

# List of "Burning Questions" (2026)

Tiny Beam Fund is a U.S.-based charitable foundation. Its mission is to understand and address the wide range of negative impacts of industrial animal agriculture especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), and it focuses on providing support to academic researchers and institutions. (For inquiries, email: [min@tinybeamfund.org](mailto:min@tinybeamfund.org))

A core part of Tiny Beam Fund's work is identifying the most pressing and under-researched questions spanning the economic, environmental, political, cultural, and equity dimensions of industrial animal agriculture in LMICs that cause or contribute to negative impacts. To this end, the Fund undertakes a consultation process every three years with a broad range of issue experts to develop a list of "burning questions". Below is the list from 2026. These are priority research questions where new evidence could most meaningfully inform advocacy, policy, and practice that can address the negative impacts.

The questions cut across multiple disciplines and entry points, but *all questions should be understood as relating to **industrial animal agriculture operating in LMICs***, even where those terms do not appear explicitly in the question. LMICs are defined according to the most current World Bank country classification.

The questions identified as most important, based on a structured consultation process with issue experts are shown in *italics*, and the overall top-ranked question is also shown in **bold**.

<b>CORPORATE STRUCTURE &amp; POWER</b>	
CORP1	<b><i>What are the most effective strategies to shift corporate practices in vertically integrated markets dominated by transnational corporations in LMICs toward more equitable, higher-welfare, and environmentally sustainable models?</i></b>
CORP2	To what extent is direct government intervention, such as blocking the market entry of transnational agribusiness companies into LMICs, more effective at protecting local economies than regulating these firms after they have entered the market?
CORP3	How do corporate "sustainability" and carbon offset initiatives (e.g. biogas credits) linked to industrial farms affect local communities in LMICs? Do these schemes effectively mitigate environmental harm, or do they displace and conceal it?
<b>ECONOMICS &amp; LIVELIHOODS</b>	
ECON1	<i>How does corporate consolidation in the animal feed and processing sectors shape the contractual models (such as outgrower schemes or contract farming) through which smallholders are integrated into supply chains? Does this lead to genuine economic autonomy or eventual marginalization and displacement?</i>

ECON2	What is the accurate market share of meat, dairy, and seafood produced by industrial systems versus traditional/non-industrial systems in LMICs? Is the food security contribution of traditional systems systematically underestimated in official data?
ECON3	How can development policies in LMICs, which have historically favored large-scale and industrial livestock systems, be reoriented to support people who depend on livestock for their livelihoods while also meeting climate goals, such as reducing methane emissions, without increasing inequality within communities?
ECON4	How do food safety and biosecurity narratives shape government regulatory reforms in LMICs? How do these reforms disproportionately disadvantage traditional markets and smallholders relative to industrial supply chains?
ECON5	What evidence exists regarding the economic viability of "higher animal welfare" farming systems in LMICs? Do strict animal welfare regulations (e.g. cage bans) inadvertently favor large-scale industrial producers over smaller, resource-poor farmers?
<b>GLOBAL FINANCE, TRADE &amp; INSTITUTIONS</b>	
FIN1	<i>What is the total volume of funding from multilateral development banks and international donors for industrial animal agriculture in LMICs, and are these investments (including Scope 3 emissions) aligned with Paris Agreement commitments? Are there documented social or environmental impacts that can be used to challenge future funding?</i>
FIN2	How do global trade regimes and export-oriented economic policies (e.g. EU Free Trade Agreements) drive the expansion of industrial animal agriculture in LMICs? Can global trade mechanisms be leveraged to enforce higher animal welfare standards and support more equitable and sustainable production systems, without displacing smallholders in LMICs?
<b>PRODUCTION SYSTEMS &amp; IMPACT</b>	
PROD1	What is the comparative impact of industrial vs. traditional farming systems on disease prevalence and "One Health" outcomes in LMICs? How can the "One Health" approach (including animal health and welfare) be legitimized in government agencies and development organizations to influence industrial animal agriculture practices?
PROD2	Beyond individual farm metrics, what are the cumulative socio-environmental impacts of industrial farms located close together on local air quality, water resources, and community health in LMICs?
PROD3	How does the introduction of high-productivity commercial breeds (that require controlled environments) versus indigenous breeds impact animal welfare, smallholder economic resilience, and input requirements (feed, water, energy, etc.) in LMICs?

<b>CONSUMPTION &amp; CULTURE</b>	
CON1	<i>Which food distribution channels (e.g. street food, wet markets, supermarkets) are the most effective entry points for promoting plant-rich diets and alternative proteins in LMICs?</i>
CON2	To what extent does increased industrial production of animal-sourced foods in LMICs actively drive consumption of these foods (supply-induced demand), or does it merely respond to existing demand?
CON3	What structural factors (including government policy and subsidies) drive the artificially low price of industrial meat in LMICs, and how do these price points act as barriers to the adoption of alternative proteins or plant-rich diets? Can strategies such as innovation in indigenous crops be leveraged to create a successful economic development strategy that overcomes these price barriers in LMICs?
CON4	How do religious doctrines and cultural understandings of animal sentience in specific LMIC regions influence public attitudes toward industrial farming and meat consumption? How can these perspectives be leveraged in advocacy and policy engagement?
<b>ADVOCACY &amp; NARRATIVES</b>	
ADV1	<i>How can animal welfare, climate justice, labor, and public health movements in LMICs build effective cross-movement coalitions to challenge industrial animal agriculture?</i>
ADV2	What structural vulnerabilities (e.g. financing, energy, genetics) in industrial animal agriculture in LMICs create leverage points for advocacy? Which organizational strategies, narrative frames, and messengers will most effectively shift support from governments, institutions, and the public toward plant-rich and higher-welfare systems?