Revolutionizing Animal Welfare Education in Rwanda: A transformative journey for animal wellbeing

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Introduction

Education to
- Improved Animal Welfare Standards:
- Economic Benefits:
- Sustainable Agriculture & Food safety
- Ethical Considerations:
- Educational Opportunities
- Resilience to Climate Change

SDG 12 & 14
The Current State of Animal Welfare Education in Rwanda

➢ Many Key actors

- Limited Resources:
  - Competition for resources with other educational priorities

- Balancing Interests:
  - In some cases, there are conflicts of interest between human needs and animal welfare.

- Keeping Pace with Scientific:
  - Educators must continually adapt their materials to reflect new insights and developments.

- Age-Appropriate Education:
  - Teaching young children requires a different approach than educating adults or professionals in animal-related industries.

- Research: Not enough
The Need for Transformation

- **Holistic Impact:** Animal well-being,
  - Addressing not only specific issues but also the underlying factors that contribute to animal suffering

- **Interconnected Challenges:** (Agriculture, livelihoods, environmental conservation, and public health)-
  - Recognize these connections and finds sustainable solutions that benefit both animals and people

- **Environmental Conservation:**
  - Addressing issues like overgrazing and deforestation through a transformative approach can help protect Rwanda's ecosystems

- **Public Health:**
  - Diseases that affect animals can also affect humans (zoonoses, AMR), so improving animal well-being is critical for preventing disease outbreaks and safeguarding public health.

- **Education and Awareness:**
  - This increased awareness can lead to more informed decision-making and a stronger commitment to animal well-being.
The Need for Transformation

- Rwanda's conservation and ethical values

  ✅ Environmental Conservation: Establishment of national parks and conservation initiatives.

  ✅ Sustainable Development: Rwanda has embraced the concept of sustainable development, seeking to balance economic growth with environmental conservation.

  ✅ Community-Based Conservation: local communities in the management and protection of natural resources.

  ✅ Wildlife Conservation & Ethical Tourism

  ✅ Green Initiatives: These initiatives contribute to environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation.
Compassionate Conservation Principles

✅ C.C represents a shift in the way conservationists think about and approach their work
  - It strives to find a middle ground between the sometimes-conflicting goals of conserving biodiversity and respecting the welfare of individual animals.

✅ Shift from merely teaching facts about animals to fostering empathy and understanding of their experiences, needs, and emotions. (Prioritizing Animal Welfare)

✅ encourages students to think deeply about their own values and beliefs concerning animals. (Ethical Considerations)

✅ highlight the interconnectedness of species and ecosystems and teach students to consider the well-being of animals within the broader context of conservation efforts. (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Ethics)
Compassionate Conservation Principles

✅ Teaching about conflict resolution is a key aspect of compassionate conservation (Human-Wildlife Conflict Resolution)

✅ Engaging local communities in discussions about animal welfare and conservation practices, respecting their cultural beliefs, and seeking collaborative solutions that benefit both animals and people (Community Engagement)

✅ Animal welfare education guided by compassionate conservation should inspire students to become advocates for animals (Promoting Empathy and Action)
Rethinking Curriculum and Pedagogy

✅ Incorporating modern animal welfare and compassionate conservation topics into the curriculum equips students with
- The knowledge and values needed to address current and future challenges related to animals, the environment, and ethical considerations.
- It empowers individuals to make informed, responsible, and compassionate choices, contributing to a more ethical and sustainable coexistence with animals and the natural world.

✅ Need for the innovative teaching methods that engage students and promote empathy towards animals
- **Hands on & Outdoor Experience:** Practical experience can foster a deep connection and empathy toward animals.
- **Guest Speakers:** Hearing from professionals who work closely with animals can provide unique insights and inspire empathy.
- **Documentaries and Films & Storytelling and Narrative-Based Learning:**
  - **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving**
  - **Animal Ethology and Behavior Studies**
Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

- **Structured Education: Courses available at UG & PG program**
  - Infectious diseases prevention and control, Animal Handling
  - Livestock management
  - Veterinary Jurisprudence, legislate on Ethic & rights
  - Animal behavior, and Welfare
  - Wildlife & Conservation

- **Unstructured Education:**
  - Local NGO- WAG, NVVH, PET+, RAWO, Gorilla Drs, Hapet, Agrotech etc, Farmers associations
    - IPC
    - Animal transport, Vaccine, Prudent use of drug, Vaccination, 5 freedom etc
    - Humane Dog Population Management
  - Public Institutions: RAB, RBC, REMA, RDB
    - Awareness
  - **WTS**
    - Modules being used across the region
    - FAO, WOAH, VSF, AU-IBAR etc
Leveraging Technology

- Online Courses and Resources & Educational Apps:
- Use of Unmanned aerial vehicles (Drone)
- Social Media and Online Communities:
- Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR):
- Online Certification Programs:
- Data Collection and Monitoring:
- Conservation

Wild Welfare
https://wildwelfare.org > resources-elearn-programme

E-Learning Programme | Wild Welfare
Wild Welfare’s digital education programme creates accessible and engaging opportunities for animal care principles to be learned and understood.

Summary of ANP6124: Animal Ethology and Welfare
Overcoming Challenges

✅ Increased Awareness

✅ Engage with community leaders, elders, and stakeholders to foster open dialogues about the benefits of animal welfare education

✅ Seek partnerships with governmental agencies, NGOs, and international organizations that may provide funding or support

✅ Develop cost-effective educational materials and use technology for wider reach.
✅ Adapt educational materials to local languages and cultures

✅ Foster constructive dialogue with industry representatives to find common ground and develop sustainable, ethical practices that benefit animals and businesses

✅ Develop a variety of educational formats, such as online courses, workshops, and community outreach programs, to reach different demographics
Measuring Impact: Implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors among participants.

Balancing Competing Interests: Promote sustainable and humane practices that consider both human and animal well-being.

Long-Term Commitment:

Advocate for the development and implementation of animal welfare education policies and regulations at local and national levels (Legal and Regulatory Barriers).

Collaborate with authorities to integrate animal welfare into existing curricula.
Call to Action

✅ Join us in the transformative journey for animal well-being in Rwanda.

✅ Revise and Modernize Curriculum: (Harmonized)

✅ Interdisciplinary Approach:

✅ Ethical Education (importance of humane treatment and welfare in all aspects of their work)

✅ Technology Integration:

✅ Continuing Education

✅ Research and Innovation

✅ Resources allocation
Conclusion

• "A transformative journey for animal well-being" describes a purposeful and significant effort to bring about positive, enduring changes in how animals are cared for, supported, and protected, with a focus on their welfare, health, and overall quality of life". 

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