

Skill Gap Analyses of the Farmers and Agricultural Development Technicians on Indigenous Poultry Production in Nkonkobe Municipality Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

S. F. G. Yusuf¹, F. S. Lategan¹ and P. J. Masika²

¹*Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, ²Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute (ARDRI), University of Fort Hare, Alice 5700, Republic of South Africa*

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ABSTRACT Skills are ingredients of productivity. Acquiring technical skills within the framework of farming activities trigger development and innovation. The paper focused on the skill gaps and training needs of indigenous poultry farmers (IPFs) and Agricultural Development Technicians (ADTs) in indigenous poultry production in the Nkonkobe Municipality, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Data were collected from 312 households rearing indigenous poultry from 14 villages and from 33 ADTs. Thirty-two skills items were used as a checklist of competency levels using the Likert rating scale from poor (1) to excellent (5). Descriptive statistics and exploratory Principal Component Analysis (Orthogonal rotation technique) was performed on the data collected for the IPFs. Findings revealed that, IPFs showed competencies in nine skill items that included ability to identify chicken predators ($x=3.92$); use of ethno veterinary drugs to treat chicken diseases and pests ($x=3.72$), and identify signs of diseases ($x=3.69$), amongst others. However, the ADTs did not show any competency in any of the 32 skills items. Six factors with the eigen value of >1 , which accounted for 77.317% were extracted, with each factor loading ranging from 0.523 to 0.93. Factor loading after rotation were described as brooding, shelter and care of the chicks; Predators and Healthcare; Hygiene and Litter Management; Feeds and Feeding Stuff; and Record Keeping and Marketing. It is recommended that intensive training is needed for both the IPFs and the ADTs for up-scaling in the indigenous poultry production.