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Report about study visit to South Africa from 28th of July 2013 to 11th August 2013

On the 28/07/2013 I travelled to South Africa (SA) for a training journey, the program consists of two visits to NGOs (KLAWS and MDZANANDA), These two NGOs are based in Johannesburg and Cape Town respectively. Both of them have a community- based veterinary clinic.

The trip was financially supported by the dogs trust (flight costs and part of the accommodation) and ACVC (the remaining costs)

This report is composed of four Chapters according to the following:

- 1. Narrative report about the activities and events during the trip**
- 2. The lessons learnt from the trip**
- 3. Challenge**
- 4. Results**

CHAPTER I

Communications and Activities

1. Community Led Animal Welfare (CLAW)

Early morning on Sunday 28th of July I took the airplane heading to South Africa- Johannesburg. By the afternoon of the same day I arrived to Johannesburg air port where I met Madam Cora Bailey's the manager of CLAW. From the airport, I took the care with Ms Cora towards an area at the suburb of Johannesburg to meet a several dog owners from the area who CLAW is providing veterinary services for their pet and social support of the families as well.

During the period; from Sunday 28th to Friday 2nd of August I worked with the CLAW veterinary staff (Katy and Jenifer) as observer, I spent valuable time at the veterinary clinic and the pet kennels, this In addition to participating on the first aid and preparing animals to the surgery. I also learned very useful methods on recuing, handling and transporting sick and injured Animals.

I spent a very valuable time with Ms Cora and the communities that CLAW provide services for them and addition to some social events with the staff of CLAW. Moreover, I made a long conversations with Ms Cora on and areas regarding to the establishment of CLAW and her experience on sustaining this charity all this time. At the clinic I found that they are using many veterinary drugs and substances that we do not use in Sudan, so I had been engaged in a long and very useful talks with the staff of the clinic about these veterinary drugs, they use and the way they, the companies that produce and how do they get them (PLEASE SEE THE PICTURES BELOW).



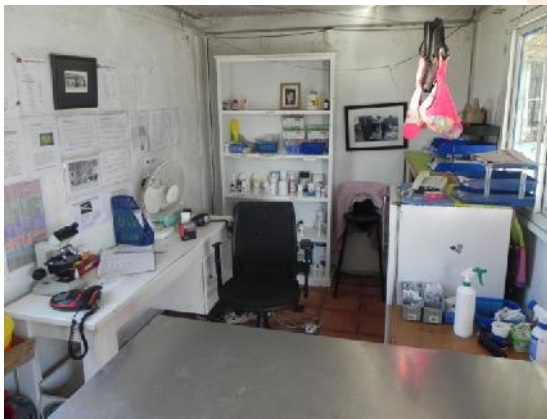
Work and activities at CLAW

2. Mdzananda animal clinic:

On Saturday 03.08.2013 I took a domestic flight from Johannesburg toward Cape Town. When I arrived there Madam **Jane Levinson** the program manager of **Mdzananda** clinic was waiting for me at the airport.

I spent the second half of the trip at Mdzananda clinic following the same routine at CLAW, with more focusing in the clinical work in their clinic, I spent a very fruitful time with the staff of the clinic, specially the two vets at the clinic, we had a remarkable discussion about different strategies of clinical work sharing the different experiences according to the varies training we had.

Again I found the building and equipments there are quite simple but very efficient, I also saw a car and a trailer with the logo of the dogs trust (see the pictures), it used as an ambulance and mobile clinic. The most impressive this I found at Mdzananda is the commercial laundry section which is used for the financial support of the clinic and its projects.



Tools and equipments in Mdzananda

And the end of the week I returned back to Johannesburg to take the flight to Sudan. At the airport I made a meeting with madam Cora to discuss many points related to the future cooperation between the two organizations and she promised to send us some veterinary medicines and tools which are not available in Sudan.

CHAPTER TWO

Lessons learned from the Trip

1. Communications with local community:

The most important lesson that I learned from Madam Cora that working in the field of animal welfare will not be effective unless we assess the needs of the community we work with, then by doing this we can find the best way to send our message to them and earn their support. In CLAW, when go with Madam Cora to the poor areas where she provides a health care for the animals, I found her engaged many activities with that community, these activities cannot be considered as mere animal welfare activities, but they are indirectly serves the mission of her organization among that community.

The implementation and sustainability of Animal welfare issues are in need of sympathetic and supportive communities, the community will react positively with the animals' welfare activists when it can see the benefits of their work.

2. Tools and equipments:

The buildings in both organizations are similar to the regular buildings in Sudan, but more efficient use of spaces is there in SA. Simple and easy making tools are used in clinic, kennels and administrative offices.

When I saw the car and the trailer of the animals in Mdzananda, I realized that it is not necessarily to have an expensive and equipped car as it found in the developed countries. We can start with such simple car and trailer, and afterward we can develop out own equipments according to needs of work.

3. Small business to support the organization:

The commercial laundry machines in Mdzananda has given me a practical example for the type of small business that we can establish to support ACVC financially. It also made aware about the challenges we might face to run such business in an environment of NGO depending on the voluntary contribution rather than business.

CHAPTER THREE

Challenges

1. Local communities in Sudan

Sudan is a big country, people are very diverse; they belonged to wide range of ethnic, cultural and backgrounds. Therefore, what apply in one place; does not necessarily be the same in other place. The only factors which are common among all Sudanese communities is poverty (sadly), and to some extent slam. A according to this, I think we should analyze the social situation in Sudan in the light of these two factors.

Poverty is an extreme challenge facing us, it is really difficult to convince somebody to pay for a health service for his animal while he cannot afford do that for his family, at the same time those people cannot stop keeping animals as they play an important role in their lives in term of economical sustainability, personal security and cultural image.

With regards to Islam, many people think the Muslim are not very sympathetic to animals, but according to my opinion I do not think this is absolutely correct, especially when we look to the status of many animals in many Sudanese communities such as BAGGARA in South western Sudan and KAWAHLA in Northern Sudan, I believe it is more cultural than religious.

I had a very good conversation with a police officer in Cape Town; Jenny had introduced me to him when she knew that I work at the police dogs school, he is an Indian Muslim, We (me and him) intensively discussed this issue with Jenny, I found him carrying the same idea about the role of Islam on the issue Muslims behavior towards animals, he mentioned that being an animal caring person is common in his community.

2. Activities and services that provided by ACVC

During the past three years ACVC has made a remarkable achievements, ACVC succeeded to sign MOU with the Ministry of Animal Resources, and with Sudan University of Science and Technology, we succeeded to embed an animal welfare course in the curriculum of a number of veterinary and animal science schools, we were been capable to hold a regular training courses for the vets in Khartoum and to build an effective advocacy groups which are respected by the government and academics in Sudan. But in spite of all these activities our work is still enclosed with the vets government and academics. We need to extend our services directly to the animals and local communities. We need to spend much effort to find a sufficient

funding to establish the mobile and outreach clinics in the poor areas in the suburb of Khartoum. These pilot projects will expose us to a better understanding and assessment of the needs of these communities. This will effectively provide us with more clear vision on how to work at the levels of governmental bodies and in academic era.

3. Availability of Medicines and equipment

One of the technical challenges that face us in Sudan, we still use medicines that are manufactured for human not for animals, we suffer of extreme shortage in pain reliefs and antibiotic substance. During my stay in the two clinics (CLAW and Mdzananda), I found that they are using a wide range of medicines, most of these medicines are not available in Sudan. This situation made the veterinary treatments in Sudan restricted to very limited options.

Moreover, equipments which are specially designed for small animal are not available in the Sudanese market, either to import them from abroad which is very expensive, or try to manufacture them locally which is less efficient due to the weak manufacturing base in Sudan.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results achieved

1. This trip has bridge the gap in my skills in field surgery and veterinary medicine compared to other members of ACVC who attended the feline welfare week on November 2012, and the feline surgery workshop on March 2013.
2. Strengthening my knowledge and strategic thinking skills
3. Important and effective relations and communication with two of the leading organizations in the field of canine and feline welfare in South Africa.
4. Success on arranging small amounts of medicines, equipment and consumables as donation form CLAW, this support will help ACVC to running the neutering program.

Finally I would like to thank the dogs trust for making this important trip available, I also thank my colleagues in ACVC to their help and support.