

Executive Summary

Mid-Term Independent Evaluation

Brooke Pakistan: Transforming the Lives of Working Equines in Brick Kilns project

2017 – 2021



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Author: Dr Karen Iles

Evaluation manager: Cesar Urquizo, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Advisor, Performance and Evaluation, Brooke UK

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BROOKE PAKISTAN BRICK KILN PROJECT

Brooke has been working in Pakistan since 1991 to improve the welfare of donkeys, mules and horses in equine owning communities living and/or working in brick kilns, coal mines and urban areas. Brooke Pakistan's (BP) current work with the brick kiln industry is being implemented through the "Transforming the Lives of Working Equines Project" funded by the Alborada Trust. The project is being implemented across 31 districts of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) provinces. The project outcomes are:

Outcome 1: By the end of 2021, 500 brick kilns in 31 districts of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have improved the health and welfare conditions of 9,000 working equines.

Outcome 2: Working equines will be meaningfully included in Pakistan's Brick Kiln Agenda for Action, along with human and child labour and the environment, and securing policy change for working equine animals across the industry, influencing outcomes for thousands of working equines.

In July 2017 BP made the strategic decision to change their approach to one focused on developing sustainable livestock services. The project strategy involves creating sustainable local solutions and long-term changes in policies and legal regulations through advocacy work. At a local level, the project engages with communities (animal owners, women, children, brick kiln owners), public and private livestock local service providers (LSPs) and government livestock departments.

BP's operational units at field level are Community Equine Welfare Teams (CEWTs) consisting of a community animal health officer (CAHO), social mobiliser who may be a veterinarian or social scientist, and a driver. Groups of CEWTs are coordinated by a Regional Manager at region level. The partners that BP is providing funding and technical support are Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO) and the National Rural Support Program (NRSP).

SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

The independent mid-term evaluation took place between 6th February and 30th April 2019. The objective was to provide an external independent assessment of the progress of the project towards its expected outcomes and targets and to identify successes, challenges, areas for learning, good practices and opportunities for improvement. The conceptual framework was based on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evaluation criteria. These include validity of design, relevance/appropriateness, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness of management, effectiveness, and sustainability and likelihood of impact.

Primary data was collected from: brick kiln communities; stakeholders at district, provincial and national levels (e.g. government, NGOs); Brooke Pakistan; and Brooke UK (BUK). In total, 557 people took part in the evaluation of whom 65 were women (reflecting the relatively low number of women engaged in the project). Participants included 37 brick kiln communities from Punjab, Sindh, Peshawar and Rawalpindi. The tools used to collect qualitative and quantitative primary data included focus group discussions (FGD), semi-structured interviews (SSI), questionnaires, proportional piling, stakeholder relationships analysis, workshops, review of documents, and critique of relevant systems. Secondary data was gathered from BP's monitoring data base including Brooke-Check.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

This section presents a summary of the independent mid-term evaluation findings based on OECD criteria and rating system that consists of five levels: 1 unsatisfactory, 2 improvement needed, 3 on average meets expectations, 4 meets expectations, and 5 exceptional.

Validity of Design: Rating 2. The overall design of the project is valid. The project logical framework (LF) is generally well developed in terms of logic. The gender component is only partially developed. While some of the indicators listed in the LF are appropriate for measuring the goal, outcome and outputs, others are not. The indicators and tools for measuring changes from the advocacy component at outcome level and contributions to the goal are insufficient (Annex VII). The design of the monitoring, evaluation, accountability

and learning (MEAL) system is well developed for measuring process and results but does not adequately support lesson learning and validating good practices.

The tools developed by Brooke to measure achievements towards the goal are of good quality, specifically the SEBWAT and OBM tools. Tools used at output level include the OBM tool, the AHMF and FQM tools. BP has used these well to collect data. After the baseline survey was completed in October 2017, BP selected a sub-set of parameters from the SEBWAT that the project would then focus on improving over the next 3 ½ years. These are BP's "prioritized parameters" referred to as the Animal Baseline Indicators (ABI) and are the goal indicators in the project LF.

The issues identified in the mid-term evaluation lie not with the tools (listed above) per se, but with *how* they are being used. Challenges with the baseline and monitoring sampling plan in terms of not being representative of the range of brick kiln communities across the project, lack of a comparable baseline for brick kiln communities recently engaged by BP, and inadequate critique of the results by BP is limiting the effective *use* of these tools. For these reasons the results from SEBWAT, ABI, OBM, AHMF and the FQM surveys need to be interpreted with caution. Also, the range of indicators being measured in the LF at goal, outcome and output levels are not generating enough of the kind of data for BP to adequately judge how much progress they are making towards achieving their *objectives*.

The exit strategy is insufficiently developed in terms of supporting evidence-based decision-making for exiting mature¹ brick kiln communities that have reached sustainable improvements in equine welfare to the required standards. Analysis of current performance suggests that the outcome target of exiting 500 brick kiln communities by March 2021 is unrealistic and unlikely to be achieved. However, BP has the potential to greatly enhance performance in key areas. This will also be critical for supporting other organisations to adapt BP's approach in the scale-up phase (after March 2021).

Coherence: Rating 4. The coherence of the project in terms of relationships and engagement with government both within the livestock sector and other sectors is good. BP's long engagement with stakeholders has built high levels of trust, mutual respect and cooperation. BP's approach to facilitating dialogue, negotiation, linking stakeholders and facilitating events and meetings has contributed significantly to building productive relationships. The project is well aligned with global and regional interventions and policies. It targets the appropriate policies to facilitate change.

Relevance/Appropriateness: Rating 3. The project is broadly relevant for equine owners, users, carers, and LSPs in terms of BP understanding and meeting their needs. Key benefits reported by owners/users include skills to treat animals; skills in grooming, cleaning stall/shelter; increased income; knowledge of good diet; and links to LSPs. Women equine carers reported improved knowledge in equine diet, giving water, grooming, providing shade, stall hygiene and why equines should not be beaten. However, the number of women engaged is low. The most important benefits gained from the project reported by LSPs are improved awareness of equine welfare and improved capacity in treatment and handling cases. Although LSPs value the training and mentoring by BP this support might not fully meet their requirements and needs further investigation.

Effectiveness: Rating 3. BP is currently working with 418 brick kiln communities and has exited 32 since the start of the project. BP has made good progress in most indicators listed in the LF. At goal and outcome levels the targets have been reached and exceeded and are on track to be achieved by 2021. However, the LF goal and outcome indicators do not measure all the parameters needed to determine whether a brick kiln community has reached maturity and is ready for BP to exit. The outcome target of exiting 500 mature brick kilns by 2021 is unlikely to be achieved. The project is on track to achieve targets for equine facilities in brick kilns (water troughs, shade), equine owners/users' practices, and the number of school students engaged. The project has not reached targets set for March 2019 for the number of Community Change

¹ **Maturity** refers to when a brick kiln community has reached a self-sustaining level of capacity where facilities (water, shade, first aid kits), social structures (community change agents, peer groups, brick kiln owners), equine owners, users and carer practices, and the quality and accessibility to affordable local services (veterinary assistants, veterinarians and farriers) to sustain equine health according to OIE standards and the five domains of equine welfare, without the support of BP.

Agents (CCA), first aid kits and number of equines treated by LSPs. The targets for the quality of LSPs (competencies) on *average* have so far been reached, but they may not be on track to be achieved by the end of the project if the persistent challenges with *specific* competencies in clinical areas are not addressed. No targets were set for March 2019 for the number of women participating in awareness sessions and the number of equine users engaged by Brooke Associate Model (BAM) LSPs, although good progress has been made. Very good progress has been made in the advocacy component in terms of policy changes, although less research was carried out than expected. However, the practical links between BP's local brick kiln environment work and the provincial and national policy change work is not yet fully developed.

BP faces critical challenges in some aspects of the farrier training and/or mentoring (safe hoof trimming and shoeing) and the veterinary assistant training (in clinical areas). The challenges are likely to lie in the training *methodology* rather than the technical content. This conclusion is based on: (a) the curricula was developed according to Brooke Veterinary Competency Framework (BVCF) and subject to rigorous review by Brooke veterinary technical staff, (b) BP trainers are qualified veterinarians with expertise in equine medicine and husbandry, and (c) BP CAHOs and trainers reported persistent difficulties in changing LSPs practices, attitudes and beliefs.

Equine owners have improved access to and are using LSPs. Most equine owners do pay for services. The most difficult owner behaviours to change include beating animals, over loading and feeding a poor diet. CCAs play an important role in improving owners/users' practices and maintaining the first aid kits. The gap in treatment services left when BP stopped giving routine free treatments is being partially filled by LSPs, equine owners and government, although the independent mid-term evaluation findings are inconclusive. The BAM approach is showing signs of success in terms of providing sustainable services for equines including for very low-income households and spreading awareness and skills on equine welfare beyond the project catchment area.

Effectiveness of management set up: Rating 3. The reduction in staff numbers and reallocation of field-team roles for community development and training has been achieved. The stream lining of the BP Senior Management Team (SLT) has supported an improvement in decision-making. BP's adoption of a new sustainability-based strategy in July 2017 has led to a need for BP to strengthen their social science capabilities to complement their technical animal health and welfare expertise. The new strategy involves a radically different way of thinking and working focussed on enabling and facilitating stakeholders to develop their capacity to lead and take ownership of processes for improving equine welfare. The mid-term evaluation found that BP has begun to make the changes needed. There remains insufficient social science expertise at senior level, especially for supporting the mainstreaming of gender and MEAL across the project. However, the current recruitment of a Community Development Manager (CDM) will help strengthen social sciences expertise. The role of CEWTs in lesson learning and validating good practices to improve BP's approaches is not yet well developed. The post of a full time Program Manager (PM) has yet to be filled (currently being held by an acting PM who is providing excellent coordination and oversight). The configuration of regional teams is appropriate. Insufficient use is being made of male staff to expand the work with female equine carers, given that it is possible for men to work with women in many areas.

Efficiency: Rating 3. Overall, BP's resources have been managed adequately. The inputs from BUK have been used effectively. There are some misunderstandings/disagreements between BUK and BP on how to carry out some activities, and occasionally for BP to follow BUK's lead too readily. Not using the monitoring results sufficiently for improving the effectiveness of BP's approach has reduced efficiency.

Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact: Rating 3. Some aspects of BP's work are showing signs of sustainability, such as equine facilities and first aid kits being maintained, and improvements in the quality of LSP services especially the BAM approach. Over time the BAMs' income increases to a level where the BP stipend makes up only a small proportion of the BAMs' total income. BAMs provide free treatments for very low-income households, indicating that the model may be improving access to quality LSP services for the poor. Responsibility being taken by some brick kiln owners for equine facilities and first aid kits, and the progressive embedding of changes in policy and legislation in government livestock departments and training institutes, is likely to be contributing to long-term sustainability. According to the LF indicators

being measured, BP is having an impact on equine welfare (although this covers only the prioritized parameters measured in the ABI). The substantial increase in water and shade facilities for equines is likely to be having a positive impact on equine welfare.

CONCLUSIONS

BP made the strategic decision to discontinue the provision of free routine treatments and adopt a sustainable strategy in line with Brooke's overall theory of change. Given that this took place just 18 months ago, and BP is still in a transition phase, very good progress has been made across many aspects of the project. Valuable contributions have been made to policy and legislation changes and the embedding of these changes is beginning to happen in brick kilns, livestock departments and training institutes and universities. There have also been significant improvements in the capacities of equine owners/users and LSPs, and the linkages between them. Equine facilities in brick kilns have greatly improved. The early signs of sustainability of BP's interventions are very promising at brick kiln, provincial and national levels. BP has made progress in modifying their leadership and management structures to support the delivery of the new strategy. Improvements are still needed in the recruitment of key staff at senior level (a program manager and staff with social science skills) and staff to support the advocacy work and MEAL system. The mainstreaming of gender and a lesson learning culture and practices throughout the organisation is vital. It is important that this is led and legitimised by BP's senior management.

It is now critical that BP turn their attention to *lesson learning* and *creating good practices* by improving the MEAL system and allocating enough time and resources for this task. Failure to do so may seriously hinder BP in achieving their outcomes of enabling a significant number of brick kilns to reach maturity within an enabling policy environment (also needed for being ready for scaling up BP's approach across the brick kiln industry). BP has a range of good quality monitoring tools and a valuable data base that can provide many crucial insights if used reflectively and creatively.

BP has underestimated the time it is likely to take to strengthen the capacity of brick kiln communities, LSPs and supporting stakeholders to levels where BP can exit. The BP team faces important strategic decisions. The first is to establish a realistic target for the number of brick kilns that can be exited over the next two years. The second is to consider not engaging with more new brick kiln communities at this stage. Instead, BP might focus resources on consolidating successes, addressing challenges and turning their approach into evidence-based good practices. The justification for this is the good progress already made over the last two years and the critical challenges that still need to be addressed and solutions then validated. In engaging more new brick kilns BP runs the danger of spreading their resources too thinly, especially staff time, and failing to achieve fully sustainable exits from brick kilns and/or not being ready to scale up in the next phase of the project.

LESSONS LEARNT AND GOOD PRACTICES

Key lessons learnt are as follows. Building and sustaining good quality relationships with government, communities and key stakeholders at brick kiln, provincial and national levels has proved vital in bringing about changes in brick kiln conditions, community capacity, the quality of LSP services, and policies and legislation for improving equine welfare. Equine owners *are* willing to pay for LSP services. This also supports long term access to LSP services and sustaining improvements in equine welfare. Relying on the *overall averages* of monitoring results can provide a misleading picture of progress, especially where there is a wide range in results between brick kilns, individual animals or people, and parameters within an indicator. This can also hide critical issues that do not get picked up and addressed (e.g. low "farrier expert" skills and the training/mentoring of farriers). Failing to design the sampling plan (for SEBWAT, ABI and OBM surveys) to ensure the data collected is representative of different brick kiln types (brick kilns with historical support from BP versus new brick kilns who had no historical support), makes extrapolating monitoring results across the whole project problematic. Another consequence was that an appropriate baseline for brick kiln communities engaged by BP since July 2017 was not established. The decision to monitor a limited range of parameters (the ABIs) based on data only collected from brick kiln communities who had

historical support from BP, prevents the team from being able to attribute changes in equine welfare to their *new* strategy and approaches.

BP has not yet reached the stage where potential good practices have been fully tested and validated. Emerging good practices include BP's approach to: establishing and maintaining good quality relationships with stakeholders; BAM local service providers; community awareness and training; the CCA approach; the establishment and maintenance of equine facilities and first aid kits; and how to link the advocacy work with changes in brick kiln environments and the impact on equine welfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Exit strategy.** Revise the exit strategy so that it includes a complete set of indicators that measure equine welfare and will be assessed as part of the exit decision-making process. This includes the targets that need to be achieved before a community is judged to be mature and BP is ready to exit..
2. **Project Targets.** Assess the status of all current brick kiln communities in terms of levels for all indicators. Identify any gaps in information and collect data to fill these. Use the assessment results to agree a realistic target number of brick kilns that BP can exit by the end of the project.
3. **Farrier and veterinary assistant training and mentoring.** Expand the critique of the monitoring results started in this independent mid-term evaluation to identify all causes of problems and systematically review each aspect of the LSP training and mentoring through: (a) observation of the quality of training and mentoring, (b) identify the elements of the curricula that need strengthening especially in terms of *learning methods* and possibly content, e.g. sessions covering clinical areas and LSPs related beliefs and attitudes.
4. **MEAL system.** Revise the sampling plan for the SEBWAT and OBM tool so that data can be collected on new brick kiln communities engaged since July 2017. Establish a baseline for the new brick kilns using the SEBWAT and the OBM tool and repeat annually. Mainstream the lesson learning and good practices aspects of the MEAL system throughout BP by revising the MEAL system. Revise the monitoring of the advocacy component by developing indicators and tools to measure changes at outcome level and contributions of the advocacy work to the brick kiln environment work.
5. **Logical framework and indicators.** Revise the LF using the recommendations in Annex VII-A. These do not imply a radical change in the project design. Rather, they intend to bring the LF more in line with BP's actual strategy and focus for the next two years in order to achieve objectives, create evidence-based good practices and develop readiness to scale-up.
6. **Gender mainstreaming.** Establish more women peer groups. This can be done by both male and female social mobilizers. Strengthen the gender component in the project design by improving the LF and indicators (see Annex VII-A).
7. **BP management set up.** Recruit a full-time program manager as soon as possible (a social scientist or veterinarian). The new PM qualifications should complement the CDM currently being recruited. Recruit an additional staff member each for the M&E work and the advocacy work. Consider women candidates in order to improve the gender balance in BP. Consider including the advocacy manager in the senior leadership team (SLT) to further strengthen social science expertise at senior level.
8. **Community Training.** Review and revise the community training carried out with peer groups and community change agents (CCAs) to make it even more practical, with less reliant on charts and lecturing.
9. **Overall project cycle management.** Strengthen BP's skills and processes in project cycle management and strengthening results-based thinking and adaptive management especially at the design stage, such as the LF hierarchy of objectives and indicators, exit strategy for brick kiln communities, the MEAL system, and the sampling plan for baseline and on-going data collection.
10. **Pilot a possible way to address long term sustainability issues.** BP explore ways of improving the *integration* of their interventions into a more cohesive unit or group (each covering a geographical area).