

DONKEYS for AFRICA

Promoting communication about donkey welfare

www.donkeysforafrica.org

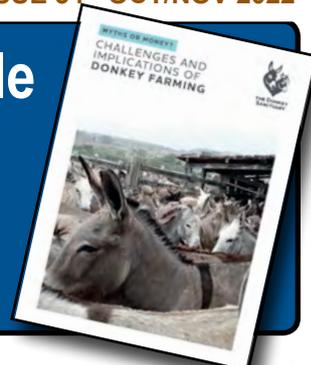
ISSUE 34 - OCT/NOV 2022

Report on Donkey Farming now available

The Donkey Sanctuary has published its latest findings in the strategy against the donkey skin trade. Obtain the report by going to:

www.donkeysforafrica.org/donkeyfarming.pdf

SEE PAGE 2



Be a positive energy for animal welfare

Even if you cannot keep animals yourself, you can be a positive force and act to ensure better lives for all animals around you.

Terms commonly used in our industry include care, welfare, outreach and advocacy.

Care means hands-on interventions. So for donkeys this can be: hoof and dental care, their diet, wound care, grooming, harnessing and so on.

Welfare is defined by the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE) as: "How an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives". From The Brooke: "Animal welfare refers to the physical and emotional state of an animal. It is affected by the environment in which it lives and works. Additionally by human attitudes and practices, as well as available resources."

There are many welfare assessments, developed for particular conditions. The internationally accepted 'Five Freedoms' provide a focal point. Freedom from hunger and thirst; Freedom from discomfort; Freedom from pain, injury or disease; Freedom to express normal behaviour and Freedom from fear and distress.

An animal is in a good state of welfare if it is healthy, comfortable, well-nourished, can express innate behaviour, and is not suffering from pain, fear, or distress. Further factors include the whole life of the animal as a sentient being and the socio-economic factors

affecting it, such as community attitudes and beliefs.

An example is: battery hens may receive good care (food, water, shelter from the elements, freedom from disease) but their welfare is poor (no chance to exhibit natural behaviour, no freedom from discomfort and distress).

Outreach means providing professional services to a group of people or animals who may not have access to such services. Examples are field trips, community workshops and the development of communication material. It also involves partnering with others, and service on an NGO Board or committee.

Advocacy is the promotion of the interests or cause of someone or a group. Speaking in favour of, recommending, arguing or pleading on behalf of others. It also involves building good relationships with people who are in the position to make decisions or to offer help.

Communication lies at the heart of outreach and advocacy.

Impact assessment of all the above is crucial, as is sustainability. Make sure that your actions deliver effective and long-lasting results - and that the right people get to know what you are doing.



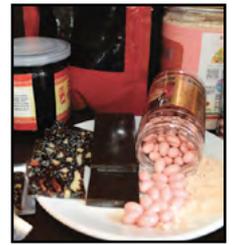
The *Town Musicians of Bremen* is a fairy tale telling the story of four ageing domestic animals, who after a lifetime of hard work are neglected and mistreated by their former masters. They decide to run away to become town musicians in the city of Bremen. The four never arrive in Bremen as they succeed in scaring off a band of robbers, capturing their spoils, and moving into their own house.

The animals in this story are old and weak, and alone none of them would be able to achieve much. Yet, by working together they are able to achieve something that none of them would be able to achieve alone.

REPORT ON DONKEY FARMING

The latest report from The Donkey Sanctuary is now available

The donkey has been part of our communities for centuries, most commonly as a working animal with little monetary value. This has changed with the rise in popularity of ejiao, a gelatin obtained from donkey skins. Ejiao is considered one of the most valuable products within Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and is a commonly used health tonic medicine in China and other countries.



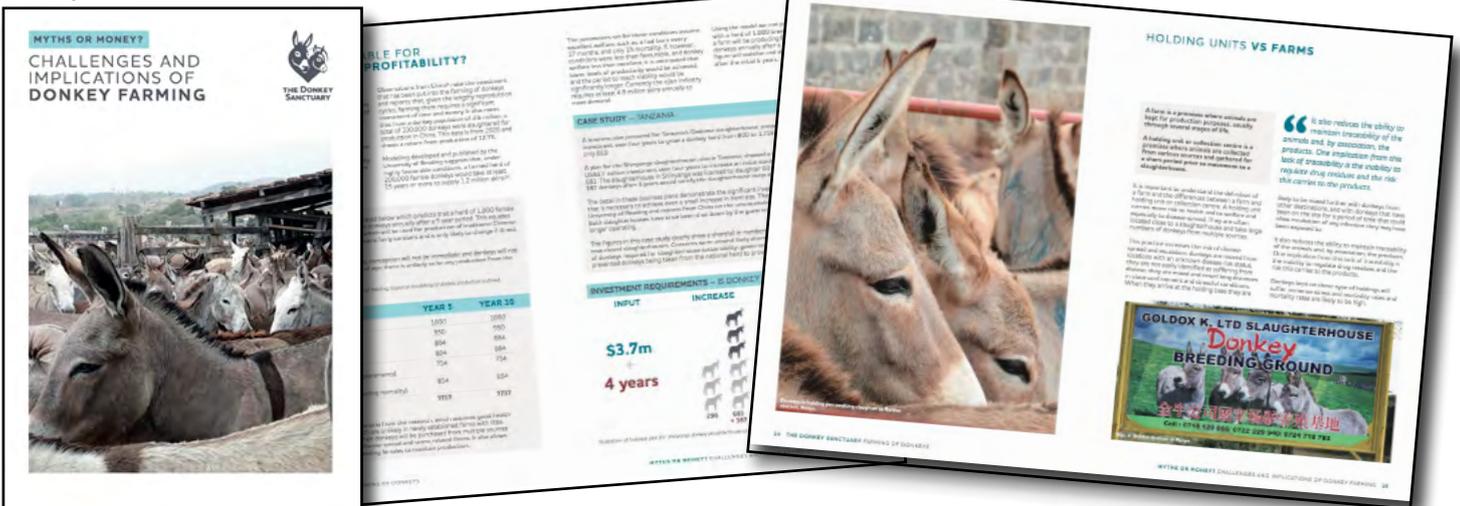
The ejiao industry is facing a crisis of supply. While large farms exist within China with the specific purpose to supply the industry with donkey skins, they are unable to meet the demand needed and the industry has turned to sourcing donkeys from across the globe to make up for the shortage.

With a growing number of countries closing supply routes due to concerns about the dwindling national donkey populations, including Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, there are simply not enough donkeys to sustain demand. As a result, more countries are considering the viability of farming donkeys.

As these countries consider farming as a source of donkeys in order to supply the skin trade, we need to consider the implications, especially with regard to risks for disease spread and lack of traceability. This is particularly important where these premises are in reality a centre for collection and holding of donkeys awaiting slaughter. Another significant consideration is whether or not the farming of donkeys is a sustainable solution to meet the demand of the ejiao industry.

“Due to the complexities of the species, the farming of donkeys cannot provide a quick turn around on investment, nor can it be relied upon to provide the annual demand for donkey skins for the ejiao industry.”

Please read this report and share it widely. It is available in the DfA website library and via the links below.



This report examines the aspects of Donkey Farming, including the biohazard, the inhumane transport and butchering conditions and the long-term viability of such operations. The extensive document contains country case studies and is a vital communication for animal welfare practitioners.

Download it at: www.donkeysforafrica.org/donkeyfarming.pdf

FEEDBACK FROM WHW
Penny Ward, World Horse Welfare Regional coordinator for South Africa, Zimbabwe and Lesotho, responded to DfA about the Donkey Skins Trade Report: “There have been many anecdotal reports from government officials, local farmers and staff from partner organisations that World Horse Welfare works with, regarding the link between wildlife trafficking and the donkey skin trade.



www.donkeysforafrica.org/library.html
www.thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk/end-the-donkey-skin-trade

Not only is the trade a clear threat to the donkey population in Africa, but it is causing a terrible welfare problem, with serious negative implications for the livelihoods of donkey-dependent households. This is of particular concern to poor female-headed households, who make up a large proportion of the communities we work with. While some countries have banned the trade, donkey trafficking

and slaughter remain rife, especially when regulations in one country differ from a neighbouring one. For example, in Zimbabwe, the trade is banned, but in neighbouring countries, it is permitted resulting in donkeys increasingly being stolen and trafficked across the border.”



Essential donkey ownership support

 One of Animal Aid Abroad's partnerships is with the Tanzania Humane Charity, (TAHUCHA) who have been working with communities in North-West Tanzania to improve the lives, welfare and treatment of working animals.

TAHUCHA is a registered welfare organization and works mainly with communities in North-West Tanzania, under the leadership of Richard Itaba.

Their aim is to improve the welfare of working equines and so strengthen the livelihoods of their owners, through veterinary care and training, particularly focusing on improving communication between people and their donkeys, and improving cart and harness design.

A further essential role lies in challenging the trade in donkey skins, including the ongoing campaign to keep the donkey slaughterhouse in Shinyanga closed.

Donkeys are the priority species for attention from TAHUCHA as they are kept for work and are income generators. Donkeys work in a wide range of environments from domestic to agriculture, in kilns, markets, forests and mines. Common welfare problems are overloading, the use of heavy yokes, exhaustion, lameness, wounds, trypanosomiasis, colic, rabies, and internal and external parasites.

Richard pays tribute to their generous donor Animal Aid Abroad, and veterinary training colleges and research institutes in Tanzania. He says that "Over six years as a community-based organisation, we have been working in partnership and built trust with local communities and regional authorities. Without this trust, meaningful progress is impossible. In addition, we have developed infrastructure to support our practical training, development and research work."

The organisation has an essential role in addressing the donkey skin trade, such as through their campaign to keep the donkey slaughterhouse in Shinyanga closed.

Since 2018 TAHUCHA has operated a sanctuary as a medical facility and referral station for rehabilitation of badly injured donkeys. Once the donkeys have recovered and the owners have been educated about correct care, the donkeys are returned to their owners. Further educational services are provided to groups of intern vets and also to young learners and donkey owners. The sanctuary also houses 128 permanent residents, including mothers and foals who were rescued from the Shinyanga donkey slaughterhouse.

Looking to the future, Richard mentions the following ideals:

- To improve the service based infrastructure, add more medical equipment and supplies, more motorbikes and bikes, obtaining uniforms and adding more working safety equipment;
- Fencing the sanctuary with electric fencing;
- Promoting sampling and monitoring of infectious diseases for the domestic species in Tanzania, guided by evidence-based research and stakeholder collaboration. This would include a wide range of species such as free-roaming and companion animals (dogs, cats), working animals (donkeys) and livestock, focusing on diseases affecting productivity, such as haemoparasites, as well as those with a serious One Health implication, including rabies.

www.facebook.com/tahucha/

www.animalaidabroad.org/news/helpingvulnerabledonkeysintanzania

TAHUCHA is improving the lives of working donkeys through veterinary care and training, educating owners and children on animal welfare, as well as enhancing cart and harness design. Each week, the TAHUCHA team undertake four-to-six mobile veterinary clinics and rescue around ten-to-twenty donkeys in need.



Donkey Welfare Conferences

Diarise the forthcoming conferences that are important for the welfare of donkeys. We aim to provide you with a synopsis in the next issue.

The 6th Africa Animal Welfare

Conference has the theme “Animals, People and the Environment in a rapidly changing 21st Century”. A sub-theme is “Welfare of Farm and Working Animals”.

31st October – 2nd November, 2022.

You can attend at the TraveLodge Hotel, Gaborone, Botswana, or virtually through Zoom. Visit www.aawconference.org

World Horse Welfare

hosts their annual conference in London on Thursday 10th November from 9:45 - 15:00 GMT, with the theme: “When does use become abuse?” A presentation by Tamara Tadich, Associate Professor, Universidad Austral de Chile, is titled “Getting the balance right for working equids”. Details are at <https://int.worldhorsewelfare.org/about-us/our-organisation/our-conference>

The 10th Donkey Welfare Symposium

organised by the University of California Davis takes place on 12th and 13th November. Register at <https://ces-apps.ucdavis.edu/confreg/?confid=1216> The Program is at www.facebook.com/DonkeyWelfareSymposium/

The Pan African Donkey Welfare

Conference, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 1st – 2nd December 2022. The theme is “Donkeys in Africa: now and in the future.” Convened by AU-IBAR, in partnership with Brooke East Africa and other relevant stakeholders, this conference will bring the whole of Africa together in one voice with a consolidated position on the donkey skin trade. www.panafricandonkeyconference.org for more information and to register to attend, either physically or virtually.

Closure of donkey slaughterhouses in Northern Tanzania

A ten-year ban on the operation of these facilities was achieved after a campaign under the guidance of Network for Animals.

The presentation to this government was created by Jonno Sherwin from the Karoo Donkey Sanctuary and is available in the DfA library at www.donkeysforafrica.org/library.html

It can serve as a guideline or inspiration for advocacy about the skins trade in other countries.



The Cart Horse Protection Association

in South Africa has launched an online training course ‘Working in Equine Welfare’ developed with World Horse Welfare (UK). Details of the course can be found at www.carthorse.org.za

We suggest finding a sponsor to cover the enrolment costs if you have limited resources.



Effective outreach collaboration

We all know of the wounds inflicted by stallions during mating times. Gelding is an effective intervention to address this, also resulting in more relaxed and more effective working donkeys and horses.

Veterinary costs and accessibility can be inhibiting factors.

A campaign by three organisations in the impoverished rural Nieu Bethesda area of South Africa resulted in many happier dogs, cats, equines - and owners.

The Nico Benadé Veterinary Fund of Eseltjiesrus Donkey Sanctuary, together with **EARS Donkey Sanctuary** funded equine geldings while **EberVet Community Veterinary Care** provided funds and their professional expertise for equines and small animals for this project. A short brochure about this outreach is available in the DfA library.



Brooke's Happy Horses Holiday Code

The Brooke has produced a 10 point infographic on aspects to consider when using a working animal while on holiday. This guide is also useful for animal welfare practitioners and donkey owners. Available in the DfA Library at www.donkeysforafrica.org/library.html



From the Editor

We are often so focused on what we still have to do that we forget to acknowledge what we have already done.

Stress builds up when we are faced with a ‘to do’ list that never gets shorter, with more items being added even as we cross off those completed. Take time to pause and reflect on achievements: your own and your colleagues’. Set some time aside to share successes. Animal welfare work is never completed and we often set our standards higher and higher. This can be good, but not at the cost of our mental and emotional well-being. No living creatures, ourselves included, can function on ‘empty’. Top up your reserves with some self-acknowledgement! We endeavour to do this through our DfA newsletters also, by acknowledging the achievements of our fellow workers throughout the continent. Thank you, each and every one.

✉ editor@donkeysforafrica.org
 🌐 www.donkeysforafrica.org
 📘 Donkeys-for-Africa

DfA is supported by

THE DONKEY SANCTUARY
www.thedonkeysanctuary.org