

Be appropriate and relevant

Donkeys are the same all over the world – or are they? Compare the living conditions of a retired donkey at a British sanctuary, one working at a brick kiln in Egypt, a pet donkey in Switzerland or a donkey awaiting its turn at an illegal slaughter-site somewhere in Africa.

Donkey welfare should meet universal standards.

How practical is this? Access to veterinary care, good diet, kind handling, proper equipment and the Five Freedoms are all aspirational. Often we have to 'make do' and take local conditions into account if there is to be any practical or lasting improvement. Even within a country different realities prevail. Rural and urban areas present different demands and problems as well as different solutions. For example: all working donkeys benefit from correct equipment but it is pointless to prescribe fine rolled leather if the only available option is sisal.

Donkeys for Africa improves donkey welfare by promoting communication so that appropriate and successful (or unsuccessful) undertakings can be shared, adapted and carried into other situations to the benefit of donkeys and their owners.

Engagement with and empowerment of local communities is crucial to avoid the repetitive situation of "Visit, deworm, treat wounds, depart. Visit, deworm, treat wounds, depart. Visit . . ." Fortunately this is increasingly recognised. Organisations such as WTG, Vets United, Animal Aid Abroad, SPANA, WHW, The Brooke and The Donkey Sanctuary, to name but a few, all include education and training in their programmes.

Dependency on an outside organisation is discouraged. Respect for local customs will get you far and slowly lead to a trust relationship which may even result in changed beliefs and attitudes.

Heather Armstrong, Director of The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust reports: "When we first started our work euthanasia was a very big issue. Many people cannot accept it on religious and cultural grounds and we have always been very respectful of their beliefs. There have been two consequences of this: one is that, much to our surprise, some animals that we were sure could not recover, actually did and with time and pain relief they made a full recovery and returned to work (fractures, tendon injuries, wounds and burns came into this category). The other consequence is that over the years we have noticed the attitude to euthanasia has changed and many people are far more accepting of it now. We have even had requests for it to relieve suffering. . . people trust us to do our best for their animals so they now accept that when we suggest euthanasia it is because we have tried everything and that death is inevitable."

Animal welfare organisations should aim to put themselves out of business as their interventions become unnecessary as a result of lasting positive change.

Donkeys generally lead a hard life.

Educating owners is the most sustainable way to improve donkey welfare around Africa – and our planet



Image: The Guardian



Botswana skins trade conference

– Gaborone, July 2019

IMPACT OF DONKEY SLAUGHTER

The conference was prompted by incidents at donkey abattoirs and the potential opening of new abattoirs, the recorded decrease in the numbers of donkeys in Botswana and the failure to honour the ban on the skins trade in that country.

With the current and projected slaughter rate it is anticipated that the donkey population within Botswana will become unsustainable, if not extinct, within three to four years.

The conference was organised by SPANA. Proceedings were attended by village chiefs, government officials, the media, legal personnel, industry leaders, research institutes and national and international welfare organisations.

Local realities

Donkeys serve their owners and communities in many different roles, including providing transport, draught power and business opportunities such as cart and taxi hire.

Speakers pointed out the impact of the skins trade on livelihoods and survival of donkey owners in the harsh environment. Dr J.C. Moreki, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food Health and Security, highlighted the plight with the call for action “I can assure you we will starve to death. Without donkeys Africa’s very food production is threatened”.

Mr Kenneth Ditshweu of Botswana SPCA emphasised the huge social, economic, cultural and even mental health impacts

that people face when losing such a vital aspect of their lives. He mentioned many, often unconsidered, long term consequences including an escalation of crime, animal abuse, gender abuse, female inequality, and childhood poverty. “It is a cycle that is difficult to break. What we do affects us at the end”.

Legislation shortcomings

Although legislation exists in the Livestock and Meat Industries Act 2007, it does not cover horses, donkeys and mules. Vital human health aspects such as meat biosecurity, zoonotic and animal disease spread, residue testing, meat or product security, transport of goods, and environmental impact are not addressed.

Outcomes

During discussion it was agreed that a review and update of current legislation was needed to address both animal welfare and human health, that update of the regulations should ensure inclusion of donkeys and that the Act should be relevant and policed with increased powers to penalise transgressors.

If no progress through regulation can be made by December 2019, a complete and total ban should be implemented immediately.

“I can assure you we will starve to death. Without donkeys Africa’s very food production is threatened”.

Dr J.C. Moreki, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food Health and Security

“Donkeys play a vital role in providing livelihoods for rural communities. This conference raised awareness about the incredibly harmful long term impact the skin trade is having.

‘There must be legislation put in place for the welfare of donkeys and equids, in line with that set out in the World Organisation for Animal Health’s legislation on this.

‘If the government and involved stakeholders want this trade to continue as a viable business, the issue must be fully assessed and analysed, and they must ensure that donkey owners are included and considered within the process.”

Pippa Young, SPANA Botswana Country Director.

Contact pippa@spana.org.bw for more information.

● In 2017, Botswana lifted a nationwide moratorium on donkey abattoirs allowing for slaughter and the export of donkey products. With the expected and current slaughter rate it is anticipated that the donkey population in Botswana will become unsustainable.

● Local police, residents and international experts (including TDS) attended the conference and explained the threat to the country’s donkeys and the implications of such trade.

● The conference raised awareness of the impact of the trade, including the inhumane conditions faced by donkeys in Botswana’s abattoirs. SPANA is calling for a sustainable approach to the trade in donkey skins while its potential and likely impact on human and animal populations is assessed.

● The conference highlighted the importance of working donkeys in Botswana, the inadequacies of current legislation, surveillance and recording in donkey abattoirs.



Click, or copy paste the link to view a report about this as produced by the SABC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bW1GeIVHng&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3Jot-IAKp5zmC1neHNXue1VoShLkfUkgJe6QbvLVVykU59HdqMqMEPnRw>



Animal-Kind International – here for African donkeys


www.animal-kind.org

[animalkindint](https://www.facebook.com/animalkindint)

Animal-Kind International is a non-profit organisation registered in the state of New Mexico in North America. They believe that strengthening existing local animal rescue and protection organizations is the key to improving the world for animals.

To help achieve this they raise funds for their partner organisations in resource-poor countries. Furthermore grants are allocated to specific projects, separately from those of their partners. Animal-Kind International has provided grants this year to approved projects, including one focussed particularly on donkeys.

Grant in Somaliland

One such project that received a grant from Animal-Kind International is the Social & Animal Welfare Service in Somaliland (SAWS).

Although SAWS is supported by both The Donkey Sanctuary and Brooke, Animal-Kind International provided additional funding. Mobile clinics visited remote villages to attend to donkeys and provide their owners with information and remedial action.

Common problems that were identified included the lack of knowledge about diseases and treatments, and the lack of veterinary support. There is also no knowledge of appropriate design of carts.

Donkeys lacked shelter against extreme weather conditions. Severe droughts are persistent in Somaliland and result in shortages of water and fodder, and ultimately in death of donkeys and other livestock. In the deep rural areas vampire bats and tick birds pick ticks off the donkeys' backs, shoulders and necks, drink their blood and cause infections. Furthermore ticks, mosquitoes and many other biting insects are common and can cause diseases.

Animal-Kind International is active in the following African countries:

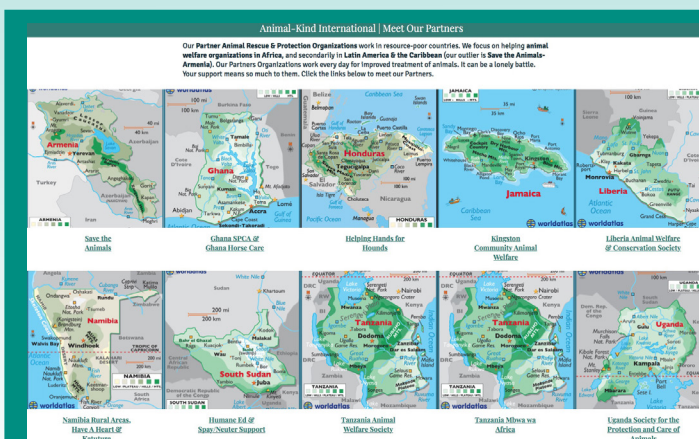
Cameroon, DRC, Egypt, Ghana, Liberia, Namibia, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Somaliland, Tanzania and Uganda.

Partner organisation in Ghana

A partner organization of Animal-Kind International is the Ghana SPCA. GSPCA's main focus is Humane Education (HE) and Animal-Kind International provides classroom material and technical support. GSPCA volunteers obtain permission to hold the programme at schools. They identify a few teacher

leaders and mentor them over the eight-week programme to ensure they are comfortable giving HE instruction. HE classes form Kindness Clubs and through the clubs, the HE programme continues even after the formal classroom programme is over. The Kindness Clubs implement animal welfare projects and the GSPCA continues to work with them.

**Kindness to
animals
has no
boundaries**





Donkey power gaining recognition

A company operating in Ethiopia, producing fruit for pulp for export, approached Donkeys for Africa for guidance. Due to the high costs of spare parts and maintenance for tractors they want to use donkey traction to transport the fruit from harvesting to collection points. They enquired about donkey care, correct equipment and working practices. We are delighted to assist with such enquiries, and to see the value of donkey power being recognised.



The SDG brochure has been updated and is available in our library. The brochure is jointly produced by the members of the International Coalition for the Welfare of Equines: TDS, SPANA, Brooke & WHW.



Lilongwe SPCA in Malawi has produced its latest annual review which contains interesting animal welfare information. To get a copy email communications@lilongwespcpa.org or visit their website at <https://www.lilongwespcpa.org>



Read the latest **Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust** newsletter, filled with remarkable achievements, at <http://www.gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk/summer2019.pdf>



Research and advocacy papers

In July Donkeys for Africa published a special edition newsletter devoted to a research project conducted in parts of South Africa. The research question was: *"Are donkeys in South Africa more valuable as domestic labourers or as export products for China's ejiao market?"*

This thesis examined the hard economic facts and figures around donkey ownership. Socio-economic value of donkeys was investigated, with Cost Benefit Analyses used to answer the research question. The conclusion was that donkeys have the greatest value as domestic labourers for South African donkey owners and communities. Keeping donkeys for the production of hides for export results in a financial loss for South African donkey owners and communities.

The findings and conclusions can be applied in other countries too. The full thesis, a pictorial summary and an important policy paper are all available in our library. We encourage you to study the policy paper for information on advocacy measures.

A Donkey's Worth in South Africa: Domestic Labourer or Export Product; Socioeconomic Impacts of China's skin trade on South African donkey owners. By Kristen Binda



humane education
coalition

Donkeys for Africa is honoured to be accepted as a Partner in the Humane Education Coalition. This partnership provides us access to a global network of educational material and connections in human rights, environmental ethics and animal protection. Visit www.hecoalition.org and sign up for their e-newsletter at info@hecoalition.org



Donkeys are worked hard in Nigeria.

IMAGINE A WORLD

WHERE ALL
ANIMALS ARE FREE
FROM ABUSE AND
EXPLOITATION.

From the editor

We need to always remember that we are working with people, not just donkeys. A quote from an animal welfare worker at a recent workshop on donkey welfare: "I have once again realised the importance of the poor societies' socioeconomic needs, how it affects these communities and the effect it has on their animals. We are always very quick to stomp our feet and shout at people for the

thing they do wrong in our eyes, but lack to see and understand the bigger picture. Working for an animal welfare organisation sometimes makes you lose your compassion towards humans and this is where we make our biggest mistake."

The first multi-racial school in South Africa, Uthongathi, had only one school rule, consisting of one word:

respect. This covers all situations. Let us keep that as our constant guideline.



editor@donkeysforafrica.org



www.donkeysforafrica.org



Donkeys-for-Africa



Supported by
**THE DONKEY
SANCTUARY**
www.thedonkeysanctuary.org