



NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE DELIVERY OF ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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SUMMARY

- NGOs play diverse roles in the delivery of animal health services in developing countries. Project partners vary and include community-based organisations, local NGOs, private veterinarians and government agencies. The broad development objectives and approach of NGOs affects animal health work in terms of poverty-focus, community participation, local capacity-building and women's development (1.0, 2.0).
- In general, within NGO animal health projects material inputs are associated with emergency and rehabilitation contexts whereas capacity-building and policy reform are more likely to feature in development projects. However, there are notable examples of long-term emergency projects that have addressed development issues (2.0).
- Project context is a major determinant of impact and sustainability of NGO animal health work. Longer term projects with consistent objectives and management style are most likely to demonstrate impact and sustainability (2.1).
- NGOs that work directly with government can facilitate policy development through long-term relationships. These and other NGOs also influence policy indirectly by working with future policy makers, influencing donor policy and publicising alternative systems of service delivery (2.0.9).
- NGOs have often supported the establishment of private veterinary pharmacies and clinics, and offered organisational support to pre-existing private veterinary groups. Due to increasing interest in combined community-based and privatised approaches, there are opportunities for NGOs to develop links with the private sector locally and contribute towards the privatisation debate at national level (3.0).
- General trends in NGO-donor relationships include an increasing reliance of NGOs on donor funds and an increasing influence of NGOs on donor policy. These trends are reflected in recent NGO and donor experience and interest in animal health service delivery. Both NGOs and donors are seeking to encourage policy reform and promote the private sector, albeit through experience gained from different perspectives and with different project partners (1.2, 4.1).
- Options for developing NGO-donor relationships include:
 - developing better linkages between NGOs and donors to enable more effective dissemination of project experiences and lessons (4.2.1 and 4.2.2)
 - through joint efforts, developing monitoring and evaluation indicators of NGO animal health work which are appropriate to project context. This process should include attention to both participatory monitoring approaches and options for combining formal and participatory methods (4.2.3 and 4.2.4).
 - donor investment in participatory appraisal training and practice for their own staff (4.2.4).
 - encouraging working relationships between NGOs and donor representatives in countries or regions where NGO animal health projects are implemented (4.2.5).
 - increased donor recognition and long-term support to NGOs as development organisations rather than implementors of discrete, time-bound projects (4.2.6).
 - attention to two important strengths of NGOs *viz.* innovation and risk-taking (4.2.7).

1.0 CURRENT TRENDS IN THE NGO SECTOR AND LINKS WITH DONORS

1.0.1 When discussing the role of international NGOs in animal health service delivery in the developing world, it should be noted that there are 4000 or so registered NGOs in OECD countries. Of these, only a small number claim to possess particular experience or in-house knowledge of livestock development and even fewer focus on veterinary services¹. Consequently, much animal health work is implemented by NGOs who buy-in expertise as and when it is needed. For these NGOs, animal health work tends to be designed and implemented according to the overall development objectives and approach of the NGO in question. Therefore, in the context of the aims of this paper, a brief summary of some of the key features of NGOs is of value because these characteristics tend to influence their veterinary activities. Many of these characteristics also apply to the small number of livestock-orientated NGOs.

1.0.2 Although many NGOs share common characteristics in terms of development approach, a key feature of international NGOs is their diversity. NGOs should not be regarded as an homogenous group of organisations with common capacity, development ideology, funding base or scale of operations. Considerable variation occurs with respect to target groups, sectoral preferences and expertise, and degrees of operationality. Two very important trends within the larger British NGOs include greater emphasis on local capacity-building and closer links with donors related to both funding arrangements and development objectives.

1.1 Some general features of NGOs

1.1.1 When considering current trends in the policy, development approach and organisational capacity of the larger British NGOs, a number of common themes emerge. These NGOs are poverty-focused and tend to adopt community-based development approaches based on local perceptions, needs and capacity. Long-term development is related to the community management of services, improved confidence and organisational capacity at grassroots level, sustainable improvements in the ownership and management of assets, and links to government and other permanent structures. Typically, gender work and community participation² are integral components of NGO projects and increasingly, these projects aim to facilitate rather than control change. Looking more closely at sustainability, these NGOs are usually more interested in the sustainability of benefits rather than maintaining their own operations indefinitely. Behaviour such as political neutrality and a willingness to work with people regardless of religion, ethnic group or political persuasion has been clearly demonstrated among the major British NGOs.

1.1.2 Although the above development objectives are shared by many NGOs, including those with a livestock-focus, there are also important differences related to the style of operations and choice of project partners. For example, Christian Aid is essentially non-operational and works through both governmental and non governmental partners in target countries. Save the Children (UK) tends to implement its own projects though in most cases,

¹ For example, VSF, VSF-Belgium, VSF Vetermon, VetAid, InterAction, DCA.

² Words such as "sustainable" and "participation" can have various meanings. Clear definitions of the various levels of participation within the context of sustainable agriculture are provided by Pretty (1994).

works through government institutions. This approach reflects SCF's belief that ultimately, government controls the wider economic and political framework within which development occurs. Oxfam UK/I might be described as an operational NGO but one which has a clear commitment to the development of local partners and a long-term strategy of minimal in-country presence.

1.1.3 The commitment to local partners shown by many of the larger British NGOs is not common to the work of all NGOs. Some NGOs continue to focus on their own sustainability and have no plans to hand-over services or projects to local players. Frequently, these NGOs have semi-covert political or religious agendas. As the author has no experience of working with these NGOs, they are not discussed in this paper.

1.1.4 In terms of NGOs developing as organisations, many NGOs are constantly reviewing and analysing their organisational structures and systems in an attempt to improve the quality of their work. Most recently, the larger British NGOs have identified a need to improve understanding of both the impact and effectiveness of their projects, and relate costs to benefits (Riddell, 1995). Much of the debate on impact assessment is based on improved monitoring and evaluation methods, and specifically, the role of participatory methods which enable project beneficiaries to play a stronger role in the assessment process (ODI, 1996). Another feature of the discussion on impact is the balance of quantitative versus qualitative data and options for combining information derived from formal and participatory approaches. These trends indicate that although NGOs might attract criticism for the lack of data to support claims of project success, they are actively seeking to develop better ways of measuring their impact.

1.2 NGO-donor links³

1.2.1 In general, during the last 15 years or so international NGOs have received increasing funds through official aid channels. According to World Bank figures, NGO income from donors rose from around 1.5% of total income in the early 1970s to about 30% of total income in the mid-1990s. Although funding systems vary between countries, historically this official donor support to NGOs has been regarded as a contribution to the NGOs own projects and programmes. More recently however, NGOs have started to execute the projects and programmes of official aid agencies on a sub-contract basis. It has been suggested that this utilisation of NGO skills and experience by donors relates to three main factors:

- When NGOs have been used to implement emergency and relief programmes, donors often support the same NGOs to undertake more long-term development work.
- The widely held view that NGOs are more effective in reaching the poor and the need for donors to improve the poverty-focus of their own work.
- The advantages of using NGOs in countries where official aid programmes are suspended.

³ Much of this section is based on the work of ODI (1995)

1.2.2 The increasing reliance of NGOs on donors has prompted considerable debate over the NGO-donor relationship and a reluctance of some NGOs to accept large donor grants. Common themes that emerge in the debate are the radically different development approaches of NGOs and donors, and the conditionality of official aid that is channelled to NGOs. Some major international NGOs feel that the receipt of large donor grants raises ethical and moral questions, particularly when these NGOs remain highly critical of the international economic policy reform programmes advocated by donors.

1.2.3 Arguably, some of these concerns are unfounded. Rather than being dominated by the official donor agenda, NGOs are increasingly influencing donor policy. Some aspects of the typical "NGO approach" such as participatory planning, gender analysis and environmental concerns have clearly affected the attitudes and behaviour of donors, and now feature in donor agendas.⁴ The increasing donor support (including the World Bank) to NGOs coupled with increasing NGO input into donor thinking are indications that relationships between NGOs and donors are improving. Certainly, the language of NGO and donor development approaches is now so similar that on paper at least, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two.

2.0 NGOs AND ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

2.0.1 As outlined in section 1.0, international NGOs have varying organisational capacity, development objectives and operational style. While some of the larger NGOs implement animal health projects as a relatively small component of their programmes, for other NGOs these activities represent a substantial proportion of their work. For the sake of discussion on animal health service delivery, these two broad categories of NGOs might be termed "multisectoral"⁵ and "livestock-orientated"⁶.

2.0.2 In terms of the pros and cons of multisectoral versus livestock-orientated NGOs, the former often have limited in-house technical capacity to implement veterinary projects. Although these NGOs may have previous experience of veterinary work, animal health tends to be regarded as a marginal issue and key experiences and lessons are rarely collated or contribute towards an organisational memory. These NGOs buy-in veterinary expertise for specific projects - personal experiences and skills tend to be lost once the project is completed. On a more positive note, these NGOs tend to enjoy a broader and more reliable funding base and have greater capacity to support veterinary projects in terms of administration and logistics. Crucially, these NGOs can possess considerable experience in more general development issues and are able to relate animal health to other sectors such as natural resource management, women's development, water, human health, or food security. In other words, multisectoral NGOs are better placed to investigate the links between animal health and poverty. When these NGOs incorporate animal health work into integrated rural development programmes, cross-sectoral links can be promoted and investigated at field level. In East Africa and the Horn, the integration of animal health into NGOs' wider programmes is reflected in numerous pastoral development programmes which

⁴ The flow of influence and ideas from NGOs to donors rather than vice versa is sometimes termed the "reverse agenda".

⁵ e.g. Oxfam UK/I, Save the Children (UK), ActionAid.

⁶ e.g. VSF, DCA, ITDG-Kenya, FARM-Africa, VetAid, other members of the VSF-Europa group.

can combine veterinary service delivery with institutional building, gender work or food security inputs⁷.

2.0.3 In comparison, livestock-orientated NGOs can possess in-house veterinary expertise and develop considerable organisational memory and know-how. These NGOs can use previous experience to contribute towards more effective animal health work and in some cases, influence policy debates. Some of these NGOs receive technical support through links with research or academic institutions. For example, DCA-VET is linked to the DLO Central Veterinary Institute in the Netherlands, VSF is linked to CIRAD-EMVT in France and VetAid is linked to the Centre for Tropical Veterinary Medicine, Scotland. A number of the smaller livestock-orientated NGOs are relatively new organisations and have limited capacity to support field programmes. They also suffer relatively high overhead costs in relation to their operating budgets.

2.0.4 In addition to NGOs implementing their own animal health projects, they may also contribute towards larger programmes coordinated by multilateral agencies. In these programmes, each NGO tends to cover a specific geographical area and agrees to common objectives in order to meet programme aims. In the case of the recent EU rehabilitation-funded "Private Sector Programme for Clinical Veterinary Services in Somalia" 12 international NGOs and one bilateral agency delivered support to private veterinary personnel under the coordination of the EC Somali Unit in Nairobi (Costagli, 1996). The more long-term Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) Livestock Programme in southern Sudan is implemented by eight NGOs and UNICEF. Programme objectives are based on rinderpest vaccination and support to community-based animal health systems (Jones, 1997). The NGOs receive emergency funding from a variety of multilateral, bilateral and independent sources. An important feature of both the Somalia and southern Sudan programmes is that programme objectives and style of implementation were strongly influenced by earlier NGO field experience. In the case of Somalia, initial work on private veterinary systems by NGOs such as ICRC, CARE and ActionAid led to EU attempts to scale-up the approach. In southern Sudan, the community-based approach of OLS clearly evolved from NGO experiences in countries such as Kenya, Sudan, India and Afghanistan.

2.0.5 Regarding the various roles of international NGOs in the delivery of veterinary services within the context of different operational situations, a categorisation of projects as "emergency", "rehabilitation" or "development" can assist discussion on inputs, impact and sustainability. However, there is often overlap between these three situations and confusion regarding precise definitions (for example, see Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell, 1994). An attempt at definitions with some typical NGO animal health inputs are summarised in Tables 1 to 3.

2.0.6 Tables 1 to 3 show that international NGOs are involved in a wide range of activities related to animal health service delivery. Some general trends that emerge relate to the balance between straightforward service delivery, and policy research and development. Frequently, the delivery of "hard" inputs such as drugs, vaccines, infrastructure, vehicles and equipment are associated with emergency and rehabilitation projects rather than

⁷ In terms of collating NGO animal health experience, a disadvantage of this approach is that reports of veterinary projects can be difficult to locate i.e. veterinary inputs can be described in general programme reports.

development. "Soft" inputs such as training, institutional development, research and policy issues begin to appear in rehabilitation projects and feature heavily in development projects.

Table 1: International NGO animal health inputs in emergency contexts

General description of emergency context	Examples of NGO inputs
<p>Aim to provide immediate relief to populations suffering food shortages or at risk of excess mortality. Short-term projects with top-down implementation. Inputs can be withdrawn rapidly.</p> <p><i>Impact:</i> Measure delivery of inputs only; occasional mortality data.</p> <p><i>Sustainability:</i> Rarely considered.</p>	<p>Rapid treatment and vaccination campaigns e.g. ICRC, Somalia (ICRC, 1993).</p> <p>Long-term rinderpest control and community-based animal health systems e.g. OLS Livestock Programme, southern Sudan with NGOs¹ – ACROSS, ADRA, DOT, GAA, Oxfam, SCF-UK, VSF-Belgium and VSF-Switzerland (Jones, 1997 - personal communication).</p>

Table 2: International NGO animal health inputs in rehabilitation contexts

General description of rehabilitation context	Examples of NGO inputs
<p>Often linked with post-conflict reconstruction, refugee or returnee populations and attempts to return to a <i>status quo</i> (or even improve on a pre-conflict situation). Development principles such as local consultation and work via local institutions should apply. Cost recovery and other issues of sustainability might be addressed, though focus on provision of basic needs, recapitalisation and return to local food production and income generation.</p> <p><i>Impact:</i> Strong tendency to focus on delivery of inputs rather than assessing impact.</p> <p><i>Sustainability:</i> Hard inputs to government often provided with no long-term commitments with respect to future management. Soft inputs such as capacity-building and training can contribute towards sustainable change.</p>	<p>Construction/refurbishment of government veterinary facilities; provision of clinical and laboratory equipment and supplies; provision of veterinary drugs and vaccines; provision of vehicles; training programmes for government veterinary staff e.g. VetAid, Mozambique (Hadrill, 1997); SCF-UK, northern Ethiopia (Catley, 1996); VSF, Eritrea (VSF, 1997).</p> <p>Establishment of community-based systems e.g. ActionAid, Somaliland (Catley, 1996); SCF-UK in northern Ethiopia (Catley, 1996) and south east Ethiopia (SCF-UK, 1997).</p> <p>Support to the establishment of private facilities such as training of veterinary personnel, credit. e.g. ActionAid, Somaliland (Catley, 1996); 12 international NGOs (and GTZ) in Somalia (Costagli, 1996).</p> <p>Support to large-scale training centres, curriculum development and extension activities linked to government and preventive medicine campaigns² e.g. DCA, Afghanistan (DCA, 1995).</p> <p>Capacity-building such as organisational support to government services and policy research e.g. SCF-UK, Ethiopia (Catley et al., 1997).</p> <p>Policy development³ e.g. DCA-VET, Afghanistan (DCA, 1995); SCF-UK, Ethiopia (Catley et al., 1997).</p> <p>Research and publications. Ethnoveterinary research and epidemiology e.g. ActionAid, Somaliland; SCF-UK, south east Ethiopia.</p>

Table 3: International NGO animal health inputs in development contexts

General description of development context	Examples of NGO inputs
<p>Aimed at long-term, sustainable improvements in the livelihoods of poor people. Emphasis on local management and indigenous systems via participatory approaches. Financial sustainability based on local contributions to maintain and develop systems. More opportunities for integrated programmes and varied activities. Should establish strong links with government.</p> <p><i>Impact:</i> Long-term nature provides opportunities for assessing impact on livelihoods. Data generally insufficient for external audiences, although NGOs currently developing improved monitoring and evaluation approaches and methods.</p> <p><i>Sustainability:</i> A key issue usually attempted via local institution building, developing good links with government and promoting financial sustainability.</p>	<p>Community-based animal health systems, often involving capacity-building with local groups or NGOs e.g. Oxfam UK/I in Senegal (Obel-Lawson, 1992), Sudan (Dahir, 1992), Chad (with SECADEV) (Peters, 1992; Hammel, 1995), Kenya (Oxfam UK/I, 1994) and Uganda (Gonda, 1992; Catley, 1997); ITDG, Kenya (Grandin et al., 1991; Young, 1992); VSF in Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, El Salvador and Nicaragua (VSF, 1996)⁴.</p> <p>Support to the private sector, such as management and organisational support for private vets.e.g. VSF in Guinea, Madagascar, Senegal, Chad and Togo (VSF, 1996); VetAid, Somaliland⁵.</p> <p>Extension e.g. VSF, various countries (VSF, 1996).</p> <p>Veterinary education via work with veterinary schools. e.g. VSF in Laos and Cambodia (VSF, 1996).</p> <p>Livestock research and development. e.g. VSF, Chad (VSF, 1996). Specific ethnoveterinary research and development. e.g. ITDG, Kenya (Wanyama, 1997); VetAid, Tanzania; HPI, Cameroon.</p> <p>Public health e.g. VSF's brucellosis control work in Palestine (VSF, 1996).</p> <p>Technical support to government services through placement of expatriate veterinary staff e.g. VSO in Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, Kiribati, Nepal.</p> <p>Advocacy and policy work e.g. VSF's work on privatisation in Niger, Burkino Faso and Guinea (Thomé et al., 1995) and West Africa generally (VSF, 1994).</p>

Notes for Tables 1 to 3

All projects listed as "rehabilitation" were funded by bilateral donors or the EU. Not all international NGOs are represented in the table - documents from NGOs such as FARM-Africa and CARE were not available to the author at the time of writing and rather than misrepresent their work, information has been omitted.

- 1 There are many projects which do not fit neatly into an "emergency", "rehabilitation" or "development" category. For example, southern Sudan is often described as a "Complex emergency situation" and receives emergency funding from various donors (including ECHO, USAID, DFID, Dutch Government, CIDA, SIDA and Charity Projects) although many ongoing OLS veterinary activities have a obvious long-term perspective.
- 2 DCA's project in Afghanistan received emergency funds from the Dutch government and UNDP but as their work progressed, DCA considered the projects to be more relevant to rehabilitation rather than emergency.
- 3 The term "policy development" rather than "policy change" has been used because in both examples cited it could be argued that in the project areas, policy was non-existent at the onset of the projects i.e. the projects were more concerned with creating policy rather than altering existing policy.
- 4 All examples here relate to British or French NGOs. With the latter, a clear distinction between community-based approaches and more conventional top-down extension and training is not always apparent. Apart from the case of Eritrea, the VSF animal health inputs are listed under "development" although the reference used (VSF, 1996) did not specify the operational context of each project.
- 5 The recent VetAid Somaliland programme delivered development style inputs with bilateral emergency funding.

2.0.7 However, these general trends are not always evident within specific projects or programmes. For example, the OLS veterinary programme in southern Sudan operates in a war zone that is somewhat euphemistically called a "complex emergency situation". Through its community-based animal health work with NGOs, the OLS programme is moving further towards a development focus because the programme's long-term view is to establish a network of CAHWs who can operate effectively after the war. OLS work also includes the option of linking CAHWs to private veterinary drug outlets - another long-term initiative. When NGO animal health inputs seem to fall outside "emergency", "rehabilitation" or "development" project frameworks, the absence of an official aid programme is not unusual. Tables 1 to 3 provide examples from Somalia, "Somaliland", Afghanistan and southern Sudan where despite a dependency on emergency funds from donors, NGOs are implementing projects with some long-term objectives. This aspect of the NGO-donor relationship is discussed in more detail in section 4.1.4.

2.0.8 A discussion of livestock-orientated NGOs would be incomplete without particular reference to the French NGO, *Vétérinaires sans Frontières* (VSF). Unlike its medical equivalent *Médecins sans Frontières*, which has an emergency focus, VSF activities are based on rehabilitation and development. With 39 programmes in 21 countries it is the largest international NGO involved in animal health service delivery. In many of its programmes, VSF links animal health to wider aspects of livestock development such as farming systems and natural resource management. Veterinary inputs are wide-ranging and include conventional livestock research and extension. VSF has also been an important player in policy reform, most notably with respect to veterinary privatisation in West Africa. VSF believes that the privatisation process should involve all stakeholders and that as a non-profit making organisation, it is well placed to facilitate links between donors, the state and livestock owners.

2.0.9 There are other examples of NGO involvement in policy development or policy change. DCA has affected FAO veterinary implementation policies in Afghanistan since 1990 (DCA, 1995); the OLS Livestock Programme work with Sudanese veterinarians is partly geared towards the incorporation of community-based systems into future government policy (Jones, 1997); SCF has recently worked with regional government in south east Ethiopia to investigate options for veterinary service reform, resulting in a "policy statement" in-line with a draft national policy⁸ (Catley et al., 1997). Less direct but important policy-related work by NGOs has included the documentation and publication of field experiences, and support to forums which allow NGOs, the state, private sector and donors to discuss alternative approaches. NGOs such as ITDG and Oxfam have been particularly active in publishing their work on community-based animal health services. Information on NGO experiences with participatory approaches and methods in relation to animal health have been published in both the scientific and informal journals. Ultimately, this growing body of literature can be used to inform policy debate.

⁸ This work aims to compliment the veterinary privatisation initiatives of PARC and the Ministry of Agriculture in Ethiopia.

2.1 The impact and sustainability of NGO animal health work

2.1.1 The following discussion on the impact and sustainability of NGO animal health work has been organised according to a recent study on NGOs in India and Bangladesh (Edwards, 1996). This study analysed project impact in the following ways:

- **Impact in relation to programme objectives** - related to the links between project activities and project objectives.
- **Impact on assets** - related to the ownership, security and distribution of productive assets.
- **Impact on social organisation and claim-making** - related to the capacity of poor people to organise themselves for collective (or individual) action, including making claims on government and other resources.
- **Impact on self-confidence** - related to changes in people's behaviour and values, including patterns of discrimination according to gender, age, class or other factors.
- **Impact on policy and practice** - related to the policy of development institutions such as the state, donors and NGOs.

The discussion also refers to a sixth approach to measuring impact based on links between benefits and costs (Riddell, 1995):

- **Impact in relation to programme costs** - for example, by benefit-cost analysis, cost effectiveness and cost efficiency.

Impact and sustainability will be discussed together because various aspects of impact such as asset security, social organisation, behavioural change, policy reform and financial factors all relate to sustainability. For example, NGO attempts to support sustainable change often focus on local institution building, gender work and the financial sustainability of community-based systems.

Example 1 Rinderpest vaccination, ICRC, Somaliland

ICRC's rinderpest vaccination campaign in Somaliland in 1993 using heat-stable vaccine administered by CAHWs achieved 95% vaccination efficiency. This is the highest level of efficiency reported in Africa since the onset of PARC (Mariner et al., 1994) and exceeds efficiencies of 50-80% achieved by government veterinary services in PARC member states. This emergency input could claim to have shown *impact on project objectives* and *impact on the security of assets* in both the project area and neighbouring countries⁹.

Example 2 Rinderpest vaccination, various NGOs, southern Sudan

The use of NGOs to implement community-based rinderpest vaccination in southern Sudan via OLS saw vaccination coverage increase more than ten times between 1992 and 1993. Up to 1997, coverage has been maintained at more than 1 million cattle vaccinated per year (Leyland, 1997). Confirmed outbreaks of rinderpest reduced from 15 in 1994 to 1 in 1997 and basic services via CAHWs are covering 70% of the project area (Jones, 1997). In common with the ICRC vaccination programme in Somaliland, rinderpest vaccination in southern Sudan showed *impact on project objectives* and *impact on security of livestock assets* in both the project area and neighbouring countries. Although officially an emergency programme, sustainability issues in the OLS programme

⁹ Impact on neighbouring countries because rinderpest eradication has international implications.

were addressed via increasing support to local veterinary groups, linking CAHWs to private drug outlets and the involvement of Sudanese veterinarians in policy debate.

Example 3 DCA Veterinary Programme, Afghanistan

This is a rare example of NGO animal health activities featuring in scientific journals. The DCA programme reported statistically significant lower mortality in livestock in districts of Afghanistan covered by their programme compared with districts with no veterinary services (Schreuder et al., 1996a). A benefit-cost analysis of DCA inputs based on livestock mortality figures estimated a benefit-cost ratio of 5 (Schreuder et al, 1996b). The DCA programme showed *impact on project objectives, impact on the security of livestock assets, impact on policy* and via the benefit-cost analysis, *impact in relation to programme costs*. Sustainability was addressed via repeated training inputs, links with government and influence on national policy. However, DCA also acknowledged that their inputs were largely determined by external factors such as donor support. Financial sustainability remained a key issue as the capacity and willingness of farmers to pay commercial rates for services was untested.

Example 4 Oxfam UK/I Kotido Livestock Development Project, Uganda

Although the Oxfam UK/I Kotido Livestock Development Project in Uganda did not record much numerical data in relation to project impact, the project clearly affected the target community in terms of local institution-building, self-confidence, improved security and changes in attitudes towards the role of women in development (Catley, 1997). This project demonstrated *impact on project objectives, impact on assets, impact on social organisation and claim making and impact on self-confidence*. Oxfam's gender work, support to a local NGO and understanding of herders' willingness to buy veterinary drugs were closely related to the sustainability of their work. In the author's view, the Oxfam project is a good example of the use of animal health inputs to create trust and rapport with communities who were highly dependent on livestock. Oxfam facilitated a process whereby communities started to organise themselves to solve animal health problems. Veterinary inputs were used as a point of contact and other inputs, such as support to peace meetings and gender work, were dependant on the success of the animal health work.

2.1.2 Although the examples above indicate the positive impact of NGO animal health work, a discussion on impact cannot ignore the marked absence of quantitative impact data in the majority of project reports, reviews and evaluations. Typically, basic data on livestock populations, livestock production, disease prevalence, disease incidence, and mortality is lacking. Information linking animal health to human livelihoods in terms of food security and household economy is also extremely limited in NGO reports. Various factors, which tend to vary according to project context, might contribute to this situation.

2.1.3 As indicated in Tables 1 to 3, numerous NGO animal health projects are implemented in areas that are characterised by "operational difficulties". A brief review of project documents shows that emergency and rehabilitation projects are often located in marginalised areas with weak or non-existent government veterinary services. Some common features of project areas include geographical and political isolation, harsh climate, poor infrastructure, poor telecommunications and bad roads. Some projects are currently being implemented in conflict zones where operational difficulties can be extreme. In the author's experience with NGOs in rehabilitation settings, target communities can include a substantial proportion of refugee, returnee or destitute families who have experienced major human and material loss. As a result of conflict, these communities can also include large numbers of female-headed households, orphans and physically or mentally disabled people.

2.1.4 Regarding animal health data in many emergency and rehabilitation situations, quantitative baseline data on livestock disease in projects areas does not exist. Although in some cases, it might be possible to conduct surveys using conventional veterinary investigation methods, target communities tend to expect immediate assistance and are often reluctant to cooperate with survey work. Surveys based on participatory methods can be extremely useful for identifying local priorities in a relatively short timeframe, though typically, this data is qualitative and is often viewed as irrelevant by veterinarians working outside the NGO sector. A key problem with formal systems of inquiry is that in most cases, data is related to livestock population. The capacity of NGOs to assess livestock populations in project areas, at least with any scientific accuracy, is limited.

2.1.5 Experience with NGOs and their donors in rehabilitation settings suggests that project monitoring and evaluation has been dominated by process indicators¹⁰. Emphasis was placed on the delivery of inputs rather than the associated immediate or long-term results. While a number of NGO final reports on rehabilitation projects express concerns regarding the suitability and sustainability of inputs, these issues have tended to be overlooked by some donors during project assessments. One exception to this statement is the current DFID rehabilitation strategy for Ethiopia that prioritises outputs such as "participation", "strengthened institutions" and "careful evaluation", thereby implying that impact indicators should feature in monitoring and evaluation systems.

2.1.6 When quantitative data on NGO animal health project impact is available, it is often associated with "long-term" emergency projects that have progressed to a development rather than an emergency focus. The DCA, OLS and Oxfam programmes mentioned above were all long-term and were based on a limited number of objectives. A commitment to these objectives over a number of years coupled with a continuity of project staff and management style may be key factors that have influenced project impact. In addition, the introduction of veterinary services in areas previously devoid of services is likely to result in relatively greater impact in comparison to projects that aim to develop pre-existing services.¹¹

2.1.7 Ultimately, evaluations of NGO animal health work should attempt to relate healthier livestock to human livelihoods and wellbeing. At present, it is often assumed that reduced livestock disease results in benefits such as improved diet or income for poor households. Although many NGO projects are able to work with livestock owners to prioritise local diseases, it is often unclear how specific health problems relate to the production of livestock-derived foods, sale of livestock, use of draught animals or cultural and social benefits. NGOs such as SCF have considerable experience in food economy surveys in rural areas (Holt, 1992) and consequently, they are well placed to develop links between their animal health and food security work.¹²

¹⁰ "Process indicators" are used to measure events (e.g. a training event by "number of trainees") or material inputs (e.g. delivery of veterinary drugs by "value of drugs provided") cf. "Impact indicators" which measure the effect of an activity or input on a target institution or community (e.g. effect of provision of livestock drugs by "livestock mortality").

¹¹ Note that this comment relates to "modern" or "western-style" veterinary services and overlooks indigenous veterinary practice.

¹² An SCF discussion paper entitled "Children and Livestock in the Horn of Africa: What are the links?" is presently in draft form but should be available in 1998.

3.0 NGOs, THE STATE AND PRIVATE SECTOR

3.0.1 Relationships between NGOs and the state have often been characterised by mutual distrust and limited cooperation. While NGOs might have viewed government as bureaucratic, corrupt, highly centralised and politically unsound, governments have regarded NGOs as loose cannons whose influence undermines government systems and authority. To the author's knowledge, among the many international NGOs working in developing countries only SCF focuses on project implementation via government partners and direct institutional support to government agencies. This approach relates to SCF's belief that sustainable social and economic change is largely dependent on government policy and that in many instances, SCF's work should relate to policy reform. Other NGOs with notable experience of working with the state include Christian Aid, ACORD and VSO.

3.0.2 In a workshop at the Institute for Development Policy and Management at Manchester University in 1992, representatives from NGOs, governments, donors and academic institutions met to discuss options for scaling up NGO impact on development (Edwards and Hulme, 1992). The discussion included accounts of NGO experiences with government and ideas for improved links:

"All agreed that partnerships had to be long-term, since the pace of reform is always slow and subject to continual reversals.....Difficulties reflect the inevitable problems of working in poorly-resourced government structures, where salaries and motivation are low, staff turnover very high, and bureaucratic systems rigid. There can also be considerable differences in ethos and styles of work between NGOs and governments..... A further point of agreement was that personalities and relationships between individuals are a vital element in successful relationships between governments and NGOs."

Other key lessons from the workshop included the importance of working with government right from the start of a project and recognition of the relative strength of donor influence on policy in comparison with NGO influence.

3.0.3 Many of the discussion points noted above apply to the recent animal health work of SCF with regional government and associated projects in south east Ethiopia. SCF has implemented veterinary projects with government in the region since 1991 and during this period developed an understanding of local government attitudes and capacity. Projects have gradually shifted from an emergency to development focus and the ongoing Veterinary Services Support Project has worked with regional government to produce a policy statement on veterinary service delivery. However, SCF's animal health projects have had to contend with regular changes in local government personnel. In one example, senior veterinary and management staff of the government partner were replaced, on average, every four months during a two year relationship. In a later project, SCF worked with a regional government steering committee on veterinary service delivery but saw the entire committee disappear overnight during political restructuring. In the author's experience, while working through government can develop capacity and policy, progress can be extremely slow. NGOs, government partners and donors need to recognise that long-term perspectives are essential if NGOs are to support sustainable change within government systems.

3.0.4 One of the important developments in community-based animal health systems in recent years has been increasing interest in linking CAHWs to the private sector. PARC has been particularly active in promoting discussion on community-based and privatised approaches to service delivery (Mariner and Van't Klooster, 1994; Leyland, 1997) and numerous VSF projects in West Africa and Latin America combine support to village-level animal health workers with support to private veterinarians (VSF, 1996). ActionAid's work in Somaliland included the establishment of private veterinary pharmacies to act as veterinary drug outlets for a CAHW network¹³ (Catley, 1996) and a similar approach is being adopted by SCF's ongoing project in south east Ethiopia (Catley et al., 1997). A recent study by PARC Ethiopia showed a considerable cost advantage of simple, community-based delivery systems - staff costs per unit cost of drugs delivered were estimated to be 30% of those in large, over-staffed public sector clinics (Moorhouse and Tolossa, 1997). With their experience in working at community level and training CAHWs, NGOs can play a key role in linking CAHWs to private veterinary pharmacies or clinics. While some NGOs are committed to handing over vaccination and clinical services via CAHWs to the private sector, others seem reluctant to reduce their own, subsidised services. According to Leyland (1997) many NGOs need to be encouraged to provide space for the private sector and consider options for developing their public nature veterinary activities.

3.0.5 The CAHW and private sector issue is also of interest because of the important role of the state in creating an appropriate policy environment for both private veterinary activities and CAHWs. In some developing countries policy on these aspects of animal service delivery remains non-existent or exists only in draft form. NGOs may have a role in policy development by using field experience to improve understanding of the pros and cons of service delivery involving CAHWs and private veterinarians. If NGOs want to seriously address sustainability of services then dialogue with government is essential. However, not all states are willing to listen to the ideas of NGOs and in some cases, suggestions might be better directed through donors.

3.0.6 In a country where there is no recognised government, there is an example of an NGO working closely with private veterinarians and providing organisational support and refresher training. In VetAid's recent project in Somaliland, inputs were focused on pre-existing private veterinary groups¹⁴. As these project partners were already well-established and financially sustainable when the project started, the project scored highly in terms of sustainability of inputs. Perhaps as private veterinarians become more established in other countries, NGOs could offer similar support based on institutional development, technical training or promoting links between local veterinary groups and their international colleagues.

¹³ Note that in Somalia and Somaliland, the absence of government means that recognisable NGO-state links do not really exist and that support to private systems is relatively straightforward in terms of policy environment.

¹⁴ Some of these groups had received support from earlier NGO projects aimed at establishing private veterinary services.

4.0 NGO-DONOR LINKS IN ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1 Donor influence on NGO animal health work

4.1.1 As outlined in section 1.2, some important aspects of NGO-donor links include increasing NGO reliance on donor support and NGO influence on donor policy. The latter is particularly associated with the uptake of participatory planning and attention to poverty and equity issues. In terms of animal health service delivery, NGOs have attracted support from donors for emergency, rehabilitation and development work and as indicated in Table 1, a wide range of veterinary inputs have been provided. Although the author was not able to determine whether donor support to NGO animal health projects has increased in-line with donor support to NGOs in general, many if not all of the projects detailed in Table 1 were dependant on donor support. All projects listed under rehabilitation were donor-funded as were the eight NGOs in the OLS Livestock Programme. Under the development project listings, Oxfam (Uganda), ITDG (Kenya) and VetAid (Somaliland) received donor funds under different funding arrangements, some of which required the NGO to contribute a proportion of projects costs. The VSF 1996 Activity Report shows that 86.5% of project funds were sourced from either the EU, French Government or international donors such as UN agencies or the World Bank. The remaining 13.5% of funds were donated by private institutions.

4.1.2 Regarding policy influences, it could be argued that the combination of increased donor support to NGOs coupled with increased NGO influence on donor policy, has resulted in donor funding strategies which closely mirror the development objectives of NGOs. DFID's BDDEA Direct Funding Initiative and DFID's Renewable Natural Resources Strategy for Uganda can be used as an example in relation to an NGO animal health project:

"Oxfam's past and proposed animal health work in Kotido District relates directly to the objectives of the BDDEA Direct Funding Initiative (enhance poverty focus; building local capacity) and the new ODA RNR Strategy for Uganda (improved production; strengthening local capacity; effective systems of public and private sector service delivery). Also, Oxfam has good contacts at both community and government levels in Dodoth and is well placed to contribute towards the wider debate on privatisation of veterinary services in Uganda." (Catley, 1997).

This example shows how some characteristic NGO development language (poverty-focus and capacity-building) has been incorporated into donor strategies which in turn, have been used to support an NGO animal health proposal. The DFID Rehabilitation Strategy for Ethiopia, with it's "community participation" and "strengthened institutions" outputs, has also been influenced by typical NGO objectives, and provides funds for SCF' veterinary project in south east Ethiopia.

4.1.3 The trends in funding and policy influence detailed above indicate that donors and NGOs are finding common ground with respect to animal health projects. However, there are also examples where agreement between donors and NGOs is less evident. Under EU rehabilitation programmes, animal health inputs have tended to focus on infrastructure, procurement and training. For example, projects in Mozambique (VetAid), northern Ethiopia (SCF) and Eritrea (VSF) included the construction or refurbishment of government veterinary clinics and the provision of furniture, clinical equipment, laboratory equipment and laboratory supplies. These projects also provided veterinary drugs and vehicles (4WDs and motor

bikes). In all cases, the bulk of the project inputs (materials) and project approach (work with government) were heavily influenced by the donor. These projects tended to be assessed according to the delivery of materials and the physical presence of facilities at the end of the project. The NGO final reports on all three of these projects raise the question of sustainability of veterinary facilities and the capacity or commitment of government to provide long-term funding. On leaving Eritrea, VSF were forced to conclude that:

"We are not a clinic-construction NGO, nor just an organisation which transfer funds between the people of the European Union and the State of Eritrea" (VSF, 1997).

Although NGOs can always make choices and opt to avoid projects which do not fit with their own objectives and approaches, perhaps some NGOs found the prospect of funding difficult to resist and regarded rehabilitation funds as a first step to more long-term donor support.

4.1.4 Regarding NGO animal health projects that have received emergency funding, the projects with emergency funding reviewed in this paper were based in areas where official aid programmes had been suspended. In these situations donors are often well aware that in "long-term emergencies" NGO activities can shift towards meetings development objectives and in general, offer continued support. However, in the case of emergency funding in politically sensitive areas such as Sudan and Somalia, the donor rationale for supporting NGOs is not always shared with them. Consequently, while NGOs can make considerable investments such as developing relationships with communities and training project staff, donors can withdraw funding at very short notice. This action is particularly frustrating for NGOs that have implemented successful projects under difficult circumstances.

4.2 Options for developing NGO-donor relationships

4.2.1 This paper presents evidence of common ground between donors and NGOs, in both a general sense and specifically in relation to animal health service delivery. The current interest of donors in veterinary service reform has much in common with calls for combined community-based and privatised approaches from agencies such as PARC, and some NGOs. For the sake of discussion, donor and NGO interests in veterinary service reform at the present time might be summarised as follows:

Donor interests/experience

Links with state (strong)
International links (strong)
Policy reform
Community-based approaches (theoretical)
Analysis based on economic theory
"Managing the change"
Support to the private sector
Support to the public sector (strong)
Specific development programmes

NGO interests/experience

Links with state (weak)
Links with communities and the poor (strong)
Policy reform
Community-based approaches (practical)
Holistic and participatory analysis
Local management/institution building
Support to the private sector
Support to the public sector (weak)
Open-ended development processes
Alternative systems e.g. use of ITK
Links with local NGOs (strong)

This type of summary of interests and experiences indicates that while there is certainly a meeting of minds concerning many aspects of animal health service delivery, the balance of interests/experience varies in some cases. Consequently, there is scope for information

sharing between donors and NGOs on issues such as: community-based approaches to service delivery in relation to privatisation: complementary systems for the analysis of services (i.e. should formal and participatory methods be combined?); the role of local NGOs in the context of privatisation; and finally, the role of "alternative systems" (e.g. options for combining western and indigenous knowledge in service delivery).

4.2.2 The need for better information sharing also relates to the current dearth of quantitative data on veterinary services delivery in either the public sector, third sector or private sector in developing countries (as noted by Holden et al., 1996). In this situation, data based on experiences and lessons learnt from both bilateral and NGO projects becomes increasingly important as a resource which can inform debate. In terms of collecting, collating and disseminating this information, there is a need for donors to support a specific information network which connects NGOs, donors, the state, international agencies and other key players involved in veterinary service reform in developing countries¹⁵. According to Edwards (1996), *"Stronger links create more openness and more openness creates stronger links."*

4.2.3 The impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of NGO animal health projects depend on the interaction between external influences (context) and internal influences (organisational choices). In common with international NGOs generally, NGOs involved in animal health service delivery vary widely in terms of their development objectives, approach and capacity. However, although organisational choices influence project success, an understanding of context is crucial when assessing project impact and sustainability. In terms of improving understanding of the impact of NGO animal health work, NGOs and donors need to define monitoring indicators which are appropriate for emergency, rehabilitation and development situations while also recognising that in the field, these three situations often overlap. Impact indicators can measure either qualitative or quantitative variables which tend to be related to social impact and technical/economic impact respectively. However, as the time and resource requirements related to quantitative data collection may fall outside the capacity of most NGO emergency and rehabilitation projects, the balance of qualitative and quantitative data appropriate to different situations may vary. Quantitative data is most likely to emerge from long-term, well-resourced projects.

4.2.4 Increasingly, NGOs are developing monitoring and evaluation systems that use participatory appraisal. This approach is particularly valuable for understanding local perceptions of project impact and the relevance of inputs to different wealth, age or gender groups¹⁶. Such systems have been applied to assessments of animal health projects either wholly (ActionAid, 1994) or partially (Catley, 1997) and there are opportunities for their wider use. Due to increasing interest and use of participation in relation to both data collection and facilitation of community-based processes, it is important that donors are familiar these methods and approaches, and where necessary, invest in training their own staff. In the veterinary field, there are clear opportunities for using participatory systems to compliment more formal or conventional ways of assessing impact.

¹⁵ Vetwork is currently developing a database of NGO animal health projects which might be expanded to include projects implemented by donors and other agencies.

¹⁶ For example, for NGOs projects aiming to work with the "poorest of the poor" it might be useful to clarify whether the poorest members of target communities actually own livestock and if so, how their use of services varies in relation to other wealth groups.

4.2.5 Another suggestion for developing NGO-donor links is based on the relatively good relationships which can exist between NGOs and donor representatives in countries or regions where animal health projects are actually implemented. Bryony Jones of OLS commented that *"The best donors are the ones who make the effort to go to Sudan, visit project areas, attend coordination meetings and generally try to understand the approach, the realities on the ground, the constraints and how we are trying to overcome them"*. The author very much supports these sentiments. One of the most encouraging aspects of ongoing NGO animal health projects in Uganda (Oxfam) and Ethiopia (SCF) is the interest of donor staff in the projects and their willingness to work with NGOs and share experiences in an open and constructive manner.

4.2.6 Other aspects of the NGO-donor relationships are related to the links between "development", "projects" and "processes". Although NGOs typically relate development to long-term processes, many donors judge their relationships with NGOs according to specific projects which in the case of emergency and rehabilitation contexts, can be of short duration. If donors are seriously committed to NGOs as development organisations with their own long-term perspectives and strategies, then options for overcoming managerial and organisational weaknesses within NGOs should be considered. For example, the USAID relationship with NGOs now avoids focussing on projects and aims to assist NGOs to develop as strong, well-managed organisations. Sweden and Denmark are also reassessing their relationships with NGOs. Regarding "livestock-orientated" NGOs, the French Government has recently provided a new form of financing to VSF which allows greater flexibility in terms of the allocation of funds to different activities according to need.

4.2.7 As NGOs and donors move closer together in terms of broad development objectives and funding arrangements, neither should lose sight of two important features of NGOs viz. innovation and risk-taking. In terms of innovative animal health service delivery, an increasing number of NGOs (particularly southern NGOs in India and other parts of Asia) are now supporting community-based services which to varying degrees, use indigenous medicines. Clearly, indigenous practice is very widely used by livestock owners in the developing world and it should not be overlooked during veterinary service reform. NGOs have been active in researching and documenting "ethnoveterinary medicine" and they well-placed to begin validation of best-bet medicines. If such work is to occur, NGOs will need long-term support from donors.

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