

Donkey Clinics Progress Report

March 2009



Introduction

March 2009 saw the official launch of the Donkey Clinics in ten brick kilns in Lalitpur District. Animal Nepal has been conducting donkey clinics with the help of volunteer vets and local donations since December 2008. On March 2 the first official clinic was conducted by Dr Sudip Koirala, Dr Surendra Basjal and programme manager Krishna Singh.

At present our mobile clinics are conducted in 10 brick kilns with a total of 450 donkeys and around 50 donkey owners. In Bungamati Village Committee there are three bricks kilns and more than 155 donkeys; in Harsiddhi, Godawari, Santeshwari and Badikhel Village Development Committee as there are seven bricks kilns with over 350 donkeys.

The programme started with survey of the population and conditions of working children and donkeys. We focused on developing good relations with kiln owners as well as donkey owners. After the interaction with kiln owners and donkey owners they understand that if the donkeys are healthy they can work more efficiently. The owners of kiln were informed about the donkey's problems and possible negative implications from media exposure or government intervention. Luckily all of them provided us authority for mobile treatment. The first donkey mobile camp started from Bungamati Brick Kiln (appointed as Model brick kiln due to high number of donkeys and relatively better conditions) where on March 2 we treated 90 donkeys.

By now all 450 donkeys have received treatment. Kiln visits are reported in a status report which enables us to monitor (lack of) progress in each brick kiln. Follow up visits are conducted to treat sick and injured donkeys. The donkey owners are happy with the results. They claim that after deworming countless worms died and the health of the donkeys improved significantly.¹ They also provide more rest to weak donkeys and claim to put smaller loads on the donkeys (this has not yet been confirmed). Since the donkey owners depend on us for providing health certificates when returning home after the brick season ends they are cooperative to a large extent.

Problems faced

Logistics - Logistically the project is a difficult one as the kilns are hard to reach. Especially when donkeys are very sick the vet finds it hard to decide what donkeys should get priority and how much time to spend on individual cases when his visiting schedule must also be maintained. This problem will be solved to some extent when the Donkey Sanctuary has been established, and sick and injured donkeys can be kept in one place.

Working conditions - The working conditions are difficult as the kilns are hot, dusty and dirty and there is no drinking water available. Often there are no toilets either.

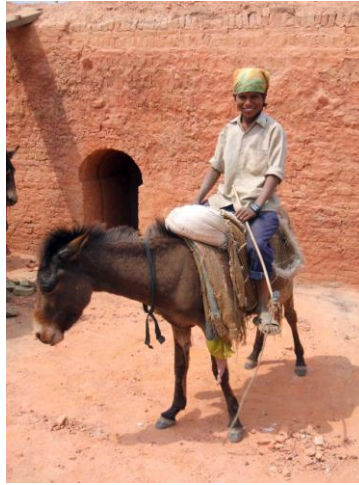
Death - After we started treatment seven donkeys died at two different kilns. In these brick kiln conditions are specially bad as the owners are careless. After investigation we found that the donkeys had been treated by our vet who recommended rest. The donkeys were forced to work anyway and died from malnourishment and overwork. We felt extremely upset when we found this out, which is why the first education session has been conducted among the donkey owners of these brick kilns.

Lack of adoptive homes - We have introduced Adopt a Donkey programme for donkeys that are blind or lame. Until now 4 donkeys have been adopted by Happy Children Foundation (a children's home close to Manakamana brick kiln). An American family has offered to take in a partly blind donkey from RM brick kiln.

Conclusions

450 donkeys and 50 donkey owner benefit from our treatment. Education is the key to improving the conditions in a sustainable manner. Also technical improvements such as providing hoof picks and improved harnesses. Water purification will be introduced in April. Establishment of a donkey sanctuary is crucial as we are unable to observe sick donkeys around the clock. It is paramount that sick donkeys are provided with total rest, nutritious food and supplements, and loving care. Another crucial intervention is education and monitoring while the donkeys are back home in Banke District. For this we hope to work with Saathi Nepal, Nepalgunj, and Animal Health Training and Consultancy (AHTCS).

¹ *Animal Nepal together with Dr Ram Sapkota of Himalayan College of Agricultural Science will conduct a research into worm infestation in working donkeys in Lalitpur District from April onwards.*



- Dr Sudip explains, A handler with his donkey, Krishna gives advice

Objectives of Mobile Clinics

- Provide preventive health care and first aid treatment
- Regular follow up visits to treat injured and sick donkeys
- Education of donkey owners, contractors and handlers on donkey welfare

Methodology

Bungmati Village Development Committee

Here there are three brick kilns with 155 donkeys. After interaction with owners, we started our mobile camps for donkey treatment and we visited or treated 5 times in the same location.

The main treatment provided:

- Deworming and anti-tetanus vaccines for all donkey
- Wound dressing and eczylmea for 2/3 donkeys (appr. 26 donkey)
- Mineral mixture/Vitamin for all donkeys (against weakness and anorexia)
- Abcess treatment to 10 to 15 donkeys
- Lameness treatment 5 to 10 donkeys
- Eye Infections treated

Common Disease:

- Respiratory diseases
- diarrhea
- Colic and eye infections
- Wounds (some of the them critical) and lameness

Main problem on works:

- lack of co-operate or donkeys owners did not follow or feeds medicine or they worked out injured donkey
- Overloading or imbalanced
- Lack of treatment tools or material (surgery tools, bags)

- Single manpower and problem on follow up because of two different site
- One donkey died because of nutrients deficiency, overloading or working

Improvements on Donkeys:

- Simple wounds heal fast
- The colic problem is noticed decreased (abdomen problem)
- Treatment by owner improved

Lesson Learned:

- Regular follow up the treated donkey and follow up donkey rest
- Orientation on donkey management for donkey Owners for feeding, watering, sanitation (shelter) health mgmt. and loading and transportation is needed
- Orientation on loading and handling for handlers is needed
- Orientations on transmittable diseases to workers is needed

Educational Program: To be implemented from April 10.

Harness Improvement: Starts on April 10 with testing of two sample harnesses at Bungamati

Godhavari, Harishidhi, Santeshwar and Badikhel Village Development Committee

There are seven brick kilns with 350 donkeys. After interaction with owners, we started our mobile camps for donkey treatment and we visited or treated many times in the same location.

The main treatments are (from Jan to March)

- De worming and anti-tetanus vaccines for all donkey
- wounds dressing and eczylmea for 1 in 4 donkeys (appr. 88 donkey)
- Mineral mixture/Vitamins for all donkeys (weakness and anorexia)
- Abcess treatment 30 donkeys
- lameness treatment 6 to 11 donkeys

Rest of the information is same as under Bungamati Village Development Committee area.

Educational Program: -

Planning for site orientation training on 10 April in one site or 5 to 10 donkey owners.

Other Activities

Educational Flexes production:

The flexes will be produced from a brochure published by the Egypt Animal Welfare Federation. The translation of Nepali text is almost completed. The flexes will be produced on April 15 and put up at the shelters of donkeys in 10 brick kilns.

Harness and Hoof Cleaner:

Hoof cleaners have been produced at a very affordable rate at the Windhorse Stables. The cleaners are provided for free to donkey owners who attend education classes. Two sample harnesses have been produced which will be tested on the site at Bungamati brick kiln from April 12 onwards.

Prepared by
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Annex 1: Dr. Sudeep Koirala Movement charts

S.N.	Name of Kiln	Times of Visit	Date/Remarks
1.	Bugnmati Brick Kiln at Bungmati	5 times	85 donkeys
2.	Shree AB Brick kiln at Bugmanti	5 times	24-25 donkeys
3.	Shree No.1 Brick kiln at Bungmati	4 times	50 donkeys
4.	Trishakti Brick kiln at Harisiddhi	6 times	10 donkeys
5.	Manakamana Brick kiln	6 times	60 donkeys
6.	Kantipur Brick kiln at Badikhel	6 times	24 donkeys
7.	RM Brick kiln	5 times	80 donkeys
8.	Bajrabarahi Brick kiln	2 times	50 donkeys
9	Bolbam Brick kiln	3 times	70-80 donkeys
10	Santeswar Brick kiln	2 times	70-80 donkeys

Annex 2: Map of Lalitpur brick kilns (see separate attachment)

Annex 3: Sample Brick Kiln Status Report

Date:

Name Brick Kiln:

No of treated donkeys	
Kind of treatment offered	
Special health conditions	
Kind of education	

provided				
Needed follow up				
No of donkeys that need rest + owner name				
No of donkeys that are pregnant + owner name				
STATUS	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Bad</td> <td>Moderate</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> </table>	Bad	Moderate	Good
Bad	Moderate	Good		
Status of health care				
Status of watering				
Status of feeding				
Status of loading				
Status of beating				
Status of rest provided				

Remarks: