

## **An Interactive Workshop on OIE Minimum Standards for Working Equines in India**

The National Academy of Veterinary Sciences (India) in collaboration with Brooke India organized a workshop on Implementation of OIE Minimum Standards for Working Equines in India at NASC Complex, Pusa, New Delhi on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

The aim of the workshop was to bring together various Stake Holders i.e, Policy makers, Academicians, Animal Welfare Professionals and NGOs together to deliberate on the way forward for Implementation of OIE Minimum Standards for Working Equines in India.

Dr. Suresh Honnappagol, Commissioner, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Department, Govt. of India chaired the meeting.

In his address, Dr. Honnappagol mentioned that policy makers are not aware of the contribution of equines towards rural economy. He urged Brooke India to conduct a study on the contribution of working equines to the National Economy.

Maj. Gen. M.L. Sharma, CEO, Brooke India spoke on the importance of working equines in India and emphasized that 40% of equines in India are used in brick kilns. He said that equines are also used extensively for carrying goods and a mode of transportation in rural areas, pilgrim sites, tourist sites and in hilly areas of the country.

Ms. Sirjana Nijjar, Head of Advocacy, Brooke India spoke on the OIE Minimum Standards on Working Equids in India and the present situation at the grass root level in the country.

The workshop recommended that Brooke India make a policy paper on the role and responsibilities of various stakeholders for ensuring health care and welfare of working equines i.e., the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI), Animal Husbandry Department, National Research Centre for Equines, National Academy of Veterinary Sciences (India), Veterinary Council of India, Brooke India etc. The proposed policy paper should also focus on brick kilns, pilgrim sites, tourist sites, equine fairs among others.

The workshop was attended among others by Dr. Ashok Kumar, ADG(AH), ICAR, Dr. S.K. Gupta, Secretary General, NAVS(I), Col R P Garg, Governing Council Member, NAVS(I), Prof. Ravindra Sharma, Governing Council Member, NAVS(I), Dr. B.N. Tripathi, Director, ICAR-NRCE Hisar, Dr. Lal Krishna, former Commissioner, AHD, Dr. Nem Singh, Former Director, IVRI and Governing Council Member, NAVS(I), Mr. Vinod Khurana, Country Manager, Donkey Sanctuary, Dr. Manilal Valliyate, CEO, PETA India and Brooke India Senior Management Team.