Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Research Question
- Hypotheses
- Methodology
- Analysis
- Discussion
- Conclusion
Introduction

Rural South Africa remains faithful to working animals instead of, or combined with mechanization. Donkey owners, their families, and rural communities greatly rely on their donkeys as sources of income, reduction of physical burden, and expanded independence.

I plan to evaluate this in tandem with assessing how China’s rapidly expanding market for ejiao (a popular Chinese Traditional Medicine), and growing presence is affecting South Africa.
Literature Review

1. Use of Donkeys in Africa
   - Donkeys and Development
     ■ Modernization
     ■ Women
     ■ Advantages versus other livestock
     ■ The SDG’s

2. Ejiao & the Donkey Skin Trade

3. Donkey Skin Trade in South Africa

4. China & South Africa
Function of equines for most of the developing world remains in a working capacity and correlates with relatively low economic, infrastructural and technological development levels.

Underappreciated or unknown connection between equines, and specifically donkeys and development by governmental, private and nonprofit institutions has led to a generally low level of knowledge and attention to the subject.

“…donkeys carry water which saves time that can be used for other, more productive tasks; till soil on crop-producing land and assist in its harvest by then transporting those crops; carry goods, household items and construction materials; take people to rural clinics to seek medical attention or transport those who cannot walk (young, sick, old or pregnant) and generally save time, increase human production and reduce human drudgery”

- Paul Starkey
Donkeys and development

Modernization

- Advancement for specific groups and countries, others face greater levels of economic and social inequality than before

- Donkeys can “allow disadvantaged people to re-establish links with the social and economic processes from which they have been excluded,” and to “withstand some of the threats [of] ‘development’.” (Fernando & Starkey)

- Donkeys = economical solution to challenges for rural households in Africa: inexpensive cultivation on increasingly smaller and less arid plots of land, negate dependence on expensive and often unreliable inputs in remote areas such as fuel, spare parts for mechanized tools

Women

- The role of donkeys in Africa as a culturally accepted tool for women compared to other livestock has a longstanding history, (Goulder)

- Reduced physical strain and labor since most household tasks performed with the assistance of a donkey would be completed solely by women without them

- Curran et al study: discovered positive correlation between donkey ownership and the women’s well-being
Donkeys and development

Advantages of donkeys versus other common livestock

- A species which is well adapted to Africa’s particular geographic and infrastructural challenges
- Climate changes have forced a shift in the way that many cattle owners in Africa maintain and utilize their herds, primarily due to cattle’s low resistance to drought
- More efficient power unit in agriculture than cattle or horses, ploughing performance of four donkeys was comparable to that of a two-cattle team (Negomasha et al)
- Reserving cattle for meat and dairy production and consumption in communities likely increases the consumable outputs from cattle (Negomasha et al)

The SDG’s

- Linked benefits to distinctive development goals increased awareness within development spaces of the benefits that they provide
- SDG 1 – No Poverty
- SDG 2 – Zero Hunger
- SDG 4 – Quality Education
- SDG 5 – Gender Equality
- SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13 – Climate Action
- SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals
Ejiao

E’jiao: donkey-hide gelatin prepared by stewing and concentrating from donkey hide, a traditional, widely used Chinese medicine” (Wang et al.)

Demand for donkey products in China stems from the country’s rapidly expanding market for ejiao

Often taken in the form of capsules, powder or added to snacks

Total sales of USD $5 billion in 2016, up from just under USD $1 billion in 2008 (Agence-France Presse).

Growing demand and steadily declining raw materials = rising prices ejiao, also for its primary input (live donkeys or donkey hides)

Popularity due to rising Chinese middle-class drawn to its supposed ability to enrich the blood, suppress bleeding, treat cancers and gynecological diseases (Wen-Long Li et al.) promote youthful skin, and increase energy and virility (Knowles, 2016)

China unable to domestically supply donkeys for its market and has begun importing donkey skins from other countries around the world
Ejiao

- Total sales of 14,000 tons of ejiao in 2017, “at least 4 million donkey hides were required” (HSI)
- Source over half of donkeys from outside of China: Africa, and Latin America (Knowles 2016)
- Particularly devastating impacts throughout Africa where donkeys are crucial working tools for large populations of citizens
- Exploitation of owners, enticed by immediate compensation by Chinese or African middlemen, face long-term financial, production and livelihood losses from the sale of their donkey(s)
- Market gains are exponentially larger for middlemen and Chinese producers than what is received by sellers
- Wave of theft reported throughout Africa, especially in small, unsecure villages and rural areas
- Supply shortages of donkeys in African countries = price of selling and purchasing donkeys to skyrocket, leaving locals unable to replace old, unusable, sold or stolen animals
- Fifteen African countries have acted against the trade either through explicit governmental bans or economic impediments
Donkey skin trade in South Africa

- Primarily news reports responding to criminal elements: theft, linkages with other illicit trades or export and cargo violations
- Exports limited to 10,500 skins per year, must be slaughtered in approved equine slaughterhouse, one in operation (two were recently closed due to violations) in South Africa, per-day quota of 20 donkeys (Kimon de Greef)
- Estimates = South Africa’s total export of donkey hides to China around 1 million each year (Sheree Bega)
- 3 high-level investigations from 2016 -2017 yielded discovery of nearly 25,000 hides
- Implicated numerous times in South Africa’s already well-established illegal wildlife trade and black market
Donkey skin trade in South Africa

- Theft difficult to determine as adequate evidence is often unavailable, losses go unreported in rural areas, and donkeys are not officially tracked in agricultural databases in South Africa
- Villagers feel forced to either sell their donkeys or risk having them stolen by Chinese buyers or African middlemen
- Literature consensus: Immense damage is being done to donkey-reliant communities who are targets of the trade, criminal elements are commonplace, and the South African government should stop the trade until its impacts can be better evaluated
- South African government announced plans in 2016 to partner with Chinese businesses interested in expanding the potential of South Africa’s donkey skin market
- Proposed agreement between the North West READ and China makes no mention of proposed subsidies for South African donkey farmers
- Widely criticized for failing to perform economic, social and environmental impact surveys beforehand
China and South Africa

China designated South Africa as a ‘preferred country’ on the preferred continent for its investments”

Two common theoretical perspectives

1. Recolonization thesis: China is undertaking a process of recolonizing Africa through its aggressive economic and diplomatic partnerships

2. Room-for-maneuver: China’s actions are resultant from globalization processes wrought by the marginalization of Africa by previous Eurocentric domination. It must operate within existing structures, yet may prove to be a more beneficial partner than former Western influence.

1998: Formal diplomatic relationship between China and South Africa established
2000: Signing of the Pretoria Declaration between the two, “the moral imperative for developing countries to strengthen capacity for cooperation and mutual support in the international system"
2009: China emerged as South Africa’s largest trade partner, South Africa secured position as China’s largest trade partner in Africa
2010: Signing of the Beijing Declaration, Chinese invitation for South Africa to join BRICS
Research Question

Are donkeys in South Africa more valuable to their owners and the larger community as “domestic laborers” or as export products to supply China’s demand for Ejiao?
Hypotheses

Retaining donkeys as domestic laborers versus selling for export to China to is a more socioeconomically beneficial option for South African owners and communities.

Cost/benefit analyses of working donkeys will show that their benefits outweigh costs on an individual, communal, and gender-oriented basis.

Donkeys are beneficial for women’s advancement, gender equality and poverty eradication in rural areas of South Africa, the skin trade damages these potential advancements.
Methodology: Mixed-Method Approach

- Theoretical Underpinnings
  - Amartya Sen: Capabilities Approach
  - Raul Prebish: Dependency Theory

- In-person Interviews
  - Individual interview design
  - Group interviews
  - Interview conditions

- Cost-Benefit Analysis
Amartya Sen: Capabilities Approach

- Assesses to what extent a nation’s citizens are free to pursue and achieve goals and outcomes in their daily lives. Understood to expand capabilities of individuals...enhancing their overall/country development.

- Five primary types of freedoms in capability approach: 1) political freedoms, 2) economic facilities, 3) social opportunities, 4) transparency guarantees and 5) protective security.

- Application:
  - Donkeys analyzed as a tool aiding in enhancing capacity and freedom of development of rural South Africans.
  - Interpretation of interview responses in order to understand in what ways donkeys add to or decrease a person’s capability in South Africa.
  - Examination of impacts beyond income-related variables from donkey use.
Raul Prebisch: Dependency Theory

- Prebisch: free trade networks perpetually favor Western “core” countries to the disadvantage of “peripheral” countries, or those outside the central apparatus of power, wealth and development (Love, 1980).

- Dependency theory: periphery countries are either forced/coerced to build economic infrastructure in a manner which suits the demands of core countries (Faletto and Cardoso, 1971)

- Application:
  - Assess whether China and South Africa are behaving in accordance with Prebisch’s theory, to the extent that China operates as a core country while South Africa is subjugated as a periphery country
  - Interpretation of CBA results
In-person Interviews

- Interviews to target the individual experiences of donkey owners and evaluate the contexts where a donkey’s worth is greatest for South Africans
- Four-part, semi-structured set of questions which
  1) address demographics
  2) target Sen’s capability approach
  3) analyze cost-benefit ratios of donkey ownership
  4) allow for elaboration on thoughts and understanding of the donkey skin trade
- Interviewed 23 individuals through three donkey-reliant provinces
  - Bahananoa, Limpopo province
  - Hluvukani, Mpumalanga province
  - Disaneng, North West province
- I facilitated 3 group interviews which examined areas importance, interest, or mixed-answers from the in-person interviews
Interview Conditions

- Necessary to use local interview facilitators in each location
- Selection of participants through convenience and snowball sampling methods
  - Individuals working with donkeys at time of our passing
  - Homes with relevant donkey-equipment visible in the front yard such as a cart, harnessing, or livestock coral
  - Large stockpiles of firewood which likely were collected by donkeys
  - Referrals from other community members or interviewed participants.
- Relative exclusion of females/children from interviews, likely related to having all-male interview facilitators and sampling methods

Philemon, my interview facilitator in Hluvukani, and I finishing interviews
Cost-Benefit Analysis

- Simple CBA's of four scenarios were utilized in the analysis to understand possible outcomes surrounding the donkey skin trade
- Combination of primary data and secondary averages – results to be interpreted as with caution and understood as estimates
- CBA ideal for its simplicity in easily showing a disparity of costs and benefits even in the face of estimations
- Weighting benefits/costs applied to South African donkey farmers, buyers and Chinese retailers given no weight
- CBA’s typically include indicators such as “net benefits” or “net losses” which encompass non-monetary factors, instead I apply Sen’s capability approach to “catch” these variables
Analysis

- Interview Demographics
  - Secondary data: Bahananoa, Hluvukani and Disaneng
  - Primary data: Bahananoa, Hluvukani and Disaneng

- Socio-economic Analysis of the Role of Donkeys in South Africa
  - Individual Interview Responses from Bahananoa, Hluvukani and Disaneng
  - Group Interview Responses from Bahananoa, Hluvukani and Disaneng

- Cost-benefit Analysis (CBA) of Donkey Ownership versus the Donkey Skin Trade in South Africa
  - Scenario One: CBA of Retaining Donkeys as Domestic Laborers in South Africa
  - Scenario Two: CBA for Owners Who Sell Versus CBA for Buyers and Chinese Retailers
  - Scenario Three: CBA of Donkeys Stolen for the Skin Trade versus CBA of Buyers and Retailers
  - Scenario Four: CBA of Regulated Donkey Skin Trade Activities for South Africa versus China
    - Sub-scenario One
    - Sub-scenario Two
INTERVIEW
DEMOGRAPHICS: SECONDARY DATA

Table 4. Poverty Ranking and Expanded Unemployment Rate at Provincial Level of Interview Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>North West</th>
<th>Limpopo</th>
<th>Mpumalanga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty ranking amongst South African Provinces (1-9, with 9 being poorest)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded unemployment rate</td>
<td>43 %</td>
<td>39 %</td>
<td>41 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stats SA report, Poverty Trends in South Africa, 2017 Table 2.6: Ranking of

Table 3. 2016 Demographic Indicators from Local Municipalities of Interview Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No School</th>
<th>High School Graduate</th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
<th>Piped Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blouberg</td>
<td>172,601</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
<td>6 %</td>
<td>1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbuck Ridge</td>
<td>546,251</td>
<td>16 %</td>
<td>33 %</td>
<td>6 %</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mafikeng</td>
<td>314,394</td>
<td>7 %</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>23 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2016 Interim Census Report
Interview Demographics: Primary Data

Average picture of a donkey owner in the areas of South Africa where I undertook interviews:

- Black South African male
- Mid-forties with an eighth-grade education
- Household between six to seven people
- Provides entirely through donkey-related income or combination of donkey-related income and other
- Owned donkeys for roughly twenty years and has nine, works between five/six of them
- Collecting water, firewood and sand as well as cultivating and they serve as a source of transportation

Table 6. Occupational Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donkey-related work only</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension or other government support only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey-related work &amp; pension or other governmental support</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle ownership only</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey-related work &amp; cattle ownership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension or other governmental support &amp; cattle ownership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal employment only</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal employment &amp; other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Socio-economic Analysis: Individual Interview Responses

■ Q1: Primary reason(s) for donkey ownership?
  – water, firewood and sand collection; cultivation, transport of self, others or goods; and used at funerals and other community events, or other

■ Q2: Do you use the donkeys for income-generation, or household use only?
  – 1) household only, 2) household use and hired use and 3) household use and free community use
  – Always seem to have a dual function where they both earn income for the family and serve as a laborer for the family as well

■ Q3: What would happen if you don’t have donkeys?
  – Many stating that they “could not survive”, “would suffer”, or “couldn’t eat” if they did not have the donkeys

■ Q4: Does anyone else use the donkey? Who?
  – 1) self only, 2) self and family only and 3) self, family and close friends
Q5: What would happen if your donkeys were sold, stolen or unable to work?
- Many respondents unable to comprehend how a donkey could be stolen from them and remain missing (areas unaffected by donkey skin trade)

Q6: Would you use something else to replace your donkey if it was gone?
- 1) Get more donkeys, 2) Hire someone else with donkeys, 3) Hire tractor or car, 4) Activities by hand
- Nearly twice as many respondents said they would remain in use of donkeys either by buying more or hiring others with them to do necessary tasks.

### Table 12. Stated Advantages and Disadvantages to Donkey Ownership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonas</td>
<td>I’m able to stay in the village because of donkeys instead of going to the city.</td>
<td>“If I didn’t have a donkey, I would do the work going to the mountains and collecting firewood in the day that people want.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location: Bahrainwa</td>
<td>Age: 35</td>
<td>Household: 7 people, main provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation: Donkeys</td>
<td>Education: Grade 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkeys: 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beti</td>
<td>I have food, I can send my two sons to school. I’m never broke, even in January!</td>
<td>“Lots of people coming to steal the donkeys or people ask for my work and build up a credit, then they don’t pay their credit, or I have a hard time getting it from them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location: Hluvukani</td>
<td>Age: 29</td>
<td>Household: 4 people, lives with brother and provides for two sons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation: Donkeys only</td>
<td>Education: Graduated high school</td>
<td>Donkeys: 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CBA: Scenarios One, Two, & Three

Scenario One: Retaining Donkeys as Domestic Laborers in South Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean cost per donkey</th>
<th>210 SAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean income per donkey</td>
<td>1,634 SAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Result</strong></td>
<td><strong>Benefit of 1,424 SAR</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scenario Two: Owners Who Sell Versus Buyers and Chinese Retailers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Profit</th>
<th>Percent increase from what owners receive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donkey owners</td>
<td>1,000 SAR/USD $71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buyers</td>
<td>USD $103</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailers</td>
<td>USD $800 – $1,200</td>
<td>1.027-1.590%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scenario Three: CBA of Donkeys Stolen for the Skin Trade versus CBA of Buyers and Retailers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donkey owners</td>
<td>Negative 1,000 SAR (market value) + 1,424 SAR (per year for span of potential earnings during working life) + 1,000 SAR (Replacement cost for another donkey) + X (widely varying costs associated with either having to hire others with donkeys or tractors/cars to perform tasks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buyers</td>
<td>USD $369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailers</td>
<td>USD $800 – $1,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CBA: Scenario Four, Regulated Donkey Skin Trade

Sub-scenario One: Meeting Current Export Quota

- If a total of three equine-licensed slaughterhouses were operating within South Africa, each with a daily maximum of twenty equines the country could meet its export quota
- Donkeys at end of working life and pose only costs to their owners could be utilized
- Positive solution in theory, but insufficient & inconsistent supply would likely result in ongoing theft to meet market demands

Sub-scenario Two: Commercial Breeding

- Sufficient allocation of land, water and grazing resources to a population of donkeys would be a primary concern. In permanently enclosed structure, donkeys are unable to forage, access water as in free-range scenarios
- Donkeys have long gestation periods, usually only one foal per each birth, and take longer to reach required size for slaughter
- Average 3-yr cost per donkey in commercial operation = USD $679
- Hide between USD $400-500 currently
- Commercial donkey farmers in South Africa would likely face losses
Discussion

■ Dynamics of Donkeys as Domestic Laborers versus Foreign Export Products
  – Understanding Donkeys in South Africa from Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach
  – Assessing the Donkey Skin Trade from a Dependency Theory Perspective

■ A Donkey’s Worth In South Africa

■ Applicability of Study to Other Developing Countries

■ Opportunities for Future Research
## Understanding Donkeys in South Africa from Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Freedoms: aiding in the transportation of rural owners and community members to political events, connect donkey owners and reliant community</th>
<th>Donkey skin trade: enticing provincial governments to omit public discussions/policy research, corruption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Facilities: owners generate income by performing fundamental tasks in rural spaces, community members hire them because of lower cost than cars or tractors for the same work</td>
<td>Sale/theft of donkeys into the skin trade constrains economic freedom: lost employment opportunities, lowered long-term income, high inflation, monopolization of local markets, unfair trade, rent-seeking (RURPC, 2007).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Opportunities: suppling of children’s school uniforms, supplies and fees as well, lessening the burden of chores and total time performing necessary physical labor for the household</td>
<td>Role of transportation by donkey for specific purposes such as medical clinics, transporting pregnant women, or reaching or larger towns was discussed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding Donkeys in South Africa from Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach

| Transparency Guarantees: The donkey skin trade has violated South Africa’s transparency guarantees through encouraging illegal activity at multiple levels in its supply chain. Corruption, theft, illegal exportation, overextension of transport quotas, illegal bush slaughter, massive transport violations, crossover with black-market items and border smuggling are commonly occurring crimes within the trade. | Trade deprived them of their animals, also exposed government’s inability to protect citizens from negative reaches of globalization and the failure of development initiatives to effectuate progress equally. |

| Protective security: Donkeys’ ability to better withstand periods of drought and more efficient utilization of food and water resources than cattle may qualify then as an asset in one area of this freedom. | Donkey skin trade is noted for its rapid consumption of local donkey populations which are slow to reproduce and reach full maturity of strength and training for work. |
Assessing the Donkey Skin Trade from a Dependency Theory Perspective

- Post-apartheid South Africa prioritized international economic alliances, constringing the country to economic dependence upon the exportation of raw materials, low-skilled labor, and import of value-added items.

- Does not equate to development, South Africa’s raw materials were purposed for the expansion and development of China’s economy rather than its own (Faletto & Cardoso, 1971).

- Monopolized power enabled China to disrupt local markets, influence political agreements which show little investment in ensuring the protection and benefit of marginalized South African citizens.

- South Africa’s Gini coefficient 2017: international leader in high inequality (0.63).
  - Indicates that dependency theory’s conditions apply, developmental gains have not had the widespread impacts they purport to.

- China is able to utilize ejiao industry to develop technological advances for TCM, production, and livestock programs which can potentially be applied to other areas.
  - South Africa left with a declining stock of raw materials and a further-marginalized rural population.

- Low-cost, low-maintenance, and high-impact tool for communities.
  - Method of fulfilling development needs where efforts have either failed, or not arrived.
  - Donkeys supply livelihoods while completing necessary tasks.
  - Alleviating owners of dependency upon outside aid, governmental support or foreign investment schemes.
A Donkey’s Worth In South Africa

- Donkeys offer nonstop household and social value even when relieved from economically-motivated work by their owners.
  - A tractor may be parked by a field it has helped to plough, a donkey transports its owner home when the work is done, likely picking up water or firewood on the way.

- Where rural households have been left behind through staggering poverty, unemployment and environmental or infrastructural hardships, donkeys have kept them moving physically, economically and socially.

- The implications of their use reach far beyond the handlers who directly benefit from them:
  - providing necessities for children
  - expanding family homes
  - generating rural employment and income
  - dispensing water and firewood throughout communities
  - transporting goods and people to cultural events and gatherings
  - lessening dependence on social welfare
  - shifting physical burden/reliance from cattle to increase communal protein supplies
A Donkey’s Worth In South Africa

- Skin Trade: best-case scenario, owners are able to obtain market value for a donkey they and others would not use. More commonly, succumb to selling working (or workable) donkeys and face long-term losses, compounded through having their animals stolen by the trade.

- Financial losses for owners and communities
  - Increases physical burdens and feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, and communal strife in an already difficult setting.

- Well-regulated circumstances in the analysis demonstrate the inefficiency and unsustainable elements of formalized agreements
  - Specific biological challenges of donkeys, scarce resources, and subsidies.

These findings show that donkeys as domestic laborers in South Africa have infinitely higher value than what could be gained from their export to China for the donkey skin trade.
Conclusion

Results from in-person interviews responding to Sen’s capability approach and interpretations of the CBA scenarios from a dependency theory perspective, show that donkeys have the greatest value as domestic laborers for South African donkey owners and communities.

Rather than maintaining some (albeit less) value as foreign export products to China, the export of hides is instead a losing situation for South African donkey owners and communities. The trade harbors immense benefits for Chinese retailers, yet is drastically unequal even in its best-case scenarios, and immensely damaging in its worst.
Recommendations

- South African policy makers reconsider their affinity towards potential formal agreements with Chinese traders interested in establishing connections for the donkey skin trade.

- Greater protections for donkey owners in areas at risk of theft or monopolized sales should be instated, as well as a process for reimbursing or subsidizing those who have lost donkeys to the skin trade.

- Increased awareness for and support of donkey owners amongst policy makers, business owners and greater South African society could improve livelihood outcomes in areas of South Africa where other development schemes (like modernization and mechanization) have failed or not arrived.

- Applicability of donkeys to reaching the SDG’s in South Africa should also be evaluated at a policy level, and greater emphasis placed upon their welfare outcomes in order to improve their capacity to fulfill such goals.