



TPGS
Tropical Poultry
Genetic Solutions

***Stakeholders' Views on the Establishment of a
Tropical Poultry Platform (TROP)***

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ADDIS ABABA



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1. Background

In the last quarter of the century, demographic factors as well as progressive increases in average incomes and urbanisation have engendered considerable demand for animal source foods. According to a recent study, livestock-derived food demand for protein is expected to increase globally by 14 percent per person and by 38 percent in total between 2020 and 2050. Demand growth is expected to be the fastest in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The demand for poultry egg and meat, which are the most efficient livestock production systems in converting feed into high-quality food and among the most sought-after nutritious animal source food, is said to be an important component of this surge in demand.¹ With the right organisation and support, it should be possible to enable smallholder chicken producers in the Tropics to cater to this market signal and thereby transform their livestock into more sustainable, climate-resilient, and profitable livelihoods and thereby help enhance wealth creation and retention and promotion of healthy diets.

To enable the rapid expansion of the poultry industry to meet the increasing demand for eggs and chicken meat, several programmes have been implemented in different parts of the Tropics. However, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners are finding it difficult to have a firm grasp as to who does what and in which location. Within this context of limited understanding of the workings of poultry initiatives, indications are that many poultry-focused interventions are characterised by duplication of efforts, with limited, if any, synergistic effects. Such a lack of a joined-up approach to poultry value chain development represents lost opportunities for supporting desirable productivity, gender-aware employment, climate change adaptation, wealth, and human health outcomes.

Taking the village chicken production system to new scales of operation and transforming the small-scale chicken business in the Tropics demand optimal use of the available organisational and financial resources and effective coordination of the various stakeholders at all levels.

A review of the accessible literature and consultations with key stakeholders in the poultry industry have revealed the presence of several forums where poultry-related issues and lessons of experience are being exchanged. However, most of these are organised by the scientific and business community in the global North and remain not only academic in content but also focus on high-end poultry and its challenges. The few such platforms that have a focus on the poultry industry in developing regions have either a narrow focus on trade and investment facilitation or operate within the agenda set by establishment interest groups in advanced economies. Thus, these platforms are largely inaccessible to and do not reflect the needs and aspirations of most poultry producers and associated value chain actors in the Tropics.

Against the above background, for some time now, the Tropical Poultry Genetics Solutions (TPGS) team at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), has been contemplating engaging with key stakeholders to establish a mechanism - provisionally called the *Tropical Poultry Platform (TROP)* - that could integrate previously scattered initiatives through facilitating effective collective action. This report summarises the outcomes of the consultations made so far. The remainder of this report is organised as follows: Section Two provides an overview of the preliminary thoughts on TROP. Section Three provides details on the outcomes of the consultations made. Section Four provides a synthesis of the findings and outlines the proposed next steps.

¹ Komarek et al. 2021. "Income, consumer preferences, and the future of livestock-derived food demand." *Global Environmental Change* 70 (2021).

2. An Overview of TROP

TROP seeks to serve as an honest broker of fostering dialogue and facilitating debate among concerned players to co-create solutions that would address identified challenges. It also aims at enhancing the visibility of the poultry industry in global discourses on, for instance, food systems transformation, climate change and low carbon economy, climate-smart livestock, and the deliberations on the fulfillment of sustainable development goals - SDGs.

The membership of TROP is expected to be drawn out from the following key stakeholders: small and medium-scale poultry producers – represented by their (apex) organisations; national Innovation Platforms or national forums for poultry stakeholders; breeding companies, hatcheries, and other poultry technology suppliers; academic and research community; leading poultry sector development organisations; and investors/development partners.

Thus, occupying a strategic niche at the science-praxis-advocacy nexus in support of transforming dual-purpose poultry that serves smallholder farmers to a more market-oriented and profitable system, TROP is expected to build on the gains of the myriad interventions pursued so far and generate value addition to the existing platforms. TROP is expected to have the following **strategic objectives** and associated **core functions**:

i) Promote knowledge management and communications - **KMC. Core functions** include:

- a. Document and share success stories of enviable practices and lessons learnt.
- b. Produce policy briefs and advocacy materials on topics of relevance primarily for a global audience; national decision-makers; and/or the business community.
- c. Popularise proven genetic innovations, allied poultry technology packages (such as feed and health innovations), and mechanical technology advances.

ii) Catalyse evidence-based actions to inform policies and institutions – **Policies and Institutions. Core functions** include:

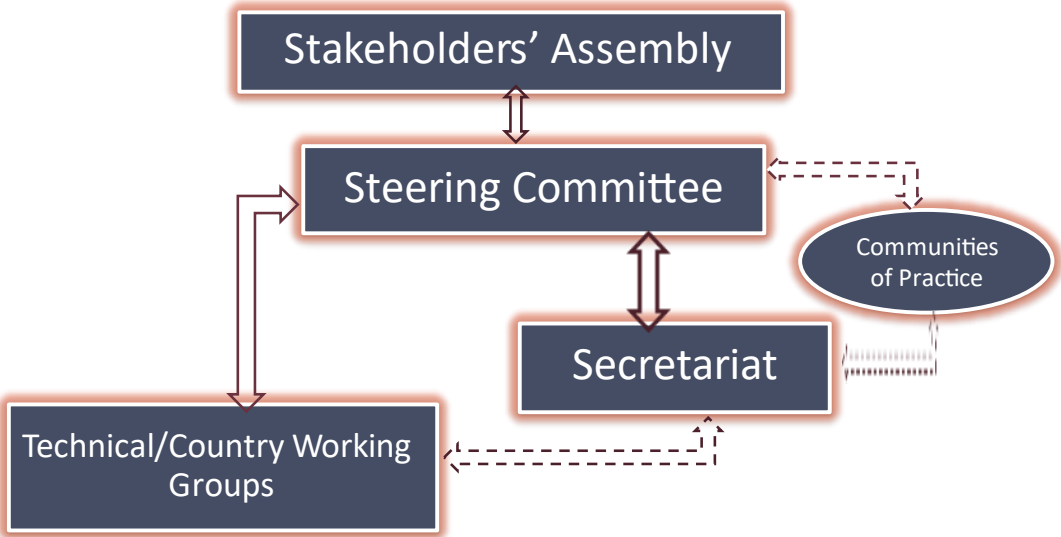
- d. Help build the leadership capacity of national institutions and poultry value chain actors to enable them to engage better with decision-makers.
- e. Support national stakeholders in the formulation/review of poultry development programmes/strategies.
- f. Help national stakeholders in their advocacy efforts for the formulation of appropriate policies.
- g. Mobilise international and in-country capacity to support poultry development in selected priority countries to demonstrate the potential of the poultry sub-sector.

The following constitute TROP's **instruments of engagement** - mechanisms through which TROP discharges its core functions: convene periodic and theme-based meetings at appropriate levels of organisation as well as scientific events; web presence; publications (including periodicals, and other knowledge products); create 'communities of practice' on specific themes; participate in global events of poultry significance; promote strategic alliances with like-minded organisations/networks; and co-organise series of 'Tropical Poultry Shows'.

It is proposed to operationalise TROP into two interrelated phases: Phase I - to lay the necessary organisation and management structures, and Phase II to implement activities as per TROP’s charter and plans. During Phase I, grants from investors are expected to cover the full funding requirements of the nascent entity. Whereas during Phase II, the bulk of funds required to operationalise TROP will have to be raised through a combination of mission-generated revenue sources: membership fees, conference registration fees, advertisement fees from information providers, event participation fees (e.g., poultry shows), fees charged by TROP for specific services rendered to some of its. Given the multitude of tasks that TROP is expected to accomplish, grants from investors are likely to continue to finance some of TROP’s basic operations.

In terms of organisational structure, three interrelated bodies are proposed to constitute the governance structure of TROP (Figure 1). These are the **Stakeholders’ Assembly (SA)**, which is the main constituency and the highest decision-making body of the Platform; the **Steering Committee (SC)** which would provide strategic guidance and oversight to the main operational arm of the Platform, which is the **Secretariat**. Upon the approval of the SC, technical/country working groups (TWGs) would be formed on an ad hoc basis to advise the SC on overcoming identified challenges. Moreover, with the knowledge of the SC, **communities of practice (CoP)** on specific themes could be established with the view to generating and sharing knowledge, promoting collective learning, and influencing TROP’s agenda.

Figure 1: Proposed governance structure of TROP



3. Outcomes of the Preliminary Consultations Held

Consultations were held continually from January to July 2023 with a total of 43 people from 30 organisations deemed important for moving the TROP agenda forward. The consultation process was conducted largely online, but in a few cases, in-person consultations were also made both in Ethiopia and overseas (see Annex 1 for details on the identity of persons with whom consultations have been made). The checklist of issues that guided the consultation revolved mainly around the relevance of TROP, views on major activities of the Platform, compatibility of the proposed organisational structure with the proposed functions of the *Platform*, the potential roles each of the stakeholders could play in support of TROP, and suggestions to make TROP financially viable (see Annex 2 for details).

“TROP would be an ideal space for initiating and supporting the design of cross-country poultry development programmes and for leading a synthesis of lessons learning from such schemes.” *Tsigereda Fekadu, Lead Executive Officer, Livestock and Fisheries Development, MoA, Ethiopia.*

3.1 In-country partners – public sector actors

Consultations of varying intensity have been held with a range of in-country professionals from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, and Tanzania, who have been working for different public sector entities in academia, research, and national ministries of agriculture.

All consulted underlined the existence of an organisational void that TROP could ably fill. To this extent, there was a consensus regarding the **relevance** and timeliness of establishing TROP. A participant regarded TROP as a step in the right direction. Some maintained that TROP will make it possible for enhancing the understanding of the membership on the nature and breadth of poultry-based initiatives being promoted in the Tropics. Moreover, TROP, it was noted, will play an instrumental role in revamping old partnerships and creating new ones. As one poultry researcher from Ethiopia observed, a properly functioning TROP will go a long way toward promoting evidence-based interventions and professionalism in poultry development. Citing the wide-ranging benefits that their country has obtained from a similar platform in the dairy sector, researchers consulted from the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO) underlined the timeliness of the initiative and expressed their hope that a proper functioning TROP will bridge an important organisational shortcoming in the poultry sector in the Tropics. This appreciation was further informed by the pertinence of TROP’s **objectives and core functions** to support the transformation of the traditional poultry production system into a more market-informed system backed by evidence-based policies and institutional arrangements.

“Kenya has benefited greatly from supra national platforms in the dairy sector. The poultry industry has lacked such a platform, thereby limiting the full exploitation of the potentials of the industry. TROP is, therefore, a welcome initiative.” *Ochieng Ouko, Research Scientist, KALRO, Kenya.*

Some of the professionals consulted expressed their hope that the core functions would be unpacked in due course as part of implementing TROP and that effort needs to be exerted to ensure that there is no duplication of activities with what other platforms/forums have been doing. In this connection, some stakeholders (e.g., those from Ethiopia and Kenya) emphasised that the KMC thrust of TROP should explicitly embrace issues of input supply and market linkages for producer organisations. Furthermore, it was suggested that TROP should identify key regional organisations (e.g., regional economic communities, RECS, in Africa) and work towards advocating the causes of the traditional poultry industry so that poultry/livestock-focused initiatives get deserved attention in regional agricultural plans and similar other development programmes. Building on the idea of mobilising international and in-country capacity to support poultry development in selected priority countries, some participants also saw a clear value addition to TROP if it were to be engaged with initiating cross-border (i.e., sub-regional) poultry development programmes and facilitating information exchange and experience sharing down the line. Some members of the research community suggested TROP consider running a scientific publication (e.g., a peer-reviewed journal) dedicated to advancing the science and practice of poultry development in the Tropics.

Considering the enormity of tasks expected of TROP and the multitude of members that could constitute the *Platform*, in the short term it was suggested that it would be operationally difficult to embrace the Tropics in its entirety all at once. Thus, a consensus had been reached to the effect that **TROP should initially embrace some or all the eight TPGS countries²** whilst still **maintaining its Tropics focus**.

There was also agreement that the proposed **organisational structure of TROP (*form*)** - though presented in an outline form - was believed to enable the discharge of its *functions*. As regards the proposal by ILRI concerning its desire to lead and host TROP in the interim – until a more suitable institutional home base could be found – was accepted by all as a reasonable suggestion. In buttressing this view, several of the professionals with whom consultations were made underlined that ILRI has a track record of decades of implementing poultry-based interventions through engaging a wide range of industry players, which bodes well for **ILRI leading TROP's establishment and operationalisation**. It was also pointed out that, as the main initiator of the idea of an overarching space for poultry in the Tropics and considering the effort that ILRI has exerted in conceptualising TROP, there would be no better agency than ILRI that could house and nurture the *Platform* at least in the early days of its existence. Some even

“It’s natural that platforms of TROP type charge agreed annual membership fees. However, considering significant differences in the financial standing of the different category of members, TROP should consider charging differentiated levels of subscription/membership fees.”
Richard Osei-Amponsah, Associate Professor, Animal Breeding and Genetics, University of Ghana, Legon; President, Ghana Society of Animal Production.

² These are Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

suggested that ILRI consider TROP as an integral part of its operations in the foreseeable future.

The above notwithstanding, some noted the legal difficulty ILRI might face concerning collecting revenue and channeling the money thus raised towards operationalising the *Platform*. Given this, an understanding was reached to investigate further as to how best hosting arrangements could be configured so that the administration function of the Secretariat, revenue collection mandates of the *Platform*, and oversight of the substantive work of TROP are streamlined.

All consulted noted the importance of playing an active **role in operationalising the *Platform***. One such manifestation is the payment of agreed annual membership fees. Within this context, though, and considering the austere financial situation of government entities and some of the poultry value chain institutional actors, the consensus was to institute a differentiated level of the membership fee that takes cognisance of the affordability and financial capacity of members. In response to the question of readiness of those consulted to allot quality time for managing the affairs of the Platform, all expressed interest in providing leadership through, for instance, occupying a seat in the proposed

Steering Committee. Moreover, especially those representing agriculture/livestock academic and

research institutes talked of their high-level professional competence and expressed interest in, and availability for, providing subject matter-specific support to **“Technical/Country Working Groups”** as and when required. Some, such as those at Ethiopia’s Ministry of Agriculture, also broadened the conceptualisation of “roles” to include co-convening and/or hosting meetings that TROP would organise at different levels and in different thematic areas.

In terms of potential *Platform sources of finance*, most noted that the proposal has identified plausible options. Some (e.g.,

“The proposed organisational structure of TROP is fit for purpose and it is not necessary to make changes at this point; unless such changes are deemed necessary in future.” *Ezekiel Goromela, Zonal Director, TALIRI Naliendele.*

KALRO) even suggested that they could enjoin private sector actors to provide information about their businesses using a TROP medium and make payments as defined by the *Platform*. Still, it was highlighted that more information is needed as to how similarly organised platforms are being financed and assess the extent to which lessons of experience could be drawn out from the same for TROP consideration. Moreover, given the developmental benefits that TROP is likely to engender and the associated public good nature of the activities of

TROP, the professionals consulted emphasised the need for giving due attention to soliciting funds from development partners/investors. This notwithstanding, some voices underlined the need for making TROP a private sector-driven enterprise capable of taking initiatives as it sees fit and steering the agenda of

“In electing Steering Committee members attention should be given to fair representation of stakeholders. To ensure women in leadership, consideration should be made to cede a certain number of seats to women poultry value chain associations or agencies.” *Ebenezer Agyemang-Duah, Animal Production Directorate, MoFA, Ghana.*

“TROP should strive to involve private companies to ensure its organisational and financial sustainability.” *Ngo Thi Kim Cuc, Deputy Director General, NIAS, Vietnam.*

poultry development in the Tropics and enhancement of its visibility in global arenas independently of other influences.

3.2 In-country partners – private sector entities

3.2.1 Private poultry businesses

“TROP can play a positive role in helping solve challenges to do with import and export regulation of inputs and end products, streamlining of information sharing from such entities as The World Organisation for Animal Health.”
Soheil Sobhi, Business Development Executive, Silverlands Tanzania Ltd.

Consultations were also held individually with three different private sector actors operating in Ethiopia (EthioChicken), Tanzania (Silverlands and AKM Glitters), and Zimbabwe (Hamara Group).

All consulted private sector actors, who are influential poultry businesses in their respective countries, see the **relevance** of TROP in solving challenges of a systemic nature that affect most of the key industry players. All also appreciated that TROP could provide important learnings not just to those directly involved in poultry businesses but also to the research and academic communities. One area that was also emphasised from these consultations is the need for

synthesising learning around measures instituted to tackle obstacles that prevent small-scale farmers from

“The core functions are doable; they also address pertinent areas of concern in the poultry industry. However, all core functions may not be equally relevant to all stakeholders: relevance varies between stakeholders depending on respective mandates and orientations.” *Justin Benade, Managing Director, Ethiochicken, Ethiopia.*

“There have been some resounding successes in certain countries in isolated areas of expertise, including technical innovations, financial structuring, or commercialisation capacity. Platforms for sharing success and failures within the diverse areas of poultry initiatives are needed. TROP responds to such a necessity.” *Ezra Prescott, Manager, Hamara Group, Zimbabwe.*

having adequate and reliable access to markets and militate against commercialising their activities.

All saw the pertinence of the **organisational structure** to the functions being envisaged under TROP. At any rate, it was observed that the structural viability of TROP will have to be judged against the specific responsibilities it would shoulder when it commences operation. Within this context, all saw the importance of **ILRI housing the Platform** and providing the needed leadership in the initial phase.

Some also argue in favour of ILRI hosting the Platform as a semi-independent organisation.

“I have the utmost trust in ILRI to provide TROP with the necessary guidance and leadership.”
Elizabeth Swai, CEO at AKM Glitters Company Ltd., Tanzania.

In terms of **operationalisation of TROP**, all consulted expressed their readiness to support the *Platform* in any way they can. Membership fee is something they could consider paying provided that the fees are reasonably set and benefits from membership into TROP are more clearly communicated. Some considered payment of membership fee as a

demonstration of interest in TROP and argued that this would bode well for the financial sustainability of the *Platform*. In addition, all expressed their openness to serve in leadership roles if elected. Most of those consulted were unsure if they would support operationalisation of TROP through advertising their products/services through TROP and paying advertisement fees for the same. They noted that such a process would be more relevant for tradable (i.e., export) products such as genetic lines.

With regards to **revenues** for operationalising TROP, some suggested that TROP should explore opportunities for additional government funding from partner/member countries.

3.2.2 National forums for poultry stakeholders

Here consultations were held with representatives of the Ethiopian Poultry Producers and Processors Association (EPPPA); the Association of Women in Poultry Value Chain and Small-Scale Poultry Farmers Association (Ghana); and Poultry Farmers Associations from two Counties of Kenya.³

All consulted underlined the **relevance** of the *Platform* idea and its potential value addition to the operation of the national and sub-national poultry forums. Participants from Kenya cited the success of other commodity platforms (such as those to do with potato and dairy) as good indicators of the validity and viability of establishing TROP.

Sharing of insights and experiences on success stories in poultry development, including workable knowledge on facilitation of inter-regional trade in poultry and poultry products, and information exchange on innovations and technologies, are among the core functions and activities that were identified as attractive propositions.

“TROP has a huge potential to facilitate cross-country experience sharing among poultry businesses and to promote information exchange on a range of products and services that could help transform traditional poultry.” *Etana Degefu, Board Member, EPPPA.*

All consulted agreed **ILRI becoming a host for TROP**, for it is considered “stable” and has a large footprint in developing countries through the various projects it has

been implementing in partnership with key livestock stakeholders. There was an understanding that if ILRI were to host the Secretariat this entity will have to be located on one of ILRI's campuses. It was, however, suggested that given the difficulty of reaching out effectively to the entire membership from one location, as and when TROP expands, consideration should be given to creating TROP nodes in different parts of the Tropics.

“TROP is a welcome news, and we are grateful for the *initiative*. Realising the potentials of the poultry industry in Africa demands a multi-sectoral approach that puts the interests of producers, the majority of whom are women, at the centre of its operations. We hope TROP will take cognisance of this!” *Victoria Norgbey, National President, Association of Women in Poultry Value Chain, Ghana.*

³ Kenya is yet to establish a country-wide association/platform of poultry producers/processors. Such forums however exist at County levels.

Whilst agreeing in principle to the idea of ILRI hosting TROP in the intervening period, some doubted whether ILRI's mandate would allow it to raise revenue from different sources as envisaged in the PowerPoint presentation that served as the basis for the consultations.

All appreciated the proposed staggered manner through which TROP is envisaged to be implemented: to **start work on TPGS countries** and move to embrace other countries in due course. Within this context, some identified the need for taking steps to involve India in TROP as quickly as possible, given their substantial experience that could be of value to informing poultry sector development in parts of Africa south of the Sahara.

"The leadership of County Poultry Platforms involves several learned men and women with grassroots experience in diverse aspects of poultry value chain development. If elected to the management board of TROP they could provide useful practical insights into the workings of poultry in Africa south of the Sahara." Patrick Kinyanjui, Member of Nakuru County Poultry Platform.

All consulted expressed their interest in playing **leadership roles in TROP** – if elected. As regards the issue of **membership fees**, the consensus view is that once sensitised about the benefits that would accrue to them, members – including national poultry forums – would be willing to pay agreed-upon membership fees. However, opinions differed regarding the level of fees to be paid and their reliability as a dependable source considering the substantial resources required to staff the Platform Secretariat and fund its operations. Some opted for a flat membership fee (Ghana) so that every member can then demand equal voice and service, while others argued in favour of a differentiated level of membership fees based on relative financial strength (Kenya; Ghana – women). Citing their own experiences, some association leaders (Ethiopia) and national innovation platform members (Cambodia) expressed their reservations on whether membership fees could be expected to be a reliable source of income for TROP.

Regarding additional **revenue** streams for TROP, it was suggested that as and when national poultry associations mobilise funds through the direct involvement of TROP, a portion of this fund should be ceded to TROP as a means of enhancing the *Platform's* revenue base.

"Local NGOs such as LDC may find it difficult to pay membership fees on a regular basis; yet, our institution could consider making a small contribution. TROP needs to explore in earnest more viable revenue sources such as organisation of events and training courses, service provision for a fee, and donor investments." Chhay Ty, Deputy Director, LDC, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Leaders of in-country poultry forums consulted noted – directly or indirectly – that before implementing TROP in full force, it would be necessary to observe firsthand the environment within which poultry producers and processors operate and understand the diverse challenges they face. This will help TROP devise its strategies in ways that would respond better to real-world challenges.

3.3 Global private sector players

The first private sector player with a global reach consulted for this purpose was the Netherlands-based Hendrix Genetics company. The consultations took both online and in-person forms. A senior representative contacted at Hendrix Genetics appreciated the relevance of the TROP brand but underlined that poultry stakeholders at local/national levels are better placed to express whether they have a real demand for a TROP-type structure. Furthermore, she observed that it would be better to try first a “small platform” and build from there rather than make big plans and fail to realise them. In response to a query from the company representative regarding the physical form which TROP will take, it was explained that TROP will be a virtual space facilitated by a small Secretariat based at the ILRI campus in Addis Ababa. This physical structure would be responsible administratively to ILRI. However, the Secretariat of TROP would be undertaking tasks that the TROP Steering Committee would require it to accomplish. In this regard, the representative appreciated the pertinence of the proposal for ILRI to serve as an interim home base for TROP until a more suitable institution could be found. As regards financing of TROP, she noted – that - in principle - Hendrix Genetics could favourably consider paying a prescribed membership. However, the extent to which the company would pay advertisement fees depends on the

“TROP raises same concerns that we also have; so many initiatives but maybe not with enough commercial focus to develop a sustainable poultry business. Also, it would be good to combine information sources more specifically for challenging environments and TROP could be that platform.” *Naomi Duijvesteijn, R & D Director, Traditional Poultry, Hendrix Genetics, the Netherlands.*

potential added value of TROP to the business of the company. In general, she observed that TROP needs funds to be made available upfront to help demonstrate its viability, after which diverse sources of finances could be explored.

Facilitated through Hendrix Genetics, a total of five Netherlands-based private sector companies involved in diverse aspects of poultry businesses, namely equipment, feed, enterprise development, hygiene and sanitation were consulted. The discussion with almost all of them took place in one location – on the premises of Hendrix Genetics

Headquarters at Boxmeer, the Netherlands – benefited from an extended PowerPoint presentation on the subject matter and plenary question-and-answer sessions. In sum, the participants:

- a. viewed the idea of establishing a forum that brings together key poultry stakeholders from both the Global South and the Global North as worth pursuing.
- b. appreciated the potential of TROP in enhancing the visibility of the poultry sub-sector globally; the need for engagement in global discourses to underscore the importance of investment in poultry - and the ramifications this would have in expanding their businesses.
- c. agreed that ILRI would be a preferred place to house this initiative and provide the necessary technical leadership.
- d. noted that such a structure (TROP) would have to be established first perhaps with the support of development partners and then try to engage private sector actors.
- e. could – in principle - consider participating as members, paying membership fees and providing support to the Platform in ways compatible with their respective companies’ business and developmental objectives.
- f. would be more engaged with TROP if it could demonstrate its capability of supporting meaningful business-to-business partnerships and facilitating deal-making operations.

This later point came out very strongly throughout the discussion so much so that in a follow up communication a senior manager in one of the companies consulted had this to say: “For now we are not interested to invest in the TROP project....If we can get some new introductions with poultry stakeholders and open new businesses in Ethiopia or other African countries I am sure we can contribute to the project....”

3.4 Investors (Development Partners)

Here, consultations were made with pertinent professionals at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and at the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). “Good thinking; TROP responds to felt needs”, was the initial reaction of the person contacted at the BMGF. He further suggested that TROP could learn from the organisation and management aspects of such global platforms as the European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders (EFFAB).

While acknowledging that some subsidy will have to be provided to operationalise TROP in the early days, advice was provided to identify who the “investors’ could be and to exert further work on the feasibility and reliability of the different revenue streams. In this regard, it was noted, instituting user/advertisement fees from information providers through TROP could be an unrealistic proposition that needed to be considered carefully.

The online interaction held with Dr. Anna Okello of ACIAR, who has been the point person for ACIAR’s support to TPGS, yielded important insights into the timeliness, relevance, and feasibility of TROP. While appreciating the preliminary thoughts given to TROP and the effort made to consult widely to gauge interest in this proposed organisational structure, she noted the need for better framing the business sense that TROP could make to private sector stakeholders. This notwithstanding, she expressed the readiness of ACIAR to explore possibilities of advancing the TROP agenda as part of the portfolio of activities her institution would support to TPGS/ILRI in the new Australian financial year (i.e., 1st July 2023 to 30th June 2024).

“TROP is a logical progression from where TPGS is in Africa (with ACGG) and Southeast Asia (with AsCGG). TROP has the potential to enhance market access to several poultry technologies that may be needed to transform traditional poultry into semi-commercial systems. Moreover, she observed that a properly functioning TROP would respond both to the business interests of private sector actors as well as the developmental objectives of public sector agencies.”
Anna Okello, Research Programme Manager, Livestock Systems, ACIAR, Australia.

4. Concluding Remarks

This report has shown the substantial effort exerted to gather information on the relevance, functionality, organisational form, operational modality, and financial viability of the proposed Tropical Poultry Platform. The consultations spanned a wide spectrum of potential stakeholders that include sub-national poultry platforms; national agricultural/livestock research institutes; national ministries of agriculture/livestock; private sector players with national, sub-regional, and global reach; and global investors/development partners.

At the level of intent, those that operate at national/sub-national levels appear to endorse the idea of TROP and expressed willingness to move the agenda by being an integral part of the proposed organisational structure and through in-kind and membership fee contributions. However, most of the consulted stakeholders underlined the importance of some of the stakeholders from within Africa emphasised the need for identifying functions and activities that speak to different geographies. For instance, stakeholders in Eastern Africa suggested the importance of identifying functions that TROP could add value over and beyond what national Innovation Platforms would be able to do, including advocating the causes of the traditional poultry industry so that poultry/livestock-focused initiatives get deserved attention in regional agricultural plans and similar other development programmes.

The picture with large-scale private sector players is a little different, though. Whilst acknowledging the potential of TROP in terms of enhancing market shares for their respective products and services, they are unsure as to how TROP could play an instrumental role in translating this opportunity into concrete business deals. Consequently, most of the private sector players with global reach exhibited a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude towards supporting TROP. It must be pointed out that we had placed great hope on this category of stakeholders to provide the necessary seed funds to set in motion the establishment of TROP. On the other hand, investors that have been supporting ACGG and AsCGG to date have provided broad endorsement to the idea of establishing TROP, but the extent to which they would provide the required funding to get TROP off the ground will have to be worked out.

Going forward, it is proposed that **ILRI pursues a twin-track strategy to establish TROP** and garner the required support from all concerned.

- a. Given the current lukewarm reception TROP got from big private sector players, ILRI will have to invest its resources to **ensure that TPGS’s traditional donors support the establishment and operationalisation of TROP generously – at least for the first few years of TROP’s existence.** In this regard, **consideration should also be given to engaging the One CGIAR partnership**, for the issues that will have to be tackled under TROP could demand a depth of expertise and knowledge that can adequately be addressed through multi-actor collaboration across disciplines.
- a. Concurrently with the above, **ILRI either directly, or through the medium of established matchmaking business enterprises, needs to exert effort to progressively bring largescale private sector players in the chicken business into the TROP fold.** This would have to be achieved through, among others, **facilitating in-person and/or online knowledge-sharing sessions, pitches, and substantive transaction-centred dialogue platforms between poultry technology suppliers and the membership of national poultry coordination forums.** This undertaking could be one of the core activities of TROP in its early days of operation.

With its focus on the developing world, TROP is an ambitious initiative with no parallels in the poultry sub-sector. At all times, maintaining TROP's focus on the Tropics is critical because having a clear vision of the eventual destination will help in crafting viable long-term strategies to reach there and plausible short-term instruments to inform action on the ground. However, given resource limitations and the imperative of gathering experience in managing such a mammoth undertaking, it is essential that phasing and sequencing be considered in establishing TROP.

Thus, trusting that programme funding would be available to TROP, a proposal is hereby made to **prioritise establishing TROP involving only a few African countries, where ACGG has progressed furthest and/or where strong rapport with national stakeholders has already been established (such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania). Depending on resource availability, progress on the ground, and perceived relevance of TROP by others, ILRI could envisage expanding the reach of TROP to existing TPGS countries and beyond.** At any rate, it is critical to **study and strengthen national Innovation Platforms as the nucleus for the creation of such a supra-national poultry forum in the shape of TROP.** A short-term focus on selected TPGS countries has also the added value of enhancing learning-by-doing, which is so critical in informing scaling options. Furthermore, **thought should be given to learning from the developmental path of similarly constituted bodies such as TROP including the Global Dairy Platform and EFFAB.**

The above proposition is in line with the well-known principle in organisational development that is encapsulated in the following phrases: *Think Big, Act Small; Fail Forward with Brilliant Mistakes⁴ (if one must); and Expand/Scale Rapidly.*

⁴ In this context “failing forward” refers to a condition by which TROP managers possess attitudes that can accommodate failure and embrace wrong steps taken as learnings and steppingstones to future success. “Brilliant mistakes” are those whose costs to TROP would be greatly exceeded by the value of the learning they will leave behind. Thus, *failing forward with brilliant mistakes* is about nurturing a culture of continuous improvement in the organisation, management, and operationalisation of TROP.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of people consulted

No.	Potential stakeholders consulted			Date	Time (East African Time)	Remarks
	Name	Organisation	Position			
1.	Naomi Duijvesteijn	Hendrix Genetics, The Netherlands.	R & D Director, Traditional Poultry.	16 Jan	1:30 – 2:30 pm	Online
				02 June	9: 30 am – 5 pm	In-person
2.	Alfred de Vries	BMGF, USA.	Programme Officer.	19 Jan	12:00 noon – 1:00 pm	Online
3.	Ed Rege	Emerge Centre for Innovations – Africa, Kenya.	Founder, CEO, and Chairman.	03 Feb	3:00 – 4:30 pm	In-person
4.	Sheba Akinyi		Programme Officer.			
5.	Soheil Sobhi	Silverlands – Tanzania Ltd.	Business Development Executive.	09 Feb	10:00 – 11:00 am	Online
6.	Justin Benade	EthioChicken, Ethiopia.	Ethiopia Managing Director.	10 Feb	2:00 – 3:20 pm	In-person
7.	Richard Osei-Amponsah	University of Ghana; TPGS, Ghana.	Associate Professor; National Coordinator, TPGS – Ghana.	15 Feb	4:00 – 5:50 pm	Online
8.	Ezra Prescott	Hamara Group – Zimbabwe.	National Coordinator, TPGS	15 Feb	4:00 – 5:50 pm	Online
9.	Ezekiel Goromela	TALIRI, Tanzania.	Zonal Director.	15 Feb	4:00 – 5:50 pm	Online
10.	Ochieng Ouko	KALRO, Kenya.	Research Scientist	15 Feb	4:00 – 5:50 pm	Online
11.	Evans D. Ilatsia		Deputy Director General, Livestock Research Programmes, KALRO.			
12.	Tsigereda Fekadu	MoA, Ethiopia.	Lead Executive Officer, Livestock and Fisheries Development.	16 Feb	2:00 – 3:30 pm	In-person
13.	Melake Assefa		Lead Executive Officer, Livestock and Fisheries Development Extension.			
14.	Tilahun Degefa		Poultry Resource Development Expert.			
15.	Elizabeth Swai	AKM Glitters, Tanzania.	Founder and Executive Director.	17 Feb	10:00 – 10:30 am	Online
				22 March	02:00 – 02:30 pm	
16.	Adebabay Kebede	ARARI, Ethiopia.	Director, Andassa Livestock Research Centre.	20 Feb	8:30 – 9:30 am	Online
17.	Etana Degefu	EPPPA, Ethiopia.	Board Member ⁵ .	20 Feb	2:00 – 3:30 pm	In-person
18.	Birhanu Million		General Manager.			
19.	Ochieng Ouko	KALRO, Kenya.	Research Scientist.			
20.	Esther Omayio	Nandinate Poultry Association, Kenya.	Technical service provider; Livestock			

⁵ Also, ECG Poultry Farm and Meat Processing Plant Owner-Manager.

No.	Potential stakeholders consulted			Date	Time (East African Time)	Remarks
	Name	Organisation	Position			
			production Officer, Nandi County.	24 Feb	10:00 – 11:10 am	Online
21.	Patrick Kinyanjui	Nakuru County Poultry Platform, Kenya .	Member; Livestock production Officer, Nakuru County.			
22.	Ebenezer Agyeman-Duah	MoFA, Animal Production Directorate, Ghana .	Senior Agricultural Officer.			
23.	Victoria Norgbey	Association of Women in Poultry Value Chain, Ghana .	National President.	24 Feb	01:30 – 03:15 pm	Online
24.	Mavis Wobill		Secretary.			
25.	Pamela Agbotse		National Assistant Secretary; President, Greater Accra Region ⁶ .			
26.	Kennedy Bediako	SSPFA, Ghana .	President ⁷ .			
27.	Ricky Aboagye Poku	University of Ghana; TPGS, Ghana .	TPGS Project Assistant.			
28.	Ngo Thi Kim Cuc	NIAS, Vietnam .	Deputy Director General; National Coordinator, TPGS – Vietnam.	21 March	04:30 – 05:20 pm	Online
29.	Sothyra Tum	NAHPRI, Phnom Penh, Cambodia .	Director.	31 March	10:00 – 11:00 am	Online
30.	Chhay Ty	LDC, Phnom Penh, Cambodia .	Deputy Director.			
31.	Thijs Berkers	Trouwnutrition/Nutreco, The Netherlands	General Manager Middle East & Africa Export	21 April	11:00 am – 12:20 pm	Online
32.	Louis Vlaswinkel	Limagrain ⁸ Africa and Limagrain South Africa .	Head of Research.	02 May	05:00 – 06:15 pm	Online
33.	Calvin Fambisayi		Business Dev't Director - HQ RSA.			
34.	Gorden Mabuyaye		Head of Research.			

⁶ Also, CEO, Pamela Chicks and Feeds Ltd.

⁷ Also, Managing Director, Kenbeb Company Ltd.

⁸ Limagrain is an agricultural cooperative and a multi-crop international seed group. In Africa, Limagrain is the biggest shareholder in Seed Co.

No.	Potential stakeholders consulted			Date	Time (East African Time)	Remarks
	Name	Organisation	Position			
35.	Takemore Chagomoka	Seed Co ⁹ , South Africa.	Regional Manager, West & Central Africa.			
36.	Godfred Afrifa Owusu		Regional Sales Agronomist, West & Central Africa.			
37.	Stef Roijmans	Schippers Group (Health), The Netherlands.	Sales Manager, Africa.	02 and 05 June	02 June: 2 – 5pm; 05 June (am) – office & farm visit	In-person
38.	Robert Whittington		Global Animal ID Sales Manager.	05 June	10 – 11 am	
39.	Edwin van Kol	Nusana (Feed), The Netherlands.	General Manager.	02 June	2 – 5 pm	
40.	Ramzy Yousef	Agromax (Equipment), The Netherlands.	Director.			
41.	Jasper Heerkens	Aeres University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands.	Researcher and Teacher - Poultry Husbandry and Welfare.			
42.	Teus Korevaar	Aeres Training Centre International (Capacity Building & Enterprise Development), The Netherlands.	Project Developer & Trainer.			
43.	Anna Okello	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Australia.	Research Programme Manager, Livestock Systems.	20 July	8:30 – 9:30 am	Online

⁹ Seed Co is a certified seed company operational in over 15 African countries.

Annex 2: Checklist of issues presented for discussion

A) Does TROP respond to demand? Will it be relevant?

B) What are your views on the proposed objectives and core functions of TROP?

- * Any additional roles for TROP?

- * Any inappropriate core function?

C) What are your views on the proposed form/organisational structure of TROP?

D) Any thoughts regarding ILRI's proposal for it to serve as an interim home base for TROP until a more suitable institution could be found.

E) What roles could your institution play in operationalising TROP?

- * Willing and able to pay agreed upon membership fee

- * Willing to play leadership roles if elected – in the following structures:

- Steering Committee?
- Technical/Country Working Group?

- * Interested in providing information through TROP publications (or media outlets) and pay advertisement fees in return for this service.

F) Any suggestions to make TROP financially viable/sustainable?

G) Any other comments/suggestions?

Annex 3: List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACGG	African Chicken Genetic Gains
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ARARI	Amhara Region Agricultural Research Institute
AsCGG	Asian Chicken Genetic Gains
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
EIAR	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research
EFFAB	European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders
EPPPA	Ethiopian Poultry Producers and Processors Association
GNPFA	Ghana National Poultry Farmers Association
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IPs	Innovation Platforms
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation
KMC	Knowledge Management and Communications
LDC	Livestock Development for Community Livelihood, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ghana
NAHPRI	National Animal Health and Production Research Institute, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIAS	National Institute of Animal Science, Vietnam
PI	Principal Investigator
PPT	PowerPoint presentation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSPFA	Small Scale Poultry Farmers Association, Ghana
TALIRI	Tanzania Livestock Research Institute
TPGS	Tropical Poultry Genetic Solutions
TROP	Tropical Poultry Platform