



viva news

Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance

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Supporting Livestock, Supporting People

December 2010



Livestock play a hugely important role in the lives of millions of the world's poorest people. In this issue we look at the impact of our projects on some farmers in the Developing World.



VIVA needs YOU!

As a nation we are facing the toughest of economic times. The hopes and dreams of many people have been dashed. Recently, I found myself finding consolation in Adam Smith, the father of modern economics, when he said that it is very difficult to destroy a country! Many of us who have been in some of the poorest countries in the world are often surprised that despite the poverty there is often a functioning society. We can in these times perhaps learn from the resilience of the people in the Developing World.

VIVA with the help of a core group of 300 supporters has achieved a lot over the past decade. Without the goodwill and support of our friends and the Veterinary Profession in Ireland it would not be possible to carry out our work programme.

The EU has designated 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering. It is hoped that this initiative will raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering. In addition, 2011 marks the 250th anniversary of the beginning of veterinary education. The world's first veterinary school was founded in Lyon, France, in 1761, at the initiative of French veterinarian Claude Bourgelat.

To celebrate this important year we would ask you, our supporters, to continue to support us as best you can through these difficult times and we would also encourage those of you who have not yet adopted VIVA to become a VIVA Volunteer for 2011.

Séan O'Laoide – VIVA Chairman

The Livestock Effect!

Livestock play an important role in the lives of millions of the world's poorest people not only as a food supply but as a source of income and as generators of employment. For these people, livestock mean much more than just meat, milk, wool, feathers, hair and hides. They provide draft power (for ploughing and transport), act as a store of wealth for emergencies, confer status (indicators of wealth), their dung fertilises gardens and crops,

provide fuel (through the use of dried dung or methane produced from dung) and serve important cultural functions (e.g. as dowries).

According to Tess Spayson, a vet working as an international development consultant, "the culture of livestock keeping has strength and meaning in every region of the world. The fact remains that livestock are the means by which millions of disadvantaged people around the world, quite literally, stay alive

and international development policies need to reflect this fact".

The families profiled in these pages are being lifted out of poverty, with your support, through the use of livestock. The bonus is that livestock aid is the gift that keeps on giving! As these animals reproduce other families in the community benefit as each farmer must "Pass on the Gift", by giving one offspring, be it a calf, a goat kid or a piglet to another family in the group.

Aiigi Jane - UGANDA - animal traction project

Koile Imor-Ican farmers' animal traction project is an integrated livestock based project. Started in 2008 with the support of VIVA, the project seeks to reduce poverty in this community by increasing crop productivity. In order to achieve this, 64 oxen and 16 ox-ploughs were distributed to 64 families. Farmers underwent training sessions in integrated farming, environmental management, sustainable agriculture and livestock management. Two years later according to Mr. Otuba James (Chairman of the group), "*Koile is becoming a food basket for the entire Kumi district.*"



Aiigi Jane harvesting maize intercropped with groundnuts.

Aiigi Jane is one of the project beneficiaries. Last year she was able to plant eight acres of maize compared to the two acres she used to plant and had a harvest of 80 bags (each of approx. 100kgs) as compared to only 10 bags the harvest before. In the same farmland, she intercropped the maize with groundnuts and harvested 50 bags of groundnuts. She attributes this success to the use of oxen in the opening up of land and timely planting. "*This used not to be the case with a hand hoe, I had to spend a lot time clearing the land and before I could clear all I needed I was already caught up by the season. Farming had become very hard; digging was left to women here in Koile, however when this project started men were interested back into farming.*"

The group membership has expanded from 120 members in 2008 to over 350 members spread across the entire Kobuin Sub-County. Otuba James attributes this growth to the benefits of the project for the participating families. One of their future aims is to transform the group into a registered cooperative society so that the members can bulk and market their produce as a unit for better prices.

Sabitri Acharya - NEPAL - community livestock project

Sabitri Acharya is a member of one of the groups in the CLPSP (Community Livestock Production Strengthening Project) project. She has been trained in goat husbandry and has built a new goat shed and received her first goats. To crown it all she has been elected Chairperson of the Deurali Livestock Raising Group in her village.

"Life wasn't always like this," she says, "I had an unsteady childhood, being raised by three mothers in a very large joint family. And due to our poor economic status, I was unable to go to school." After she was married off by her family at the age of 15 to Dilliram Acharya from a similar background, she soon became even more acquainted with poverty. Following the birth of her fourth child her husband decided to leave to find work in Saudi Arabia to support his growing family.

"Many social and economic projects have come to my village and gone, but owing to my poor health and illiteracy, I have been unable to participate." Then one day she heard about the CLPSP project in her area, which

provides various livestock trainings and other advantages. "I was so excited about this project, that I became very involved in the new group, so involved, in fact, that they elected me their chairperson!" She has learned basic technical skills in animal management and also feels empowered by the group management and gender awareness courses. Slowly but surely she has become encouraged by the project and has gained confidence through it.

"I will use my new skills to provide for my animals. I will ensure water at all times and feed a healthy balanced diet. I have also made mineral blocks for them. I will worm them regularly and if they are sick, I will call the local VAHW (Village Animal Health Worker)".

One of the biggest impacts of the project on her life has been the respect she has earned for herself and her family from her peers, group members and the community.



Sabitri Acharya with her goats

Rogate Lukumayi - TANZANIA - paravet training programme

In 2009 Rogate Lukumayi (30) graduated as a Community Animal Health Worker (CAHW) from Tengeru Institute of Agriculture in Arusha and the benefits of her basic veterinary services to the livestock farmers in her village are already evident.

Ngiresi village, Rogate's home place is situated under the slopes of mount Meru in the Arumeru district in Arusha region in north-eastern Tanzania. A dairy cow and poultry farmer and a single mother of three children, Rogate lives with her parents in a small house surrounded by banana and coffee plantations.



Rogate Lukumayi and two of her three children. They are; Joyce (11) left and Hillary (6). Both are in primary school.

Rogate is one of the 30 paravets (CAHWs) who completed their four-week course in March 2009 funded by Heifer International Tanzania in partnership with VIVA. Since she started providing the basic veterinary services to her community, Rogate has been greatly valued by the livestock farmers in Ngiresi village. "We're truly happy to have Rogate's veterinary services, she is close to us and we can call her anytime our livestock face problems, she is a friend to everyone here in our village," admits Avaline Charles a livestock farmer in the village.



Rogate Lukumayi provides roundworm treatment to a cow for one of her clients in Ngiresi village.

Leya Outa - UGANDA - animal traction project

Farm size: Total acres 10, of which green peas (2), pigeon peas (1), cassava (2), sorghum (1) and citrus (2) with the remaining being sown with elephant grass for the oxen.

Leya has been involved in VIVA's animal traction project for the past 2 years. Being a widow and mother of eight children, Leya has struggled to juggle both family duties and also farm full time to support her family. She has often had to hire labour during harvest and sowing times which is expensive. She received a draft oxen and plough as a result of the project and this has meant reduced labour costs and has allowed her to sow more crops. What used to take a month to till by hand is now done in a matter of days. In addition, yields have increased as ploughing with oxen means seeds are planted at a deeper level where there is more moisture. From this extra income Leya has bought chickens and goats which can be used as a quick supply of income in case of emergency. Her income is mainly spent on her children's school fees.

Rogate is providing veterinary services to about 50 livestock farmers in her village, by carrying out basic husbandry tasks such as castration, treating the livestock for the common tick-bone diseases and worming livestock. "Most of the livestock in my villages are faced with roundworms, high fever and rumen impaction diseases," says Rogate.

However, since she started providing the services, she has successfully created awareness on how her livestock farmers could fight those problems.

"Now, my livestock villagers are taking serious precautions in fighting tick-bone diseases by making sure they spray their livestock three times a month," says Rogate adding that, "currently cases of high fever are very rare."

Rogate loves her work and she is proud that she has been able to boost her family's income. "Thanks to Heifer and Viva because now I can easily pay school fees and buy uniforms for my children," comments Rogate. The veterinary service she provides to her community has also enabled her to buy 30 local chickens for rearing.

Asked on what is her dream, Rogate said, "I wish I could be trained on Artificial Insemination (AI) because the service is in high demand in my village."



Leya (extreme right) with some of her family.



Leya shows Martin Breen (Mike O'Leary Trust Travel Bursary winner) some of her citrus trees.

VIVA's AI Programmes

VIVA continues to support AI programmes with its project partners abroad. In August we sent 5000 straws (courtesy of the National Cattle Breeding Centre) to Albania for BOVAK's livestock programmes and in July we shipped 5000 straws to Malawi (courtesy of Dovea AI) to SSLPP, our long-time partner there. In addition, Brendan O'Connor, an AI Technician with Munster AI, donated an AI equipment kit and holder he has designed himself to Heifer Kosovo for us in their training programmes.



Robert Monahan (left) and Eamonn Cassells with a flask containing 8,000 straws of bovine semen donated by the National Cattle Breeding Centre, Enfield, Co. Meath for AI programmes in Albania. Special thanks to Bernard Eivers VS for his assistance.



Mike Burke (VIVA) accepts an AI equipment kit from Brendan O'Connor (right) of Munster AI.

Mike O'Leary Trust Travel Bursary

This year's winner of the Mike O'Leary Trust Travel Bursary was Martin Keane a third year veterinary student from Co. Wexford. Martin travelled to Uganda in July to visit our animal traction project in the Koile district in eastern Uganda.

This is the sixth year of the Bursary which sponsors a veterinary student each year to spend a month working on one of VIVA's overseas projects. The *Mike O'Leary Trust* was established to honour the memory of Kerry vet, Mike O'Leary, who died tragically in 2003 at the age of 39. His family and friends have undertaken a number of fundraising initiatives over the years to

raise funds for the Travel Bursary in addition to supporting the Irish NGO, GOAL, and cardiomyopathy research.

New Faces at Bóthar

Peter Ireton, the Bóthar CEO, will step down from his position in 2011 to pursue other interests. VIVA would like to wish him the best for the future and thank him for his unstinting support to VIVA over the last 11 years. Under Peter's direction, Bóthar and VIVA have co-operated on livestock projects across the Developing World. In addition, grants from Bóthar have enabled VIVA to develop to the stage where we now have our own stand alone projects.

Ní fheicimid a leithid arís!

We'd also like to wish his successor, Dave Moloney, the best of luck in his new position. Dave is no stranger to VIVA and we look forward to working together in the future.



Martin visits one of the farming families in the Koile project.



Supporting livestock farmers in
the Developing World

The VIVA Wheelers

The VIVA Wheelers are a group of cyclists of all ages and abilities who have raised almost €165,000 for VIVA's projects worldwide with fundraising cycles in Vietnam (2005), Morocco (2007), the Burren (2009) and Bantry (2010).

Join us on
Facebook – just
search for
“VIVA Wheelers”
and “like” us!



L to R – Rebecca Fabby, Lauren McNally and Cathy Waddell get ready for the off.



L to R – Syd Nagle, Roy Gallie, Miguel Lopez, Oliver Duran, Alasdair Gallie and Rebecca Fabby on the Sheep's Head Peninsula.



L to R – James Madden, Mike Burke, Cathy Waddell, Patricia Bambury, Helen Casey, Shirley Lyons and Joan Flavin enjoy lunch.

Bantry 100

The annual VIVA 100km cycle challenge rolled into Bantry this year for a tour of west Cork. Despite heavy rain almost countrywide, west Cork was blessed with glorious sunshine and emergency supplies of sunblock had to be handed out at the snack stops to the 50 participants.

Exploring the Sheep's Head and Mizen peninsulas the cycle offered participants some of the finest scenery in Ireland. The cyclists took the coastal route around the Sheep's Head peninsula to the village of Durrus. After lunch there, we headed down the Mizen peninsula to Toormore (where some of the cyclists took the opportunity to cycle out to Mizen Head). Onwards then to Schull, Ballydehob and home to Bantry. The day ended with a celebratory dinner in the Westlodge Hotel. Martin Breen, who travelled to Uganda in the summer to visit VIVA projects, spoke after dinner of the impact the projects have had on the families he visited. Martin is this year's winner of the Mike O'Leary Trust Bursary which enables VIVA to send a vet student to visit our projects every summer.

The event, organised by Irish Cycling Safaris, raised over €15,000 for VIVA's livestock projects overseas. This annual event offers cyclists of all ages and abilities a unique opportunity to explore our beautiful island. Same date every year (second Saturday in September) with the route for the 2011 challenge to be announced in the spring. To register your interest for future “VIVA Wheelers” events contact mike@viva.ie



Liam Hogan and Niall Burke survey Bantry Bay.



L to R – Syd Nagle, Denis Healy and Diarmuid Healy check out the route.



L to R – Syd Nagle, Dónal Connolly and Ivan Heffernan.

Rugby World Cup 2011

Are you going to the World Cup in New Zealand in 2011? Would you like to do something unique while you're there? How about an adventure challenge that will also benefit others?

The VIVA Wheelers have organised a cycle challenge in New Zealand to coincide with the Rugby World Cup. Over five days and 500km, participants will travel from Dunedin (after the Ireland v Italy game) to Wellington on the North Island (in time for

Ireland's quarter-final date – hopefully!).

Participants will be responsible for their own travel and match costs and are being asked to raise €3,000 sponsorship for VIVA's overseas projects. For more details contact mike@viva.ie



Join the Fundraisers

Without your help, VIVA cannot continue to support livestock farmers in the Developing World. With just over 300 regular supporters we have achieved an enormous amount over the last decade but we need new blood. Our two flagship fundraisers are the annual Golf Classic (now in its 8th year) and the VIVA Wheelers cycle challenges. Every year these events enable VIVA supporters to show their solidarity with farmers in Africa, Asia and eastern Europe. Why not make a New Year's resolution today to join us in one of our events or organise one of your own. We can guarantee you a good day out and the satisfaction of knowing that you've made a significant impact on the life of a farmer in the Developing World.

(For more info contact Mike Burke on 086 – 2568357).

Regular Giving

Regular giving such as direct debits enables VIVA to predict its income more accurately and plan accordingly. Why not take out a direct debit in favour of VIVA? A monthly donation of €22 will allow us to claim tax relief on your donation (or in the case of the self-employed, this tax relief can be claimed by the donor).

To take out a direct debit, contact VIVA for an application form (see contact details on page 1).

VIVA Golf Classic

On August 6th, the VIVA Golf Classic moved to Glasson Golf Course for the first time. This is one of the most challenging and scenic courses in Ireland with magnificent views of Lough Ree. 34 teams competed for a host of prizes with John Parker, Oliver Fahy, Seamus Hayden and Peter Brady emerging as the victorious team.

Since its inception in 2003, the event has built up a loyal following and has now raised just over €55,000 for VIVA's overseas projects.

VIVA would again like to thank Tony McManus for all his efforts in organising the Classic. We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our main sponsors, Univet, C & M Vetlink and Liam McElDowney (Letterkenny veterinary surgeon).



L to R – Tony McManus (VIVA) with winning team – John Parker, Oliver Fahy, Seamus Hayden and Peter Brady with sponsors Brendan Crowe (Univet) and Stephen Lyons (C&M Vetlink).

Midland Showjumping

Following their recent summer shows, Midland Showjumping have again donated all the entry fees from the events to VIVA. At a recent function in Granard, Brian Gormley MRCVS, chairman of the Midland Showjumping Committee presented a cheque for €2,000 to VIVA's Brendan Mimmagh. VIVA would like to thank all the organisers and sponsors of the event.



L to R – Brian Gormley MVB (Midland Showjumping), Ann Gannon (Sponsor) Brendan Mimmagh, Mary Gannon (Sponsor) and Oliver Glancy (Sponsor).

Tax Relief on Donations

Did you know that if you give €250 in any one year to VIVA, we can recoup the tax you have paid on it? Irish tax legislation allows for tax relief for the charity on donations greater than €250 in any tax year at the rate of tax that you would have paid. Typically a €250 donation is worth over €430 to VIVA when we claim the tax back. All you have to do is fill out a CHY2 form (it's very easy, takes about five mins) and post it back to VIVA and we will be able to claim back the tax you paid on the donation amount from the Revenue Commissioners.

You are of course under no obligation to fill in this form but it allows us to benefit from your hard earned tax Euros at no extra cost to yourselves.

If you are self-employed you can claim this tax relief yourself on your annual return to the Revenue Commissioners. For more details contact VIVA.

Fundraising Events

Why not mark a significant birthday with a fundraising challenge?

If our VIVA Wheelers cycle challenges don't grab your fancy why not run or walk a marathon or half-marathon?

VIVA is now registered on www.sponsor.ie. With Sponsor.ie you can set up your own fundraising page in five minutes, email the link to all your friends and contacts who can then donate online to VIVA. Fundraising made easy!

Special Thanks

VIVA would also like to thank the following for their support in 2010:

- Áine Collins who ran four events over the summer to raise funds for VIVA
- Maurice & Paula O'Reilly
- Séan Collins (County Photos)
- Oldcastle Labs Ltd
- Thomas & Mary Piersie
- Michael Horan
- Dónal McLoone
- Pat Kelliher

Check out our website

Check out our website (www.viva.ie). There, you can read about our projects, make a donation and register for regular email updates. Have a look!