

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL CAVIES IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS IN DR CONGO'S SUD-KIVU PROVINCE



CAVIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT (GEWE)

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Background

- Women constitute more than 50% of global population – as producers and consumers.
- Gender equality is smart economics (Danny Leipsiger- VP-WB).
- Women's ownership of livestock is better compared to ownership of other assets, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa – The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) 2011, Gender, Land and Asset Gap Surveys confirms.
- DRC Sud-Kivu is a vulnerable environment where large livestock is difficult to keep due to insecurity.
 - Hence the preference of small livestock especially cavies for women and chicken for men.



Background

- Stunting rates in Sub-Saharan Africa are high (40%) and growing (20% annually). DR Congo average is 43% stunting – Eastern Congo is 58% (UNICEF 2011).
- Use of animal products and especially animal protein is known to improve food and nutrition security at household levels, thus curbing stunting and malnutrition.
- Women associations with control over resources results in better mother and child health, nutrition, agricultural development and general improvement of community livelihoods.



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Rationale for Cavies in Sud-Kivu

- Incomes, Food and Nutrition insecurity are real challenges especially where animal-source foods are scarce.
- Regular consumption of small quantities (4 gm/day) of animal protein, is adequate for physical and cognitive development of children
- Bringing people together from all walks of life

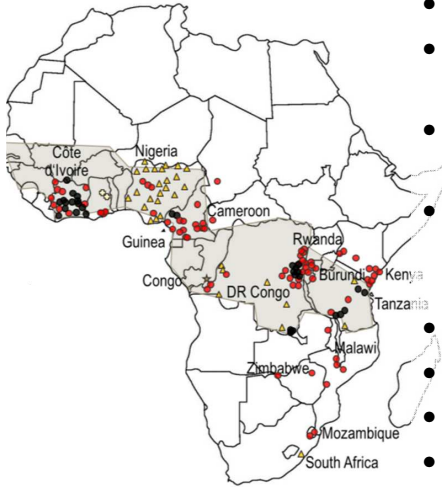
Principle reasons for keeping cavies (N=250)	Average (%)
Consumption	65
Income generation	20
Manure	8
Blood to treat anemia	6
Other (Labor payment, gift, pet)	1



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Small stock	Small stock holdings in research territories (no./household)			
	Kabare	Kalehe	Walungu	Mean
Cavies	15.1	15.4	16.6	15.7
Chicken	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.2
Rabbits	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.3

Rationale for Cavies in Africa



- Very widely spread small livestock species in Africa
- Women + youth have complete control over it
- Provides good quality animal protein, similar to chicken
- Is used to pay for small needs, especially school fees
- Multiplies quickly (67 days) with little husbandry efforts + adapts to a wide range of natural + economic environments (urban, peri-urban + rural)
- Does not compete with humans for their food
- Grows + reproduces on a flexible diet
- Responds favorably to husbandry + management
- Has a size that is easy to manage
- Is a robust, prolific and productive animal
- Provides security from disease and other risks like theft

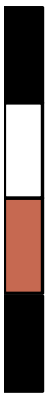
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Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth

- Subsistence production and small scale trade
- Convertible rapidly – “petty cash” or a “currency”
 - For paying teachers’ salaries or
 - For barter trade



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Price changes in the last one year (US\$)

Cavy size (g)	FG Price 2012	FG Price 2013	Trader Price 2012	Trader Price 2013	Cavy dish price (US\$)
Small (300-500)	0.6 \$	1 \$	0.8 \$	1.25 \$	8-12 \$ per cavy dish/ deep fried, stewed or roasted with beans, tomato, garlic and rice
Medium (500-800)	0.8 \$	1.5 \$	1 \$	2 \$	
Large (800-1000 and above)	1.2 \$	2 \$	1.5 \$	2.5 \$	



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Cavy Trade in Eastern DRC

Example from Tubimbi of number of people involved in the cavy market chain

Category of actor	Male youth (no.)	Female youth (no.)	Male adult (no.)	Female adult (no.)	Total (no.)
Cavy keepers	5	7	6	18	36
Rural collectors	2	1	12	26	41
Middle-men	5	6	11	15	37
Whole seller	3	3	5	9	20
Urban collectors	1	2	1	4	8
Total	16	19	35	72	142

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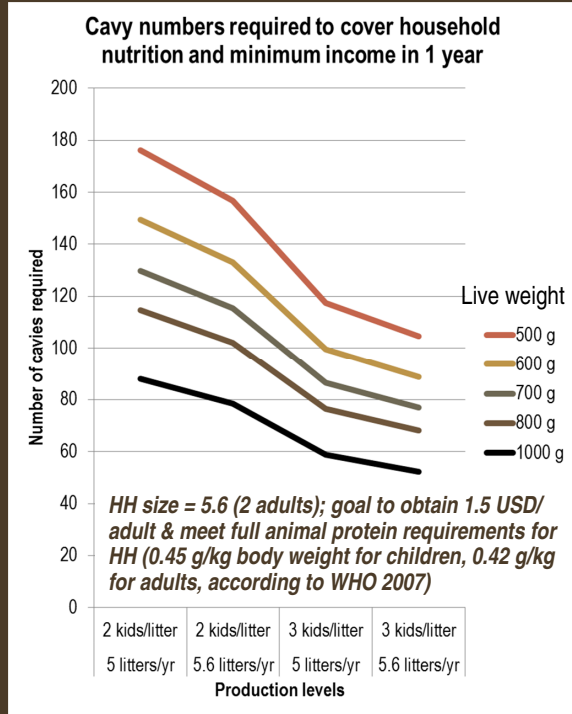
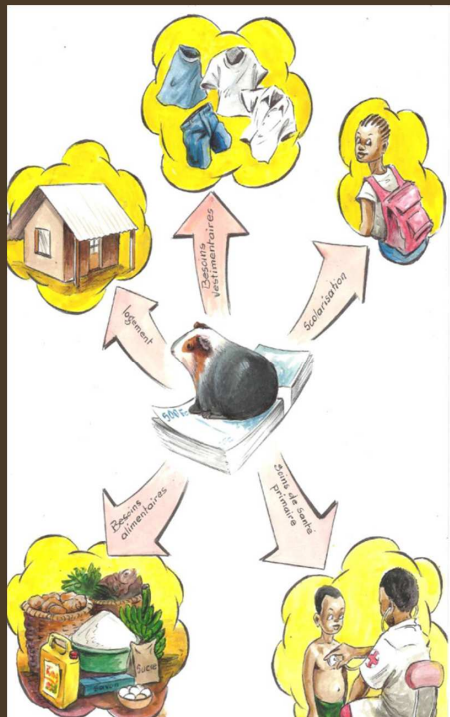
Photo by W Chiuri

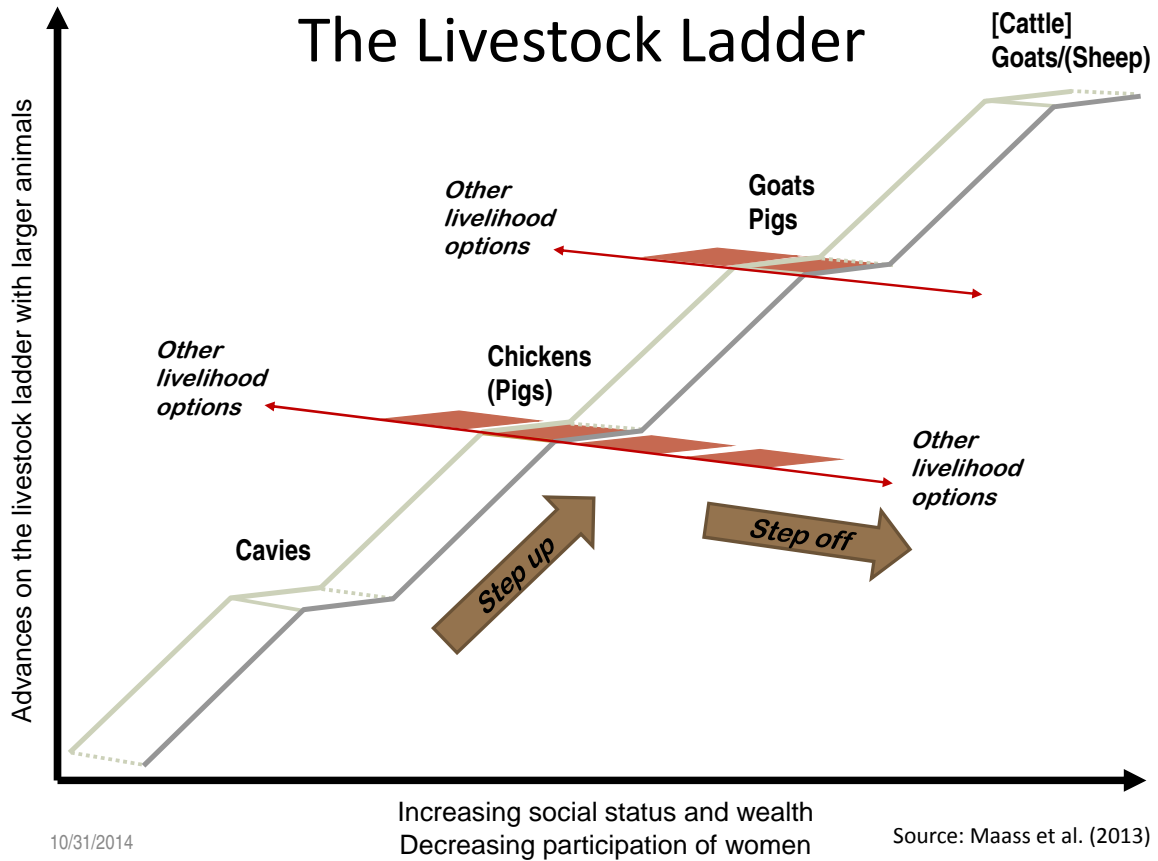
Cavies & Natural Resources Management

- Forage grasses serve as soil erosion control
- Some of the legumes are good as soil cover



Economic Benefits of Cavies

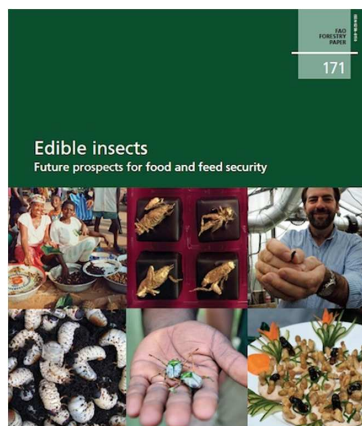




Food for the Future!




- UN Habitat: more than 60% of population in developing countries in urban centers in 2020



- Cavies are “urban-nice”
- One of the coping strategies for climate change
 - Low carbon foot print
- Addresses increasing urbanization in terms of animal protein
 - Healthy meat with low fat and low cholesterol levels
- Addresses dwindling land sizes for the poor

International Public Goods

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Communication & Profile lifting

WikiCavy

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Welcome to WikiCavy!

"The end of the cavy project is not the end of cavy science!"
(Felix Meutchieye, 2014)

WikiCavy will help in management, planning and knowledge sharing of the project

[Harnessing husbandry of domestic cavy for alternative and rapid access to food and income in Cameroon and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) supported by

The Cavy Project

Domestic cavy are widely used as meat animal in a broad belt of sub-humid Africa, especially in mid altitude highlands. Little is known about cavy production systems and productivity, genetic diversity, feeding systems, or consumption habits of people. In fact this small animal of South American origin is usually ignored in

Acknowledgement

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 - Univ. of Dschang, Cameroon
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YES WE CAN!

