



# viva news

## Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance

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Bringing New Life to people and their animals

December 2008

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

*VIVA Improving Agricultural Productivity in Vulnerable Communities.*

It would be all too easy to be extremely pessimistic about the future of mankind when one examines the enormous challenges facing the world. The four "F"s namely Finance, Fuel, Feed and Food exercise the minds of world leaders while climate change is creating a reduction and transfer of our most vital resource, fresh water, from one region of the world to another. More than half the world's population now lives with the daily reality of water scarcity. This is happening in the context of a world population expected to grow from the present 6 billion to 9 billion by mid century. Agriculture, meanwhile, remains the biggest consumer of water in the world with 40% of the world's food produced from irrigated land. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that in order to feed the world's growing population, food production needs to grow at 1.4% per annum by 2030 with much of it requiring irrigation. This presents an enormous challenge to the Agricultural Scientific Research Community to develop plants that require fewer inputs, including water. What can we do? While most of us will try to live an ethical lifestyle that is environmentally sustainable there is a limit to what we can do to influence global events. We can, however, make a start by improving the lot of small communities by helping them to increase their food outputs. VIVA has committed over €143,000 over the next three years to a project in eastern Uganda to increase agricultural productivity. 128 families will be supported with the distribution of oxen, draft ploughs and carts. Farmers will also be given grass seeds, vegetable seeds, tools and appropriate training. Using hand hoes it can take an average household up to 15 days to dig an acre of ground in preparation for crop planting. The introduction of animal traction will significantly boost crop production as farmers will be able to plough and plant large pieces of land in a short time. VIVA's efforts are significantly improving agricultural productivity in vulnerable communities. I would like to thank all of you, our supporters and friends, for making this possible through your generous contributions.

*Seán O'Loide*

— VIVA Chairman

## VIVA NEPAL

**In August, Ciaran Gobl, a vet from Co. Longford, took over from Susan Griffin as VIVA's representative in Nepal. Working with our partner organisation, AHTCS (Animal Health Training and Consultancy Service), Ciaran will oversee the implementation of our project there working with 15 farmer groups in the Kaski district. Ciaran reports below on the progress of this project and his initial impressions of Nepal. VIVA would also like to thank Susan Griffin for her contribution to VIVA's work over her year in Nepal**

### Ciaran reports from Pokhara

Following the dedicated work of my predecessor Susan Griffin, VIVA is now an officially recognized International NGO here in Nepal. The new project, Community Livestock Production Strengthening Project (CLPSP) is co-funded by VIVA and Bothar. It incorporates two previously separate projects namely, the Women Empowerment and Animal Nutrition Management projects.

In Nepal, over 70% of the population depends on agriculture as a source of income. 90% of all the farming work is done by the women in the family. 15 groups, predominantly female, have been selected in 6 very needy areas of the Kaski district for the CLPSP project which aims

to improve the socio-economic status of all the participants involved by increasing the productivity from their farms. We will achieve this by empowering them with the training and management skills they require. The project is now in the full implementation phase but only with the diligent efforts of the AHTCS (Animal Health Training and Consultancy Services), our partner here in Pokhara. All the groups have taken part in group management and animal management training courses. Also, nine Village Animal Health Workers (VAHW) have undergone intensive training and are working in the field, providing basic animal health services, not only to the group members, but also to local farmers. By the end of the first project year (May 2009), we plan to have trained the participants in shed construction and management, improved animal nutrition and distributed improved breeding stock to all the groups. Nepal is a beautiful country where one wakes up to the Himalayas at your doorstep. The country's troubled past is easing into a new era of beginning. We have planted the seeds of hope thanks to our supporters in Ireland, and soon we will reap the fruits that the people deserve. It is a pleasure to work here and I only hope that I can give as much as I am gaining! You can follow my progress here on my blog – [www.vivanepal.blogspot.com](http://www.vivanepal.blogspot.com)



VIVA registered as an International NGO in Nepal. Ciaran Gobl receives the registration from Dr. Resham Pd. Acharya (AHTCS Director), left, and Dr. Jayandra Shrestha, right, Member Secretary of the Social Welfare Council of Nepal



Ciaran with the Sagun Group in Thumki district for Animal Management training.



A farmer with his goat in Thumki district



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# Mike O'Leary STUDENT BURSARY

This is the fourth year of VIVA's involvement in the Mike O'Leary Student Bursary which sponsors a veterinary student to spend a month working with one of our partners in the Developing World. The lucky recipient this year was Donal Cape who spent a month in Uganda as a guest of Heifer Uganda, VIVA's partner in that country. During his stay, Donal got to visit the Koilei Amora Ican Animal Traction Project which VIVA is funding over the next three years. According to Donal "the entire community here was displaced almost 20 years ago by the invading Karamajong – a neighbouring tribe who are infamous all over East Africa for their violent cattle rustling. They didn't return for almost 4 years, over which time their houses fell into disrepair and the land became barren". After they moved back the restructuring process began. A new primary school was built, with the help of Irish Aid in which 669 students, walking for miles to and from the village, are enrolled. In addition, a small farmers association was set up which became the driver for the current project. Donal was invited by the committee of this group to come back to the area in a few years time to see how the project had progressed. Donal commented that he's not sure "if they took my acceptance of the offer seriously enough"!

In tandem with the Mike O'Leary Student Bursary, the Veterinary College funds a second student on our summer programme. The lucky student this year, Heather Kingston, traveled to Tanzania for a month to see at first hand the work of VIVA and our partner, Heifer Tanzania. The impact of the livestock projects that she visited made a huge impression on Heather. According to Heather, this was especially obvious in a "specific project in which women's groups were formed and they were given pigs to raise.....because it targeted the women, it empowered them with a greater sense of respect both in their homes and in the community. One woman tells me that since getting her pig, her maize crop has tripled"! The "tireless work of the Heifer Tanzania staff" as they dealt with the daily frustrations and of working in a developing country also impressed Heather greatly.

On behalf of Donal and Heather, VIVA would like to thank Prof. Grace O'Malley and The Mike O'Leary Trust for making these trips possible and the staff of Heifer Uganda and Heifer Tanzania for organizing the work placements.



*Donal Cape with VIVA Chairman, Sean O'Laoide (left) and Frank O'Leary of The Mike O'Leary Trust.*



*The Koilei Farmers Committee*



*Yasinta Joseph Kileo feeding her sow with Heather Kingston and Sr. Alexandra Bahati.*



## Nancy Aburi Joins VIVA Team.

VIVA is delighted to announce the appointment of Nancy Aburi as our Global Projects Manager. Currently living and working in her native Nairobi, Nancy's background is as a development communications specialist. On moving to Ireland in 2000, she worked with Concern and Gorta before taking on the role of Head of Marketing and Communications at Self Help Development International. In addition, she has worked extensively with women's groups in Kenya engaged in implementing sustainable social enterprises. As a result, she has championed the empowerment and education of African women to enable them play an active role in improving their economic and social status. We wish her well in her new role.



Nancy Aburi meets VIVA Board members. L to R: Denis Kelliher, Nancy Aburi, Pat Murphy, Sean O'Laoidhe, Mike Burke

## ESB SHINE A RAY OF HOPE

ESB ElectricAid Ireland have announced a grant of €9.800 for VIVA's projects in Tanzania. ElectricAid, the ESB's staff social justice fund, has been supporting development projects in Ireland and across the world since 1987. By 2008, 2,700 ESB staff were contributing to their funds. Supported by matching funding from the ESB ElectricAid now focuses primarily on long-term and sustainable development projects in the Developing World. In addition, they also devote specific funding (€1 million per annum) to the two targeted areas in Ireland – suicide and homelessness." VIVA greatly appreciates their support.

## NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH BOTHAR

Since its inception VIVA has worked closely with the Irish livestock development agency, Bothar. Over the years, we have partnered on projects in Kosovo, Serbia and Malawi. This model of co-operation was based on Bothar supplying livestock to local NGOs with VIVA providing training to the recipients in the areas of animal husbandry and artificial insemination. In addition, VIVA supplied these projects with animal medicines and AI equipment.

In recognition of VIVA's contribution to their work, Bothar have now committed funding of €75,000 to VIVA over the next three years in the form of an Institutional Strengthening Grant (ISG). These funds will be used to develop the administrative and fundraising structures of VIVA which will provide a strong platform from which to progress our work in the coming years. Bothar are also cofounding VIVA's Tanzanian project (€17,000) and The Uganda Draft Cattle Project (€20,000) .

VIVA would like to thank Bothar for developing this unique funding mechanism which takes our partnership to a new level.

## VIVA's African Projects

As outlined in our cover story VIVA has now obtained substantial funding from Irish Aid to allow us initiate two major project projects in Africa. Firstly, VIVA has committed over €2,500 over the next three years to the Koilei Amora Ican Animal Traction Project in Eastern Uganda. One hundred and twenty eight families will be supported with the distribution of draft oxen, ploughs and carts. Farmers will also be given grass seeds, vegetable seeds, tools and appropriate training. The population of this area consists of peasant farmers whose livelihood depends on farming with traditional methods. The families engage mostly in subsistence farming that unfortunately does not provide sufficient income or produce to maintain their large families. This has resulted in malnutrition (especially in children) and early school-leaving which leads to illiteracy, unemployment and early marriages. Using hand hoes it can take an average household up to 15 days to dig an acre of ground in preparation for crop planting. This obviously reduces the acreage under crops. The introduction of animal traction will therefore significantly boost crop production as farmers will be able to plough and plant large pieces of land in a short time. This will lead to increased yields and raise household incomes. The project will be supervised by our project partner **Heifer Uganda**.

In Tanzania VIVA has also committed over €7,000 over the next three years to the training and equipping of Community Animal Health Workers (Paravets) in Tanzania. Initially, 90 community animal health workers will be trained under veterinary supervision to provide basic animal healthcare to 100 villages around Arusha and Kilimanjaro. This model of village-based paravets (who are themselves livestock keepers and are nominated by their fellow farmers) ensures a low-cost and sustainable rural veterinary service for the region. All those who complete the required training are given a veterinary toolkit and a bicycle.



# MALAWIAN PARAVET PROJECT

VIVA has been involved in Malawi in southern Africa for several years. Their partner here, **SSLPP** (Small Scale Livestock Promotion Programme), assists small livestock farmers by donating livestock to farmer groups and following up with training and technical assistance. Many of these animals have come from shipments by **Bothar** of pigs, goats and cattle to the country. Over the years **VIVA** volunteer vets have provided training in cattle and pig husbandry to the recipients of these animals. In addition, they have provided training for artificial insemination technicians and dispatched thousands of straws of bovine semen to supply these technicians. At present, **VIVA** is concentrating on training and equipping paravets for **SSLPP**. These paravets or animal health technicians provide a very important low-cost veterinary service to the small holder farmer in a country with no rural veterinary services. In the summer of 2007, Mike Burke and Pat Murphy, a practitioner from Loughrea, traveled to Malawi to provide basic skills training to the **SSLPP** paravets. While being very enthusiastic and committed the paravets are hampered by a lack of basic equipment. To overcome this, Pat Murphy, on his return gathered together fifteen practices in Ireland who all agreed to sponsor a Basic Equipment Kit for each of the paravets. These kits (containing burdizzo, dehorning irons, snaffles, thermometers, calving ropes etc) were dispatched in February of this year and have now distributed. One of the recipients, Clinton Kawonga, recently contacted **VIVA** to express his gratitude for the initiative.....“When the consignment finally arrived in my hands I was not only overjoyed with excitement, but also overwhelmed and spellbound in my spirit. I jumped about in front of my family and prayed”.

A big thank you to the participating practices:

*William Gibbons, Craughwell. Frank Canavan, Tuam. James Smyth, Loughrea. John Ward, Athenry. Gerard Slattery, Gort. Summerhill Veterinary Centre. Hugh C Dolan, Ballinasloe. John Dixon, Claremorris. Mulcair Veterinary Clinic, Limerick. Glenbower Veterinary Group, Cork. Clenkins Veterinary Group, Cootehill. Glasslyn Veterinary Group, Kinsale & Bandon. Castle Veterinary Clinic, Castleisland. Richard Fahey, Cahir. Pat Rhatigan, Tuam. Scariff Veterinary Services. Shannonside Veterinary Group, Kilrush.*



*Mr. Wilfred Lipita, Director of Department of Animal Health and Livestock Development in Malawi and Dr. C. B. Chizonda, Chairman of SSLPP present the kits to the paravets.*

## IRISH AID FUNDS VIVA

In a major recognition of the quality of VIVA's projects and the strength of the organisation, Irish Aid has committed funding of €125,189 from its Civil Society Fund to VIVA over the next three years. The Civil Society Fund has, as its objective, the improvement of the livelihoods of disadvantaged communities in developing countries by funding of Irish NGOs (non-governmental organisations).

This funding is being allocated to two projects in Africa. Firstly, in eastern Uganda, VIVA has committed over €140,000 to the Koilei Amora Ican Animal Traction Project over the next three years. One hundred and twenty eight families will be supported with the distribution of draft oxen, ploughs and carts. Farmers will also be given grass seeds, vegetable seeds, tools and appropriate training. Secondly, in Tanzania, we have committed over €57,000 for the next three years to the training of paravets. Initially, ninety people will be trained under veterinary supervision to provide basic animal

healthcare to 100 villages around Arusha and Kilimanjaro. There are more details on these projects overleaf.

The projects will be monitored by VIVA's new Global Projects Manager, Nancy Aburi, who is based in Nairobi. She will be travelling to Uganda and Tanzania on a regular basis and reporting to VIVA on the progress being made. Nancy (profiled inside) brings a wealth of experience to her new role and is a welcome addition to the VIVA team.

Irish Aid is the Irish Government's programme of assistance to developing countries. From humble beginnings in 1974, it has grown steadily over the years with over €800 million being allocated to overseas development assistance in 2007. The Irish Aid programme has as its absolute priority the reduction of poverty, inequality and exclusion in developing countries.

## VETERINARY OFFICERS COUNTRYWIDE LEND SUPPORT TO VIVA

Sincere thanks to all the members of the Veterinary Officers Association who contributed €510 as a result of the annual AGM raffle held in Kilkenny last April.



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## VIVA WHEELERS IN MOROCCO

Last year's newsletter came too early for a report on the VIVA Wheelers last fundraising trip to Morocco which raised over €47,000 for VIVA projects. Over 5 days in the Anti Atlas Mountains of southern Morocco, the 17 participants battled with the heat, steep mountain climbs and snoring room partners to complete the epic trip.

Any notions that the participants had of a leisurely cycle in the sun were dispelled on the first day when the ascent to our hilltop hotel (Hotel Kerdous – 1100m!) tested even the most committed amongst us. However, there were some highlights to ease the pain including a night spent camping at the oasis of Ait Mansour and the spectacular mountain scenery. The VIVA Wheelers have now raised almost €130,000 for our projects overseas which is a major achievement especially considering that many of the participants have been on both trips.

The participants were: Pat Murphy, Donal Connolly, Ivan Heffernan, Denis Healy, Michael O'Brien, James Madden, Mike Burke, Perpetua McNamee, Patricia Bambury, Syd Nagle, Donagh McDonnell, Seamus Fagan, Brian O'Neill, Joe Walsh and Padraig Jordan.

For details of future trips contact [mike@viva.ie](mailto:mike@viva.ie)



Patricia Bambury and Donagh McDonnell tackle the roads of Morocco for VIVA.

## CLINICAL SOCIETIES LEND THEIR SUPPORT TO VIVA'S WORK

Kilkenny Clinical Veterinary Society €1000

Mid West Clinical Veterinary Society €1300

Midland Regional Clinical Veterinary Society Christmas party €690

*A big "thank you" to all concerned.*



Alan Johnson of the Mid-West Clinical Society presents Mike Burke of VIVA with a cheque for €1000.

## STEVIE WONDER

VIVA would like to congratulate veterinary student, Stevie O'Connor, for his incredible fundraising efforts on behalf of VIVA. In 2008, Stevie ran in the Dublin City Marathon raising over €6,400 in sponsorship. In the summer of 2007, Stevie travelled to Tanzania as a recipient of a Mike O'Leary Student Bursary to work on VIVA's projects there. Inspired by what he saw, Stevie resolved to dedicate 2008 to fundraising efforts for VIVA. Well done Stevie!

## SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT NEW LIFE TO FARMS AROUND THE WORLD THIS YEAR

Many thanks to all the individuals and businesses who through their financial support of the Golf classic in Tullamore Golf Club on August 8th this year helped make it one of our most successful to date.

- Michael Oates, Eight Till Late, Roscommon.
- Donal Brady, VS, Carrickboy.
- Pat Flanagan, SSVI, Roscrea.
- John O'Roarke, VS Roscommon
- Ned Duignan, VS, Roscommon.
- FBD Insurance
- Donal Shine, Athlone
- Michael McSharry, Four Mile House Roscommon
- Veterinary Ireland
- S Maher, Roscommon
- Pat Kavanagh, VI
- John P Higgins, VI Longford.
- Anthony Sweeney, VI. Longford.
- George Bannon Sports Shop, Roscommon.
- Michael Brehony, Roscommon
- John Corcoran Menswear, Roscommon.
- All Creatures Veterinary Clinic, Roscommon.
- Liam McElDowney MRCVS, Letterkenny.
- Cornmarket Group, Dublin.
- Frank O'Leary MRCVS, Cahirciveen.
- John O'Gara, Roscommon.
- Gay Sheeran, Roscommon.

## Special thanks to veterinary students



UCD Veterinary Graduates present VIVA with €1000 as a result of their fundraising efforts in their Final Year. L – R : Isabelle Kilcoyne, Claire Savage, Brendan Mimmagh, VIVA, and Deirdre Ni Bhuchalla. Absent from photo are Eva Wilson and Karen McGoey.

**Veterinary Ireland are proud to support VIVA as the development charity of the veterinary profession in Ireland.**



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## Kiernan Milling supporting VIVA



Ciaran Nally (left) CEO, Kiernan Milling Granard, Co, Longford presenting a cheque to Brendan Mimmagh (VIVA Sec). This money will be used to support village animal health programmes in Uganda & Tanzania. Also present was Gareth Carroll (right), (Business Development Manager).

In 2009, Kiernan Milling will celebrate 30 years in business at their mill in Granard, Co. Longford. During this time they have become one of the largest manufacturers of Pig & Poultry feed in Ireland. In 2007, they acquired Stewarts Animal Feeds in Boyle, Co. Roscommon and as a result they now offer a range of ruminant products to farmers based across the country. Over the last 30 years they have worked with and assisted various local and national charities, one of these being VIVA and we would like to gratefully acknowledge their significant support over the past year.

## The volunteers that make the wheels turn Golfing for Uganda and Tanzania



VIVA Golf Classic - Left to right, back row:- Pat Kavanagh, Jim Spratt (Vetlink C&M), Leonard Dolan, Tony McManus, Brendan Crowe (Univet), Bill O'Donovan. Front row: - Brendan Mimmagh, Paul Rafter.

This year's VIVA golf classic was held in Tullamore Golf Club on August 8th. Set in mature parkland, this course has many picturesque views and is truly a magnificent setting. This year's classic was by far the most successful to date thanks again to the valiant efforts of Tony Mc Manus. A total of 39 teams turned out to play this excellent course. Many thanks to our colleague, Leonard Dolan, for organizing the course and the events on the 19th hole!!!! A special thanks again must go to our joint sponsors Univet and C&M Vetlink.

## CALLING ALL RUNNERS IN 2009

*Thinking of taking part in next year's mini-marathon or Dublin City Marathon?*

*Why not use the opportunity to raise funds for VIVA?*

*To join the VIVA Team contact us for further information – [info@viva.ie](mailto:info@viva.ie)*

### HOW TO HELP IN 2009 ...

- Have you an idea for a fundraiser?
- Is there a local community group near you that would show the VIVA video to learn more about what we do?
- Do you work in a company which assigns money to charity?
- Can we send an information pack to the Directors?
- Donations to VIVA now qualify for tax relief – our charity no, CHY 93510.
- We welcome the opportunity to speak to local groups, schools or individuals
- We can show a video or PowerPoint presentation on the work of VIVA at short notice

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