

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Volunteering

Ireland has had a proud record worldwide in relation to the number of volunteers that make themselves available to work in developing countries. This tradition goes back to early Christian times and more recently to a period when numbers joining the religious orders were high. This resulted in thousands of missionaries working and living in some of the poorest countries in the world. For many of us who have visited African countries in recent years we get a real sense of the legacy of these people. We are immediately accepted as a result of the trust built up over the years by generations of Irish people.

Ireland has transformed its economy over the last decade to join the ranks of the world rich countries. Some people may have concluded that we have moved to a post Christian time and that the Irish can no longer empathise with the world's poor. This however would be an over simplification of the new situation. Irish NGOs are proving to be the most able and creative in the world. The Irish ability to communicate and our strength in the area of creativity remains our unique selling point. While Ireland has clearly become a much more materialistic country many wish to serve those who are less fortunate. The need for a healthy life balance to include physical, cultural, spiritual, social, community, family as well as work activities is now becoming clear to many.

VIVA has enabled veterinarians and veterinary students to use their particular veterinary skills while also carrying out voluntary work. Susan Griffin as a young veterinarian is making a major contribution in Nepal. The Veterinary profession in Ireland through their generous support have made it possible to create the environment for this unique Irish veterinary contribution.

Seán O'Loide

— VIVA Chairman

GREETINGS FROM THE TOP OF THE WORLD!

Susan Griffin - Volunteering in Nepal



Above: a scene from a village health camp which aimed to raise awareness of AHTCS projects

Nepal is a small land locked country, situated between the two largest and most populated countries in Asia, namely India and China. Though small in area, Nepal is famous for hosting the world's tallest mountains including Mt. Everest. It is divided into three broad agro-ecological regions, the mountains, the hills and the terai (flat land), which run in a parallel fashion from north-west to south-east, adding great diversity to the landscape.

Nepal is one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. A Maoist rebellion has led to serious unrest in recent years but an uneasy peace prevails at present. This has led to a huge drop in tourism, one of the country's greatest sources of income. Presently, livestock farming and agriculture contribute nearly half of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with most of the population depending on this sector for household incomes and as a source of employment.

The livestock population may be high in Nepal, but the productivity of these animals is very low. The major reason for this is poor breeding practices and nutritional deficiencies. In the past year, VIVA has been

funding a Nepalese NGO, AHTCS (Animal Health Training & Consultancy Services), to implement a project which is investigating the composition of the diets fed to livestock in the different regions of Nepal.

The analysis of the data collected in the dry season has been completed. This has shown that the main inadequacies are in relation to DCP (Dietary Crude Protein) and DM (Dry Matter). Another aspect of the project is the training of participants in animal nutrition management and in addition seeds and saplings of suitable animal feed crops were distributed throughout the year. This project aims to improve the socio-economic status of subsistence farmers, by increasing the productivity of their animals through improved animal nutrition.

Since the end of July, I have been working along side AHTCS to help implement this project, while contributing to the implementation of all their projects. We have also hired an enthusiastic young vet to be the Project Coordinator of this Animal Nutrition Management Project. I look forward to continuing the report on this project through the year ahead.



Bringing New Life to people and their animals

Mike O'Leary STUDENT BURSARY

This year was the third year of VIVA's involvement in the Mike O'Leary Student Bursary which sponsors a veterinary student to spend a month working with one of our partners in the Developing World. The winner this year was Kerryman, Stevie O'Connor, who fittingly, had seen practice with Mike O'Leary (in whose memory the Bursary was created). Stevie spent a month in Uganda as a guest of Heifer Uganda, VIVA's partner in that country. In light of the success of the Bursary to date, Prof. Grace Mulcahy, the Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at UCD, offered to fund a second student on the programme. This enabled VIVA to send Anja Peters to Tanzania to spend a month with Heifer Tanzania, VIVA's new partner in that country.



Figure 1 - L - R: Professor Grace Mulcahy, Dean of the Veterinary Faculty, Anja Peters, Brendan Minnagh, VIVA Secretary, Sean O' Laoide, VIVA Chairman, Stevie O'Connor.

Both Anja and Stevie have described the trip as the experience of a lifetime. According to Stevie, "what I did during my five weeks in Uganda will live with me for the rest of my life". Both students were made to feel very welcome and Anja commented that in Tanzania "the pace of life is very relaxed, their motto being "Hakuna Matata" (no worries) to everything that happens".

Both Anja and Stevie were able to see at first hand the impact of these livestock projects on the lives of subsistence farmers. Stevie visited one such project, the "Kisinga women dairy goat project". According to Stevie, the members of this group have had to reconstruct their lives after fleeing from their homes and farms in the hills of Kasese on the western Ugandan border with the Democratic Republic of Congo as a result of war and tribal fighting. "These ladies purchased small plots of land ¼ acre in size and by using a dairy goat and the empowerment provided by HPI, have helped kick start their lives allowing them to educate their kids and build new homes. Mikeline Muhindo (Figure 2) is one of these ladies who received a dairy goat in 2003 from HPI.

This goat still produces 1.5-3 litres of milk per day for her and her six kids. Some of this milk is sold to generate income while since 2003 she has also sold 2 buck goats and a nanny and has used the funds to build a new home on the plot replacing the smaller home (Figures 3 & 4). When she sold the 3 kid goats that she had at the time of visiting she intended to buy doors and maybe windows for the house".



Figure 2 - Mikeline Muhindo



Figure 3 - Family home prior to becoming involved in the project



Figure 4 - New family home as a result of the project



Anja was involved in the Community Animal Health Worker (Paravet) program in Tanzania. As Anja points out “paravets provide a very important low cost veterinary service to the small-holder farmers who could not afford it otherwise”. VIVA has now committed over €30,000 for the next three years to the training of Paravets in Tanzania.

On behalf of Stevie and Anja, VIVA would like to thank Prof. Grace Mulcahy and The Mike O’Leary Trust for making these trips possible and the staff of Heifer Uganda and Heifer Tanzania for organizing the work placements.



Stevie presenting footballs to the Kisinga Women’s Dairy Goat Project for their children

EAST AFRICA AND BACK ~ Tony McManus.



As always a safe pair of hands Tony Mc Manus ploughing with this family in Apac, Uganda.

I have been involved in recent years in the organization of a fund-raising Golf Classic for VIVA. I accepted an invitation from Brendan Mimmagh to accompany him on a visit to Uganda and Tanzania in April of this year. VIVA planned to invest in two new projects and wished to see how the money allocated to the projects would be spent.

Our arrival in Kampala, the Ugandan capital involved a thirty - minute road journey from Entebbe. Initial impressions of Uganda formed during that journey included the poor state of the country’s infrastructure, the poverty associated with a developing country and the sudden onset of darkness at sundown. The phrase “in darkest Africa” became a reality. One was particularly struck by the endless masses of people who appear to be wandering aimlessly.

We visited Kampala Veterinary School where VIVA is involved in a

veterinary student programme - the Michael O Leary Bursary. It was interesting meeting the vets at the school during this visit. They provided a useful insight as to where their priorities lay. A six - hour journey to Apac province in Northern Uganda followed the veterinary school visit. The severe poverty everywhere was evident during this journey to Apac. I was genuinely surprised therefore to witness the difference the projects sponsored by VIVA in association with Bothar and Heifer International made to Ugandan farming families. It is astonishing to see what a difference the gift of a goat can make – it provides hope as well as financial well being. The change where families have received a dairy cow is enormous – relatively speaking families who own a dairy cow are wealthy. VIVA in addition to providing food-producing animals, supply draught oxen to farmers. These animals are used to plough the land, carry water and in the transport of produce to the local markets. The draught cattle bring an added advantage for those families in that women are freed from these duties to look after themselves and their families.

The visits to the various projects in Uganda and Tanzania confirmed the importance these animals have in the daily lives of these people. These visits also showed the pride the people have in making a success of project goals. We were informed by the local worker on our arrival in a village beside Mt Meru, near Arusha, Tanzania that our initial plan to visit three different farms in the local area be expanded to include six farms as all wished to show us what they were doing. It was uplifting to see the pride they had in the progress they were making. It made me realise that while my contribution was small it could make a huge difference to their lives. Poor farmers in these remote villages have no veterinary service for their animals. VIVA is involved in training and equipping Community Animal Health Workers to provide basic animal healthcare to the farming communities in villages (a hundred in number) around Arusha and Kilimanjaro.

I am delighted to be associated with VIVA’s work. There are many worthy charities who devote so much to different causes. However, my recent visit to “darkest Africa” has convinced me that VIVA’s ethos of helping people to help themselves is probably best.

“VIVA Wheelers”

Following their highly successful Vietnam Cycle Challenge which raised over €80,000 for VIVA’s projects, the “VIVA Wheelers” headed to Morocco in November on their latest adventure. All funds raised from this venture are being allocated to VIVA’s new project in Tanzania where we are funding the training of 90 Community Animal Health Technicians over the next three years in conjunction with our partner, Heifer Tanzania. Many thanks to the 15 cyclists and their sponsors. The participants were: Pat Murphy, Donal Connolly, Ivan Heffernan, Denis Healy, Michael O’Brien, James Madden, Mike Burke, Perpetua McNamee, Patricia Bambury, Syd Nagle, Donagh McDonnell, Seamus Fagan, Brian O’Neill, Joe Walsh, Padraig Jordan.



TRAINING PARAVETS IN MALAWI

This summer, Pat Murphy VS from Loughrea, Co Galway travelled to Malawi with VIVA to run a training programme for twenty Paravets employed by VIVA's partner there, SSLPP (Small Scale Livestock Promotion Project). In a country with no rural veterinary services, these Paravets (Community Animal Health Technicians) provide essential services to rural smallholders.



Sute Mwakasungula, SSLPP CEO, speaks at the presentation ceremony

The week's training involved lectures and practical demonstrations of castration techniques, disbudding, blood sampling etc, the "bread and butter" tasks of vets everywhere. While being very enthusiastic and committed, the Paravets are hampered by a lack of basic equipment. To overcome this Pat has gathered together twenty vets here in Ireland who have all agreed to sponsor a Basic Equipment Kit for each of the Malawian Paravets. The kits should reach Malawi in the New Year.

A big thank you from VIVA to Pat and his crew for their efforts



Pat Murphy demonstrating techniques to the Malawian Paravets



Paravets gather for presentation of certificates on completion of the course

SPECIAL THANKS TO VETERINARY STUDENTS

The UCD Veterinary Students raised €650 for VIVA with their carol singing last December. Who said the Vet College was a cultural wasteland!



Picture above :- Students Eoin Liston, Ciaran Gobl and Joanne Coughlan presenting Sean O'Laoide with the proceeds of their Christmas Carol singing.

The Pig Health Society for their kind sponsorship. This is the fourth year they have given us a stand space and facilitated us in holding a raffle.

Veterinary Ireland are proud to support VIVA as the development charity of the profession in Ireland.

The staff of Kiernan Milling over the last few years have organized a Christmas collection for VIVA with their contribution being matched by the management. A big thank you Mary O'Reilly for acting as Treasurer for this effort!

MID WEST VETERINARY CLINICAL SOCIETY.



Pictured are John Bourke and Alan Johnson presenting Mike Burke with a cheque for €1000 for VIVA.

At their Christmas Dinner last December, the Mid West Clinical Society presented VIVA with a cheque for €1000 for which we are very grateful. In addition, in a very generous gesture, the guest speaker on the night, Justin McCarthy of the "Farmer's Journal" donated his speaking fee. Thanks also to the Clare Vets who raised €400 for VIVA at their Christmas dinner.

A big thank you to Mairead Kelly who donated €250 from the sales of the album "Behind the half door" on which she features with Keogh's Session Group from Keogh's Pub in Longford.

Again a special thanks to the loyal VOA members and friends for the kind support of the annual AGM Dinner raffle held in Kinsale for the VIVA projects.



Bringing New Life to people and their animals

UNIVET /C&M VETLINK Sponsored VIVA Golf Classic

Our annual Golf Classic was held this year on August 10th at Roscommon Golf Club and for the first time in its five year existence was sponsored. Thanks to Brendan and George Crowe of Univet Ltd and Edmund Wall of C&M VETLINK for their valued support. Thanks to the valiant efforts of Tony Mc Manus this year's classic was by far the most successful to date with a total of 42 teams turning out to play this excellent course. €15,000 was raised for VIVA's Koilei Amora Ican Animal Traction Project in Eastern Uganda. The Loughrea winning team was led by Pat Watts, ably assisted by David Rooney, TJ Sheil and Fiachra McGrath.



Brendan Crowe, Univet, congratulating another worthy winner Michael Oates, ETL, Roscommon.

SHOWJUMPING FOR VIVA



Left to right:-Derek McCoppin, St Mel's College; Liam Mullen, Moyne Community School; Brendan Mimmagh of VIVA, Siobhan Connell, Cnoc Mhuire, Granard and Linda Kelly, Longford making a presentation to Brendan Mimmagh of VIVA.

A very successful Co Longford Inter-Schools Show Jumping League took place at McCoppin's state of the art equestrian facilities at Clonterm on the outskirts of Longford town recently and the money raised from the event was donated to VIVA.

Pupils from Scoil Mhuire, Longford; Moyne Community School, Ballymahon Vocational School, Ardscoil Phadraig, Granard; Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon and St Mel's College, Longford participated in the event and the standard of show jumping displayed was second to none.

Brian Gormely, ex-President of the Showjumping Association of Ireland was the inspiration behind the event. The facilities at the McCoppins are fantastic and were supplied, along with refreshments, pro bono. Insurance was the only expense. An enormous group of volunteers came together to ensure the event was a huge success and their hard work certainly paid off. The funds raised are being committed to the Koilei Amora Ican Animal Traction Project in Eastern Uganda.

Brendan Mimmagh of VIVA wishes to thank Brian and Ann Gormley, Harold McGahern for their dedication and organisation of the event. He would also like to thank Ned and Margaret McCoppin and their family for the use of their fantastic indoor arena and for supplying refreshments for the participants throughout the league.

SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT NEW LIFE TO FARMS AROUND THE WORLD THIS YEAR

VIVA is most appreciative of all the individuals that played on the day and made the effort as many did to travel and take time off to support our Classic. Many thanks also to all the individuals and businesses who through their financial support of the Golf Classic helped make it such a success

Michael Oates Eight Till Late, Roscommon.

Donal Brady, VS, Carrickboy.

Pat Flanagan, SSVI, Roscrea.

John Griffin, SSVI.

Gregan McGuinness, (Life & Pensions) Dublin.

PJ Donnellan, Lanesboro.

Kiernan Milling Granard.

Peter Casey & Sons, Roscommon.

John O'Rourke, VS Roscommon

John O'Gara, Roscommon.

Eddie Miley, VS, Roscommon.

FBD Insurance

Donal Shine, Athlone

Sean Collins, Strokestown

Michael McSharry, Roscommon

Tom McTague, VS Ballymoe

Intervet Ltd

Gary Molloy Surgical Supplies, Ballymahon

Rathoath Veterinary Clinic.

Gerry Purcell VI.

Leonard Dolan SVI.

Peter Hayes, VI.

Brian Mulligan, VS Arva.

Teddy Clifford, VS Tipperary.

FBD Roscommon.

Paul Redmond VS.

Thomas Murphy.

Liam Mc Eldowney VS Letterkenny.

Denis Healy, VI.

F Nally, Roscommon

S Maher, Roscommon

Niall Nally. VS Ballymahon

Pat Kavanagh, VI

John P Higgins, VI

Paddy Gubbins, VI

Brian Harrington VI

Dr Joe Daly, Athleague.

George Bannon Sports Shop, Roscommon.

Cormac Robinson, Overstone Golf Supplies Longford.

John Corcoran Menswear, Roscommon.

Peter Casey & Sons, Roscommon.

Martin McDermott, Permanent tsb Bank.



New Projects 2008.....

Uganda

Koilei Amora Ican Animal Traction Project in Eastern Uganda to which VIVA has committed over €82,500 over the next three years. One hundred and twenty eight families will be supported with the distribution of draft oxen, ploughs and carts. Farmers will also be given grass seeds, vegetable seeds, tools and appropriate training.

The population of this area consists of peasant farmers whose livelihood depends on farming with traditional methods. The families engage mostly in subsistence farming that unfortunately does not provide sufficient income or produce to maintain their large families. This has resulted in malnutrition (especially in children) and early school-leaving which leads to illiteracy, unemployment and early marriages.

Using hand hoes it can take an average household up to 15 days to dig an acre of ground in preparation for crop planting. This obviously reduces the acreage under crops. The introduction of animal traction will therefore significantly boost crop production as

farmers will be able to plough and plant large pieces of land in a short time. This will lead to increased yields and raise household incomes. The project will be supervised by our project partner Heifer Uganda.

Tanzania

VIVA has also committed over €30,000 over the next three years to the training and equipping of Community Animal Health Workers (Paravets) in Tanzania. Initially, 90 community animal health workers will be trained under veterinary supervision to provide basic animal healthcare to 100 villages around Arusha and Kilimanjaro.



Community Animal Health Worker in Arusha Tanzania

LITTLE ROCK(USA) TO IRELAND

VIVA's partners Heifer International, Little Rock, USA paid a courtesy visit to Ireland to meet its Irish partners to plan future co-operation.

Pictured Right:-Dr Bernard Muyeya, Bothar Overseas Programme Director, Brendan Mimmagh VIVA CEO, Marissa Geraci, Heifer Overseas Director, Jim de Vries, Heifer Deputy CEO, Peter Ireton, Bothar CEO.



Visit our website www.viva.ie

HOW TO HELP IN 2008 ...

- Have you an idea for a fundraiser?
- Is there a local community group near you that would show the VIVA video to learn more about what we do?
- Do you work in a company which assigns money to charity?
- Can we send an information pack to the Directors?
- Donations to VIVA now qualify for tax relief – our charity no, CHY 93510.
- We welcome the opportunity to speak to local groups, schools or individuals
- We can show a video or PowerPoint presentation on the work of VIVA at short notice

CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE SENT TO ...



Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance

13 Abbeycartron, Longford
Tel: (043) 47869, 47849.

Fax: (043) 47849 • Mobile: 086-8509697

for further information.
Email: info@viva.ie
Website: www.viva.ie