Executive Summary
Final Independent Evaluation Report
Brooke India Programme
2006–2017

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Summary of Brooke India Exited Interventions

Brooke is an international animal welfare charity dedicated to improving the lives of working horses, donkeys and mules with headquarters in London. Brooke has worked in India since 1992 and to manage the expanded activities, Brooke India (BI) was established in December 1999 as a registered company in India. India is home to around 1.2 million equids, of which most belong to underprivileged communities and are used as working animals. Non-availability of resources and poor knowledge of owners on equine health are the main causes of poor equine welfare in India. To achieve the goal of ensuring acceptable level of welfare for working equids, the programme focuses on service provision, community engagement, and advocacy. BI is funded directly by Brooke UK. BI implements the intervention through Direct Equine Welfare Units (direct units), and Partner Equine Welfare Units (partner units). BI has passed through various phases and at present is focused on strengthening local service delivery system.

Summary of the Final Independent Evaluation of Brooke India Programme

By March 2017, the programme exited seven units after a decade of intervention. In order to understand successes and failures and learn lessons, BI commissioned an exit evaluation in 2018. The objectives of the evaluation are to evaluate various programme approaches, and to analyse the cost of intervention in relation to the results achieved in direct units compared to partner units. The evaluation was undertaken by a lead evaluator and a technical consultant. The focus was on two direct units (Aligarh and Baghpat) and two partner units (Lucknow and Unaao). The findings will primarily be used by BI, Brooke UK and BI Trustees as a learning document. The evaluation framework used an adapted version of the evaluation criteria developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Economic Cooperation and Development. The evaluation was conducted between February and April 2018.

The evaluation adopted a mixed method approach, a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques. The qualitative techniques included In-depth Interviews (IDI), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), direct observation, and documentation of good practice. Quantitative techniques were used for the analysis of financial data. Questionnaires for IDIs and FGDs were developed and used to obtain information from programme stakeholders. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources included programme documents, data from Monthly Progress Reports (MPR), and financial data. The primary data was collected from various stakeholders including direct beneficiaries, service providers, community influencers, government officials, Brooke UK staff, and BI staff. Limitations in the methodology included that the selection of visited sites was done by BI, the fact that indicators were continuously changing throughout the lifetime of the project (meaning progress couldn’t be accurately assessed), and the possibility of getting biased responses due to the presence of BI staff.

Findings

Validity of Design. The programme complied with the exit strategy of gradual withdrawal from free treatment services and shift to paid services through local institution building and linkages to service providers. However, the timing of exit was not built into the programme design and a detailed exit strategy came much later. Exit for each unit was based on the findings of an internal exit assessment. The exit assessments showed that targets on equine welfare indicators were met across the units, barring a few exceptions. In the absence of a log frame for the whole programme, long-term planning could not be made. The exit from units took longer as the focus and indicators for exit kept on changing. The strategic plan 2015–2020 articulated the need for strengthening local service delivery to bring sustainability after exit. To achieve this, accelerated efforts were undertaken for the capacity building of Local Health
Providers (LHP), farriers, Government Veterinary Officers (GVO), Livestock Extension Officers (LEO), Ashwamitrası and Community Resource Persons (CRP). In the first five years, advocacy meant influencing at the district and state level and mainly focused on the Animal Husbandry Department (AHD). From FY 2013–14 onwards, policy advocacy was reflected in the log frame. When the provision of free treatment services came to an end, there was enough capacity to achieve the programme goals in less amount of time. Factors such as the availability of a detailed exit strategy and learning from previously exited units will also contribute to achieving targets quicker in future interventions.

Relevance/Appropriateness The programme was relevant as it tried to find a happy union between the community need and BI’s central focus on equine welfare. The identification of problems and possible solutions to ensure equine welfare came from the community. Participatory tools such as the Participatory Welfare Needs Assessment (PWNA) were useful to identify the problems of the equid owning community. Equid owners as well as service providers were consulted at the unit level planning meetings, and Ashwamitra conferences. The involvement of Equine Welfare Group (EWG), Association of Equine Welfare Group (AEWG) members, and Ashwamitrası in various forums led to their overall empowerment. Most of the female members in older EWGs felt that they are now experienced enough to manage the EWGs. The members of a few newer groups still look for guidance of Veterinary Assistant cum Community Motivator (VACM).

Coherence The programme was able to identify local resources through resource mapping and PWNAS. The programme built on the capacity of existing resources such as local farriers and LHPs so that their services would be better accepted by the community. BI staff was able to maintain a cordial relationship with AHD staff. The AHD invited BI to participate in the health camps organised at district and block level. However, the AHD could not be of help to equid owners as presently government vaccination drives on livestock does not include vaccinations of equids. There was widespread awareness about the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) programme among women EWG members and uptake of benefits from the scheme was high. Awareness and uptake of the labour card and livestock insurance was low.

Effectiveness of Management set up: The previous management structure of the exited units, which existed until March 2017, was conducive for the implementation of activities. Field operations were strengthened based on learning. In clusters where the VACM was a woman, formation and nurturing of women EWG groups was better, especially in Muslim communities. With the end of free treatment services in March 2017, restructuring of staff was done at the unit level. The merged position of VO-cum-Manager now conducts both the technical and managerial functions in the unit. After the end of free treatment services, they became responsible for strengthening of local institutions, linkage with service providers, and engagement with district officials.

Until 2015 there was no advocacy staff at BI headquarters to plan and implement advocacy activities. Presently there are five staff members in the advocacy team. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) took a leadership role for policy advocacy at national and state level and the advocacy team played a supportive role. BI did not have separate advocacy staff at regional level although animal health is a state subject. Therefore, Advocacy at state level was limited to the AHD only.

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1 Ashwamitra is an active member of the equid owning community in the village who acts as a link between the community and local service providers.

2 The Mission was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011 and it aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services.
**Effectiveness** Adequate emphasis was given to implement activities to achieve outcomes on service provision and community engagement. The exit targets on all the key indicators were achieved in all the units with a few exceptions. Qualitative information reflected a broadly similar picture on awareness creation, local institution building and linkages. Positive changes were observed in the behaviour of equid owners and brick kiln owners. Linkages with LHPs and farriers were found both at brick kiln sites and homes. The programme used tools such as Clinical Quality Monitoring (CQM) and Farrier Quality Monitoring (FQM) to ensure good quality services of LHPs and farriers. Equid owners were satisfied with the services of trained LHPs and farriers. For most of the owners the cost of services was affordable. Equid owners realised the effect of adoption of husbandry practices, namely decrease in diseases and improved health and productivity of the equids. Formation of EWGs at village level, and AEWGs at gram panchayat or block level provided opportunities for income generating activities. Gram panchayat is the lowest level local administration in India. A block covers several gram panchayats and is a higher level administrative unit. However, the majority of owners at brick kiln sites were concerned about new challenges which affected their livelihood. The focus on advocacy activities to create a favourable policy environment came much later. Advocacy was a success in a few areas like the Glanders compensation policy. Advocacy efforts by BI resulted in the inclusion of equids for insurance purposes. There are certain emerging areas where BI should undertake policy advocacy at the national level.

**Efficiency** The initial years of partnership saw a participatory mode of working in which suggestions of partner staff were taken into account. Later on, decisions on strategies and budgets for partner units became prescriptive in nature, making partnership appear more like a contractual project. Partners had a limited role in the management of staff. Partner units were more economical as compared to direct units. A substantial proportion of the cost in direct units was on human resources, as the salary of direct staff was higher than partner staff. There was no visible difference on achievement of results between direct and partner units. The exit assessment showed that exit targets were achieved in both.

**Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact** The increased knowledge of good husbandry practices is sustainable in the future, because equid owners see value in practicing them. The increased demand of services from trained LHPs due to linkage with community institutions makes them sustainable. The linkage with trained farriers is sustainable as both owners and farriers benefit from shoeing regularly as required. Female groups and associations are sustainable as the members realize the potential of these groups to address their urgent financial and social needs. The functioning of ARCs is sustainable since they act as one-stop centre for linkage with service providers. Sustainability of men EWG groups is in question as these groups were found to be less stable due to migration of members for work. The functioning of federations at the district level in Uttar Pradesh is also found to be less viable. The use of PWNAs has resulted in behaviour change of the community and the likelihood of such change could be predicted for the future. The smooth functioning of female groups is also likely to be continued in future.

**Conclusions**

The 10 years of programme intervention witnessed important developments, i.e. the shift from free treatment services to paid services, and a focus on policy advocacy. To meet the changing circumstances, various strategies were adopted at different stages of the programme. However, the continuation of free treatment services fostered a dependency on BI and created challenges for exit. The previous management structure and staffing of exited units, which existed until March 2017, was adequate for effective implementation of activities. Most of the owners found the cost of quality services affordable as they realized that overall costs decreased if their equids fell ill less often. The majority of owners at brick
kiln sites were concerned about the slowing down of brick kiln work which affected their livelihood. A large number of units were run through partners to reduce programme cost and to leverage local organizations for better rapport building with the community and networking with local government. Partner units were less expensive as compared to direct units. However, the nature of engagement between BI and partners has turned into a contractual relationship. From the findings it could be concluded that while most of the programme features are sustainable for equine welfare, more effort is required to enable the community to access government schemes and other livelihood options for equine owners’ welfare.

**Lessons learnt and good practices**

Lessons learnt were: free treatment is not required as equine owning communities are willing to pay for quality services; a holistic approach which addresses equine and human welfare is needed for long-term success; a five year programme is sufficient to achieve objectives; capacity building of AHD staff did not translate to government ownership; and the limited role of partners in decision-making hindered partnerships. Good practices found are: use of WhatsApp by staff and LHPs to share events and seek guidance; participation of staff in brick kiln owners’ associations meeting to promote the agenda of equine welfare; and strengthening the AEWG through convergence of group interest and individual interest.

**Recommendations**

1. Units should be exited within five years. The first four years should focus on site selection and implementation of activities while the last year should be devoted for transition to exit.

2. After exiting, light support should continue for 11 year, focusing on technical guidance and support.

3. New units should be run as partner units. Non-Government Organization (NGOs) working locally with experience in institution building and networking should be given more preference.

4. Experienced vets with a minimum two years’ project management experience should be recruited for the posts of VO-cum-Manager in new units.

5. Policy intervention is required to mainstream LHPs and bring them under a legal framework. BI should influence and support the regulation and standardization of LHP training.

6. Every unit should recruit at least one woman VACM.

7. VO-cum-Managers and VACMs should be paid competitively as per the technical nature of their work.

8. Ashwamitras should be linked with the Panchayati Raj Institution at the ward level so that updated information on government schemes is available to community.

9. Issues for policy advocacy need to be identified and an actionable strategy should be put in place.

10. BI should focus on developing alternative livelihood strategies that support equine welfare.

11. More emphasis should be placed on formation of women EWGs.

12. District level federations should not be formed in the future in Uttar Pradesh.