

FINAL REPORT

Study on “Common services activities, Technological and Environmental interventions requirement for Poultry Sub-sector”

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The study sought to understand better the present situation and future direction of the use of inputs, institutional and infrastructural environment requirements, and support services needed for the potential areas of improvement in small-scale poultry business clusters. In particular, the study is designed to identify critical issues where recommendations to local, national, and international development agents and policymakers might be warranted to create or strengthen an enabling environment for poultry farming micro-enterprises to thrive their production performance sustainably. The results of this study are made based on an analysis of data drawn from a baseline survey, personal experiences, and secondary information. A total of 387 enterprises contracted with an estimated 95% confidence of level. In addition to the interviews conducted by the interviewers, several poultry actors and stakeholders have been contacted to get a better understanding of their views on the sustainable poultry business operations in Bangladesh. Based on the results of the study, six significant observations stand out.

1. Nonappearance of workable group functioning in the business clusters.

It is well-documented in many reports that producer organizations may provide many benefits to small-scale farmers. By working together in cooperatives, poultry producers can achieve transformative change. They can play a crucial role in ensuring sustainable growth in poultry production, meeting rising demand while addressing related environmental, social and economic challenges. This study finds on average, 10% of respondents belong to a member of any business association. However, only a limited portion of the farmers received partial credit supports from those associations. Steps should be taken to enable small-scale poultry farmers to join existing organizations and facilitate new organizations or cooperation in areas where they do not exist. There is a massive opportunity for the farmers to work together in cooperatives for the co-benefits and other efficiency gains by the business clusters. Beyond increasing productivity, the association must also consider initiatives to improve few services like vaccination, cooperative marketing of poultry products, and awareness-raising on environmental and other issues.

2. Employment generation and livelihood support to the farming communities.

The study investigated the employment and income generation from poultry farming operations. According to the present study, poultry farming operations create crucial employment generation, income, and livelihood support for farming families and other actors. Further, it is noted that poultry farming MEs supporting the provision of alternative livelihoods for families.

3. There is a lack in access to technical input services, credit supports, and skills and capacity-building programs.

Despite the growing recognition of technology, knowledge, and information as critical determinants of the performance of micro-enterprises, access to timely, relevant, and affordable services remains very limited. The reasons behind this may be lack of knowledge, lower income levels of rural dwellers, poorly developed or poorly maintained infrastructure, insufficient government service provision to meet local requirements. There is an urgent need for the introduction and development of more environmentally friendly technologies and production processes. The majority of the respondents indicate that some form of insufficient training and skills development are being provided as part of the enterprise development. According to the survey report, three-quarters of the grow-out farmers received short training on poultry rearing management. The present study also indicates that low levels of service provision prevail in the farming community, including vaccination against potential diseases, technological services, technical advice, and marketing support.

4. Poor health management of birds and inappropriate wastage management.

Common health problems encountered in poultry farms include both infectious and non-infectious diseases. Vaccination coverage of native chicken against commonly reportable diseases is severely lacking. Poultry farmers are not adequately aware of farm bio-security concepts to prevent the entry of infections. Farmers are rarely treated their birds by qualified veterinarians. The study also highlighted that farmers' practices towards poultry manure and waste management are non-satisfactory to the environmental point of view. Despite the severe environmental effects, small-scale poultry farmers do not effectively dispose of waste generated from poultry settings. The majority of farmers often dump manure in the nearby ground. The widespread non-scientific poultry waste disposal option could further be detrimental to the health of farmers and the environment as well. This study indicates that most grow-out farmers have low levels of technical knowledge on proper waste management techniques. Insufficient waste generation by the farms, poor pricing of bio-manure, inadequate marketing channel, and lack of credit supports are considered significant constraints. Even though gaps in knowledge on appropriate waste management practices by the producers, training, and awareness programs were nearly non-existent in the business clusters. The poultry producers should prioritize with training and awareness programs including necessary credit supports for the appropriate waste management system in the small-scale poultry production system. A cycle of effective technical options for manure processing is already available, but these need to be more widely applied and adapted to local conditions within the clusters.

5. Multiple constraints of poultry farming micro-enterprises

Notwithstanding contributing to the agricultural household economy, poultry micro-enterprises face constraints that limit farmers from achieving optimal production and development. However, significant challenges of the poultry business include price hikes of day-old chicks and feed ingredients, inappropriate skills and capacity development process, an insufficient amount of credit and insurance facilities, poor health management, and a disorganized unstable marketing system. Additionally, the lack of demand-driven policy support remains a bottleneck to the sustainability of the sector. Therefore, policies and programs should remove obstacles and constraints to enable producers to operate in and benefit from the poultry sub-sector meaningfully.

6. Preferred services and physical structures requirement by the farmers for the development of MEs.

The study identified revenue and non-revenue generating activities concerning poultry production activities for the MEs. Few physical structures and service requirements are necessary for the clusters dealing with poultry farming operations. Therefore, respondents were asked to provide information on physical facilities and services they wish to have for increasing the productivity and development of poultry business clusters. According to the majority of the respondents, proper training facilities for the capacity building of the farmers, provision of low-priced poultry feed, and development of market facilities were preferred responses. More than three-quarters of respondents reported that linkages and associations among different actors are also crucial. Furthermore, respondents also indicated that they would like institutional cooperation among various organizations for the development and sustainability of the poultry sub-sector.