



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS



THE BROOKE

Expert Meeting on

ROLE, IMPACT AND WELFARE OF WORKING (TRANSPORT AND TRACTION) ANIMALS

FAO Headquarters, Rome (Italy)

13 -17 June 2011

CALL FOR EXPERTS

(DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS: **15 APRIL 2011**)

Background

Working animals play a fundamental role in livelihoods improvement as they provide farm power and contribute to food security and poverty reduction, income generation and gender equity. Smallholders who use animals for soil tillage can cultivate larger areas more efficiently and quickly than with human labour, thereby greatly increasing their yields. Working animals create synergy in nutrient cycles, farming and marketing systems: animals allow farmers and traders to transport harvests, market products, fodder for livestock and manure. They increase people's transport capacity and range, providing families and entrepreneurs with access to supplies, services and livelihoods. Working animals are multipurpose, producing profitable livestock products, including manure, milk and sometimes meat. Human, animal and mechanical power are not mutually exclusive and each has advantages depending on the environment, scale and socio-economic context. People aspire to prestigious, modern machines but tractors may be unaffordable and inappropriate on small farms or in difficult terrain.

Animal welfare is recognized as a core component of responsible animal husbandry and therefore should be an integral part of all working animals systems. The welfare of working animals, apart from being a common good per se, has a direct impact on their health and on their capacity to carry out the required functions, which in turn, affect the livelihood of their owners. However, animal welfare practices are not given sufficient attention worldwide despite their acknowledged positive impacts on both animals and the families who own them. In light of these issues, FAO and the Brooke are organizing an expert meeting that will consider how to raise not only the profile but also the welfare of working animals in agricultural and rural development programmes. taking into consideration the current status of these animals throughout the world, and more particularly in developing countries. The experts will consider the findings in the reports from the two recent consultation exercises and analyze the reasons for the successes or failures of policies, programmes, projects and activities linked to these animals and their welfare. They will explore how these may contribute to point towards a pathway for the future.

In February 2011, in preparation for the Expert Meeting, FAO and the Brooke conducted an electronic consultation with 156 subscribers from 52 countries, (available at <http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/themes/animal-welfare/blog/en/>) to gather up-to-date relevant information and expertise on the following themes:



The current state of knowledge on the contribution of working animals to livelihoods worldwide; Existing standards and guidelines, case studies and best practices addressing working animals health and welfare; and Adequate policies, legislation and any other further action necessary at national and international level.

The report of the e-consultation along with the documents shared by participants and experts and the report of the 5th Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference Workshop, Ghana (March 2011) will constitute the background literature to the Expert Meeting.

Objectives of the Expert Meeting

The objectives of the meeting are: to analyze the role and impact of working animals in livelihoods (food security, poverty alleviation, income generation, access to services, gender equity, etc.); to identify necessary actions to raise their profile in agricultural and rural development programmes; and to identify necessary actions to improve their welfare.

Output of the Expert Meeting

The meeting will provide scientists, development workers, governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations, and the international community at large with an interest in working animals and their welfare with a report which will act to inform development agencies and government and academic institutions as to why and how the profile of working animals and their welfare should be raised. This will be based on current scientific knowledge and consolidated experience recommending policies, programme, projects and activities linked to a more effective and welfare-friendly use of working animals.

CALL FOR EXPERTS

Suitable qualified experts with professional or practical experience in the following areas are invited to submit their curriculum vitae including a description of their work experience, and if applicable, a list of peer-reviewed publications, particularly those related to the subject of the Expert Meeting:

- Use of working animals to support income generation, reduce drudgery and reduce women's and children's labour (including recent trends)
- Socio-economic evaluations of the role of working animals
- Human and working animals relationships
- Design and use of harness and implements
- Welfare of working animals (including its assessment)
- Health and nutrition of working animals
- Human behaviour change, capacity building methodologies and tools, training and education, communication, awareness building.

Selection of experts

FAO has developed procedures for selecting and designating experts that assure transparency, excellence and independence of the opinion expressed. In selecting experts, the organizers will consider, in addition to scientific and technical excellence, diversity of backgrounds and balanced representation from geographic regions and gender. The selected experts will be invited to participate in the meeting and to contribute with background material and papers. Experts are selected in their 'personal capacity' and will be asked to sign a declaration of interest stating that they are not presenting any particular organization or group. The expert meeting will be held in English and all



meeting documentation and correspondence will be in English. Experts will be provided with economy class air travel to Rome, accommodation and a daily subsistence allowance for the length of their stay. No honoraria are paid.

Selection process

All submitted applications shall be reviewed by a panel that will determine whether the applicants meet the following selection criteria:

Relevance of academic qualifications and professional/practical experience in the required area (see under Call for Experts); Scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals in areas related to the subject of the Expert Meeting and/or practical experience in these topics; Leadership of, or invited participation, in national or international scientific committees or networks pertinent to the topics; Working knowledge of the English language.

Please submit applications, data and relevant information, no later than 15 April 2011 by email to: Working-Animals@fao.org