

NEWS & FEATURES

Poultry Futures Forum 2024: Tanzania Pushes for Youth Empowerment and Poultry Sector Growth

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Dar es Salaam, October 16, 2024 – The Poultry Futures Forum 2024 kicked off today in Dar es Salaam with a keynote address by Tanzania's Deputy Prime Minister, **Hon. Dr. Doto Biteko**, standing in for Vice President **Hon. Dr. Philip Mpango**. The forum, bringing together delegates from across Africa, including Malawi, Botswana, Mozambique, and beyond, serves as a critical platform for fostering collaboration, innovation, and growth within the poultry sector—an increasingly vital component of Africa's food security strategy.

A Consultative Platform for Shared Learning

In his opening remarks, Dr. Biteko underscored the event's role as a dialogue and mutual learning forum. The forum allows member states to exchange ideas, share experiences, and collaborate on agricultural and food production efforts.

"This is a consultative forum where we share experiences across several member states and learn from each other, complementing one another," Dr. Biteko stated. He highlighted the importance of cross-border cooperation in tackling shared agricultural challenges as African nations strive to improve food production and reduce reliance on imports.

Welcoming Regional Delegates

Dr. Biteko welcomed international participants, particularly delegates from Malawi, Botswana, and Mozambique. Reflecting on his visit to Botswana, where he represented President Samia Suluhu Hassan at a natural resources forum, Dr. Biteko expressed gratitude for the cultural exchanges and the delegates' presence.

"To our friends from Botswana, I remember the wonderful traditional dances. Everyone from outside Tanzania, please feel at home. This is your home," he remarked, encouraging delegates to explore Dar es Salaam and iconic Tanzanian destinations like Zanzibar and Mount Kilimanjaro.

Strengthening the Poultry Sector for Food Security

Dr. Biteko reinforced Tanzania's commitment to its agricultural goals, aligning with the resolutions of the **Dakar 2 Summit on Feed Africa: Food Sovereignty and Resilience**. He emphasized the poultry sector as a key component of Tanzania's strategy to enhance food security and drive economic development.

"As we gather here, it's essential to remember that agriculture, and specifically the poultry

sector, plays a critical role in ensuring food sovereignty for our nation and the region. Through collaboration and innovation, we can elevate this sector to meet the growing demand for food and nutrition," he emphasized.

Empowering Youth in Agriculture

A key highlight of the forum was the recognition of young Tanzanian farmers for their contributions to the agricultural sector. Dr. Biteko presented certificates to several outstanding youth, symbolizing Tanzania's commitment to supporting the next generation of agricultural leaders. He emphasized the importance of youth involvement in agriculture, recognizing them as the driving force behind the future success of the sector.

"The future of agriculture lies in the hands of our youth. We must continue to support and encourage them to lead in innovative and sustainable agricultural practices," Dr. Biteko stated, urging young people to embrace opportunities in the poultry sector and beyond.

Pathway to Continental Agricultural Transformation

As the forum continues, Dr. Biteko delivered a forward-looking message, stressing the need for stronger regional partnerships and collaborative efforts to ensure the long-term success of Africa's agricultural industries. He expressed optimism that the Poultry Futures Forum 2024 would serve as a catalyst for strategies to boost food production and agricultural sustainability across the continent.

"This forum is just the beginning. Our collective responsibility is to ensure that the discussions and strategies developed here are implemented for the benefit of all our nations. Together, we can achieve food sovereignty and resilience," he concluded.

Dr. Biteko's Call to Strengthen Tanzania's Poultry Industry

To bolster Tanzania's poultry sector, **Dr. Biteko** directed the **Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries** to take bold steps in enhancing poultry farming. He pointed out that under the leadership of President **Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan**, Tanzania has cultivated strong relationships that have opened doors across various sectors, including the poultry industry. He noted that 55% of households in Tanzania and other Southern African countries engage in poultry farming, driven primarily by women and youth. Tanzania alone boasts over 103.1 million chickens, a mix of indigenous and commercial breeds.

Dr. Biteko called on the Ministry to establish breeding farms for parent stock, set up modern processing centers and laboratories, and invest in advanced poultry slaughterhouses. He stressed the need for cold chain distribution systems, local feed production factories, and reducing reliance on imported poultry feed.

"The Ministry must invest in cages and ensure that poultry feed is locally produced, eliminating the need for foreign exchange to import essentials," he urged. He encouraged stakeholders to partner with the government, stating that the government has created opportunities for everyone to engage in poultry farming as a source of income.

Dr. Biteko also invited the private sector to invest in the poultry industry, emphasizing its economic potential. He urged researchers to collaborate with the government to provide accurate data to support the industry's development without causing public concern.

Minister Ulega's Remarks on Poultry's Future

In his remarks, **Minister of Livestock and Fisheries Abdallah Ulega** noted the forum's significance, tracing its origins to discussions during the Africa Food Systems Forum (AFS Forum) meeting led by Her excellency President Samia Suluhu Hassan. He expressed gratitude to AGRA and the **Food Action Alliance** for prioritizing the poultry sector, giving local farmers a platform to learn and connect.

Minister Ulega revealed that by 2030, poultry farming will contribute 41% of Tanzania's protein intake. He emphasized the importance of research collaboration to prevent misinformation and panic in the community regarding poultry farming practices.

Empowering Regional Growth: Highlights from the Poultry Futures Forum

In a vibrant gathering that underscored the critical role of poultry in regional development, the Poultry Futures Forum officially opened with a warm welcome from **Professor Isaac Shemdoo**, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. His opening remarks extended heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their presence, setting the tone for an event centered on shaping the future of the poultry sector in the region.

The forum began with introducing notable government officials and delegates, including **Mr. Hussein Omari**, Deputy Parliamentary Secretary from the Ministry of Agriculture in the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. Representatives of various Tanzanian ministries, such as the Ministry of Livestock and the Ministry of Agriculture, alongside key development partners led by the Food Action Alliance, also participated.

A strong international presence was felt as development organizations and private sector players were recognized for supporting agricultural progress. Among those acknowledged were USAID, Feed the Future, Cagri, U.S. Grain, MasterCard Foundation, GAIN, IFAD, and Sakau. These partnerships have been instrumental in fostering innovation and investment in the poultry sector, providing essential frameworks for sustainable growth.

The forum's global reach was emphasized as delegates from 23 countries stood in recognition of their participation. Countries represented ranged from Southern African nations such as Botswana, Malawi, and Mozambique to international delegations from Chile, India, the United States, and the Netherlands. Their presence underscored the forum's broad, multi-national focus on transforming the poultry industry.

The private sector was recognised for its pivotal role in fostering economic growth and innovation in the poultry industry. Representatives from the **youth sector** were also highlighted, emphasizing the need to integrate young people into the industry through training programs, resource access, and inclusive business models. Research and academic institutions were acknowledged for their contributions to scientific advancements and data-driven decision-making within the sector.