Increasing mass awareness of equine welfare through Free Medium Radio in Jacobabad, Pakistan

The Brooke Pakistan

Nawaz S, Shah S Z A, Llaghari H and Shafi M
shernawaz@thebrooke.org.pk
The Brooke South Region, RC VH MA Jinnah near Radio Pakistan, Karachi 74200, Pakistan

Introduction
- Brooke Pakistan gives importance to community awareness on equine welfare issues alongside direct veterinary service provision
- This includes generating wider mass awareness in districts with tangible working equine populations, for example in Jacobabad (Figure 1)
- The aim of this study was to identify the best mass media channels for increasing awareness amongst equid owners and the general public

Methods
- Baseline and follow up surveys were conducted with randomly-selected members of equid-owning communities
- Data were collected through face-to-face questionnaires, investigating which media and transmission times were preferred by owners alongside their awareness on equine welfare issues
- Welfare awareness messages were developed in local language and broadcasted through FM radio for a month after baseline survey
- Following broadcast of the welfare messages, equid owners were resurveyed

Summary
- This study is one of the first in Pakistan to evaluate using radio to educate owners on equine welfare
- These encouraging results show that welfare messages can be communicated through radio to equid owners

Results
- 193 owners were included in the initial survey, and 211 owners were included in the follow-up survey
- In the baseline survey the majority (53%) of respondents had access to and listened to FM Radio (Table 1)
- The majority (70%) of equid owners stated that they listened to the radio most frequently in the evening (5pm to 8pm)
- Following the radio broadcasts equid owners reported positive changes in their husbandry practices (Figure 2)
- Whereas prior to the broadcasts 83% of owners treated wounds using harmful traditional practices, following the broadcasts 9% treated wounds using saline and antiseptic

Conclusions
- FM radio programmes, especially if aired for an extended period, may be an effective medium to provide education to owners and users on equine welfare issues
- Based on these positive data, the programme can be replicated in other districts and areas of need, focusing on the general public as well as equid owner and users

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