

Summer 2023



Working animal welfare since 1923

NEWS

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ARTHRITIS APPEAL

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years of support for
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WELCOME

to the latest issue of SPANA News.



I'm proud to share with you our news and updates because, in these difficult times, our teams have been working with courage and determination to improve the welfare of working animals. The complexity of the environments we work in can be extremely challenging, such as in East Africa, which is facing a devastating, ongoing drought. Despite this, our teams are continuing to work hard to ensure working animals receive the lifesaving treatment and care they need. In fact, in this SPANA News, you'll find updates from Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Tunisia – and more!

On page four, our **special appeal** focuses on the plight of the thousands of working animals who endure the agonising pain of arthritis every day. Sadly, arthritis is often an invisible condition for working animals, but, unlike us, they can't voice their suffering. With your help, our vets can provide early diagnosis, treatment and careful management of arthritis in working animals, and they can work to increase awareness of the condition through community training to help owners spot the signs early and know what action to take.

Also in this issue, on page six, Mathilde Merridale-Punter, our Melbourne-based Senior Veterinary Programme Advisor, provides a fascinating insight into SPANA's work helping working oxen and buffalo. In 2022, we provided essential veterinary care to more than 4,000 oxen in Guinea, India and Zambia. You can also find out about our new emergency project, which is aiming to protect 3,000 water buffalo from a deadly outbreak of septicaemia in eastern India.

2023 marks a very special year for SPANA. This year we celebrate 100 years since we began our vital work helping working animals across the world. Read more about **SPANAs centenary** on page eight of this issue.

All the news and updates in this issue are important achievements for the welfare of working animals. As always, they wouldn't have been possible without your continued support, for which we are all so grateful. Thank you for your kindness.

Linda Edwards
Chief Executive, SPANA



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SPANAs IN THE NEWS



Improving the welfare of Indonesia's carriage horses

SPANAs has helped launch a new pilot scheme to improve the welfare of the working carriage horses and carthorses in Indonesia's capital city, Jakarta.

Through the Care for Carriage Horses scheme, which has been endorsed by the Indonesian government, each carriage horse owner is issued a licence, so that the veterinary care and vaccination record of their horse can be tracked. During the pilot stage, more than 100 horses received vital veterinary care and preventative treatments.

Mathilde Merridale-Punter, SPANA's Senior Veterinary Programme Advisor, said: *'This initiative is the first of its kind in Indonesia and will help to improve the working lives of Jakarta's carriage horses and their owners. I'm delighted that the scheme has been embraced by the government and that they are working to improve the welfare of horses in Indonesia.'*



Teaching humane education in Guinea

For the first time, SPANA has established an animal welfare education programme in Guinea, West Africa.

The programme – which teaches children about the basic needs of working animals, the important role these animals have in their communities, and why they should be looked after carefully – is currently reaching 3,000 children in 10 schools.

Working animals are an integral part of daily life in Guinea. However, despite their importance, there is little awareness of animal welfare. The students taking part in the lessons are from communities that largely depend on donkeys and cattle for their livelihoods.

Hannah Meese, SPANA's Education Programme Advisor, said: *'We are thrilled that our animal welfare education programme is reaching children in Guinea. Our lessons foster empathy and respect for animals. By promoting positive behaviours, we can bring about long-term improvements in the welfare of working animals.'*

Thank you to everyone who responded to our supporter survey last year. Your valuable feedback will help us to improve and will help to shape SPANA's future, making an even greater difference for working animals around the world.

HELP SAVE WORKING ANIMALS FROM AGONISING ARTHRITIS

SPECIAL APPEAL



Arthritis can often be an invisible condition. Cheikh's owner was unaware that the strenuous daily work had started to impact Cheikh's joints.

Every day, thousands of working animals endure the unbearable pain of arthritis. Arthritis is a common disease for humans and animals alike – but it is particularly prevalent in working animals. The repetitive nature of their work, which often involves carrying heavy loads for long hours on rough terrain, can cause massive strain on their joints and lead to the early onset of the disease. Sadly, once arthritis has developed, there is no cure. But with your support, we can provide early diagnosis, treatment and careful management of the condition. We can also educate owners to help prevent or slow its advance, and ease the pain that working animals face.

Cheikh's story

Cheikh – meaning 'wise' – works tirelessly for his owner, Mahmoud, transporting construction materials around Douboungué, a region of Mauritania. Every day, the six-year-old horse hauls a heavy cart full of sand, brick, iron or wood, in intense 40°C heat. Once his cart is emptied, Cheikh goes back to get another cartload. Without the faithful carthorse's help, Mahmoud would have no way of making an income and supporting his family. Life is extremely tough for both Cheikh and Mahmoud.

Mahmoud started to become worried when he noticed his horse was having trouble walking more than even a few steps at a time and showed significant discomfort when pulling his cart. After inspecting his horse's legs and finding a wound on Cheikh's right front limb, the concerned owner borrowed a neighbour's pickup truck and went to SPANA for help.

When Cheikh and Mahmoud arrived at our centre in Boghé, the team helped Mahmoud gently coax the startled and sore animal out of



Swollen, tender joints can make every step agony. Left untreated, arthritis can develop into long term crippling lameness.

the vehicle and into the veterinary treatment area. Once there, they gave Cheikh a full physical examination, first checking the leg wound and then feeling his joints for any abnormalities.

As one of the trained vets gently examined Cheikh's legs and flexed the fetlock joints, the horse visibly flinched and tried to pull his front right leg away in discomfort.

The affected joint was swollen and tender, so our vets first gave Cheikh an anti-inflammatory injection to relieve the soreness and reduce the inflammation. They then treated the wound on his right front leg by

gently removing the dead tissue and cleaning the area with antiseptic solution to prevent infection.

The vet team took an X-ray of Cheikh's legs to find the root of the problem. They also asked his owner about Cheikh's medical history. Mahmoud recalled that there had been times prior to the injury when his horse was listless and reluctant to work. After reviewing the X-ray results and the horse's medical history, the team diagnosed Cheikh with arthritis.

Arthritis occurs when the soft cartilage between bones begins to deteriorate, leading to excruciatingly painful, stiff and swollen joints.



A lifetime of pulling heavy loads means that working animals risk developing crippling arthritis. Without treatment, these animals can suffer painful and permanent damage to their joints.

On the days that Cheikh was slow and lethargic, his owner was unaware that he was suffering from an unbearable flare-up of arthritis. His body had seized up, making it hard to move, let alone haul a heavy cart along the hard, dusty roads of Mauritania. With no rest, his joints became tender, hot and inflamed, and he risked severe lameness.

Thankfully, the X-ray showed that Cheikh's arthritis was still in the early stages. This meant that, with the right management, Cheikh could lead a comfortable life and the disease could be slowed down.

Before Cheikh was discharged, the vets prescribed a course of anti-inflammatories to ease his discomfort. Mahmoud was advised to let Cheikh rest for two weeks before gradually reintroducing him back to work, with reduced hours and a decreased load. The team also stressed the importance of good farriery and adequate equipment so as not to overwhelm Cheikh's joints.

Mahmoud listened carefully to the vets' advice and promised to introduce more breaks during Cheikh's work and reduce his workload. He said: *'Thank you, SPANA, for helping Cheikh. The vets always give our animals the best treatment possible.'*

The sad reality is that arthritis is often an invisible condition for working animals, just like it is in humans. But, unlike us, these animals cannot voice their suffering. If you or someone you know suffers from arthritis, you can imagine how uncomfortable and stressful it would feel to work all day when your joints are swollen and seizing up.

Fortunately, SPANA vets were able to intervene before Cheikh's arthritis worsened or he faced permanent lameness. But for every horse like him, there are a thousand more arthritic working animals who are tormented daily by their painfully inflamed, tender joints and desperately need expert care.

With your support, our vets can provide early diagnosis, treatment, and careful management of different forms of the condition, to slow its advance and ease the pain of hardworking animals. We will also work to reduce the development of arthritis by making owners aware of the dangers of overworking their animals, the importance of good farriery and appropriate work equipment, and the risks of injury in certain environments. This will mean that horses like Cheikh can live longer, healthier and more comfortable lives. But we can't do this without you.

Please, if you can, donate today and help working animals suffering from agonising arthritis before the disease becomes too severe. Thank you.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please donate today to help alleviate the suffering of working animals like Cheikh, who are living with agonising arthritis.

\$36 could buy painkillers, anti-inflammatories, and other vital medicines for an animal like Cheikh suffering from painful arthritis.

\$72 could allow a working animal being treated for arthritis to stay at a SPANA centre for two days, paying for food, bedding, daily care, and follow-up treatments.

\$275 could help fund lab analysis and specialist equipment, such as X-rays and microscopes, so that different types of arthritis can be accurately diagnosed, monitored and treated.

To make a donation, please use the form enclosed or call 1300 149 080.
To donate online, please visit www.spana.org/arthritis or scan the QR code



THERE FOR ALL WORKING ANIMALS



Mathilde Merridale-Punter, SPANA's Melbourne-based Senior Veterinary Programme Advisor, outlines our work helping oxen and buffalo, which are vital to many families around the world.



Did you know that SPANA provides vital veterinary treatment to working oxen and buffalo? Just like donkeys, horses and camels, these hardworking animals play a crucial role in low-income countries.

When compared with horses, oxen and buffalo can pull heavier loads and have more draught power. They're mostly used in agriculture and are typically fitted to a yoke – a large wooden beam across their neck or withers – so that they can plough fields.

In 2022, SPANA provided essential veterinary care to more than 4,000 oxen in Guinea, India and Zambia. We also ran community training sessions so that owners could learn how to look after their working animals and receive practical training in skills such as harness repair. This training is crucial because our vets often treat working oxen for yoke and other harness-related wounds.

Other conditions common to bovines are lameness, nutritional problems and parasites. As they can be kept in herds, there is an increased risk from infectious diseases, so our vets also administer preventative treatments and vaccinations.

SPANA recently launched an emergency project to protect water buffalo from an outbreak of septicaemia in Manipur, a state in eastern India. In Manipur, 80 per cent of people depend on agriculture and forestry for their livelihood, and in some areas water buffalo are exclusively used to plough fields and to carry timber. In a two-month period nearly 1,000 buffalo died because of the septicaemia outbreak last year. Working with a local partner, we're aiming to protect 3,000 buffalo from contracting the contagious disease through vaccination and community training.

Thanks to your support, SPANA also provides feeding programmes for livestock during times of emergency to help avoid famine. In East Africa, where people and animals are fighting for their lives due to a devastating drought, we have been providing emergency water, food and veterinary treatment to thousands of working animals, including oxen.

We're proud to be an organisation that helps all working animals in need, whatever their species. Working oxen and buffalo are vital to many families and, with your support, we're able to improve the welfare of these animals across the world. **Thank you for your kindness.**

SPANA's founders, Kate and Nina Hosali, started working in Morocco in 1925. We've been helping working animals there ever since.

SPANA OPERATIONS

From bustling city souks to isolated mountain communities, donkeys, horses, mules and camels are the backbone of daily life in many parts of Morocco. They transport food and water and act as taxis – often in areas that would be impossible for vehicles to access.

In Morocco, we operate five veterinary centres, in Casablanca, Chemaia, Had Ouled Frej, Khemisset and Marrakech. Our team also helps working animals in remote communities with our mobile veterinary clinics. In 2022, thanks to your support, we were able to treat more than 17,000 sick and injured working animals across Morocco.



How long have you worked with SPANA?

I started working with SPANA in 1991 at our veterinary centre in Rabat, located about 320km (200 miles) north of Marrakech. I was then responsible for the SPANA centre in Casablanca between 2008 and 2013. I was appointed Country Director for Morocco in January 2014.

What role do working animals play in Morocco?

As in many other African countries, donkeys, horses and mules continue to play a crucial role in the life of often impoverished communities and in the country's economy. They remain an important means of traction in agriculture and are also used to transport goods and people, both in rural areas and around major cities.

Why is SPANA's work important in Morocco?

The work that SPANA has been doing in Morocco for

PROFILE MOROCCO

We also provide training to animal owners about proper animal care, training over 2,800 people in 2022. Meanwhile, our animal welfare education programme reached more than 17,000 children in 2022 through visits to our veterinary centres and our mobile exhibition unit, which travels to schools in rural areas.



MOROCCO AT A GLANCE

Population: 36.91 million
Area: 446,300 km²
Location: North Africa
Capital city: Rabat
Number of working equines and camels: 1,563,776

PERSONAL PROFILE Q&A Professor Hassan Alyakine, SPANA Morocco Country Director

decades is invaluable, helping working animals and the communities that depend on them. This has contributed a lot to improving animal welfare.

What have been your biggest achievements?

Working animals face very significant problems, such as harness injuries and lameness, but these problems are often compounded by the lack of appropriate animal welfare legislation. That's why one of SPANA's greatest achievements in recent years was to contribute to the development of local laws for the protection of carriage horses in Aït Ourir, near Marrakech, and mules used in tourism in Imlil, in the High Atlas Mountains. These two initiatives have greatly improved animal welfare. Similarly, SPANA was able to help working animals and their owners throughout the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic by providing emergency feed.

Do you have a message for SPANA supporters?

Enormous thanks to all SPANA supporters in Australia, New Zealand and around the world! Without your help and support, none of our work could be accomplished.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF WORKING ANIMAL WELFARE

Thanks to your ongoing support, 2023 marks 100 years since SPANA's vital work began, transforming the lives of working animals in the world's most impoverished communities.

In the early 1920s, two adventurous and compassionate women, Kate Hosali and her daughter, Nina, embarked on a lengthy tour of North Africa. As they travelled through Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, they were struck by the suffering and neglect of many of the working animals they encountered.

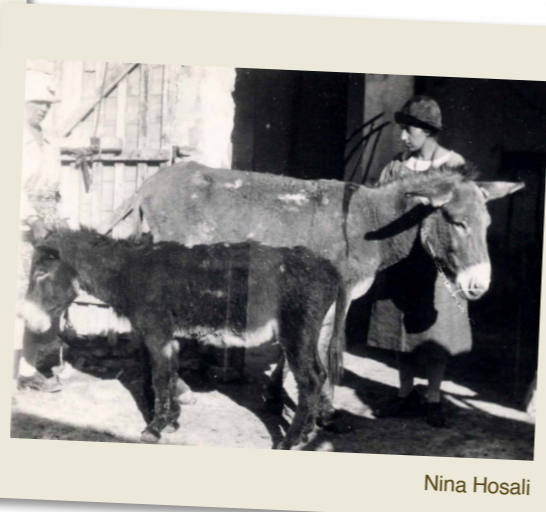
Following their return to their home in Britain, Kate and Nina decided that working animals deserved better than a life of suffering. So, on 2 October 1923, they established the global animal welfare charity that would become SPANA – The Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad, to support working animals in low-income countries.

The need for SPANA's work was great, and the charity quickly opened veterinary centres and mobile clinics across Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. In the decades that followed, we continued to grow, treating sick and injured animals and offering emergency support in times of crisis, including World War II and during natural disasters and civil unrest. By the 1980s and 1990s, SPANA was expanding beyond our North African roots – first into the Middle East and then across Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Kate died in 1944 and Nina passed away in 1987, but today – 100 years since the formation of SPANA – the pioneering spirit and unwavering passion that drove our early days continues to inspire everything we do. SPANA's work now spans 28 low-income countries across the world. Thanks to your kindness and generosity, we are improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of working animals every year through such activities as the provision of essential veterinary care, training for owners and animal welfare lessons for children.



Kate Hosali



Nina Hosali



SPANAs first centre opened in Tunis, Tunisia in 1927. More centres in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia soon followed.



SPANAs launched the charity's first mobile clinic, in Tunisia, during 1930



SPANAs co-founder Nina Hosali (pictured right) instigated owner training from the very start of the charity



Today, our 28 centres are a haven for sick and injured animals in need of treatment, food and rest



SPANAs currently operates 34 mobile clinics globally, reaching thousands of working animals in remote areas



Training owners and teaching children remains an essential part of our work, helping to build a world that's kinder towards working animals

SPANAs future, like our past, will be shaped by the needs of working animals. The challenges they face are only increasing – from the long-term effects of climate change, to rising political and economic uncertainty. But with your support, we are committed to expanding our reach and impact, especially at this time of great need. Together we can build a brighter, more compassionate future for working animals.

'Thank you so much for being part of the SPANA story. Your kindness and generosity is making a vital difference to working animals around the world.'
– Linda Edwards, Chief Executive

YOUR SUPPORT GOES A LONG WAY

TUNISIA

Abyad helps her owner, Zouheir, earn a small income in Siliana, a farming town in northern Tunisia.

The 14-year-old horse had developed a swelling on her right shoulder. Abyad did not appear to be in pain, but the mass was starting to rub against her harness collar and was preventing her from moving normally.

At the SPANA centre in Siliana, the vets carefully examined Abyad and performed diagnostic tests. After careful consideration, the vets decided to surgically remove the mass so that it would not impede Abyad's movement.

Abyad was administered a general anaesthetic and the area was expertly cleaned, shaved and disinfected. The vets made an incision to remove the mass and then stitched the muscle and skin back together. Abyad stayed in the centre's stables for a week where she received daily post-operative care and treatment. Zouheir was advised to rest his mare for another two weeks and to keep Abyad's wound clean.

Zouheir said: 'I am very grateful to SPANA and your role in helping the animals of Siliana. Thank you.'

Introducing just a few of the working animals we've recently helped, all made possible thanks to your kind support.



Abyad

MOROCCO

Touria is essential to her family. The eight-year-old donkey transports goods and water to help her owner, Maymouna, and her family.

One day, Maymouna noticed some small, sore-looking wounds on the sides of Touria's mouth. She decided to take Touria to the SPANA mobile veterinary clinic when it made its regular visit to their small village near Chemaia, in Morocco.

At the clinic, SPANA vets gently examined Touria's wounds. The donkey's bit – which had become old, worn and rusty – had caused the wounds and was rubbing against the sides of her mouth. The vets set about carefully cleaning the wounds, then applied a soothing ointment to encourage healing. Finally, Touria was given a comfortable new bit.

Our team advised Maymouna that Touria should not wear a bit until her wounds had healed and explained the importance of using safe and comfortable equipment to prevent wounds in the future. Maymouna was also given some ointment and shown how to clean Touria's wounds and continue her treatment at home.



Touria

Thank you to everyone who supported our dental appeal last year. Your kindness is helping working animals at risk of starvation due to agonising dental disease.

INDIA

Dholee the camel transports goods for her owner, Hemraj, in Bagru, near the city of Jaipur, in India.

Dholee is usually a healthy, docile camel, but one day Hemraj noticed that she couldn't stop itching. She kept rolling on the ground in an effort to scratch her irritated skin and was starting to lose her hair. Hemraj hated to see Dholee in such discomfort, so he took her to SPANA's mobile clinic the next morning.

Dholee and Hemraj were first in line at the busy clinic. SPANA vets quickly diagnosed Dholee with mange – a parasitic skin disease caused by an infestation of mites. To tackle the problem, they gave her an anti-parasitic injection. They also applied a topical treatment to the areas where Dholee had started to lose her hair and gently rubbed a soothing cream on the skin that was most inflamed to encourage healing and give her some relief. Hemraj was advised to clean Dholee's bedding thoroughly and to keep her away from other camels until she had fully recovered.

Hemraj said: 'I don't know what I'd do without Dholee. It's good that we can come to SPANA for help because I would not be able to buy expensive medication. Thank you.'



Dholee

ETHIOPIA

Megal the horse pulls a cart around the outlying towns and villages south of Ethiopia's capital city, Addis Ababa. The seven-year-old horse walks the hot and dusty roads with his owner, Ayenew, so that Ayenew can earn a basic living to support three generations of his family.

One day, Ayenew noticed that Megal's left eye looked sore and swollen and was weeping a thick discharge. Concerned, he travelled an hour and a half to SPANA's veterinary centre in Bishoftu to seek help for his beloved horse.

At the centre, SPANA vets carefully stained Megal's eye with a harmless fluorescein dye to check for damage to the surface of his eye. They also looked for any foreign material trapped under the eyelid – which could be causing irritation. After clearing Megal's eye of any damage or foreign material, they diagnosed an eye infection and applied an eye ointment to treat the infection. Ayenew was shown how to administer the ointment to Megal's eye twice a day for the next 10 days.

Ayenew said: 'Thank you SPANA for treating my horse free of charge. His eye must have been very painful, so I am glad he has received this treatment.'



Megal

- TREAT
- TRAIN
- TEACH



Help build a brighter future for working animals

Thanks to you, and other friends of working animals like you, SPANA now has a 100-year track record for improving the welfare of working animals.

With your support, we want to build on that work and go even further. That's why, during our centenary year, we will be looking at new ways to help working animals in an increasingly challenging world.

At a time when working animals need our help more than ever, SPANA is determined to build upon our historic achievements with pioneering new projects and partnerships, that will bring about lasting transformation for the welfare for working animals.



Help us continue our vital work in 2023 and beyond. By making a donation, signing up as a regular giver, or remembering us with a gift in your Will, you can ensure help is there for the working animals of the world during this time of great need.

Contact us

Please do get in touch, we would love to hear from you.

Call us on: 1300 149 080

Donate by scanning the QR code or visit:

www.spana.org/donate



If you would like to find out more about how to leave a bequest in your Will to help working animals, please use the tick box on the bottom of the enclosed donation form.

