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Welcome to the 2019 annual report

The Uganda Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (USPCA) is a non-governmental organization established in 1998 to respond to the immediate needs of abandoned, stray and sick animals whilst simultaneously tackling the root causes of the large population of strays. We work with communities and schools to support a healthier pet population. The USPCA runs Uganda's only animal shelter, The Haven, which receives animals from across the country. The animals are rehabilitated before being rehomed.

The USPCA is registered with The National NGO Board, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Uganda.

Activities and achievements

The Haven

The Haven cared for **1138 dogs, puppies, cats and kittens in 2019**, up 61% from 2018 when the shelter cared for 705 animals, and up 139% from 2017 when we cared for 477. We aim to rehome all animals at the shelter and do not have a time limit on how long animals can stay, offering life-long care to those who need it. 32% of animals found new homes in 2019.

Unfortunately, we had to euthanize 148 animals this year (13%), with a further 283 passing away naturally (24%). Many of these animals come to us in a terminal state or with such extensive injuries that it was more humane to peacefully put them to sleep. Others were already suffering from diseases such as parvo-virus which particularly affects very young puppies, and from which, sadly, many are unable to recover. There were 204 animals remaining in the shelter at the end of the year.

Animal rescue

We receive calls at all times of the day and night from members of the public who are concerned about animals. This year we have seen a disturbing rise in the number of dogs left behind in locked compounds after their owners have moved house. We have also responded to a high number of calls from people who no longer want their animals and request that we remove them. Where possible we work with

individuals, providing advice and support, so that they can keep them, however if we are concerned for the animal's welfare then we will rescue them. 2019 saw another latrine rescue, which involved the team carefully extract a kitten from a long drop toilet. Several rescue trips were also made to nearby islands to rescue dogs and puppies.

Left: Assistant Manager Jackie rescues a puppy from a busy road.

A total of 934 animals were supported through rescue in 2019.



Right: The USPCA were made aware of a dog who had been left on Iramba Island by a maize plantation owner who hoped she would chase away monkeys. Without enough food, she had become thin and was struggling to manage with a litter of eight new puppies.

Fostering

The best place for cats and dogs awaiting a permanent home is a foster home, so we were very pleased to have so many new foster volunteers join us in 2019.

The shelter is a very busy place and so it is not always possible to provide extra care and attention animals who need it in order to flourish. At the top of the priority list for fostering is always orphaned kittens and puppies, as they require around the clock care. We also try to find

foster homes for animals with disabilities, those who are very shy and are not coping with shelter life, that require additional socialisation support and those with recurring health issues. We also try to prioritise our long stay residents who have spent many years at the shelter and are repeatedly overlooked for adoption, as foster carers have the opportunity to get to know the animal's personality really well and take great photos in a home environment, making the animal's adoption advertisement very personal and more likely to be successful.



Fostering story: Willow

Willow was rescued from an abandoned compound in Naalya back in 2016. Her owners had moved house and left her there with her mother and siblings.

*Thankfully, someone reported this to the USPCA, who went out to rescue her. Fast forward to 2019, and Willow was still at the USPCA. She spent her days shaking and hiding away in the kennel, overlooked for adoption time after time. In July 2019 a foster volunteer agreed to take Willow and help her to gain confidence and become adoption ready. Willow spent the rest of the year in foster care, free to roam in a garden with a new friend, enjoying walks, visits to cafes and new places, and of course lots of love and attention. She no longer shakes and is slowly gaining confidence around new people. Willow will be ready for adoption soon, a chance she may never have had without a foster placement. **Right: Willow enjoying a day out with foster volunteer Aaron***



Occasionally members of the public or regular volunteers find animals in need of rescue but cannot keep them permanently, so agree to foster them with our support whilst we find new homes for them. This year we have had 70 animals cared for outside the Haven in this way.

Rehoming

367 lucky animals were adopted from the USPCA in 2019. This is a 19.9% increase on the 2018, which saw 306 animals adopted, and a 31.5% increase on 2017, when 279 animals were adopted. We are very proud of our increasing adoption rates as we put a lot of time and energy into finding great homes for our rescued animals. However, the rate of new arrivals has more than doubled over the past two years, outstripping the rehoming increase.

Dogs were our most adopted companion animal (152 adoptions), followed by cats (85), kittens (78) and puppies (52). Our busiest months were September and October, which saw 28 and 43 adoptions respectively. The quietest months were April and July, with 24 and 22 adoptions. Around half of our animals are adopted by the expatriate community, so we find that adoptions tend to decrease during the international school holidays around Christmas, Easter and July.



The shelter is open to visitors every day of the week and potential adopters drop by on a daily basis. We promote adoption via our website and social media, highlighting particular animals looking for homes through our Facebook group.

Adoption story: Bone

When Bone was rescued he was painfully thin and in need of some love and care. Luckily, that's exactly what he got!

A wonderful USPCA volunteer fostered him, and when he was fit and well, he was adopted by Victoria Hills. Victoria moved to Europe, taking Bone with her.

Victoria says, "I'm so grateful to the USPCA who work so hard to help animals. No words for how thankful I am that Bone and I found each other".

Right: Bone when he was rescued, and Bone happy and healthy in his new home.



Adoptions month by month

	Dogs	Puppies	Cats	Kittens	Monthly total
<i>January</i>	12	5	4	7	28
<i>February</i>	13	5	4	4	28
<i>March</i>	12	10	1	8	31
<i>April</i>	10	6	4	4	24
<i>May</i>	8	7	7	9	31
<i>June</i>	12	6	8	8	34
<i>July</i>	13	0	4	5	22
<i>August</i>	13	9	3	7	32
<i>September</i>	12	8	11	7	38
<i>October</i>	23	10	3	7	43
<i>November</i>	12	10	1	6	29
<i>December</i>	12	9	2	6	29
TOTALS	152	52	85	78	367

Adoption story: Lugazi

Kerstin Njeri found Lugazi as a four-day old puppy and brought him to the USPCA as he needed specialist care. Lugazi spent the next year at the shelter, becoming a firm favourite among staff and volunteers. Kerstin then came back to Uganda to adopt lucky Lugazi and take him to Germany. Lugazi was quite perplexed at having to wear a coat to prepare for the cold weather, but soon got used to it. He is now happily living with his new family, including two canine siblings!

Kerstin said, "thank you Alex and the staff for the excellent treatment and loving care!"

Top right: Lugazi when he was rescued.

Bottom: Lugazi preparing for the German winter.

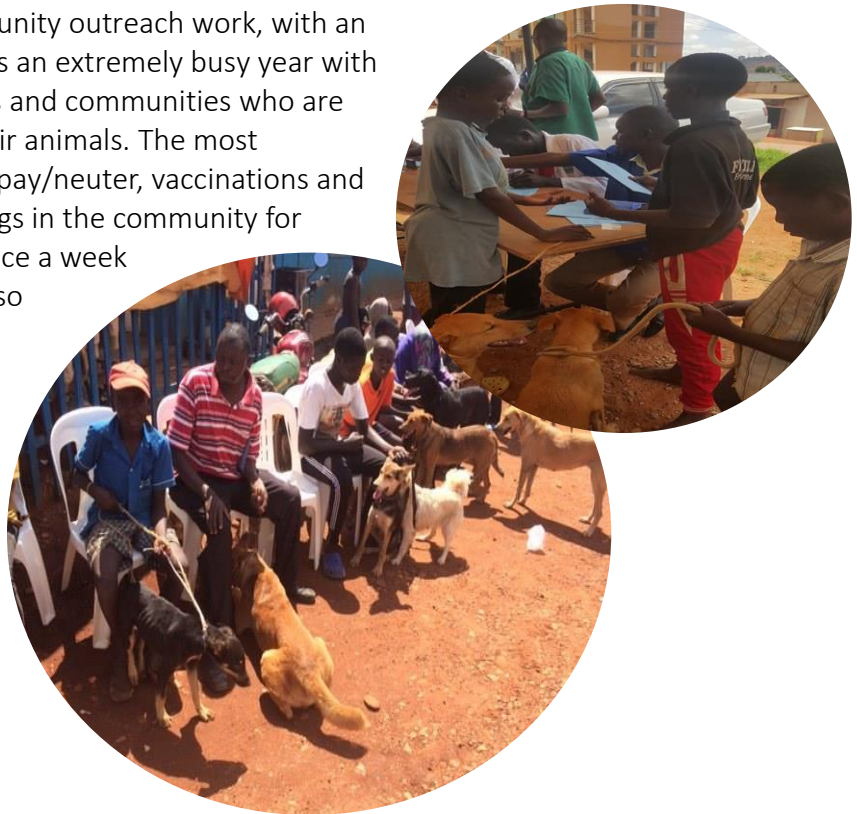


Community outreach

The USPCA is very committed to community outreach work, with an emphasis on spay and neuter. 2019 was an extremely busy year with **693** community animals living in homes and communities who are unable to afford veterinary care for their animals. The most common types of care provided were spay/neuter, vaccinations and deworming. We also treated several dogs in the community for mange, which involved visiting them once a week for six weeks to apply treatment. We also treated several adult dogs for canine transmissible venereal tumour (TVT), which is life-threatening and involves intensive four-week residential treatment at the Haven.

Right top- children from the local community bring their dogs to a community clinic for free treatment.

Right bottom- Community members queue up at a clinic held for World Rabies Day.



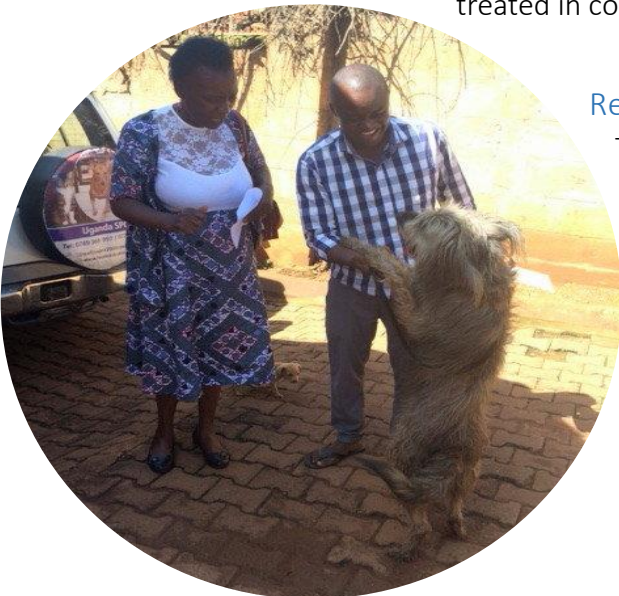
The majority of the animals treated through community outreach are seen during special community clinic days. 2019 saw five such days and a series of three clinics in Kawempe.

Some community outreach work, such as treatment for TVT, involves animals staying at the shelter for a few days, or sometimes even weeks or months, before being returned to their homes. Others can be treated in community settings and visited regularly.

Reuniting lost pets with their owners

The USPCA reunited over 20 pets with their owners in 2019. Sometimes when an animal is rescued, staff suspect that it has an owner, either because it has a collar or has been well cared for. In these cases, the USPCA uses its very active Facebook group to initiate a search for the owner. It is always very rewarding to reunite owners with their beloved animals.

Right: Escapee Hunter is happily reunited with his owner, Mrs Malinga.



Animal welfare education

The shelter has welcomed many groups of visitors over the past year, including children from M-LISADA organisation, many of whom had not touched a puppy before. The children came to the session feeling quite apprehensive, and left as firm animal lovers.

We also visited several schools to provide information, run workshops and clubs. These included a weekly 'puppy club' at the International School of Uganda (ISU), where we take a group of puppies to the school and teach children how to handle and interact with them. We also attended 7 Hills International School with a group of puppies to teach the children about animal care, and ran a workshop for a large group of students at GEMS International School.

Right: The ISU Puppy Club



Veterinary student placements

We want to contribute to improving the standard of veterinary care available in Uganda and to this end the USPCA offers placements to students from Makerere University. This year 59 students completed placements at The Haven as part of their 4th year training. We additionally welcomed eight visiting veterinary students from Iowa State University in May.

Staff

The USPCA has eight paid staff members: a manager, deputy manager/clinic assistant, vet, four caretakers and one night security guard.

In May 2019 we said a sad goodbye to Dr Josephine after 3 years as the shelter vet. Dr Josephine served the shelter and community animals with compassion and love, even taking quite a few special cases home with her for extra attention! Dr Josephine has moved to The Big Fix in Gulu, an excellent organisation running northern Uganda's only veterinary clinic. The shelter's new vet is the very talented Dr Singh, who has been a USPCA supporter and volunteer for many years. Dr Singh has a big heart for animals and has become a vital member of the USPCA team.

Right: Volunteer Veterinary Technician Danielle from Scotland supporting the shelter's new vet, Dr Singh.



Volunteers

Many wonderful volunteers gave their time and skills to help the USPCA serve animals in need during 2019. From volunteers who come to the shelter on a regular basis to help with animal care and rescues to those coming for a day as part of their holiday or to celebrate a special occasion, we appreciate all help and support. This year during Independence Day we had several families come to spend the public holiday caring for and socialising the animals. We were very pleased to welcome staff from the US Embassy who spent a day at the shelter redecorating the reception area to give it a much needed fresh coat of paint.

All adult shelter animals are spayed or neutered before adoption, and with so many new animals arriving at the shelter each day it can be a challenge to keep up. We were therefore very lucky to have the services of volunteer vet Dr Dickson of Makerere University at the shelter, who helped us prepare animals for adoption by performing their surgeries. We also welcomed veterinary nurse Danielle Marchant from Scotland. Danielle came to us via the World Veterinary Service and worked with us for two weeks, assisting with surgeries, caring for our animals and even sharing some of her knowledge and skills. We were very lucky to have her, and wish she could have stayed longer!

Thank you to everyone who has given their time to the USPCA over the past year. We are very fortunate to have a large number of passionate volunteers who support with such a wide range of tasks, both hands on at the shelter and also behind the scenes supporting administration, finance, communications and many other important roles.



Above right: School girl Sara and friends celebrating her birthday with a day at the shelter.

Donors and fundraising

A huge thankyou to Animal Kind International, Protea Hotel Entebbe, Cafe Javas and 2-4-Life for their ongoing support to the USPCA. Year after year their unwavering financial and in-kind support enables the Haven to run and we are extremely grateful to them. We received many cash and in-kind donations from supporters and local businesses over the course of the year. Commonly donated, much needed items included dog and cat food, kitten and puppy formula, newspapers and blankets.

Left: Lydia Torrington held an online fundraiser, raising a massive 1.9million shillings. Thank you, Lydia!



We are grateful to our dedicated volunteers who organise the two-monthly pub quiz at Makindye Country Club to raise funds.

Thank you to GEMS International School for once again choosing to support the USPCA as part of their inter house competition and raising 785,500 UGX for the shelter.

The future

A priority for the USPCA is to secure land upon which to build a new shelter. The Haven has been in its current location in a rented property since 2007. Since then the surrounding area has become increasingly developed to such an extent as to include the construction of a newly-completed block of expensive modern apartments directly opposite the entrance to No. 12 Ismail Road. We are extremely concerned that the noise from the shelter animals will draw complaints from the new residents and lead to us being forced to vacate.

In addition, we have outgrown our current facilities and require more space to ensure our animals can be housed in less crowded conditions and dogs can be exercised without having to be taken out on the road. We envisage having a purpose-built facility where we can become a centre of excellence for Africa in animal welfare education, rehoming and shelter management whereby others from across the continent can learn from our example. To do this we require a minimum of a one-acre plot on the outskirts of Kampala after which we can seek funding for construction to begin.

Thank you to all our supporters for a fantastic 2019!

