

*Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen*

We are delighted and honoured to host you for this short course in Indigenous Chicken Production today and to welcome you to College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Upper Kabete Campus.

I recognize that this course is principally designed to enhance your competences in Indigenous chicken production with emphasis on hands-on training. Unlike raising of layers and broilers, intensive systems of producing indigenous chickens commercially are uncommon. But due to the heavy demand for indigenous chickens in many urban and rural areas, many people are now considering venturing into this practice. There is however a mismatch between demand and supply in the formal and informal markets. One of the causes for the mismatch is the relatively low production which is caused by several constraints. The single most important constraint of local chicken rearing is their high mortality as result of poor health control, poor housing, and inadequate feeding. Although local breeds are well adapted to harsh living conditions, their productivity is relatively low and rarely do farmers use the most optimal chicken breeds. Use of better suited breeds will improve the survival rate, the weight gains, the number of eggs, and the fertility of the chicken stock.

Even though there is high demand for indigenous chicken, most farmers lack the production skills. For successful indigenous chicken production, one needs to have competencies in production and healthy practices, marketing and financial management. This course therefore will impart the required knowledge and develop the competencies required to ensure a sustainable commercial indigenous chicken production.

Ladies and gentlemen, today's multifaceted agricultural industry and fast changing world calls for a close partnership between learning institutions, farmers and industry. I hope this training will highlight possible avenues for increasing productivity and also come up with beneficial, cutting-edge knowledge and skills, which can positively impact the small scale chicken production.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to the Women Enterprise Fund for sponsoring this training and their cooperation. I also take this opportunity to thank the organizers

I wish the participants a very fruitful and productive sessions and with that, I declare the Short course in Indigenous Chicken Production open.

Thank you