



Spring 2021 • Issue 194



For the working animals of the world

NEWS

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LAMENESS APPEAL

Caring for working
camels in India

Overcoming the
challenges of
the pandemic



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WELCOME

to the latest issue of SPANA News.

As Patron of the charity, I would like to start by sending my thanks to every single supporter of SPANA, following a year in which working animals have needed our help more than ever. The ongoing Covid-19 crisis has seen an appalling worldwide toll in human lives lost. In many ways, it has also proved to be the greatest threat to working animals that SPANA has faced in our 98-year history. But your continued support is, literally, lifesaving. Thanks to you, we have been there for working animals from the very outset of this crisis – and our support for starving, injured and abandoned animals remains just as high as this disastrous situation unfolds.

The life of every animal we are able to treat is precious. On page 12, you can read about a few of the thousands of animals we've recently been able to help through vital veterinary care, thanks to your support.

On page 16, our Director of Veterinary Services, Dr Ben Sturgeon, talks about the major challenges that veterinary professionals around the world have been facing since the global pandemic began last year. SPANA vet teams adapted very quickly to meet rising demand for our services, and a huge increase in emergency cases. In the face of lockdowns, restrictions on movement and other constraints, they have made an extraordinary difference in alleviating animal suffering.

Our **special appeal** on page six focuses on the serious issue of lameness, which causes agony for many working animals if left untreated. Many different injuries can lead to lameness, often leaving animals unable to walk or even stand in severe cases. The problem of lameness has worsened during the Covid-19 crisis, with many animals weaker and more prone to injury. Please, if you can, support our appeal and help SPANA vets to ease the unimaginable pain of lameness and prevent animals from suffering.

I hope you find the articles in this issue interesting and that the impact the charity is making, thanks to you, is clear. Once again, thank you for being a committed friend to SPANA – and to working animals across the world.

John Craven OBE, FLS
Patron, SPANA

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If you'd like to receive regular updates about SPANA's work, please sign up for our e-newsletter at spana.org.

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A LIFELINE FOR ETHIOPIA'S DONKEYS

In Shashemane, southern Ethiopia, working animals and local communities have been severely affected in recent years by a devastating combination of drought, conflict, flooding and – most recently – the Covid-19 pandemic.

Plummeting crop yields, and a lack of water and pasture, have had a major impact on donkeys and the people who depend on them.

As part of our emergency work, to assist animals threatened by crisis situations, SPANA has constructed lifesaving donkey protection areas. These include new water troughs and a water line to supply them, feed banks, and shaded areas to shield the donkeys from the intense sun. Last year, thanks to your support, we also built a 5,000-litre capacity water tank in Shashemane, which was accessed by 650 animals in August and September alone.

More than 6,600 animals are directly benefiting from this project, which is helping to protect them from the effects of drought and other life-threatening events.

SPANNA IN THE NEWS



Massive strides for animal welfare in Uganda

A SPANA project in Uganda, one of our newest countries to work in, is being expanded in 2021, following a very successful first year. The project combines SPANA's veterinary work, education for schoolchildren and training for animal owners and vets.

Last year, more than 2,800 working donkeys received veterinary treatment through this project, while training was delivered to 46 veterinary professionals, along with schoolteachers and 439 owners, who were instructed in humane care and animal handling.

Animal welfare clubs have been established in eight schools and more than 300 children attended these classes before March 2020. Although school closures due to the global pandemic affected this part of the project last year, the plan is to grow our education programme and set up clubs in more schools in 2021.

The project is being carried out in six districts of Uganda, working with local partner organisation AWPO (Animal Welfare Protection Organization). This year, the plan is also to expand the veterinary care provided to working animals, as well as the training programmes for communities and veterinary professionals.

The team is also using radio programmes to broadcast animal welfare advice for owners. The local radio station has more than one million listeners and there is huge interest in the shows, which have regular phone-ins.

Dr Ben Sturgeon, Director of Veterinary Services at SPANA, said: *'Through our joint approach of "Treat, Train, Teach", we are already seeing excellent progress for animal welfare in Uganda through this project, which is helping to cultivate lifelong respect and compassion for working animals.'*





Dancing for donkeys

In Tanzania, community educating groups are using dance to capture the attention of audiences and spread donkey welfare awareness in rural areas. The groups also sing in a local language, Gogo, to ensure the message reaches a large number of people.

These innovative approaches to promoting animal care are just part of the SPANA project being carried out in Mtera, Lake Mwanza, Dar es-Salaam and Dodoma, working with local partner, TAWESO.

The wide-ranging project also includes veterinary treatment, training for donkey owner groups, humane education and clubs for schoolchildren, and the production and distribution of safe and comfortable equipment for donkeys, such as well-fitting harnesses and reflectors to prevent accidents at night.



Inspiring a love of animals through reading

A new picture book has been produced in Namibia to support SPANA's humane education programme for children. The book, which is designed to help children develop empathy for animals and understand their needs, is used during school visits, with extra copies being given as gifts for children taking part in animal welfare lessons.



SPANA welcomes new Chair of Trustees

We're delighted to welcome keen animal lover and long-standing SPANA supporter, Dr Mary-Lorraine Hughes, as SPANA's new Chair of Trustees.

Mary-Lorraine has been a Trustee of SPANA since January 2017 and has extensive experience of both the charity sector and the business world. She has held Chief Executive roles at companies including Portmeirion Potteries and Twycross Zoo.

Mary-Lorraine said: *'Animal welfare has been a lifelong passion of mine, and particularly the welfare of working animals, who are owed an enormous debt of care by humankind. I am very proud to be appointed as Chair of SPANA, a charity that provides outstanding and comprehensive support for working animals.'*

'I am looking forward to working with SPANA's Trustees and talented staff to ensure SPANA can continue to be there for working animals as we move forward to the charity's centenary in 2023, and beyond.'

Mary-Lorraine will be supported by Gavin Helmer, who becomes Deputy Chair of SPANA, having been a Trustee since 2014.

HELP SAVE ANIMALS FROM THE AGONY OF LAMENESS

Every day, thousands of working animals endure the unbearable pain of lameness. Sadly, it is one of the most common conditions affecting the wellbeing of working animals today, exacerbated by the ongoing economic impact of the pandemic. Life for these animals has become much more arduous in the past year, as they work harder to support their communities. Imagine working many hours each day, carrying a heavy load, on an injury that causes agony with each step. With your support, we can save working animals from the agony of lameness today.

SPECIAL APPEAL



Our skilled vets found the source of Kotial's pain and gave her the necessary treatment and aftercare to ease her suffering

Kotial's story

Before the pandemic, Kotial's life was tough. Omar relied on his 17-year-old carthorse to transport building materials around the desert town of Boghé, Mauritania, in the searing heat. When Covid-19 forced construction sites to close, Omar and Kotial switched to transporting water barrels, providing a lifeline to the local community.

Although Omar was grateful to have found work, he and Kotial were required to deliver large quantities of water due to increased demand. What's more, people living locally – most of whom had lost their source of income – were unable to pay the full price. As a result, Omar struggled to afford the food his hardworking horse desperately needed.

Kotial had become so malnourished that she barely had enough strength to carry

the large barrels home. One day the mare began to slow down further, as she struggled to put weight on her leg. She walked unsteadily and showed clear signs of discomfort each time she stumbled. Kotial was in a great deal of pain and needed help.

Kotial's owner was beside himself with worry, as he knew that the gruelling daily work was becoming increasingly hard for her. Fortunately, SPANA's Boghé centre has remained open during the pandemic, so Omar came to us for help.

Upon examining Kotial, the SPANA team soon found the source of her pain – a metal nail had become lodged in the sensitive middle part of her hoof. If Kotial continued to work in this state much longer, chronic lameness would have led to permanent damage.

After evaluation, our vets treated Kotial with a much-needed course of antibiotics and painkillers. They gently removed the nail, cleaned the wound, then trimmed and bandaged the unbalanced hoof. Immediately,



Kotial was in agony and could barely walk; she urgently needed expert care





Our teams have seen an influx of animals suffering with crippling lameness. Emaciated animals are at greater risk as they become weak and more prone to injury.

the vets saw an improvement in Kotial, who started to walk more comfortably than she had been in weeks.

Concerned with how thin Kotial was, our team gave her an anti-parasite injection and took her into the stables where she received expert care for five days. When Kotial was well enough to be discharged, her owner was given advice on hoof care, cart balance and safe levels of loading and work. The team also provided Omar with enough feed to help Kotial on the road to recovery.

Fortunately, Kotial was brought in before she had to endure the misery of infection or the hopelessness of incurable bone damage. But for every horse like Kotial, there are thousands more who are tormented with crippling lameness and desperately need your support.

As the pandemic continues, animals like Kotial are more vulnerable than ever. What was once a preventable

problem has now become a bigger challenge due to local government restrictions on movement and rising malnutrition. If left untreated, lameness can become so severe that animals are permanently debilitated and unable to work – and in the worst cases, left to face a harrowing death.

SPANAs vets are on the ground treating helpless working animals suffering from lameness. With your support, our trained vets and farrier technicians can provide vital hoof treatment, easing the suffering of donkeys, horses and mules worldwide. We can also provide emergency feed and medicine for animals like Kotial that are overworked and malnourished.

In most instances, we are these poor animals' only hope of receiving veterinary care, and we can't do this without you. **Please, if you can, donate today and help save working animals from agonising lameness. Thank you.**

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please donate today to help protect vulnerable working animals like Kotial from lameness.

£20 Food supplies

This gift could feed an overworked starving animal for two weeks, helping them recover from a severe lack of nutrients.

£60 Essential medication

This gift could help treat three working animals like Kotial who are suffering from lameness, by paying for essential medication such as anti-inflammatories and other supportive treatments including bandaging, antibiotics and vaccinations.

£150 Tool kit

This gift could pay towards a tool kit that includes items like a hoof rasp, hoof knives and shoeing tools to ensure that working animals' hooves can be properly cared for on a regular basis.

To make a donation, please use the donation form enclosed, call 0300 033 4999 or visit our appeal page at www.spana.org/lameness

CARING FOR CAMELS

Working camels remain integral to daily life in many parts of India and continue to be vital to some of the poorest communities, who depend on them to earn a small income.



Dr Abhinav Swami, who leads a SPANA-funded veterinary project in India, on overcoming the challenges of the past year



Since 2015, SPANA has been working in partnership with my organisation, Help in Suffering, to provide free veterinary treatment to camels in Jaipur and the surrounding areas. The team cares for animals at our veterinary centre and through two mobile clinics. The mobile clinics make regular visits to local brick kilns and neighbouring villages, where camels and their owners work side by side in blazing heat and very hard conditions.

We treat a wide range of common conditions, such as mange, wounds and stomach issues. We also undertake emergency procedures,

distribute humane equipment, including replacing harmful traditional nose pegs, and fit reflectors on carts to prevent road accidents.

In 2019, we cared for 7,872 working camels, and we are very grateful to SPANA supporters, who make this work possible.

2020 was a very different year. The pandemic affected India badly, with tourism grinding to a halt and many people losing their jobs. Camel owners often live in extreme poverty and, unable to work during lockdown, many had no choice but to let their animals go or sell them at very low prices.

At first, the team was only able to respond to emergency cases. But, after the lockdown, the situation slowly returned to normal. Masks and social distancing were a very new thing, and it took time for some owners to understand why these measures were necessary. In time, we were able to return to our routine work each day, travelling to different areas in the mobile clinics and treating animals at the hospital.

Our community training programme is currently on hold, as the government does not allow more than four or five people to gather in one place, but we hope to restart this work soon.

Animals have undoubtedly suffered due to the crisis. And during lockdown, large numbers of camels faced starvation, abandonment and disease. It is a tragic situation. But, we are pleased that, thanks to your support, we have been able to save the lives of many animals and have also protected their health throughout this critical time. Through good times and bad, we will continue to be there for the working animals of Rajasthan.

BRINGING ANIMAL WELFARE EDUCATION TO MALI

On joining SPANA in 2018, I understood right away that this organisation works for a just and noble cause.



Mahawa Guindo, Humane Education Officer, on helping schoolchildren to develop respect and compassion for animals



Through my role, I manage all activities relating to our school education programme in Mali. This includes coordinating animal welfare workshops and lessons with schools and local authorities. I also provide regular training for teachers and organise school visits to our SPANA centre, where children can interact with animals and feel comfortable with them.

The programme reaches children between the ages of 10 and 14 in the capital city, Bamako, as well as in rural areas, where many families rely on working animals for their livelihoods.

The lessons focus on a wide range of topics, such as understanding

the basic needs of animals, along with animal story sessions in class. Stories are a very powerful way of getting our message across, as they help children to develop great empathy towards animals and reflect upon how animals feel. Through the programme, children learn for themselves that working animals are sentient beings and, as a result, they adopt benevolent behaviours towards them.

Training teachers is a very important part of my role, as it equips educators with the skills to deliver effective humane education and hugely expands the number of children we are able to reach. Helping children to

think for themselves is key, as it ensures that positive attitudes and beliefs become ingrained, with a lasting impact.

The reaction of the students when receiving the lessons is superb. This can be seen through the questions they ask, their enthusiasm, their active participation in lessons and their joy. Some students are so happy that they sing the SPANA song, which translates as 'Donkeys are very important in our lives. Don't treat them badly'.

The lessons do not only benefit the children. After their visits to the centre, some students urge their parents to come and see the animals. Children actively encourage adults within their communities to treat their donkeys with kindness, and many students do not hesitate to call SPANA if they encounter an animal that needs help.

It is an honour to see the impact our education programme is making, thanks to our supporters, and how it is bringing about a better future for working animals. Humane education teaches the child to take responsibility and be active in the community. By empowering children in this way, we are changing the lives of both these children and animals for generations to come.

SPANA has worked in Mauritania since 2001, helping the country's working animals in extreme conditions

SPANA OPERATIONS

Working animals have a vital role throughout Mauritania. In this Saharan country, there are severe shortages of water, and donkeys are relied upon to deliver water to households. This even includes the capital, Nouakchott, where there is no piped water supply. Day-to-day life in the city, and in many rural areas, literally depends on these animals.

We have three SPANA centres in the country – one in Nouakchott, one in the town of Rosso, and a new centre that opened in Boghé in 2019. In addition, we run three mobile veterinary clinics that reach animals in more remote locations. Last year, our small but dedicated team provided veterinary treatments to more than 151,000 working animals.

PROFILE

MAURITANIA

Alongside the work of the veterinary team, our education programme reaches children in a number of schools and in a designated classroom at the SPANA centre in Nouakchott. The programme promotes caring behaviour towards animals.



MAURITANIA AT A GLANCE

Population: 4.5 million
Area: 1,030,000 km²
Location: West Africa
Capital city: Nouakchott
Estimated number of working equines and camels: 1.9 million

PERSONAL PROFILE Q&A **Bebaha Hmeiditt, SPANA Mauritania Country Director**



What are the main problems facing working animals in Mauritania?

Mauritania is a very poor country and working animals continue to be the main means of transport in urban and rural areas. However, the extreme poverty of many

owners means animals often do not receive the care or food they need. They face many problems, such as lameness, malnutrition, infections, wounds, parasites, road accidents and poor farriery. This is why SPANA's services are absolutely necessary.

How has the Covid-19 pandemic affected working animals?

Following a year of drought in 2019, Mauritania and the country's working animals have been hit hard by the pandemic. A lack of work for owners and animals – due to curfews restricting travel and low agricultural activity – has made it very difficult for many owners to pay for food for their families and their animals. SPANA has been distributing emergency feed to animals across

Mauritania and providing essential veterinary care. Little by little, the situation in Mauritania is slowly improving, but there is still a great deal of suffering and our team is extremely busy.

What are you most proud about?

In 20 years of working with SPANA, my greatest pride has always been to see injured and malnourished animals arrive, and for them to come out healed and well. Their owners are often destitute and they are grateful and relieved to receive this help.

Our greatest achievement is to have persuaded the state, through the Ministry of National Education, to allow us to deliver humane education classes in schools, along with the training of teachers. SPANA has helped drive a change in attitudes among young people and this programme is shaping their respectful behaviour towards animals for the long term.

What are your plans for the coming year?

This year, we are planning to start a formal community training programme, alongside our veterinary and education work. This will involve mentoring owners in all aspects of animal care, so they can look after their animal's wellbeing and prevent avoidable problems.

CASE FILE

Protecting Abou's sight

A painful eye injury brought Abou, an eight-year-old donkey, to the SPANA centre in Nouakchott for treatment.

Abou has helped his 23-year-old owner, Ousmane Traore, to transport water around the city for the past two years. He is one of an estimated 70,000 working donkeys providing a lifeline to families in Nouakchott by supplying water.

Ousmane noticed that Abou was showing discomfort due to a problem with his right eye and some swelling on his face. He visited the SPANA centre to ask our vets for help.

'I always think of SPANA in times of need like these, and I really thank the vets for taking care of my animal.'

Ousmane

Upon examination, the team identified a scratch on the surface of Abou's eye, which may have been caused by a piece of debris or a foreign object, and had led to the inflammation on his face. They immediately rinsed the eye thoroughly and administered antibiotics to stop infection and anti-inflammatory medicine for the swelling.

The team instructed Ousmane to allow Abou to rest for several weeks to recover. They also advised him to avoid driving his cart too close to branches or other low hanging hazards to prevent similar injuries from occurring in the future.

SPANNA AROUND THE WORLD

Introducing just a few of the tens of thousands of animals we've helped recently, thanks to your kind support.

TUNISIA

Dora the mule was brought to the SPANA centre in Kasserine, Tunisia, suffering from severe stomach pain and swelling.

Her owner, 48-year-old Moulahi Ennaser, who relies on Dora for ploughing, was alarmed to see his mule throwing herself to the ground and rolling around in distress. He was aware of SPANA's work and turned to our vets for urgent assistance.

The team examined eight-year-old Dora, who appeared bloated in the abdominal region. She was also very weak and her dung was dry, containing traces of blood. They diagnosed the problem as colic, which can be deadly without treatment.

Our vets provided a treatment to help relieve constipation and clear any obstructions. They also administered antibiotics, anti-inflammatories and medication to prevent stomach spasms.

Moulahi was told that the cause was most likely an unbalanced diet, that was too rich in concentrates, and he received nutrition advice to avoid this problem in the future. Dora needed to be hospitalised at the SPANA centre for a week, for observation and to recover fully.



ENDING THE AGONY OF COLIC FOR DORA THE MULE

Dora rested while in the care of the expert team, before returning home to Moulahi. He said:

'I thank the efforts of SPANA, for helping the health and welfare of my animal and providing this special care.'

ZIMBABWE

When Ivos the donkey was involved in a road accident, his owner took him immediately to the SPANA team in Zimbabwe for help.

Ivos works every day, pulling cartloads of agricultural produce in hot and dusty conditions. Travelling along roads in rural Zimbabwe can be very dangerous for working animals, as cars and trucks often drive too close, making animals vulnerable. After a collision on the road, Ivos was clearly injured and in need of veterinary attention. His concerned owner, Emson Siamatanga, travelled to the SPANA mobile clinic operating in the area.

Following a thorough examination and X-rays from a portable machine, the vets could see that Ivos had suffered a fracture of a bone in his right foot. They sedated Ivos and applied a splint bandage to protect the limb and prevent further injury. They administered pain relief medication for Ivos, who needed to have complete rest for four weeks, with some controlled exercise, until the splints could be removed. In the weeks after the accident, the team



URGENT HELP FOR IVOS AFTER TRAFFIC COLLISION

checked in on Ivos and were very pleased with the progress he had made.

Emson has worked with animals his whole life.

He said:

'I rely on my donkeys to be able to work. SPANA is awesome – the help they offer to our donkeys is much appreciated.'

ETHIOPIA

Dama, an eight-year-old horse in Kebele, Ethiopia, was struggling to breathe and was showing other worrying signs, such as coughing and diarrhoea. His owner, Alelign Kumlachew, came to the SPANA centre in Bishoftu to seek help.

SPANAs vets were concerned that Dama had respiratory problems and a high temperature, along with nasal discharge. They suspected Dama's symptoms could be due to a bacterial infection, combined with poor nutrition or the wrong feed. The team set to work, giving Dama medication to treat the bacterial infection and further medication for parasites.

Dama's owner explained that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, his income had fallen dramatically, and he had been finding it difficult to provide enough food for his family and animals. He was advised on the most suitable feed to give Dama, and the team stressed the importance of sufficient rest, food and water for his animal.



ASSISTING A HORSE STRUGGLING FOR BREATH

Alelign said:

'Thanks to SPANA for your help. Our animals are very important to us and we have nowhere else to turn.'

HELPING DONKEYS IN MALI'S HOMELESS CAMPS

War and civil unrest have forced many people and their working animals to leave their homes in the north of Mali in recent years. With their donkeys and other animals, families have travelled in large numbers to the capital city, Bamako, in search of safety. Ending up in makeshift refugee camps, the conditions for animals and people are terrible. But SPANA is taking action.

In the camps of Bamako, most refugees live a precarious existence, simply trying to survive until the situation improves and they can return to their homes. Working animal owners have told the SPANA team how precious their donkeys are to them. In their former lives, they relied on these animals to help work their farms and transport produce. Now they rely on them to carry out small jobs, such as collecting rubbish, carrying water or transporting building materials, so they can earn enough to feed their families and their animals.

But the camps are not easy places for these animals to find themselves. There is very little by

way of basic necessities. Shelters are makeshift huts, there is no running water, and hygiene is poor. Parasites have become common and, given how poor the people are, there is no possibility of them affording veterinary treatment.

That's why SPANA stepped in. The team in Mali has been running clinics in the camps to treat these desperate animals. If we didn't, it's likely the animals would not receive any veterinary care and would potentially face years of suffering. But thanks to you, there is hope for them.

The mobile clinic makes regular visits to the camps. The team provides treatments for a range of conditions, and our vets often give vitamins for malnourishment, together with antiparasitic injections. Sadly, most donkeys have issues with worms and internal parasites, which can exacerbate malnutrition.

The owners consistently tell the team that their greatest hope is for peace to return. Once it does, they will return to their villages with their animals. There, they will be able to work in good conditions and give their animals the proper care they deserve. Until then, SPANA will continue to provide help for these vulnerable animals and the people that value them so much.



Nursing a new mother back to health

In one of the Bamako camps, our vets were called to treat Zarah, a mare who had just given birth to a foal. Zarah was extremely weak following the birth and couldn't stand. She was also not strong enough to be able to feed her new foal.

Zarah's owner had been feeding the foal hay to help him build up his strength, but the vets advised against this because the foal was still too young to digest it properly. Instead, they told the owner to give the foal cows' milk if his mother wasn't able to feed him.

The mare was clearly in a lot of pain, so the vets gave her some anaesthetic and advised her owner to let her rest and recover from the painful birth.

With the right care and nutrition, it is hoped that both mother and foal will make a full recovery.



DIGGING DEEP FOR WORKING ANIMALS

No-one will need reminding, but the past year has been an incredibly difficult time in most people's lives due to the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic – and our thoughts are with all the families tragically affected.



Director of Veterinary Services, Dr Ben Sturgeon, on the most challenging year for veterinary professionals across the world.

For many vets and other animal health workers, it has been the hardest period encountered during their careers – both emotionally and professionally.

Our teams working in developing countries dedicate their lives to improving the welfare of working animals. And to see such a sharp increase in animal suffering as a result of the pandemic is heartbreaking.

The crisis has had a huge impact on working animals and the families who rely on them in the world's poorest communities. Lockdowns, restrictions on movement and marketplace closures have led to animal owners losing their incomes. As a result, vast numbers of animals have faced malnutrition and starvation, with desperate owners unable to afford food. Injuries and disease have also risen rapidly,

particularly affecting animals who are abandoned or scavenging for anything they can find to eat.

Initially, national lockdowns and regulations on social contact prevented many of the routine activities that our teams carry out every day, such as running mobile veterinary clinics and providing training for communities. The number of emergency cases, hospitalised animals and animal rescues rose dramatically however, and our veterinary staff have been responding throughout the crisis, with demand for our services continuing to remain very high today.

Our veterinary teams across the world reacted immediately to the new situation, adapting our procedures before any government guidance or legislation was put in place, to ensure that animals, owners and staff were protected. This included measures around social distancing, face masks, the disinfecting of clinics and equipment, personal sanitation, and changes to entry and movement in our centres.

In a worsening situation, in which animal suffering has escalated drastically, it has been more essential than ever for us to focus our resources in the right places. From the outset, a major shift took place from routine and preventative healthcare – measures to prevent disease and injury – to vital emergency work. This emergency intervention has included treatment for growing numbers of lameness cases and wounds (with emaciated animals





being more susceptible) and rising infection levels in malnourished and weak animals. The need for emergency surgery has also risen sharply, with more animals consuming plastic and other refuse as they forage in the streets and rubbish dumps. Road traffic accidents are becoming more common too, as animals roam further in search of grazing.

In addition to lifesaving veterinary care, SPANA teams across the world have led emergency feeding programmes since the start of the crisis. **Thanks to the generosity of our supporters**, we have been able to provide this lifeline for working animals who are starving and struggling to survive.

In Morocco alone, we have carried out four separate emergency feeding programmes to date, distributing more than 274,000kg of feed to thousands of animals.

However, there have also been many obstacles and frustrations. The cycle of lockdowns, followed by the easing of restrictions, has limited what we've been able to achieve at times. Recently, a newly identified strain of the virus has seen Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa enter lockdown again, which has forced our teams to reduce their range of work after several months of busy activity.

As vets, providing the best care that we can to all animals in need is what drives us and what led us into the profession in the first place. On an emotional level, it has been extremely difficult. On the one hand we know how vitally important it is to act in a socially responsible way and follow national legislation, but on the other hand we know that, by doing so, we can't reach as many animals.

Many of the emergency cases we have been treating have been severe, often involving complex veterinary work and long periods of hospitalisation and care. It is immensely rewarding to save the lives of these animals, but it is also very challenging to see animals in such a bad condition who, only months before, were healthy and receiving preventative treatments.

The scale of the challenge globally is enormous, demand is unprecedented and no country in which we work is unaffected. But we are proud of the difference we have been able to make with your continued support – and our sincere guarantee is that every SPANA vet will give everything they can to prevent animals from suffering for as long as this crisis continues, and beyond. **On behalf of all SPANA vets and technicians, please accept my heartfelt thanks for all your support during this unprecedented time.**



WE WORK WHERE THEY WORK

So often, working animals can be found toiling in the most remote and inaccessible areas. Working hundreds of miles away from towns in many cases, they have no chance of reaching help if they are sick or injured. SPANA's response has been to work where the animals work, providing our free veterinary care, children's education and community training where the need is greatest.

But we couldn't do it without you – your support makes everything we do possible. One of the ways many SPANA supporters help working animals is through leaving a gift, of any size, in their Will. Gifts like these fund over half of all SPANA's work, which is incredible. If you have left SPANA a gift in your Will – thank you so much. If you haven't and would like more information, please do let us know on the donation form.

For decades, gifts in Wills have helped fund our mobile clinics, which provide treatment and care to animals

in remote locations, like the rugged Atlas Mountains in Morocco. In recent years, SPANA has started working in hard to reach areas in even more countries. For example, in Mauritania (which is our profile country in this issue, on page 10), SPANA opened its first centre in Nouakchott in 2001, and we remain the only provider of veterinary services to equids in that desperately poor country. SPANA's incredibly dedicated vets treated 150,000 working animals in Mauritania last year. And it is just as incredible that 75,000 of these animals were helped thanks to gifts in Wills.

Even in the midst of the current turmoil caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, our work continues, and we are as committed as ever to bringing about a brighter future for working animals in the remote, inhospitable regions of the world. If you would like to help us improve the lives of even more animals in future, perhaps you might consider including a gift in your Will?

If you would be interested to find out the difference your legacy could make to the lives of working animals, we would be happy to send you a copy of our free guide to gifts in Wills. You can request a copy on the bottom of the donation form, or download it from our website at www.spana.org/legacy.

SUPPORTER NEWS

GET INVOLVED, HAVE FUN AND HELP WORKING ANIMALS WORLDWIDE

Despite the huge challenges we are facing, our amazing supporters continue to raise money to ease the suffering of working animals around the world. A big thank you to every one of you. Your support is providing a lifeline for working animals, making sure we can be there when they need us most.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF VIRTUALLY!

SPANA supporter, Joanne Bell, walked 1,083 miles from Land's End to John O'Groats on an incredible virtual challenge, raising vital funds for working animals with every step. Thank you, Joanne!



RUN FOR SPANA

Help thousands of working animals by joining team SPANA and taking part in one of the UK's most iconic challenge events!

Take in London's most epic sights by running the Virgin Money London Marathon or enjoy London's greenest spaces by running in the Royal Parks Half Marathon! We'll provide you with hints and tips on your fundraising, sponsorship forms, and your very own SPANA running vest or t-shirt to wear with pride on the day. **If you would like to join team SPANA as a runner, please get in touch with the events team by email events@spana.org.**

THE SPANA WORLD TEA PARTY IS BACK – WITH A VIRTUAL TWIST!

Since 2015, our supporters have been hosting SPANA tea parties with themes from around the world, raising more than £22,000 for working animals in need.

As we continue to face the challenges of social distancing, it can be helpful to come together and support each other online instead. Holding a virtual SPANA World Tea Party is a great way to catch up safely with friends, family and colleagues, and support the working animals of the world.

Download your free World Tea Party pack now, which includes eight delicious recipes from around the world, at www.spana.org/tea-party.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Your fundraising plans may have been affected by the pandemic, but there are still so many ways you can make a huge difference to animals in need.

Call our friendly community fundraising team for ideas, on 020 7831 3999, or email events@spana.org. You can also visit www.spana.org/get-involved

Become a Stable Sponsor for working animals today

Hundreds of working animals are treated every day at SPANA's busy stables. Now, more than ever, there is constant demand for food and veterinary supplies. That is why we urgently need more Stable Sponsors.



Our stables provide a haven for working animals, where they can receive expert veterinary care, and rest and recover in peace and comfort. By sponsoring our stables with a monthly gift, you will play a special role in helping sick and injured animals make a recovery.

As a Stable Sponsor, you can offer more working animals the best chance – often the only chance – of a life free from pain and suffering.

Receive a special Stable Sponsor welcome folder and certificate, prepared just for you. Plus, you will receive exclusive updates from our stables and get an inside look at how your sponsorship is making a difference!



Could you support SPANA in this special way? To help working animals as a Stable Sponsor, complete and return a Stable Sponsor sign-up form, visit our website or call us on the number below. We'd love to hear from you.

Visit www.spana.org/stablesponsor or call 020 7831 3999

