GROWING THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY COMMUNITY IN COUNTRIES WHERE IT IS SMALL OR NEW SKILLS PROFILE

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SUMMARY

By reading this profile we hope that you can build a better understanding of whether working to grow the animal advocacy community in countries where it is small or new seems like one of the best ways for you to use your time to help animals.

HOW DOES THIS WORK HELP ANIMALS
Ensuring that animals across the world have advocates to help them, as well as taking opportunities for easy victories for animals.

WHO IS THIS WORK A GOOD FIT FOR
Contributions can vary from part-time work to setting up a new advocacy organisation to working for a grant-making organisation. The required skills vary, but you will need a good understanding of the culture and context of the country you work with.

HOW MUCH DO WE NEED MORE EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA
There are concerns about the difficulty of community-building efforts in at least some countries, but this work would be a good option for many individuals seeking to help animals.

WHAT OPTIONS WOULD YOU HAVE IF YOU WERE TO LEAVE THIS PATH
Other roles growing the animal advocacy community where it is small or new, other generalist nonprofit roles, or other work using your expertise in particular countries.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR WORK IN THIS AREA
Build understanding of and connections in the animal advocacy community both in the country you want to work in and internationally.
INTRODUCTION

THERE ARE MANY EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK THAT HELPS ANIMALS, FROM FULL-TIME, SALARIED ROLES THROUGH TO UNPAID, OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEERING. THESE INCLUDE OPPORTUNITIES THAT FOCUS ON DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING THE GROWTH OF THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY COMMUNITY.

A lot of discussion in the animal advocacy community focuses on countries that already have relatively well-established animal advocacy movements, like the US or UK. This profile considers countries where the animal advocacy community is small or new, especially those that also have high numbers of farmed animals.

The focus in this profile is on work that grows the animal advocacy community in these countries. This can include a number of different types of role, from frontline animal advocacy work through to donating or grant-making. We discuss relevant career opportunities in this area for people in all parts of the world, including both for those who are new to animal advocacy and experienced members of the community.

We will share insights with you from the experiences of people working to grow the animal advocacy community in their country (via 15 interviews), plus interesting research findings.
HOW DOES THIS WORK HELP ANIMALS?

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING ANIMALS EFFECTIVELY THROUGH YOUR CAREER, YOU SHOULD PRIORITISE WORK THAT HAS HIGH POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT.

We're optimistic that the work of the animal advocacy community is already having positive effects for animals.

There are many countries that have had relatively little animal advocacy to date, despite having extremely large numbers of farmed animals. Without strong advocacy, these animals may continue to be bred into poor conditions in factory farms, with little protection. There may be opportunities for easy victories for animals in those countries. Animals need advocates across the world, not just in a few countries.

Focusing on community-building rather than direct advocacy enables you to multiply your impact for animals by increasing the number of people who take action for animals. There may be opportunities for community-building successes. Consider the example of the Open Wing Alliance's (OWA) grant programme, which has meant that, “for the first time ever, countries like Ecuador, Peru, and Chile, to name just a few, are able to have strong national representatives working to defend abused animals.”

A factory farm in Mexico (image by Jo-Anne McArthur / Animal Equality). Our interviewees estimated that there are only around 50 dedicated farmed animal advocates in the country.
IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

The information in this section is intended to help you assess whether you will have good “personal fit” with roles that help to grow the animal advocacy community in countries where it is small or new. Your “personal fit” with a role or career path is how well-suited you are to it and your chances of really excelling at it. We think this is one of the most important factors in impact-focused career strategy.

HOW COULD YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THIS AREA?

Whether you are new to animal advocacy or have been working in the space for years, there may be part-time or full-time community-building work that could be a good fit for you. This section describes some of the sorts of opportunities that are available.

Some of our interviewees have focused on setting up or working for nonprofits and advocacy groups based in their own countries.

Daniela Espinosa of the Association for the Rescue and Welfare of Animals (ARBA) lives in Peru, which she estimates only has about 15 really dedicated farmed animal advocates in total. Alongside ARBA’s outreach, rescue, and legislative work — and her part-time work as an equine vet — Daniela also supports other animal advocacy nonprofits in Peru to become more structured and organised.

Daniela Espinosa, Association for the Rescue and Welfare of Animals (ARBA).

Ana Davila, TerrAnimal.

Jian Yi, Good Food Fund.
Daniela's situation is, in many ways, similar to that of Ana Davila, of TerrAnimal in Ecuador. Ana also works part-time to grow the organisation while being able to support herself. Like ARBA, TerrAnimal has become one of the first organisations in its country to focus on farmed animal advocacy.

Many of our other interviewees — Jian Yi of the Good Food Fund (registered under the China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation), Yuki Takahashi of Animal Rights Centre Japan, Greg Quimpo of Animal Kingdom Foundation in the Philippines, and Sabina Garcia of Global Food Partners in Singapore — are working full-time in animal advocacy or animal-free food organisations that they or their colleagues set up.

Rather than set up independent organisations, other interviewees — Jeff Zhou of Compassion in World Farming, Amey Deshmukh of Animal Equality, Catalina Lopez and Lucas Alvarenga of Mercy For Animals, and Kristina Mering of Nähtamatud Loomad (the Estonian branch of Anima International) — chose to work as local staff for international animal advocacy organisations. Like them, Animal Advocacy Careers is optimistic that organisations can do good work in countries outside those that they're headquartered in.

Of course, there are many different kinds of work that benefit animals. We also interviewed Varun Deshpande and Elaine Siu, managing directors of the Good Food Institute's affiliate organisations in India and Asia Pacific, respectively. Rather than working directly on animal advocacy, GFI “supports the innovators, investors, and companies” that are making “market-disrupting” animal-free food technology products a reality.

A related option, which can also be done part-time, is local effective altruism movement-building, with or without a particular focus on animals. This is something that Varun Desphande did prior to his work at GFI, for example.
The contribution of financial resources is also vital for the growth of the animal advocacy community in countries where it is small or new. Hence, work at foundations or grant-making organisations can be an impactful career path; you may be able to encourage the organisation to give more towards this area, improve grant-making decisions, or provide other forms of assistance to advocates working in these countries. Providing funding via personal donations (e.g. through earning to give) may also be a promising option. If you optimise your career for earning money, you may be able to directly donate enough money to support one or more full-time staff members for animal advocacy organisations in countries where the community is small or new.

The international community can support advocates in these countries in other ways, such as by providing training and guidance. The Humane League’s Open Wing Alliance, Anima International, and Sinergia Animal are all doing this sort of work, for example.

These options won’t all be practical in all countries; it is important that individuals consider the difficulty of working on specific options in their country of interest. However, even where there are substantial restrictions on activities, some work will be possible.
If you’re still unsure about what high-quality community building work might look like, see our short supplementary document on “What sorts of interventions can advocates use to build the community in their country?”

WHAT MAKES GREAT COMMUNITY BUILDERS?

Of course, the requirements for different role types vary substantially. Our interviewees believed that great community builders working in countries where the animal advocacy community is small or new have:

- Courage to take on challenges, resilience, and patience.
- Social skills, including comfort speaking to people with a different background.
- High motivation for animal advocacy.
- Understanding of the culture and context of the country in which they work and knowledge of its languages.
- The ability to speak or learn foreign languages such as English.
The ability to connect advocates in the country with the wider animal advocacy community.

Good leadership skills.

Willingness to compromise.

The above skillsets are all “generalist” skills that could be useful in other role types, including fundraising, management and leadership, and government, policy, or lobbying roles. Given that animal advocacy work in countries with small or new communities will likely involve working independently or in organisations that are also small or new, you probably do need to be a good generalist, able to focus on a range of different task types. Expertise in specific skillsets can also be useful, as discussed below.

CAN YOU WORK ON THIS ISSUE IF YOU’RE NEW TO ANIMAL ADVOCACY?

If you are based in a country that badly needs more expertise and more people working on community building (see the section on this below), then the answer is almost certainly “yes,” especially if you have the skills described above. Given that opportunities range from donating to volunteering to full-time work, there’s likely to be something that could be a good option for you. If possible, it’s probably best to focus at first on working with existing organisations, rather than setting up your own.

If you are based in a country with a more established animal advocacy community but are new to animal advocacy work yourself, then there are likely to be fewer volunteering opportunities. However, donating could still be helpful, and there may be longer-term options in this space if you can build up relevant expertise.

CAN YOU WORK ON THIS ISSUE IF YOU’RE BASED IN A COUNTRY WITH AN ESTABLISHED ANIMAL ADVOCACY COMMUNITY?

Several of our interviewees and the careers advice organisation 80,000 Hours believe that people can do good work in direct advocacy or in community-building in other countries.

Nevertheless, you might be at a disadvantage relative to locals. The leaders of some animal welfare charities believe that a big part of their success comes from having
local staff. There might be social factors that restrict you and it may be difficult to navigate cultural differences. Sensitivity to the culture of the country that you intend to work in is important. foreigners seem more likely to “accidentally make things worse” and their contribution may be unusually “replaceable.”

Though it might not be a “requirement” that you are from a particular country in order to work directly on growing the animal advocacy community there, direct advocacy or community-building work may not be your best option if you are not from that country.

For example, it might be your comparative advantage to focus on earning to give and donating to advocacy efforts in other countries, to help indirectly via work at foundations or organisations focused specifically on supporting other nonprofits, or just to work on some other animal advocacy career path within your own country.
HOW CAN YOU ASSESS YOUR PERSONAL FIT?

- Look honestly at your previous success in related work that uses the skills described above.
- However you are planning to contribute to the animal advocacy community in countries where it is small or new, it's important to try to build up a good understanding of the existing community in that country. Which organisations work there? What sorts of interventions do they conduct?
  - Some organisations can probably be identified by Googling or searching Facebook groups. Some groups, like Anonymous for the Voiceless and the Save Movement, list their various grassroots groups around the world. You can also search this website for animal advocacy events in the country.
  - You should read any resources specifically about animal advocacy in that country (see the section on “useful resources”).
  - Ask advocates and organisations about your uncertainties. We recommend using your personal connections and the effective animal advocacy community directory as starting points.
Are there existing groups operating in the country that you can volunteer for or do internships with? As with any volunteering, try to make the assistance that you offer specific, skilled work, if possible.

If you are not from the country that you are hoping to work in, you could immerse yourself in the local culture, such as through reading books or watching films from the country, travelling around the area, or taking a course on business culture in the country that you intend to work in.

If you think that you are plausibly a good candidate, you could apply for roles involved in animal advocacy or animal-free food. This can provide useful feedback.

Forming a new animal advocacy or effective altruism group could be an excellent option for some individuals. Of course, forming a new group is a substantial commitment (so beware of the planning fallacy) and it may be better to seek opportunities with existing groups first.
DO WE NEED MORE EXPERTISE AND MORE PEOPLE WORKING ON THIS?

A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE LANDSCAPE OF THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY COMMUNITY MIGHT HELP YOU UNDERSTAND SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF WHETHER YOU ARE WELL-SUITED TO WORK IN THIS AREA.

It’s also important for understanding how your strengths compare to other members of the animal advocacy community who might plausibly do similar roles. This determines your comparative advantage — the job or path that is highest-impact for you, taking into account the possibility of coordination with others in the
animal advocacy community. This is something we can talk through with you if you apply for a one-to-one careers advice call with us.

As discussed below, there are concerns about the difficulty of efforts to grow the animal advocacy community in at least some countries where it is small or new. Nevertheless, we remain optimistic that this work would be a good option for many individuals seeking to help animals.

ANIMAL AGRICULTURE BY LOCATION

Often, discussion of animal advocacy is focused on the US. This makes some sense, because the US is a powerful and influential country. However, most farmed animals are outside the US. The charts below shows global meat production and aquaculture production (including farmed fish) by continent or region:
Of course, the available protection of animals also differs by country. For example, if the ratings on World Animal Protection’s Animal Protection Index (API) — which rates “commitments to protect animals and improve animal welfare in policy and legislation” — are converted into a numerical format, from 1 (best) to 7 (worst), we see the following ratings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group of countries</th>
<th>Average API score</th>
<th>Number of countries evaluated</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is important work left to be done in the US, which receives a score of 4 on the API (close to the average across the 50 countries evaluated), has a large proportion of the world’s farmed animals, and exerts a substantial influence over the rest of the world. But many other countries are important in these senses too. It seems clear that animal advocacy work needs to extend to all continents of the world.

**FARMED ANIMAL ADVOCACY BY LOCATION**

In our own [spot-check](#) of 27 animal advocacy organisations (which focused on a group of organisations mostly based in the US and other Western countries), the number of staff can be counted by country, although these results only reflect directly employed staff, rather than affiliates or local partners:
Although this is far from a perfect representation of the animal advocacy community more widely, it seems likely that the organisations evaluated in the spot-check are quite heavily focused on the US.

To get a sense of the size of the advocacy communities in various countries, we also asked our interviewees to estimate the number of people who were substantially engaged with farmed animal advocacy in their country. When we compare their estimates to data on meat production in these countries, many of these estimates imply that animal advocacy is more than 10 times more “neglected” in these countries than in the US, relative to the scale of factory farming.

**FUNDING FOR FARmed ANIMAL ADVOCACY BY LOCATION**

Lewis Bollard of Open Philanthropy has estimated funding for farmed animal advocacy in various parts of the world:
Again, we see that Northern America and Europe are overrepresented.

Nevertheless, a number of organisations provide grants to organisations with small or new animal advocacy communities, including:

- Open Philanthropy,
- The animal welfare EA Fund,
- The Open Wing Alliance,
- Animal Charity Evaluators,
- World Animal Protection,
- ProVeg International,
- The Pollination Project,
- Tiny Beam Fund, and
- PETA Germany.

Our guess is that talented and well-prepared advocates in countries with large farmed animal populations, will often be able to secure funding from these organisations. However, such individuals may still not get as much money as they would like. There may not be enough paid opportunities for all talented advocates. So you may need to do part-time, self-funded work at first if you want to work in this area.

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Even if animal advocacy is neglected in a particular country, it may still be difficult to win successes there. Charity Entrepreneurship have looked at factors such as “Governmental regulation of NGOs” in 20 countries. Mercy For Animals’ forthcoming Farmed Animal Opportunity Index looks at “Attitudes Towards Foreigners,” “Levels of
Volunteerism,” and “Percentage Urban Population.” Once we consider factors like this that reflect the difficulty of change, we will often become less optimistic about efforts to grow the community in countries where it is small or new.

Our impression is that other advocates tend to believe that growing the community in countries where it is small or new is very important.

As you build your understanding of the current animal advocacy community in your country of interest, you should try to understand what is holding back the development of the community there.

Is it:
- A lack of advocates to support grassroots campaigns?
- A lack of engaged and talented individuals willing to focus their careers on animal advocacy?
- A lack of engaged and talented individuals willing to lead organisations or found new ones?
- A lack of awareness of the conditions of farmed animals and relevant concepts like “animal welfare” or “animal rights”?
- A lack of particular high-priority and high-impact advocacy tactics?
- A lack of funding?
- A lack of coordination of and support for the existing advocates in the country?
- A lack of coordination between local advocates and the international animal advocacy community?
- A lack of political capital or political freedom to engage in advocacy tactics?

The best career options for you may depend on the relative importance of these factors.
WHAT OPTIONS WOULD YOU HAVE IF YOU WERE TO LEAVE THIS PATH?

EARLY STAGE FARmed ANIMAL ADVOCACY WORK IN A COUNTRY SEEMS LIKELY TO REQUIRE INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-MOTIVATION. BY BUILDING UP THE SKILLS INVOLVED IN WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY LEADERSHIP AND "CHARITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP" YOU COULD BE WELL-PLACED TO GO ON TO FOUND OR LEAD OTHER NONPROFITS.

More generally, career capital (skills, connections, and credentials) that is built up within the broad area of growing the animal advocacy community where it is small or new seems likely to be applicable to other kinds of work within that area. For example, someone who has built up expertise in developing and expanding an animal advocacy organisation in one country may be well-placed for work building up organisations in another country too. As another example, someone who worked in grant-making or another role providing support for advocates in other countries might be well-placed to transition to work in more frontline roles growing the community in a particular country.
Apart from the career capital that is specific to the country that you work in (e.g. detailed knowledge on Indian political institutions), much of the career capital gained through roles in this path seems to be consistent with a “generalist” skillset. So transitioning into other generalist roles, such as fundraising or campaigning, seems likely to be possible.

It seems possible that some of the career capital specific to the country that you work in could be useful in other fields. For example, you could work with animal-free food technology companies seeking to sell products to the country that you work in.

INTERESTED IN WORKING TO GROW THE COMMUNITY IN COUNTRIES WHERE IT IS SMALL OR NEW?

IF YOU NEED TO DO SOME CAREER PLANNING, 80,000 HOURS’ “TIPS ON MAKING CAREER PLANS” WILL LIKELY BE HELPFUL.

If you’re considering whether you’d like to focus on developing expertise for working to grow the community in countries where it is small or new, or bringing your existing community-building expertise to bear on this issue, we might be able to help you talk through your options.

You can apply for a one-to-one careers advice call with us.
HOW TO PREPARE FOR WORK IN THIS AREA

SO FAR, THIS PROFILE HAS FOCUSED ON INFORMATION TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHETHER YOU SHOULD SEEK TO WORK ON GROWING THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY COMMUNITY IN COUNTRIES WHERE IT IS SMALL OR NEW. THE INFORMATION BELOW IS MORE FOCUSED ON HELPING YOU DECIDE WHAT YOU COULD DO NEXT IF YOU DECIDE THAT YOU DO WANT TO FOCUS ON THIS.

WHAT SORTS OF EXPERIENCES ARE MOST USEFUL?

Our interviewees believed that the following types of experiences would be useful for growing the animal advocacy community:

- Public relations, communications, or marketing expertise.
- Technical expertise in animal welfare or veterinary science.
- Fundraising experience.
- Experience with volunteer management and community building.
- Experience that enables you to build understanding of the country’s political institutions.
Legislative or lobbying experience.

If you plan to work on animal-free food rather than animal advocacy per se, then entrepreneurial skills or relevant technical expertise are likely to be necessary.

80,000 Hours' article on becoming a “China specialist” has a number of concrete recommendations for people planning to focus on China and similar options could be generated for other countries using the advice there. Bear in mind that that profile is not focused on animal advocacy.

If you live in a country where the animal advocacy community is small or new and there are good opportunities available to you currently in your country, then it may be best to focus on those. But it may be worthwhile seeking internships, volunteering positions, or paid, full-time roles in international animal advocacy or effective altruism nonprofits.

Of course, if you do choose to focus initially on work in your own country, there may be other ways to build connections and gain support from the international community (see the resources below).
USEFUL RESOURCES

You might benefit from a [one-to-one careers advice call with us](#).

You may be interested in reading [the longer, more detailed version of this skills profile](#) or our short supplementary document on “What sorts of interventions can advocates use to build the community in their country?”

Information about animal agriculture and animal advocacy in various countries is provided by:

- The [interview findings spreadsheet](#) for this skills profile,
- Animal Charity Evaluators’ reports on [Brazil](#) and [India](#) and their roundtable discussion of “How can organizations responsibly expand internationally?”,
- Charity Entrepreneurship’s [reports](#) on 20 “priority countries,”
- Mercy For Animals’ Farmed Animal Opportunity Index (forthcoming),
- World Animal Protection’s [Animal Protection Index](#), and
- Various episodes of the [Sentience Institute Podcast](#) and [Our Hen House](#).

Grants for organisations in countries where the animal advocacy community is small or new are available from:

- [Open Philanthropy](#),
- [The animal welfare EA Fund](#),
- [The Open Wing Alliance](#),
- [Animal Charity Evaluators](#),
- [World Animal Protection](#),
- [ProVeg International](#),
- [The Pollination Project](#),
- [Tiny Beam Fund](#), and
- [PETA Germany](#).

Training and support for organisations in countries where the animal advocacy community is small or new is provided by:

- [The Open Wing Alliance](#),
- [Anima International](#), and
- [Sinergia Animal](#).
Other resources for connecting with the international effective animal advocacy community include:

- Various conferences and events, including those organised by existing local effective altruism groups and animal advocacy groups.
- The effective animal advocacy community directory.
- The Effective Animal Advocacy - Discussion Facebook group.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN HELPING ANIMALS!

Thank you for reading this skills profile. We hope this has been helpful for shaping your future steps. We wish you the best of luck in your animal advocacy career planning.

If you’ve found this skills profile useful, you can support our work by donating to Animal Advocacy Careers. Your contributions will support us to help animals.