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## MICROLENDING CHICKENS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EMPOWERING POOR RURAL FAMILIES IN KENYA

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This is about a project combining entrepreneurship and microlending—two currently significant concepts in international development. The project's purpose is to empower poor rural families with a source of income and protein-rich food through micro lending chicken start-up support. Its method is to partner with a non-governmental organization, Nutri-Fresh Farm & Agri-Hub, for creating agricultural entrepreneurs from subsistence farmers in Kenya. Each family is supplied with 50 chicks of the improved Kuroiler indigenous breed and signs a Poultry Project Loan Agreement. It states their obligation to repay—without interest—in the form of mature poultry cocks the costs of the chicks, feeds, vaccines, training and follow-up until the chicks attain maturity at six months. The repaid loan amounts are invested in new families. All families so far involved have eggs for sale and as a regular source of protein for themselves. They increase their asset through the additional hatching of their own chicks. They are repaying the loan. The project is now expanding to additional families in the Donyo region in Kenya. The repaid loan amounts allow it to continue sustainably in the future. Our conclusion is that this project combining entrepreneurship and microlending chickens has been successful and that it can be useful elsewhere and can include other agricultural inputs as well.

### Biography

William Schoenl is Professor emeritus, Modern European History (including Imperialism) and Michigan State University. He is also interested in helping serve dire human needs overseas. He is cofounder of: the Chicken Project with Nutri-Fresh Farm & Agri-Hub in Thika, Kenya (2016-present); the Michigan State University Honors College Dire Needs Overseas Undergraduate Grants (2008-present, Endowment 2013-present); the Michigan State University College of Engineering Dire Needs Overseas Undergraduate Grants (2013-present); and the Canisius College Honors Scholarships for International Program (2008-present). His wife Linda Schoenl and he were Nyaka AIDS Orphans Foundation Volunteer of the Year, Uganda (2015). He has published five books and numerous articles. He was included in Who's Who in America (2002-15) and Who's Who in the World (2003-04).

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