



## **Transforming the treatment of working animals Speaker Notes**

SLIDE 1: Speaker to introduce him/herself and the talk.

SLIDE 2: We keep a vast number of horses in the UK, whether for pleasure or for sport. There are, however, very few true working horses.

SLIDE 3: The majority of horse owners in the UK love and care for their horses. We are fortunate that if they become ill we have access to state-of-the-art veterinary care, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

SLIDE 4: By contrast in the developing world horses and donkeys are a necessity, a work-horse, vital for the livelihoods of the people that rely on them. Families rely on their animals to make a living; the income the owner makes from using his animal will help buy food, clothes and send his children to school.

SLIDE 5: There are around 100 million working animals in the developing world, many of these will suffer with malnutrition, exhaustion, disease or injury in the course of their working lives and their suffering is sometimes shocking and difficult to understand.

SLIDE 6: Animals are used to transport people in tourist towns and as local taxis; to take people to markets, children to school and the sick to hospital.

SLIDE 7: Animals are used as commercial vehicles, carrying and selling goods, and collecting rubbish from cities.

SLIDE 8: Animals are a vital lifeline to families in poor communities – carrying drinking water, helping farmers to work the land and to transport their produce to market.

SLIDE 9: Poor welfare results from poverty and necessity. If people can barely afford to feed their family, it is unsurprising they cannot afford to feed their donkey or buy him medicine. They do not know the correct way to look after an animal or what is important for their welfare. These are the harsh realities of living in poverty with little or no education.

SLIDE 10: When a working animal falls sick, or becomes injured there is rarely a qualified vet nearby. There is a lack of the basic resources we take for granted, vets and trained farriers and harness makers are scarce or non-existent. Poor farriery causes pain and lameness; and badly made, ill fitting harnesses cause skin sores and wounds. If their animal becomes ill or lame, it is often unable to work, or is forced to despite being unwell. While an animal remains sick and untreated it won't be earning money for the family and they could fall deeper into poverty.

SLIDE 11: Some of the traditional methods used to treat wounds and injuries are harmful to their healing and cause further suffering; for example using engine oil and ash on wounds, and firing to 'treat' lameness, an ancient practice in this country, and done with no anaesthetic or pain relief. Traditional bits are very severe and commonly cause mouth injuries.

SLIDE 12: Overloading and overworking animals, often without enough food or water, causes fatigue and injury. Animals may collapse through exhaustion and are always vulnerable to road accidents on the busy roads. Excessive straining to pull loads can cause body wall hernias.

SLIDE 13: SPANA treats diseases seen infrequently in the UK, such as tetanus, influenza and parasite related diseases and see many others that don't happen in the UK such as African Horse Sickness, Epizootic Lymphangitis and Trypanosomiasis.

SLIDE 14: Even with all the hardships of normal life, sometimes natural disasters or conflicts make life even harder. If the rains fail, the crops don't grow, leaving little available to feed and water animals. If people are displaced by war and conflict to refugee camps, there is little means to look after their animals. If animals die in these situations, even if their owners live, they have lost the means to their livelihood in the aftermath of the disaster.

SLIDE 15: Now let me explain what SPANA is doing to help working animals.

SLIDE 16: SPANA was founded in 1923 by Kate Hosali and her daughter Nina, after they witnessed the mistreatment of animals on their travels through North Africa. They realised much of the suffering was due to the extreme poverty of animal owners, lack of medicines and education, so planned to set up a service that offered practical help to working animals. Kate worked with the animals while Nina set up SPANA in London. Initially, Kate's work was ridiculed but in time she won the respect and friendship of the local people who called her the Toubiba ("Lady Doctor"). Kate and Nina's compassion and devotion remains at the heart of SPANA's work to this day.

SLIDE 17: SPANA helps working animals in developing countries in many ways, but most importantly by the provision of free veterinary care. The reality is many sick, injured or mistreated animals never receive veterinary care. That's why SPANA funds a vital network of veterinary centres and mobile clinics that provide the necessary veterinary care free. Not only does SPANA treat the sick, injured and suffering, but they also provide preventative medicine to ensure animals remain healthy and pain free, and able to do their vital work for the families that rely on them.

SLIDE 18: SPANA has fixed centres and mobile clinics throughout Africa and the Middle East. Tens of thousands of working animals depend on these centres for veterinary care. Mobile clinics are usually present at souks enabling thousands of animals every week to come and have treatment. The permanent centres are important for the hospitalisation and after care of animals needing longer term treatment or surgery.

SLIDE 19: In these countries there is a never ending need for SPANA'S services. Working animals play a crucial and significant role in the day to day lives of their owners and users. Whilst their suffering is sometimes shocking and upsetting, SPANA is there to ease that suffering and to improve their lives.

SLIDE 20: SPANA has helped animals caught up in natural disasters and conflicts all over the world. Their emergency teams are ready to get essential help to animals wherever and whenever disaster strikes, providing the food, water and veterinary care vital for their survival so in the aftermath their owners have some hope of retaining their way of life. SPANA has run emergency missions in Chad, Kenya, Sudan, Mongolia, Iraq, Zimbabwe and Afghanistan.

SLIDE 21: Wounds are treated and doughnut bandages can be fixed to harnesses to protect pressure points and allow minor sores to heal and the animals to continue to work.

SLIDE 22: SPANA also recruits local service providers to make humane bits, saddle pads, hobbles and harness parts so they can exchange these for worn out or damaging ones. By using local service providers SPANA is encouraging sustainable local business and supporting the local economy.

SLIDE 23: In addition to veterinary treatment, SPANA realises that only by providing education can there be any long term benefit to working animals. Owners are taught about disease and injury prevention, and vets students spend time at SPANA centres, learning from SPANA'S vets so that when they become vets they will have the skills necessary to treat horses and donkeys. SPANA also provides training for existing non SPANA vets and university lecturers, to try and raise the standard of veterinary education in less developed countries. SPANA runs courses to improve the skills of local service providers like farriers, and supply them with the tools required to do a better job. To break the cycle of misery in the long term, SPANA teaches animal welfare to children. SPANA has interactive exhibitions and classrooms at many of its centres and work with local schools to integrate animal welfare into their curriculum.

SLIDE 24: SPANA also works with local municipalities and authorities to create welfare legislation for taxi horses, including regular inspections and licensing. In Morocco horses wear bands around their legs once they have passed their inspection.

SLIDE 25: SPANA's research aims to provide the vital evidence needed to ensure that its veterinary programmes have the greatest impact possible, leading to long term improvements in animal welfare. A recent example involved identifying different types of African Horse Sickness, to allow SPANA to vaccinate horses against the right strains.

SLIDE 26: SPANA takes vets to work as volunteers in Morocco, an enormously rewarding experience for them and for SPANA'S local vets who to benefit from the experience of working with vets who will have received the most up to date veterinary education.

SLIDE 27: SPANA is only able to carry out its amazing work due to the generosity of horse lovers like you. There are lots of ways you can help, whether it's giving a donation, hosting a bake sale or running a marathon. SPANA will help fundraisers who want to organise their own events by providing posters and support through their London office.

SLIDE 28: If you would like to help SPANA, here are their contact details. Thank you.