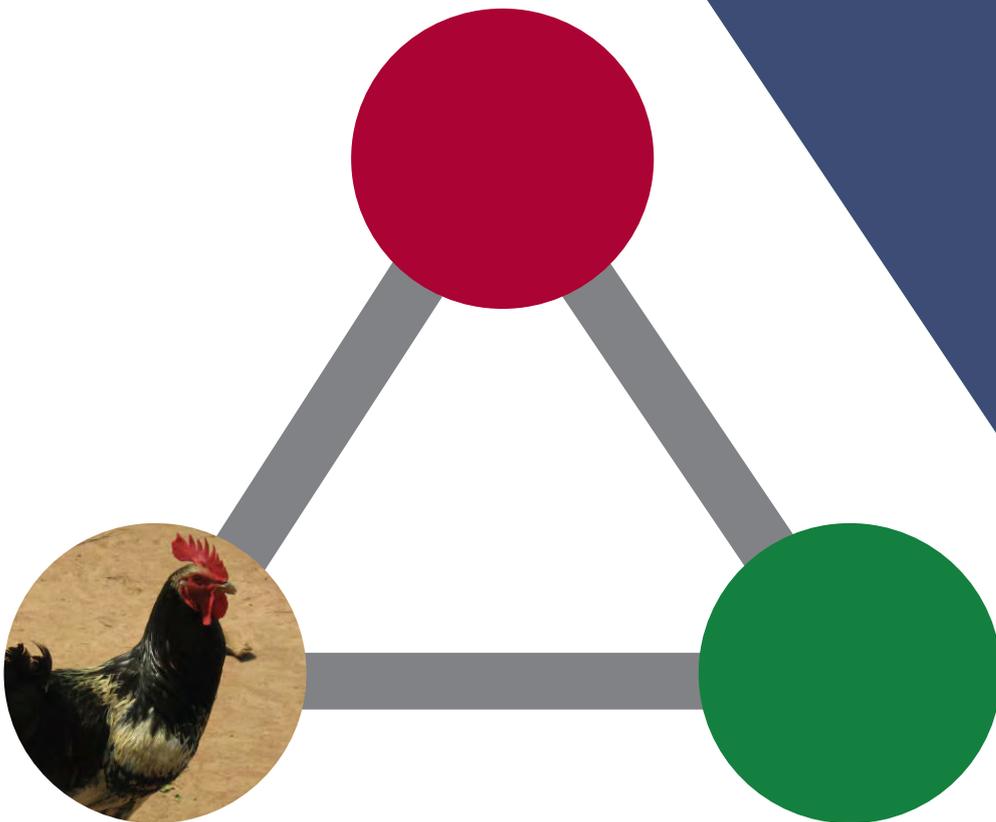


# Poultry policies, legislation and strategies in Uganda



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## Acronyms

AHBL.....	Animal Health, Breed and Livelihood
CBPP.....	contagious bovine pleuropneumonia
DSIP.....	Development Strategy and Investment Plan
FMD.....	Foot-and-Mouth Disease
HPAI.....	highly pathogenic Avian Influenza
IGAD.....	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MAAIF.....	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MIA.....	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MOES.....	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOH.....	Ministry of Health
MPFED.....	Ministry of Planning, Finance and Economic Development
MTTI.....	Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry
NAADS.....	National Agriculture Advisory Services
PEAP.....	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA.....	Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture
UBOS.....	Uganda Bureau of Statistics



## Overview/background

In 2007/2008 poultry numbers in Uganda were estimated to be 26.9 million (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] abstract 2008). Although this is still the lowest poultry population in the East African region, poultry is known to contribute significantly to Ugandan livelihoods as a source of income and protein and a safety net for livelihood options. Poultry keeping is considered a pro-poor enterprise because of the low capital investments required. The additional socio-cultural values associated with poultry ownership encourage almost all resource-poor and disadvantaged groups, such as women, children, youth, refugees and pastoralists, to keep poultry at various points in their lives.

Among the many threats facing poultry in Uganda, the disease highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) could be the most severe. Although Uganda has not yet been affected by HPAI, the disease could have a huge impact on Ugandans' livelihoods, through two particular aspects: it is a zoonosis, so can affect human life; and its occurrence is associated with high spillover effects due to the high mortality rate in poultry. This is evident from an HPAI scare that occurred in 2005/2006, which led to a 20 percent reduction in the national flock within a year, even though there was no confirmed case (Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries [MAAIF] records, 2006; UBOS abstract, 2007). Since then, several strategies and activities have been put in place to prepare the country to respond effectively and efficiently to HPAI.

As part of the national HPAI emergency and preparedness plan, FAO, with funding from the Government of Germany, is implementing the Animal Health, Breed and Livelihood (AHBL) project in three countries: Uganda, Egypt and Cambodia. The project's overall aim is to create a safe environment for poultry production, and among the activities implemented in Uganda are baseline pilot studies. These gathered the necessary information for reviewing and designing processes (strategies and policies) to improve smallholder poultry production systems and align them to national HPAI preparedness and contingency plans. Among the studies was an analysis of existing policies and legislation that affect the poultry sector in Uganda. The results of this analysis are summarized in this document, which also highlights the policy gaps that need to be addressed and filled. Strengthened policies and legislation would contribute to the overall goal of increasing poultry production for rural and urban populations.

At present, the poultry sector in Uganda is guided and regulated by livestock policies and a legislative framework within the agriculture sector. Although this sector does not have a specific comprehensive policy, it is guided by the Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture (PMA), which is a framework developed under the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) to transform subsistence farming into commercialized agriculture. The PEAP itself is based on major political and economic reforms, key of which were amendment of the Constitution, restructuring of public services, democratization, decentralization and privatization. These changes have shifted most of the central government's roles and responsibilities for service provision on to local governments and the private sector (Figure 1).



### Implementation of the PMA is based on seven components (pillars):

- research and technology development;
- improved advisory (extension) services;
- agro processing and marketing;
- agricultural education;
- rural finance;
- sustainable natural resource utilization and management;
- improvement of supportive physical infrastructure

Although MAAIF has achieved a degree of success in implementing this multi-sectoral intervention through several ministries and agencies, it has become increasingly clear that there are gaps associated with agencies' diverse understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the decentralized structures. As more local governments emerge, weak linkages between central and local governments are becoming more evident, further complicating the sharing and allocation of resources, programme coordination and monitoring.

In 2006, parallel programmes such as the Rural Development Strategy, the Prosperity for All initiative and the agriculture sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan (DSIP) were designed to strengthen ownership and the equitable distribution of resources. However, these did not address the gaps fully, and a second DSIP that draws lessons from the first is being developed. It is hoped that this new plan will be sensitive to the current and future needs of the livestock sector, including the poultry subsector.

## Challenges and actors in the policy environment

To understand the policy environment for agriculture, specifically poultry, it is important to understand the Local Governments Act of 1997 and how it is implemented. This act distinguishes the roles and responsibilities of central government from those of local governments (Figure 2).

### For livestock policies, central government is responsible for:

- policy review and formulation;
- initiating and designing laws and regulations;
- setting standards and specifications, and providing guidelines on service delivery;
- formulating and coordinating national plans and programmes;
- providing local governments with technical back-up, including capacity building;
- controlling specific epidemic diseases<sup>1</sup> and vectors;
- promoting, lobbying and advocating for agriculture sector activities;
- monitoring and evaluating programmes, projects and activities.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2001, the National Delivery of Livestock Services Policy charged central government with the control of four diseases: rinderpest, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP), foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and rabies. Avian influenza has since been added to this list.



### Local governments are charged with:

- managing national services at the district level, through the development and implementation of local government plans, programmes and projects;
- ensuring community development;
- managing district information and statistical services;
- managing and developing human resources;
- marketing and licensing.

Although policy formulation is the responsibility of central government, legislation and implementation activities are district or local government functions. This means that roles and responsibilities must be very clearly defined and laid out, and all programmes must consider the overall government framework and structures when allocating these roles and responsibilities to the different levels of government and to other stakeholders.

The central government bodies involved in the livestock sector are line ministries such as MAAIF; the Ministry of Health (MOH), charged with public health and disease control, including those of zoonotic importance; the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Economic Development (MPFED), which is the main agency for government budgets and all financial activities, including the harmonization of donor aid; the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), which provides law enforcement and regulatory support, including the control of entry and movement of animals and animal products at internal and external border points, especially during quarantines; the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry (MTTI), which defines trade and tax zones; and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), which provides support in capacity building and the regulation of service providers.

Over the last five years, the number of local governments has increased to more than 80 as a result of new districts being formed. Each local government is a separate decision-making entity with powers to legislate, recruit personnel, and implement and manage its own district plans. As a result, the numbers and types of livestock sector activities prioritized by each local government in its district plan vary, depending on the capacities, needs, resource packages and geographical location of the local government concerned. For example, market infrastructure may be a priority in one district, but not in another. Districts that share borders with another country usually have additional needs, especially regarding disease control strategies and emergency preparedness measures, which need to be strategically harmonized through coordinated planning and local government leaders' commitment to collaborate with other local governments and central government. Unfortunately, central government ministries such as MAAIF often face challenges seeking consensus from the more than 80 separate local governments.

The National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) programme provides a good example of the setbacks a government programme is likely to face if it fails to include local government structures at the design stage. This programme focuses on strengthening farmers' institutions, but did little to define the roles of the local governments that were to host the programme. This led to poor programme ownership (although the situation has since been corrected). In addition, although the shifting of responsibilities from central government to the districts has brought the benefits of reduced workloads at the central level and less duplication of roles across different ministries, it has also brought challenges. For example, the decentralization of veterinary service provision has reduced central government's regulation and supervision, which are critical components of livestock disease control and the implementation of veterinary services.



Another important actor in Uganda's livestock environment is the private sector, where key stakeholders include the Beef Producers' Association, the Poultry Breeders' Association, feed millers and processors, and input suppliers. Private sector stakeholders provide goods and services along the entire value chain, are based in both urban and rural areas, and are directly or indirectly regulated by central or local governments through semi-autonomous bodies or government structures. They have the potential to form pressure groups and lobbies, but they are still weak and often lack cohesive structures.

## The policy and legislative framework for the poultry subsector

The following are livestock policies and legislation with a direct bearing on poultry production in Uganda that should be considered when embarking on any policy work regarding poultry:

### Policies:

- National Delivery of Veterinary Services Policy (2001);
- National Veterinary Drug Policy (2002);
- Animal Breeding Policy (1997);
- National Meat Policy (2003);
- National Animal Feeds Policy (2005);
- National Health Policy (1999).

### Statutes and legal instruments:

- National Environment Act (Chapter 153);
- National Drug Policy and Authority Act (Chapter 206);
- National Agricultural Research Organizations Act (Chapter 205);
- Animal Diseases Act (Chapter 38);
- Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Act (Chapter 39);
- Veterinary Surgeons Act (Chapter 277);
- Food and Drugs Act (Chapter 278);
- Animal Breeding Act (from 2001);
- National Agricultural Advisory Services Act (Act 10 of 2001);
- Agricultural and Livestock Development Fund Act;
- Animals (Straying) Act (1964, Chapter 40);
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics Act (Chapter 310);
- Food and Drugs Act (Chapter 278);
- Markets Act (Chapter 94).

### Statutory instruments:

- Animal Diseases (Declaration of Animals) Instrument (Statutory Instrument 38-1)
- Animal Diseases (Declaration of Diseases) Instrument (Statutory Instrument 38-2);
- Animal Diseases (Importation of Poultry) Rules (Statutory Instrument 38-12).



### Legislative framework at the local government level:

- Constitution, Articles 176 and 189;
- Local Government Act (1997, second schedule Parts 1, 2 and 3);
- Local government by-laws passed by each local authority, such as:
- Local Governments (KCC) (Meat) Ordinance (Ordinance 9 of 2006 );
- Local Governments (KCC) (Urban Agriculture) Ordinance (2006);
- Local Governments (KCC) (Livestock and Companion Animals) Ordinance (Ordinance 7 of 2006);
- Local Governments (Bushenyi District) (Miscellaneous) By-laws;
- Local Governments (Kabale District) (Agriculture) By-laws.

National policies specify service provision, drug access, breeding regulations, animal feeding and the marketing of livestock and livestock products. The meat and animal feed policies are not yet operationalized as their legislative instruments are still under discussion.

Most policies and laws do not make specific reference to poultry issues, and poultry farmers' needs are not disaggregated from those of farmers in other subsectors. For example, the meat policy does not differentiate poultry meat from beef, the local government meat ordinance elaborates slaughter and meat conveyance processes for cattle but not for poultry, and there are no specifications for the slaughter of poultry.

Neither the national breeding policy nor the breeding act provides strategies for the conservation of poultry genetics. Although poultry is implicitly referred to in the definitions of "animal" and "livestock", there is a lack of specific reference to poultry as a form of livestock.

This reduces the visibility of the subsector, especially during planning and prioritization for resource allocation.

Local governments, municipalities and town councils are responsible for providing services such as registering farmers (including poultry farmers), setting standards and guidelines, issuing certificates and permits, enforcing regulations, and monitoring compliance. However, most town councils have not drawn up livestock by-laws, in spite of the local government act's stipulation. Most districts also lack guidelines for the management of livestock, especially poultry, and where such guidelines exist, they tend to be very weak and/or poorly enforced. In general, districts pay little attention to poultry as a livestock species. When by-laws, standards and effective regulatory monitoring are lacking, disease outbreaks are more likely to occur and more difficult to control. This makes the spread of disease a real threat to poultry farmers, their enterprises and the national economy, when the disease in question has high externalities, as HPAI has.

## Gaps requiring attention

The overall objective of the AHBL project includes the creation of a safe production environment for smallholders that supports sustainable livelihoods and poultry genetic diversity. The following gaps in policies affecting the poultry sector should be addressed.

**Lack of specific attention to poultry:** At present there is no clear poultry policy or strategy, so poultry is often neglected. Enhancing the visibility of poultry through a strategy or policy



could help ensure that national plans for the agriculture sector include budget allocations for poultry, which would lead to improved poultry production in the country.<sup>2</sup>

**Unclear definitions and concepts:** Definitions of terminology such as “bird”, “migratory birds” and “caged/ornamental birds” are currently unclear; it is important to clarify all terms and concepts so that policy-makers, implementers and key stakeholders have a common understanding of what they mean. A list of definitions should be appended to all policy and legal documents for the livestock sector.

**Lack of laws and by-laws to guide district planning and implementation:** The current lack of by-laws at the local level means that many issues cannot be adequately dealt with. The introduction of by-laws to promote biosecurity measures and activities would protect poultry producers and consumers from losses associated with poor disease control and breeding management. Where possible, laws should distinguish among livestock species and farmer categories to enable equitable planning and resource allocation. Although it may not be feasible or practical for local governments to enforce the registration of all birds, as specified in the animal disease act, such registration will have to be implemented in cases where compensation is to be paid for culled birds.

**Lack of access to veterinary drugs and other supplies:** Market liberalization has been fairly successful in increasing and improving farmers’ access to drugs and other supplies, but quality control of drugs is paramount and requires strengthening. Although this is a private sector domain, government has a role in stabilizing escalating prices and meeting supply gaps.

**Lack of trade and marketing at the local level:** Although the meat laws have not yet been enacted, it is worth starting to plan improved domestic and international poultry marketing policies, and to regulate cross borders trade, for disease control purposes. So far, there is no evidence that local governments are streamlining and/or improving their laws and services on marketing. As the control of markets and marketing activities is central for effective disease management and fair trade for farmers, local governments must review and strengthen their market by-laws, including those for the construction of markets and slaughter facilities, the designation of market areas, the issuing of licences and sanitary permits for trade, slaughter and movement of birds or meat to slaughter areas or butcher shops, and the supervision of such activities as waste disposal.

Animal welfare legislation is related to market laws. Currently, birds are transported in poor conditions,<sup>3</sup> which affects their carcass quality and violates the prevention of cruelty act. To improve this situation, it is necessary to sensitize and inform farmers, animal handlers and the public, and to prepare guidelines for all species, including poultry.

**Inappropriate sanctions for offences:** In most legal instruments, there is a mismatch between the gravity of an offence and the severity of the sanction. The penalties for unprofessional behaviour and breaches of law are often paltry compared with the negative outcomes associated with the offence. For example, a farmer who knowingly moves an animal

<sup>2</sup> Greater visibility for the poultry sector is expected to help fill some of the current gaps in breeding, nutrition and feed requirements for all categories of poultry farmer; improved health and biosecurity measures to protect small-scale poultry owners who depend on poultry for their livelihoods; quality control and standards for the safe feeding of poultry and the production of safe poultry products for human consumption; infrastructure and technology for sero-surveillance, diagnosis and research; processing and value addition for better terms of trade, locally, regionally and internationally; improved training, extension and information systems; and institutional financing and incentives for production, emergency measures and compensation.

<sup>3</sup> Birds are often transported in overcrowded conditions on motorcycles or trucks, in which they are suspended upside down or carried on top of other merchandise.



during quarantine is subject to a maximum penalty of only 2 currency units (equivalent to US\$20), even if the animal in question is an HPAI-infected bird, the movement of which could have dire consequences. Fines should be revised and made commensurate to the gravity of offences to help deter potential offenders.

**Lack of breeding and genetic conservation:** The lack of a hatchery strategy and breeding guidelines is a serious gap for the monitoring and regulation of breeding activities. Uganda needs to strengthen its management of hatchery and brooding operations, before it can generate sustainable genetic biodiversity and best practices for improved poultry production.

**Lack of accurate data:** Countries are committed to exchanging information on livestock issues at the regional level, but to do so they require accurate statistics. Although central and local governments in Uganda have been charged with gathering relevant data and statistics for feeding into national databanks, this has not occurred. In particular, local government livestock statistics, including on poultry, are often lacking or grossly inaccurate.

**Weak animal disease control structures:** To ensure the food security and economic gains that would arise from an effective and efficient disease control system there is need to improve financing of the agriculture and livestock sectors. More financing should be allocated to policy activities aimed at strengthening monitoring and regulation, improving data collection, and providing technical backstopping to local governments as they design by-laws and fill other policy gaps.

## The way forward

This paper has summarized key policies affecting the poultry sector in Uganda and identified gaps in those policies. These findings, along with collective decisions about poultry and its role in Uganda, should now be used to answer the following questions:

- Can the current gaps in poultry development be filled by policy action?
- Which of them require policy action? What is working and what is not?
- What are the minimum conditions for successful implementation of policy actions, given the available time and other resources? Who are partners and allies in policy change?

Will the consequences of policy change be beneficial for the target beneficiary group and the ultimate goal? Will it be possible to measure impacts over time, such as impacts on livelihoods or trade flows, or on biosecurity across borders?

## Opportunities

Most of the discussion has focused on the complexity and difficulties in the policy environment for poultry production, but there are also several opportunities, which should be seized: The occurrence of HPAI and its impact on the poultry sector has encouraged a review of poultry's role in people's livelihoods. This has led to new thinking and a shift in the approach to HPAI control, focusing on broader issues of poultry breeds, production systems, biodiversity and conservation.

Uganda is currently revising its medium- and long-term operational development plans and the broader policy framework. The gaps identified in the PMA (the main national framework guiding agriculture) will be addressed during the ongoing development of the



second DSIP and the Agriculture Sector National Development Plan paper. This provides an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in long-term planning for the sector.

The Livestock Policy Initiative in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region aims to address gaps in livestock policy and recognizes that key stakeholders are inadequately engaged in policy formulation. The project is being implemented in IGAD member States, including Uganda, and plans to establish improved mechanisms to promote greater stakeholder participation in livestock policy processes.

## Recommendations

Many countries are seeking to establish specific national policies for poultry. However, Uganda has already made much progress in reviewing and improving its various livestock policies in terms of their provisions for poultry. Currently, many of these updated policies are at different stages of development, with some still being formulated while others are awaiting legislative instruments or cabinet decisions. This paper is therefore of the view that resources would be better used on developing a comprehensive poultry sector strategy, with clear directions for the future of the sector at the household and commercial levels, rather than a poultry policy.

### The paper recommends the following:

- Prepare a comprehensive strategy paper detailing the vision (future projections), plan of action, budgets and monetary framework for Uganda's poultry subsector over the next five to ten years. Share this paper with planners at the relevant ministries.
- With the relevant authorities, discuss the best approach to addressing the gaps created by decentralization of veterinary services and the effects of these gaps, focusing on creating harmonization and synergies among local governments.
- Engage stakeholders in activities to improve the visibility and funding of the poultry subsector, including through DSIP II and the Agriculture Sector National Development Plan paper.
- Engage a government legal adviser to help fill key policy gaps.



Figure 1 The Agriculture Policy Framework

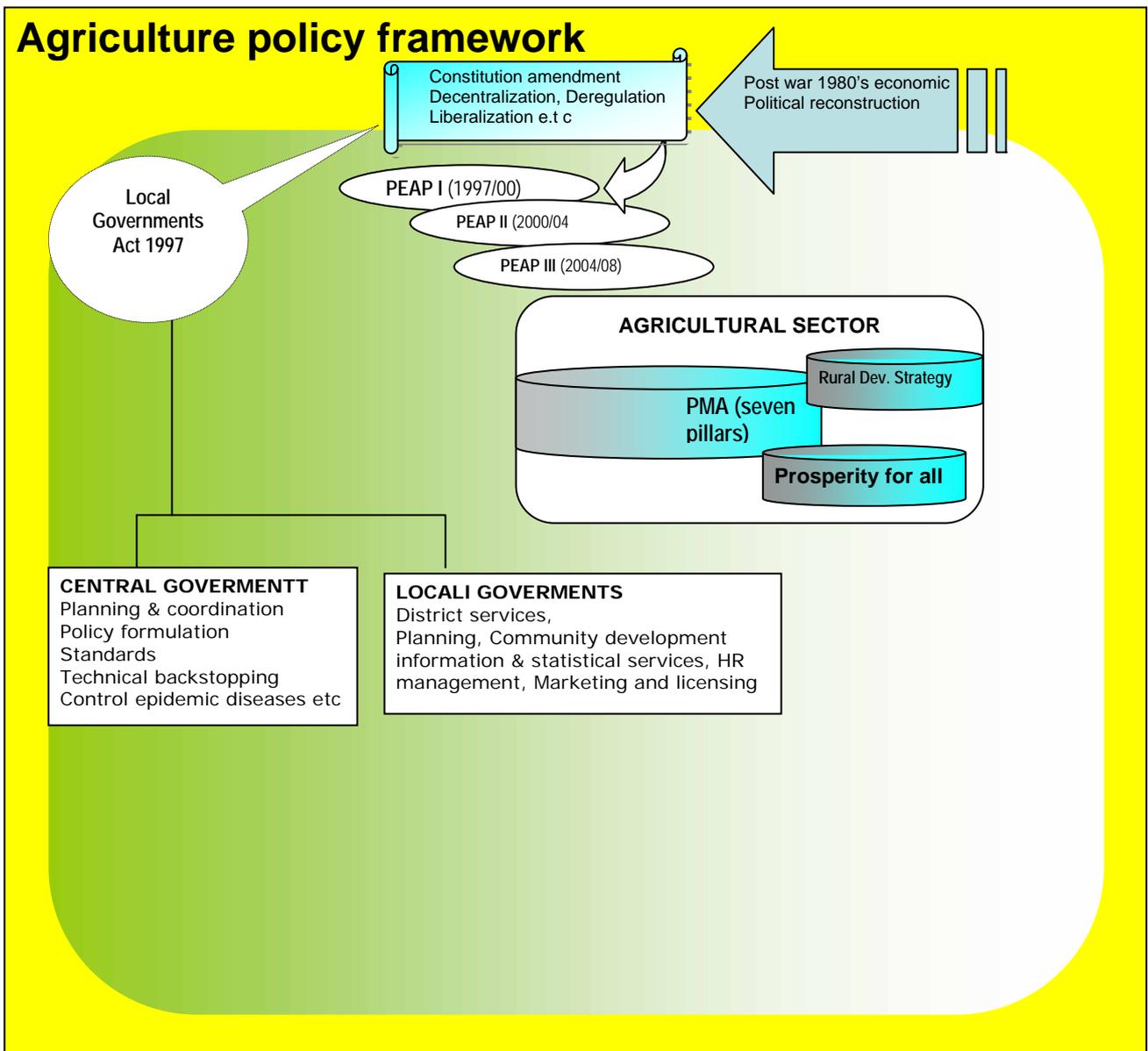


Figure 2 Policy and legislative framework for the poultry subsector

Animal Diseases Act

