



Supporting Global Livestock Advocacy for Development (GLAD) project

Stakeholder perceptions on sustainable livestock –
report from a message testing exercise

Marchmont Communications

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Executive summary

In May and June 2017, Marchmont Communications carried out a series of one-to-one phone interviews with individuals drawn from 12 stakeholder organizations for the Global Livestock Advocacy for Development (GLAD) project led by ILRI.

The interviews were divided into four parts to solicit the interviewees' perceptions on:

- Their stakeholder organisation and livestock
- Livestock's role in development
- Livestock advocacy
- Audiences and influencers

Of the 12 interviewees:

- 5 were based in Europe, 4 in Africa and 3 in the US;
- 4 said livestock was "very central" to their work, 5 said it was equal to others, 2 said it was a small focus of their work and 1 said livestock was not central at all.
- 5 worked with issues related to growth and equity, 9 worked with health and nutrition and all 12 said their organisation worked with issues related to the environment and climate change.

The summary findings from each of the three other sections are provided below:

Perceptions on	Positive	Negative
Livestock's role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to economic growth. • Contribution to human health and nutrition in developing countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to the environment overall. • Contribution to human health and nutrition in developed countries.
Livestock advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILRI's prominence as an organisation promoting livestock for development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility of livestock in development dialogues. • Perception of livestock's image. • Lack of a figurehead or public face for livestock for development.
Audiences and influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILRI's reputation as a research institute. • All stakeholders saw potential for collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donors often located in countries where image of livestock is negative. • Lack of flagship event to shape agenda for livestock for development.

The key findings for advocacy and communications were:

- **All 12** stakeholders' activities were said to relate in some way to the **environment and climate change**.
- **84 per cent** of interviewees said livestock's visibility in development dialogues was **average or below**.
- **25 per cent** of interviewees said livestock was **not visible at all** in development dialogues.
- **1/3** of interviewees said livestock for development was viewed **largely or somewhat negatively**.
- The top three donors cited by the interviewees were: **The World Bank**, the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** and **USAID**.
- **No single event** dominated interviewee responses when it came to shaping the agenda of livestock for development.

From such findings that highlighted gaps in knowledge or awareness, the following talking points were identified:

Livestock's role	Livestock advocacy	Influencers/audiences
Whether/how to address the environmental impact of livestock, identified as a key issue for livestock's image.	How to communicate different elements and sub-sectors of livestock e.g. extensive/intensive; production/consumption.	How to target/attract donors based in countries where perception of livestock is negative.
Whether/how to prioritise livestock's contributions to livelihoods to counteract its environmental impact.	How/who to address lack of figurehead to champion livestock for global development.	How to address gap for agenda-setting event: further awareness, new events, improved events, etc.
Whether/how to prioritise livestock's contributions to health and nutrition to counteract its environmental impact.	How to address low visibility of livestock within development sector e.g. more events, more media outreach, etc.	How to leverage the potential for collaboration with the stakeholder organisations interviewed.

Methodology

Following a comprehensive stakeholder audit, a shortlist of 12 organisations were selected to be approached for interview. This shortlist was compiled in conjunction with ILRI. Where an organisation declined to participate, an alternative was found with a similar profile.

The interviews involved individuals from the following stakeholder organizations:

<u>NGOs</u>	<u>Donors</u>	<u>Research</u>	<u>Private sector</u>	<u>Multilateral</u>
CARE International	Global Environment Facility (GEF)	The French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)	Cargill	The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Conservation International	Global Resilience Partnership (GRP)	The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)		
Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)	The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)			
FoodTank				
The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)				

The interviews were carried out using a structured interview guide as shown in Appendix 1. The questions were structured around four key themes:

- The stakeholder organisation and livestock
- Livestock's role in development
- Livestock advocacy
- Audiences and influencers

Participants were asked to answer the qualitative questions on a scale of one to five e.g. *In your view, to what extent do livestock contribute positively to economic growth)? Where one = not at all and five = very much.*

The gender balance of the participants was 8:4, male to female.

The geographic split between locations was:

Europe	5
Africa	4
US	3

Limitations

The stakeholder organizations were shortlisted from an audit carried out in collaboration with ILRI.

While every effort was made to ensure a spread of different backgrounds and profiles, the participating organizations – and some of the individuals - were by and large known to ILRI. This raises the possibility that those interviewed represent only a small segment of the specific niche of organisations that work with livestock or livestock-related issues for development.

As the table above shows, the selection was skewed towards NGOs and donors with only one participating stakeholder each from the list of private sector and multilateral organizations.

Many of the participating organizations had a broad profile, which meant that the responses given by any one interviewee can only be said to represent the work of that individual and not necessarily the organisation. Where possible, this was distinguished within the responses and in the analysis.

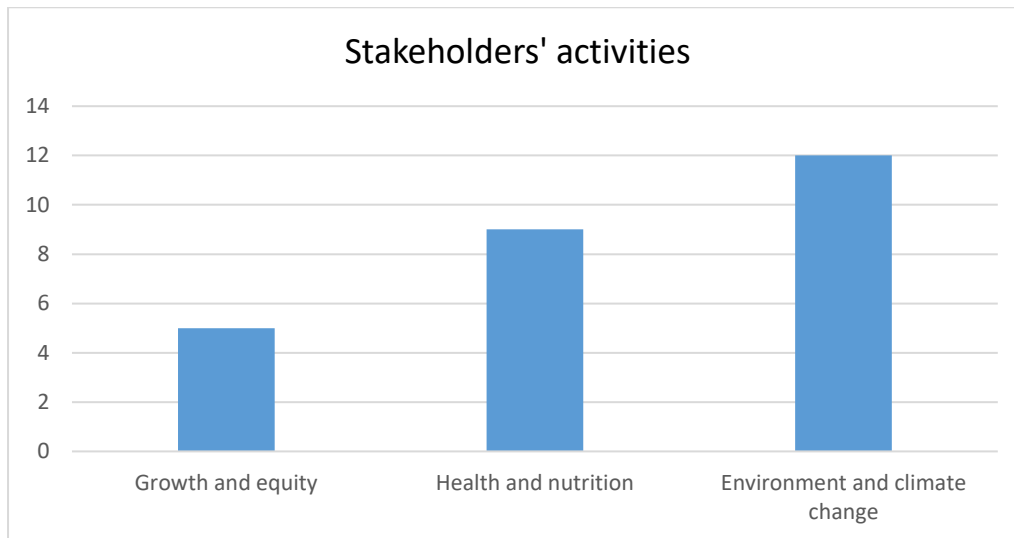
All interviewees were informed that the interviews were carried out on behalf of ILRI, which may have added an element of bias when it came to questions on the most prominent organisations for livestock for development. However, participants were advised they would not be identified without their consent to try to allay any concerns.

The participating organizations ranged from those for whom livestock was ranked by interviewees as “**very central**” (4/12) to their activities to “**not at all**” (1/12), as shown below:

Centrality of livestock to organization activities	Number of stakeholders
Not at all	1*
A little	2
Equal to others	5
Very central	4

* This participant said livestock was **not central** at all to the organisation’s activities but was fairly central to the specific program the interviewee was working on.

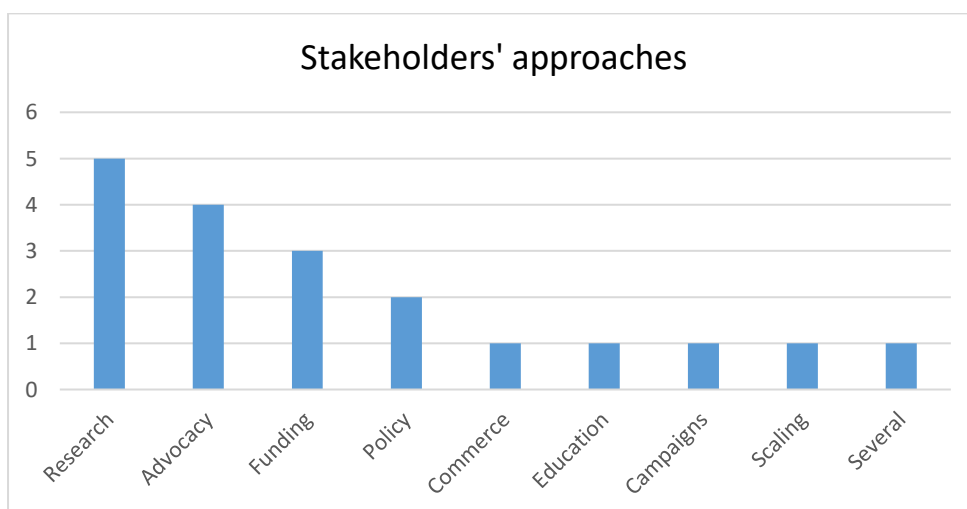
According to the interviewees, their organisations work across a combination of the three GLAD pillars:



All participants (12) said their organizations focussed on livestock issues related to the **environment and climate change** to some degree. Some were also said to focus on health and nutrition (9) while none indicated their organization worked solely with growth and equity related to livestock. **Five** said that their organization worked with **all three** of the pillar headings of the GLAD programme.

Five of the interviewees said the approach of their organizations to these issues was though **research**. **Four** counted **advocacy** among their activities. **Three** said their approach focused on **funding**. Most responded with a combination.

*“I’m part of an environmental organisation and **they often like to hide my work** [in livestock]. Because of the northern hemisphere lack of understanding, it’s **downplayed**.”*



Analysis

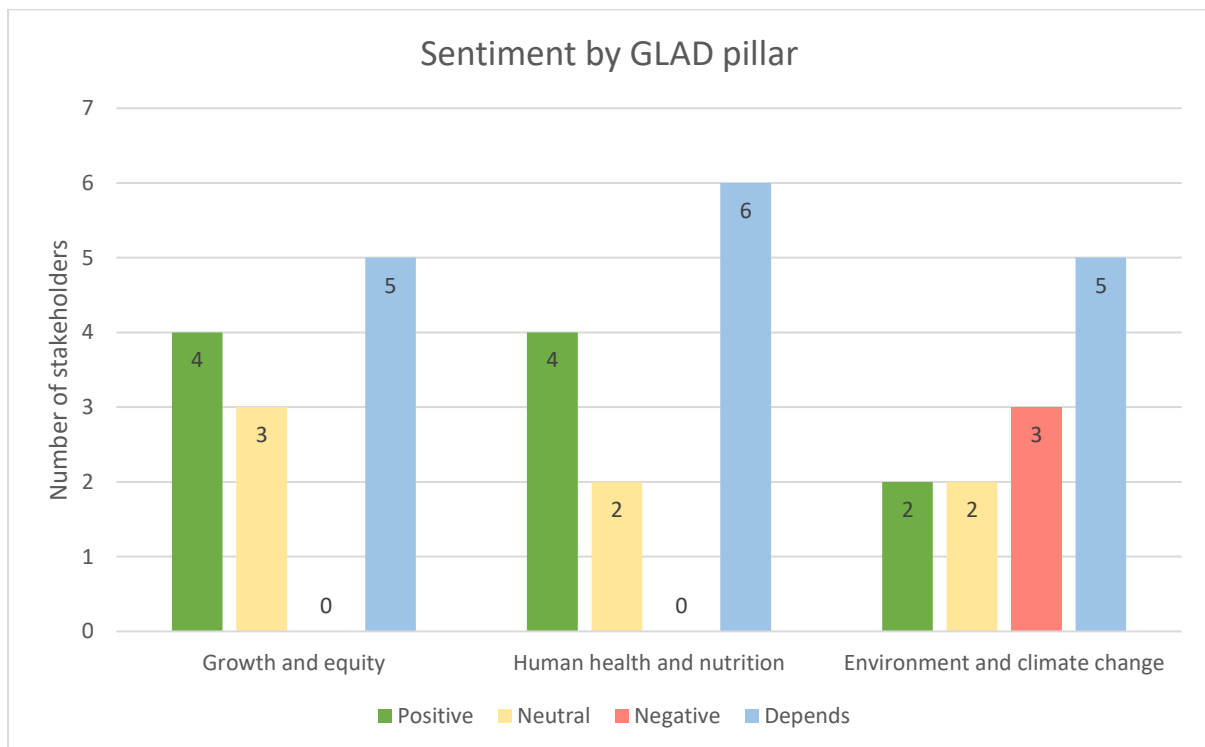
Role of livestock

Q: In your view, to what extent do livestock contribute positively to:

1. economic growth
2. human health
3. the environment?

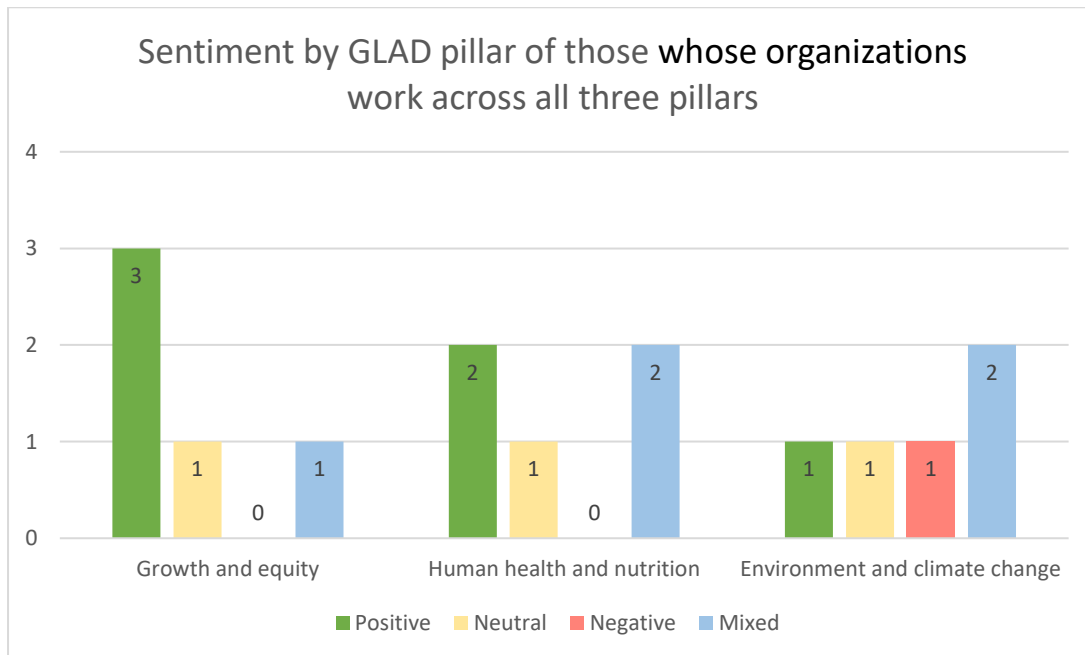
(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3= neutral; 4 = fairly; 5 = very important)

The sentiment of the interviewees towards each of the three GLAD pillars is shown in the bar chart below:

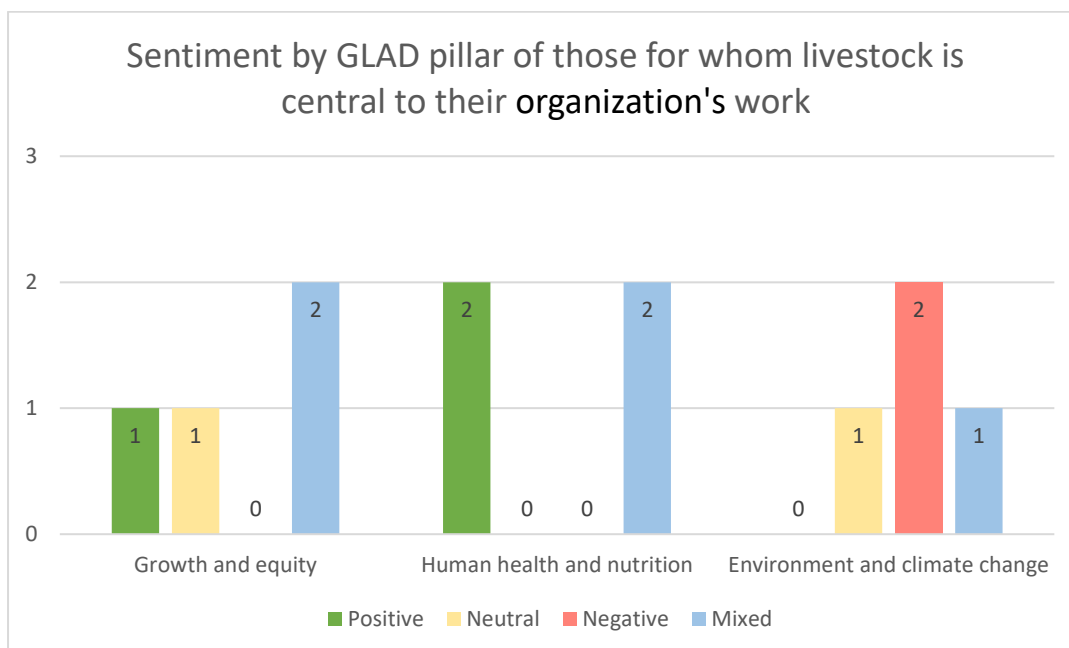


The chart above shows that on balance, more interviewees identified positive contributions to both economic growth and human health than negative. However, when it came to livestock's contribution to the environment, interviewees were more divided, with three expressly stating livestock's contribution to the environment was negative.

The following chart shows the sentiments among the five participants who said their organisation worked across all three GLAD pillars:



The following chart shows the sentiments among four participants who said livestock issues were central to their organisations' work:



Economic growth

Overall, the interviewees tended to agree that livestock's contribution to economic growth could be viewed on a sliding scale depended on region and circumstance. Most identified that livestock were economically very important to developing countries while several others went further to specify:

- in some areas, such as arid land, livestock was the only economic possibility;
- livestock played a positive role not only for GDP but also for resilience and empowering women;
- livestock's economic contribution varied according to production system e.g. pastoralism, feedlots.

Only one participant offered a scenario in which livestock's contribution to economic growth might be expressly detrimental, citing impact on forests.

In terms of awareness of livestock's contribution, many of the participants cited figures about the economic importance of the livestock sector as well as distinguishing between the different economic roles that livestock can play according to region, landscape and production system. Three participants offered little or no explanation for their response.

“Fastest growing economic activity in the agriculture sector in developing countries.”

*“In the countries we are working in, **there aren't reliable figures** [for livestock's impact on livelihoods]. Most of the organisations have a very **unclear idea** of what is a real contribution of livestock to development.”*

*“I'd like to see a **bigger focus on equity, gender, and the role of women** as well as focus on small ruminants, indigenous chickens.”*

*“One thing that never comes out in communications is the **role of the herder.**”*

Health and nutrition

The participants tended to agree that livestock's contribution to human health and nutrition was most positive for poor people in developing countries. Several participants made reference to specific health issues associated with a lack of protein and nutrients found in animal-source foods including cognitive development problems and malnutrition.

The participants also tended to agree that the livestock's contribution to human health was more negative in developed countries:

- Four of the 12 participants cited overconsumption in their response;
- Two cited diseases linked to animal-sourced foods;
- One cited evidence that red meat was unhealthy.

“Positive economic and nutritional benefits outweigh environmental issues.”

Environment and climate change

Overall, livestock’s contribution to the environment was a much more polarising question than the previous two. The participants tended to agree that it depended again on the circumstances but with stronger responses on either side of the spectrum:

- Half of the participants said livestock’s contribution to the environment was or could be positive when well-managed;
- One participant suggested that livestock’s contribution was “95 per cent” negative, the exception being in rangelands;
- One participant said the environmental impact of livestock varied between sub-sectors: intensive and extensive.

Participants cited greenhouse gas emissions as a negative and soil carbon as a positive.

*“At the moment, most livestock production globally is **not good for the environment**; it would probably be 95pc is not good for the environment. The exception is the rangelands and central states.”*

*“[Environment is the] **more controversial issue**. From our perspective in developing countries, livestock can contribute to improving the environment but it’s true this needs to be managed. The image of livestock sometimes is **not positive**. There are too many examples of **mismanagement**.”*

This indicates the greatest potential to shift opinion is around the environmental impact of livestock, particularly in managed pastoral or rangeland systems and where greenhouse gas emissions have been found to be lower than global averages. The level of mixed responses offers the chance to address divided opinions with positive messaging while counterbalancing those with negative perceptions to foster a more nuanced understanding.

However, it also suggests a level of acceptance and understanding around livestock’s potential to positively contribute to economic growth and human health in developing countries. This offers an opportunity to capitalise on positive messaging, particularly the suggestion that “positive economic and nutritional benefits outweigh environmental issues”.

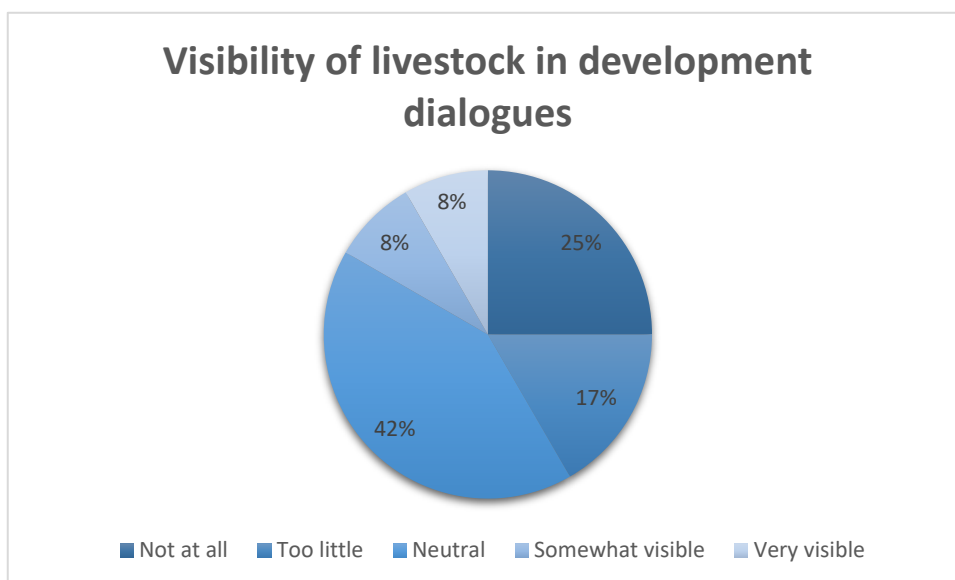
Furthermore, these findings reveal an opportunity to highlight some of the benefits of livestock to industrialised countries to add greater balance and understanding of livestock’s role and potential in different circumstances.

Livestock advocacy

*Q: In your view, how visible is livestock's role within broader development dialogues?
1 = not at all; 2 = somewhat too little; 3= neutral; 4 = somewhat too much; 5 = definitely too much; (Don't Know)*

When it came to the visibility of livestock within development dialogues, the interviewees gave mixed responses but the consensus fell towards the low end of the scale. A total of **10 out of 12** said that the visibility of livestock for development was **average or too little**. **Three** said it was not visible at all while only **one** said it was very visible.

The overwhelming majority (84 per cent) saw livestock's visibility in development dialogues as average or below. A quarter said it was not visible at all:



*“**Livestock is not on the agenda.** Most of the time it’s negative. Even in developing countries, there’s an idea that livestock is the cause for anything bad.”*

*“There is a general acceptance around **smallholder systems being generally positive for development** and more industrial and western models are deeply harmful. I think that’s fairly well understood.”*

Q: Is this visibility largely positive or negative?

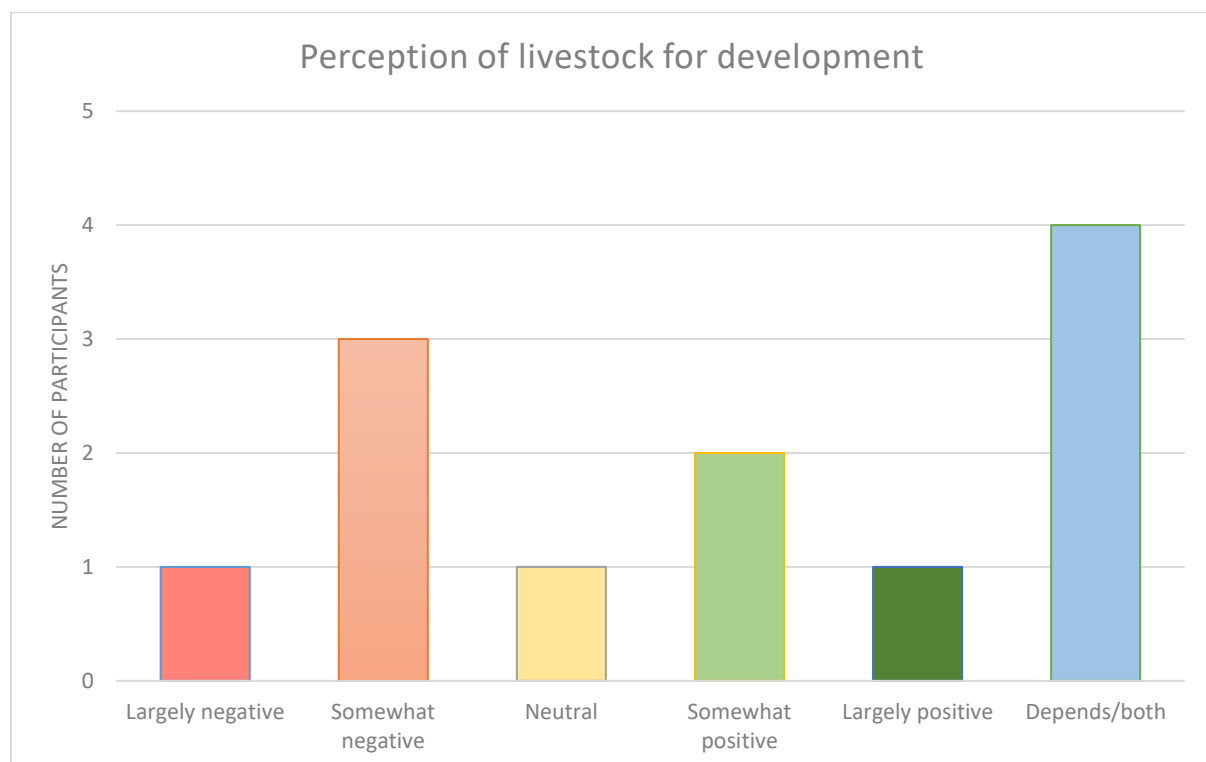
1= largely negative; 2 = somewhat negative; 3 = neutral; 4 = somewhat positive; 5 = largely positive

The perception of livestock’s role in global development was also varied. **Four** said it was **somewhat or largely negative** while **four** said it depended on the circumstances. Only **one** interviewee said livestock’s contribution to global development was seen as largely positive. Many participants acknowledged a division between how livestock was seen within the development sector, and how livestock was seen by the general public/mainstream media.

“If we’re talking about development professionals, the perception of livestock is positive. But the world as a whole, journalists, maybe not.”

*“We need in all these debates around livestock to have an honest discussion around the **role of consumption.**”*

The range of responses may indicate the development sector is divided over livestock or that the community of livestock advocates is somewhat fragmented.



This raises two challenges: raising the profile of livestock for development and tackling its associated negative image. Some stakeholders said the challenge of making livestock more visible related to differentiating livestock’s role in developing and developed countries, with **five** interviewees agreeing that this distinction was not widely accepted or understood. **Three** said that it was sufficiently differentiated while **four** said it depended.

Others indicated that the challenge of advocating for livestock for development resulted from the heterogeneity of the sector, with different elements of the livestock sector offering different solutions, advantages and disadvantages.

*“The core messages are around **extensive** and **intensive** sectors. We do need to stop treating livestock as a sector and recognise it is two very distinct subsectors with very different needs and implications and those are the more extensive and more intensive approaches.”*

For those in developed countries, responses tended to focus on overconsumption, which overshadowed arguments that livestock can improve health both through nutrition but also through income. This suggested a further division in livestock’s profile between livestock’s products for consumption and livestock as an economic activity.

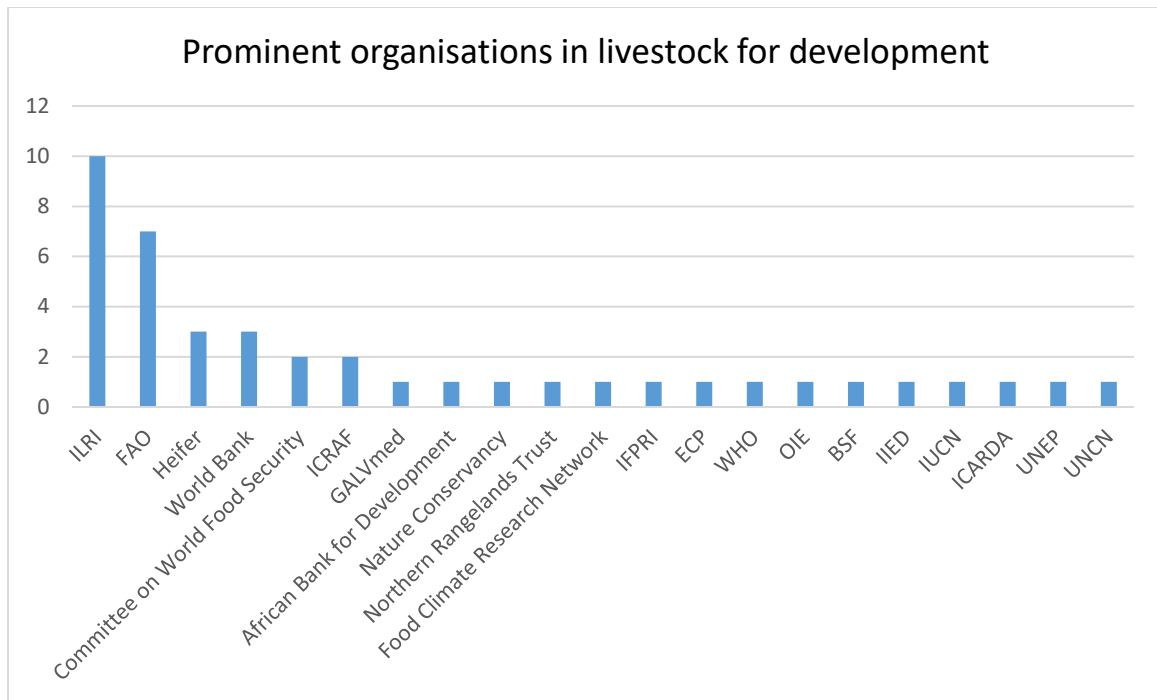
*“I followed a panel in which someone suggested just growing soy. There’s **a need for education** around where food comes from.”*

*“Many people think Africa and India should go **vegetarian**. There is a great **need for more information**, data and analysis to inform the public.”*

Q: Which organisations would you consider to be most prominent in global discussions and dialogues on livestock for development?

When asked which organisations were **most prominent** in global discussions and dialogues on livestock for development, **10 out of 12 interviewees** identified ILRI. Many cited ILRI’s research in different areas in their response. This is particularly notable given how little consensus there was around any other organisation.

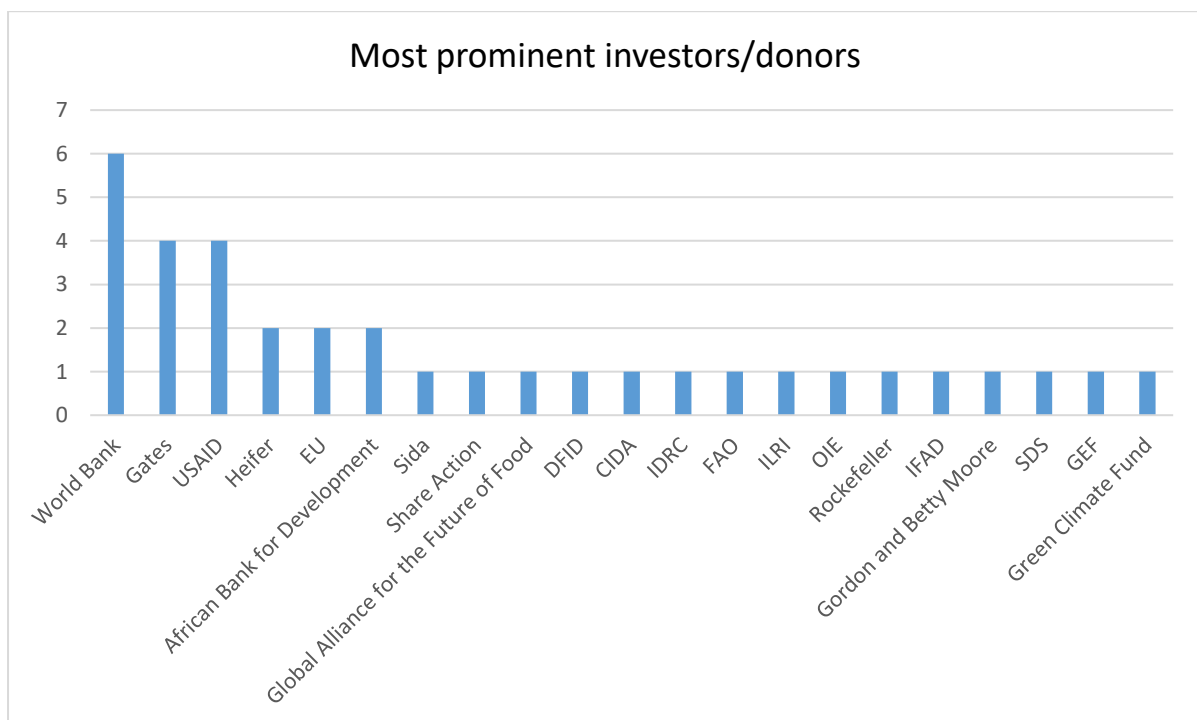
Notwithstanding any bias associated with the participants, this indicates ILRI may be uniquely placed to shape the agenda for livestock for development. Responses from the participants also offer a list of potential partners who may also be instrumental in galvanising livestock advocates.



Target Audiences/Influencers

Q: In your view, which investors or donors are most visible/influential in their support of livestock for global development?

The top three donors cited for their influence in livestock for development were **World Bank, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** and **USAID**, with participants recalling a wide range of organisations:



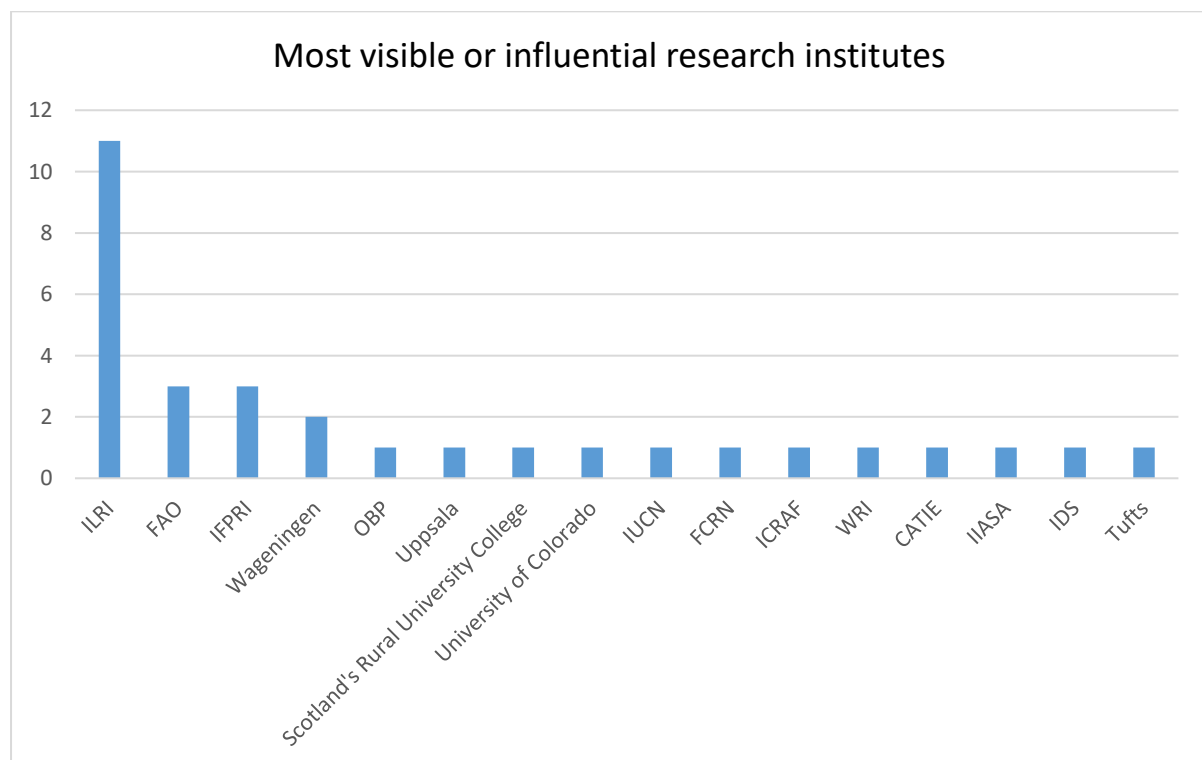
Some of the participants highlighted the challenge of securing donors, which tend to be based in countries where the impact of livestock/the consumption of livestock products is seen negatively. The point was made that more outreach could be done in the countries where donors are based in order to combat the negative image of livestock and highlight its potential for development.

*“The problem was the livestock issue was known in Africa and India but it was **less known by the donors** that were more listening to the press against livestock, deforestation, overgrazing.”*

*Convincing traditional environmental donors to invest in livestock is “like **pulling teeth**”.*

Q: Which research institutes are most visible/influential?

ILRI’s visibility was again clear when interviewees were asked about influential research institutes. However, one or two mentioned that ILRI’s profile was not as high as it could be. Once again, the range of responses may indicate a lack of familiarity with research institutes among the participants and/or a fragmented research sector with few leaders:



*“[ILRI is] really **visible** for pulling people together.”*

*“[ILRI] are the ones **well-known**, especially within CGIAR.”*

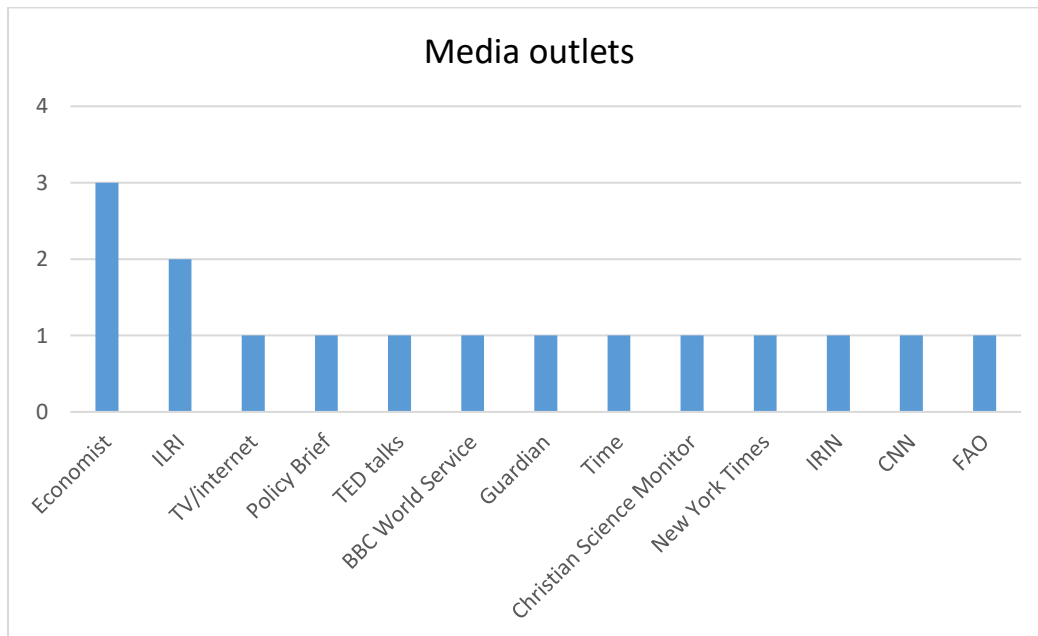
*“Among all the CGIAR, [ILRI] the **least visible** – people don’t realise it exists.”*

*“CGIAR is an **enigma**. Lots of development professionals who have never heard of it.”*

Q: In your view, which media outlets are most visible/influential in terms of shaping perceptions of livestock for development?

Interviewees were less confident in recalling media outlets that were influential in shaping their perceptions of livestock for development. **Three** mentioned **The Economist** but responses varied indicating that no one publication dominates this subject and/or that participants had limited experience of livestock coverage in the mainstream media.

Among the notable responses were **TED Talks**, which may be an avenue to explore for ILRI, **ILRI’s own website and content**, which is perhaps a resource to build on, and **BBC World Service**:

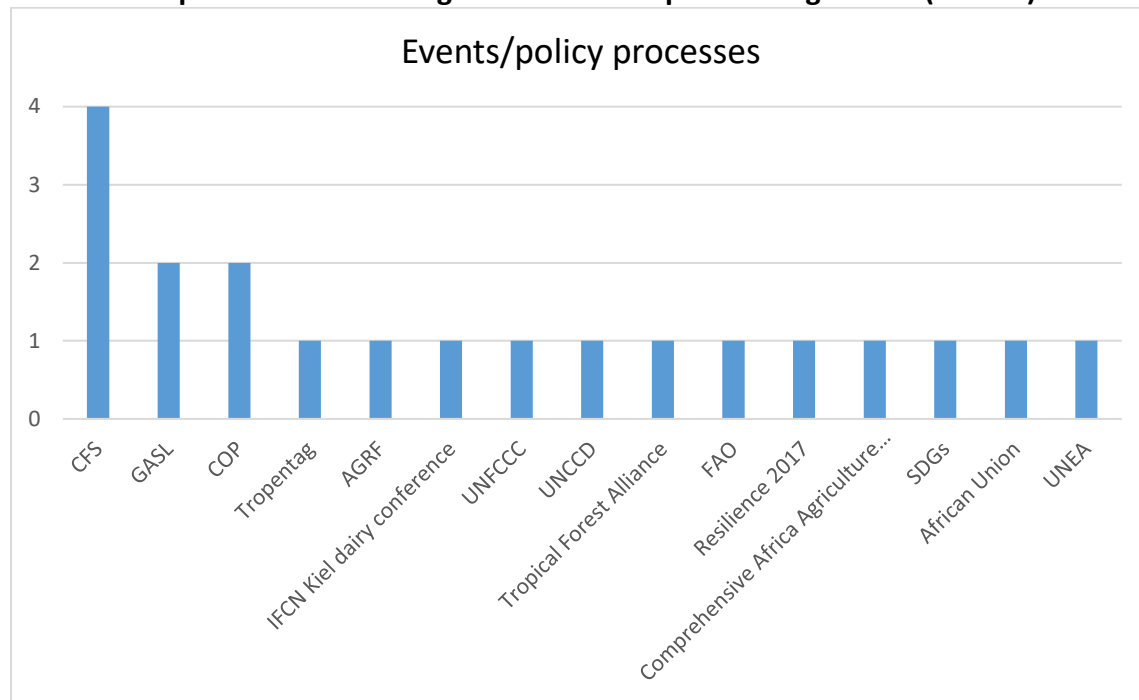


Q: In your view, which events/policy processes are most influential in shaping the agenda for livestock for development?

The most commonly cited event for shaping the agenda of livestock for development was the **Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** (4/12).

However, the broad spread of responses again indicated that no single event or policy process is seen as the flagship moment for livestock on the global agenda, despite the aims of the **Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock (GASL)**. This opens up a number of possible opportunities: to create a new one, to improve those that exist by developing GASL or pushing for a bigger share of voice at the CFS, or by raising awareness of them.

Others that may offer new opportunities to explore included: **Tropentag, Resilience 2017** and the **Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)**.



Conclusions

From this series of qualitative interviews, it is possible to gather insights about the gaps in knowledge and perceptions of livestock as a tool for global development, as well as identifying possible partners, platforms and press that may help address this.

The findings have demonstrated how livestock is seen according to its roles in economic growth, human health and the environment. While the participants gave a broad range of responses, the environment emerged as the most problematic issue.

When considering future advocacy around livestock for global development, this insight allows for a discussion on how best to leverage livestock's different roles to convey key messages, for example, by building on the positive contributions to growth and equity, and health and nutrition, or by addressing the negative associations of livestock's environmental impact.

These options can be considered in light of the finding that 2/3 of the participants said that livestock for development was or could be seen as negative.

Meanwhile, 84 per cent of interviewees considered livestock to have limited visibility in development dialogues.

Participants' responses under the livestock advocacy section offer some possibilities for addressing this in terms of:

- Institutional leadership – how to coalesce those identified as most prominent?
- Individual leadership – whether/who to fill this gap for a livestock champion?
- Events – how/whether to unite existing events or provide a new event?
- Media outreach – if/how to promote messages through traditional media.

The following have been identified as issues to address when discussing future advocacy and communications strategies:

- How to differentiate livestock's different systems/sub-sectors;
- How to differentiate between consumption of livestock products and livestock as an economic activity;
- How to capitalise on understanding of livestock's different roles in economic growth;
- How to promote examples of best practice management to limit environmental impact;
- How to evoke possible positive contributions to environment;
- How to improve livestock's visibility in development dialogues;
- How to challenge negative image;
- If/how to leverage ILRI/others' prominence as organisations;
- How to address gap for individual livestock champion;
- How to target donors identified as most visible/prominent.

Appendix 1: Interview guide

In partnership with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Marchmont Communications is conducting a series of structured, one-on-one phone interviews to inform communications and advocacy work that addresses perceptions and attitudes toward livestock for global development.

Each interview will last approximately **30 minutes** and will be completely **confidential**, unless you specifically consent otherwise. The interviews are designed to inform the development of future communications and advocacy activities in the campaign.

Thank you for your willingness to participate. A summary of the interview results can be shared with participants at the close of the process.

Section 1 – Your organisation and livestock

How central is livestock or livestock-related issues to your organisation’s activities?

Please describe the kinds of livestock-related issues your organisation does?

And what approaches to these livestock issues does your organisation do?

Section 2 – Role of livestock

In your view, to what extent do livestock contribute positively to economic growth)?

In your view, to what extent do livestock contribute positively to human health?

In your view, to what extent do livestock contribute positively to the environment?

Section 3 – Livestock advocacy

In your view, how visible is livestock’s role within broader development dialogues?

Is this visibility largely positive or negative?

Is the role of livestock in the developed and the developing world sufficiently differentiated?

Which organisations would you consider to be most prominent in global discussions and dialogues on livestock for development?

Section 4 – Target Audiences / Influencers

In your view, which investors or donors are most visible/influential in their support of livestock for global development?

Which research institutes are most visible/influential?

In your view, which media outlets are most visible/influential in terms of shaping perceptions of livestock for development?

In your view, which events/policy processes are most influential in shaping the agenda for livestock for development?

Section 5 – Additional Information

Is there anything else that you would like to add that has not already been covered?

Would you be willing to let us follow up with you with any additional questions in the future, based on your responses?