

Country Report: Angola

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POULTRY production in Angola is a traditional domestic activity practised mainly by women and children. It is very important and can be divided into the commercial poultry sector (modern semi-industrial and industrial) on the periphery of the big towns, and the traditional or family sector. The commercial sector involves large investments in the acquisition of poultry, equipment, medication, vaccines, food, etc. In contrast, traditional poultry production practised in rural and suburban areas generally does not involve investments (K. Kama and O. Afonso, pers. comm.). The main constraints to traditional poultry production are instability in the rural areas, shortage of feed and diseases especially Newcastle disease (ND) which kills about 50–80% of chickens each year in the villages. Consequently, ND is a serious problem in areas where appropriate hygiene and prophylaxis are lacking. ND is a contagious viral disease, which can quickly spread through flocks. It appears with higher frequency during the dry weather between June and August.

Background

After Angolan independence, commercial poultry production was given special attention. It was practised in big State-owned institutions that were supervised by the central body of the Ministry of Agriculture until the start of privatisation in 1988. The last structure, which coordinated and orientated poultry production, was a National Program of Poultry. Its actions were essentially to support commercial poultry activity as well as to stimulate and encourage small-scale family poultry production with the introduction of improved rustic breeds known as Haro Sex Link and Nera Sex Link imported from Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Because of organisational and logistical difficulties, activities were discontinued. The National Livestock Directorate was not involved in extension activities organised by the National Department of Training and Veterinary Extension and the Agriculture Development Institute. Consequently, the rural areas were left without structured interventions for small livestock, especially chickens (K. Kama, pers. comm.). This was brought about by the disbanding of specialised services that existed during the colonial period. Unfortunately, they were not replaced by others that could guarantee the continuity of assistance to the small farmers and peasants. New services with polyvalent (multidisciplinary) extension workers who could attend to this type of activity were also not created.

ND was first diagnosed in Angola in 1957 (Sousa 1973). Preventive sanitary measures were not rigorously and sustainably applied in rural areas for many years, although the rural population before the big armed conflicts accounted for more than 60% of the Angolan population, or around 12 000 000.

A survey of rural family production units in nine provinces in 1997 showed that an average of 40% of the national population lives in rural areas (varying from 21% to 61% according to province) (Proj. ref. Cap. Gest. Econ. and FAO 1997). The entire population owns poultry and small livestock and the population is estimated to be around 6 000 000.

Newcastle Disease Control

Until 1991, the diagnosis of ND (pseudo-fowl pest) was carried out in two laboratories using haemagglutination and haemagglutination (HI) tests, and the immune response to vaccination was evaluated using HI.

Preventive measures

The National Directorate of Livestock introduced a Preventive Health Program for the commercial poultry sector which consists of a set schedule of

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vaccinations for breeders and laying chickens. Although ND is not a problem in the commercial poultry industry, monitoring is needed.

The first vaccination is given during the first week with Hitchner B1. Subsequent vaccinations are given at the third, 8th and 13th week with La Sota clone. They are all administered in drinking water. From the 22nd week, chickens are vaccinated each 4 months with the La Sota clone. Other vaccines, anthelmintics, vitamins and anti-stress medication are also administered. All of these are given in drinking water. For broilers, the vaccines are administered only on the 4th and 15th day.

However, this program has not been implemented in rural, urban and suburban areas for reasons discussed previously, as well as inappropriate dose format and thermolability of the vaccines.

Cost recovery strategy

Economic restructuring has brought about economic difficulties. This is shown by the low budget distributed to the agricultural sector, which contributes to a lack of human and material resources. Thus, stock breeders and village farmers must share in the costs of preventive services, especially vaccines and laboratory analysis.

Changes are needed in the structure of livestock, veterinary and extension services, and farming organisations. Therefore, rural areas must change to strategies worked out many years ago for the semi-industrial and industrial poultry sectors. Of course, the introduction of new measures must be done gradually.

Problems of Poultry Development and Research

As previously discussed, the Angolan poultry production sectors have been viewed differently, especially for commercial (semi-industrial and industrial) poultry production on the one hand, and for traditional poultry production on the other.

Traditional poultry production has been given relatively little attention because of lack of coherent policies.

Therefore, Angolan poultry production has suffered severe shortages, especially of maize, a basic component of rations, in these last years, generally because of organisational and economic constraints. The persistent instability in the rural areas also contributed to decreased development of poultry production. In some provinces, production declines have been observed because of the permanently displaced population (N'salambi 1999).

The following factors influence traditional poultry production:

- The poor conditions of hygiene and non-existent application of appropriate preventive health measures.
- Lack of accurate knowledge of animal species distribution at the national level because no national livestock census has been undertaken. Animal species distribution was not a part of the survey of nine provinces mentioned previously.
- Political instability led to an interruption of diagnostic and research activities within the Veterinary Research Institute (IIV). Vaccine production ceased, equipment and materials were destroyed or stolen and the human resource base was diminished. Consequently, ND monitoring and control activities ceased.
- Low priority for traditional poultry production because of indefinite or ill-defined development policies. Therefore, only immediate research priorities are addressed.

Development Prospects

The existence of markets for poultry products and a poultry production tradition are two fundamental factors which might drive poultry production once the organisational problems and other problems have been solved, especially the lack of livestock extension and spread of available technology.

Therefore, the Veterinary Research Institute plans to undertake progressively the following actions:

- recommence laboratory diagnostic activities;
- undertake a study of local poultry breeds, characterise them and undertake a survey of ND in the rural areas; and
- participate in experimental technology in collaboration with interested public institutions and communities, and participate with national and international NGOs.

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