

Does a holistic approach to improving equine welfare produce better outcomes?

# Minimising cart donkeys’ foot conditions through community awareness-raising, capacity-building and linking relevant stakeholders in Jacobabad



## The Brooke Pakistan

Shah S Z A<sup>1</sup>, Nawaz S<sup>1</sup>, Laghari H<sup>1</sup>, Shafi M<sup>1</sup>, Upjohn M<sup>2</sup> and Eager R<sup>2</sup>  
zahir@thebrooke.org.pk  
1. The Brooke, Opposite Telephone Exchange, Charsadda Road, Peshawar 25000, Pakistan  
2. The Brooke, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Friars Bridge Court, 41-45 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8NZ, UK

### Summary

- Poor awareness regarding foot care, poor terrain and unavailability of trained farriers and health workers can lead to relatively higher prevalence of lower limb conditions: for example, overgrown and cracked/worn-out hooves and lameness
- Brooke organised awareness sessions on basic management practices, trained an animal owner as a farrier and another as a community-based animal health worker, then linked them with two needy and willing communities with a total of 36 donkeys
- As a result prevalence of foot conditions in target donkeys reduced notably

### Introduction

- A survey on 210 cart donkeys in Jacobabad Pakistan, March 2012 revealed high frequency of pastern joint swelling, hoof cracks, elongated hooves, abnormal gait and bruised and diseased soles (Figure 1)
- It was hypothesised that these problems were due to poor community awareness and non-availability of trained local service providers
- A community education initiative was designed, supported by training a farrier (Figure 2) and a community-based animal health worker (CBAHW) with the aim of improving the hoof health of donkeys in this region

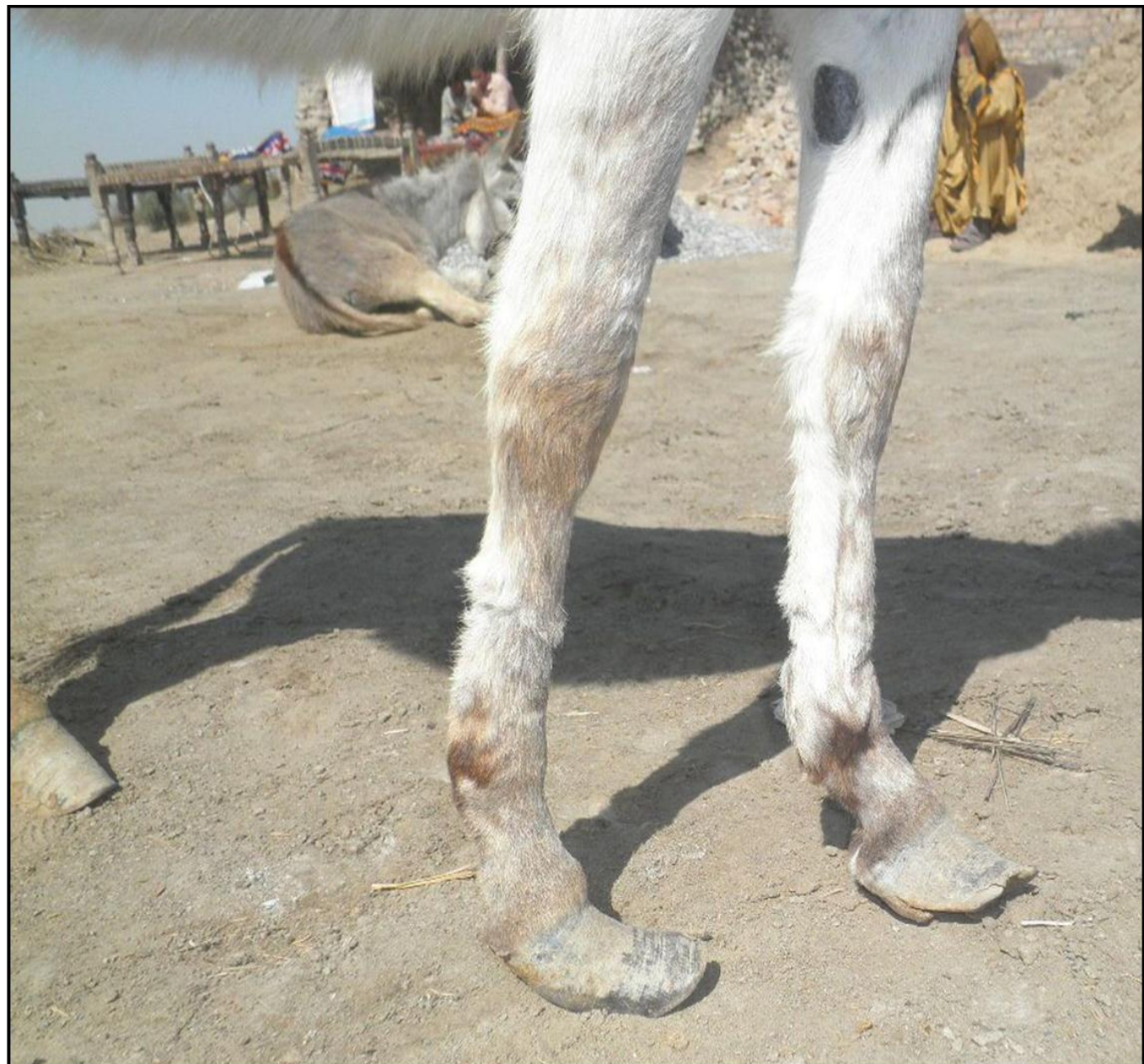


Figure 1: Elongated hooves in a donkey



Figure 2: Brooke-trained farrier

### Methods

- The frequency of various foot conditions in two communities was recorded every two weeks
- Two donkey owners in each community were trained by Brooke staff, one as a farrier and one as a CBAHW
- Community members set their own indicators for animal-based measures and owner awareness on basic management practices (BMPs) for follow-up and impact assessment
- A total of 24 awareness-raising sessions were conducted on BMPs, including foot care
- Animal-based indicators were measured on the same animals prior to, and following, the intervention
- At the end of the pilot study, communities evaluated the impact of the pilot project through the participatory rural appraisal tool “now and before analysis”

Community-measured indicators	% before	% after
Grooming awareness	2	90
Foot cleaning awareness	30	85
Appropriate hoof trimming frequency	15	75
Frequency of elongated hooves	75	0
Frequency of lame animals	70	30
Appropriate stable management	20	55

Table 1: Results of community impact assessment of the intervention



Figure 3: Community-led impact assessment of the intervention

### Results

- Awareness of the BMPs in the communities was enhanced (Table 1)
- The trained farrier and CBAHW were linked with target communities
- Prevalence of foot conditions was significantly reduced (Table 2, Figure 4)
- This improvement was acknowledged in the community’s own assessment following the pilot intervention (Table 1, Figure 3)

Table 2: Prevalence of foot conditions in 36 donkeys before and following the intervention

Veterinary-measured indicators	% before	% after	P-value
Hoof cracks	97	11	<0.001
Overgrown hooves	61	0	<0.001
Animals with normal gait	31	69	0.002
Bruised/punctured sole	50	0	<0.001
Overgrown frog	92	0	<0.001
Trimming	0	47	<0.001



Figure 4: Measuring the animal-based indicators

### Conclusions

1. The combination of increasing owners’ awareness, training and linking stakeholders brought positive change in these animals’ foot conditions
2. Community engagement with ownership of the project kept it active and enthusiastic, leading to positive human behaviour change
3. However, further work is required to evaluate which component of the intervention had most impact on foot conditions This will inform future scaling-up of the project in similar areas

#### Acknowledgements

All praises to Almighty Allah Who enabled me to complete this task

Thanks to Brooke Pakistan CEO Major Mohammad Farooq Malik and Senior Management Team especially Major Mohammad Anwer Asim, Dr Shahabat Khan & Dr Sher Nawaz and Dr Gulshad Khan, Naeem Abbas Shah, Ahmad Omer Ch, Dr Mohammad Shafi, Dr Habib Laghari and their teams for their practical support throughout the study Thanks to IDUK Animal Welfare & Research Team especially Rachel Eager, Christine Reix, Melissa Upjohn, Veronica Fowler and Polly Compston for their sincere help and support. Heartiest thanks to all community members and their donkeys for their time and cooperation



Presented by  
Sher Nawaz