



HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Anti – Rabies Task Force

Project : Malappuram (Kerala)
Month : March – 2018
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Submitted to : LSG

- **Activities for the month**
 - **Animal Birth Control and Vaccination**
 - Total number of dogs sterilized this month - **135**
 - Male: **69** and Female:**66**
 - We are using hand & net catching along with traps also.
 - The team is presently working in Parapanangady municipality area for one month doing education and awareness as well as catching of dogs there after there was an issue regarding a suspected rabies dog in the area.
 - There are 45 wards in Parapanangady municipality but since there is no place to set up facility there for keeping the dogs, the team is still staying at the Tirur Veterinary Polyclinic facility and doing catching at Parapanangady area.
 - Dr. Anubhav Khajuria was with the team for 15 days when Dr. Shivendra Rathore went on leave till March 26th.
 - Catching had to stop for few days because of water issue at Tirur facility.
- **Challenges faced**
 - Because of the start of severe summer season, the heat is extreme and it affects work and stress.
 - The team had a water scarcity problem when the well at the facility dried up and work had to stop for a few days. With the help of Tirur municipality and Parapanangady municipality, water was arranged and helped work to resume.

- Narrow streets and open terrains making net catching very difficult.
 - Problems with public during release of dogs, especially in Parapanangady area where there was a recent report of 24 people being bitten by street dogs.
- **Team**
 - **Veterinarian : 1** Dr. Shivendra and Dr. Anubhav
 - **Education and awareness officer:** Sally Varma
 - **AWO's : 5** (Santosh, Robert, Aman, Rohit and Ravidas)
 - **Dr,Meera Mohandas Deputy Director(A.H) Malappuram**
 - **Next month Plan**
 - Meeting with AHD director and secretary at Trivandrum to ask for increase in rate per dog for the ART team in Malappuram.
 - Awareness and sensitization sessions to the public and panchayat members about our program and what we wish to achieve.
 - Parapanangady municipality is doing arrangements to possibly shift the team there as the work is presently concentrated there and it is around 20 kms away from our present facility.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS:

Steps taken to spread awareness:

- Regular awareness sessions in Municipality wards schools and panchayats regarding our program.
- Always having a person present in the back of the catching vehicle with the dogs. This helps a lot in convincing the public that street dogs are not dangerous and that people can be around them without being hurt. Every time our vehicle stops for catching or release, a big crowd gathers around the vehicle and this time is very useful for spreading awareness as the public sees how the dogs are being handled by the team members and a lot of them have many questions about the program which are answered.
- Leaflet explaining ABC and sterilization program and its importance has been translated into the local Malayalam language and will be with the team in the vehicle as well as facility to be given to the public.
- The main issue that people have is regarding release of the dogs back from where they are caught. Public always keep wanting the dogs relocated and not brought back to the same area. We convince the public that relocation is against the law and that it

is always safer to have dogs from their own areas back there because these dogs are used to the people. Sometimes we are threatened by the public that they will take those dogs away and release in faraway places to which we respond that if they create a vacuum in their area, then dogs from different areas which are not friendly to them will come and take over those territories and also other animals like foxes will also increase and cause more problems to the public.

- Public are shown the ear notches of the dogs when they are being released and explained that it is a sign to show that the dog has already been operated on and had anti-rabies vaccination. People keep complaining that there are still many dogs in their areas unaware that those dogs have already been operated and vaccinated.
- Since Parapanangady municipality was not a dog friendly place, we had a lot of issues in the beginning with regard to community awareness but slowly, seeing the team interact with the dogs and the way the dogs are caught and also the regular awareness sessions at each catching and releasing time, the people at Parapanangady have started to accept ABC and vaccination as a solution for the street dog issue that they are facing.

Tirur Vegetable Shop Dog:

At Tirur, near a vegetable shop there was a dog that our team had sterilized and released. The dog is very friendly and after release, the locals there have accepted her to be there and they do not have an issue with her lying in front of their shop after seeing us handle her and how friendly she was to all of us.



Community awareness during trap catching of dogs:

Every time we set traps to catch dogs, a crowd gathers and we use the opportunity to take awareness sessions on the work that we do and how it will help with the street dog issue of Kerala.



Tea Shop dogs Parapanangady:

At Ward No. 28 at Parapanangady municipality, there is a tea shop at the main road where the team usually stops for a tea break. When the team started catching in that area, we had caught two friendly female dogs from near the tea shop. The people there were very scared of the 2 dogs but since the dogs were friendly, they always used to run up to the people there. The locals were very amazed to see us catching the 2 dogs by hand catching and when we brought them back after sterilization and vaccination, they had no objection to us releasing them back in the same area. Every day when our vehicle passes the shop, the 2 dogs would run behind our vehicle and continue to do so until we stop our vehicle and feed them biscuits. This



continued for a few days and then one day we were surprised to see the tea shop owner had feed the dogs. He seeing us interact



with the few days and were very that the tea started to with the

dogs made him also want to do so and he had decided that the 2 girls can live near his shop and he would feed them every day. We feel very happy to see the 2 girls every time we go there for catching in that area.

Every single day when we go there for catching, the two female dogs always come running up to us to cuddle them and the people around are also very happy seeing the team interact with the dogs.



Friendly dog area, Tirur



We were called by two students from ITI College in Tirur saying that in their area there were a few dogs that needed to be sterilized and vaccinated. It was an area where a lot of waste is usually dumped by people and these dogs feed out of it. There was an entire family and when we went there, we saw that they



were extremely friendly and loving dogs. The people there didn't hate them but they were scared to touch or handle or go near to the dogs. So, the team showed the public there how to be with the dogs and also explained to them that the dogs will be brought back to the same place after surgery and vaccination. Even though they did not agree at first, they finally

were made to understand that dogs should not be relocated and having so good friendly dogs around was really a good thing for them.



During release of the dogs at the same area:



Happy Dog released after surgery with community lady.