

**INTERVENTIONS FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE OF POULTRY-BASED  
POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROJECTS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF  
EHLANZENI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

By

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509

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## ABSTRACT

Poultry-based PAPs are important to improve the livelihoods of rural communities. The environments in which they operate determine their ability to succeed in terms of self-reliance and income generation capabilities. A positive adequate and supportive extension service enables the PAPs to contribute to food security and job creation. However, in South Africa despite the government, and NGOs huge investment in the PAPs, high mortalities of the poultry, and ineffectiveness in reducing food and nutrition insecurity, remain major concerns because most of them collapse soon after cessation of donor or government funding. Information on why most of the PAPs fail is still inadequate. Thus, the main objective of current study was to characterize poultry-based PAPs in order to suggest intervention strategies to strengthen their performance. The specific objectives were to: (a) identify the constraints to the successful implementation of poultry-based PAPs; (b) determine the coping strategies applied in poultry-based PAPs; and (c) suggest interventions for improved performance of the poultry-based PAPs. This case study was undertaken in Bushbuckridge Municipality of Ehlanzeni District in Mpumalanga Province. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques were applied in the two-phased study. Purposive sampling was used to select ordinary members and chairpersons of PAPs as well as some government officials who served as respondents. In phase 1 of the study face-to-face interviews were conducted using open-ended questions with 10 Chairpersons, 20 ordinary members and 5 government officials involved with poultry-based PAPs. Qualitative data were analyzed using Atlas ti7.0.81. Thereafter, the qualitative results of phase 1 were consolidated to produce a questionnaire administered to (n=16) focus group participants of the same categories of respondents. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was used to analyse data and to compute the means of ranks assigned to perceptions relating constraints, coping strategies and intervention strategies in terms of institutional, production, marketing and sustainability. The results of phase 2 revealed that most of the 116 respondents (57 %) were members of poultry-based PAPs in the northern region of Bushbuckridge local Municipality. Females constituted more than half (58 %) of the respondents. The respondents were mainly 51-60 years old (39 %), closely followed by those aged 36-50 years (37 %). Only (13 %) of the respondents were 35 years old. With respect to the highest level of education attained, (45 %) of the respondents had completed primary schooling. An almost similar proportion (44 %) had secondary school education but had not matriculated. The remainder had never attended school. The respondents experience in PAPs was greatly variable. Slightly more than half of them (54 %) had been members of their projects for 5-10 years. Approximately, (25 %) had been involved in the PAPs for 10-15 years,

with the rest ranging from 1-5 years (3 %) and also at least 15 years (17 %). It was revealed that the top ranked constraints facing poultry-based PAPs in Bushbuckridge were: Lack of regulation of poultry feed, lack of government start-up capital/subsidy, inadequate training, especially with respect to financial management and inadequate markets. Buying chicken feed in small quantities from middlemen, use of substandard day-old chicks, purchasing water from people having boreholes, and selling produce to the local community at reduced prices were the top ranked coping strategies that PAPs relied on. The top ranked intervention strategies proposed to deal with the challenges faced by PAPs were: develop a funding strategy, regulate prices of chicken feed, upgrade available infrastructure, develop marketing outlet points, and offer tailor-made training that includes financial management and record keeping. It is recommended that in order to ensure sustainability feasibility studies should be conducted prior to implementation of the poultry-based PAPs. This would eliminate the possibility of running 'hand to mouth' PAPs. The need for introducing appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems was also evident.

**Key words:** Intervention, project, poverty alleviation, poultry and successful PAP