

THE IMPACTS OF INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE IN SUBSAHARAN AFRICA: THE NEXT STEP FOR RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT

The online consultation was co-hosted by Brighter Green and University of Western Cape (UWC). With the support from Tiny Beam who were the donors to the project.

Judy Muriithi, Advocate of the High Court

Judy started off the webinar by stating the topic of discussion. She then introduced the two panels for the webinar. The first panel: **The Impact of Industrial Agriculture on Food Security and Livelihood** was moderated by Amy P. Wilson. The second panel: **Industrial Farming and its Impact on Animal Welfare** was moderated by Tozie. She set out the format of the webinar, and then officially introduced and welcomed the Dean of the University of Western Cape, Prof. Monwabisi Ralarala who gave opening remarks.

Prof. Monwabisi Ralarala, Dean of the University of Western Cape

Dean Ralarala started off by sending warm greetings from South Africa. He noted that the session has generated a lot of interest per the attendance register attracting academics, researchers, advocates, and activists around the globe. He extended a special welcome to the panelists. Dean Ralarala gave a background on UWC's role in shaping history and drew parallels between the outline of Brighter Green's project and UWC's aspirations.

He ended by thanking all members of the organizing committee for pulling it off with special tribute to Brighter Green Executive Director, Ms. Mia MacDonald and Dr. Sharyn Spicer, Senior Member of the Department of Sociology for taking this idea to the next level. Dean Ralarala made a final acknowledgement to colleagues and friends..

Judy Muriithi invited the first panel.

PANEL 1 – Impact of Industrial Agriculture on Food Security and Livelihood

Moderator – Amy P. Wilson, Director and Co-Founder of Animal Reform South Africa

Amy started off by noting that this is a very important and critical event. She thanked the organizers, Brighter Green, the UWC, the panelists, and the attendants.

She reiterated the topic of discussion of the panel. She then stated that the panel aims to take a critical look at industrialized animal agriculture, exploring some of the purported benefits, and highlighting some of the harms and challenges. She recognized that this is a major area with various complexities and issues and acknowledged that today's webinar will be scratching the surface and covering selected issues at a high level. She advanced that the session seeks to educate, create constructive discourse, and carve a path forward for future considerations, research, and engagement. She then extended Dr. Desiree Lewis' apology as she was unable to be part of the panel as advertised but assured that there is an excellent expert panel.

She introduced the panelists starting with Ornella Kasongo, a Masters student in Sociology at the UWC. She then introduced the second panelist as Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, a Professor of Agro-Ecology with a focus on Systems Philosophy and Applications, as well as Organic Agriculture.

To kick off the panel and contextualize the issue for the attendees, Amy asked the panelists: How they would define industrialized animal agriculture and how it compares to smallholder agriculture

She handed the mic to Prof. Ssekyewa first.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa started off by thanking Amy for the introduction. He then stated that according to his understanding and from systems perspective, industrialized animal agriculture is a form of agriculture where animals are reared intensively with specific interest

in responding to market forces of supply and demand, and with limited concern for conservation of nature.

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

She stated that industrial agriculture uses a lot of chemicals and science trying to increase the growth of livestock so as to maximize their output, whereas small-scale industrial farmers use traditional type of farming which is quite different.

Amy, the Moderator

Do you believe that industrialized animal agriculture fulfills the role of achieving food security? If yes, how? If not, why not?

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo started off by giving no as a response to the question. She then quantified the answer by stating that in the long run, it increases food insecurity because industrialized agriculture contributes highly to global warming, climate change, and drought which affect agriculture and in the long run will affect food security as a whole. Further, the chemicals used for livestock, for example antibiotics for growth or to speed up production, may impact human health. It makes no sense for food to be present if there is no one to consume it. In the long run therefore, it leans more negative than positive.

Dr. Charles Ssekya, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekya stated industrialized animal agriculture would enable us to fill the gap as far as food security is concerned, and it would also contribute to livelihoods. However, there is a challenge that at the end of the day, food may be available but not quality food therefore unfit for human consumption. If we are to have food security, we must have access and availability of nutritive and safe food for all.

In addition, he stated that industrialized animal agriculture competes with human beings because of its intensity. We are forced to feed the animals on food that is value-added

and mostly food for human consumption unlike the smallholder systems where animals are fed on what one would consider commodities, that are wild and not fit for human consumption. He gave an example that what we consider weeds are actually animal fodder and what is deemed to be wastes are feed for domestic animals.

He reiterated Ms. Kasongo's point on pollution. Prof. Ssekweya spoke of pollution beyond food but also our environment. He stated that acaricide and other additives put in food received as processed from industrial animal agriculture affect our health. He gave an example that presently, most youth have issues of development; they have grown very fast physically but mentally have not grown properly. He stated that most of this is attributed to the growth hormones that are additives to animal feed in industrial animal agriculture.

He concluded that industrial animal agriculture is not going to deliver food security in the desired form. He debunked the assertion that generated income used to purchase food entails food security by stating the income is generated by feeding people on poor quality food and unfit food. Therefore, industrial animal agriculture is not the best way to achieve sustainable food security and better livelihoods.

Amy, the Moderator

She thanked the panelists for the fantastic responses. She highlighted the notion that industrialized animal agriculture creates employment and contributes to the economy. She then noted the longevity of the practice in developed countries and its identifiable impacts such as the growth of powerful agricultural monopolies. She asked the panelists:

Is this something that is happening in Africa or that may potentially happen in the future? What are some of the economic impacts of this?

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that agriculture monopolies in Africa are predominantly happening differently with 70% smallholder farmers and using a blended modern and traditional approach to sustain their systems. As regards industrialized animals, there is a discernible desire from policymakers to commercialize agriculture and the definition or explanation of commercial agriculture exemplifies the industrial form of agriculture. This is down to misconception and the mindset. He stated that these needs be changed because a number of mistakes have been made with animals reared in an intensive manner resulting in environmental degradation. He argued that if it had been done differently, it would have contributed to the sustainability of the agroecol system. But, in this case, industrial animal agriculture is mainly science-led and disregards the agroecol systems and its components resulting in a focus on producing food meeting the market demand and generating income. This appeals to politicians and policymakers, but not in a sustainable or environmentally healthy way.

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

She stated that competition is quite hard and the entry level for small-scale farmers is quite hard and thus some fail to compete with the industrial farmers due to lack of resources and lack of market information. Consequently, the farmers especially rural farmers end up shutting down and this affects employment as small-scale farmers also create employment. This also affects the economic growth of the country and decreases the development of the rural areas exacerbating rural-urban migration for better opportunities.

She argued that the lack of employment previously proffered by local farmers affects the livelihoods of households limiting the purchasing power of food produced by industrial farmers. As such, food security is hampered as households are worse off and unable to afford the food in the market.

Amy, the Moderator

She acknowledges that there is a lot of economic and social impact. She stated that the next segment intends to look at specific groups and how they are impacted by industrial

animal agriculture or potentially by the growth of Africa. She started with women in particular and referred to Ms. Kasongo.

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo started off by saying most of these women use the livestock as assets and it helps give them power in society, to make choices, to have a livelihood and to send their children to school. If women are unable to compete with industrial farmers, their ability to sustain themselves in society is affected and consequently their decision-making in their households, their livelihoods, and gender equality.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that women are the major actors in the agroecol system and men often are at standby waiting for the time of sale. The women thus suffer most of the negative impacts of industrial animal agriculture. He stated that women are encouraged to form groups such as cooperatives with the bracket activity industrial agriculture mostly industrial animal agriculture because of the quick turnover. There is however, a disregard of the negative effects of industrial animal agriculture on these women that have far reaching consequences. The knock-on impacts result in a generation of youth impacted by the form of agriculture practiced. Therefore, the reason to come in time like Brighter Green's is, to intervene and probably bring such practices to a soft ending so that the youth are protected. He concludes that women are very vulnerable in as far as industrial animal agriculture is concerned and an intervention is necessary.

Amy, the Moderator

Are there other environmental impacts of industrialized animal agriculture? What are some of these on the environment and more broadly?

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekweya stated that the major environmental impact is pollution with the synthetic chemicals used that end up in our water bodies, which are sources of drinking water for households. Beyond that, there is a lot of mismanagement of animal waste that emits gases contributing to global warming and hence climate change. There is a need to manage the wastes adequately including by blending the traditional and modern way of agriculture.

He also addressed the misuse of human drugs in industrial animal agriculture. Farmers have to the extent of using ARVs in raising poultry to boost growth and achieve marketable weight in a short time. This has far reaching consequences considering the debate about the origins of COVID-19 as animals and other diseases attributed to animal interactions with human beings. The practice of using human drugs in industrial animal agriculture enhances that problem such that the effective drugs end up being less so as we acquire them in low dosages through consumption of those animal products.

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo noted the droughts in recent years and stated that industrial agriculture requires large quantities of water, reducing the quantity of water distributed to other aspects of the environment. It also impacts the water capacity requisite for the well-being of everyone.

She also argued that the soil breaks down animal droppings slowly. However, as industrial farmers use large numbers of livestock, the droppings are turned into chemicals harmful to the soil whereas traditional methods use mixed methods by using the droppings as fertilizer for the crops which balances things out. Industrial farming, on the other hand, leaves the droppings without utility and they become harmful to the soil.

Amy, the Moderator

She acknowledged that antibiotic resistance is one of the emerging threats facing our generations and will continue to grow over time.

What should the role of the government be in industrialized animal agriculture? What kind of policies should they be promoting?

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

She stated that the government should focus on animal welfare as most of these animals are not taken care of in industrial farming. The animals are huddled together, denied the freedom of movement, and disregarding their rights. The government should have policies that would show awareness of animal welfare, the rights of animals, as most public knowledge is limited to cruelty during slaughter. Harsh penalties to cruel offenders should be adopted as a motivation for industrial farmers to consider animal welfare because their focus is mostly profit.

Dr. Charles Ssekweya, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekweya emphasized that the important thing is not only to have policies, but also policies that have gone through the right process and therefore can be implemented. The policy process must be improved by engaging systems principles, stakeholder engagement and other representations for issues such as pollution and health. The policy making process must be multi-sectoral.

He stated that there is a need for government-supported research prior to policy development to address knowledge gaps. This is necessary as policymakers in Africa wholly adopt foreign policies without tailoring them to fit local circumstances. It is thus important for the government to support research to generate the necessary data. He added that there is a need to evaluate the implementation of these policies to understand their effectiveness. The evaluation is important as there is also a danger of disregarding the multi-sectoral approach during implementation resulting in partial achievement of policy aspects. Prof. Ssekweya stated that the Millennium Development Goals failed to perform because of the lack of a multi-sectoral approach and the SDGs have tried to address this. He argued that if the SDGs implementation follows the same path, it is likely to result in failure. He stated that this is prevalent in the African context with regards to agriculture and industrial animal agriculture policies. Therefore, there is a need for re-

search, understanding of the agroecological system, and incorporation of lessons from small-holder and traditional animal agriculture systems.

Amy, the Moderator

What are some of the alternatives to the current industrialized animal agriculture seen in other jurisdictions? Are there perhaps more appropriate forms of feeding people? What are some of the benefits of these systems? How can they be promoted?

She stated that she wants to focus on the alternatives and maybe carve a way forward.

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

She advanced that there is a need for educating, training and supporting small-scale farmers. Ms. Kasongo stated that the presence of more small-scale farmers competing with the industrial market will balance the monopolistic nature of the market. She also proposed the motivation of more farmers to use the traditional method. This would entail undertaking more research to elevate the perception of traditional methods.

Further, Ms. Kasongo advocated for the use of the mixed method, livestock with crop farming for a balance as regards to pollution.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that it is important to firstly understand the contribution of industrial animal agriculture for substitution purposes. He set out three recognizable benefits:

1. Economical use of space. It helps to limit the area in which animal agriculture is taking place by intensification and area limitation.
2. Transformation of animal commodities into money.

3. Bulking up to meet food security requirements.

He argued that as regards space, the misuse of space by smallholder farmers is evident. This may be addressed through training on cost-effective ways of undertaking animal agriculture. However, targeted research in these areas may identify the positives and thus guide the optimization of the traditional smallholder systems accordingly. As regards the production of food for money to meet the supply and demand, he also advocated for research into those systems and taking lessons from what is enabling. An action is possible, but it must be research-driven and based on existing overlooked concepts.

Amy, the Moderator

Could you identify one or two areas for further research and engagement that are critical moving forward in relation to food security, livelihoods, and the provision of protein?

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo stated that it is important to first establish the role the community can play to help improve agricultural systems. She also advanced how to find out to really elevate the level of small-scale farmers in society.

Dr. Charles Ssekweya, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekweya stated that there is an urgent need to do a systems analysis of the agroecol system with specific interest in understanding what enables and what does not enable our systems to achieve food security and better livelihoods for our people. He then proposed that we pick lessons and optimize by filling existing gaps. Lessons can also be picked from the new knowledge and then blended with the traditional knowledge to create a balanced way forward with limited concern for only meeting the market demand and with aspects ensuring sustainability of our environment, the future production, and the future sustainability of humankind.

Q&A

Amy, the Moderator

1. **In Ghana, more commercial farmers are doing intensive poultry in peri-urban areas for egg production in particular. This is different to free range poultry in most of the villages. Do you consider this form of industrial animal agriculture a positive evolution?**

Dr. Charles Ssekya, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekya stated that the type of poultry farming happening in peri-urban areas in Ghana is industrial animal agriculture and therefore all that has been discussed concerns it. He would not encourage that as there is competition for food with human beings, use of synthetic chemicals in the process among others.

Amy, the Moderator

2. **To what extent does industrial agriculture affect biodiversity – both for animals and for plants?**

Dr. Charles Ssekya, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekya stated that this observation is very good in that industrial animal agriculture zeroes in on specific breeds. Industrial animal agriculture limits animal biodiversity whereas smallholder agriculture, traditional agriculture, and blend with agroecology there is encouragement for a biodiverse system enabling the system to be resilient to adverse conditions, pests and diseases, and other challenges. Therefore, industrial animal agriculture is less biodiversity concerned and income-centric.

Amy, the Moderator

Amy mentioned that there are quite a few questions dealing with the alternative health impacts raised by the World Health Organization. She stated that she would like to touch on and get the panelists perspective on the additional health impacts for humans who consume large amounts of meat.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that when chemicals, hormones, and additives are added to animal food in industrial animal agriculture and humans consume the products whether meat or milk, there are effects which have mostly affected the youth. There are instances of youth responding to the same growth hormones which cause unbalanced growth resulting in obesity and abnormal heights. Other challenges include cancer and communicable diseases. Further, there is evidence that because of resistance, some communities such as the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania have contracted Tuberculosis.

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo reiterated by stating that consumption of food containing hormones and antibiotics affect human health by increasing disease exposure, exposing the youth to obesity, resulting in future harm, and lowering youth life expectancy.

She then states that this is evident as the older generation live longer than the youth as the youth consume unhealthy foods.

Amy, the Moderator

3. **What are the thoughts on improving indigenous poultry by foreign owned genetic corporations such as the Hendrix Genetics and the Sasso chicken?**

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that the gestation periods for these animals are short and thus there is no need to use biotechnology and genetic engineering in the process. He ar-

gues that it would be easy to go to the level of artificial insemination if modern knowledge and biotechnology are to be applied, but not biotechnology. He concluded that he does not see the need to apply biotechnology for animals with such short gestation periods.

Amy, the Moderator

- 4. What comments do the panelists have on the monopolistic approach by industrial animal agriculture that will determine the prices and hence price out the poor from accessing meat-based products?**

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo started by recognizing that investing a lot in their input to ensure faster growth rates and this affects the output that increases the price. As the price increases, the poor are priced out.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that until recently, most of what was present in Uganda for the poultry industry and animal husbandry has been imported. This means that it becomes a commercial activity sometimes driven by multinational corporations who would have to support their systems by selling animal welfare products or health products. The industry beyond the farm sometimes has a substantial impact on the breeds the farm will produce. He also said that the efforts to improve our breeds come in the form of projects such as technology transfer projects or technology dissemination projects which sometimes dictate the sources of such materials with less emphasis on improving indigenous breeds. There is the challenge of population growth that may require immediate answers, but human health and welfare concerns and sustainability should be considerations.

Amy, the Moderator

- 5. Would you align the industrial agricultural model with the Western/Colonial or more of the Afro-centric worldviews?**

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo stated that not every region has its own agricultural ways with different challenges.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that the whole problem has been the disregard of the rich knowledge of the African people and therefore, developers of African policies on sustainability have mostly focused on borrowing and taking lessons from other continents in the hope that they are applicable. He also stated that the issue of industrial animal agriculture is the result of majorly colonialism and disregard of the African traditional knowledge that could have been improved on to make a difference.

Amy, the Moderator

- 6. How do you get the industry to acknowledge the true cost of their cheap foods? True costs accounting for human health, environment, animal welfare, ex cetera. Any thoughts on how to seek accountability when they are not behaving responsibly, increased intensification taking in Africa and how do we protect our indigenous breeds and regenerative practices.**

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo advocated for transparency where industrial farmers avail information on the food production process. The knowledge will ensure accountability on the use of chemicals on foods and livestock rearing. She also stated the need for evaluation of policies and regulations enforcement as relates to industrial farmers.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa first recognized that we are in a global system that may be considered at the national level. All actors are responsible with a role to play. The aim for everyone is a sustainable ecosystem, a sustainable global system. All actors have to focus and drive our activities towards that goal. He stated that the industry is responsible for the mistakes so far done and it is their responsibility to address those concerns. Where there are knowledge gaps, there is a need for research to support generating the data. It is the responsibility of all actors to demand for appropriate solutions that will result in sustainability, access, availability and inclusiveness in the food system.

Closing Thoughts

Ms. Ornella Kasongo, Masters student in Sociology

Ms. Kasongo stated the relevant actions may be undertaken however, it all comes down to the actors who play a role in this. The actors should educate themselves about the foods they consume, motivate the agriculture system to use a better and friendlier system.

Dr. Charles Ssekyewa, Professor of Agro-Ecology

Prof. Ssekyewa stated that the agroecol system belongs to all actors and it is our responsibility to find enabling solutions that will make it better for us. A benefit today that is not sustainable will in the long run affect the current beneficiaries. We should have an industrial animal agriculture system that is enabling, leading to the sustainability of the agroecol system, delivering safe and nutritious food to all, and is contributing to improving our livelihoods in the present and to the future.

Amy, the Moderator

Amy expresses gratitude to the panelists and wrapped up the first panel.

Judy Muriithi, Advocate of the High Court

She opened the webinar by introducing and welcoming the Moderator for the Second Panel, Tozie Zokufa.

PANEL 2 – Industrial Farming and its Impact on Animal Welfare

Tozie Zokufa, Moderator

Tozie introduces the Second Panel.

Opening Remarks

Tony Gerrans, Executive Director Africa Humane Society International

Mr. Gerrans started off with a quote from Matthew Scully writing on how we treat animals in modern industrial farming. Mr. Scully wrote that factory farming isn't just killing, it is a negation, a complete denial of the animal as a living being, his/her own needs or nature, it is not the worst evil we can do but it is the worst evil we can do to them. Mr. Gerrans stated that that is a good summary of what animals experience in modern industrial food systems.

He also stated that the concerns about animal welfare largely become apparent and magnified when we commodify animals and move them off the land and apply industrial methods of production to farming. This essentially largely involves moving animals from rural areas to peri urban areas close to markets. The animals are removed from range-lands and are kept in sheds, manipulate them genetically, their diets, the very conditions that they live under, accelerate their growth, and then transport them en masse to slaughter either by road or sea. At the slaughterhouse, the animals are processed entirely as commodities, measured only in mass and there is a whole range of welfare compromises or harms that flow from that process.

He stated that to understand the scale of the problem we should be mindful that every year, the FAO reports that human beings kill 80 billion terrestrial animals for food. There are 20 – 25 billion farmed animals alive at this point on the planet and if weighed in terms of mammalian biomass, we have squeezed out the natural world with wildlife only

occupying 4% of the planet in terms of mass, people are occupying 20%, and the rest are farmed animals. The scale of this industry is one of the primary problems. We are not just processing animal food to sustain our immediate food needs; we have a huge vertically integrated multinational food system that is now projecting its influence into the developing world across Africa and Asia with virtually no regard for the welfare of the animal.

Dr. Victor Yamo, Lecturer JKUAT

Dr. Yamo started off with a quote from Indira Gandhi, “The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” He stated that over the last five years there has been an increase in the level of awareness, the recognition that animals are sentient beings.

He proffered that work they have done in the past two or three years; animal welfare is connected to its productivity and livelihoods.

Dr. Yamo stated that the best place to start is to recognize that animals have fundamental freedoms or rights. The freedoms are critical for the animal’s wellbeing and if they secure those freedoms, humans will have better products and productivity which contributes to good nutrition, good health, and better livelihoods.

Lynne Vigeland, Masters student at UWC

Ms. Vigeland stated that the industrial agriculture process is quite costly, highly concentrated and mechanized, and uses chemical inputs such as antibiotics and growth hormones generating favorable products that are further commodified through other industries in society.

She suggested that as a process to modernization, we can look at the ways in which society adopts new materials and cultural practices of more technologically advanced communities compared to those identified as lacking in resources. The debate here would revolve around small- and large-scale agriculture and the pros and cons.

She stated that as an economic entity of a capitalist system, it is based on market value of animals and their by-products following profit maximizing business models. She noted that studies have cited negative impacts both environmental and animal welfare. Policies that govern animal welfare only set out what is accepted human behaviour such that it does not cause distress to other humans or negatively impact the quality of the animal post-slaughter. The implementation of five freedoms of animal welfare is not met without the anthropogenic gains associated with it and consequently there is conflict arising in the interaction between humans, non-humans, and their shared environment.

Ms. Vigeland stated that the commodification of animals in terms of its economic value changes the animal from a biological entity that experiences a given environment to an economic entity that can be exchanged. The role of animals in African society is a little more complex with different types of animals influencing attitudes and representations among the diverse cultures of the continent. She also stated that animal welfare, wildlife protection and conservation areas of legislation potentially contradict each other in terms of their aims which leaves room for lobbyists of wildlife hunting and farming to seek loopholes in industry sector supply. The physical environment shared between humans and animals can be indicative of several things: access to resources, knowledge of animal handling and husbandry, and attitudes towards animals. She continued that in factory style farming, it is observed that the process of raising and slaughtering animals induces stress in the animals more clearly observed in the response reactions to each other and to humans. Indicators of stress such as kicking or resistance to restraints can tell humans that welfare of the animal is negatively impacted in this environment. Small-scale agriculture is not without its challenges; however, the benefit may lie in the ability to more effectively mitigate these challenges compared to large-scale agriculture.

Tozie, Moderator

[How is industrial agriculture impacting negatively on the animal itself?](#)

Tony Gerrans, Executive Director Africa Humane Society International

Tony stated that he would start by talking about farmed animals in the food chain as it is the largest number of terrestrial animals on whom we inflict harm. There are seven major categories of harm that you can identify for farmed animals. The first one is we take them out of a natural environment and put them inside low sheds and confine them at very high stocking densities. A lot of negatives come from this; they cannot realistically be expected to get veterinary care at an individual level. They do often live in their own wastes and sometimes attack each other depending on the species and there are thus issues of disease and injury that go unattended for long periods of time. The industry response to dealing with this has been to commit certain animals to cages for long periods of their lives. Other responses to the negative consequences you get from putting animals in stocking densities like that they tend to pick at each other. Instead of affording these animals reasonable room, often industry response is to reduce the offending part of their body. This is often done without anaesthetic when these animals are still juvenile and so it is inherently cruel. We have terms for this, but these are typically quite harmful interventions on the integrity of that animal and usually done without any form of pain relief.

He also stated that to maximize profits, we tend to put these animals on unnatural diets; they are increasingly fed a grain-rich diet with growth stimulants. The meat industry also produces surplus animals such as male calves. These animals are either killed off immediately, separated from their mothers, given to small scale farms, used for production of veal. All those processes are inherently harmful. Once the animals reach the slaughter age, they are transported some distance to an industrial slaughter facility. The entire process of transporting the animal subjects them to a lot of harm as well. They do suffer injury and a high degree of stress in that transport system. Trucking is usually regulated in many jurisdictions with maximum limits on time spent on the road, however enforcement is poor. There is also the question of live export by sea where animals suffer the same confinement issues with the additional stresses of heat, the vessel moving while on top of each other in their own waste, and no veterinary care.

Tony also stated that the slaughter process is not practically possible to slaughter 80 billion a year in an unharmed way. There are insurmountable problems with having high

speed slaughter lines such as the lack of efficiency guarantee. In addition, the industry has a term 'downer animals,' describing animals that arrive at the slaughterhouse to compromise to walk to their own death; an indication of how severe their experience is in the transport and pre-slaughter process.

Further, modern slaughterhouses are not ideal places to work thus the workers are usually discriminated against minorities, transient people, or people who otherwise cannot earn income in a better job. As such, they are exploited and the work itself is inherently harmful. This results in abuses of animals in these processes where standard operating procedures are disregarded and animals are killed in ways that are not part of the regulatory framework.

Finally, Tony stated that the manipulation of animal genetics to improve profitability is advancing faster than the regulatory environment. Most of the manipulation techniques are not welfare friendly with the animals suffering significant welfare compromises. He argues that the system lends itself to exceptional events such as zoonotic diseases because of the scale. The meat industry has done an amazing job of hiding these truths from us.

Tozie, Moderator

Tozie requested to build on Tony's contribution, but also speak to the Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare (UDAW) by World Animal Protection.

Dr. Victor Yamo, Lecturer JKUAT

Dr. Yamo stated that part of the process is that there may be lack of awareness and that is where the UDAW comes in. He described animal welfare as how an animal copes in the environment it's in. This considers the nutrition, environment, and behavioural aspects.

Tozie, Moderator

Firstly, Tozie requested the addressing of the issues and examples. Secondly, why is Africa the focus now when we average about 20kg/person per year and you have countries like the United States that average 125kg/person per year?

Lynne Vigeland, Masters student at UWC

Ms. Vigeland stated that her comments on the issues and examples draw a comparison on what happens on a small-scale. The welfare of the animal is considered in the smaller space to an extent, but as it moves from the small-scale space to an industrial space there is a decline in the acknowledgment of the sentience of the animal. Justifications for treatments of animals such as electro prodding of cows arise. She also stated that in considering the transfer of diseases between individual animals, it is easier to assess it on a small-scale compared to a large-scale.

Ms. Vigeland argued that when considering issues of animal welfare in industrial animal agriculture, it is important to acknowledge the animals as biological entities, as sentient beings that experience reproduction, birthing process for females, and possess mating rituals for some species. Therefore, it is important for understanding what we as humans are doing to negatively impact the welfare of the animals to understand the animal as a biological entity and to acknowledge its sentience. She stated that denying the sentience amounts to denying the rights the animal may have.

As regards the 'premature' focus on Africa, Ms. Vigeland stated that prior to introduction of an agroecological approach, recognition is granted of Africa's history of pastoralism amongst its indigenous groups with a view to solutions to adapt to modern society. She considered that industrial agricultural systems seek solutions for mitigating issues that they may be experiencing both in terms of welfare and productivity under the guise of sustainability as the public increasingly require accountability.

She also stated that this kind of discussion is important as we begin to bring forth our ideas on what we observe in societies and what we observe in the literature to formulate a solution based on our circumstances. It is good that we bring context to Africa.

Tozie, Moderator

How do we balance the issue of hunger and the growing middle class on the African continent when looking at the industrialization of animals?

Prof. Werner Scholtz, Professor University of Southampton

Prof. Scholtz stated that underlining this question is the issue of sustainable development and is reminiscent of the North-South debate in international environmental law. The question ignores the link between the issue of health and the approach to the mechanization of the consumptive use of animals. The issue here is the balancing of factors but also taking cognizance of certain elements within sustainable development on the one hand, the social component, the rights of people, the needs, and interests of people. On the other hand, there is the economic growth factor and importance thereof, and the environment component. He stated that it is under the environmental component that one can fit in animal welfare and is where it is necessary to understand the interplay between the elements. The use of the economic circumstances of a continent or country to follow abhorrent practices negates the interplay between all the factors. The argument may be used as a short-term solution however, there will be long-term ramifications such as pollution. These are some of the impacts that increase poverty and unsustainable patterns, and it is a vicious cycle that is not easy to escape that fully negates the perspective. He argues that we should focus on Africa because it is important not to import those practices that are unsustainable, abhorrent, wanton, and immoral. There cannot be a one-dimensional focus on a skewed perspective, an immoral perspective on acquisition of food as it negates all the other aspects. It is therefore important to ensure the creation of awareness and an understanding of the interlinkages of all these factors including important aspects of indigenous practices.

Prof. Scholtz stated in Africa, the most important thing is that we still have wildlife left in the wild. It is thus important to prevent the transposition of the abhorrent model of commodification and industrialization of sentient beings, of our precious species such as lion and rhino.

Q&A

Tozie, Moderator

- 1. How do we ensure that animal welfare makes part of the risk assessment of our corporations? Why is there less research about animal welfare in the African continent?**

Tony Gerrans, Executive Director Africa Humane Society International

Gerrans stated that it is important that African countries, the citizenry, and government understand that the meat industry is not a benign food service business. It is a powerful corporate organization that is there to make profits. To the extent that it provides food, that is a positive, but it has a lot of negative externalities. It is important that citizens and governments force companies to bring those externalities into their permitting and licensing and financial reporting process. This is done through afro-centric research that localizes these economic transactions. There is a need for good local, contextually specific, country specific research that allows informed decision making about the type of food systems we want. The food systems need to be locally appropriate, empower local people, and anchored in the context of the ecosystems in which those food systems operate. The law can sometimes be a tool, there is need to push jurisprudence to ensure that the modern conception of animals and the recognition of their sentience is reflected in those laws. Finally, there are approaches other than an animal rights position, a lot that can be done based on current contemporary science of suffering, alternative food systems and it is our responsibility to present that in an accessible way to policymakers and to hold them to account in their policymaking.

Dr. Victor Yamo, Lecturer JKUAT

Why Africa? Dr. Yamo suggested looking at it from an economic and market perspective. He notes animal welfare is taken seriously in Europe yet brands from the devel-

oped countries are moving to Africa. What are they coming with? What are their market requirements?

Lynne Vigeland, Masters student at UWC

Ms. Vigeland, in her closing remarks, stated there is a need to bring it back to the African context. The existing research has mostly been conducted in the Global North. She highlighted that the countries considered forerunners in animal welfare work with the indigenous people and the existing indigenous knowledge. Moving forward, it is essential to consult the people for country-specific laws. This ensures recognition of their attitudes towards the role of animals in those societies and to create the policies to regulate and affirm the welfare of the animals. There is a need for finding the linkages between the acceptable practices for conservation, farming, and meat industries.

Prof. Werner Scholtz, Professor University of Southampton

Prof. Scholtz stated that it is important to appreciate that this is a global issue. It has a global impact; it is a global trade with global linkages. There is thus a need for a global approach. Further, there needs to be a movement of advocacy and awareness in Africa, and linkages between African countries, NGOs, and people on the ground to address this issue. It is especially important to feed into the global movement to counter the suffering of billions of animals both in agriculture and wildlife. It is also important to utilize legislation on the national and international level to advocate for change.

Judy Muriithi, Advocate of the High Court

Judy thanked the panelists and invited Mia MacDonald to give her closing remarks.

Mia MacDonald, Executive Director Brighter Green

Mia thanked the speakers, the moderators, Brighter Green's partner at UWC, Prof. Sharyn Spicer, Judy Bankman and Judy Muriithi. She stated that the aim was to look at issues where environment, animals, global sustainability, and global development intersect. One of them is in the world of food systems and animal agriculture. This is a

Western system exported around the world. There is a global movement challenging this development. She stated that part of Brighter Green's goal with the webinar is to help develop a research agenda going forward, to acknowledge the huge importance of academic research in the policy process, the role of student undertaking this kind of research, the professors, the role of civil society and activists, and how to work together going forward. The outcome of this webinar is a good research agenda.