



Policy Brief to Mainstream Poultry Husbandry Practices Towards Cage-Free Production in Tanzania



Effective Altruism



POLICY BRIEF

INTRODUCTION

In Tanzania Livestock keeping is one of the most important means of improving livelihoods. Livestock Sector Analysis (LSA) shows that 50% of all Tanzanians household keep livestock which is about 4.6 million households and according to Tanzania Livestock Modernization Initiative (TLMI 2015), 62% are rural and 23% urban, with ownership pattern dominated by chickens 86%, goats 48%, cattle 35%, pigs 9% and other livestock 10%.

The poultry sector is still at infantry stage both in the commercial and traditional subsectors. However, poultry farming does play a pivotal role in both urban and rural settings in terms of food security, source of income, manure and meeting social obligations such as dowry and rituals. The growth of the poultry sector is steady. Indigenous chickens are mainly raised by rural dwellers and contribute to almost 100% of poultry meat and 20% of eggs consumed in the rural and urban areas respectively, while layers and broilers are raised by urban dwellers. The commercial poultry industry includes the breeder farms, hatcheries, poultry farms (layers and broiler farms), traders and processors. Poultry as a source of protein has a competitive advantage over other livestock such as cattle, goat, sheep, and pig due to the fact that it can be produced in large quantities within minimum space and time. As eating habits are changing from red meat to white meat and the economy is growing, disposable income is increasing and the demand for poultry products is likely to keep increasing.

In view of the current legislative framework in Tanzania, the use of battery cage system of raising poultry is neither legislated nor unapproved. Its use therefore is neither permitted nor prohibited.

THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT FOR THE POULTRY IN TANZANIA.

In Tanzania, the government is trying to protect the infant domestic poultry industry through the enhancement of local production and banning of importation of poultry and poultry products. Tanzania has several policies for the poultry sector that regulates the input and veterinary sector. However, implementation remains inadequate. There is potential for growth of the indigenous



and dual-purpose breeds because they are highly preferred by consumers especially in urban areas in Tanzania compared to broilers.

POLICY AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Policies and regulations in the post-independence time frame (After 1961 - 1989) in Tanzania

Tanzania on the other hand has been implementing a gradual process of trade policy reforms since the mid-1980s. Leading to a more open trade regime of agricultural products including poultry. The outbreak of Avian Influenza in 2006, attracted government interventions into the sector leading to the banning of importation of poultry and its products into Tanzania to prevent bird flu from entering the country.

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF THE POULTRY INDUSTRY IN TANZANIA TO DATE

The National Livestock Policy of 2006 guides the development of the livestock industry in Tanzania. The instruments for the implementation of this policy touching poultry industry come from the Livestock Sector Development Strategy of 2010, the Livestock Sector Development Programme of 2011, and various regulatory frameworks with respect to: Veterinary Act, 2003, Animal Diseases Act, 2003, the Meat Industry Act, Animal Welfare Act, Livestock Identification, Registration and Traceability Act and the Grazing-lands and Animal Feed Resources Act.

In the context of the poultry industry the institutional framework most relevant include the Livestock Sector Development Strategy 2010, Livestock Development Sector Programme 2011, Tanzania Livestock Modernization Initiative 2015 and ambitious Livestock Master Plan (LMP). The LMP stresses that successful poultry interventions would allow the subsector to move to improved family poultry with semi-scavenging crossbreeds or pure exotic breeds and for substantial increases in the scale and number of specialized layer and broiler operations.

Tanzania has put in place several policies to regulate the input and veterinary services sector, though the implementation is still not much good in some cases for example, -

- **The Tanzania Veterinary Act of 2003** mandates the Veterinary Council of Tanzania to regulate the veterinary profession in the country including procedures to address disciplinary cases related to mismanagement of drugs and vaccines.



- **Tanzania Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics (TFDC) Act, No. 1 of 2003** which establishes the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) and gives it an exclusive mandate to regulate all matters related to the quality and safety of veterinary drugs, biological, and medical devices.
- **The Industrial and Consumer Chemicals (Management and Control) Act, 2003** mandates the Chief Government Chemist Laboratory Authority (CGCLA) to inspect and certify imported veterinary drugs at the point of entry before they are allowed on the market.
- **The Animal Diseases Act of 2003** gives the Director of Veterinary Services (DVS) the overall mandate of regulating livestock activities to control animal diseases in the country. The Act has set requirements and procedures for inspecting, registering, testing, identifying, licensing and regulating movements of animals and animal products. This is one of the acts that regulate poultry breeding farms and hatcheries in Tanzania.
- **The Tanzania Meat Industry Act of 2006** mandates the Tanzania Meat Board to regulate all stakeholders involved in the business of producing and trading poultry birds and their products including breeding farms and hatcheries. There is an inadequate regulatory framework in hatcheries and breeding farms.
- **The National Livestock Policy (NLP) of 2006** was designed to stimulate the development of the livestock industry to exploit available resources whilst showing due concern for the conservation of the environment. With regards to poultry, the policy objective was to increase the quantity and improve the quality of poultry and its products to satisfy domestic demand, increase export, and promote sustainable poultry production.
- **The Animal Diseases (Hatcheries and Breeding Flocks) Regulations of 2010.** These Regulations were launched following the global outbreak of the H5N1 avian influenza virus to ensure the quality of chicks sold in the market. The regulations require hatcheries to be inspected and registered formally and hatchery owners to have formally written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). They also regulate the production and sale of eggs and chicks through registration and inspection of hatcheries and agents that distribute eggs and chicks.
- **The Grazing Land and Animal Feed Resources Act of 2010** provides for the management and control of grazing lands, animal feed resources and trade, and other matters related to animal feeding. It regulates feed manufacturers, importers, and distributors. It also sets standards for different feed resources and ensures no substandard feeds are sold in the market. While the law was passed in 2010, its implementation is still poor as the government is still formulating regulations and training inspectors.

CURRENT POLICIES AND REGULATIONS 2011 TO DATE

Since 2006, Tanzania has maintained a hardline position on its ban on imports of frozen or fresh chilled chicken and poultry products from all countries. There has also been a ban of poultry meat from neighboring countries including Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique since 2016. Additionally, the importation of chicks was banned in 2016 to protect farmers, but because of their acute shortage, fertilized eggs and DOCs (both broiler and layers) have continued to be imported. Due to the differences in the agricultural trade policies in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar, there is the importation of poultry meat and poultry products in Zanzibar which illegally infiltrates into the mainland.

Tanzania Livestock Modernization Initiative (TLMI) formulated in 2015 had an objective to transform the traditional livestock subsector into a modern, responsive, sustainable and environmentally friendly engine for rural development and improved national health and nutritional standards. **The TLMI priority areas for supporting the development of the poultry value chain were:-**

- (i) Identify key dual-purpose breeds suitable for Tanzania free-range conditions;
- (ii) Rapidly disseminate improved breeds to meet agreed targets of household and commercial operators;
- (iii) Strengthen stock management capacity;
- (iv) Support concentrated delivery of veterinary and extension services;
- (v) Ensure availability of high quality improved feeds;
- (vi) Facilitate the availability of credit and insurance, and
- (vii) Revise the regulatory framework to facilitate investments in the poultry sector.

The Value Added Tax (VAT) Act, 2014, and Finance Act, 2018 were instituted in Tanzania to exempt imported animal and poultry feeds additives from VAT from July 2018 aiming at reducing the costs incurred by livestock keepers and increase the contribution of the sector to the economy. The government of Tanzania, through the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries is mandated to regulate all feed manufacturers to ensure there is correct formulation of all the ingredients required in poultry feed.

The Government of Tanzania formulated the import policy in the poultry subsector which relates to the importation of veterinary products, DOCs, poultry meat, eggs, parent stock, equipment, and machinery. The import policy aims at ensuring that the products that are



imported are of high quality and free from diseases and health risks. The importation of veterinary drugs and vaccines has been left to the private sector which has increased access and availability of veterinary services to farmers within the poultry value chain.

The Tanzania Livestock Master Plan was launched in 2019 sets out livestock sector investment interventions which will help Tanzania meet its development targets by improving productivity and total production in the key value chains of poultry, pork, red meat and dairy.

The key policy interventions to develop the poultry sector were;

- 1) Prioritizing poultry investments in genetic improvement by focusing on crossbred and fully exotic chicken, and pure breeds for both family and commercial enterprises,
- 2) Undertaking investments in promotional activities to change tastes and preferences from beef to white meat, especially chicken and
- 3) Improving access to land appropriate for grazing, and land for feed production.

POLICY ISSUES

Hatcheries and poultry breeding farms with standard operating procedures: Strategies to improve the sector include promotion of the registration of hatcheries and poultry breeder farms, establishment of operational guidelines and standard operating procedures for the enterprise and institutionalizing of mandatory biosafety and Hazard Critical Control Point (HCCP) procedures for poultry meat, eggs and feeds.

The land tenure and poultry farming: Facilitation by Government, as a matter of priority, in the allocation of land for the establishment of poultry farms and the production of feed in accordance with Grazing and Animal Feed Resource Act of 2010.

Cross border trade and private sector involvement: The existing regulation on movement of poultry and its products across borders needs to be addressed. Since the outbreak of chicken influenza in 2000 there is imbalance of trade across our borders. Also, promotion of large-scale private investment in poultry processing plants are needed to produce value added products for industrial uses (e.g. powdered eggs) or to meet consumer demand for processed egg and meat products. This will be through the provision of favorable taxation levels and low- interest loans to investors.

Animal health services: The current national animal health service coverage is 40%. The quality and quantity of services provided by both the public and private sectors are low. Mortality rate for chicken is at the rate of 50% hence hinders growth of the sector. Improved



animal health and veterinary services delivery must effectively control diseases to reduce current production losses from high morbidity and mortality rates and revenue losses in international trading.

Employment and human resource capacity: The current need for extension services in Tanzania is 17,328 while the available extensionist is 8,600. (Budget speech, 2019/2020). Poultry keepers hence lack the proper knowledge and skills which are important in quick and timely adoption of appropriate technology to enhance productivity.

Imposition of VAT on poultry production facilities: Several gears and tools such as battery cages, pluckers, poultry drinkers and chick boxes for transfer of old day chicks hinders investment in the sector. Poultry sector needs improved technology so as to be effective. Government needs to address this challenge by subsidizing importation of these technologies which will trigger more investment and hence multiplier effect will enable government to get more revenue from the poultry production.

Imposition of chick transportation fees for each day-old chick and import duty on parent fertilized egg: This increases the cost of production and hence hinders development of the poultry Industry. There is a need for Government to intervene and reduce or removal this transportation fees for day old chick and import duty on parent fertilized egg as a means to stimulate use of improved chicken breeds, easy transportation and thus improve productivity of the sector.

Chicken feeds available in Tanzania are of low quality, lacking in nutritional content in terms of energy, protein, mineral and amino acid and crude fibre content: Unfortunately, there is a lack of access to land to produce maize and soya beans for feed formulation and little institutional capacity to control the quality of chicken feed produced and processed. The movement permit fees charged for every metric ton hinders availability of quality feeds. The strategies proposed to mitigate these challenges include the: development of the capacities of animal feed inspectors and feed processors; preparation and implementation of guidelines for poultry feed inspection; raising of awareness of value chain actors on the importance of producing quality poultry feed; introduction of regulations on the export and importation of cooking oils designed to increase availability of oil by-products and oil cakes; and strengthening of quality control mechanisms for poultry feed.

Health, safety and biosecurity measures



It is vital that poultry producers practice daily biosecurity measures. Developing and practicing daily biosecurity procedures as best management practices on poultry farms will reduce the possibility of introducing infectious diseases such as Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease as well as many other poultry diseases. The primary method of spreading disease causing microorganisms between poultry flocks is the use of contaminated equipment or exposure to contaminated clothing and footwear of humans. Protecting poultry flocks from microorganism contamination is an extremely important component of commercial poultry production environment. Practicing sound biosecurity procedures every day as part of a best management program will help to reduce the possibility of contracting a disease and will reduce the spread of diseases and an outbreak to occur.

Poultry welfare standards

Consideration of the relevant animal welfare science indicates areas for improvement to layer chickens' welfare standards. The first is to remove the extreme behavioral restriction inherent to battery cages. The second is to improve management practices, and genetic selection. The discipline of animal welfare science treats animal welfare as the primary concern, with productivity and efficiency as associated benefits. However, the economic value of farm animals is largely determined by their productivity. In contrast to improvements in productivity, improvements in welfare do not necessarily guarantee an increase in profit. Therefore, there is an obvious role for government policy in establishing and enforcing standards, and a clear need for government to intervene when market processes fail to adequately protect animals from poor welfare practices. The manner in which animal welfare standards are developed has large impacts on their acceptability and the extent to which they are supported by stakeholders and the wider community.

Facilities and Equipment for Poultry

As welfare depends on both management practices and the use of adequate equipment, therefore the use of better equipment's which takes into accounts the welfare issue of the chickens then this will help to improve welfare issues while minimizing costs, in addition, the reduction in health and welfare problems would lead to a more efficient and sustainable production in the long term. Therefore, there is need to provide the minimum requirements for facilities that farmers use to raise bird's, The farmers should have guidelines that guarantee that the facilities have minimal stress by providing satisfactory space, and shelter from thrilling weather settings, and ensure proper care and handling.

CONCLUSION

Despite to the fact that in Tanzania, the government has put in place measures aimed at enhancing and protecting the domestic poultry industry by imposing an import ban on poultry and poultry products from countries whose sectors are heavily subsidized and thus, have lower production costs. However, despite having policies and strategies that support the poultry sector, Implementation and enforcement is still lacking. For example, there is no policy in place for regulating the poultry battery cages and their uses in our country therefore some of the chicken's battery cages lack standards whereby some of them are not well galvanized or not galvanized at all to prevent them from getting rust, this is of disadvantages to poultry farmers. Also, the battery cages have some of the welfare issues of concerns whereby this system of keeping chickens reduces the freedom of birds as their movement is restricted and so the chicken's welfare is compromised. The lack of free space appears to constrain activities that chickens would otherwise choose, restriction of movement in cages can have tangible consequences on the physical integrity of birds too. While the welfare of chickens in floor systems is not without concern, the advantages of a cage-free system for chicken's production are more total space, greater opportunity for exercise and improved bone health compared to cage production. Birds kept in litter-based systems are able to express more of their natural behavior, including ground scratching and dust bathing.

RECOMMENDATION

The poultry farmers and the poultry stakeholders generally must be aware that moving from a floor system to a cage system does not improve the overall welfare of birds raised, and this important consideration should be carefully weighed in future decisions regarding expansion of cage systems for chickens' production so that birds will have more space for expressing their behaviors as birds raised in deep liter/ or floor system. Also, bird's welfare is not attained solely by following non-cage or free ranging system, the nutrition, environment and health domains are also important and contribute effectively towards the chicken's welfare. Rearing in non-cage systems allow poultry to express a wider behavioral range like foraging, scratching, dust bathing, wing flapping, perching, and nesting behavior.