

NEWS FROM THE BVA

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Disaster management – an update

The launch of the BVA Overseas Group's disaster management resource in June 2006 had elicited an excellent response from interested parties. The Overseas Group's coordinator on this project, Tess Sprayson, describes the progress.

The disaster management resource aims to act as an independent hub of information on disaster issues as they pertain to animals and, in particular, livestock and working equids in developing countries.

Through individual responses and contacts with our sister organisations – the Commonwealth Veterinary Association (CVA) and World Veterinary Association (WVA) – we are compiling a database of details of individual veterinarians and healthcare professionals who have agreed to become a 'point of contact' in countries throughout the world. These individuals and the organisations in which they work have a specific interest in disaster management issues. With up-to-date information on current development policies, programmes and projects that are active within the country at the time, these contacts will be in an enhanced position to assess in-country needs at a time of crisis and advise interested parties accordingly.

We have become increasingly aware that communication and collaboration within the development and animal welfare sectors is paramount if our concerns are to be taken seriously. The resource is an impartial source of information and support that is available to any organisation or individual



Following the earthquake in Pakistan in October 2005, displaced livestock owners throughout the affected regions continued to rely on shelter, feed, veterinary supplies and treatment throughout 2006

that may require information or advice.

It is important that those involved in the resource act as advocates for the health and welfare needs of livestock within disaster management work and increase awareness of the role animals play in a sustainable future for many affected communities.

The task that we have set ourselves is extensive but is nonetheless a worthwhile one. In the short term, we will continue to develop the information database and to extend our advocacy role. In the meantime should anyone have any comments on the initiative please contact the Overseas Group office by telephone 020 7636 6541, or email helenac@bva.co.uk



After flash floods destroyed roads in Romania in July 2005, draught horses were the only means of transport

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