

Situation of working equines in Nepal AHTCS, Nepal (2007)

Abstract

A survey was done to assess working equines in five hilly and two terai districts. Transect walk, personal/group interaction, interview with stakeholders and questionnaires were used to collect data on population, distribution, congregation and major problems faced by equines and equine owners. In total, 3663 equines and 897 equine owners were counted in the surveyed districts. The average equine to owner ratio was found to be 8-10:1 in hills and 1-2:1 in terai districts. Of the total equines counted 76% were mules, 21% were horses and the remaining 3% were donkeys. Out of the total number of equine owners, 8% have school level education, 30% can read and write only and 62% are illiterate. Most of the owners (95%) in the terai region work as handlers/drivers but only 44% of the owners of the hills work as drivers. A limited number of equine service providers have been documented in the surveyed areas. Colic, lameness, wound, ineffective and often painful traditional medicinal practices, poor housing and feeding practices and the lack of preventive measures were the major equine health and management problems observed.