



**EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN ANIMALS WELFARE**



# **Status Of Poultry Farming in Tanzania**

**2025**

# ABSTRACT

Poultry farming is an essential component of Tanzania's agricultural sector, providing households with food security, income, and employment opportunities. Education for African Animals Welfare (EAAW) conducted a survey to assess the current status of poultry farming in Tanzania with a special focus on animal welfare. The study aimed to generate insights into the types of poultry reared, the prevalence of intensive production systems such as battery cages, levels of farmer awareness on animal welfare, demographic characteristics of farmers, and the challenges faced by the industry.

The findings reveal that poultry farming in Tanzania is dominated by indigenous and local breeds, which account for over 43 percent of the surveyed farms. Other common categories include crossbreeds, layers and meat chickens (broiler), reflecting both traditional and semi-commercial production systems. The adoption of battery cages remains relatively low at 11 percent of farmers; however, the practice raises significant animal welfare concerns, particularly as demand for eggs and chicken meat grows in urban areas.

Awareness of animal welfare among farmers is limited, with nearly three-quarters of respondents indicating no prior knowledge of the concept. Despite this, a significant proportion of farmers self-rated their knowledge as fair or good, suggesting the need for clearer training and sensitization. Only 40 percent of farmers reported having received any form of training on animal welfare, underscoring a gap in extension services and education. The demographic profile of poultry farmers indicates that women constitute the majority (55 percent), while the most active age group is between 31–45 years, highlighting the sector's potential for youth and women empowerment.

The survey also identified major challenges facing poultry farmers, including high feed costs, limited veterinary services, disease outbreaks, and welfare issues associated with intensive farming methods. These challenges, if unaddressed, could hinder productivity, compromise chicken welfare and the sustainability of the sector.





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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Education for African Animals Welfare (EAAW) aims to teach, create awareness, and train people on care, health, rights, and proper treatment of animals based on the reality, cultures, and needs in Africa and beyond. The survey was conducted purposefully to know the current poultry farming conditions in Tanzania and gain knowledge on how to help farmers with the challenges they were facing so that to improve the chicken welfare. The survey covered some of Tanzania's mainland regions, which are Mwanza, Njombe, Arusha, Singida, Kilimanjaro, Tabora, Dar es Salaam, and Pwani.

### 1.2 Main objective

The survey aims to assess poultry farming in Tanzania, examining chicken welfare, consumer preferences and behavior in regards to eggs, including quality and safety perceptions.

### 1.3 Specific objectives

The research aim is to study the status of poultry farming in Tanzania. The following are the study objectives, tailored to explore production systems, welfare conditions, market dynamics, and policy gaps.

- i. To assess the current poultry production systems in Tanzania, including traditional, semi-intensive and commercial models.
- ii. To evaluate the welfare conditions of farmed poultry, focusing on housing, feeding, health management, and the use of battery cages.
- iii. To Identify challenges faced by poultry farmers, such as access to veterinary services, feed quality, and market linkages.
- iv. To Examine consumer preferences and behaviour regarding eggs, including perceptions of quality and safety.
- v. To Investigate gender and youth participation in poultry farming and its role in household income and food security.
- vi. Recommendations for Sustainable and humane poultry farming practices. Aligned with national development goals and international standards, sustainable and humane poultry farming practices should be recommended for Mwanza, Njombe, Arusha, Singida, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam and Pwani should be considered.



# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

There are different types of poultry farming in Tanzania depending on the scale, purpose, and the type of birds. These are household or backyard level farming, small scale farming, medium scale farming, and large scale or commercial farming.

The Small-scale Poultry Farming usually starts with 10-500 birds. The birds are kept in free-range. There is low capital investment. It is used mainly for family consumption and selling surplus locally.

The medium-scale poultry farming ranges from 500-5,000 birds. Where farmers invest in better housing, regular vaccination, and quality feed. It is more organized, often a semi-intensive system. It is focused on supplying the products to local markets, schools, hotels, or restaurants. It is a mix of commercial purpose and livelihood.

The large-scale or commercial poultry farming includes more than 5,000 birds. It is a fully intensive system with modern poultry houses, automated feeders, and strict veterinary care. It is the one with high investment but also high profit. It is divided into specialized units; the commercial layers (egg production at scale) and commercial broilers (meat production at scale). Supplies are to the supermarkets, wholesalers, and to the big cities like Dar es Salaam, Arusha, and Mwanza.

The household or backyard farm level has been identified as the most used type of poultry farming in Tanzania due to low start-up cost since low capital is needed for housing and feeding. Also, farmers can use local materials for chicken shelter. There is easier management because the few numbers of chickens make it easy to monitor their health. As a result, there is lower risk of diseases. It provides food and acts as a quick source of income.

# CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Study areas

The survey of identifying the status of poultry farming in Tanzania, was conducted in different regions of Tanzania which are Singida, Mwanza, Arusha, Njombe, Kilimanjaro, Dar Es Salaam and Pwani.

### 3.2 Documents review

Relevant literature was reviewed, including The National Sample Census of Agriculture (NSCA) report of 2019/20, the Tanzania Livestock Master Plan report of 2017/18-2021/22 and the report of African Chicken Genetic Gains (ACGG), which was led by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

### 3.3 Development and data collection tools

The data collection tool was developed and digitized using the Survey Solutions program. It consisted of eight sections that include background information which was the farmer's general information, prevalence and characteristics of battery cage systems, physical welfare of hens, behavioral welfare of hens, farmer perspectives, socio-economic factors, alternatives, feasibility and lastly the stakeholder awareness.

### 3.4 Training of Data collectors

All data collectors (enumerators and supervisors) received training for one week covering the study's objective, research ethics and integrity, sampling protocol, and data collection tools.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations during data collection

The study was explained to poultry farmers so that they may understand the objective, nature of the study and the required activities needed to complete the study. Consent was requested from the respondents which was informed verbal consent before enrolment. Confidentiality of the information collected and the rights of the subjects was ensured.

### 3.6 Data Analysis and interpretation

The data obtained from the structured questionnaire were analyzed using the descriptive statistics technique in R-statistical software. This technique involves use of frequency tables for categorical variables and measures of central tendency (median) and dispersion (standard deviation) for numeric variables.



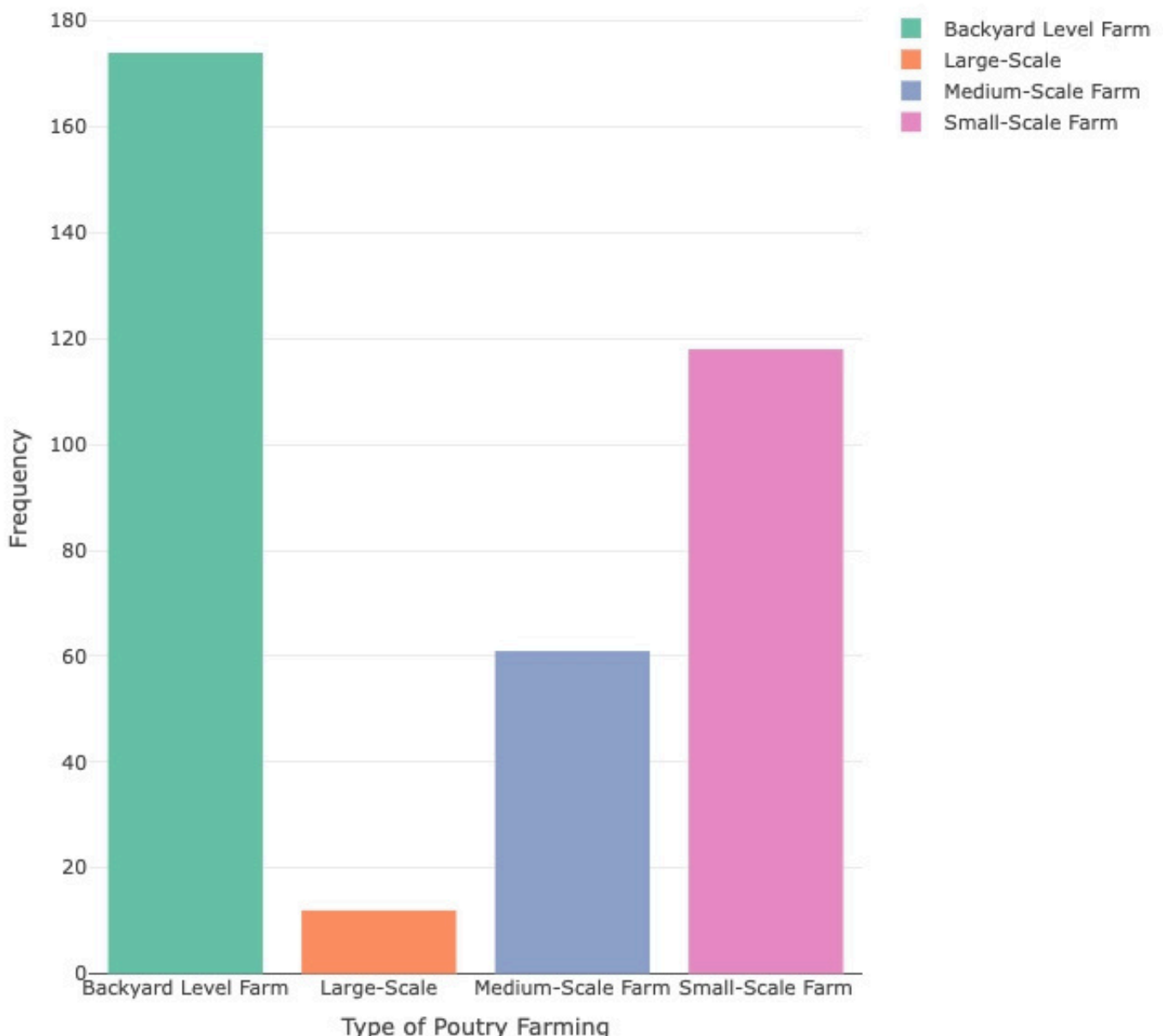
# CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 General overview of the respondents covered by the study

This study covered selected regions of mainland Tanzania, including Mwanza, Njombe, Arusha, Singida, Kilimanjaro, Tabora, Pwani and Dar es Salaam. Respondents practiced various poultry farming types, reflecting diverse production scales. Half (47.7%) engaged in household or backyard farming, easier to manage and requiring less space. Small-scale farms (32.3%) followed, while medium-scale farms (16.7%) accounted for the rest. Only 3.3% operated large-scale or commercial poultry farms. Poultry farming in the surveyed regions is predominantly small-scale, with most farmers relying on traditional or semi-intensive systems.

A Graph Showing Types Of Poultry Farming



4.2 Prevalance of battery cage use

Out of the 364 poultry farmers surveyed, only 41 (11.3 percent) reported using battery cages in their farming practices, while the majority, 323 respondents (88.7 percent), indicated that they do not use this system. These results demonstrate that the adoption of battery cage systems remains very limited among poultry farmers. The findings suggest that most farmers still rely on alternative methods such as deep litter, free-range, or backyard systems rather than battery cages, which may be due to factors such as high installation costs and lack of awareness. Table 4.2.1 illustrates this.

Using Cages	Frequency	Cum.
Yes	41	11.26
No	323	88.74
Total	364	100.00

Table 4.3.2: Farmers self-rating on the understanding of the animal’s welfare.

4.3 Farmers awareness on animals’ welfare

4.3.1 Farmers awareness on animal welfare concerns related to battery cage systems

As presented in Table 4.3.1, only 93 farmers (25.5 percent) reported being aware of animal welfare concerns associated with battery cage systems, while the majority, 272 respondents (74.5 percent), indicated that they were not aware of such concerns. When compared to Table 4.2.1, which showed that only 11.3 percent of respondents currently use battery cages, this finding suggests that the low awareness of welfare issues may contribute to farmers’ limited knowledge base when evaluating poultry housing systems. Furthermore, the self-assessment results in Table 4.3.2 indicate that most farmers rated their understanding of animal welfare as only fair (53.7 percent), reinforcing the view that farmers’ awareness is largely general and not specifically tied to the potential risks or ethical implications of battery cage use. Together, these findings point to a critical need for awareness-raising initiatives to help farmers make informed decisions on poultry management systems that balance productivity with animal welfare standards.



Aware	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Yes	93	25.48	25.48
No	272	74.52	100.00
Total	365	100.00	

Table 4.3.3: Farmers whom received formal training on animal's welfare.

### 4.3.2 Self-assessment of farmers' understanding of animal welfare

As presented in Table 4.3.2, just over half of the respondents (53.7 percent) rated their understanding of animal welfare as fair, while 30.7 percent considered it good and 14.5 percent rated it as excellent. Only a very small proportion (1.1 percent) described their understanding as poor. These results suggest that while most farmers perceive themselves as having at least a moderate level of knowledge, relatively few consider themselves highly knowledgeable.

When compared with earlier findings, however, a clear gap emerges between perception and actual exposure to structured knowledge. For instance, only 25.5 percent of respondents were aware of animal welfare concerns specifically linked to battery cage systems (Table 4.3.1), and just 40.3 percent had received formal training (Table 4.3.3). This mismatch indicates that many farmers may be relying more on informal experience or general farming practices rather than systematic training in animal welfare. Consequently, while self-ratings suggest reasonable confidence, the limited depth of awareness and training points to the need for more targeted educational interventions to strengthen farmers technical understanding.

Rate	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Excellent	53	14.52	14.52
Good	112	30.68	45.21
Fair	196	53.70	98.90
Poor	4	1.10	100.00
Total	365	100.00	

Table 4.3.2: Farmers self-rating on the understanding of the animal's welfare.

### 4.3.3 Formal training on animal welfare

As shown in Table 4.3.3, 147 farmers (40.3 percent) reported having received formal training, while the majority, 218 respondents (59.7 percent), indicated that they had not. Although this reflects a higher level of training exposure compared to awareness of battery cage welfare concerns (Table 4.3.1), it still shows that more than half of poultry farmers operate without the benefit of structured training. When these findings are considered alongside the self-assessment in Table 4.3.2, where most respondents rated their understanding of animal welfare as only fair, it suggests that limited access to formal training continues to hinder the development of deeper knowledge and informed practices. This gap in formal capacity building may help explain why adoption of battery cages remains very low (Table 4.2.1), and why awareness of their welfare implications is limited. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of expanding training programs to enhance farmers' technical skills and to promote informed decision-making regarding poultry production systems.

Trained	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Yes	147	40.27	40.27
No	218	59.73	100.00
Total	365	100.00	

Table 4.3.3: Farmers whom received formal training on animal's welfare.

### 4.3.4 Health problems

The study examined the prevalence of various health and welfare problems among poultry flocks. Broken bones were the least frequently observed issue, with 310 respondents (84.9%) reporting that they never encountered this problem and only a few cases reported occasionally. Deaths or stress-related issues were somewhat more common, with 195 respondents (53.4%) reporting never, 139 (38.1%) reporting rarely, and the remainder experiencing these problems sometimes or often. Feather loss and foot injuries were moderately prevalent; feather loss occurred sometimes or often for 47% of respondents, while foot injuries were reported at least rarely by approximately 45% of respondents. Illnesses and diseases were the most significant health concern, with only 18 respondents (4.9%) reporting never, and the majority—228 respondents (62.5%)—experiencing illnesses rarely, 65 (17.8%) sometimes, and 54 (14.8%) often. No respondents reported illness occurring always, indicating that while diseases are common, severe continuous outbreaks are rare.



Overall, these findings indicate that health and disease management is a major concern for poultry farmers, particularly illnesses and stress-related conditions, whereas physical injuries such as broken bones are relatively rare. The results highlight the need for improved management practices, disease prevention measures, and veterinary support to enhance poultry welfare and productivity.

Problem	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Broken bones	310	47	7	1	0	365
Deaths/stress	195	139	21	10	0	365
Feather loss	159	159	29	17	1	365
Foot injuries	202	143	12	5	1	363
Illness/diseases	18	228	65	54	0	365
Total	884	716	134	87	2	1823

Table 4.3.4: Chicken problems

#### 4.4 Breed types used by farmers

The survey revealed a diversity of poultry breeds among farmers (Table 4.4.1). Indigenous or local breeds were the most commonly reared, with 189 respondents (43.2 percent), followed by crossbreeds or hybrids (18.0 percent), meat chickens (15.1 percent), and egg layers (13.9 percent). Dual-purpose or improved breeds were the least common, reported by only 43 respondents (9.8 percent).

When considered alongside earlier findings, the dominance of indigenous breeds may be linked to limited formal training and awareness. For example, only 40.3 percent of farmers had received formal training on poultry management (Table 4.3.3), and just 25.5 percent were aware of animal welfare concerns related to battery cage systems (Table 4.3.1). This limited exposure to structured knowledge and best practices may discourage farmers from adopting improved or dual-purpose breeds, which often require higher inputs, technical skills, and careful management. Overall, the results suggest that expanding training and awareness programs could adopt and encourage promotion for sustainable and welfare-conscious poultry farming practices in Tanzania.

Breed Type	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Crossbreeds / Hybrids	79	18.04	18.04
Dual-purpose or Improved Breeds	43	9.82	27.85
Egg Layers	61	13.93	41.78
Indigenous or Local Breed	189	43.15	84.93
Meat Chickens	66	15.07	100.0
Total	438	100.0	100.0

Table 4.4.1 Breed types raised by farmers

#### 4.5 Gender distribution in poultry farming

The survey included 200 female and 165 male farmers, with a slightly higher participation of women in poultry farming (54.8% vs. 45.2%). This highlights women's crucial role in poultry production, consistent with trends in small-scale poultry where women often care for livestock. When viewed with earlier findings on training and awareness (Tables 4.3.3 and 4.3.1), capacity-building initiatives must consider gender dynamics to ensure equal access to training, knowledge, and resources for improved poultry management and breed adoption.

Gender	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Male	165	45.21	45.21
Female	200	54.79	100.0
Total	365	100.0	100.0

Table 4.5.1: Gender distribution in poultry farming

#### 4.6 Age of poultry farmers

The age distribution of the respondents (Table 4.6.1) shows that the majority of poultry farmers fall within the 31- 45 years age bracket, comprising 110 individuals (49.6 percent) of the sample. This is followed by those aged 46 - 60 years (27.9 percent), 18 - 30 years (14.4 percent), and the least represented group, 61 years and above (8.1 percent). The results indicate that poultry farming is predominantly undertaken by individuals in the prime working-age group (31 - 60 years), which may have positive implications for farm productivity and the adoption of new technologies, given that these age groups are generally more active and economically engaged. The relatively lower participation of younger (18 - 30 years) and older (61+ years) farmers suggests potential challenges in attracting youth to poultry farming, as well as the need for support mechanisms for elderly farmers.

Age Group	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
18-30	32	14.41	14.41
31-45	110	49.55	63.96
46-60	62	27.93	91.89
61+	18	8.11	100.0
Total	222	100.0	100.0

Table 4.6.1: Poultry farmers age distribution



## 4.7 Challenges facing farmers

The survey identified several challenges facing poultry farmers, with respondents reporting multiple constraints that affect their operations. As shown in Graph 4.6.1, the most frequently cited challenges were management costs and water system problems, each reported by 12 respondents. Disease outbreaks were also a significant concern, affecting 10 respondents. Other issues included high vaccine and feed costs (4 respondents), cleanliness (5 respondents), market access (2 respondents), small farming area (3 respondents), and lack or scarcity of skilled personnel (1 respondent). A few respondents (3) reported facing no challenges.

These findings suggest that operational and resource constraints, particularly costs, water systems, and disease management, are the greatest barriers to effective poultry farming. Combined with earlier findings on limited formal training and low awareness of animal welfare concerns, capacity-building interventions, infrastructure support, and targeted advisory services can address these challenges and enhance productivity.

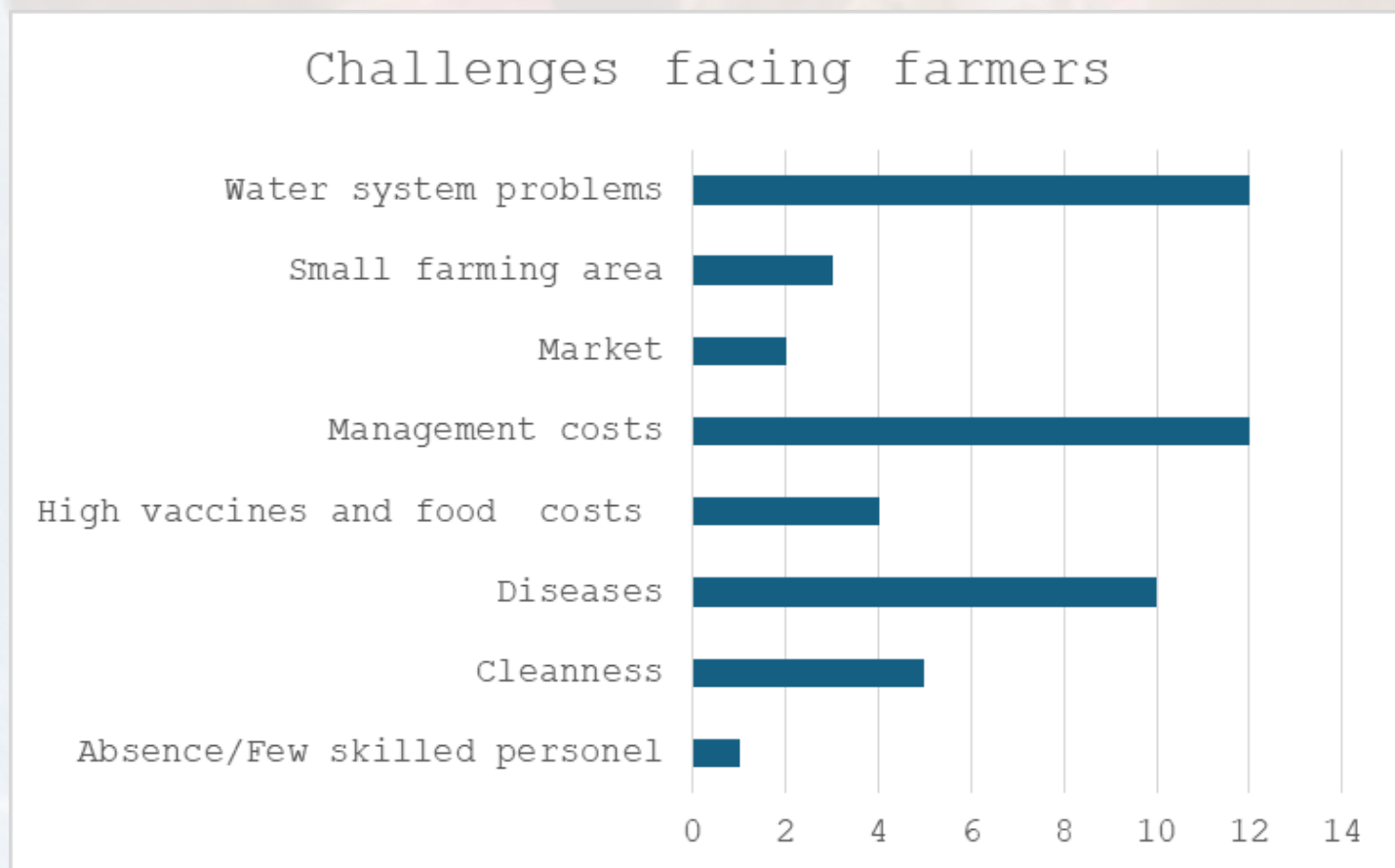


Figure 4.7.1: Challenges facing farmers

# CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 5.1 Conclusion

Household or backyard poultry farming is the most common system among farmers due to its ease of management and limited space. Only 11% of farmers use battery cage systems, indicating their limited adoption. Factors influencing this include high installation costs, specialized knowledge, and welfare concerns.

Health management remains a major concern, with diseases being the most common challenge. Injuries are rare, suggesting they are not a significant problem. Farmers face operational and resource constraints, including management costs, inadequate water systems, and disease control. High feed and vaccine costs, limited farm size, and insufficient skilled personnel hinder efficient production. These challenges, coupled with limited formal training and awareness, highlight the need for targeted interventions to improve chicken welfare, productivity and sustainability.

Animal welfare awareness and training emerged as a critical concern. About 40% of farmers had formal training, while most lacked it. Over half rated their understanding as fair, suggesting personal experience over formal instruction. Awareness of welfare issues related to battery cage systems was low, indicating farmers may lack knowledge to make informed decisions about housing and care. Expanding training and awareness programs could enhance poultry productivity and welfare standards.

Breed choice was influenced by tradition and resource constraints. Indigenous or local breeds were most common, accounting for nearly half of the respondents. Crossbreeds, hybrids, meat chickens, and egg-laying breeds were less frequently used. Limited adoption of improved or dual-purpose breeds may reflect higher costs, technical management, and lack of training. This preference for local breeds aligns with backyard farming, where farmers prioritize low-input, low-maintenance systems.

Gender and age dynamics significantly influence poultry farming. Women represent 55% of poultry farmers, highlighting their role in small-scale production and household food security. Men account for 45%, suggesting accessibility to both genders but predominantly managed by women. The majority of poultry farmers are between 31 and 45, the prime working-age population. They actively manage their flocks and adopt improved practices, while younger and older age groups are less involved, indicating gaps in youth engagement and the need for support for older farmers.



The study regions poultry farming is predominantly small-scale and traditional, with limited adoption of intensive technologies like battery cages. High operational costs, inadequate water systems, disease management challenges, and limited access to formal training influence farmers' practices. Despite these challenges, the predominance of women and the active participation of the prime working-age population suggest opportunities for targeted interventions to improve productivity, breed diversification, and animal welfare standards. Expanding formal training, raising awareness of welfare concerns, and supporting resource management could enhance poultry farming efficiency and sustainability in these communities.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Farmers provided several recommendations aimed at improving poultry farming practices and addressing the challenges they face. The most frequently suggested intervention was the provision of education and awareness campaigns, reported by 221 respondents, highlighting the strong demand for knowledge and capacity-building initiatives. Access to formal training and practical guidance was perceived as crucial for improving farm management, disease control, and animal welfare practices.

Financial support was another key recommendation, with 89 respondents emphasizing the need for funds to facilitate poultry farming activities, reflecting the constraints posed by high operational costs. Farmers also called for improvements in the affordability and availability of food supplements and vaccines, as well as measures to stabilize prices for chickens and chicks. Specifically, 37 respondents recommended reducing the cost of vaccines and feed, 33 highlighted the need for improved feed quality and supplements, and 11 suggested implementing fixed pricing mechanisms for poultry and chicks to protect farmers from market fluctuations. Market stabilization more broadly was noted by 29 respondents, indicating concerns over inconsistent demand and income from poultry sales.

Finally, access to skilled personnel was emphasized by 19 respondents, underlining the importance of technical support and advisory services to enhance productivity and animal welfare. Overall, these recommendations reflect farmers' recognition of the critical role that education, financial resources, affordable inputs, market support, and technical assistance play in sustaining and improving poultry farming practices. Addressing these areas could significantly enhance productivity, breed diversification, and animal welfare standards in the study regions

## Farmers Recommendations

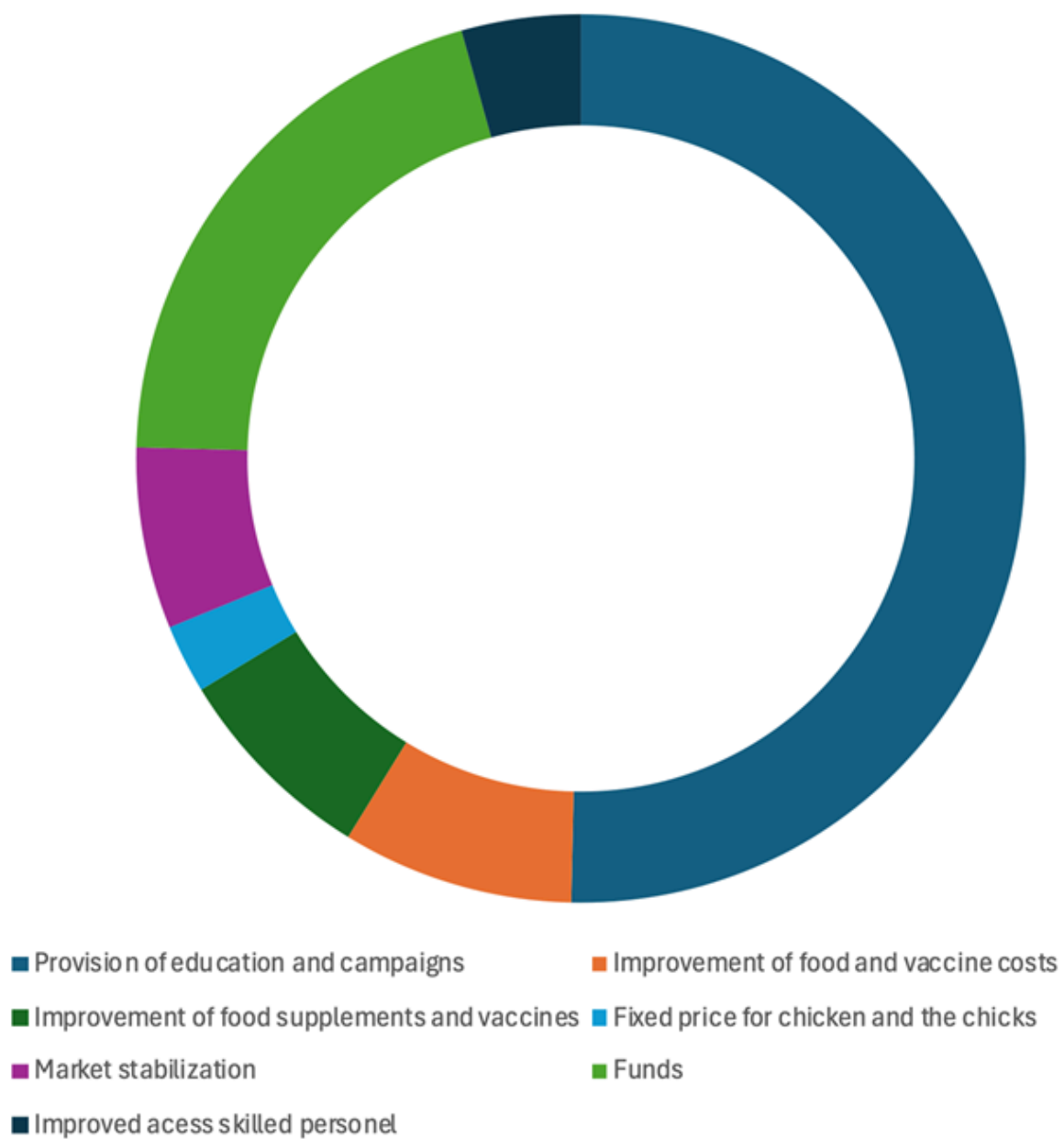


Figure 5.2.I: Farmers recommendations



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