

NEWS & FEATURES

SAGCOT Supports Groundbreaking Poultry Disease Diagnosis Initiative in Tanzania

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By Abdallah Msambachi for SAGCOT.co.tz

Dar es Salaam—February 10, 2025: To elevate Tanzania's poultry sector to international standards, the SAGCOT Centre has teamed up with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, the Netherlands Embassy, and Royal GD Animal Health to launch an ambitious initiative aimed at transforming poultry disease diagnosis across the country. This collaborative project seeks to modernize and enhance the capabilities of the Tanzania Veterinary Laboratory Agency (TVLA), equipping it with the tools and expertise to tackle the challenges of poultry disease management more effectively.

Prof. Riziki Shemdoo, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, inaugurated the launch event in Dar es Salaam. Prof. Shemdoo emphasized the vital importance of this initiative, stressing its critical role in improving poultry disease management, safeguarding the livelihoods of millions of Tanzanian farmers, and contributing to national food security. "This initiative is not just about combating diseases; it is a commitment to building a resilient and sustainable poultry sector that can compete globally," Prof. Shemdoo stated.

The project, supported by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency, marks a key milestone in Tanzania's agriculture-driven economic agenda. The initiative focuses on capacity building, knowledge sharing, and incorporating cutting-edge technological advancements in diagnostic processes. Royal GD Animal Health, which conducts over five million laboratory analyses annually, provides top-tier expertise to address critical gaps in poultry disease management.

Ambassador Wiebe de Boer of the Netherlands highlighted the transformative potential of this partnership. "This initiative is more than just a financial investment; it is about sharing expertise, building trust, and transferring resources to tackle local challenges with global solutions," he said. The collaboration aligns directly with SAGCOT's mission to foster agricultural growth through strategic public-private partnerships. Silverlands Tanzania, one of SAGCOT's private partners, is contributing its expertise in agribusiness to reinforce the project's impact on Tanzanian farmers, particularly the youth.

Tanzania's poultry sector is a cornerstone of its agricultural economy, with around 97.9 million chickens supporting the livelihoods of 4.6 million households. However, the sector faces persistent challenges, such as the misuse of antimicrobials and inadequate vaccine distribution, which undermine the effectiveness of disease control efforts. Dr. Mfaume Simbah, a veterinarian and technical manager at Silverlands Tanzania, emphasized the need for farmers

to receive advanced education. "The misuse of antimicrobials and poor vaccination practices continue to hinder disease prevention efforts. Providing farmers with the necessary training and tools is crucial for improving poultry health," he said.

To address these challenges, the project will enhance TVLA's capacity to process and analyze samples more efficiently and accurately. The initiative aims to accelerate disease detection and response times by applying advanced diagnostic tools, ultimately saving farmers from significant financial and livestock losses.

In addition to its immediate goals, the initiative is linked to Tanzania's broader National Livestock Vaccination Strategy (2024-2029), which has already been allocated 28.1 billion TZS. This comprehensive national strategy focuses on improving livestock health, fostering safer trade practices, and advancing Tanzania's regional and international livestock trade position.

The transformative potential of this initiative extends beyond disease management. It is pivotal in Tanzania's food security, economic stability, and youth empowerment efforts. Associated with the larger '**Building a Better Tomorrow: Youth Initiative for Agribusiness**' (BBT-YIA), it encourages young Tanzanians to explore opportunities within the agribusiness sector and adopt sustainable practices in poultry farming. "The poultry sector is a significant avenue for youth employment and innovation in agribusiness," Prof. Shemdoe emphasized. "Through initiatives like this, we are setting the stage for a new era of sustainable and profitable agriculture."

As Tanzania works to modernize its agricultural sector and align with global standards, partnerships like these reflect the nation's commitment to overcoming hurdles in disease management, improving livelihoods, and opening new pathways for agricultural innovation. In the words of SAGCOT Centre leadership, "This initiative represents a vital step forward in building a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive poultry industry for Tanzania."

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