- Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn urged the youth to unleash their potential to sustain ongoing economic growth as a Five-year 220 million Birr Young Entrepreneurs in Silk and Honey Project was officially launched here yesterday.

The project would be jointly implemented by the International Centre of Insect Physiology

and Ecology (ICIPE) and the MasterCard Foundation with a financial assistance from various organizations targeting to benefit 12,500 -25,000 young entrepreneurs directly and indirectly.

The project would be implemented in Amhara and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples States and aims to provide the selected beneficiaries in the 18 -24 age bracket who have completed Grade ten.

The project will facilitate the provision of modern bee hive and other equipment needed for agriculture and silk rearing development and creation of marketing linkage and supply of credits.

Speaking on the occasion, Primer Hailemariam said that the project came at the right time where the Ethiopian government attaches due attention to the active participation of the youth in the

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ongoing economic development. The country is heavily investing in the development of the youth, he said.

The project not only contributes to creation of jobs but also to ensure food security and create favourable condition. He also called upon the youth to exploit the potential of the country and use their skills and experience to help their community.

MasterCard Foundation Chief Financial Officer Peggy Woo also said the Foundation is keen to partnering in the area of agriculture as it is a sector providing significant opportunity for young people. Through the project Ethiopian youth will benefit a lot. Most importantly, 40 per cent of the beneficiaries will be young Ethiopian women, he added.

Despite the exceptional quality and huge potential for beekeeping, the

number of people engage in the business remains small. So, if supported by new technologies and innovated ideas, the sector will create a range of jobs particularly the youth, he said.

ICIPE Director General Dr. Segenet Kelemu on her part said that although a century-old practice and the country posses huge untapped potential for production of honey and bee wax, Ethiopian beekeepers employ traditional techniques in the production process.

Beekeeper lack the needed technologies and system so does the silk farming. In this regard the project will equip the beneficiaries with new technology skills related to the production of silk, honey, wax and hives. Acquainting the youth with modern honey and silk production, the project also contribute to enrich the agriculture and textile industry.