

# Report Of Egypt

Unfortunately the status of animal welfare in Egypt is utterly different from how it used to be once. Animals were once glorified and considered an integral entity in Egypt. Animals used to be revered and qualities of all animals whether domestic or wild were appreciated and respected. That's clear from all the hieroglyphic writings and temple scriptures found by archeologists. Today's picture is profoundly the opposite. Below some elucidation of each category of

## **Farm animals:**

Farm animals are the most exploited and abused domestic animal in Egypt due to the nature of their relationship with humans.

In rural areas the public depends on the utilization and exploitation of their farm animals, however, animal welfare standards are somehow exercised contrary to urban areas where animals are crowded to limited spaces and the concept of factory farming is gaining support.

Egypt is increasingly becoming a capitalist country mimicking everything from the west, and sadly the ill practices too, such as factory farming. The government is promoting factory farming, backing their argument that it's the best modern technology in animal husbandry and care. Especially after the avian and swine flu outbreaks, the concept of factory farming is gaining much popularity. Currently poultry are the main animals going through massive factorization and small free range farmers are forced to go out of business. Transportation of farm animals are not regulated by any law, the animals are transported by whatever means, as long as it's cost effective. Animals are cramped so tightly and no consideration is put on the timing of transportation, many animals suffocate particularly poultry and cattle collapse due to extreme weather conditions.

## **Working Animals:**

The status of working animals are deplorable mainly due to lack of knowledge and limited income of their handlers and care givers. Animals like horses and donkeys are mainly used in garbage collection and transporting goods. In major cities like greater Cairo and Alexandria carriages are not allowed in the streets, however, such law is not strictly enforced in the poor areas of the cities or near the outskirts.

Horses, donkeys and camels are also used extensively in the tourism business for riding, particularly around historical monuments. In any case whether used to pull carts or riding animals they hardly receive veterinary care or given adequate shelter and nutrition. Animals are overworked and show significant signs of lameness and emaciation.

The cruelest practice imposed on working animals is the method of destruction. Animals are usually left in the middle of nowhere to die slowly from starvation. This scene is periodically observed by animal welfare organizations.

### **Companion animals:**

Having a companion animal is considered a luxury in the majority of Egypt, however, this does not mean that the low income families don't have companion animals but the relationship is based on their utility as guard dogs. Majority of companion animals are roaming animals (feral, strays or semi-owned). Pet responsibility, adoption and sterilization are all relatively new concepts to the Egyptian public.

Due to the over population of roaming animals, dogs and cats are destroyed periodically by the authorities in response to public complaint using strychnine and bullets, both inhumane methods.

### **Wild Life:**

Smuggling of wild life in Egypt is a common trend. Although Egypt has signed the CITES convention, amendment of the law to meet CITES regulation is very poor, and the current laws protecting wild life is not enforced and limited. It's becoming fashionable now to open private zoos and restaurants displaying wildlife. Many animals residing in such places are illegally smuggled and are under Appendix A of CITES, which is in total violation of CITES Convention. Such places are backed by powerful people in the country, and bribery plays a major role in the existence of such zoos and restaurants. Government and private zoos don't meet the WAZA standards, hence the dismissal of Egypt from WAZA. The conditions of the animals in both private and governmental are below minimal, and don't meet wild animals requirements.

Egypt's wild life is also under major threat, although the ministry of environment has designated many protected habitats, the enforcement is limited. Many animals are hunted and are on the brink of extinction.

### **Animal Experimentation:**

There is no significant data or information regarding animal laboratories in Egypt and the standards and quota of animals used. Our direct encounter with animals used in experimentation is for educational purposes in universities. Animals are extremely abused, they are destroyed in very inhumane methods using gasoline and strychnine, operated on without anesthesia, and administration of medicine or usage of medical equipment on animals don't meet animal welfare standards or veterinary standards. Holding areas of animals are deplorable providing animals with minimal nutrition and health care. Particularly this group of animals and their status requires further investigation.

## **Challenges:**

As clear from the above, the status of animal welfare in Egypt is minimal. The Five freedoms are not exercised or maintained.

One of our main challenges is the law. We don't have a strong law that protect animals. Currently we have couple of articles under the agricultural law but its very weak and never enforced.

Secondly, the public attitude towards animals. Due to the high poverty levels in Egypt people consider animal welfare as a trivial cause and should not be considered. General attitude is that humans should come first, prioritizing humans to any other cause. This attitude is reinforced by lack of humane education curricula in schools and the current religious teachings which doesn't promote positive attitude towards animals, although Islam and Christianity the major religion followed by the people encourages merciful and compassionate attitude towards animals.

## **Conclusion:**

The bright side to all of this is that there are several animal welfare organization working in Egypt now promoting animal welfare. Animal welfare organizations were not heard of before, the ridicule and opposition to the existence of animal welfare organization has dramatically decreased. Already an Egyptian Federation for animal welfare has been founded uniting the majority of animal welfare societies together to tackle animal welfare issues in a wider scale.

Over all we believe much progress can be achieved by the collaboration of all the stakeholders and by uniting forces and sharing experiences in the region on the different methodologies implemented in respective countries and how animal welfare issues were tackled. Such collaboration will certainly be beneficial to the welfare of animals in Egypt

## ***Animals Matter***

Because they are creatures of God , like us they have rights.

Since I was a child I have always defended the weak and the helpless , the animals are the weakest of all God's creatures , they have no voice to speak , they have no hands to push their oppressors.

They can't decide for themselves , we decide for them and our decisions are not always the right ones.

In my culture as an Egyptian , they were gods.

In my life they were my only true , sincere friends.

In my values they are the real victims on this earth , they didn't declare war , don't have weapons , don't want to destroy humans don't impose religion , their only crime is that they exist .

Animal matters because they are mentioned in all the religions, because they inspired many great authors like Lafontaine and Colette.

Julien Grack said this about them : " Lending the animals some of Humans touch , is degrading to the animals " in French " Preter aux betes des lueurs d'humanite , c'est les degrader " .

Animal rights are a part of women rights , children rights , minorities rights and handicapped people rights , it is the duty of strong people to give back their rights to the weakest.

## ***ANIMAL IN EGYPTIAN HISTORY***

In Pharaonic times animals were placed in very high consideration and even deified.

Their place in society can best be summed up by the text found on a stela 2.200 years old ( Late dynastic period ) where the deceased owner proudly boasts :

"I gave bread to the hungry , water to the thirsty , clothing to the naked , food to the Ibis , the Falcon , the cat and the jackal ."

The status of the cat was very elevated in everyday life and in burial chambers they are portrayed sitting on the tomb owners lap.

The love of cats was carried to such an extreme that in the late era , even the unintentional killing of a cat was a crime punishable by death.

Dogs are frequently pictured as everyday household pet sitting .

Dogs were given personal names and this indicates the high status of the dog in ancient Egypt.

The multitude of charming expressed and sympathetic conditions of animals found decorating the walls of the temples and tomb- chapel over many centuries clearly reflect a caring and respectful relationship with them.

In addition the very gods themselves could appear in the guise of an animal.

In the ancient Egyptian view, humankind did not command as superior a position in creation over the animal kingdom . Instead there existed a "partnership" between Egyptian and animal. Both were created by the god and both were bearers of life.

Therefore animals were entitled to respect and car

## ***ANIMALS IN ISLAM***

What is written in the Koran about animals:

Surat 6 Verset no 38

" There is no animal on the earth nor a being that flies on its wings , but communities like you .We have not neglected anything in the book , then to their Lord shall they be gathered.

Koran Surat 55 verset no 10

" And the earth he has assigned it to all living creatures"

What the prophet said :

" Whoever is kind to the creatures of God is kind to himself.

According to the teachings of Islam , the rights of livestock and animals with regard to their treatment by man are:

- 1- That he spends on them the provisions their kind require , even if they have aged or sickened such that no benefit comes from them.
  - 2- That he not burden them beyond what they can bear.
  - 3-That he not put them together with anything by which they would be injured whether of their own kind or other species.
  - 4- to slaughter them quickly , not before each others , never show them the knife and to kill them humanely without making them suffer.
  - 5-That do not slaughter their young within their sight.
  - 6- That he put their males and females together during their mating seasons.
- These teachings take us to our very recent and modern 5 Freedoms.

- Freedom of hunger and thirst
- Freedom of discomfort,distress and sickness.
- Freedom of fear
- express their natural behaviour
- Freedom of pain.

This is the position of Islamic religion towards animals , but Muslims behaviour are not exactly the reflection of this religion.

We have spoken about history , it is time to speak about the present.

### ***OUR MAIN PROBLEMS***

- 1- Lack of legislation ( Very few articles and very vague to protect animals)
- 2- Fear of being ridiculed if anyone uses the few laws to defend an animal.
- 3- The ignorance our worse enemy.
- 4-Massacre of the stray dogs and cats with Strychnine poison and bullets by the government authorities.
- 5- The in humane practices in the slaughterhouses.
- 6- The tragic life of the fauna and flora of the Giza zoo.
- 7- The Massacre of the wildlife in Egypt
- 8-The tragic treatment of animals in Egyptian pet shops
- 9- The Circus .

I won't have the time to develop all these points will speak about what we are really working for.

### ***THE LACK OF LEGISLATION.***

- 1- The lack of legislation is one of the main problem and is even the cause of all the problems I have mentioned .  
Very few articles in our legislation for animal protection .

### ***2-THE IGNORANCE***

It is a national problem , 56 per cent of Egyptians are completely illiterate, which makes our problem worse.

Even the literate ones ignore the main part of their Pharonic ancient civilisation and also ignore do not follow to the teaching of the Islamic religion , they are

very scrupulous on the appearance which is dressing and talking but forget about the main rules of the Islamic religion and its essence.

The only way to educate people in my country is to use the television, very few people read, but almost everybody watches TV and very few Egyptians don't own a TV.

I don't see any link between poverty and cruelty to animals, many countries who are even poorer than Egypt have a strong animal welfare legislation, like Kenya and India.

Egypt is a country where you will find many poor people, but where also you have a very big number of milliard, I can tell you that the rich people are not more compassionate to animals than poor ones, animal welfare is a concept that we ignore, it doesn't exist in our modern culture maybe because of the invasion of the Bedouin culture that has almost destroyed our unique and glorious ancient culture.

### 3-SLAUGHTER HOUSES

slaughterhouse in our country represents :

- Religion, Islamic rules are very strict and precise about slaughtering, criticising slaughterhouses could be interpreted by extremist as a critic to Islam.

- Stating that our national abattoir was not following the Islamic rules for slaughtering is not a small accusation.

- Politics: We were also attacking the ministry of agriculture, and in the meantime causing a threat to the Egyptian population, they could stop eating meat if they knew that the meat was not slaughtered in the halal way. This is dangerous and can cause trouble.

- The General Organization for Veterinary Services will feel threatened and will be accused of not doing their job properly, they are supposed to supervise the hygiene and the slaughtermen.

- We were also threatening the economy, the trading of meat, the businessmen and the butchers.

### 4-OUR WILDLIFE

Is almost destroyed, rich princes from petrol countries come to Egypt for hunting, they hunt all kind of rare species, they bribe some responsible and are killing anything moving in the desert, Gazelles, Deer, Birds, foxes, Fenec, wolfs

The market that sell all species of wild animals are officially working every Friday, they sell monkeys, snakes, wild cats, wild rabbits, falcons, foxes, and anyone can order all kind of animals if he has the money he will get the animal (lions cubs, tigers, chimps, Gorillas, crocodiles, turtles, turtoises, foxes, snakes).

The animal smugglers are breeding the animals and when a wild animal is bred in the country, so it is considered legal. The CITES doesn't interfere. It is becoming a huge problem in Egypt. It is said that we are the third country for animal smuggling in the world.

Wild animals are everywhere in Egypt, especially the PRIVATE ZOOS owned by very rich millionaires who have good connections with politicians most of them are on the desert road of Cairo -Alexandria , these zoos are expanding and many new ones open every year, they all have lion cubs and monkeys , the owners of the restaurants know that this will attract clients, we receive many complains from visitors and tourists that the animals are very badly treated, neglected and suffering.

Not one owner has studied the habits and environment of the animals he owns , so imagine the horrible life of this animal especially that the keeper knows nothing about him.

Owning wild animals in restaurants is the latest fashion in Egypt , it is a kind of competition which restaurant will own more animals ...

## **EXPERIMENTATION ON ANIMALS**

And the last and most complicated issue is the Veterinary Faculty of Cairo where the students are experimenting on animals without using anaesthetics( these words were said by most of the vets who worked with S.P.A.R.E) during the exams 30 to 40 students are giving an injection to ONE Donkey ALL together .

The animals are euthanized by being electrocuted

The animals that will be used for vivisection are not being fed or given water.

The dogs are all together puppies with adult and they fight.

The students when they hear the dogs screaming don't even look at the place where the screaming come from, I was there and saw this scene it look to me like a horrible nightmare, to see the future vets so indifferent , so disrespectful to their future patients.

## **PET SHOPS**

A real catastrophe , people who use animals to make money , they put 3 or 5 animal in one small cage ,in the middle of their urine and faeces.

They breed them to infinity , only focusing on the price.

No legislation, no supervision to watch if the animals are given vaccines or not or to avoid zoo.

It is the complete chaos that is in almost everything in our country. No system , no knowledge, no methods, no laws .

The animals are the victims and us the animal advocates too.

## **Animal welfare organization :**

Egypt has more than 25 non-profit Organization that aims for better animal welfare and animal care. Furthermore, Egypt has the Egyptian Federation for Animal Welfare, the first of its kind in the region, uniting all animal welfare and animal care organization in tackling problematic issues in a larger scale.

Although it has been Observed in recent years that some problems have affected the performance of the Federation, but fortunately those problems have been resolved with the formation of a new board of directors for the federation.

The Egyptian Federation for animal welfare is profoundly interested for future collaboration with arab and global bodies for the sake of animal welfare and their care. The federation will also be delighted to hold future preliminary meeting Under the auspices of the Egyptian Federation for Animal Welfare, the Egyptian government and her royal highness princess Alia to establish the base stone for the Arab Federation for animal welfare, As well as holding a euro-arab meeting to exchange experiences in all related fields in animal welfare.

**Thank you**