

# DONKEYS for AFRICA

Promoting communication about donkey welfare

[www.donkeysforafrica.org](http://www.donkeysforafrica.org)

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## Corona consequences

In Tanzania, Meru Animal Welfare Organisation highlighted how donkeys are assisting people in remote communities to stay safe. By transporting water, donkeys are enabling good hand hygiene and thus preventing the transmission of coronavirus.

Image-Asset

<https://www.animalaidabroad.org/news>

Measures to contain the spread of the corona virus have far-reaching effects on humans and their animals – and not all effects are beneficial. Some organisations let us know how their work is affected.

### Funding

The international animal aid society, *Network for Animals*, has a strict policy of visiting projects before helping any, and this they can't do at the moment because all international travel has stopped.

*amaTrac Uluntu* works in a remote rural area in South Africa. The Director, Michelle Griffith, writes "A dreadfully worrying effect is that one of our major funders is putting this year's grant on hold in case the money is needed elsewhere to assist with impacts of COVID-19."

*Dr Solomon Onyango* in Kenya says that no funding is coming through as everyone is holding back, waiting to see what will happen. "Probably donations will also go down a lot as most economies have suffered and many people are now jobless."

*MARES* in Zimbabwe is funded by the restaurant run by its founder Claire Einhorn. No income has been forthcoming since lockdown forced the closure of the restaurant late in March. Claire relates "To cut costs we have been cutting and raking our own grass instead of purchasing bales."

### Outreach

*amaTrac Uluntu's* trainers regularly contact donkey owners telephonically. Concerns are that villagers don't have masks, don't know what they are for, where to get them or how to use them. Information about the virus doesn't penetrate quickly into the villages, much of it is in English via TV or radio and little is available in other languages. There were rumours that they can catch the virus from donkeys, but the trainers eased that concern. They hope to find funding to equip Village Donkey Champions with more knowledge and how to use masks. In Zimbabwe *MARES* is unable to travel to the rural areas. There has also been no importation of medicines or veterinary supplies in this area.

*Dr Onyango* reports that animal welfare work in Kenya is constrained by the lock-down restrictions. Initially veterinary services were not classified as essential and farmers lost animals due to lack of veterinary help. He states "We hope that governments will include animals in the recovery plans so that we do not leave out the farmers who need assistance to help their animals."



### Grants are being considered by Animal-Kind International

Many organisations have suspended funding of animal welfare projects but Animal-Kind International is going ahead with grants. Applicants must describe how their proposal is Covid-19 compliant and how they will adapt their project to changing Covid-19 restrictions. Go to: <https://mailchi.mp/dc06908f3983/2020-grants-covid-19-relief-fund?e=59e620d337> Requests can be submitted until 15 July, 2020.



# Animals suffer when people suffer

## The impact on veterinary training



Image: "I want to be a Vet Day" held at Onderstepoort in 2019.

### **Dr Quixi Sonntag of Onderstepoort Veterinary Faculty in South Africa, reports on the situation at this renowned academic animal hospital:**

"The University closed in mid-March, and since early May we have been teaching online. A small core of clinicians still operate the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital (OVAH), since veterinary service is an essential service.

Most of the staff of the Faculty of Veterinary Science are working from home. It is time-consuming to create material for online learning so that students can study effectively from home. This is challenging for students who do not have data access or an electronic device. The university has been able to assist students with laptops and free data.


Our biggest headache is our final year students - there is a good chance that they will not be able to write their final exams at the end of 2020. The last 15 months of the 6-year BVSc degree and the final year for the veterinary nursing programme, involve rotating between clinics at the OVAH and doing clinical work off-campus. All of this had to be stopped. We are currently

negotiating with government for the return of the final year students to campus as soon as possible. If the final year students come back only in 2021 to write their exams, it will have a negative knock-on effect on the compulsory community service (CCS) programme, as they can't fill their CCS positions until they have completed the examinations.

All community engagement work has to be suspended during the lockdown, but we hope to still do most of it in the second semester. Some clinics have had to close. The lockdown regulations have a negative impact on the interaction between clinicians and clients.

Sadly there is an increase in animals being euthanased because people cannot afford the cost of veterinary care now, even at a reduced fee. Animals suffer when people suffer. Our aim is to help people and animals flourish, and we will continue to do this to the best of our ability, now and in the future."

## Educating for a better future

 **In a remote area of Botswana, in spite of lock-down, three youngsters bring their two donkeys to their mentor, Ansie Gildenhuys, for daily treatment of minor abrasions.**

Ansie has promised Salvestor, Matamu and Lawrence that she will present lessons on Humane Education once lockdown is lifted and these three young men will be asked to tell their peers how to care for animals. The youngsters are extremely keen – and a better future lies in their hands.

Ansie can be contacted on [babopiman@gmail.com](mailto:babopiman@gmail.com)




### **A link about the Corona impact from Brooke**

[www.thebrooke.org/news/how-coronavirus-covid-19-impacts-brooke-work](http://www.thebrooke.org/news/how-coronavirus-covid-19-impacts-brooke-work)





# Animal Welfare Society of Cameroon (AWES)

 **AWES is based in Garoua in the northern region of Cameroon and is in its third year of operation. It is supported by Animal-Kind International.**

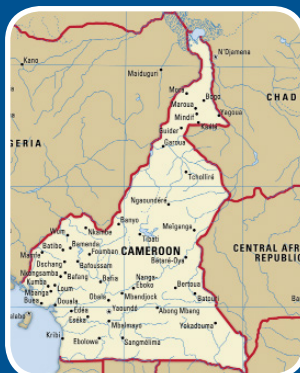
AWES focusses on alleviating the pain and suffering of working animals through providing basic animal health care services. At the same time the owners of working animals are educated on the importance of animal health and welfare.

## Regional project

In September 2019, with assistance from SPANA, AWES launched a project around the Pitoa local government area aimed at providing basic health care services to working donkeys, horses, mules and cattle.

Ten Common Initiative Groups (CIGs) of farmers were involved. All these farmers produce cotton and use working animals to plough their fields.

After doing a representative fecal analysis of samples to evaluate the worm load, AWES de-wormed a total of 297 donkeys as a start. Most of these donkeys had never previously been dewormed. AWES also treated neglected injuries resulting from poor harnessing and improper tethering. In addition the local community was sensitized and trained in good donkey care, using modules from Welttierschutzstiftung, Germany.



**Dr. Achiri Fru Martin, the Founder & President of AWES can be contacted at [achimart@yahoo.com](mailto:achimart@yahoo.com)**

## Ulcerative lymphangitis

In April 2020 there was an unfortunate outbreak of ulcerative lymphangitis among the equine populations. In this painful disease caused by bacterial infection, multiple small abscesses and ulcers develop along the lymphatic vessels of the skin. These are commonly seen on the hind limbs, on the chest, and on abdominal and neck skin. The disease proved fatal to a few donkeys. Other affected donkeys and horses responded favourably to treatment.

Dr. Achiri Fru Martin says 'We look forward to continuing these activities, especially during the farming season beginning in June, when the use of working animals is at its peak, and therefore, when injuries and illnesses also peak and when AWES' help is needed most. Due to the covid-19 situation we will no longer be able to gather in groups, but we can easily treat individual farmers' donkeys and horses and discuss improving their animals' health without endangering AWES staff and others.'



*Providing donkey care such as de-worming is part of the basic health care service.*



*Donkeys are essential transport for children to get to school.*



*Informing and engaging with the local population is essential in improving donkey care in this remote region.*



*Left: An example of Ulcerative Lymphangitis.*

**Find out more about this African donkey welfare organisation at:**

<https://www.animal-kind.org/post/animal-welfare-society-of-cameroon-helping-donkeys-and-the-people-who-rely-on-them>



### Sweet wound care solution

A new trial is underway on donkeys seen by Tanzania Humane Charity TAHUCHA in Bukombe, Tanzania.

Wounds on donkeys are common and they are being treated with high quality locally produced honey in place of antibiotics. Honey has excellent healing properties, is cheaper than antibiotics and more freely available. Initial results are promising. Let us know if you have experience of this.

<https://www.animalaidabroad.org/news/woundtreatmentsweetsuccess>



### Happy result

In our April newsletter we reported that Animal-Kind International would help raise funds to purchase a motorcycle for use by Bam Animal Clinics-Uganda. Bam received A-KI's covid-19 relief funds and bought a motorcycle. They received permission to travel for veterinary work and now reach remote parts of Kween and Bukwo counties to help donkey communities that were previously inaccessible.

### NOT A COVID CURE

Ejiao is falsely being used to treat Covid-19 in some places in China. This raises concerns about a trade which already has glaring animal welfare issues and risks of disease spreading. The Chinese government has announced a temporary ban on the trade of wild animals and the closure of all wildlife markets across the country but donkey skins continue to be imported at a high rate.

### Jeep of the past

Donkeys have been described as “the jeep” of earlier times, in the fascinating article reflecting on the emotional tie that existed between people and their donkeys.

“Donkeys, Domestication and Early Bronze Age Society” can be viewed at: <http://www.asor.org/anetoday/2020/05/>



Donkeys have an incredible memory – they can recognise areas and other donkeys they were with up to 25 years ago.

## HARNESS HELP

Chris Garrett, international harness consultant at The Donkey Sanctuary has developed a global team of harness makers and champions, who improve existing designs and train people to make and use them properly.

**He shares his knowledge with us:**

Donkeys with wounds are, unfortunately, a common sight in many areas, but it doesn't have to be that way. A large proportion of these wounds are caused by incorrect harnessing.

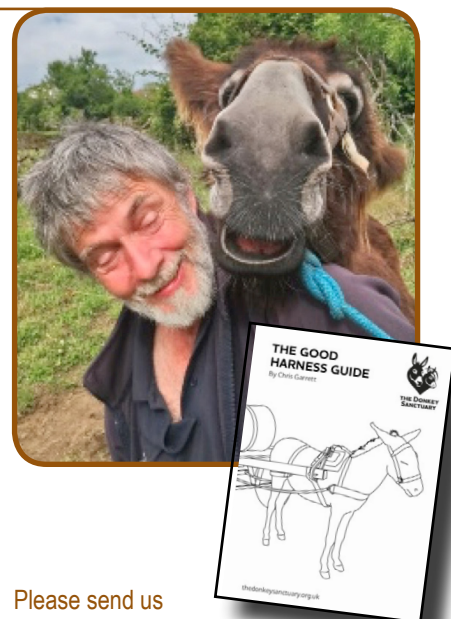
**What is a harness?** It is the system that attaches our animals to the cart, cultivator, plough, or which we put on the animal's back to help it to carry a load.

I have worked all over Africa and in other countries for many years. I make harness with what we can find locally and work with donkeys and horses so have a good

idea of the work required day to day.

I want to talk about harnessing: what to use, how to use it, how to avoid wounds, but more than that: there's a revolution going on in some industrialised countries where working horses are making a comeback, and they are beating the machines in some aspects.

**Want to know more?** Start by looking at the 'Good Harness Guide' in our library. Let us know what you think and we will look at what a harness is and what it does in our next issue.



Please send us your questions, comments and experiences about harnessing.

### From the editor

While the world holds its breath on a “pause” button, we all have the opportunity to think – about what we do, why we do it, how we do it, and whether there are better ways.

Nothing will be the same as before and it is up to us to make sure that we learn from this challenge.



The Chinese symbol for a crisis consists of two characters: one represents danger and the other represents opportunity. Let us create opportunity from the current scenario. Fortune favours the bold.

We wish you all great strength and perseverance. Donkeys need you.



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