



Viva News

Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance
13 Abbeycartron, Longford | Tel: (043) 33 47869
Mobile: 086 – 2568357 | Email: mike@viva.ie | Web: www.viva.ie

December 2014

*supporting
livestock farmers in
the Developing World*

The “**Taraqee Women’s Cooperative
Credit Society**” (TWCCS) in Pakistan
thank you for your support in **2014**



Thank you!

Dear Supporter,

The United Nations named 2014 the International Year of Family Farming. The goal throughout the year was to raise awareness of the challenges facing family farming - which is the largest employer in the world. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN says it is crucial to promote the sector as a way of production in order to combat hunger and poverty and contribute to healthy food systems.

There are over 570 million farms in the world of which over 500 million are family owned. They are responsible for at least 56% of agricultural production and work on a significant portion of the world's farmland (62% in Africa and 83% in Asia).

VIVA is working with family farmers in Africa and Asia to enable them to move from subsistence farming (producing just enough food to feed themselves) to commercial farming where they begin to produce surpluses for sale generating cash incomes which can be used to help them climb out of poverty.

Your support is making a vital difference amongst the communities we support and is a wonderful expression of solidarity between the Irish veterinary and agricultural sector and farmers in the Developing World.

Over the following pages you can read all about our projects and the work of our supporters who ensure they happen.

We look forward to your support in 2015

Pat Murphy (VIVA Chairperson)

Mike Burke (VIVA CEO)

Slan go Séan & Denis

VIVA would like to thank our outgoing Chairman, S an Ó'Laoide, for his many years of service. In addition to chairing the Board, S an participated in several VIVA training missions in Malawi and Kosovo in the early 2000s. However, we are not losing S an completely as he will continue to serve on our Board. We would also like to wish our new Chairperson, Pat Murphy, all the best in his new role. Pat was the inspiration behind the VIVA Wheelers whose fundraising efforts enabled VIVA to initiate the Ugandan Animal Traction project. We are however, losing Denis Kelliher who has stepped down from the Board. Denis has been a Director since VIVA was founded in 1999 and we'd like to thank him for his efforts and support over the years. We would also like to welcome new Board members, Ciaran Gobl (working as a vet in Cork and a former winner of the Mike O'Leary Trust Travel Bursary – see page 12), Perpetua McNamee (Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer in DARDNI) and Peter Ireton (formerly the Bothar CEO). Their combined expertise in the agriculture, veterinary and development sectors will be a huge asset to VIVA as we move into 2015.

Cover Photo - Qamar Zaman (Executive Director – TNJ) presents goats to one of the recipient farmers on our goat project in Pakistan

Goats bring hope to Pakistani farmers

VIVA has just finished funding a project in the Punjab region of north-east Pakistan. Working with our new partner, TNJ, the project worked with 80 marginalised women who are members of the “Taragee Women’s Cooperative Credit Society” (TWCCS).

These women and their families work in the local brick kilns earning approx. €1 a day for producing 1000 bricks. These low incomes do not allow the women to care properly for their families or send their children to school. In fact, as soon as children are old enough they also start working in the kilns to help their families meet the daily target of 1000 bricks. The kilns do not operate during the monsoon season (July to September) so the women then get

loans to tide them over from the brick kiln owners at very high interest rates. This is one of the reasons they women have set up their Co-operative Credit Society.

To help the women generate additional income 240 teddy goats (a local breed raised for its meat) were purchased and each of the 80 women received 3 goats. The goats generated an income from the sale of milk, ghee (a type of butter) and meat. The women also received training in the care of the goats. At the end of the year the beneficiaries must return three goats to the Co-op for distribution to other members of the group thus ensuring the sustainability of initiative.



The project was jointly funded by VIVA and Electric Aid (the social justice fund of the staff of Electric Ireland).

Ugandan Animal Traction Project

Working in conjunction with our partner, Heifer Uganda and five farmers groups and with the assistance of funding from Irish Aid, VIVA's project is transforming the lives of 12,000 farming families. In addition to providing oxen and ploughs for crop cultivation, the families receive training and assistance in other areas such as vegetable growing, home sanitation, tree-planting, installation of energy-efficient stoves and gender issues. We are now concentrating on helping these farmers with post-harvest handling and marketing of their produce in addition to climate change adaptation strategies.

Key achievements in 2014

- The review of the project in 2014 indicated significant improvements in household incomes and food and nutrition security amongst families as a result of implementing project activities.
- The total household income improved to \$183.48 as compared to \$137.80 at baseline.
- 67.8% of the participating households not only consume 3 meals per day but eat a wider variety of foods compared to 31% at the outset of the project.

- Formation of a farmers' cooperative – Ngora Farmers' Multi-Purpose Co-operative Society(NGOFAMCOS) - by the 5 farmers groups involved in the project. NGOFAMCOS will process and market farmers' produce (mainly cassava and groundnuts).
- 6,836 households received and planted vegetable (eggplant, tomatoes, sukuma wiki and amaranths) seeds passed on from 1,000 households that first received vegetable seeds from the project last year.
- Average groundnuts production per acre this year was 350kgs as compared to 280kgs last year. This increase of 25% is attributed to the use of drought-resistant groundnut seeds, as well as favourable weather conditions.
- So far in the project, 420 oxen have been distributed to farmers under the scheme and another 144 have been distributed as a result of the Passing on the Gift mechanism whereby recipients of oxen undertake to provide an ox to a neighbouring farmer with the extra farm incomes the oxen generate.



a farmer demonstrates a groundnut shelling machine. This removes the husk from the groundnuts to give you what we know as peanuts.



Mike Burke (VIVA) plants a tree to mark the foundation of the Ngora Farmers' Multi-Purpose Co-operative Society (NGOFAMCOS).



Mike Burke (VIVA) with Jane Opolot – Jane manages a tree nursery owned by one of the farmer groups on the project. The nursery supplies fruit trees e.g orange trees and fodder trees (leaves can be fed to livestock) to local farmers.



Perpetua McNamee (right - VIVA Board member) and Patty Abozaglo (left - VIVA's Overseas Programmes Manager) with some farmers who are demonstrating their groundnut harvest. Groundnuts are an important local crop and the project is promoting drought-resistant varieties. In addition, the newly-formed Co-Op hope to add value to the groundnut crop by shelling the groundnuts and also producing groundnut paste (used as a sauce in local dishes).



Pat Murphy (VIVA Chairperson) tries his hand at ploughing using oxen. Ploughing using oxen allows farmers to complete in a few hours what would take weeks with hoes.

At a Passing on the Gift (POG) ceremony, Perpetua McNamee hands over an ox to a newly-trained farmer. This yearling animal was donated by a previous recipient with the extra farm incomes the oxen generate.



Farmers with their new oxen





The VIVA Wheelers

The VIVA Wheelers are a group of cyclists of all ages and abilities who have raised over €220,000 for VIVA's projects worldwide with fundraising cycles in Vietnam (2005), Morocco (2007), the Burren (2009), Bantry (2010), Westport (2011), Dungarvan (2012) and the Glen of Aherlow (2013)

The Breffni Bike 'n Hike

For 2014 the VIVA Wheelers headed for Breffni country and the Sliabh an Iarainn mountains. Our base for the day was the Leitrim Gaels GAA complex in Leitrim village. On a beautiful sunny morning the cyclists headed off on a three counties tour taking in Leitrim, Cavan and Roscommon breaking for lunch in Dowra village

The hikers climbed Sliabh an Iarainn enjoying spectacular views once they had negotiated the boggy tracks.

At the end of the day the 57 cyclists and 13 hikers raised over €12,500. Since their inception in 2005 the VIVA Wheelers have now raised just over €236,000 which is an amazing achievement. For our 10th anniversary in 2015 we have set a target of €250,000 so we are in touching distance of this!

A special mention is due to the following participants who have taken part in every one of our events: Syd Nagle, Donagh McDonnell and James Madden.



The Hikers take a break at the summit

In addition, 6 participants have taken part in all six of our Irish "Bike 'n Hikes":

Roy Gallie, The Fabby Family, Jim Higgins, Cathy Waddell, Ascinta Kilroy and Mary Sadlier.

Finally, a special word of thanks to our sponsors, Zoetis (who sponsored our dinner) and Veterinary Instruments Ltd (who sponsored the food breaks). The support of XLVets, Prime Health Vets, Interchem and Duggan Veterinary is also appreciated.

Hope to see you next year.

Next year we hope to revisit one of our iconic cycles - Westport! To join our mailing list contact Mike Burke on 086 256 8357 or mike@viva.ie



Paula Bergeson-Quinn & Cathy Hawthorne



The Coens enjoy a well-earned break



XL Vets Team – Tadgh Murphy, Ger Cusack, Kieran O' Mahony & Geoff Dooley

Most appropriate cycling gear award – John Henry & Cathy Waddell



Donagh Brodie in a spot of bother



Donal Duggan, Pat Kirwan & Finola McCoy



Rachel Burgess does her best to restore James Madden



Fergal Sheridan, Conor O' Scannail & Fergus Smith



“Univet” and “C & M Vetlink” Golf Classic

The 2014 VIVA golf classic returned to one of its favourite courses, Tullamore Golf Club's mature 18-hole parkland championship course on August 1st. VIVA would like to thank Tony McManus for organising the event and to all the competitors who played on the day. Thirty five teams competed for an array of prizes. Once again the VIVA classic was sponsored by Univet and C&M Vetlink. Without their valued support it would be very difficult to stage this most successful annual competition that has raised over €72,000 for VIVA's projects. Special thanks also to the following for their sponsorship:

Liam McEldowney, Anthony Sweeney, Donal Brady and John O'Roarke.

Jim Cox, Sponsors Brendan Crowe (Univet) and Jim Spratt (C&M), Brendan Mimmagh (VIVA), Leonard Dolan and Tony McManus (VIVA)



Prime Health Vets seminar benefits VIVA



Prime Health Vets was set up in early 2013 by ten veterinary practices in Munster to work together to benefit their farmer clients and promote herd health. One of their initiatives is to organise practical training days and seminars where experts in a specific topic share their knowledge with their farmer clients. At one of their recent seminars in Fermoy Mart on dairy fertility all the admission fees were donated to VIVA. This raised a total of €2,500 for our overseas projects.

VIVA would like to thank their chairman, Paul Redmond and all the participating practices for their generous support.

Paul Redmond (Prime Health Vets) presents a cheque to Mike Burke (VIVA)

Heifer Draw 2014



Conor Geraghty (right) CAVI Chairperson, pulls the winning ticket in the Heifer Draw



Aine Collins, the 2011 winner of VIVA's "Mike O'Leary Travel Bursary" at the VIVA stand at the CAVI Conference in Cork.

The draw for our annual "Heifer Draw" was made at the CAVI (Cattle Veterinary Association of Ireland) conference in Cork on October 12th.

The winners are as follows:

- The Limousin Heifer - Liam Garavan, Kilameena, Westport, Co. Mayo
(Seller's Prize - Cathy Waddell, Westport, Co. Mayo)
- €500 Travel Voucher - Paddy Cadden, Loughduff, Co. Cavan.
- €250 Bike Shop Voucher - Celia Coyle, Kllcross, Beglieve, Bailieboro, Co. Cavan.

Congrats to all and thanks to CAVI for facilitating us on the day.

Almost 2,250 tickets were sold raising over €11,000 for VIVA's projects. We'd also like to acknowledge the efforts of our two of our most successful ticket sellers, Rachel Burgess and Mary Coen, who between them sell between €1500 and €2000 worth of tickets each year. Well done!

Super Supporters

VIVA would like to thank the following for their generous support in 2014:

Donal Connolly
Pat Murphy
Maurice and Paula O'Reilly

Kilkenny Clinical Club also donated €1000 during the year. This brings to €3000 the sponsorship received from this Clinical Club over the past few years.

Midland Showjumping continue their support

Midland Showjumping, based in Granard, donated €1,000 in fees from their summer showjumping event to VIVA. In all this brings to €10,000 the support they have given to VIVA since 2008. This is a fantastic achievement – well done to all the organisers.

L to R: Brendan Mimmagh (VIVA), Mary Gannon (sponsor) and Brian Gormley MVB (Midland Showjumping)



The 2014 Mike O' Leary Trust Travel Bursary Winner

This year's winner of the Mike O' Leary Trust Travel Bursary was Charlene Grice, a third year veterinary student in UCD. Charlene travelled to Uganda in July to visit our animal traction project. This is the tenth year of the Bursary which sponsors a veterinary student each year to spend a month visiting one of VIVA's overseas projects. The Mike O' Leary Trust was established to honour the memory of Kerry vet, Mike O'Leary, who died tragically in 2003 at the age of 39. His family and friends have undertaken a number of fundraising initiatives over the years to raise funds for the Travel Bursary in addition to supporting the Irish NGO, GOAL, and cardiomyopathy research.

According to Charlene *"it was truly amazing to witness how hard working these farmers are and how far and how quickly they have been able to progress. The average initial investment in each farm is actually less than €250 so it is quite impressive"*



Charlene has a go at ploughing with some local farmers



Charlene interviews a farmer

Mike O'Leary Trust Bursary Winners

Roll of Honour - 2005 to 2014

- 2005 Michelle Cramer
- 2006 Ciaran Gobl
- 2007 Anja Peters / Stevie O'Sullivan
- 2008 Dónal Cape
- 2009 Carmel Molloy
- 2010 Martin Breen
- 2011 Áine Collins
- 2012 Una Boyle
- 2013 Sarah Irwin
- 2014 Charlene Grice