



**The Role and Value of an NGO in Promoting  
Regional Animal Welfare Activities**

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Chair- International Coalition for Animal Welfare

**WOAH**

**18<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Regional Commission for the Middle East**

**24-28 November 2025**

## ICFAW: Coalition of International Animal Welfare NGOs

- Since 2001 to represent NGOs in the WOAHP standard-setting and policy space.
- **Purpose: Contribute to the development, adoption, and implementation of animal welfare standards** (farming, trade, transport, slaughter, working equids, DPM, wildlife, aquatic animals, research) **via collaboration with WOAHP.**







## MoU WOAHA- ICFAW

**May 2018: ICFAW signed MoU with WOAHA  
- renewed in 2022- formalizing cooperation modalities.**

Under the MoU, ICFAW and WOAHA agree to modalities such as

- participation in standard-setting
- supporting regional animal welfare strategies
- capacity building, workshops/training events
- promoting implementation of standards

## Working together for better Animal Welfare



## ICFAW organization:

- **Steering Committee**
- **Regional Working Groups**  
(aligned with WOA's regional breakdown)

Two thematic working groups:

- **Gap Analysis (Transport)**
- **One Welfare**

→ **WG Chairs build SC**



## **ICFAW 's Regional Working Groups: Africa, Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Middle East**

- Under the MoU, ICFAW is intended to cooperate in support of WOA's regional and subregional representations via the regional working groups.
- ICFAW's regional working groups are intended as a bridge and support mechanism between WOA's regional offices and NGOs and their activities in the relevant fields.
- The regional groups coordinate NGO input, regional advocacy, capacity building, and joint initiatives that align with WOA's regional strategies.
- ICFAW understands itself as a partner for WOA's regional ambitions in the field of animal welfare.





Key Elements of Successful RAWS/P –  
The Role and Value of an NGO in Promoting Regional Animal Welfare Activities

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What key factors enable successful regional work in the field of animal welfare, and how can animal welfare organizations best support this shared effort?





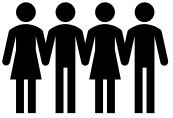
### **Built on Shared Commitment**

- Vision, priorities
- Regionally relevant
- Ownership
- Drive from Members

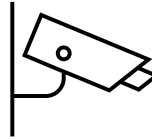


### **Policy Integration**

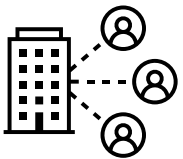
- Link to WOAHA global animal welfare strategy



### **Stakeholder Integration**



### **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaption**



### **Governance and Coordination**



### **Funding and Use of Resources**

- Use of human resources and monetary resources



### **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing**



### **Communication/Public Awareness**

- Communication strategy



## Stakeholder integration:

NGOs are essential partners in regional animal welfare initiatives.

- NGOs bring field-based knowledge, independence, and sustained commitment.
- NGOs bridge policy, science, and practice within regional animal welfare ambitions.





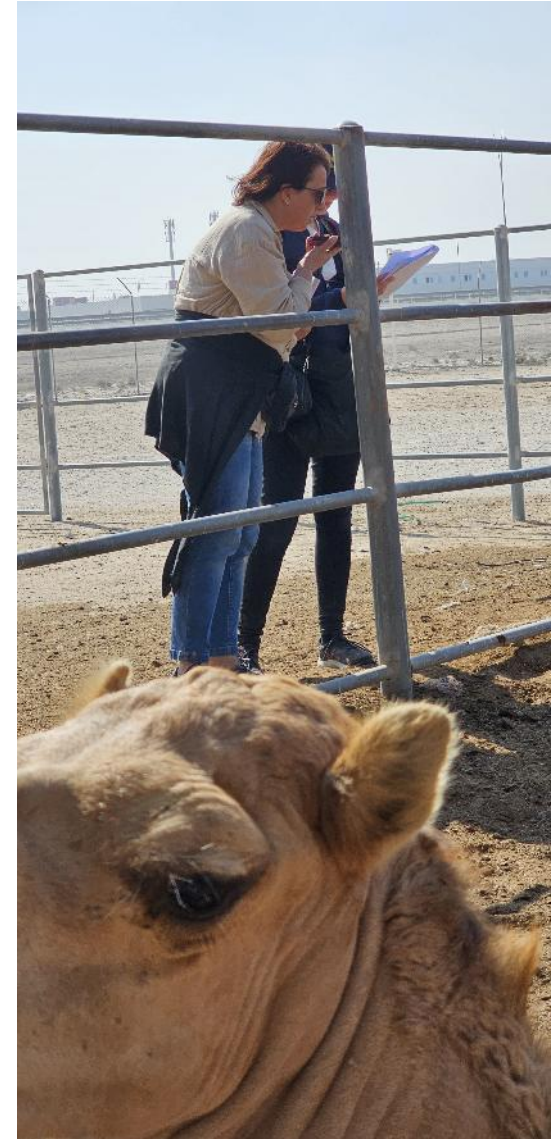
## **NGOs - Independent voice, free from political or commercial interests.**

- Provide transparent assessments of welfare conditions.
- Trusted by public and international partners.

## Field-based evidence and ground reality

First-hand documentation and field experience, e.g.,

- Equine welfare, responsible ownership, free roaming animals, farming, markets, transport
- Insights into compliance gaps and implementation challenges.





## Technical expertise for strategies, action plans, guidelines, or e.g., trainings

- Multi-regional experience enriching discussions
- Specification on topics
- Support monitoring and evaluation of implementation



## Added Value for Regional Cooperation

- Promote the ethical discussion
- Facilitate dialogue among governments, veterinarians, scientists, industry.
- Translate complex issues into accessible messages.
- Provide early warnings on emerging issues.



## Capacity building: Training for inspectors, veterinarians, market staff, transporters

- Promote understanding of WOAHA standards, national legislation
- Facilitate cross-country experience exchange

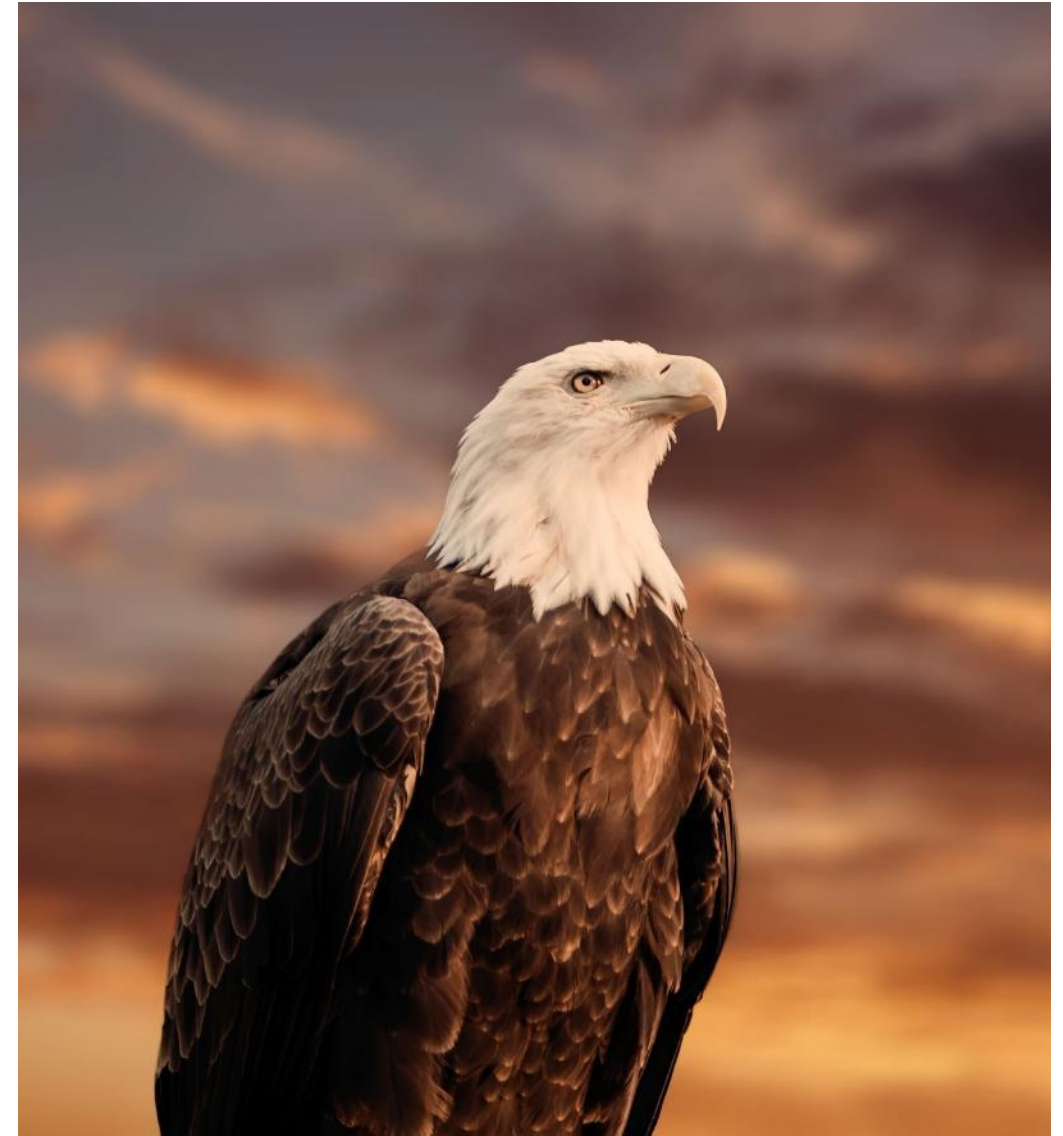




## Ensuring on-the-ground implementation:

### Monitor practical application of standards, national laws, policies

- Offer tailored recommendations for regional realities
- Sharing evidence with policymakers and international bodies
- Strengthen accountability and transparency



## NGOs' Support to Scientific Research

- Funding independent research
- Supporting collaborative research with universities and experts



## NGOs provide economic support

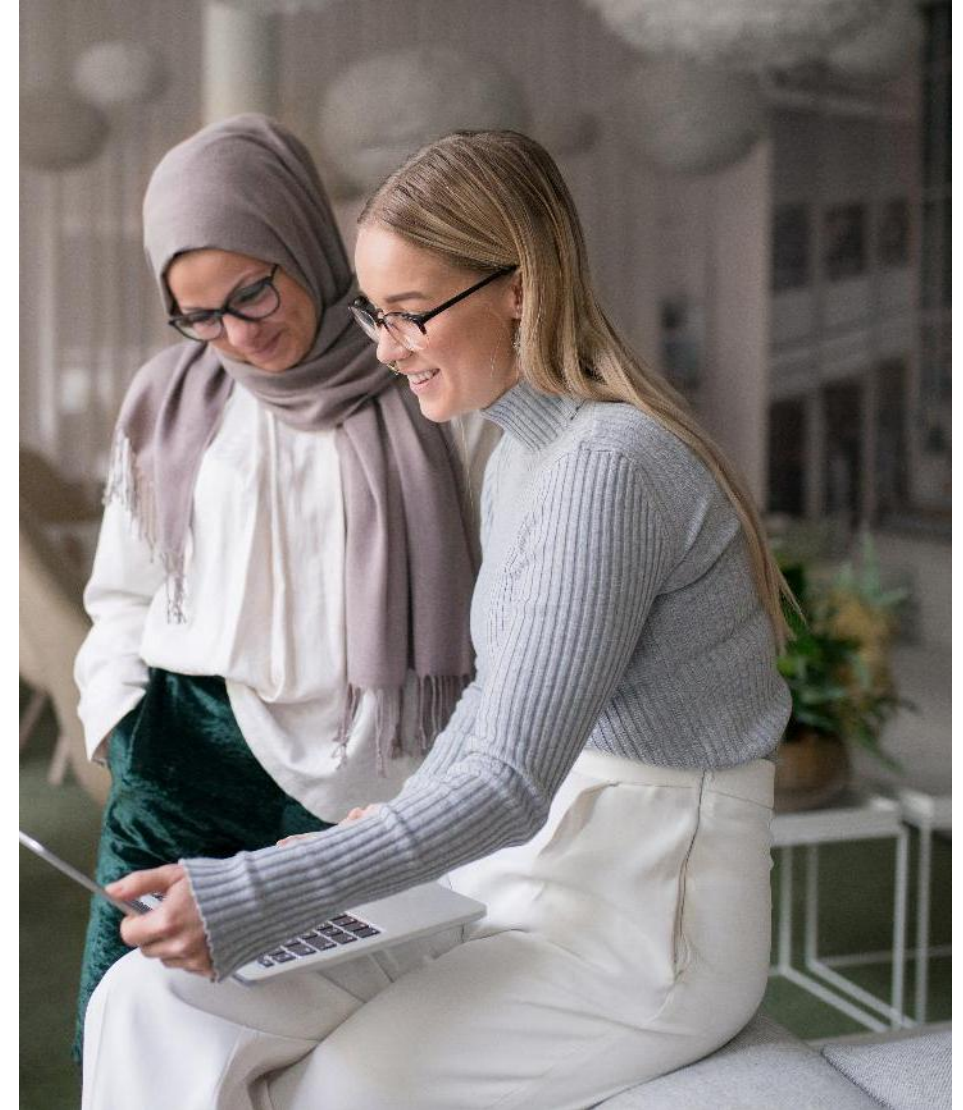
- Funding for targeted initiatives (training, infrastructure, pilot projects)
- Cost-sharing with authorities and institutions
- Mobilizing donor and grant resources
- Supporting long-term capacity building
- Reducing financial barriers for stakeholders





## Complementary roles: NGOs and Authorities

- NGOs support official veterinary services
- NGOs can be the veterinarian's eyes in the field
- Authorities provide mandates + NGOs add capacity and expertise.
- Cooperation avoids duplication and improves efficiency



## Successful Workstreams within RAWSP: Africa

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of Training for WOA National Animal Welfare Focal Points with emphasis on Transport and Slaughter, Nairobi in September 2024.

- The training was designed sustainable and continuous, building on the achievements of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycles
- Engaging not only with national authorities but with e.g., AU-IBAR, FAO, animal welfare NGOs, and a network of international experts.
- **ICFAW** provided technical support to the training event





## Dog Population Management



**DPM:** One of the priorities of the WOA Animal Welfare Platform for Europe since its beginning.

**ICFAW member *RSPCA*:** deeply involved in Platform activities regarding DPM, technical input and funding.

*Example:*

Third then OIE Regional Workshop on 'Stray' Dog population management for Balkan countries in June 2018 in Belgrade, Serbia. This workshop was an integral activity of the Regional 'stray' dog roadmap for the Balkans launched in June 2014 with the objective to become compliant with the WOA Standards on DPM by 2025.



### Animal Welfare during Transport

ICFAW participated in the WOAHA Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario (WJS) Workshop on long-distance transport by land and sea between Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and presented the NGO's view on animal transport.



## Successful Workstreams in the Region: Europe

The screenshot shows the MDPI Animals journal website. The top navigation bar includes links for Journals, Topics, Information, Author Services, Initiatives, and About, along with Sign In / Sign Up and Submit buttons. A search bar is located below the navigation bar. The article page for "Journals / Animals / Volume 12 / Issue 22 / 10.3390/ani12223122" is displayed. The article title is "Journeys, Journey Conditions, and Welfare Assessment of Broken (Handled) Horses on Arrival at Italian Slaughterhouses" by Martina Felici, Leonardo Nanni Costa, Martina Zappaterra, Giancarlo Bozzo, Pietro Di Pinto, Michela Minero, and Barbara Padalino. The article is marked as Open Access. The left sidebar contains links to Submit to this Journal, Review for this Journal, Propose a Special Issue, and an Article Menu. The right sidebar includes a Share button, a Help button, a Cite button, and a Discuss in SciProfiles button. The bottom of the page shows the submission and publication dates.

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**Journeys, Journey Conditions, and Welfare Assessment of Broken (Handled) Horses on Arrival at Italian Slaughterhouses**

by Martina Felici <sup>1</sup>, Leonardo Nanni Costa <sup>1</sup>, Martina Zappaterra <sup>1,\*</sup>, Giancarlo Bozzo <sup>2</sup>, Pietro Di Pinto <sup>3</sup>, Michela Minero <sup>4</sup> and Barbara Padalino <sup>1</sup>

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ICFAW Members *World Horse Welfare* and *Animals' Angels* supporting research in the field of animal welfare during transport.

## Webinars to enhance Animal Welfare in the Region

- WOAHA Subregional Representation for the Arabian Gulf – ICFAW
- 2022: Webinar on Camel Welfare
- 2024: Cycle of Webinars 'Towards boosting animal welfare knowledge and implementation capacities in the Middle East' (including camel welfare)





## ICFAW Member Organisation:

### ***SPANA'S ACTIVITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST***

- Current partnership in Northern Iraq
- Historical support of activities in Jordan and Syria (not currently active)



## WORKING ANIMAL IMPORTANCE IN IRAQ

Used by farmers and internally displaced people (IDP) for:

- Shepherding
- Agriculture (ploughing, harvesting, irrigation)
- Transport (people, building materials, firewood, water, crops)





## MAIN CHALLENGES

- **Challenging environments and working conditions** such as harsh climates, limited shade, and long working hours
- **Limited awareness and education on animal health and welfare** lead to poor husbandry practices, handling, nutrition, work equipment (chains used across the nose are common)
- **Traditional or cultural practices** that compromise animal welfare, such as traditional castration using rings, without analgesia or tetanus prophylaxis
- **Poor access to related services** such as veterinary services and drugs, farriery, harness-makers and other para-professionals
- **Economic pressures and vulnerability of working animal owners** in low-resource environment





## MAIN CHALLENGES (CONTINUED)

- **Specific REGIONAL threats** such as military conflict
- **Specific WORK-RELATED welfare threats** such as overloading animals, insufficient rest, poor harnessing and work equipment, lack of training avenues to upskill, lack of oversight of animals in tourism
- **Migratory community** makes ongoing welfare services or training challenging
- **Limited data availability and lack of evidence** for the value of working animals and the main factors affecting their welfare
- **Policy and legislation challenges**, including gaps of specific legislation for working equids— policy review currently underway



## SPANNA's current approach through active projects in the region

- **Partnership with local animal welfare organisation**
- **Supporting direct service provision and access to care**
  - Mobile veterinary clinics and prevention campaigns
  - Distribution of harnessing and work equipment
- **Capacity Building and Training**
  - Community engagement and training for working animal owners and handlers
- **Professional Training**
  - Training of veterinary professionals and students
- **Education**
  - Teaching of children in communities with working animals
  - Training of teachers
- **Stakeholder engagement and international coalitions**
  - Engagement of Kurdistan and Iraqi parliament, ministers of Agriculture, Education council members, and INGOs to support the update of the animal welfare law of 2010 (currently under review in parliament)



# WORKING ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Overview of SPANNA's **working animal reach** in Iraq 2024-2025 (to date)



**14578**  
Working Animals Reached

**9665**  
Donkeys

**3028**  
Horses

**1863**  
Mules

**22**  
Camels



**13205**  
Animal Treatments  
(e.g. case treatments, prevention)



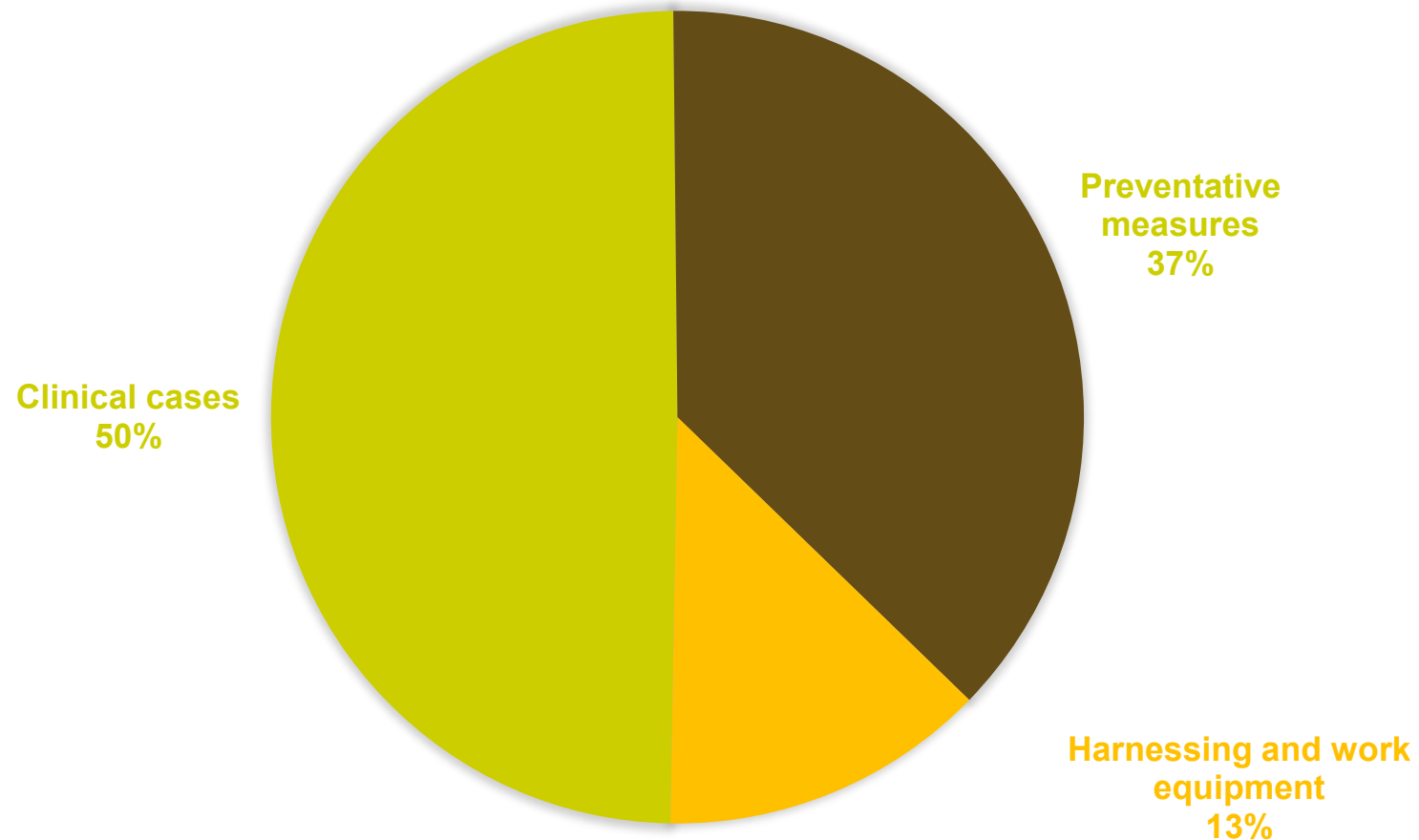
**2304**  
Professionals Trained  
(e.g. clinical skills, prevention)





# SNAPSHOT EXAMPLE

SPANNA interventions with working animals in the Middle East 2024-2025 (to date)



# WORKING ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

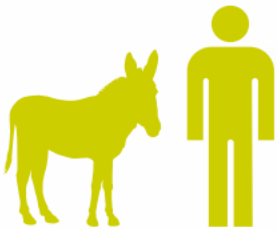
## Overview of SPANA's **Education** reach in Iraq 2024-2025 (to date)



**4652**  
Children Reached



**1225**  
Teachers trained



**1679**  
**Community Members Trained**  
(Welfare, husbandry, harnessing, wound care)



## PRIORITIES

- **Improving welfare through access** to veterinary care
- **Strengthening veterinary and para-professional systems** through training
- **Sustainable and One Health based approach to local challenges** to working animal welfare
- **Positive change in behaviours and practices** among working animal owners, users and children
- **Growing awareness** of sustainable preventative care practices
- **Capacity building** at community level
- **Identifying key areas of welfare need** and building robust evidence
- **Raising awareness** among stakeholders
- **Supporting the development and enforcement of relevant legislation**
- **Collaborations and partnerships with local and international organisations** for higher impact and sustainability







## Ministry of Municipalities & Animals' Angels cooperation on animal health and animal welfare for food security and food safety in Qatar

Third training session of welfare officers  
and livestock markets' visits, 13-14 January 2025

*Animal resources Department - Food security Department - Animals' Angels Association*

- **Who?** Animal resources Department & Food security Department (Ministry of Municipalities) ; Aswaq (Hassad Food) ; Animals' Angels association (Germany)
- **Where?** Um Salal livestock market / Abu Nakhla camel market
- **What?** Training of security officers at Umm Salal livestock market to explain the intricate links between animal and human health, raise awareness on animal welfare & ensure that market's tenants, traders and buyers follow the best practices
- **What for?** Dissemination of good practices to improve animal welfare, food safety and food security, as well as food quality in Qatar
- **What next?** Pursue and deepen collaboration to extend best practices to all animals' markets and livestock auctions on the long term in Qatar



Training and field work in Abu Salal market



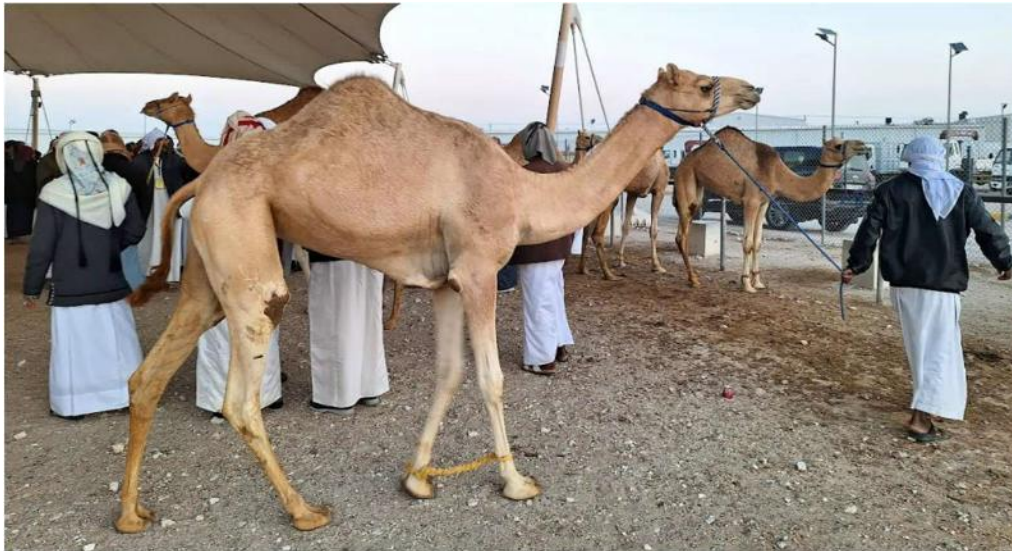
Camel pen in Abu Nakhla wholesale market, Qatar

Training at Um Salal Market, January 13<sup>th</sup> 2025





Visit to Abu Nakhla camel market and camel auction, January 14<sup>th</sup> 2025



## The welfare of dromedary camels

ICFW Member *Animals' Angels* documented the welfare conditions of dromedaries at camel markets across several countries in the Middle East and North Africa, identifying both strengths and shortcomings. Based on these findings, the organisation developed targeted recommendations and has made all results available to market operators and competent authorities.

The Welfare of Dromedary Camels  
traded at Livestock Markets

Case Studies by Animals' Angels  
2024 and 2025





## **Conclusion: NGOs provide independent, reliable, and constructive partnership**

- Ensure strategies remain evidence-based, practical, and grounded.
- Strengthen long-term visibility and relevance of animal welfare.
- Collaboration is key to lasting progress for animal welfare in the regions







**icfaw**  
INTERNATIONAL COALITION  
FOR **ANIMAL WELFARE**

**Shukran!**

Thank you for your  
commitment to improving  
animal welfare

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