



healthy working animals for the world's poorest communities

November 2017

Dear Fiona

As a veterinary advisor for Brooke, I can honestly say that the urban 'gharry' horses in Ethiopia suffer from some of the worst welfare conditions that we've ever witnessed.

Your incredible generosity has already done so much to support our work. That's why I'd like to tell you about the desperate conditions of the working horses in Ethiopia, and ask for your help once again.

In cities like Halaba, gharry horses work as taxis, trudging through dusty streets for hour after hour, dragging heavy loads of passengers behind them. Many are painfully thin and so weak they can barely stand. Around 90% of these animals have difficulty walking, which is often the result of poor hoof care. They are badly shod with rubber tyres and worked hard on rough, uneven road surfaces. Their hooves are rarely trimmed, resulting in overgrowth and imbalance, which leads to joint damage and more pain.

On top of this, minor wounds are routinely left untreated so severe complications can develop. It's not uncommon to see horses plagued with epizootic lymphangitis, a fungal disease that infects open wounds and causes 'chains' of abscesses all the way up the animal's legs. We also see end-stage eye disease, where the eye has become so damaged it has shrunk down to nothing.

Finally, when the horses can't work anymore, they are sometimes abandoned in the street, where they're at risk of being hit by cars or attacked by predators such as roaming hyenas.

I'm writing to you today to ask you to **help us improve the lives of these vulnerable animals. We're working to make a difference, but we can't do it without you.**

As a supporter of Brooke, you'll appreciate the reasons why these animals are suffering are complex. The owners of urban gharry horses in Ethiopia rely entirely on their animals for their livelihoods, but their resources are stretched. In general, equine welfare is a low priority. The situation for the working horses of Ethiopia is worsened by poor quality or inaccessible veterinary health services, and little consideration of equine animals in government policies.

Since 2006, Brooke has been working with local animal health practitioners and communities in Ethiopia to tackle these problems. With over 9 million horses, donkeys and mules, Ethiopia has one of the largest equine populations in the world. Horses and donkeys in rural areas tend to be better cared for, largely because people are used to raising animals and have basic husbandry skills.