

World Association for Transport Animal Welfare and Studies (TAWS)
The challenge of improving transport animal welfare in the world:
ways forward

Workshop held 24 April 2003, Silsoe Research Institute, UK

TAWS Workshop evaluation

Before the workshop closed, evaluation forms were distributed and participants were asked to complete them anonymously. A total of 30 completed forms were returned.

Participants were asked to assess eleven aspects of the workshop on a scale of A (very useful, very good) through C (OK) to E (very poor). The information on the various forms was consolidated and the average responses were ranked using a scoring system (see table below). Responses were generally positive. Of 330 assessments made, 82% were 'good' or 'very good'. Only 2% were considered 'weak', and nothing was 'very poor'. The most popular presentation concerned intervention strategies. At the other end of the scale, was the practical demonstration (although this still had a relatively high approval rating). The relatively poor evaluation of the demonstrations can be explained by the practical problems encountered. Following the drought, the soil was very hard and it was difficult for the donkeys to plow; then (ironically) rain curtailed the demonstration.

Things learned

Participants were asked to note three things they had learned from the workshop. The main responses related to knowledge of the various organisations participating (TAWS, the animal welfare charities and BVA) in general (11 mentions) and the importance of collaboration between such organisations (7 mentions). Most other responses clustered around the contents of the five themes including harnessing and implements (9 citations), strategies/methodology for implementation (8), practicalities of involving young people (8), ethno-veterinary medicine (5) and welfare legislation (4).

Best and most useful aspects

Participants were asked what was the best aspect of the workshop. Most people (28 mentions) referred to making contacts, networking and/or strengthening collaboration. Some people greatly appreciated the methodology (8), with some specific reference to discussions groups, action plans, the multi-sided approach and its role in instilling enthusiasm. The diversity of interesting participants was also mentioned (6). Other things mentioned included the presentations, the themes, the demonstrations and the wonderful venue.

Suggestions for improvements and future workshops

When asked how the workshop could have been improved, the main issues were to attract more people and more organisations (13), with more 'decision-makers' from the charities and donor organisations (3), more young people (2) and ITDG represented (1). Several people wanted more time (4) and two of these suggested a two-day event. People suggested having an address list (5), copies of papers/handouts available (3), and giving all participants the opportunity of introducing themselves (2). Two people wanted more time for discussion groups, but two others thought the time could have been shorter, with

more focused questions. Some individuals wanted more of particular programme elements or topics, but there was no consensus on this (eg, more on students, methodology, practical demonstrations, animal nutrition, breeds and veterinary topics).

When asked for suggestions for future workshops, some people thought TAWS should ‘keep up the good work’ with similar, multi-disciplinary workshops allowing discussion and critical feedback (7). There were calls to continue (or further develop) collaboration between the organisations represented, and to monitor progress (5). Mentions were made of particular topics, but without consensus, with individual mentions of equine disorders, non-equid work animals, animal nutrition, harnessing and equipment, and preparing project proposals.

Other comments

In response to the opportunity to give ‘any other comments’, 16 participants wrote positive remarks, thanking the organisers for a well-organised workshop and great day.

TAWS 2003 Workshop

Evaluation questions, ranked by mean response (score)

Question	☺ Response			☹		Mean Score
	A	B	C	D	E	
Presentation: Intervention strategies	15	8	4			8.4
Presentation: Welfare legislation	10	13	3			7.9
Presentation: Ethno-veterinary	11	11	3	1		7.9
Overall impression of workshop	9	19	1			7.9
Overall usefulness of workshop	12	11	5	1		7.8
Presentation: Equipment and harnesses	10	12	6			7.6
Discussion groups	8	16	4			7.6
<i>Overall mean score</i>						7.6
Presentation: Career prospects	7	16	4	1		7.3
Opening session and keynote	7	14	5	1		7.3
Presentation: Student experience	7	12	8			7.2
Practical demonstrations	4	15	7	3		6.5
Total of responses	100	147	50	7	0	
<i>% of all responses</i>	33	49	16	2	0	