

Community Engagement Newsletter



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Faculty of Veterinary Science
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Community Education on Small Scale Chicken Farming

Mareli Smalberger (BSc Agric, MSc Agric, BVSc III)

As part of the third year veterinary science module, Veterinary Professional Life (VPL) 300, students are required to undertake a community engagement project in randomly assigned groups. Our student group decided to take on a project involving chicken farming, since some of the group members had prior experience with poultry production.

The project entailed hosting a training day for community members on how to successfully farm with chickens in a rural area. The beneficiary was the community of Zama-Zama in the West of Pretoria. Previous research and needs evaluation conducted by the Department of Human Nutrition at the University of Pretoria has shown that the community suffers from malnutrition and that a source of protein is desperately needed to enhance their diets.

The project was launched in conjunction with other existing projects from the University's Faculty of Veterinary Science and the Faculty of Health Sciences, as a true example of a One Health project. All the projects have a common goal: to ensure good health and to improve the lives of everyone in the community. The aim of the project was to utilise existing resources by training the community on how to improve the production of their village chickens, so that they produce more meat and eggs without high input costs.

The training day encompassed several aspects of chicken production, including housing, feeding, health, breeding and chick care. It was based on resources made available by the South African Poultry Association and was very hands-on.



Veterinary Science students presenting their hands-on training day.



The community members felt equipped to start their own small production systems and excited to improve their chicken production systems after the visit from the Veterinary Science students.

Despite some setbacks, the training day was a success. All participants were previously identified as interested in chicken farming or they already owned chickens. Their enthusiasm was palpable and they were keen to know more.

Reaction afterwards was mostly positive, with some participants now feeling equipped to start their own small production systems and others excited to improve their chicken production systems.

The students in our group agreed that our lives were enriched by the interaction with the community members and we gained skills through our experience of the community dynamics and socio-political situation. It was also challenging to work with so many partners during the project, and we learned the importance of clear communication.

HLUVUKANI EXPERIENCE

Elza Hollenbach, Melyssa van Heerden, Ivan van Wyk and Anke Venter (BVSc VI)

The Hluvukani Animal Health Clinic (HAHC) is located in northern Mpumalanga. It offers veterinary services to the local villages in the surrounding areas.

It has two components: a clinic with basic facilities to examine and treat small animals and an ambulance that provides mobile services and treatment for cattle, sheep and goats. The mobile services include visits to the different dip tanks in the villages every morning according to a roster, resulting in a veterinarian being present if any treatment is required. Appointments or call-outs are made, allowing for the examination of livestock and companion animals at the owners' houses. Alternatively, the clinic is open for clients to bring their companion animals during the day. Veterinary Science students spend two weeks on the clinical rotation, and participate in both clinic and mobile services.

Veterinary animal health technicians and environmental monitors (EMs) also form part of the staff and are mostly residents from the local community, making interaction with the local villagers easier in terms of language barriers and trust. The state and municipality provide dip solution and water for the dip tanks and the veterinary animal health technicians frequently vaccinate cattle before the dipping process. The community members rely on these services provided by the state and the HAHC for the well-being of their animals.

Working at the HAHC teaches you to treat animals as effectively as you can, regardless

of the conditions and the funds available. It is rewarding to see that owners want to save their animals and are willing to try. It is important to follow up on cases to monitor the progress of the patients. It also allows for the improvement of the relationship between the clinic staff and the local community. The function of this rotation is to learn how to provide a high standard of basic veterinary services to domestic and companion animals in an area prone to foot-and-mouth disease, and to apply the necessary biosecurity precautions. It taught us all the aspects of running a well-functioning clinic, as well as to continuously keep in touch with events and members of the community. We also had a very valuable experience of not only working with domestic ruminants, but also receiving the opportunity to work on rhino.

Veterinary services were made available to various townships in the Bushbuckridge region at either cost prices or very low prices. The overall benefit enjoyed by the communities will be their ability to produce healthy and disease-free small- and livestock by means of the service offered by the HAHC. Members of the community were taught how to monitor and look for signs of disease and given insight into how to manage their flocks and herds.

The Hluvukani project is a critical one that bridges gaps in terms of communication and disease control. Being placed in a very rural region, the HAHC sees to the needs of animals who would have suffered or died as a result of the lack of alternative veterinary services.

Putting the knowledge we have acquired after studying for so long into action, an being afforded the opportunity to refine

our skills and making a difference while doing so, was truly rewarding.



The Veterinary Science students were lucky enough to work with rhino during their project at the HAHC.



The Veterinary Science students learned how to provide a high standard of basic veterinary services to domestic and companion animals, and to apply the necessary biosecurity precautions.



DONATIONS: All donations received will be used for community engagement purposes, specifically in less-fortunate communities. Please contact one of the following people if you would like to donate money, dog food, collars, leashes, blankets or your time:

Dr Eugene Machimana 012 529 8100
Sr Sarah Johnson 012 529 8387

Senior Lecturer: Community Engagement Chairperson eugene.machimana@up.ac.za
Small Animal Section Head and Referrals Co-ordinator sarah.johnson@up.ac.za

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN STORMY CAPE TOWN

Lindi Smit, Carrea Greeff, Samantha Domenico and Fladia Buongiorno (BVSc III)

The Community Engagement (CEn) project that we were assigned to on 8 June 2017 was made up of two parts.

The first part of the project was to go to a school in the community of Khayelitsha in Cape Town to give a talk on how to handle and care for dogs, as well as the sterilisation of pets. The second part of the project incorporated VetSol, an organisation that sterilises animals in communities around the Western Cape. We were to volunteer at one of their sterilisation campaigns in Khayelitsha. Unfortunately, the weather was not on our side and the sterilisation campaign was cancelled, and the partner school was changed to Caradale Primary School in Mitchells Plain. Nevertheless, the project was a huge success.

We provided Caradale Primary School with two professionally made posters to put up in their classrooms. One discusses the basic needs of pets and the other the benefits of sterilisation. The learners were also each given a tin of food for their pet, and various educational pamphlets concerning the topics we discussed with them. These materials were sponsored by Valhalla Park Animal Welfare (VPaw). We believe that by reaching out to the learners of Caradale Primary School, and by educating the learners on important general concepts about their animals, the message would be taken home and spread throughout the entire community. In the end, if our message could be heard and understood by even one learner, we know that we have made a difference in

the future of the animals and the people of Mitchells Plain.

As a team, we agree that our Veterinary Professional Life (VPL) 300 community project was an experience that we will never forget. The fact that we got the opportunity to travel to Cape Town to work with the learners of Mitchells Plain was one of the most significant experience afforded to us by the Faculty. We were out of our comfort zone; working with learners from a background and culture that is different to ours. We underestimated the degree of knowledge in the community

on basic animal care and handling. This forced us to think on our feet to make them understand why some concepts they hold true regarding animal handling and care are not necessarily beneficial to their animals. Luckily we had Ms Sharon Classen from VPaw with us to help with the communication. She works with the communities of Cape Town every day and have a better understanding of how to communicate with the learners in a way that they understand. Overall, the experience taught us to communicate with people from different backgrounds, engage in impromptu problem solving, and implement



Ms Sharon Classen from VPaw helped the Veterinary Science students to communicate their message to the learners from Caradale Primary School.

out new people skills. Most importantly, we all learned more about ourselves.

One of the highlights of our project was experiencing our CEn group's development from five strangers working as individuals on completely different wavelengths, to a single entity working as a unit. Each group member had qualities that could be used to enhance our team as a whole in order to execute a successful community project. At the point of implementation of our project, the team knew the strengths of each team member and we used these strengths to our advantage. The process of empowering young malleable minds was another highlight of the project. We presented on basic handling, dog fighting and sterilisation to a class of 50 learners, who were enthusiastic and willing to learn. We are very thankful to see that the learners appreciated our team's hard work.



The Veterinary Science students presented on basic dog handling, dog fighting and sterilisation.

MEETING

Community Engagement Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, 22 February 2018 at 13:30.

World Rabies Day: Faculty partners with GDARD and community partners at Temba Animal Clinic

Ms Lesego Teffu (Public Relations Coordinator) and Dr Eugene Machimana (Senior Lecturer)

World Rabies Day on 28 September saw the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Veterinary Science partner with the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD) to hold an awareness and vaccination day at the Temba Animal Clinic in Hammanskraal.

A number of other community partners also attended the event, offering different services and donating items to the community. These partners included the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA), Community Veterinary Clinics (CVCs), MSD Animal Health, Zoetis and Supreme Pet.

During the event, dogs that were brought to the clinic by members of the community were dipped, dewormed and vaccinated at no cost, and they were happy to leave the venue with dog food, fancy toys and attractive goodie bags, all donated by participating organisations.

The Hammanskraal community was grateful and committed themselves to vaccinating their animals on a regular basis. The World Rabies Day event not only raised awareness

about rabies, but also highlighted the range of services offered by the Temba clinic.

Dog owners and learners from the community also visited the Faculty's stand to find out more about careers in veterinary science, with some learners showing interest. The community was made aware of the important role the Faculty plays in community engagement (CEn) projects. The educational CEn projects are mainly aimed at improving animal health, lobbying for welfare-related issues and addressing factors affecting livestock production in various communities. It was great to see a number of Compulsory Community Services (CCS) veterinarians participating in this initiative, as the Faculty has indeed contributed to preparing them for working in the field through community engagement activities.



Community members could receive basic clinical care for their pets.



The Faculty's stand provided learners with information regarding careers in veterinary science.

SAY BYE TO RABIES, MMAMMUNDU PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kenja-Lee Millar (BVSc III)

On 6 June 2017, a group of third-year students from the Faculty of Veterinary Science drove out to Makapanstad, a small rural town in the North West province, about 60 km from the Faculty. These students included myself, Kenja-Lee Millar, Ruvania Pillay, Sinawo Jack, Afikile Ndabankulu and Ruan Reinhardt. We were handed the task of teaching a group of Mmammundu Primary School learners about rabies prevention.

Our mission: to teach the Grade 4 and Grade 5 learners of Mmammundu Primary School all about rabies and inspire these learners to become future veterinarians along the way. We arrived at the school armed with 55 rabies booklets that were donated by the Global Alliance for Rabies Control. Packed with excitement, we were ready to tell the learners of our exciting career and enlist them in the fight against rabies.

We aimed to portray the message of what rabies is, how it is transmitted and how they can prevent contracting the disease. Part of our message included the five freedoms and dog-bite prevention. We hope the learners carried the message home with them and convey it to their family members and friends. In this way, we could reach the community of

Makapanstad and aid in the control of rabies.

Our experience of this project was fantastic. Mr Moloto (the principal), the teachers and even the learners eagerly welcomed us. Teaching a group of young enthusiastic learners was very rewarding, especially when they all put up their hands to correctly answer our follow-up questions! I would say that our mission was accomplished with success. Each learner walked away with their rabies booklet and we even managed to inspire some of them to become veterinarians. We hope that the Faculty will be seeing their faces on campus in a few years' time.

We would like to thank the Global Alliance for Rabies Control for their sponsorship of the rabies booklet.



The learners of Mmammundu Primary School were very excited to learn about rabies prevention with their rabies booklets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Event	Venue	Date
Production Animal Outreach Clinic	Makapanstad and Ratjiepan Project	Tuesdays and Wednesdays
Mamelodi Animal Health Care (MAHC)	Mamelodi Campus	Mondays to Fridays
Mnisi Community Project	Hluvukani	Mondays to Fridays



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO PUBLISH?

The Community Engagement Committee invites you to submit short articles to be published in the next Newsletter (Autumn 2018). The Community Engagement article should not be more than 1 page long.

Contact person: Dr Eugene Machimana
Tel: (012) 529 8100 (w) | **Email:** eugene.machimana@up.ac.za

Visit the UP Community Engagement Management System (CEMS) for updates about community project opportunities.