

Overseas Newsletter - November 2007

■ ■ ■ News – BVA

Sri Lanka Eastern Province - Negenahira Navodaya

With the restoration of peace and normal civilian life in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, the Government of Sri Lanka has launched a massive development programme to rehabilitate the war affected province. Rehabilitation of livestock in the region has been identified as a priority area under the above programme, in view of the importance it plays in raising the living standards.

The Sri Lanka High Commission has approached the BVA Overseas Group for assistance in seeking donations of [specific items of equipment](#) (.pdf) to aid this important project which will make a real difference in the lives of thousands of people in the region who depend on raising livestock. The Government of Sri Lanka will meet cost of shipping of donated items to Sri Lanka.

Any support would be very much appreciated – and please do spread the word. Please confirm any donations to Deeptha Kulatilleke, Minister of the Commercial Section of the Sri Lanka High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W2 2LU tel: 020 7262 3996 or e-mail: trade@slhc-london.co.uk (Please also advise the Overseas Group via helenac@bva.co.uk of any donations made).

Trevor Blackburn Award 2007

The Overseas Group was delighted to name John Cooper as the recipient of the 2007 Trevor Blackburn Award in recognition of his many contributions in the field of animal health and welfare in developing countries. Currently working as Professor of Veterinary Pathology at the University of the West Indies, Trinidad, John is a specialist pathologist with particular interests in wildlife and exotic species, tropical diseases and comparative medicine. The Overseas Group's citation for John can be [read here](#).

Vets in the Wider World

The Overseas Group's session at the recent BVA Congress explored the role of vets overseas, from their involvement with transport animals, through their role in disease control, to the assistance they can provide in times of natural and man-made disasters. Four speakers highlighted the contributions veterinary surgeons can make to the lives of both animals and people. [See here for a report of this session](#) (as published in *The Veterinary Record* Oct 20, 2007).



*Children playing with puppies in Jaipur
Photo: Jack Reece, Help in Suffering*

Guidance notes on working overseas – new section on insurance

The BVA Overseas Group has further expanded its [guidance notes on working overseas](#) to include advice on insurance.

Intended to provide some basic information and guidance to those who are interested in this sort of work – as well as to veterinary students undertaking projects overseas - the series now covers:

- Introduction - general comments and advice
- Cat neutering programmes
- Street dog population control
- Donkeys
- Contributing to animal welfare in developing countries
- Equipment – when working in the field
- Personal safety
- Health & safety
- Insurance
- North Africa
- Nepal
- India
- China
- Peru
- Sources of advice and further reading

BVA Overseas Travel Grants 2008

Information on the next tranche of [overseas travel grants](#) for students undertaking projects in developing countries is now available. The closing date for applications is 20 March 2008.

The Road to Marrakech

As this newsletter reaches you, Patrick Sells, newly qualified from Liverpool Vet School will be undertaking an incredible 3,100 mile sponsored motorbike ride from Leahurst to Marrakech to raise funds for SPANA. Patrick will then be working as a volunteer vet in the Atlas Mountains for three months at the Midelt SPANA clinic, during which time he will also be carrying out valuable research on harness-induced injuries. The trip has already attracted the BVA/TAWS Travel Grant and the UFAW Travel Award. To sponsor Patrick go to: <http://www.justgiving.com/patricksells> - just ½p a mile (£15.00) would finance the full treatment of one equid in Morocco.

Impact assessment of beneficiaries of Vetaid UK

Emma Pearson's [report of her recent project in Tanzania is now available](#). Emma, from Glasgow vet school, was one of the recipients of a BVA Overseas Travel Grant in 2007.

BVA highlights World Rabies Day

September 8, 2007 was designated World Rabies Day with a view to raising awareness of the disease and the means available to prevent it. Building on the 'one medicine' concept, which advocates better integration of veterinary and medical expertise in the fight against disease, the initiative is being driven by scientists and professionals working in the field and is supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among others. As its own contribution in advance of the event, *The Veterinary Record* carried a number of articles discussing the thinking behind the initiative, and the role that veterinarians can play in tackling the disease worldwide.

[Full editorial comment and the other articles](#) published in *The Veterinary Record* Sept 1, 2007.

Overseas visitors welcomed at BVA

We were delighted to welcome Drs Sam Okech and Frank Mwiine from Uganda and Dr Joseph Kuria from the Kenyan Veterinary Association who called in to BVA HQ during their recent visits to London.

Congratulations!

Many congratulations to BVA Overseas Group member Karen Jones on her recent marriage to Tim Reed. We wish Karen & Tim every happiness for the future.

■ ■ ■ News – General

Alliance for Rabies Control

[Alliance for Rabies Control's November 2007 newsletter](#)

The second annual World Rabies Day will be on September 28, 2008.

4th Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference

Delegates from over 50 countries attended the highly successful 4th Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference in Barbados at the beginning of November.

Speaking at the meeting, the Director of the Commonwealth Foundation Dr Mark Collins pointed out that livestock were essential in order to alleviate poverty and pointed out that professional associations such as the Commonwealth Veterinary Association were well-placed to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty by half by 2015. See the [transcript](#) of Dr Collins' speech.

A full report on the conference will be published soon in *The Veterinary Record*.

RCVS Trust 2008 Grants Round

The [RCVS Trust](#) has launched its 2008 grants round, featuring a comprehensive range of research and animal welfare programmes including Travel Scholarships and Small Grants - and a £250,000 "Golden Jubilee" award for a single project in any discipline within veterinary science or medicine to mark the Trust's 50th birthday celebrations in 2008.

Role for vets in vulture crisis (from the RSPB)

The RSPB have asked for our assistance in drawing this to the attention of the veterinary community.

The manufacture of the veterinary drug diclofenac has been banned by the Indian, Pakistan and Nepalese Governments, because of its lethal effect on vultures. Several species have declined to the brink of extinction, poisoned by eating carcasses of livestock recently treated with the drug.

It is likely that other species are similarly affected by diclofenac, and there are serious concerns that other NSAIDs may also be unsafe. Only meloxicam has been safety-tested, and is known to be a safe alternative. The use of other NSAIDs coming onto the market could be equally disastrous. The Bombay Natural History Society, with support from the RSPB, has embarked on a costly breeding programme, while continuing to press the Indian government for firmer action. The veterinary community has a crucial role to play across south Asia by reacting to this. However, although manufacture is banned, diclofenac sale is not yet illegal. There are very real fears for the survival prospects of the vultures.

The absence of vultures has brought major sanitation problems, and risks to human health. Feral dog populations have multiplied, as they benefit from the food that vultures ate in the past, which seriously increases levels of diseases such as rabies.

Latest news from FAO

Recent updates from the FAO Newsroom may be of interest:

- [Bangladesh: agricultural sector devastated in cyclone-hit areas](#)
- [Rift Valley Fever situation in Sudan could escalate](#)
- [Aquaculture only way to fill the coming "fish gap"](#)
- ["New agriculture" needs new FAO](#)
- [Paying farmers to protect the environment?](#)
- [Working together to improve rural lives and livelihoods](#)
- [Bird flu virus in Europe – a hidden danger](#)
- [FAO insists on food as a human right](#)
- [Spread of bluetongue confirms animal diseases on the rise](#)
- [Call for more strategic approach to mountain development](#)
- [Dramatic changes in global meat production could increase risk of diseases](#)
- [Global plan of action for animal genetic resources adopted](#)
- [Living with climate change](#)

Alternatively see the [complete list of articles](#).

You can also see [fact sheets on major FAO issues](#) - e.g. The Right to Food; Women, Agriculture & Food Security.

Reducing the impact of climate change

The most recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that there is overwhelming evidence that humans are affecting climate and it highlighted the implications for human health. The World Health Organization (WHO) is helping countries respond to this challenge, primarily by encouraging them to build and reinforce public health systems as the first line of defence against climate-related health risks. [Further information here](#).

First national convention of the Afghanistan Veterinary Association

For decades, Afghanistan has been roiled by conflict. As a front in the war on terror, where combat operations against al-Qaida and the Taliban are ongoing, it's hard not to imagine Afghanistan as rife with violence and lawlessness. Yet a recent gathering of Afghan animal health workers illustrated that reality in Afghanistan is markedly different from the headlines. Read the [report from JAVMA here](#).

World Veterinary Association (WVA) Newsletter - November

The WVA newsletter November 2007 includes articles on World Veterinary Day in Japan; Dr Bent Christensen; 29th World Veterinary Congress; WVA meets WSPA; Congresses; Mauritius Loses >50 % of Pig Population Within Weeks; BVA Congress moved to Belfast; Emerging Diseases in Denmark; Asian activities; List of Veterinary Schools now on WVA website. It can be read in full at: <http://www.worldvet.org/docs/WVANewsletter8.pdf>

World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Monthly News – November

The [latest WSAVA monthly news](#) includes WSAVA Activities and Committee Reports; Scientific Advisory

Committee (SAC) – WSAVA Vaccine Guidelines Available Online; Microchip Committee - Microchip Transponders and cancer: a request for information.

World Animal Week – 4-10 October

The World Veterinary Association marked [World Animal Week](#) by reflecting on the services that veterinarians provide to animals around the world. World Animal Week runs every year from 4-10 October. The aim of the week is to celebrate animals and raise the standard of animal welfare worldwide, making the world a safer, more compassionate place for all animals.

International Disaster Day – 10 October

October 10 was [International Day for Disaster Reduction](#) focussing on the impact that natural disasters have on people around the world, particularly those in poor countries, and reminding us of the importance of tackling disasters before they strike, to prevent them from happening or to reduce the damage they cause.

Every year, 250 million people are affected by natural disasters. With pressures such as climate change increasing the threat of disasters, there is an increased need to build the resilience of poor countries and their most vulnerable citizens. Natural disasters are a major threat to development and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Not being able to cope can mean disease, hunger, loss of educational opportunities and poverty. DFID's commitment to reducing the risk of disasters recognises the development benefits of helping poor countries withstand floods, famine, earthquakes and other potential catastrophes.

■ ■ ■ Overseas Postings and Requests for Volunteers

Help in Suffering, India (Jaipur & Darjeeling)

[Help in Suffering](#) has two vacancies for volunteer veterinary surgeons: one for a new spay-neuter (ABC) project being established in Darjeeling, West Bengal in the eastern foothills of the Himalayas, while the other is for a vet for Help in Suffering, Jaipur, Rajasthan to assist in the work of a busy animal shelter. The latter has projects with equids, camels, elephants though it is expected that the volunteer will spend most time in the ABC project which aims to control street dog population. Both positions would require cultural sensitivity, adaptability, the willingness to share clinical skills with colleagues, the ability to keep accurate records and willingness to become involved in a range of professional duties. MRCVS required. Simple accommodation and food would be provided at both locations. Assistance with air fare may be available. A commitment to at least 3 months work is required. Starting date early in 2008. It is possible that opportunity to exchange between Darjeeling and Jaipur, and to visit and be involved in other projects, may occur. For further information contact Jack Reece at: hisvet1@helpinsuffering.org.

FAO Vacancies

We have received notification of the following vacancies at FAO:

Animal Health Officer (Veterinary Public Health) - P4

Food Safety Officer (Assessment) - P3

[Further information here](#)

Guyana SPCA

The Guyana SPCA would welcome volunteer vets to assist largely with its spay and neuter programme (dogs and cats) – and would also be grateful for any assistance in the areas of animal legislation, medical supplies and education and awareness. For further information contact Oliver Insanally at oliver@guyana.net.gy or Ms Shiromanie Isaacs at shiromanieisaacs@hotmail.com

Noistar Thai Animal Rescue Foundation

The Foundation will be carrying out an island wide neutering programme on Koh Tao from February 18 to March 15, 2008. They already have some volunteer vets but need more (qualified for at least two years and preferably with experience of working on this kind of project). Please contact Jayne Chard at: info@thaianimalrescue.com

Paphiakos & CCP Animal Welfare (Cyprus)

The shelter is looking for volunteer vets and nurses but is also looking for a vet (salaried) to work with them for a longer period. For further information e-mail paphiakos.welfare@cytanet.com.cy or [visit their website](#).

Worldwide Veterinary Service (WVS)

WVS has just been awarded a large grant by the Marchig Trust to expand their veterinary teams, disaster relief aid and sustainable veterinary education programme. Annie Cook has been appointed the Director of Veterinary Operations and will be spearheading the deployment of the Marchig Trust/WVS support teams throughout 2008. Should any members of the profession be keen or able to assist with any of WVS projects, the charity is always very grateful to receive any help or support. Further details for those who may wish to volunteer for a trip can be found on the [WVS website](#).

■ ■ ■ Reminders and Dates for the Diary

29th World Veterinary Congress will be held on 27-31 July 2008 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. [Further information](#).

33rd WSAVA Congress and 14th European FECAVA Congress will be held on 20-24 August 2008 in Dublin, Ireland. [Further info](#).

25th Biennial Caribbean Veterinary Medical Association Conference "Veterinary Medicine - Uniting the Caribbean veterinary fraternity" will take place on 6-9 November 2008 on the twin-nation island of Dutch Sint Maarten-French St. Martin (www.st-maarten.com). For further information contact Garry Swanston at sxmvetclinic@megatropic.com or sxmvetclinic@caribserve.net