Conclusions

- The owners' level of compassion towards their equines increased significantly, leading to corrective action on issues affecting the well-being of the animals.
- By initiating and actively undertaking the entire programme of participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation the owners have experienced an empowering process.

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ANIMAL WELFARE FOR WORKING EQUIDS: A CASE OF CULTURAL IMPERIALISM?

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Introduction

Concern about animal welfare has so far mainly been a preoccupation of rich countries in the West. However, until fairly recently the dominant view in the West was to assume without question that animals are there for us to use. Therefore there were very few ethical limits to animal use indeed. This changed in the early nineteenth century when movements and legislation aiming to prevent cruelty to animals first appeared. Next, the idea of animal welfare emerged; this was after the Second World War. The focus here changed from protecting animals from meaningless cruelty to shielding them from the adverse side-effects of intensive animal production and other forms of animal use. Of late, new attitudes to companion animals have developed, and this has given rise to the idea that animals deserve not only protection but also respect [1].

Throughout these developments in the moral agenda on animal treatment in the West, horses have appeared towards the top of the list. Thus cruelty against working horses appeared in the early anti-cruelty legislation while other species of animals were exempted. After the Second World War, in the more prosperous western countries, horses were rendered redundant by tractors and other agricultural machinery. Later they reappeared as companion animals. As a consequence, in these countries horses nowadays tend to enjoy more extensive protection than other farm animals. For example, in the United States, where very limited protection for farm animals exists, a ban on horse slaughter has now been put in place.

With globalization the West has become increasingly aware of animal welfare in the developing world; and a growing number of animal welfare and animal rights NGOs take an interest in animal welfare issues in developing world countries. This is likely to affect other issues such as trade and aid. However, in many countries in the developing world animal welfare does not seem to play the same role as it does in the West. The animal welfare legislation that *is* in place in this part of the developing world is very often a legacy of imperial occupation; and against this background one might ask whether the western interest in animal welfare standards in the developing world can be seen as a case of cultural imperialism. This question is the focus of the present presentation. Before addressing the argument directly I will try to outline how concern about animal welfare in the West might affect developing world countries.

How concern about animal welfare in the West may affect developing countries

Western concerns about animal welfare could affect animal use in the developing world in 3 ways. First, through international organizations such as the OIE international agreements may be made which impose minimal welfare standards on poor countries. However, experience within the EU suggests that any such standards will be limited and difficult to enforce.

Second, companies in wealthy parts of the world importing products from the developing world might work to their own animal welfare standards. Often these will be driven forward by media reports and lobbying by international welfare and animal rights organizations. The standards might be introduced as part of a product specification. Just as there are specifications governing such matters as the use of child labour, company rules may limit the ways in which working equids can be used and treated.
Third, in several ways requirements on animal welfare might come to be tied up with *aid* to the developing world. This is most likely to happen where a project funded by aid involves animal use. Suppose it were to emerge, for example, in the western media, that (what by our standards counts as) severe cruelty to animals was taking place

in a project financed by western taxpayers' money. This would probably lead to a public and political outcry, and this in turn could have a negative impact on aid to the developing world in general.

Even if forecasts such as these are realistic, it makes sense to ask whether it is acceptable for wealthy citizens in the western world to impose their own standards of animal welfare on people who do not share them in the developing world.

The poor man's ethics argument

The question whether it is acceptable for people in the West to impose their standards of animal welfare on people in the developing world has been addressed in a paper by Doerfler and Peters. They raise the issue specifically in relation to agricultural production:

> The introduction of European ethical standards in tropical livestock agriculture is critical because it ignores existing moral standards in other cultures that constitute the individual and social identity of human beings in those cultures. Natural conditions widely determine decisions in animal agriculture and animal treatment. The magnitude of human intervention within the production system and the level of economic/technological development have an influence on ethical queries. [2]

In this passage, and in the paper from which it originates, two lines of argument run in parallel. According to the first, it is wrong for people in the developed world to impose particular standards of animal welfare on people in less wealthy countries if the latter do not hold the ethical beliefs that support those standards as part of their cultural identity. As a matter of fact, people in less wealthy countries do not share our ethical outlook, and hence by imposing our standards we show a lack of respect for their cultural values.

The second line of argument alleges that the way animals are kept in parts of the developing world reflects local conditions and cannot be changed. Thus, for example, where animal production is extensively based on pasture, it is inevitable that the animals will at times suffer as a consequence of food shortage owing to dry weather. Animals will suffer - as will humans - but this is due to natural and not human limitations.

So far as this second line of argument is concerned, it is my clear impression that few, if any, observers living in the developed world will complain about animal hardships elsewhere if they are convinced that the suffering reflects inescapable local conditions and goes hand in hand with human misery. However, there probably will be disquiet if the claim is instead that just because people live in poor conditions they need to not treat their animals well. And controversy will arise if alternative approaches to animal use are available but are being resisted for cultural reasons. But this returns us to the first line of argument, which seems to raise the key issue. Are rich people in the West entitled to impose their standards of animal welfare on people who do not share their culturally formed perspective on animal ethics? This is a variety of what might be called the poor man's ethics argument.

The case of human rights can be invoked to cast doubt on the *general* assumption, apparently underlying the poor man's ethics argument, that we are not entitled to impose ethical standards on people who do not share them. When it comes to issues of human rights, the dominant view now seems to be just the opposite: it is not just acceptable but desirable - and indeed many would say that people in the rich part of the world have a duty - to ensure that such rights are respected everywhere. The rights are, after all, *human* rights. Let me ask, then, whether animal welfare requirements are similar in this respect.

One obvious difference emerges in international law. Human rights are underwritten by international conventions, which have been signed by a sufficient number of nations to be elevated to the status of international law. In reality - and, in particular, politically - this makes a huge difference. However, it must be borne in mind that there was a time when human rights were not underwritten by international law. The question therefore is: Would it have been acceptable for developed countries to impose respect for human rights on less developed countries through trade

restrictions and the like at that time? Many commentators would answer 'Yes': they would insist that human rights are part of international law because they are universally valid, and not the other way round.

Is it acceptable, then, to impose animal welfare requirements on other countries before their incorporation in international law - as it seems to have been with human rights? It might be said that the parallel is at odds with the following, reasonable, principle of tolerance. Except in cases where human rights (or entitlements of similar moral significance) are involved, people should be allowed to decide for themselves about ethical issues.

Obviously, however, advocates of the animal cause will want to insist that animal welfare requirements *are* of similar moral significance to human rights. (They are after all thought of as *animal* rights, not western animal rights.) This, they might point out, is precisely why richer countries tend to have stringent animal welfare legislation. It is also why, with the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, 'respect for the welfare of animals as sentient beings' was written into the EU treaty.

Even if those holding these views are a minority, most people would probably agree nonetheless that it is reasonable to require that certain minimum standards of animal welfare are met in projects paid for by taxpayers in the developed world.

On balance, the argument for resisting 'animal welfare imperialism' seems less than fully persuasive. It seems reasonable to insist that moderate standards of animal welfare are maintained in developing countries, not least when aid is involved. This is not at all to deny, of course, that the conditions under which animals are kept in some countries can introduce very real mitigating circumstances.

Notes and references

[1] For a fuller discussion of these ideas, see Sandøe, P. and Christiansen, S.B. (2008) *Ethics of animal use.* Blackwell, Oxford.

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THE ETHICS OF CONDUCTING ANIMAL WELFARE RESEARCH IN POOR COMMUNITIES

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Introduction

Ethics is often thought of as the rules that distinguish between right and wrong, but it covers far broader issues than those governed by legislation alone. However, ethical questions are not always clear cut, so part of the function of ethics is to provide frameworks within which to think through moral questions. In research, ensuring good ethical practices protects the quality of the work done, allows collaborative work built on trust, holds researchers accountable, and protects research subjects [1]. For these reasons, applying ethical consideration to animal welfare research in poor communities is essential.

Animal welfare research is generally seen as 'positive' animal experimentation. The purpose is to benefit the species on which the research is conducted. In much the same way that testing medicines and medical techniques for human benefit *on* humans is seen as morally acceptable. However, animals such as working equids and their impoverished owners may be particularly vulnerable to intentional or unintentional exploitation. Where people and animals are living in very impoverished and vulnerable circumstances researchers may feel a strong imperative to investigate and document their suffering [2]. This may be of considerable value in drawing attention to the plight of such people and animals and provide valuable information about how their condition may be improved. The cautionary point made by Macklin [3] is that such subjects are very easily manipulated by empowered researchers, this would amount to exploitation and exploitation is morally wrong.

Animal welfare research is driven by a desire to improve the lives of animals. Approaches include cataloguing their problems, understanding the causes of such problems and instigating interventions to test hypotheses and implement changes [4]. This admirable desire does have the potential to lead to a lack of ethical questioning about how the research is being conducted. As more sophisticated methodologies and development approaches that aim to explore the personal situations and livelihoods of owners, their families, and wider communities are integrated with experiment design there is potential to overstep ethical boundaries of animal experimentation and human vulnerability. Researches may in fact become so 'goal' focused that they fail to review the route they use to get there.

The following sections give examples of some ethical dilemmas associated with animal welfare research in developing countries. The list is not exhaustive and all research studies, clinical studies, and participatory learning and action projects should be subjected to ethical review before, during, and after they are run.

Informed consent

The concept of informed consent applies to both medical/veterinary and social research. It is the word 'informed' which is of critical importance. For example, simply asking a donkey owner if we can look at his animal is only a request for consent. However, explaining that while looking at the animal we will remove the harness, take the animal out of the owner's sight, take a blood sample, and that this process will take an hour, and then seeing whether the owner will agree is a request for informed consent. The problem with requesting informed consent is that it increases the likelihood of owners refusing their consent. This can result in difficulty recruiting sufficient animals or people on to a study, can bias sampling, and increase the time taken to conduct research. In the developed world the concept of informed consent is enshrined in research and provides legal protection for all involved. In the developing world there are many circumstances which can make it difficult to obtain informed consent to use an animal or person in research:

1. Where the horse or donkey owners are too poor, vulnerable, or insufficiently educated to clearly understand the scientific ideas being explained to them (e.g. explaining a vaccine trial) [3]
2. Where the researchers appear empowered and official
3. Where the owners have other dependency links with the researchers (e.g. expectations of free veterinary services)
4. In very hierarchical societies where neither the researchers nor owners are familiar with participating in the type of discussion needed for obtaining informed consent

Invasive animal research

Research that can cause pain, suffering, or lasting harm to an animal is very tightly regulated in countries such as the UK. Even a procedure which is a common part of daily veterinary practice, such as venipuncture to obtain a blood sample, is regulated when it is used for research purposes as the animal will be exposed to the pain of needle insertion without obtaining any direct and benefit from the procedure. Such regulation is in place for the protection of both the animals involved in research and the researchers themselves. Unfortunately many countries in the developing world do not have or enforce such stringent regulation. Nyika [5] discusses the growing phenomenon of animal research being exported to developing countries to circumnavigate the legal protections placed on animals in western countries. While animal welfare research is intended to benefit animals, the fact that the legal protections are not in place or enforced does not mean that researchers and clinicians should not apply the same rigour to their study design. Factors to consider include the impact of the research on the research animal verses the benefit to the species. Ensuring an experimental design which has fully considered the 3Rs (reduction, refinement, and replacement) in relation to animals used means using good statistical analysis to ensure the minimum numbers of animals possible are involved in invasive studies and pre-identifying endpoints for procedures, e.g. limiting venipuncture to two attempts only.

Intervention studies

A growing area of animal welfare science, and one that is particularly relevant to working equids in poor communities, is intervention studies. Such studies aim to bring about changes, hopefully improvements, in animals' lives through reducing welfare problems. Intervention studies are intended to:

1. Directly benefit the animals involved
2. Allow us to learn which intervention approaches work most effectively, and
3. Provide us with more information about the causes of welfare problems

Field studies and Participatory Learning and Action projects that involve working directly with equine owners to implement interventions on their own animals are most likely to have the greatest welfare impact and to be sustained in the long term. However, such studies also carry some inherent ethical risks. First, in general interventions are being targeted at the poorest communities where both the humans and animals are living extremely difficult lives. In such circumstances asking owners to make even very small changes may represent huge economic risks. For example, a horse owner who agrees to park his tonga horse in the shade while it is not working may lose custom because he is not directly available for customers. The loss of even one customer can represent an economic catastrophe. Second, if an intervention focuses on one major welfare problem, for example improving body condition, at the same time there may be a commensurate deterioration in another aspect of the animal's welfare, e.g. as the horse gains weight the harnesses become tight and causes pain. The greatest care is needed in running interventions that affect vulnerable animals and people; plenty of time should be taken to plan and implement them; and careful and responsive monitoring should be put in place to intercept problems as soon as they develop.

Control groups

Related to intervention studies is the need for control groups. Control groups allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention and can distinguish changes seen in an experimental group from changes that were occurring in

the population as a whole. Factors outside the control of the study such a global economic recession, civil war, or the end of a drought can all cause a general change in animal and/or human welfare that would be attributed to the intervention if a separate control group is not used. The concern with control groups is that by implication an intervention or 'treatment' that we have reason to believe will be effective is being withheld. In poor communities this feels like a further injustice that is being added to their already difficult lives and that we are practising a deception in much the same way as when we fail to achieve informed consent. However, without control groups the research will be virtually meaningless. So far there seems to be no very good solution to this problem. Options include designing studies with 2 different interventions so that a 'positive' control is used (this still has scientific limitations in this context) or ensuring that at the end of the study the control groups are the first and most resourced recipients of the roll-out of the new approach.

Conclusions

The above examples illustrate how important ethical consideration is in animal welfare research among poor communities. It is the ethical review of our practices that ensures we have fully considered the implications of what we intend to do and that we have weighed up the potential costs and benefits to those involved. Ethical reasoning is often presented as complex and inaccessible to non-ethicists. It is the problems that are complex and not always easy to resolve: ethics should be seen as a tool to help give due consideration to such problems and to ensure that the interests of stakeholders, particularly the animals and owners from poor communities, are given equal and fair consideration against those of the researchers, research funders, practitioners, and welfare charities.

Recommended further reading

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[3] Macklin R, 'Bioiethics, vulnerability, and protection', *Bioethics*, Vol 17, Nos 56., 2003, pp. 47286.
[4] Whay H R, 'The journey to animal welfare improvement', *Animal Welfare*, Vol 16, 2007, pp. 11722.
[5] Nyika A, 'Animal research ethics in Africa: An overview', *Acta Tropica*, Vol 112S, 2009, pp. S48S52.

REVIEW OF BROOKE INDIA EUTHANASIA POLICY (2006-08) TO FACILITATE DECISION MAKING

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Abstract

The Brooke India is working in 7 Indian states with 20 equine welfare units at district level. This working equine population is being sustained by marginalized livestock owners. The animals are an important means of transportation of goods and people, particularly in hilly areas; they are also used in the brick kiln, tourism and farming industries. Equine owners view their animals not only in terms of economic support but also with emotional attachment.

In the Brooke, euthanasia is one of the major means of relieving immediate and long lasting pain and suffering commonly encountered in working equines. This paper aims to review the Brooke India euthanasia activity during a 3-year period (2006-8) in terms of its direct and partnership operations, unit-wise accomplishment, compensation money, seasonality, species, work type, and circumstances of euthanasia.

The paper uses information gathered from 256 reported cases of euthanasia. It was observed that 9 District Equine Welfare Units (DEWU) reported a total of 145 cases of euthanasia; and 3 Partner Equine Welfare Units (PEWU) reported a total of 111 during the specified period. The findings highlight the number of euthanized animals according to work type, species, and equine welfare unit. Lameness is the most prevalent cause of euthanasia: of 256 euthanasia cases, 42 were the result of problems related to lameness.

Quantifying such operational and clinical issues across all operational units will facilitate the organization's decision making. It will also support Brooke India and other animal organizations in focusing on the causes and prevention of pain and suffering in animals.

Introduction

In the Brooke, euthanasia is one of the major means of relieving immediate and long-lasting pain and suffering commonly encountered in working equines. The Brooke has laid out policies and protocols to practise and promote euthanasia within the organization as well as at institutional and stakeholder levels. It is now necessary to evaluate trends in euthanasia, so that the policies and protocols can be revised and updated where necessary. The Brooke treatment data were used to look at certain specific variables, such as the number of animals euthanized in relation to species, work types, the terminal cause of suffering by the animal, seasonal trends, compensation paid and the understanding developed among Brooke staff and other stakeholders on the concept of euthanasia and its implementation.

Definition

The term euthanasia is derived from the Greek words 'eu' meaning 'good' and 'thanatos' meaning 'death'. Euthanasia means a good death. The average person defines euthanasia in lay terms as 'putting a horse to sleep' or 'putting a horse down'. The understanding is that euthanasia is pain free and peaceful. The act of going to sleep is a pleasant and pain-free experience.

Guidelines for recommending euthanasia

The following criteria were used to evaluate the immediate necessity for euthanasia of animals to avoid incurable, excessive, and unnecessary suffering:

1. Is the condition chronic and incurable?
2. Does the immediate condition carry a hopeless prognosis for life?
3. Is the horse a hazard to itself or its handlers?
4. Will the horse require continuous medication for the relief of pain for the remainder of its life?

Coping with the loss

Owners purchase their horses to support their livelihood. After a horse has died, it is natural and normal to feel grief and sorrow for the animal owner and their family. To ease the emotional and financial loss, the Brooke used to pay a token amount to the animal owner as well as to bury the animal properly.

Method

The Brooke clinical teams working in different districts kept records of their activities, including euthanasia cases. A 'Euthanasia form' was used to obtain the consent of the animal's owner and information about the animal, including its identification, species, work type, and circumstances necessitating euthanasia.

The Euthanasia forms of 2006, 2007, and 2008 were collected from DEWUs and PEWUs and data compiled to analyse the situation, using Microsoft Excel. However, due to the lack of an organized reporting system no data relating to euthanasia were recorded in PEWUs during 2006.

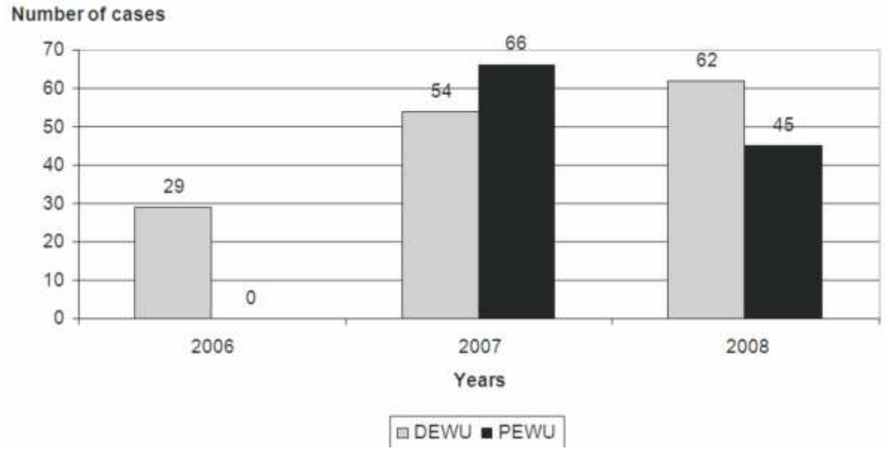
Results

The results of the study are set out according to operational and clinical importance.

Euthanasia cases in DEWUs and PEWUs

Compilation of euthanasia reports from May 2006 to September 2008 gives a total of 256 euthanasia cases, which includes direct and partner operations. Nine DEWUs reported a total of 145 cases; and 3 PEWUs reported a total of 111 during 2007 and 2008 (Graph 1).

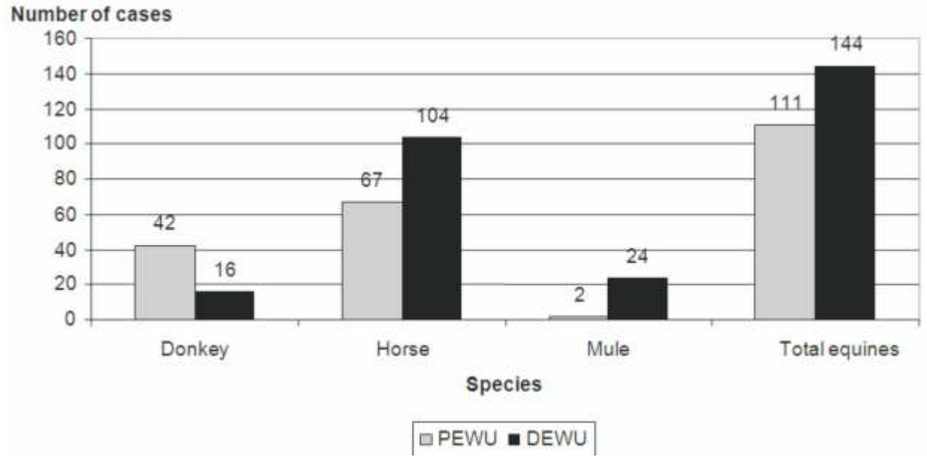
Graph 1. Euthanasia cases in DEWUs and PEWUs



Euthanasia cases according to species

Analysis of species shows that a total of 171 horses, 26 mules, and 58 donkeys were euthanized (Graph 2). The species of one animal euthanized in a DEWU was not reported.

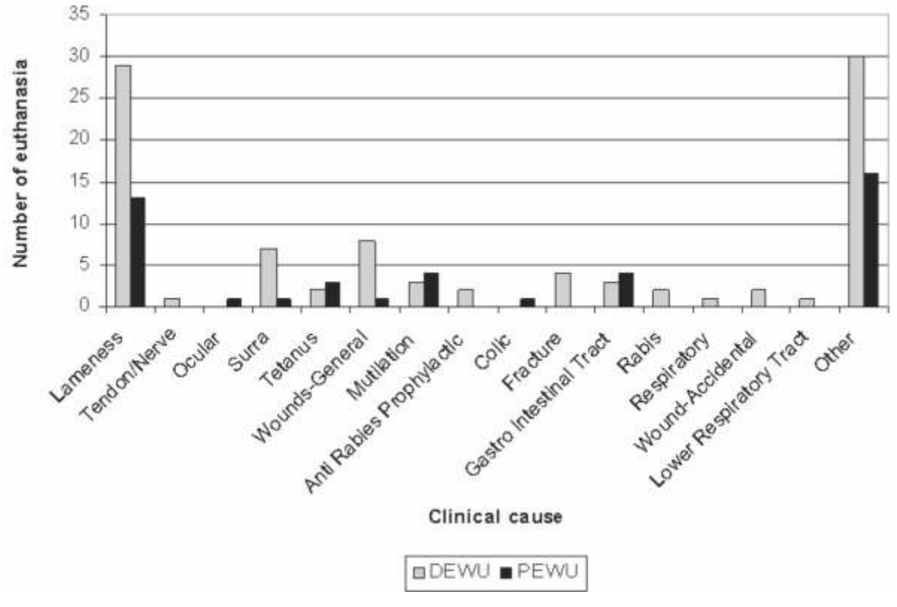
Graph 2. Euthanasia cases by species



The clinical causes of euthanasia

There were more than 15 major reasons causing veterinarians conduct euthanasia, involving incurable conditions or highly painful/suffering states. Among these were lameness, surra (trypanosomiasis), wounds, and gastrointestinal tract (GIT) diseases. Out of 256 cases, 42 were the result of problems related to lameness (Graph 3).

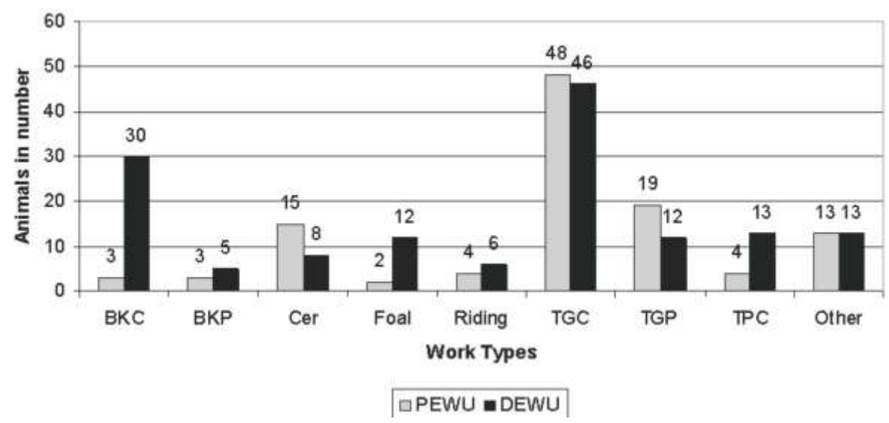
Graph 3. Clinical causes of euthanasia



Euthanasia cases according to work type

The data analysis shows that brick-kiln cart animals (BKC) and animals transporting goods by cart (TGC) were the highest risk group. A total of 33 BKC and 94 TGC were euthanized during the period (Graph 4). The graph also shows the number of work type wise euthanasia case by work type, including brick-kiln animal with pack saddle (BKP), ceremonial (Cer), foal, riding, transporting goods in pack saddle (TGP), and other, such as engaged in breeding.

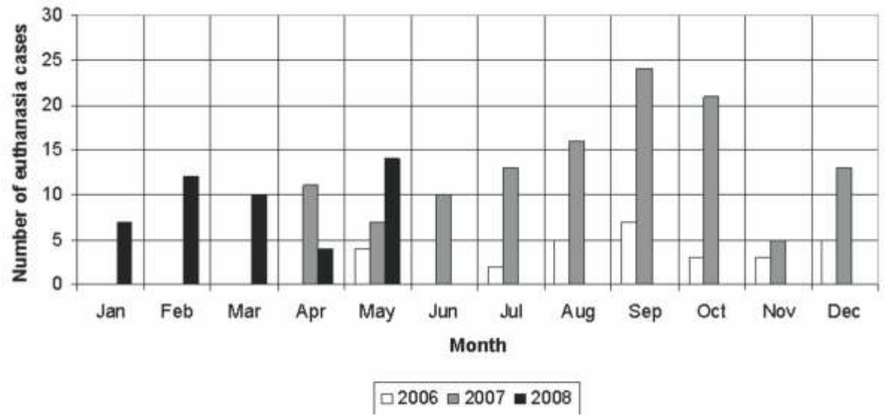
Graph 4. Euthanasia cases by work type



The seasonal pattern of euthanasia cases

In 2006, the data show a moderate rise in DEWU cases during September (there was no reporting of euthanasia cases in PEWUs for this year). In 2007 again a rise is discernible during August to October. In 2008, there is in cases in May (Graph 5).

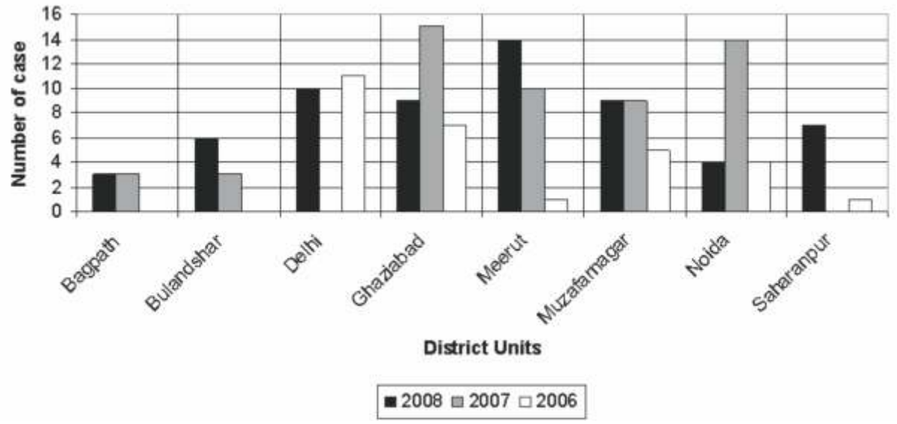
Graph 5. The seasonal pattern of euthanasia cases



Occurrence of euthanasia cases according to unit

Analysis by unit shows that DEWUs Baghpath, Bulandshar, and Saharanpur had fewer cases of euthanasia than Ghaziabad, Meerut, Muzaffar Nagar, Delhi and Noida (Graph 6).

Graph 6. Euthanasia cases by unit

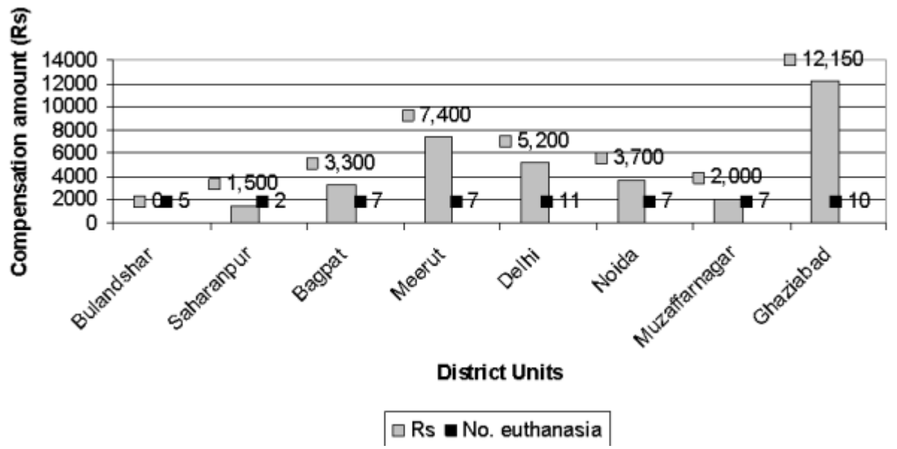


Compensation for euthanasia

Data on compensation for a 6-month period (April-September 2007) were analysed to assess the utilization of the euthanasia fund (Graph 7). The amount of compensation paid varied from unit to unit and case to case, as it was decided by the veterinarian concerned according to circumstances.

The Ghaziabad and Delhi units spent 12,150 rupees and 5,200 rupees as compensation for 10 and 11 euthanasia cases respectively. In the same period, 5 animals were euthanized in Bulandshar without any compensation being paid to their owners.

Graph 7. Compensation for euthanasia, April-September 2007



Discussion

This review of 256 cases of euthanasia over a 3-year time period provides an overall picture of Brooke India's euthanasia policy and interrelated issues. It necessarily does not represent the skills of Brooke veterinarians or views of animal owners towards euthanasia.

The review and analysis derive from the 'Euthanasia form', which is mandatory for veterinarians to complete before euthanizing an animal, and which provides authentic operational and clinical information.

The study demonstrates that there were more cases of euthanasia for horses than for mules and donkeys. across all units. Chronic lameness, surra, and wounds were the major clinical causes for euthanasia, although the animals may also have suffered from multiple problems. Seasonality of euthanasia could not be clearly discerned. However, moderate rises shown in the months of September and May may relate to the beginning and end of summer. The data for number of animals and amount of money spent to compensate the animal owners for euthanasia varies widely across units. This may demonstrate the units' independence in decision making and the differing socio-economic status of animal owners. It is evident that money spent on compensation was not proportionate to numbers of euthanasia cases: see Saharanpur (2 cases against 1,500 rupees) and Bulandshar (5 cases against no compensation money).

The study will enable decision makers to review their activity and make necessary amendments to their policies and field operations. It will also help them to compare their direct operations with partnership operations. Organizations that care for equine animals can work on preventative measures for the main causes of euthanasia revealed in the study and other risk factors which lead to pain and suffering of animals.

Further reading

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MODERNIZING RURAL LIVELIHOODS AND TRANSPORT IN AFRICA: DIRECTIONS AND DILEMMAS

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Modernizing agriculture and building rural roads for farming populations throughout the developing world have constituted the cornerstone of post-colonial development policies for the past 5 decades. The rational appears both reasonable and laudable. In most developing countries, populations have been overwhelmingly rural. Increasing their productivity and mobility has been seen as the most effective way of alleviating poverty and modernizing the nation. In addition to facilitating access to improved agricultural inputs and techniques, roads are intended to eliminate the disadvantage of rural remoteness, making it possible for rural dwellers to raise their standard of living.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the nature of the modernity being sought and the necessity for placing emphasis on roads rather than mobility on or off roads can be questioned. This paper considers the changing nature of African smallholder farmers, specifically their experience of deagrarianization, before turning to 3 key issues of rural welfare, namely: the improvement of agricultural yields, the diversification of non-agricultural activities, and the feasibility of rural transport interventions in Africa.

Disappearing peasant farmers

Peasantries, who have formed the bulk of the world's population for millennia, reside in rural areas, earning their living on the land as farmers engaged in both subsistence and commodity production. Their family units form the nucleus for organizing production, consumption, human reproduction, socialization, welfare, and risk-spreading.

Peasant cash crop producers provided the political force behind the national independence movements that swept the African continent in the 1950s and formed the foundation for the economies of the newly independent countries that came into being in the 1960s. During that decade the economic performance of African countries was promising. African and Asian countries were both part of the 'third world' striving for higher standards of living.

United Nations agencies and bilateral donors prioritized the modernization of peasant agriculture. The success of Green Revolution investments in raising rice and wheat yields in South Asia during the 1960s led African governments and donors to invest in developing staple food improvement packages, especially for maize. Beginning in the 1970s, peasant farmers in many African countries participated in subsidized fertilizer and seed programmes and began to experience increasing yields.

Why do African staple food yields still lag behind those of the rest of the world?

The African continent's improving staple food yields were short lived. In the mid-1970s, the economic shock of the oil crises undermined African peasants' prospects and their national economies. Most African governments had established agricultural parastatals to handle the marketing of the widely fluctuating stocks of commercial staple food crops produced by peasants. Peasants had been availed fixed pan-territorial prices regardless of the distance that they were located from urban centres of staple food demand. This, in addition to peasant farmers' subsidized crop input packages, had successfully incentivized peasant grain production. But, at the time of the oil crisis, as the cost of surface transport escalated, parastatal finances became severely stretched. This marked a profound turning point in the tripartite relationship between peasant producers, state infrastructure providers, and the global market.