



PVO 50/25

VICTORIA FALLS COMMUNITY ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE CENTRE ACTIVITY REPORT 2025

Prepared by Dr Isaac Moyo and Sue Chenux-Repond

CARE - Community | Animals | Research | Education

We are an animal welfare organisation assisting the community with the health and welfare of their domestic animals and therefore their own well health and livelihoods. Our work positively impacts the wellbeing of wildlife. Our extensive and consistent vaccination campaigns prevent deadly diseases, such as rabies and distemper, from infecting and killing wildlife on which this tourism area depends. We further support human-wildlife co-existence by treating the community's animals when attacked by wild predators.

Our clinic

We operate the Victoria Falls Community Animal Health & Welfare Centre, situated in the rural village of Ntabayengwe, 15 km from the tourist town of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Our veterinary clinic serves the rural community as a facility to treat their domestic animals and livestock for illness and injury, vaccinate, sterilise and educate. This is done at low to no cost. Few of these animals would receive any veterinary treatment throughout their lives without our help. We also provide services to the urban community, such as our Trap, Neuter & Return Programme. The clinic was established in 2016, built with funds from Australian Aid. It is staffed by Veterinarian, Dr Isaac Moyo, and Assistants, Themba Moyo and Bhutholezwi Mahlangu.



The Victoria Falls – one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and a UNESCO World Heritage Site

The community's need

The rural community is made up mainly of subsistence farmers. The land is not suitable for dryland cropping (which is attempted every year, nevertheless), and only suitable for livestock production at low stocking densities. The resulting lack of food results in poor nutrition, and even death for many animals. Water is very short in this dry, sandy area, despite being near the gorges of the Zambezi River. As this is a wildlife area the community has to co-exist with wildlife, creating further challenges.



A young community member with his puppy – children are often sent to the clinic with the families' animals

Poverty and lack of education in animal health and welfare can make it difficult for the community to be able to take proper care of their animals, especially dogs and donkeys. These animals are considered of lesser value than cattle and goats and, therefore, are often neglected.

Conditions commonly affecting rural dogs are loss of condition, due to a combination of worms and malnutrition, external parasite infestation and sexually transmissible venereal granuloma (TVT). Uncontrolled breeding is another issue of concern, with many dogs then having to search for their own food.

Goats commonly suffer from mange, loss of condition due to parasitism, pink eye and respiratory infections. Pigs have issues with diarrhoea, mange and wounds.

Donkeys often suffer from wounds due to ill-fitting harnesses, being overworked, loss of condition due to poor - or no - food, and injuries from attacks by lions and hyenas. Tragic road accidents also occur. Fences are few and far between and animals are sometimes 'punished' with beatings and axing when they stray onto others' fields to feed.



Our veterinary clinic in Ntabayengwe village

Our guiding Board

From left to right:
Douglas Musiringofa
Lisa Rossiter
Elisabeth Curiger
Sue Chenaux-Repond
Blessed Mpofu
Bhuto Mlilo



Our operational team

From left to right:
Dr Isaac Moyo - Veterinarian
Susan Chenaux-Repond - Manager
Themba Moyo – Clinic Assistant
Bhutolezwi Mhlangu - Clinic Assistant



Some of our achievements since the clinic opened in 2016

- 12 647 animals treated at the Centre and out in the field
- 15 172 rabies vaccinations administered to dogs; and
- 9 676 canine distemper vaccinations
- 1 530 dogs and 519 cats sterilised
- 9 021 dogs and 970 donkeys dewormed
- 19 sterilise and vaccinate field campaigns run - on average - per year



Dr Moyo and Themba treat a puppy with a broken leg in the clinic

On behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves - we thank all our donors and supporters.

Without your assistance the Centre could not have operated.

Animals would have suffered, more unwanted animals would have been born, and people's health endangered.

We have pleasure in providing our activity report for 2025.

Our clinic cases

We treated **1 119** animals of different species at the clinic this year. This excludes routine vaccinations, sterilisations and dog dipping (excludes sterilisations).

Dogs	Goats	Cattle	Donkeys	Cats	Pigs
910	83	39	42	44	1

Treatments and surgeries included:

- **20** dogs treated for Transmissible Venereal Tumour (TVT), a sexually transmitted but curable cancer in dogs. Neutering prevents this!
- **26** animals – 6 dogs, 5 cattle, 15 donkeys, a goat and a kitten – treated for injuries from bites from baboon, lion and hyena attacks.
- **280** dogs sterilised - 166 spays and 114 castrations – reducing unwanted dogs and TVTs.
- **57** cats sterilised – 39 spays and 18 castrations - reducing unwanted cats and potential negative impact on wildlife. Includes TNR.
- **5** donkeys castrated – preventing unwanted births. Also, stallions fight fiercely and serious injuries can occur.

Major conditions affecting dogs were mange, injuries from road traffic accidents, wounds and loss of condition due to a high worm burden, combined with malnutrition. The major diseases affecting cattle in our area were still the tick-borne diseases, including heartwater. We continue to educate cattle owners on the importance of strategic dipping as well as early reporting of cases. Goats were treated for mange, respiratory disease, pink eye and loss of condition, usually due to parasitism. Donkeys struggled with loss of condition due to hunger, mange, harness wounds, and injuries from attacks by wild animals. Pigs were treated with diarrhoea, mange and wounds.



A rabbit brought in with a snake-bite wound



A puppy who injured his leg in a road accident



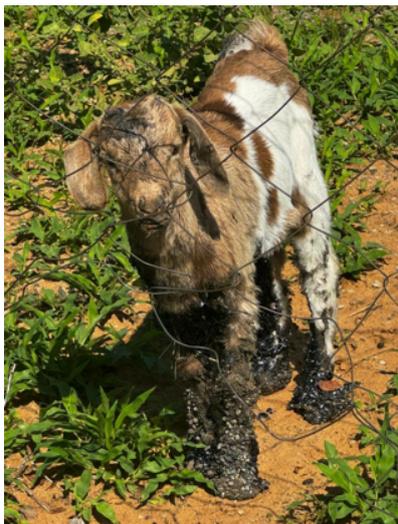
A piglet treated for mange



A severely malnourished dog

Field Work

Due to the distances involved, and a lack of transport, we treat many cases out in the field.



This little kid fell into a vat of unprotected tar



This cow needed assistance with delivering her calf that was in breech presentation



This donkey needed a cast after fracturing its forelimb



A goat with-Dystocia (obstructed labour), a C-section was performed

Dipping and Deworming

Rural dogs often suffer from loss of condition due to a combination of poor nutrition (too little protein – they are fed sadza (corn meal) or have to find their own food) and a heavy worm burden.

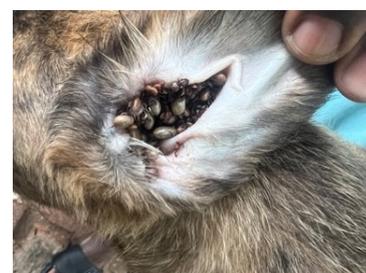
We facilitated **2 654 dog dewormings** this year at the clinic and during our annual vaccination and neuter campaign in rural Victoria Falls. This significantly improves the lives of these animals. It also protects their owners – particularly children - as some species of canine roundworms can infect humans.

Our dog **dipping** facility at the clinic to control external parasites caters for an average of **20** dogs per week. Tick bites cause biliary (often fatal). Humans are also affected by tick borne illnesses, such as tick-bite fever.

We also dip in the field when on outreach campaigns.



Dipping in the field



The tick infested ears of a little puppy

Vaccinations

Rabies is a significant zoonotic disease in Southern Africa. (Zoonotic diseases refer to infectious diseases transmitted between humans and animals.) It is a priority to control rabies and we do this through free mass dog vaccination campaigns in rural communities. It being a major tourist attract tourists (and residents) walk around on foot and visit rural areas on tours arranged for visitors. So this is also an important contribution to safety as visitors and residents could be exposed to dog bites. We thank our Board Member, Elisabeth Curiger, for donating funds needed to do this work.

Rabies vaccinations are a legal requirement under The Animal Health (Rabies) Regulations, 1966 - dogs (and cats) should be vaccinated annually. There is little to no enforcement of this in rural or urban Victoria Falls, or elsewhere in Zimbabwe.



Community members bring their dogs in for vaccinations

We vaccinated **540** dogs against **rabies** at the centre, and another **2350** dogs on 31 outreach campaigns = **2890**. See Appendix. **60** cats were also vaccinated against rabies in the urban area.

There were no cases of rabies in either domestic animals or wildlife in our area, though occurring in other parts of Zimbabwe, including Hwange, only 100 km away from Victoria Falls. This is due to our long term, consistent vaccination campaign.

Canine distemper is a viral disease that is often fatal or results in serious nerve damage, should the animal survive. It is highly contagious and can be transmitted between dogs and wildlife.

We vaccinated **130** dogs against **distemper** at the centre, and another **2159** dogs on 31 outreach campaigns = **2289**. See Appendix.



Sterilisation and vaccination day



Puppies brought for vaccination and deworming on an outreach



Community members waiting for vaccinations for their dogs



Youngsters taking their dog home after sterilisation

Co-existing with wildlife

There are no fences separating rural agriculture and wildlife zones in our area. Co-existing with wildlife is therefore an ongoing challenge for the rural community. Domestic animals are prone to attack by lions, leopards, hyaenas, baboons and jackals. Our veterinarian is called on to provide treatment for what are often serious injuries. This mitigates retaliation.

26 animals – 6 dogs, 5 cattle and 15 donkeys – were treated for injuries from bites from baboons, lions and hyenas.



Donkey attacked by hyena – vagina ripped, tail lost



Calf with lion bites to the neck



Donkey injured in hyena attack



Tiny kitten attacked by mongeese

Assisting wildlife

Injured wildlife requiring surgery are brought to our operating theatre.



Dr Moyo assists with performing wound closure surgery on a python python



Dr Moyo assists with the relocation of a buffalo considered dangerous from town – elephants and buffalo are frequent visitors, along with baboons, Vervet monkeys, warthogs, bushbuck, mongeese, and the occasional leopard

Sterilisations

Dog sterilisation is important for preventing unwanted - and therefore uncared for – puppies. It also prevents the spread of TVT - a sexually transmitted cancer - and significantly contributes to the overall welfare of rural dogs. The Centre is open for sterilisations throughout the year. We also go out to carry out sterilisation campaigns in communities within a radius of 100km of the Centre. A combined total of **280** dogs were sterilised this year (166 spays, 114 castrations) in rural Victoria Falls. See Appendix. **57** urban cats were also sterilised (39 spays, 14 castrations).



Dogs coming around from anesthetic in the field



Community members check in their dogs for sterilisation on an outreach



Dogs quietly coming around from anesthetic at the Centre

Trap-Neuter-Return Programme (TNR)

Few cats are kept in rural areas but there is a burgeoning community cat population in the urban area. TNR is a humane approach to addressing this. Feral cats, from hotels, residential and shopping areas, are live-trapped, neutered, ear-tipped (for future recognition) and vaccinated against rabies, before being released back into their territories. The aim is to reduce the population over time, though more resources are needed. There is some resistance to this, with some shops and hotels not wanting the cats back near their premises. However, research has shown that returning cats to their home area stops others coming in. A total of **23** stray cats were trapped in urban Victoria Falls throughout the year. This work reduces the potential impact of cats on the wild bird population.

Donkey welfare

Donkeys play a critical role in providing draught power (for example, collecting water, farming firewood collection) and transport (including taking ill and injured people to the clinic) to rural communities, yet their welfare is often poor. Under aged, heavily pregnant and nursing donkeys are often used in work, and donkeys carts overloaded. Road accidents and predator attacks also take their toll. We work towards improving their welfare through providing access to veterinary care, and educating donkey owners in health and proper harnessing. The major conditions affecting donkeys in our area are wounds from improper harnessing, bites (and even death) from hyenas and lions, and territorial fights among male donkeys. Lameness and mange are also issues seen here.

We ran several donkey clinics where **167** donkeys were dewormed, had their health checked, and any necessary treatment given. **5** stallions were castrated.

Clinic Assistant Themba Moyo assisted donkey owners by exchanging harnesses with amore donkey friendly system, including moveable swingle trees, longer chains, and better yokes.



Donkey team after receiving free donkey friendly harnesses and driver education



Children driving donkey cart



Donkey cart on busy main road



Poor harnessing



Donkey foraging for food



It is a serious concern that children – under 16 – are used to drive donkey carts on busy urban roads. Vehicles pass at 120 km per hour. We have appealed to ZRP Traffic to enforce the road regulations that state that it is not permissible to be in charge of a vehicle under 16, and that a person must be on foot at the head of a donkey team when on a public road.

Welfare education

Animal welfare education is a huge part of what we do in our everyday work. We educate animal owners on animal welfare and husbandry both at the Centre and during case visits and outreach activities. Our initial approach is to impart knowledge to animal owners with the goal of changing attitudes on how animals are treated so communities can proactively take better decisions to improve the life and welfare of their animals. During our outreach programs in more than 30 rural centres throughout the year, we held discussions on animal welfare and husbandry, handed out pamphlets in local languages, and did practical demonstrations on humane animal handling and care.

Students from various universities overseas visited the centre to learn how a rural welfare clinic is run. In January, we welcomed 25 students from several American universities through Edu Africa. In May, 7 students and a veterinarian visited from Purdue University, and, in June, 11 vet tech students and 2 lecturers from Appalachian State University came to visit under the Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust (VFWT).

Herd Health

We provided assistance to the VFWT in providing veterinary care for cattle, in support of the Predator-Proof Boma Project. This project plays an important role in mitigating human-wildlife conflict in rural Victoria Falls. Cattle owners are encouraged to keep their cattle in movable bomas to protect them from predators. The bomas are moved from time to time, leaving behind manure to fertilise the soil.

63 cattle were treated for conditions such as Heartwater, Pink eye, lameness, Bovine ephemeral fever, and injuries sustained from attacks by wildlife (lions and hyenas) throughout the year.



Working with cattle in a boma for 'Herding for Health'

Welfare investigations

We received and responded to several cases of cruelty and neglect in urban Victoria Falls. Dogs were chained, cruelly confined and neglected. A security dog was found to be kept chained and in inadequate housing. Confinement and chaining are considered cruelty under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. With the assistance of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) this dog was uplifted and is being cared for at our centre. Charges were brought against the company. The ZRP have powers, under the PCA, to remove animals in need of veterinary treatment and who are being kept in unsatisfactory conditions. We thank the members of our community who reported cases, and to the ZRP for their assistance.

Inspector Needed!

An Inspector, licenced under the PCA, is sorely needed to step up investigations and investigations. An Inspector is authorised to go onto properties to investigate and inspect, and has the power to remove animals from cruel conditions. Veterinarians do not have this power. We need funds and a vehicle for an Inspector. We would like to be able to be more proactive in this area.

Strays



Ill, wounded (burns) and starving dog found in the urban area. He sadly also had cancer and did not make it but he spent his last days comfortable with us. Owner untraceable.

Strays are often seen in the urban area. This is due to the owners not having secure properties and a perception that the dog being out on the street does not matter. Owners also go away and leave their animals with inadequate supervision. We do not have the facilities to act as a shelter – but assist where we can. The Council does not have a pound. The Victoria Falls Veterinary Surgery is very helpful in accepting strays brought to them by concerned residents.

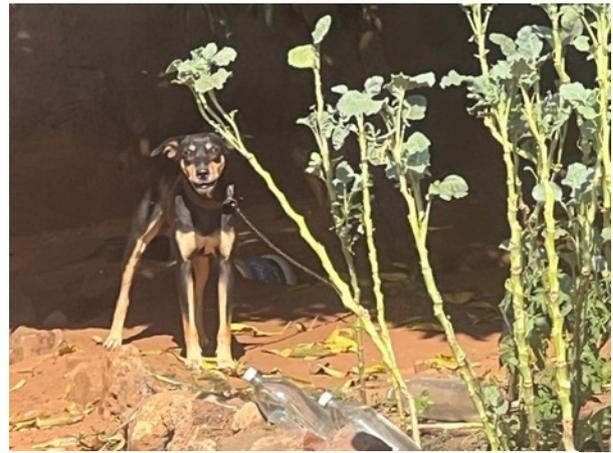


Stray found in poor condition – urban area – returned - with a warning - to owner who had a secure property but had been out of town

Cruel confinement and chaining of dogs - an offence under the PCA Act



Security dog kept chained in a dark, wet kennel all day



Chained dog



Pet dog kept in a hot kennel all day



Bemused and hot little dog inside

Poor horse welfare in the safari tourism industry



Thin horses at a riding establishment



Saddle sores on a horse – with signs it was still being ridden – at the same establishment

We encourage safari agents to do their due diligence when booking any activities involving the use of animals to ensure that the welfare of the animals is good. There is, sadly, a lack of awareness and education in this area.



Scarlett and Arusha healing and resting at CARE - sincere thanks to our Board member, Lisa Rossiter, Wild Bhiza Stables



Two Jack Russel dogs were being kept in this kennel all day by a dog trainer



An unsuitable kennel for two dogs in the high density area

Collaboration is caring

We believe in collaboration and have productive working relationships with other welfare organisations. We travelled to the Hwange area to assist MARES who do excellent work in this area.



Dr Moyo vaccinates a donkey



Dr Moyo vaccinates and applies tick and flea treatment to puppies



A tin bath full of puppies arrives for treatment

Road Kill

The roads in the Victoria Falls area traverse wildlife areas. The road to Kazungula – Botswana – goes through the Zambezi National Park. Many animals are killed and injured by drivers speeding and travelling at night. Donkeys are also the victim of vehicle accidents – usually hit-and-run.



Just one of many incidents of road kill – banded mongoose



Donkeys left to wander in the traffic in the town



Passenger died, elephant euthanised



Donkey cart on the main road to the airport – traffic passes at 120 km per hour

Research

We conducted a pilot **Donkey Census and Welfare Survey** to assess the population status, socio-economic importance, health challenges, and management practices of donkeys within the study communities. The survey aimed to generate baseline information to inform donkey welfare interventions, veterinary outreach, and community awareness programs. A total of 25 respondents participated in the survey, providing information on donkey ownership, use, health management, disease prevalence, and risks from wildlife interactions. Feedback included:

- 1 in 4 owners take their donkey for treatment if ill, none took them to the clinic if injured (lack of transport)
- 40 km is the average distance travelled pulling a scotch cart per trip
- 1 in 2 owners reported their donkeys had been killed or injured by wild animals (hyenas and lions)
- All said they kept their donkeys in bomas at night
- 1 in 4 did not provide any supplementary feed

Thank you to Nkosana Khumalo for designing and conducting the survey.

Rescue and rehoming

We fostered and found 'Furever Homes' for 8 kittens and 6 dogs.



A happy new kitten guardian



Tiny kitten rescued from a storm drain



Just 103 grams - bottle feeding needed every two hours



A caring foster mother to two tiny kittens



A foster getting up to mischief!



Ginger – one of three kittens found in a bag at the city dump by the Pristine Society team found a loving home with Board member Elisabeth Curiger



It is very difficult to find homes for kittens, cats, puppies and dogs in Victoria Falls – most times not even one response is received for an advertisement. So little Milo has joined the centre cats Tiger and Dee to make a team of three

Fund Raising

The clinic had been a beneficiary of the annual motorbike **Enduro**, run by Victoria Falls Roundtable, in conjunction with the Zambezi Offroad Motorcycle Club, for the past few years. We were happy to be able to assist again by acting as marshals at this exciting event. The Enduro runs through the area we serve. The local community assists and can see the benefit of their participation. Thank you to the organisers, helpers, riders and spectators – and we look forward to the 2025 event at the end of April!



Dr Moyo clocks in an Enduro rider



Dr Moto stops a rider to clock him in

Visitors to the Centre

We were delighted to welcome Her Excellency the Ambassador from Australia and her team. Ms Perera congratulated us on our work and on achieving PVO Status. We also welcomed His Excellency Stephan Frey, Ambassador from Switzerland. Dr Bill White visited us again and assisted in the clinic and out of field campaigns.



Australian Ambassador, Minoli Perera, with the team



Swiss Ambassador, Stephan Rey, chats to Dr Moyo in our exam room



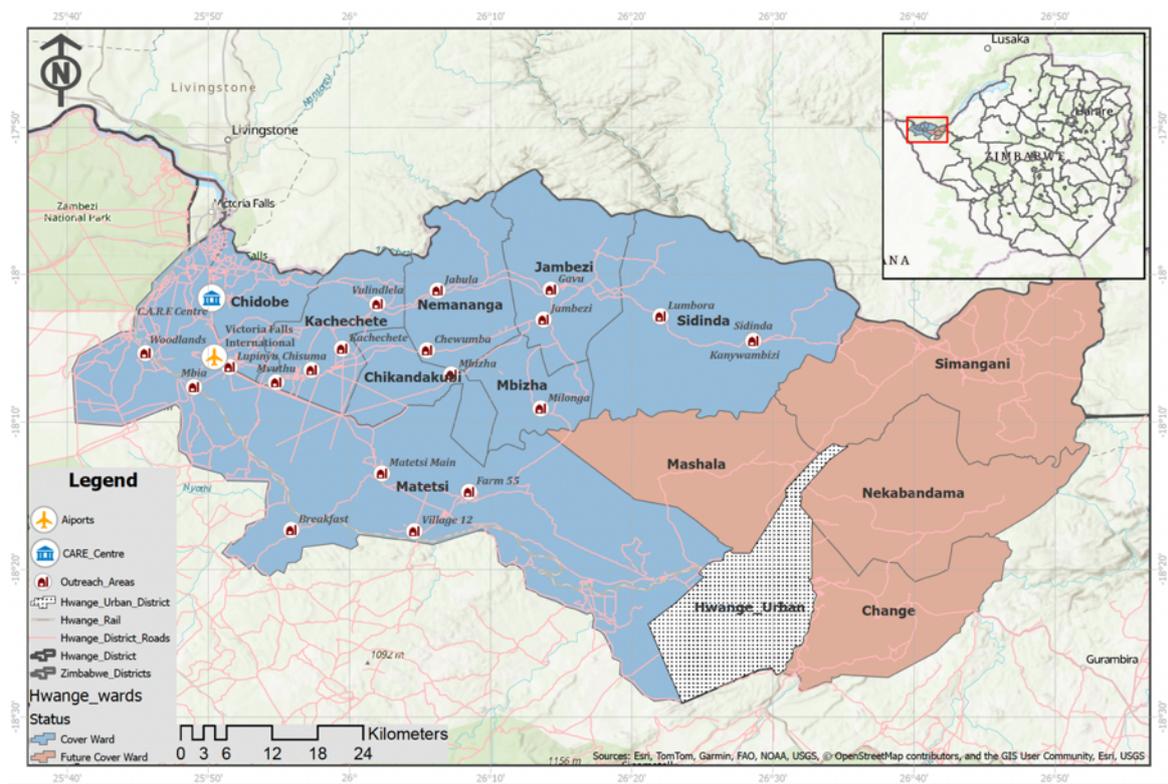
Dr Bill White, from Long Island USA, provided invaluable assistance



Sue visited Andrea & Tamara - Stumme Brueder Stiftung in Lichtenstein whilst on a personal visit to friend and long time supporter and donor to CARE Elke Lehnerr (right)

Expanding our range

We expanded our work into Mashala, Simangani and Nekabandani wards. Thank you to Nkosana Khumalo for the map.



Our wish list

- **Anaesthetic machine** – we do not have one anymore. USD6 000.
- **Xray machine** – portable - USD6 000.
- **Laptop** USD300
- **Equipment** - orthopaedic surgical kit USD900, spay kits USD300, suction tubes USD50, drill guides USD500, bone files & rasps USD200, calf puller USD200, circlage wire passer USD120.
- **Surgical light for operating room**
- **Canopy for vehicle** – so we can store equipment and transport animals safely USD1 800.
- **Projector & TV monitor** for educational purposes. We would run this during clinic hours for people to learn from while they wait, and use for training sessions at the clinic. USD600
- **Cattery** – a small one to house cats – we have nowhere to safely keep cats and kittens for longer than two or three days. The slab is already down. USD1 000.
- **Welfare Inspector**, licenced under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, to carry out inspections and investigations and educate. USD1 200 per month. Vehicle also needed.
- **Borehole** - we get municipal water once in three weeks, if we are lucky. We store this in two tanks – if we can fill them and this just lasts for basic needs. This could be shared with the nearby community so they can use it for their animals too. USD15 000.
- **Rainwater collection system** – for the reasons above.
- **Dog dipping station** that is plumbed in and environmentally friendly – at the moment we use an old bath and need to dispose of the old dip safely and responsibly.
- **Vehicle** to transport large animals and for an Inspector to use for his/her work. USD15 000



Flame lilies – *Gloriosa superba* - our national flower - blooming

Thank you to Liquorama for providing a fridge for our vehicle to keep drugs cool on outreach and to Rocco for two dog beds.

Appendix

Outreach Summary 2025

We visited 31 areas this year – an increase from 18 in 2024 – expanding into three new areas.

AREA	LOCSTAT	RABIES	CANINE DISTEMPER	SPAYS	CASTRATIONS
Lupinyu	S18.10437E025.85832	64	64		
Mbia	S18.12712E025.81620	58	58	8	2
Woodlands	S18.08874E025.75893	55	55		
Chidobe		90	90		
Chisuma	S18.01779 E02595523	80	80	8	6
Mvuthu	S18.12174 E025.91339	128	128	13	8
Kachechete	S18.08367 E025.9913	68	68	9	8
Mbizha	S18.11301 E026.12043	211	211	13	11
Jambezi	S18.05075 E026.22919	83	83	3	2
Gavu	S18.01692 E026.23781	201	201	25	13
Milonga	S18.15141 E026.22582)	113	113	6	10
Sidinda	S18.07384 E026.47690	21	21		
Lumbora	S18.04706 E026.36735	88	88		
Kanywambizi	S18.07491 E026.47697	58	58		
Vulindlela	S18.03307 E026.03307	59	59	8	1
Farm 55	S18.24567 E026.14120	31	31		
Isla shed		50	50		
Village 12		73	73		
Msekesa		34	34		
Breakfast	S18.28872 E025.93128	31	31		
Matetsi Main	S18.22483 E026.03833	76	76		
BH 36		45	45		
Siamwele		92	92		
Lukunguni		50	50		
Tshatshatshunda		96	68		
Mashala		32	32		
Mwemba		83	50		
Kasase		61	50		
Makwa		31	31		
Simangani		78	69		
Jabula		110	0		
Total - 31 outreach days		2350	2159	93	61



A beautiful rural homestead near our clinic