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### REVIEW ARTICLE

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## Review on Challenges and Opportunities of Local Chicken Production in Ethiopia

Guesh Fesaha and Haftom Gebretsadik

College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Department of Animal Production and Technology, Adigrat University, Ethiopia

### ABSTRACT

*The paper was prepared to review challenges and opportunities of local chicken production in Ethiopia. predators, poor genetic, lack of proper health care, poor feeding and poor marketing information are considered to be the major challenges of chicken in Ethiopia, However, low nutritional requirement and disease resistance are opportunities of Ethiopian local chicken. So, improving appropriate cross breeding and management (diseases control, improving infrastructure and improving marketing information) are best recommended methods to increase the productivity of local chickens.*

**Key words:** Challenge, Local chickens and Opportunity.

### INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia is a country with a large chicken population in Africa, contains about 65 million (Mammo Mengesha *et al.*, 2008). The indigenous chickens are known to possess desirable characters such as thermo-tolerance, resistance to some diseases, good egg and meat flavor, hard eggshell, high fertility and hatchability as well as high dressing percentage (Abdelqader *et al.*, 2007).

Even though Ethiopia contains a large chicken population their productivity is very low and death rate is very high this is because chicken feeding in most part of Ethiopia is based almost entirely on scavenging system, the quality and quantity of which is subject to great seasonal variation and the breeds are also poor in genotype. As a result, poor genotype of breed and shortage of feed affects growth and decreases chicken output (ILCA, 1988).

Therefore, it is necessary to improve the productivity of local chicken through crossbreeding with exotic chicken and improving management such as feeding, housing and health care. Having this in mind, the objectives of the paper is

- To review challenges and opportunities of local chicken production in Ethiopia

### **Challenges of local chicken production**

The most striking problem in local chicken production systems is the high mortality rate which could reach as high as 80–90% within the first few weeks after hatching, due to diseases and predation (Wilson et al. 1987). Newcastle disease (NCD) is highly infectious and causes more losses than any other diseases in the tropics. The disease spreads rapidly through the flock and mortality could reach up to 100% (Aini 1990; Bishop 1995; Nigussie et al. 2003; Serkalem et al. 2005; Nwanta et al. 2008).

Among the infectious diseases, NCD, salmonellosis, coccidiosis and fowl pox are considered to be the most important causes of mortality in local chicken while predators are an additional causes of loss (Eshetu et al. 2001). According to Tadelle (2001), the high mortality of chicks under local chicken production in the central highlands of Ethiopia is due to diseases, parasites, predation, lack of feed, poor housing and insufficient water supply.

The other major limiting factor of local chicken production is feed, in terms of both quantity and quality (Mohamed and Abate 1995). The nutritional status of local laying hens from chemical analysis of crop contents indicated that protein was below the requirement for optimum egg production and the deficiency is more serious during the short rainy and dry seasons.

### **Opportunities of local chicken production**

Most consumers in Ethiopia prefer to buy local chicken from village producers, since they are considered to be tasty and better suited for preparation of the traditional chicken sauce (locally called 'doro wot'). Eggs from local chicken are often favored because of their deep yellow colored yolks. As a result, free ranging local chicken are in higher demand and fetch higher market prices in urban markets (ILRI 1995).

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**Corresponding author: Mr. Guesh Fesaha, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Department of animal production and technology, Adigrat University, Ethiopia**

**Email id: [gueshfesaha2001@gmail.com](mailto:gueshfesaha2001@gmail.com)**

**Phone number: +251910964199 Fax: 0344452115**