



# NEWS

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## LIFESAVING SURGERY APPEAL

**Celebrating 20 years  
in Mauritania**

**Compassion for camels**





**3** Spotlight: Travelling to school in Costa Rica

**4** Making headlines: All the latest news from SPANA

**6** **Special appeal:**  
Lifesaving surgery



**8** SPANA in action: A closer look at camels

**9** Education: From the classroom to the community in Ethiopia

**10** **SPANA up close: Botswana**



**12** SPANA around the world: Meet some of the animals you're helping

**14** **Opinion: Focusing on a brighter future for working animals**

**16** Focus: Celebrating 20 years in Mauritania



**18** Your SPANA: How you can help working animals worldwide



# WELCOME

to the latest issue of SPANA News.

It's been a busy time for us all here at SPANA. Despite the ongoing challenges of the global coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, and civil and economic uncertainty in many countries where we work, we have continued on our mission to transform the welfare of working animals, and have successfully provided a lifeline for animals in the greatest need.

In this issue, our **special appeal** on page six focuses on the very sick or badly injured working animals we encounter that need surgical intervention. Animals like Bahira, a horse from Morocco who was involved in a serious road accident. Sadly, our vets regularly have to perform lifesaving surgery on working animals like Bahira. With your support, we can help working animals in a critical condition by ensuring our vets are equipped with the right medication, basic surgical tools and the expert equipment they need to save lives.

On page eight, Mathilde Merridale-Punter, our Veterinary Programmes Advisor, takes a closer look at our vital work with camels. Camels have an important role supporting people in low-income countries around the world, but rarely receive the recognition that they deserve. That's why SPANA is proud to treat thousands of camels every year and to train their owners in how best to look after them.

As you read through this issue, you'll see that, thanks to your kindness, we've been able to help working animals in great need in diverse locations throughout the world. And, on page 14, you can read about our plans to help even more working animals in need. Despite the challenges facing the world right now, there are many exciting opportunities where SPANA is perfectly positioned to change lives and improve the welfare of working animals in the communities that depend on them.

It can't be said enough how grateful everyone at SPANA is for your support. The welfare of working animals is at the core of everything we do – and, together, we will continue to work towards a world where every working animal lives a life free from suffering and is treated with compassion. Thank you.

**Linda Edwards**  
Chief Executive, SPANA

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# TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL IN COSTA RICA



**In the remote Talamanca mountains of south-east Costa Rica, there's only one way to get to school – by horse.**

With just a single road through the mountains, horses are often the only way for many children living in the isolated communities of this mountainous region to get around. Some school journeys can take up to two hours on this challenging terrain.

Working horses and mules are integral to daily life in many inaccessible regions of Costa Rica. As well as

helping children get to school, horses and mules work hard transporting local crops, including coffee beans.

Our animal welfare education programme reaches children in these remote outposts – teaching them about the needs of animals so that they are able to care for the horses that they rely on. Thank you for making this possible.



# SPANA IN THE NEWS

## Ségou veterinary centre update

**More working animals are receiving the vital veterinary treatment they need as SPANA's plans progress to build a new veterinary centre in Ségou, Mali.**

SPANA launched a special fundraising appeal in 2021 to enable the charity to build a permanent veterinary centre in Ségou, which will help to transform and save the lives of approximately 60,000 animals per year in Mali. The town is currently served by SPANA's mobile clinic, which travels 150 miles from the country's capital, Bamako, once a month to provide lifesaving veterinary care.

SPANA has recently set up a temporary clinic in Ségou to treat and hospitalise working animals in acute need while the new centre is built. This temporary workspace is ensuring that SPANA vets are able to give sick working animals the medicines, care and rest they need to recover. In the first few days of operation alone, 15 injured donkeys who required more intensive, ongoing treatment were admitted to the stables at the temporary clinic.



In addition, a new mobile clinic has also been purchased, delivered and stocked with essential veterinary equipment so that SPANA vets can help working animals in Ségou and the surrounding area.

Mathilde Merridale-Punter, SPANA's Veterinary Programmes Advisor, said: *'I'm thrilled that, thanks to your kindness, we have been able to open a temporary clinic in Ségou as we prepare to build a permanent veterinary centre in the town. Ségou is a community that relies on working animals, and there is great demand for our services there. This temporary clinic is just the start, and we hope that a permanent centre will enable the treatment of many more animals in urgent need of help.'*

With your support, SPANA plans to build a permanent veterinary centre in Ségou to provide treatment to working animals in a clean and secure environment. Sick and injured animals requiring specialist or long-term treatment will be able to stay and rehabilitate at the centre until they have fully recovered. You can find out more about our appeal at [spana.org/malicentre](https://spana.org/malicentre).

## A win for working animals

**A United Nations (UN) resolution has recognised the link between animal welfare, the environment and sustainable development – paving the way for a brighter future for working animals.**

Linda Edwards, SPANA's Chief Executive, said: *'This announcement is hugely significant for the working animals of the world. Sustainable development and treating animals with respect go hand in hand. SPANA has always highlighted the urgent need to protect animals and their welfare, and this UN resolution finally gives animal welfare the global recognition it deserves. We are one step closer to SPANA's vision of a world where every working animal is treated with compassion.'*

## New mobile clinic for Ethiopia

**SPANA is helping more working animals in Ethiopia, thanks to a new mobile veterinary clinic.**

The clinic is based in the northern town of Gondar, where many people rely on horses, donkeys and mules for their livelihood. The clinic will make regular visits to Gondar and the surrounding villages to provide veterinary care to working animals in need.

SPANA vets helped 23 equines in Gondar in the first few days of operation alone, including a donkey who had ingested some rope, and a horse suffering from lameness.

SPANA's mobile clinics allow us to reach working animals who would otherwise have no access to the essential veterinary care they need. Thanks to your kindness, we are able to stock our mobile clinics with necessary supplies, such as antibiotics, antiseptic, dewormers and bandages, so that our vets are ready to provide vital treatment for the problems they encounter.

Mathilde Merridale-Punter, SPANA's Veterinary Programmes Advisor, said: *'Mobile clinics have always been a crucial part of our work, and we're delighted that we are now able to help more animals in Ethiopia. This new clinic, run in partnership with Gondar University, will be a lifeline for the working animals of Gondar.'*



## Education success in Zimbabwe and Mauritania

**SPANA has secured major new education agreements with the governments of Zimbabwe and Mauritania.**

In Zimbabwe, SPANA has signed a five-year agreement with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to run and support Promoting Animal Welfare in Schools (PAWS) clubs in primary schools throughout Zimbabwe. The charity will also train teachers in humane education and animal welfare.

In Mauritania, SPANA has been selected as the animal welfare organisation for a new 'Green Schools' pilot project in 60 schools – partnering with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Environment, the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and the German Development Corporation. Students will learn about topics relating to the environment, sustainable development, and the need for good animal welfare.

Linda Edwards, SPANA's Chief Executive, said: *'These key agreements will have an extremely positive impact on animal welfare and are a vital step forward on our journey to create a better world for working animals.'*



# PROVIDE LIFESAVING SURGERY FOR WORKING ANIMALS IN NEED

When Bahira arrived at our centre, she was badly injured and could barely walk. With a deep wound running the length of her thigh, the poor horse needed emergency surgery. SPANA vets regularly encounter very sick or badly injured animals that need surgical intervention. In life-or-death scenarios, our vets have the expertise to perform lifesaving surgery. But this is only possible if they are equipped with the right medication, basic surgical tools, and specialist equipment. By making a donation today, you can help working animals in critical condition receive the lifesaving surgery and essential aftercare they need to survive.

## Bahira's story

Bahira – meaning ‘brilliant’ – plays a key role in the lives of her owner, Rachid, and his family. The faithful carthorse works hard to help Rachid earn a modest income, transporting goods from Asni, a small, rural town in Morocco, to markets in the neighbouring city of Marrakech. It's long and gruelling work. Six days a week, Bahira navigates her cart through bustling, uneven streets that are densely packed with traffic. In hazardous environments like these, working animals are at real risk of being critically injured.

Rachid and Bahira were on their way home one evening when they were involved in a serious accident. Beside them, another cart, also leaving the crowded market, clipped Bahira at high speed. Before Rachid had time to react, the larger cart had already collided with his horse, badly wounding her leg.



Bahira could barely walk and was in a great deal of pain; she urgently needed surgical treatment.

**Shocked, distressed, and in severe pain, Bahira limped to the side of the road, blood pooling around her feet from the deep gash across her thigh. Rachid feared the worst, believing that Bahira had broken her leg. Not only was Rachid very attached to his animal, but without her, he had no means of supporting his wife and children back home.**

Bahira was losing blood and needed help fast. Thanks to a kind onlooker with a truck, Bahira was



A road accident left working horse Bahira fighting for her life. She was badly wounded and suffering when she was rushed to our centre.



rushed to SPANA's Marrakech centre alongside Rachid, who kept the startled mare calm during the journey. At the centre, the horse was carefully led into the treatment area, where the team staunched the flow of blood and gave her a thorough examination. They took X-rays of her leg to rule out any possible fractures. Luckily, Bahira escaped without any damage to her bones. But due to the size and severity of the wound, the vets decided they would need to operate immediately.



After receiving emergency surgery, Bahira was led to the comfort of the stables where she received follow-up treatment, medication, nutritious food and some much-needed rest.

Without surgery, Bahira's wound would not have been able to heal properly, and the long and painful process could have led to chronic damage. She would also have been at risk of developing a serious infection, which, in the worst cases, could have led to an agonising death.

Bahira was guided to the padded surgical theatre, where the team administered general anaesthetic before carefully cleaning, disinfecting and suturing the large wound. When the surgery was complete, Bahira was put on a course of antibiotics and painkillers to soothe her discomfort. To ensure that her wound healed properly, the team hospitalised Bahira, allowing her time to rest and recover from her ordeal. After two weeks of observation and attentive aftercare at our stables, her stitches were removed and she was ready to go home.

Rachid was deeply grateful for the vet team's intervention and said: *'Bahira is important to my family, it scared me to see her so badly injured after the accident. I am relieved that the vets could help. Without them, I could have lost her.'*

**Unfortunately, Bahira is just one of the many working animals who require an essential, and sometimes lifesaving, operation. Whether they are enduring agonising and life-changing injuries as a result of an accident or animal attack, or facing problems like colic, tumours or congenital issues; without the necessary surgery, these animals are sentenced to a short life of pain and suffering. Unable to work, they may even be abandoned by their owners, who cannot afford treatment.**

We must ensure that SPANA's dedicated vets have the right medicines, surgical tools and specialist equipment so that there will always be hope for animals like Bahira to live a life free of pain and suffering. In most instances, we are these vulnerable animals' only chance of receiving surgical treatment. But we can't do this without you. Please, if you can, donate today and help working animals in need of lifesaving surgery.

**Thank you.**

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please donate today to ensure working animals like Bahira receive the lifesaving surgery they need.

**£20** could pay for the vital medication and anaesthetic needed to help save a working animal's life.

**£60** could provide essential care, food and stabling to help horses like Bahira recover from surgery in the safety of a SPANA centre.

**£150** could pay towards a lifesaving surgical kit as well as expert equipment, such as X-ray and ultrasound machines, to help our vets diagnose conditions that require surgery.

**To make a donation, please use the donation form enclosed, call 0300 033 4999 or visit our appeal page at [www.spana.org/surgery](http://www.spana.org/surgery).**



# COMPASSION FOR CAMELS



**At SPANA, we're proud to help all working animals in need. While the majority of the thousands of sick and injured animals we treat every year are donkeys and horses, we also help a wide range of other animals, such as mules, oxen, elephants – and camels.**

Just like horses, camels have been domesticated for thousands of years. Over the centuries they have played a vital role transporting goods and people. Today, they remain just as important in the daily lives of millions of people around the world. For example, in Jordan they transport vital supplies, including water, across desert areas. In India, they continue to work in the brick-making industry to move heavy loads of bricks from the kilns.

In 2021, thanks to your kindness, we were able to provide essential care to 16,962 sick camels requiring



Mathilde Merridale-Punter, SPANA's Veterinary Programmes Advisor, explains how, thanks to your support, we are helping thousands of camels every year.

our help in India, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Our dedicated vet teams treat camels suffering from all sorts of worrying conditions. They are quite often infested with parasites, so we administer a large number of deworming treatments. Other common ailments include skin conditions and wounds.

Crucially, as we treat each camel, we also improve their ongoing welfare by training owners in how best to look after their animals. It's heartening to see that just a few simple fixes can make the world of difference. For example, we're working to reduce the reliance on traditional wooden nose pegs, which some owners use to help control their camels. Traditional pegs are a significant cause of injury, because they can splinter and cause infections. Last year, we replaced 1,286 traditional nose pegs with more humane alternatives.

To prevent road accidents, we fit reflectors onto the carts pulled by camels. Last year, 778 reflectors were fitted onto carts to make sure that camels and their owners are visible on the road at night.

In some locations, we operate regular mobile clinics specifically for camels. In Marrakech, for example, we provide regular check-ups for tourist camels and treat those who need veterinary assistance. In India, we visit the vast annual camel fairs to help ensure the welfare of animals.

**Camels are a lifeline for so many people, but rarely receive the recognition they deserve. Thanks to your compassion, we're helping these hardworking and loyal animals. From all our vet teams, thank you for your support.**

## FROM CLASSROOM TO COMMUNITY



Dr Hanna Zewdu, SPANA's Ethiopia Project Leader, on a new initiative helping students spread positive animal welfare messages in their community.

**'We need to take care of horses and donkeys', 'Let us respect SPANA,' read the homemade signs held proudly aloft by students from Burka Ejersa school in Sheno, a town in central Ethiopia.**

The signs were made by the students as part of a new education initiative we have recently launched in Ethiopia. The initiative encourages children to take the lessons they are learning through SPANA's animal welfare clubs and pass on their knowledge to members of their community. It's an exciting move that is really making animal owners take notice.

In Sheno, where the students live, many horses are used by their owners to transport goods by cart. With the support of their teacher, the students discussed ways that animal welfare could be improved in their town. They chose to focus on carthorse owners and created an awareness programme to present to them using slogans and poems. In this way, the students have been teaching their community about the needs of animals.

The carthorse owners were amazed and looked at the children with great surprise. They knew the students were from the area, and when they heard such big messages from the children about animal needs, it made them think very seriously.

We are receiving positive feedback from the initiative. For example, in Holeta, a town north-west of Addis Ababa, there is a school near the market. The animal welfare club students at the school, together with their teacher, visit the market to explain to the owners of working animals why they should not overload their carts. In response to this message, some owners have reduced their cartloads, which is great news.

These are very promising achievements, and they are only possible thanks to your ongoing support. Thank you so much for helping SPANA teach children to develop positive beliefs, respect and compassion towards animals. Because of you, the lessons they learn at SPANA's animal welfare clubs will last a lifetime – and are spreading far beyond the classroom. **From everyone at SPANA in Ethiopia, thank you.**



**SPANA has been providing lifesaving veterinary treatment to donkeys and horses in Botswana since 2015.**

**SPANA OPERATIONS**

Working animals are the backbone of rural, agricultural life in Botswana. The northern town of Maun is known for its working donkey population – estimated at 24,000 – and because of this it is called ‘donkey town’. Around the vast Greater Maun area, thousands of donkeys are used to plough fields or pull carts to transport goods and people. However, partly because they are so common, there is a widespread lack of concern for donkeys’ welfare.

That’s why SPANA works across Greater Maun to provide essential veterinary care and to train owners how to look after their animals.

**PROFILE**  
**BOTSWANA**

We run regular mobile clinics that travel hundreds of kilometres every week to reach donkeys and horses in need of help in Maun and remote rural villages. SPANA also teaches children in Maun, providing lessons and activities about caring for animals.



**BOTSWANA AT A GLANCE**

**Population:** 2.3 million  
**Area:** 581,730 km²  
**Location:** Southern Africa  
**Capital city:** Gaborone  
**Number of working equines:** 157,963



**How important are working animals to daily life in Botswana?**

Donkeys are the most important asset to rural people, but they are extremely undervalued. They provide all of the draught power for daily firewood and water collection. They pull carts to provide much-needed supplies. They are used for ploughing in the rainy season, so that their owners can grow staple crops. Horses, meanwhile, play a crucial role mustering cattle.

**What are the biggest challenges working animals face in Botswana?**

Through no fault of their own, many owners are unable to afford or obtain the correct equipment for their animals, so we are still seeing wounds caused by improper harnessing. Some owners also use traditional

**PERSONAL PROFILE Q&A**  
**Pippa Young,**  
**SPANA Botswana Country Director**

methods to control their animals. Throughout 2022, we’re running community training initiatives to promote humane care.

**What do you like most about your job?**

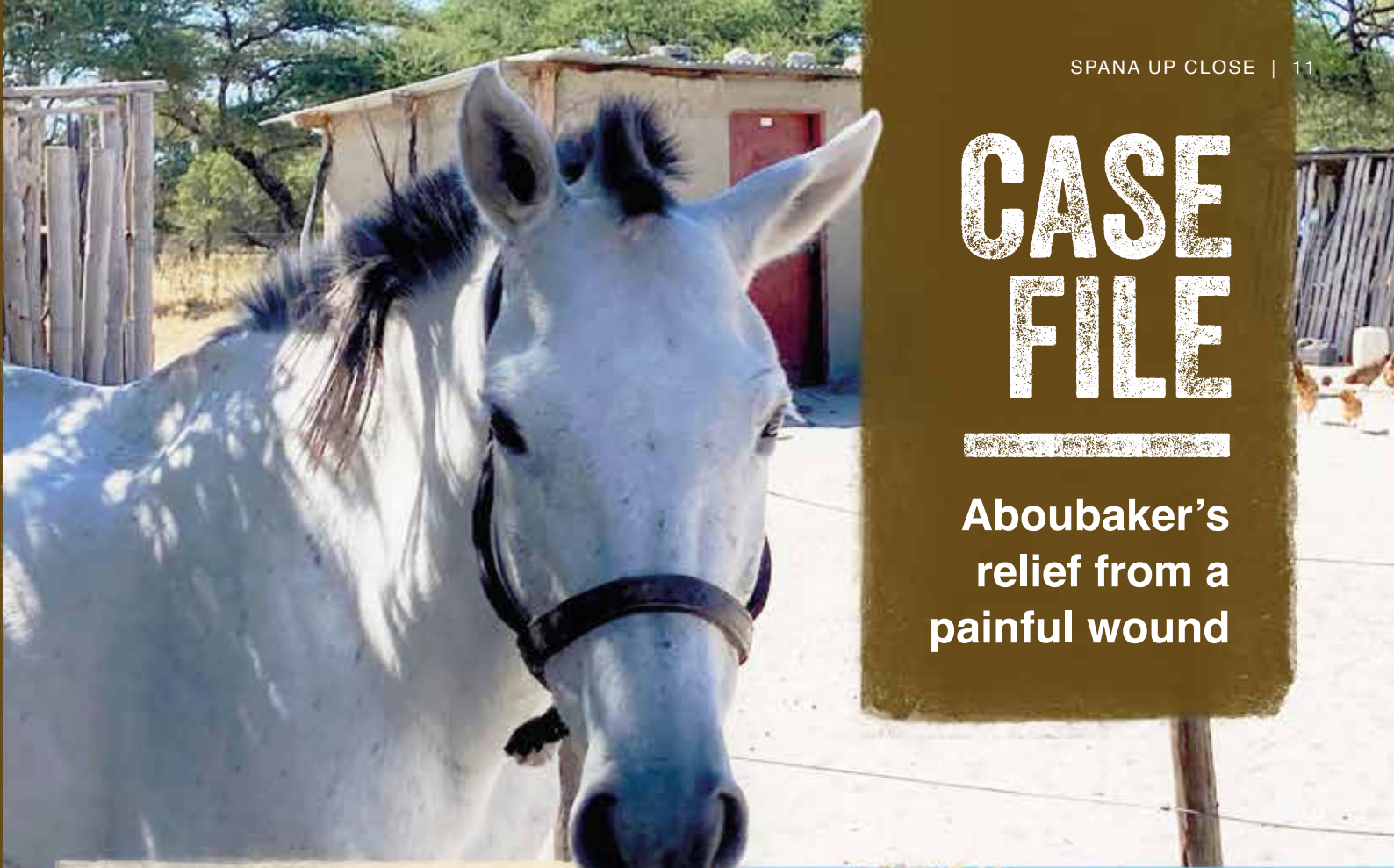
That it is so varied! There is never a typical day because it’s constantly changing depending on the phone calls and requests to help working animals we receive. You need to think on your feet! But when my day’s work is over, it is great to know that I have been able to make a difference to the lives of working animals.

**What would your message to SPANA supporters be?**

On behalf of the working animals and their owners in Botswana, and the SPANA Botswana team, thank you for your never-failing support over the years. Working animals are often overlooked, but for centuries people have depended on them for their survival. For the price of a coffee in Europe, you are helping to provide vital treatment to a working animal in need, and the families and communities who rely on them so much. **Thank you for your support.**

**CASE**  
**FILE**

**Aboubaker’s relief from a painful wound**



*‘This is the second time my horse has been injured while herding cows. The vets at SPANA are always there to help. Thank you, SPANA.’ Mr Bamotshabile*



**Aboubaker the horse works six hours a day to support his owner, Mr Bamotshabile – known locally as Mr Bam – in a remote, rural area of Botswana. Mr Bam has a small number of working animals who help him to earn a basic income, and Aboubaker’s daily work includes rounding up cattle and ensuring they do not stray too far, keeping them safe from danger.**

One day, Aboubaker was travelling through the bush when he suddenly pulled up in excruciating pain. Mr Bam was horrified to discover that a stick had appeared to have punctured Aboubaker’s abdomen, causing a large, painful wound. Extremely concerned, Mr Bam called SPANA vets, who immediately drove out in their mobile clinic to help Aboubaker.

The vets examined Aboubaker’s injury – a large, open wound on the lower left side of his abdomen. Fortunately, the stick had missed entering Aboubaker’s abdominal cavity itself, which could have been fatal. The vets carefully cleaned Aboubaker’s wound, applied ointment to encourage healing and then dressed it to prevent infection. They also administered pain relief so that Aboubaker would be more comfortable. They advised Mr Bam that Aboubaker’s wound would take at least six weeks to heal and would need to be cleaned daily to stop infection. Mr Bam was shown how to clean the wound and given all the supplies he needed to do this.

The vets returned to check up on Aboubaker the following week and were delighted with his progress and how well Mr Bam was looking after him.



# SPANNA AROUND THE WORLD

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

## MALI

**Bemba is one of the hundreds of donkeys who work on the rubbish dumps of Mali's capital city, Bamako. Six mornings a week, the five-year-old donkey pulls a cart laden with rubbish to enable his owner, Amadi, to earn a small income as a refuse collector.**

One morning, Bemba pulled up suddenly after walking knee-deep through rubbish. Worried that something was wrong, Amadi checked Bemba all over and found that he had cut his left front leg. The wound was open and bleeding and needed urgent attention, so Amadi rushed Bemba to SPANA's centre in Bamako.

At the centre, SPANA vets treated Bemba straight away. They disinfected his wound thoroughly, applied a soft dressing to keep it clean during the healing process, and administered anti-inflammatory medication to ease any discomfort. Crucially, Bemba was also given a vaccination to prevent tetanus – a bacterial infection that can enter the body through the smallest of wounds. Left untreated, tetanus can cause an agonising death, so it is vitally important that the donkeys who work on Bamako's rubbish dumps, and similar environments, are protected against this deadly infection.

The vets advised Amadi that Bemba would need at least two weeks of rest to allow his wound to heal and ensure Bemba made a full recovery.



### BEMBA THE DONKEY'S TETANUS PROTECTION

**Amadi said:** *'This is the first time that my donkey has been injured at the rubbish dump, and the first time that I have visited SPANA. Thank you, SPANA, for helping him so quickly.'*

## TUNISIA

**Issam was delighted when he brought Zaytun the donkey home to work on his small farm in rural Tunisia. Zaytun – which means 'olive' in Arabic – would be able to help Issam and his family with the olive harvest, transporting sacks of olives from the groves so the family could make a living.**

But Issam soon noticed that Zaytun was unwell. The seven-year-old donkey had developed a deep, dry cough and lost his appetite. His breathing had also become laboured. Seriously concerned, Issam took Zaytun along to SPANA's centre in Siliana for treatment. At the centre, SPANA vets examined Zaytun. As well as the symptoms Issam had identified, they also found he had conjunctivitis.

The vets diagnosed Zaytun as suffering from a viral respiratory infection that should improve in a few days with supportive treatment and rest. They administered anti-inflammatories to make him feel better and vitamins to boost his general health. The vets then advised Issam to rest Zaytun in a clean and well-ventilated shelter until he had recovered. Finally, they applied a topical eye ointment to treat Zaytun's eye.



### ZAYTUN THE DONKEY'S RESPIRATORY INFECTION

**Issam said:** *'I have not had Zaytun for long, so I was worried when he became ill. Thanks to the vets at SPANA, he should be better very soon.'*

## INDIA

**Kajala the horse supports his owner, Bilal, by transporting goods and participating in marriage and festival processions in Gujarpur, eastern India.**

One night, a serious fire broke out at Bilal's home. The flames spread quickly to neighbouring buildings, including Kajala's shelter. With little thought for his own safety, Bilal battled through the smoke to save his eight-year-old horse.

Thanks to Bilal's bravery, Kajala escaped with his life, but he was not totally unscathed. Kajala had two painful burns on the right side of his body. Bilal made an emergency call to SPANA vets, who raced to Gujarpur in the mobile clinic to give Kajala the urgent veterinary treatment he needed.

While the vets were on their way, the team advised Bilal to cool Kajala's burns with a gentle cold-water bath. As soon as they arrived, the vets gently cleaned each burn to ensure there was no dirt or debris, and applied a cooling water-based ointment and a light dressing to protect the burns and encourage healing. The team then administered anti-inflammatories and pain relief to make Kajala more comfortable. The vets returned several times over the next few weeks to continue treatment until Kajala's burns had healed.



### KAJALA THE HORSE'S EMERGENCY TREATMENT

**Bilal said:** *'I will be forever thankful to SPANA for helping my horse. I would not be able to support my family without him.'*





Linda Edwards, SPANA's Chief Executive, reflects on her initial months in the role and looks forward to exciting times ahead.

## FOCUSING ON A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR WORKING ANIMALS

**Time flies! In our last issue of SPANA News, I had been at the charity for just a few weeks. The months have simply raced by, and I've now been Chief Executive for more than eight months.**

I would like to thank you – our supporters – for all the kind welcome messages I have received since joining SPANA. Your dedication to helping working animals is truly heart-warming and not a day goes by when I do not reflect on how grateful we all are for your devoted support. It is only because of you that SPANA is able to provide free veterinary treatment to sick and injured working animals, to train the owners of working animals in humane care, and to teach children compassion and respect towards animals. Thank you.

In my last column, I promised to keep you up to date with our progress. I've been spending the last few months really getting to know SPANA, examining our projects across the world to build a real understanding of how we are helping working animals and their owners.

It is clear that we are making a huge difference to the lives of working animals. But, as we approach our centenary, we want to build on that work and go even further. SPANA has been successfully improving the welfare of working animals across the globe for almost 100 years. Our work has been a constant in a changing world, with the welfare of animals always at the forefront of everything we do. As we now come to the close of a century of work, and consider the future of our work, it is essential that we learn from everything we have achieved and do so well, and – perhaps even more importantly – look at how we are able to build on this to develop a more sustainable, lasting impact on the lives of even greater numbers of working animals across the world.

This fills me with such enthusiasm and positivity. It's an incredibly exciting time for SPANA, because we now have a historic opportunity to develop our work in ways that will help even more working animals in need.

And working animals are almost certain to need our continued support more than ever in the months and years ahead. The long-term effects of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the Cost of Living crisis will likely hit low-income countries hardest of all, and will continue to have a devastating impact on the lives of working animals and their owners. Sadly, in many areas where SPANA works,



working animals are also threatened by economic and political unrest. The growing impact of climate change will have further disastrous consequences for poor communities and the working animals that support them, as we've already seen recently in places like East Africa, where there is a deadly drought.

But despite these heartbreaking challenges, there are a wealth of opportunities – opportunities where our teams can use our almost 100 years of skills, expertise and frontline action to mitigate problems, change lives and improve the welfare of working animals in the world's poorest communities.

One immediate opportunity for us is our centenary. In 2023, we will celebrate 100 years since our founders Kate and Nina Hosali embarked on their life-changing journey to North Africa that led to the formation of

SPANNA. Our centenary is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reflect on our achievements, but more importantly, to step into a future where we build on everything we have achieved and draw closer towards the vision we all share – of a world where every working animal lives a life free from suffering and is treated with compassion.

The care and commitment of you – our dedicated supporters – is invaluable. That's why I will be reaching out to you for your help in shaping our work in the years to come. Now is the time to build on everything SPANA has achieved to become even better, so that working animals receive the recognition and respect they so rightly deserve.

**I am very excited about the enormous difference we can make for working animals, together. I hope you are, too. Thank you so much for your support.**



# SUPPORTING WORKING ANIMALS IN MAURITANIA FOR 20 YEARS



Bebeha Ahmed, SPANA's Mauritania Country Director, on the far-reaching impact SPANA's work has had in Mauritania.

**We've now been helping working animals in Mauritania for two decades. Bebeha Ahmed, SPANA Mauritania's Country Director, explains the far-reaching impact SPANA's work has had, thanks to your support.**

## Why is SPANA needed in Mauritania?

SPANA is needed here for many reasons. The majority of people depend on agriculture and livestock farming for their livelihood, and working animals play an essential role in agricultural activity. Animals are also used to transport goods and people

— particularly for delivering drinking water to poorer districts that are not connected to the water supply.

Despite Mauritania's dependency on working animals, we do not have a strong veterinary system and the few resources available focus on animals that produce milk and meat, rather than working animals. So, before SPANA, it was too expensive to care for working animals with illnesses and injuries, and their owners often had no other choice but to abandon them. At SPANA, we offer free veterinary treatment, so that every sick or injured working animal can be helped, without families having to worry about the cost. The intervention of SPANA is contributing greatly to animal welfare.



## What has been the biggest positive change for working animals over the past 20 years?

In the past, a large number of sick or malnourished working animals roamed the streets of our capital city, Nouakchott. Today, thanks in large part to SPANA's intervention and our work educating communities, the mistreatment of working animals has significantly decreased and their state of health has improved remarkably. Instances of owners abandoning their animals have become very rare. Owners are now more aware of the interdependent relationship they have with their animals and attach great importance to their health and wellbeing.

## What has been your favourite moment of the past 20 years?

I have had many unforgettable moments during my time with SPANA. That said, very recently, I was filled with pride and joy when the Ministry of National Education announced that they would pilot animal welfare education at a 'Green School' in each district of Mauritania in partnership with SPANA. This project reflects the massive efforts and progress SPANA has made over the past two decades to introduce animal welfare education into the school curriculum.

## Can you tell us about a specific instance where you or your team made a real difference for a working animal?

A few years ago, I was contacted late at night by someone reporting that a donkey had been hit by a vehicle. I immediately contacted Wane Baila, our



technician in charge of our SPANA centre in Nouakchott, who went out with the team in our mobile clinic to search for the donkey. They found him lying injured on the road leading to the port. Wane and his team provided first aid at the scene before taking the donkey back to our centre. The donkey was cared for at our stables for two weeks. During that time, we searched for, identified and contacted the owner. His donkey had wandered off while grazing and he had been searching for him ever since, so he was delighted and thankful to hear that his donkey was alive and recovering from his ordeal. It also gave us the opportunity to introduce the owner to SPANA and the help we offer working animals.

## How would you sum up the impact of SPANA's work in Mauritania?

Before SPANA, the welfare of animals was a very low priority in Mauritania and animal welfare education did not exist in local schools. Thanks to SPANA, more and more people are aware of the importance of working animals and their role in the fight against poverty. Fighting poverty through respect for the rights of working animals and their wellbeing is no longer a slogan in Mauritania, but an irrefutable reality.

**I would like to thank all SPANA supporters for making our work possible and I extend my gratitude for their unwavering support. They've changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of working animals and their owners over the past 20 years, and will continue to do so for many more years to come.**



# A FUTURE OF LOVE FOR WORKING ANIMALS



Michael in Tanzania with one of his beloved donkeys.

Educating children, and developing their empathy and understanding, is vital to a kinder future for working animals. After all, long-term improvements in animals' lives depend on the next generation of animal owners. So, we were delighted to hear heart-warming stories from our children's education projects around the world, and we wanted to share them with you to show the positive impact.

In Tanzania, Michael comes from a family with five working donkeys. After two years of attending SPANA's education programme at his school, he is now a Donkey Club Leader. Michael has shown a keen interest in ensuring the appropriate treatment and care of donkeys. He said: *'After completing the lessons, I feel differently than before. I now realise that animals need empathy, as they feel as we humans do.'*

Abel is a member of the SPANA animal welfare club at his school in Ethiopia. At the club, Abel learnt about the basic needs of animals, including shelter, which made him concerned for his family's horse. Abel spoke to his mother, and together they rearranged a small room in their house so their horse would have somewhere safe to sleep at night. Abel also gave his horse better food and fresh water and was pleased to see his horse was much healthier and happier.

It can be hard to realise just how much children in the poorest communities of the world can fear animals, or how they simply don't understand that animals have

feelings and the same basic needs as us. However, through our education programme and school clubs, we are replacing fear and unawareness with kindness and knowledge.

Teaching children to be kind to animals has always played a central role in SPANA's work. We would love to expand our education programme to reach even more children in the poorest parts of the world – where the need is greatest. One way to help make this happen is through leaving a gift to SPANA in your Will. Your gift could mean that more children learn to treat animals with kindness and empathy – a wonderful legacy.



If you are planning on writing or updating your Will any time soon, could you consider including a gift to SPANA? For more information, you can request our free legacies guide on the enclosed donation form or contact us by email on [giftsinwills@spana.org](mailto:giftsinwills@spana.org) or on 020 7831 3999. Whatever you decide to do, we'd be so grateful to hear of your intentions.

# SUPPORTER NEWS

GET INVOLVED, HAVE FUN AND HELP WORKING ANIMALS WORLDWIDE

## SPANA ROCKS!

We'd like to commend a wonderful group of nine-year-olds from the Harrodian School in Barnes, London, for raising over £115 by selling painted rocks at their school Christmas fair. It was the creative idea of Josephine (shown painting), whose trip to Morocco inspired her to fundraise for SPANA.



Thank you, Josephine and friends!



## FAMILY FUNDRAISING

Jean Smith, from Southampton, has been supporting SPANA since 1998. Last year, with the help of her daughter Karen and granddaughter Abbie, Jean raised an astonishing £3,451.63 through her stall sales in Winchester. Rain or shine, Jean and her family work hard to raise vital funds for working animals and we'd like to say a massive thank you from all of us at SPANA.



Thank you, Jean and family!

## ROYAL PARKS HALF MARATHON

Vita Tocilovska, a true animal lover and fundraiser for a variety of animal causes, donned this snazzy donkey suit at the Royal Parks Half Marathon last October, completing 13.1 miles in aid of SPANA.

*'It was an incredible experience,' Vita said. 'I made it in three hours, through different weather changes. At one point it felt like my knees were about to give up, but I gave it that very last push just before the finish line. It was so worth every minute of it!'*

The Royal Parks Half Marathon takes in the capital's world-famous landmarks in four of London's eight Royal Parks – Hyde Park, Green Park, St James's Park and Kensington Gardens. This year's event takes place on Sunday 9 October. If you would like to join the SPANA team, get in touch by emailing [events@spana.org](mailto:events@spana.org) or calling 020 7831 3999.



Thank you, Vita!

## RECYCLING FOR GOOD

Please find enclosed your special envelope for our annual recycling appeal. Pop in any old or unwanted jewellery, plus UK and foreign banknotes (even ones that are out of circulation, but no coins please), and the funds raised will make a big difference to working animals. Did you know you can also recycle your old stamps, postcards, collectibles and gadgets for SPANA? Go to [spana.org/recycle](http://spana.org/recycle) for full details or call 020 7831 3999.



# Making a lasting difference

Thanks to you, SPANA can be there for working animals when they need us most. Whether they are in desperate need of food, a lifesaving operation, or vaccination against deadly disease, your ongoing support makes everything we do possible.

As we approach our centenary and look ahead to the future, we are as committed as ever to building a brighter future for animals working in the harshest of conditions, in some of the world's poorest communities.

**The challenges that lie ahead for working animals are only growing. At this crucial time, we are incredibly grateful for your continued dedication towards easing their suffering.**

Setting up a regular gift today is one way that you can make sustainable improvements to their health and happiness in the long term. A regular donation can help us to reach more animals, and fulfil the constant need for essential feed and vital medical supplies.



With a regular gift to SPANA, you can make a lasting difference to the lives of many more working animals across the world.

However you choose to support our work, we would like to say a huge thank you for continuing to stand by working animals when they need us most.

## Find out more

Whether you sign up as a Stable Sponsor, donate £3 a month by text, or set up a Direct Debit, regular gifts are an important means of ensuring we can help more working animals, long into the future.

To find out more, please visit:

**[spana.org/regular-giving](http://spana.org/regular-giving) or call 0300 033 4999.**

