Despite considerable evidence, today, the sector faces intense global pressure as opposition to livestock is becoming part of climate activism or the mainstream western narrative of an unhealthy diet. This is happening as the demand for meat, milk and eggs is projected to almost double by 2050, driven by population growth, urbanisation, and rising economies in developing countries. With these growing adverse perceptions about animal farming, the challenge for advocates for sustainable livestock is how do we position ourselves to drive a stronger narrative that shows the nuance required for context-specific livestock systems that can deliver multiple benefits for people and the planet. The challenge is how can evidence-based advocacy be a useful tool to anchor insights from the science on nutritional health, climate change and land restoration.

Global Sustainable Livestock Advocacy for Development (GLAD) Project

Since 2016, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Global Sustainable Livestock Advocacy for Development (GLAD) project has argued that increased funding to the livestock sector in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) can deliver a wide range of development outcomes such as better nutrition for women and children, better incomes for smallholders, more job opportunities for youth, greater empowerment for women, and enhanced resilience and adaptation to climate change. As shown in the diagram below – GLAD has evolved in terms of its scope, focus and sophistication.

Why the need for science-based advocacy?

Lessons learned

Better targeting and focus on priority topics and audiences with explicit impact pathways and indicators of success. We will prioritize activities around a limited number of topics (nutrition, climate change and environment) with associated narratives, communications, partnerships and impact pathways.

Identify and work with partners and collaborators around key topics. We will be more deliberate about securing strategic anchor partnerships with organizations (and individuals), within the livestock sector and beyond the sector, based on complementarities of strengths and work to co-design interventions.

Thought leadership: GLAD will put in place a global technical and engagement resource panel that will provide high level global assessment and engagement and act as a sounding board to prioritize actions to improve the positioning of livestock in global sustainable development agendas.

Engaging livestock champions and investors through brokering solutions: Livestock champions, investors and policy-makers are often poorly connected, so solutions are not known or fully understood.

Innovative communication communications: Phase 1 and 2 were successful in distilling evidence and messages that provided a solid foundation for engagement. Phase 3 will expand these efforts but ensure that communication products are targeted to address specific outcomes.

More deliberate learning and metrics: Advocacy requires nimbleness and learning. We will develop better ways to learn and adjust as well as metrics to identify our contributions to outcomes as well as monitoring communication and engagement both quantitatively and qualitatively.

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