

# Community Engagement Newsletter



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Veterinary Science  
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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT IMPLEMENTED IN COLLABORATION WITH EDENDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caron Styles (BVSc III)

As a group of five third-year veterinary science students, we were given the task of implementing a community engagement (CEn) project in collaboration with Community Veterinary Services Southern Africa (CVSSA) and a group of Grade 3 learners at Edendale Primary School.

The aim of this project was to educate the learners on some important issues in the veterinary field, such as animal health and welfare, the role of a veterinarian in a community and rabies. Our hope is that the community and its animals will benefit greatly from this information.

We decided to implement our project using five mini stations. Each station had one veterinary science student teaching about a particular issue. The five stations covered the following topics: how to love and care for your animal, how to provide food and water for your animal, the role and responsibilities of a veterinarian, and information on rabies and what to do in the unfortunate case of being bitten by a rabies-infected dog. The learners were split into five groups and rotated between the stations throughout the project. Small participation tasks were implemented, such as allowing them to feed and provide water for a mock animal, and colouring pictures of their favourite animals. Puppet shows were also used to express how animals feel and how one should treat them kindly and with respect.



*The third-year veterinary science group getting ready for a fun-filled day with the learners from Edendale Primary School.*



*The learners from Edendale Primary School are now equipped with all the information they need to work with animals responsibly.*

One student presented as a veterinarian in her lab coat, complete with a stethoscope. She explained what a veterinarian does, and demonstrated a clinical exam on a toy dog.

Hopefully, the information imparted on the learners will remain with them throughout their lives. The community as a whole can benefit from the project if the learners provide the information that they received to other members of the community, such

as their parents or friends. With this information, there is a chance that cases of neglect, abuse and rabies infestation in the community can be reduced. We hope the education will bring about awareness surrounding these issues, as well as increase the interest of these learners to apply for study in the field of veterinary science in the future.

Our group had a wonderful time with the learners. We found them to be eager to participate in the activities, and full of questions for us. They had responded well to us and seemed to take a genuine interest in the veterinary field. They were a very caring, loving and talkative group of learners, who engaged with us throughout the project.

At the end of the presentation, we presented the learners with some questions to test their knowledge on the subjects they had been educated on, and they responded with the correct answers to our questions.

The highlight of this project was the responses we received from the children. They have such bright and enquiring minds and thoroughly enjoyed our presentation and activities. We received many hugs and had a lovely time spending the morning with them.

## WORKING HAND AND PAW TO PREVENT RABIES

Joanet van Zyl, Jonathan Wright, Kaitlyn Reabow, Marianca Barnard and Venecia Naidoo (BVSc III)

**Our group visited Kosea Moeka Primary School for our community engagement (CEn) project on 7 June 2017. We were warmly welcomed by Mr Bob Maswanganye (principal) and the teachers. It is a beautiful primary school with very kind and helpful teachers and staff members.**

Our aim was to promote rabies education and teach the learners some basic concepts of primary animal health care. We made posters with the aid of the rabies booklets and brought along two special guests called Fluffy and Spot. We gave each of the 90 learner a rabies booklet, which was kindly donated to us by the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC). The booklets explain what rabies is and what to do when one is bitten by a dog. The learners loved the booklets, especially the certificate included at the end.

The community partners benefited from this project in that the learners now have a better understanding of what rabies is and how to react in certain situations. Based on our preliminary investigation, we

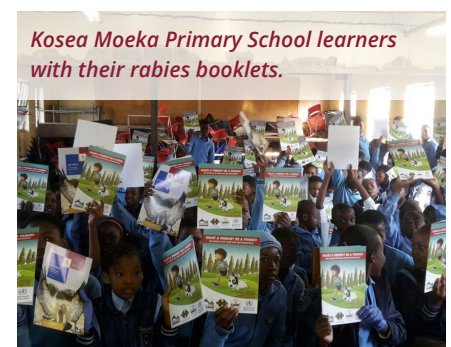
established that the learners did not have any knowledge about rabies. However, we are sure that they have gained knowledge on rabies as a result of our CEn project. By educating the community we can prevent rabies in animals and humans.

We had a great experience participating in the Veterinary Professional Life (VPL) 300 CEn project. It is rewarding to know that you can share your knowledge with others and that the knowledge they gain can save their own lives, as well as the lives of animals. We are so grateful for the opportunity we had to share our knowledge and make a difference.

We are sure that the highlight for the learners was the arrival of Fluffy and Spot, the two animal mascots, and the rabies booklets. However, for us, the highlight was the learners' excited faces and their

willingness to learn. Our group had so much fun acting out the pictures in the booklet and interacting with the learners.

We would like to thank everyone involved for all the guidance and help during the course of our project, and advise everyone to participate in future CEn projects. It will change your life!



*Kosea Moeka Primary School learners with their rabies booklets.*



*Veterinary science group members and representatives of Kosea Moeka Primary School with Fluffy and Spot.*

# MEETING

Community Engagement Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, 29 November at 13H30.

## VetSCO VISITS THE VILLAGES OF STINKWATER

Khutso Chiloane (BVSc III)

Caring is the gift of making the ordinary special. On Saturday, 22 April 2017, students from the Faculty of Veterinary Science embarked on yet another thrilling journey, this time to the community of Stinkwater.

This was the first bovine outreach of the year. The Veterinary Student Community Outreach (VetSCO) Committee organised the outreach with the support of the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD). Another key community partner to this initiative was CEVA pharmaceutical, who donated oral dewormer for goats and sheep, Cevamec 1 injectable solution and Cypertraz 1I pour-on solution.

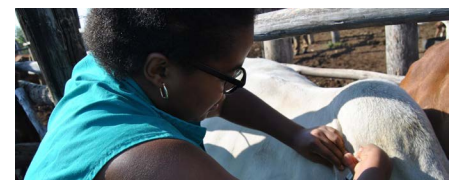
This student-initiated vaccination excursion started off when the 60-seater bus arrived early on the Saturday morning at the Onderstepoort residence and delivered us safely to the area of Stinkwater, just outside the Temba Animal Clinic. The highly skilled Animal Health Technicians were waiting to meet the students at the Temba Animal Clinic. The group of students were efficiently separated into four groups, with a combination of students from each year of veterinary science studies in each group. Each task team then drove off to four different locations in the area so as to cover as many animals as possible.

Upon arrival to the different locations, the students started their vaccination procedures with the assistance of the Animal Health Technicians, the farmers of the area and the herdsman responsible for the animals. The vaccinations used included anthrax, botulism, blackquarter and brucellosis.

Area	Supervax	S19	Oral dewormer	Cevamec injectable	Cypertraz pour-on
Dilopye	100 cattle (15 herds)	40 cattle (15 herds)	110 goats 30 sheep	100 cattle	80 cattle
Stinkwater trust	150 cattle (21 herds)	40 cattle (21 herds)	81 goats 24 sheep	150 cattle	100 cattle
Stinkwater	82 cattle (12 herds)	20 cattle (10 herds)	30 goats	82 cattle	82 cattle
Eersterus	100 cattle (22 herds)	40 cattle (20 herds)	100 goats	270 cattle	150 cattle

After a long day of hard work, one lucky group of students were fortunate enough to have serviced a family of farmers who knew the VetSCO name well. To their great pleasure, the farmers had prepared a lunch for them. This was how the farmers showed their gratitude towards everyone who participated in providing basic health care for their livestock, which translates into their livelihoods. The students were delighted and very honoured to receive such an unexpected kindness from this community. It made them realise the gravity of veterinary science careers and the significant difference that their skill sets can make in the lives of both people and animals. This illustrated that caring is the gift of making the ordinary special.

VetSCO would like to thank all the people who participated in this excursion: Animal Health Technicians Mr Joseph Manamela, Mr Theo Serebolo, Mr Tsholofelo Mojanaga and Mr Mafulacha William Kutu (Chief Animal Health Technician), all the farmers and their herdsman, as well as their colleagues from Onderstepoort Campus.



Many animals were successfully treated on this excursion (Cattle n = 1117 and goats and sheep n = 173)



The community showed great appreciation to VetSCO and the students involved in the outreach project.

# PET CARE AT PHOLOKGOLO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Jodi Botha, Benjamin van As, Hermanus Swart, Johann Stadler and Jeanine Odendaal (BVSc III)

As veterinary science students, we understand the need for education, especially concerning animal care in rural areas.

To our delight, we found that we were assigned to Pholokgolo Primary School, situated in the Ratjiepene village in North West, for our Veterinary Professional Life (VPL) 300 community engagement project. We immediately realised that it would be the perfect opportunity for a talk on many of the important issues surrounding animal handling, rabies and veterinary science in general. Our group of five students visited the school to do an entertaining and informative presentation for the Grade 6 and Grade 7 learners. The principal, Ms MS Leballo, greeted us upon our arrival and was very accommodating to all of our plans.

We presented an educational programme to each class separately to allow for a more manageable and interactive session. One part of the presentation covered basic animal nutrition, with a focus on what can and cannot be fed to pets, as well as the importance of providing clean water regularly. A few items of veterinary equipment were brought along for the learners to observe the practical aspects of veterinary science, as many of them did not know what it meant to be a veterinarian. We felt that inspiring the learners to dream big and reach

for a career in veterinary science is very important, as there are study opportunities and bursaries available for underprivileged learners.

In the other session, we discussed basic animal body language using plenty of pictures and putting our acting skills to use because of the language barrier. Fortunately, the learners were very intuitive and realised almost straight away when to avoid playing with a dog and when a dog is being friendly. Most importantly, we presented a skit on rabies – what to do if approached by an animal suspected to have rabies and how to react if bitten by an animal. The importance of taking their pets to the clinic and having them vaccinated and sterilised was also stressed.

The learners thoroughly enjoyed being part of the presentation and looked extremely proud when given their certificates contained in the rabies booklets. The Global Alliance for Rabies Control donated 55 rabies booklets, which were presented to the learners at Pholokgolo Primary School. We hope that this will encourage them to go home and show their parents the booklets, as many adults may also be uninformed about rabies.

The project was a fun and fulfilling activity, and will hopefully help to reduce the number of preventable deaths due to rabies in both people and animals in the area.



*A veterinary science student using her acting skills during the presentation.*



*The learners from Pholokgolo Primary School can now show off their rabies booklets to their family and friends to help raise awareness of the disease.*

# A TRUE ADVENTURE

Cherise Swanepoel (BVSc III)

For the past couple of years, the dedicated staff of Bela-Bela Superspar have been making a difference in their community by donating lunch packs to the learners embarking on the Adventures with Elephants community engagement projects.

This year, it was our group's privilege to give back to the Bela-Bela Superspar staff as part of our VPL 300 community engagement project. How do you show appreciation to these generous people? By giving them the opportunity to experience the project that they have been sponsoring for themselves. For our project, we took the Bela Bela Superspar staff members to the Adventures with Elephants experience.

The aim of the project was to create awareness of the importance of nature conservation and ecotourism, as well as to inform the community of the impact of poaching in South Africa.

This was made easy thanks to the wonderful individuals who work at

Adventures with Elephants. After getting so close to the magnificent giants, it was impossible not to fall in love with their intelligence and soft nature. It was, however, not just the elephants that made the project special, but also the look on every single person's face when the elephants walked right up to us. It was with childlike excitement that we could feed, photograph and even kiss these giants.

For me, working with such a dynamic group of people was the true highlight of the project. Everyone was interested in the activity and actively participated in every single interaction with enthusiasm.

The Bela Bela Superspar staff members thoroughly enjoyed every interaction

with the elephants. These included the following:

- Stroking the elephants (even stoking their tongues)
- Feeding the elephants
- Playing memory games with the elephants
- Getting a free shower from one of the bulls

With every activity, it was easy to see the progress that each guest made in reaction to these gentle giants; from initial fear to a greater understanding of them and their intelligence.

We wish to extend a big thanks to the staff members from Adventures with Elephants, who were very accommodating and welcomed us with big smiles. It was a true adventure making a difference and giving back to this community.



*The veterinary science students interacting with an elephant.*



*The veterinary science group with the very excited staff members of Bela-bela Superspar.*



**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

Community Engagement Chairperson  
 Small Animal Section Head & Referrals Co-ordinator

eugene.machimana@up.ac.za  
 sarah.johnson@up.ac.za

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Event	Venue	Date
Production Animal Outreach Clinic	Makapanstad & 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 (Summer 2017). The Community Engagement article should not be more than 1 page long. Contact person Dr Eugene G. 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.

*Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see.*

