

Poultry Value Chain: Killing four 'birds' with one stone

Livelihoods for Resilience is investing in poultry production for four reasons: nutrition, income, women's empowerment, and climate change. Poultry production provides a cheaper source of much-needed animal protein compared to beef and mutton (up to six times less expensive) and can be managed in small spaces such as a backyard. It also provides a reliable source of income, particularly for women who can easily manage the feeding, egg collection, and health of chickens while staying close to home. Furthermore, it contributes to households' resilience during weather shocks when production and income from crops and livestock go down. Livelihoods for Resilience promotes both a poultry value chain for commercial markets and backyard production for nutrition and income.



Etagegn Benberu, 48, raises chickens to help support her eight children. She got started with a loan secured from her VESA in Dilla Zuria Woreda, SNNP region.
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To get started in poultry production, a household would need a secure coop, about 5-10 pullets (or young hens), vaccinations for the pullets, and a stock of feed. Start-up costs can be estimated at around 1600 birr for 10 pullets. Against these costs, sale of eggs and chickens can yield a net profit of up to 1,000 birr (roughly \$35) per month.

Livelihoods for Resilience helps households develop poultry business

plans and links them with micro-finance institutions and pullet and feed suppliers. It facilitates hands-on training for households on improved husbandry practices, construction of low-cost chicken coops, and post-harvest technologies, including locally made baskets for egg collection and storage. Use of these baskets, made of bamboo and mesh wire, improve the shelf life of the eggs especially important during fasting season, when consumption is minimal. Thus far, nearly 2,000 project households (over 60% of them female-headed) have become engaged in the poultry value chain.

There remain some challenges in sustaining a poultry value chain in rural areas. There is a shortage of vaccines and veterinarians to ensure the health of poultry. Limited capacity of hatcheries (day old chick producers) is another challenge as is poor access to

Poultry Voucher Scheme

Livelihoods for Resilience has introduced a poultry voucher scheme to provide an incentive for households to engage in poultry production through linkages with private sector service providers. The project selected a total of 36 VESAs from six woredas to pilot the scheme. All households in the selected VESAs were eligible for the poultry voucher, but preference was given to vulnerable woman who were anxious to start production but needed help to get started. Selected households were required to construct a chicken coop with the elements (feeder, drinker and footpath) and purchase three pullets using their own funds (approximately 200 birr). The vouchers then allowed them to receive three additional pullets and 50 kg. feed. The project also provided training on poultry coop construction and management with the support of Woreda livestock officers and SNV technical advisors. To ensure sustainability, the project has signed agreements with the selected pullet and feed suppliers to continue to sell their products in the remote communities. So far, the project has helped more than 950 households through the poultry voucher scheme.

commercial feed. To seek solutions, the project collaborates with government and private sector actors through zonal poultry Multi Stakeholder Platforms (MSP). In MSP meetings, participants work together to solve problems and to expand and improve productivity in the sector.

Looking towards bright future through poultry

Hagos Mebratu, 37, is married and the father of one. He lives in Ofla Woreda of South Tigray. His family has participated in the PSNP since 2016. Hagos used to grow locally bred chickens, which produce an average of 60 eggs/year. He had neither the skills to improve his poultry farm nor a source for buying improved breed chicks. The project provided Hagos with technical training on improved poultry husbandry and helped him construct a low cost chicken coop. The project also supported him to develop a business plan and get access to credit.



Hagos and family in the newly constructed poultry coop. © CARE Ethiopia 2019.

Hagos began with eight pullets of an improved variety purchased from a supplier supported by the project. He bought commercial feed and had his chickens vaccinated by animal health service providers. Hagos now gets eight eggs/day and earns a net profit of 342 birr per month, a 60% increase compared to his earlier income from the sale of eggs. Apart from the additional income he receives, his family also consumes eggs regularly, incorporating this important source of protein into their diets. Encouraged by the initial success, Hagos secured a 3,000 birr loan from an MFI and bought 37 pullets. He expects that the resulting income from this investment will drastically improve the livelihood of the family and eventually enable them to graduate from the PSNP.

