

# Viva News

Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance  
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Volunteers in Irish  
Veterinary Assistance

Member of



VSF INTERNATIONAL  
VÉTÉRINAIRES  
SANS FRONTIÈRES

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- VIVA Wheelers head to Mallorca
- Donor News

# Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance





# VIVA celebrates its 20th birthday

Dear Supporter,

As we mark our 20th birthday it is interesting to look back on the first VIVA newsletter which was published in 2001. It reported on VIVA's first venture into development assistance which was the funding of the importation of concentrate feed into Kosovo from Italy to help local farmers who had no fodder for their cattle. The planting of fodder had been hampered by the chaos of the Yugoslav war and the proliferation of landmines in fields and many farmers were facing into a harsh winter with no feed for their livestock. Twenty years on and VIVA is now involved in funding a large animal health project in Uganda (having committed €100,000 over 5 years) and is a member of Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International (VSF International), a network of similar organisations in Europe and Canada. To mark the occasion, VIVA recently hosted the VSF International AGM in Dublin, the first time that it had been held here.

This progress would not have been possible without you, our fantastic supporters. Looking at our first newsletter, it was mainly local community groups who were fundraising for VIVA. Everyone from the local ICMSA, Macra na Feirme, Foroige and dairy co-ops were involved in these early efforts. Since then, almost 700 people have contributed to VIVA's efforts through regular donations or by participating in one of our annual events such as the Golf Classic or the Heifer Draw.

We would like to thank everyone who supported our fundraising in 2019. We hope that you will be inspired by the impact of your contribution in the stories we tell here.

We look forward to your continued support in 2020.

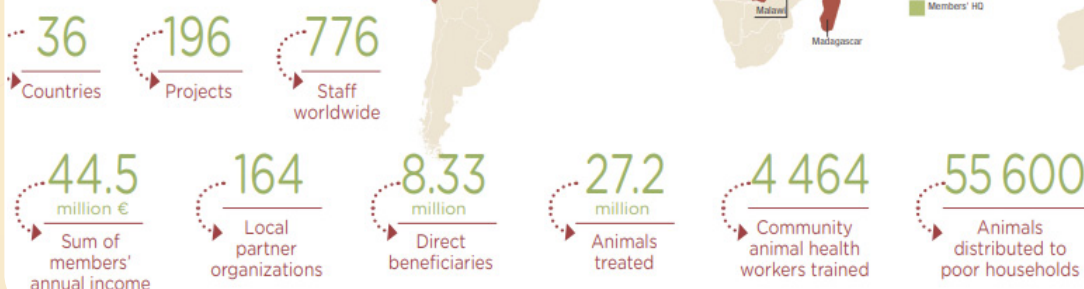
**Pat Murphy (VIVA Chairperson) & Mike Burke (VIVA CEO)**



VSF International delegates gather in Dublin

## Our work in 2018


The VSF International network supports families and farmers' organizations in **36 countries** in Africa, the Americas and Asia. In 2018, the members of VSF International implemented altogether **196 projects**, reaching over **8.33 million direct beneficiaries**, with an overall budget of **44.5 million €**.



*(Cover Photo – a Karamoja farmer in traditional costume and carrying his stool and herder's stick at a cattle vaccination round-up)*



# VSF Belgium & VIVA in Karamoja

A photograph of a person, likely a member of the Karamojan community, walking away from the camera in a dry, open landscape. The person is wearing a blue cap, a red and black striped shuka (a traditional wrap), and a black shuka. They are holding a wooden staff in their right hand and a small, light-colored object in their left hand. The background shows sparse, dry vegetation and a clear sky.

This April, Mike Burke of VIVA, along with Marc Joolen (the CEO of VSF Belgium) visited the joint VIVA / VSF Belgium project in the Karamoja region in north-east Uganda. Only one million people live in this region which is approx. the size of Belgium. It is the least developed region of Uganda and was until relatively recently a region of high conflict. Besides conventional conflict between the Ugandan Army and a militia called the Lord's Resistance Army, pastoralist and semi-pastoralist groups have engaged for years in cross-border cattle raiding ranging across the Ugandan, Kenyan and Sudanese borders. With climate change leading to increasing episodes of drought, access to pasture and water are now beginning to cause problems. In addition, huge mineral deposits in the region are also leading to conflict with the indigenous, pastoralist communities. As land in Karamoja is owned communally, mining companies often disregard the indigenous people's land rights, sometimes appropriating large areas of land without their permission. Land in Karamoja is particularly important to the community, which depends on nomadic pastoralism for survival and they are voicing fears of land grabs and environmental damage. VSF Belgium is supporting the Karamoja Development Forum, a local grassroots organisation which is advocating for local communities as they try to register ownership of communally-owned land and agree compensation with mineral companies.



# The RUPA CAHW Association

VIVA is funding the animal health elements of the project. The first aspect of this is the training of local farmers as Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW) to provide basic animal care to the farmers in their community. These CAHWs have formed associations, of which there are now nine, and eight of these have small outlets where they can meet, store supplies and sell medicines to local farmers. These groups are visited monthly by project staff to provide technical support, as well as training in record keeping, business skills and marketing. Already, almost half of the

groups are profitable. Motorbikes have been provided to two of the groups enabling them to service a bigger area. In addition, they are used as a taxi service in the community which provides another income source for the groups. Three groups have also been provided with solar-powered fridges to store vaccines. One of the biggest challenges in the groups is the level of illiteracy which can cause problems in the work of the CAHWs (calculating dosages of medicines) and in the viability of the vet outlets (lack of business skills e.g. stock control, records etc)



The CAHWs of the RUPA CAHW association gathered outside their veterinary outlet.



Typical dwelling of a Karamoja pastoralist family



Local CAHW, Ayopo Andrew Lomurumoe (centre with stick) discusses the progress of the project with Déthié Faye (centre right), VSF's Country Director in Uganda.



Emmanuel Emaruk, Co-Ordinator of the project and his colleague Isaac



The other element of the programme is vaccination of livestock for local endemic diseases. Up to 10,000 goats have been vaccinated against Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) and 5000 against Pestes de Petits Ruminants (PPR). Along with other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) over 25,000 cattle have been vaccinated against Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP) with the government providing the vaccines and the NGOs organising the gatherings and the recruitment of CAHWs to carry out the vaccination.



*Cattle being wormed at a gathering organized by local veterinary authorities, VSF Belgium and other livestock Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)*



*Mike Burke (VIVA) hands over a motorcycle to the Nayokatuk CAHW Association*

*Cattle being put through a crush to be vaccinated and treated with insecticides*





# Access to credit

Access to credit is a huge issue also in these communities with less than 1% of individuals having bank accounts, the average distance to a bank being about 80 km. To address this, VSF Belgium has implemented a programme of Village Savings and Loan Associations. These "Village Banks" provide an informal, accessible and transparent system of credit at low cost. Members meet weekly, agreeing to contribute set amounts every week to a loan fund (the typical amount being 5,000 Ugandan Shillings, (about one Euro). They can then borrow multiples of their savings at low interest rates which they pay back in three to five months. Members also contribute to a "welfare fund" which provides emergency funds for things like medical fees - there are no interest payments on this credit. Interestingly, one of the groups we visited, the Lokori Livestock Marketing Group, as well as operating a "Village Bank" also bought and sold cattle as a group to generate funds and ran a

group garden which nicely illustrates all the synergies that can evolve once people being to come together in groups like these.

The story of one lady's loan in the Lokori Livestock Marketing Group is a perfect example of the power of credit in these communities. She borrowed €40 and used it to pay her children's school fees (€20) and buy a goat (€20). She then slaughtered the goat and sold the meat for €30 from which she paid back €20 (half her loan) and used the remaining €10 to buy some maize. With the maize she brewed some homebrew which sold for €20 which paid back the remainder of the loan. So with a combination of access to credit, a little entrepreneurial spirit and hard work she had her school fees paid for "nothing"!

*The members of the Village Savings Bank (associated with the Lokori Livestock Marketing Group) gather - (the locked box for the savings is in the foreground).*







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 €296,000 for VIVA's projects worldwide since 2005 with fundraising cycles and hikes in Vietnam (2005), Morocco (2007), the Burren (2009), Bantry (2010), Westport (2011), Dungarvan (2012), the Glen of Aherlow (2013), Leitrim (2014), Westport (2015), Kilkenny (2016), the Burren (2017), the Slieve Bloom mountains (2018) and Mallorca (2019)

Mention Mallorca and everyone thinks of the nightlife of Santa Ponsa and Magaluf. However, there is another side to Mallorca in that it is a cycling mecca with over 150,000 cyclo-tourists visiting the island every year to enjoy the spectacular scenery and all-year round sunshine. After 10 years pounding the roads of Ireland the VIVA Wheelers this year headed for Mallorca, our last overseas cycle being to Morocco in 2007.

We were hosted by the Sportsactive cycle operation based in Alcudia in the north-east of the island and what a week we had. To quote one of the participants, Ger Cusack, this was "a fantastic escape"! Over five days cycling, the participants explored some of the iconic cycles the island has

to offer including the climb to the Cap Formentor lighthouse and the Sa Colabra climb (the first experience for many of a Category 1 climb – 10km, 7% gradient and 26 hairpin bends!)

A special note of thanks to Eamon O'Sullivan who organised the Zoetis sponsorship of the special fleece jackets for the event.

Our thanks also to Paddy O'Donoghue, Olaf O'Neill and Joe O'Donnell for being the inspiration behind the trip and for convincing us all that it would be brilliant (it was!).

All told, the event raised almost €10,000 for VIVA bringing the total raised by the VIVA Wheelers since 2005 to €296,000.

At the Cap Formentor lighthouse: L to R – George Chambers, Syd Nagle, Ger Cusack, Gordon Kellett, Paddy O'Donoghue, Donal Flynn, Eamonn O'Sullivan, Pat O'Brien, Seamus Fagan, Conor Sheridan, Ollie Dillon. Front: Mike Burke and Danny from Kildare!







Conor Sheridan & Ger Cusack taking the Sa Colabra climb in their stride



Donal Flynn, Seamus Fagan, Mike Burke, Joe Collins and Joe O'Donnell take a break



Conor Sheridan, Ger Cusack, Mike Burke, Pat O'Brien and Eamonn O'Sullivan prepare to tackle Sa Colabra



Gordon Kellett, Paddy O'Donoghue, Mike Burke and Joe Collins



L to R: Dave Martin, Frank Conway, Paddy O'Donoghue (3rd from left), Gordon Kellett, Enda Finnerty (last on right)



"Class of '89" veterans, L to R – Enda Finnerty, Mike Burke and Pat Kirwan.





Left (foreground back) – Matt Corcoran, Enda Finnerty, Diarmuid Healy, Pat Kirwan. Right (background forwards) – Lesley Yeats, Jim Higgins, Tom Fabby, Marie Longworth and Denis Healy.



Lucy Fabby took a more leisurely approach!

The achievement of Syd Nagle also cannot go unmentioned. He is the only VIVA Wheeler remaining who has participated in every cycle we've organised. There's also no excuse for him not to come next year as in 2020 we're heading to Ballyhoura country (his home country) for our annual "Bike 'n Hike". Nestled on the Cork-Limerick border the Ballyhoura Mountains offer a unique cycling and hiking experience and for those staying overnight there is the chance to try out the Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trail which is the largest trail network of its kind in Ireland. There are 98 kms of trails ranging from the moderate 6 km Greenwood loop to the demanding Castlepook loop which is over 50km in length!

**For more info or to be added to the VIVA Wheelers mailing list contact Mike Burke on 086 2568357 or [mike@viva.ie](mailto:mike@viva.ie)**

Syd Nagle and Ollie Dillon





## Avolon donate €5,000 to VIVA

Dublin-based aircraft leasing company, Avolon, has made a contribution of €5,000 to VIVA's overseas projects as part of its corporate social responsibility CARE programme. VIVA would like to thank Pat Murphy Jnr. In their Treasury Department for facilitating this very generous contribution. Coincidentally, Avolon are based in offices on the site of the old veterinary college in Ballysbridge.



## Mid-West Clinical Society donate €4,000 to VIVA

The Mid-West Clinical Society has donated €4,000 to VIVA's projects as a result of a surplus in their funds. VIVA would like to acknowledge this very generous donation and thank the Society for their efforts.

*Mike Burke (VIVA) accepts a cheque from Gwen Spicer O'Connell (Treasurer – Mid West Clinical Society).*



## Legacy Giving

Leaving a gift of any value in your Will can make a real and lasting difference for generations to come, to the small-scale livestock farmers that VIVA works with in the Developing World.

While providing for your loved ones will be your priority, making a will is also a unique chance to provide for those causes close to your heart and leave an everlasting gift.

If you would like further information about including a gift to VIVA in your will please contact Mike Burke on 086 – 2568357 or [mike@viva.ie](mailto:mike@viva.ie). All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence.





The "Heifer Draw" this year raised just over €4,000. VIVA would also like to acknowledge the support of our sponsor, Duggan Veterinary Supplies in Thurles who generously sponsored all the prizes. We wish their MD, Dónal Duggan, and his staff the best of luck with the opening of their new premises in Thurles in the spring.

## Heifer Draw Winners 2019

- The heifer goes to Aishling Browne, Martinstown, Co. Limerick (Seller – Aine Davin).
- €500 goes to Tom Kelly, DVO Office, Cavan Town (Seller – Jim Higgins)
- €250 goes to Albert Coleman, Cootehill, Co. Cavan (Seller - Fortune Vets, Cootehill)
- €250 goes to Tom Timon, Roscommon Town (Seller - John Murray of "All Creatures Great & Small Vet Clinic", Roscommon Town)



*Our top ticket seller this year was Karen Mulherin who sold €700 worth of tickets. She also joined us in Mallorca to represent the hikers on the VIVA Wheelers trip! Here, she (centre) joins her Mayo colleagues, Lucy and Tom Fabby.*

*Thanks a mill to everyone who sold or bought a ticket!!!*

On a positive note our "VIVA Heifer" from 2017, Altamira Kate, gave birth to a calf in March of this year after some infertility issues. Having been won by Stephen Harrison, Riverstick, Co. Cork, she is now being looked after by his uncle Sean Coffey in Newport, Co. Tipperary (who sold Stephen the winning ticket). Sean is a vet in Mulcair Vets and Altamira Kate's calf was delivered by his colleague, John Berkery, while Sean was away on a well-deserved break! Appropriately enough, the calf was christened "Bó"



*Altamira Kate and her calf*



# The "Univet" and "C & M Vetlink" Golf Classic

The 17th annual VIVA golf classic returned to its usual haunt, Tullamore Golf Club's 18-hole parkland championship course, in July. VIVA would like to thank Tony McManus for organising the event and to all the competitors who played on the day with over 30 teams competing for an array of prizes. Once again the VIVA classic was sponsored by Univet and C&M Vetlink. Without their valued support it would be very difficult to stage this most successful annual competition that raised over €4,000 bringing the total raised since 2003 for VIVA's projects to €94,000. Next year, we'll be pulling out all the stops to take this total to €100,000!

**Also special thanks to the following for their additional sponsorship:**

**Liam McEldowney and Anthony Sweeney.**



*L to R – Stephen Lyons (Univet - Sponsor), Tony McManus, Brendan Mimmagh, (VIVA).*



*History was made this year when a competing team was made up of 4 brothers. The O'Connor brothers originally from Co. Kerry are pictured above: L to R - Joe Joe (Ballybunion), Frank (Dingle), Humphrey (Tullamore), Michael (Dublin). Joe Joe runs a successful Veterinary practice in Listowel, Co. Kerry.*



*The winning team: L to R- Tom Byrne, Rickey O'Gara, Arron Fullard, John P. O'Gara, with (left) Stephen Lyons (Univet) and (right) Tony McManus.*