

Options for dog population management: Where do you start?



Improving animal welfare in
shelters: a practical approach
Warsaw, 12 April 2014



International

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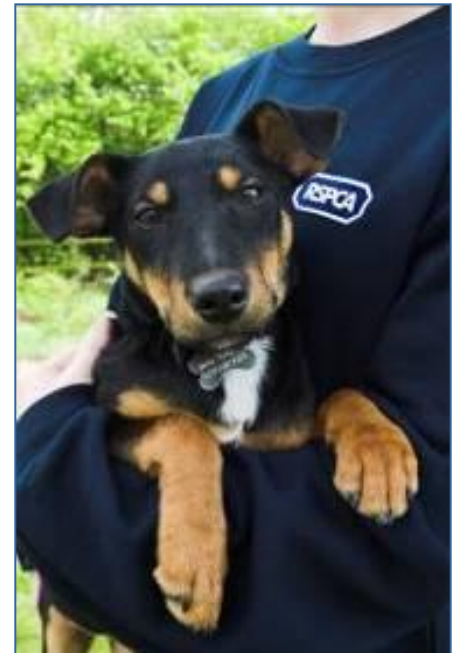
RSPCA mission



‘The RSPCA will, by all lawful means, prevent cruelty, promote kindness to and alleviate suffering of all animals’

The RSPCA ...

- is the worlds oldest **animal welfare organisation**
- is a **charity** and receives no government funding
-
- has **4 science departments** for companion, farm and laboratory animals, and wildlife
- enforces UK **animal welfare law through its inspectorate**
- campaigns, **lobbies and educates** for improved conditions for animals.



Scale

- 159,686 cruelty complaints investigated in 2011
- 2,441 convictions secured in 2011
- 130,033 animals collected and rescued in 2011
- 64,086 animals re-homed in 2011
- 67,388 animals microchipped and 79,810 animals neutered in 2010
- 41 branch-run clinics
- 51 animal centres



Introduction to the RSPCA International

Where? → **East Asia**

↘ **Europe**

↙ **southern Africa**



Links to organisations

What?

→ **Advice**

↘ **Training courses**

↓ **Support**

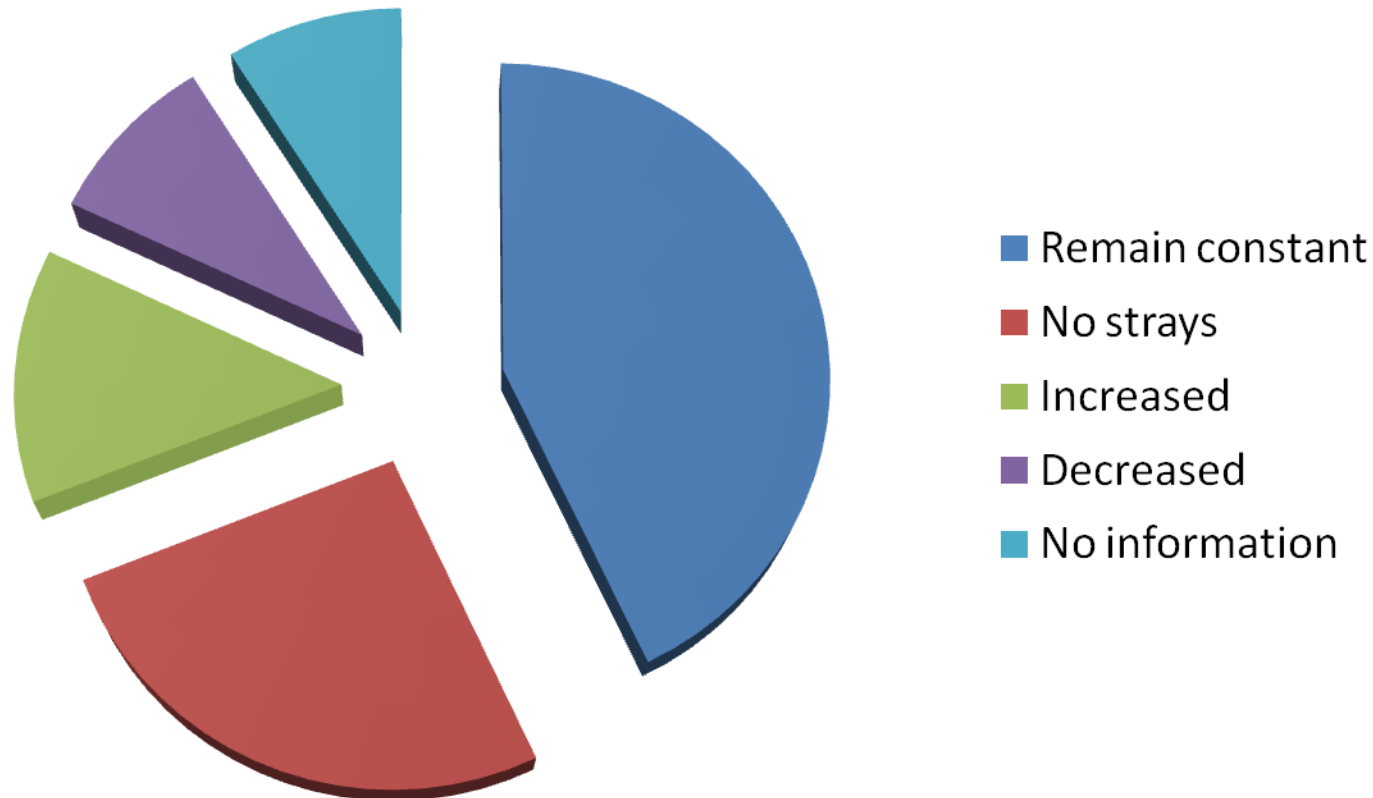


Developing humane DPM intervention

- ◆ Support initial dog population assessment and community surveys.
- ◆ Work with the key stakeholders to develop targeted and comprehensive intervention measures.
- ◆ Provide advice and technical assistance for the competent authorities and shelter managers.
- ◆ Deliver catching and handling and shelter training for municipal staff, service providers, veterinarians and NGOs.
- ◆ Support awareness raising and education activities.

Dog population management

Trends in stray dogs in Europe

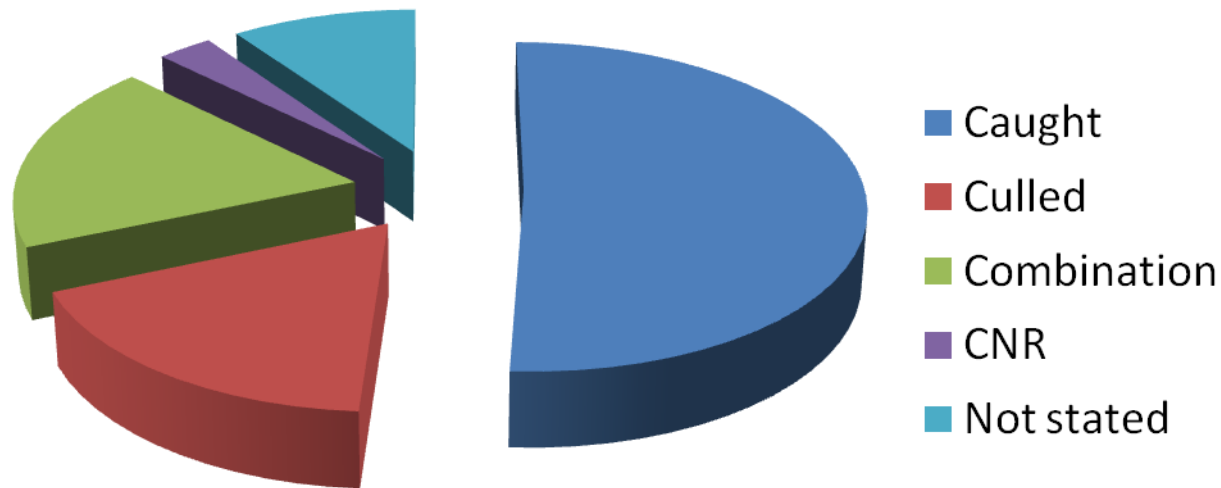


No census or population data was systematically recorded nationally by a central government or agencies responsible for stray dog control.

Stray animal control practices (Europe), WSPA and RSPCA report, 2007

Dog population management

Methods of stray dog control in Europe



In those countries that caught strays 10 (32%) euthanized animals at the end of the holding period, 2 (6%) euthanized upon capture, and 3 (10%) did not legally permit the euthanasia of healthy dogs. Holding periods varied from 3-60 days.

Stray animal control practices (Europe), WSPA and RSPCA report, 2007

Legislation overview in Europe

- 87% have legislation that covers AW and the protection of animals
- 70% of countries prohibit abandonment
- 50% restrict selling and breeding of dogs
- 42% had national legislation that specifically addresses pet ownership (dog control laws)
- 70% compulsory identification and licensing but report little effect due to poor implementation in 48% and little effect on stray dog numbers
- In countries where dog identification and registration were rigorously enforced it was considered the most effective element of in successful stray control practices.

Stray animal control practices (Europe), WSPA and RSPCA report, 2007



State of play in the EU



- Approx. 197 million companion animals owned by households in the EU.
- This includes around 64 million pet cats and 60 million pet dogs.
- No specific legislation at the EU level to protect the companion apart from the pet passports scheme requiring animals travelling with their owners to be permanently identified.
- However there is no registration system across the EU making traceability difficult.
- MSs have adopted legislation which varies across the EU.
- No EU legislation regarding the stray dog control practices.

State of play in the EU

- In 2010, the EU Council decisions calling upon the EU Commission to investigate differences between MSs and develop a harmonised approach across the EU for companion animals.
- In 2011 the EU Parliament adopted a resolution on dog population management and responsible ownership.
- The second EU AW strategy 2012-2015 proposes a framework animal welfare law to include companion animals.
- The strategy also requests a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices. It is anticipated to be published in 2014.



Dog population management

Related costs in EU MSs

France

17 million dogs and cats
1 million puppies sold per year
100.000 dogs abandoned each year

Only 530 shelters for 36.779 villages
= 70 villages per shelter

Cost Fondation BB 2 million
SPA 27 million

UK

14 million dogs and cats
100 rehoming centres
+70.000 abandoned animals
Cost to shelters RSPCA 53 Million



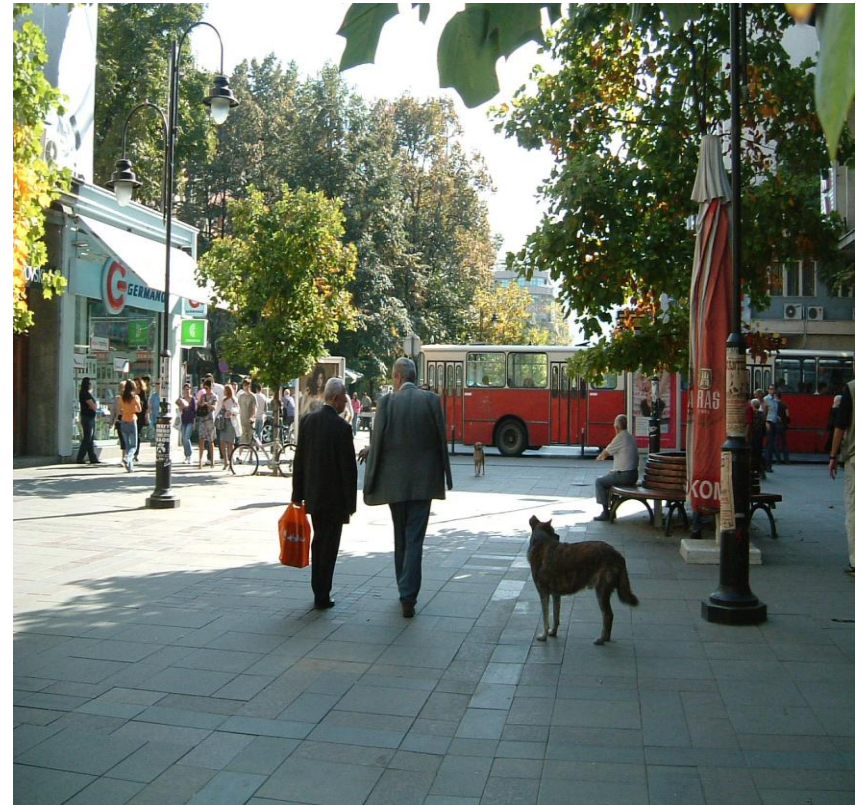
A community problem

All can contribute in
providing solutions

Develop the “stakeholder
concept”

Share responsibilities

Municipalities should take
lead role



Free-ranging dog population pose several problems in terms of human health....

- *zoonoses*
(rabies, echinococcosis, leishmaniosis)
- *environmental pollution* (e.g. noise, faeces)
- *nuisance behaviour* (noise, chasing vehicles)
- *traffic accidents*
- *attack and injury to people*



.. and animal welfare

- *lack of protection from **adverse environmental factors***
- *insufficient **feed resources***
- *lack of **veterinary care***
- *lack or deficient or inadequate **zoonoses control programs***
- *invasion of **environmental preserve areas***
- *damage and threaten to **farm animals and wildlife***



OIE stray dog control guidelines

Owned dog: means a dog with a person that claims responsibility.

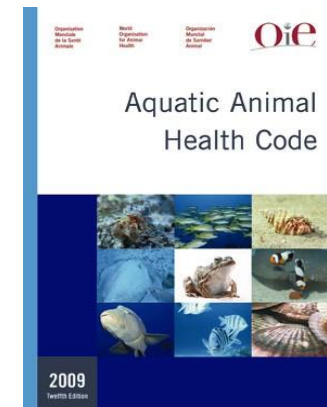
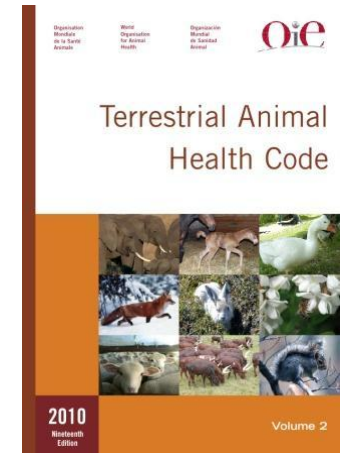
Stray dog: means any dog not under direct control by a person or not prevented from roaming.

Types of stray dog:

1. **free-roaming owned dog** not under direct control or restriction at a particular time;
2. **free-roaming dog with no owner;**
3. **feral dog:** domestic dog that has reverted to the wild state and is no longer directly dependent upon humans for successful reproduction.

OIE stray dog control guiding principles-2009

- ✓ *Critical importance of promotion of **responsible dog ownership***
- ✓ *Recognises that **dog ecology** is closely linked to **human behaviour***
- ✓ *Promotes humane stray control practices*
- ✓ ***Need to change human behaviour** to be successful in stray dog population management programs*



Dog population management

Art. 2 Dog population control programme objectives

- ✓ Improve dog **health and welfare**
- ✓ **Reduce the numbers of stray dogs** to an acceptable level
- ✓ **Reduce the risk of zoonosis** and parasitic infections
- ✓ Protect the **environment**
- ✓ Prevent **illegal trade** and **trafficking**

Art.4 Considerations in planning a programme

- ✓ **Identify the sources** of stray dogs
- ✓ Estimating the existing **number, distribution and ecology**
- ✓ Set up **specific legislation**
- ✓ **Resources** (are not unlimited.....!!)

Dog population management

Art.5 Control measures

- ✓ Education and legislation for **responsible ownership**
- ✓ **Dog I & R**
- ✓ **Birth control**
- ✓ **Removal, handling and management** of free-roaming dogs (housing standards, "community dogs", adoption policy)
- ✓ **Environmental** controls
- ✓ **Dog movement** control (national, international)
- ✓ Regulation of **commercial dog dealers**
- ✓ Reduction in **dog bite** incidence (education, responsible ownership)
- ✓ **Euthanasia**

Dog population management

Where do they come from?



A hand-drawn diagram of an iceberg floating in water. The water level is indicated by a horizontal line with dashed lines below it. The tip of the iceberg is above the water and contains the text 'Stray dogs'. The much larger part of the iceberg is submerged below the water and contains the text 'DOG POPULATION'.

Stray
dogs

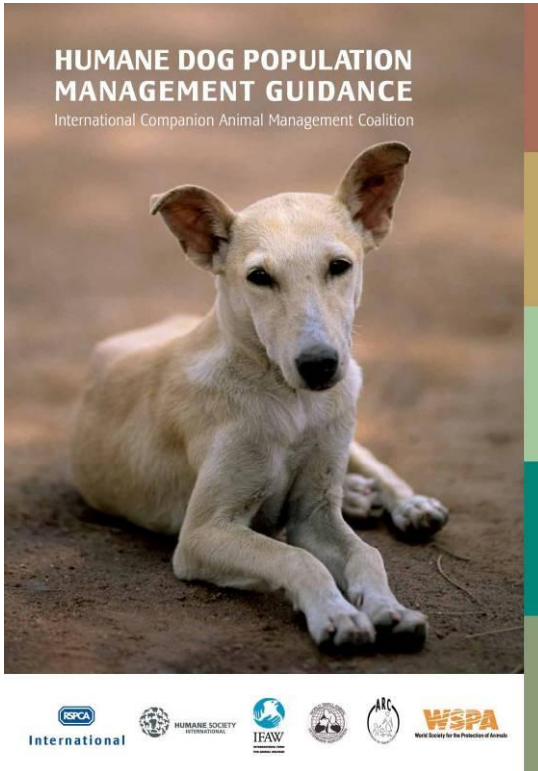
DOG POPULATION

Dog population management

Targeting the source



ICAM COALITION



HUMANE DOG POPULATION MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

Available in:

English, Spanish, Portuguese,
Russian, Mandarin and Thai



HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL

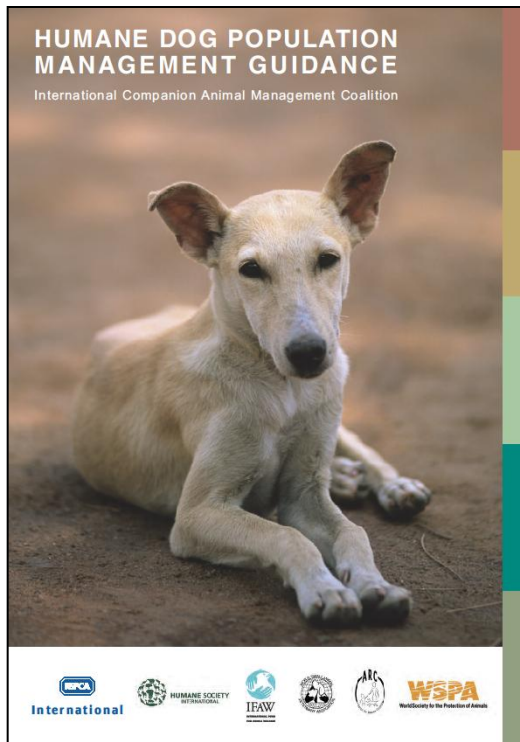


MISSION

To support the development and use of humane and effective companion animal population management worldwide.



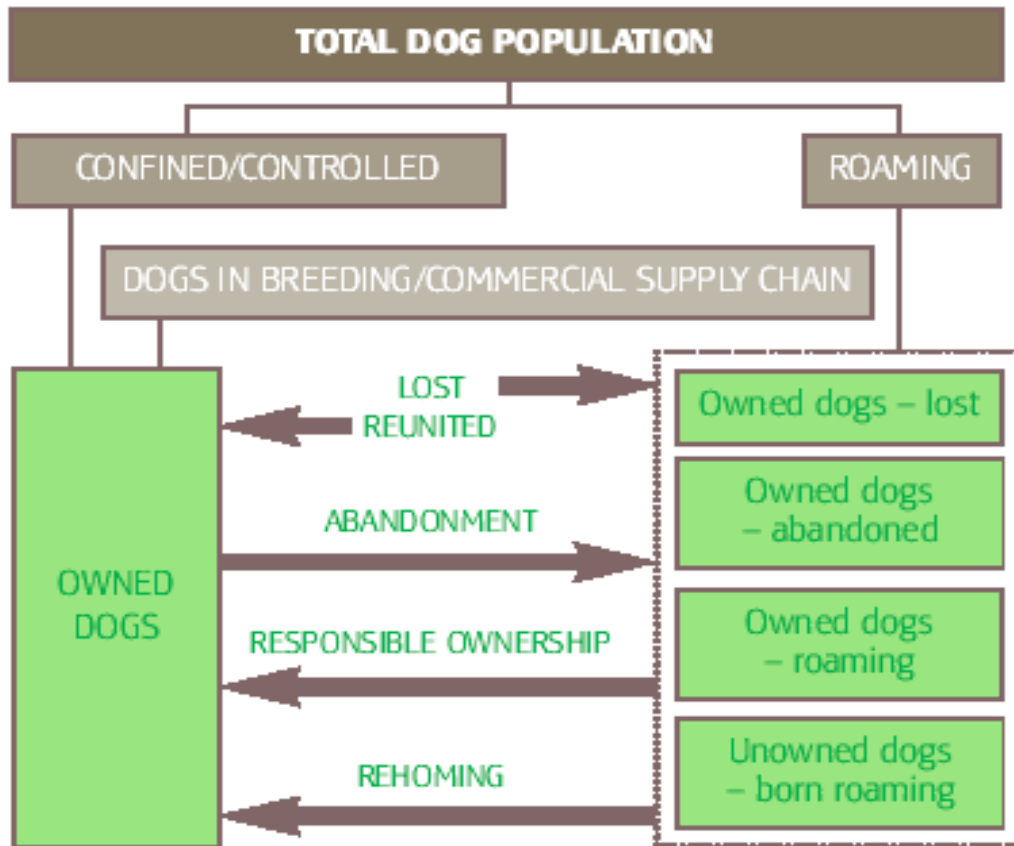
International Companion Animal Management (ICAM) Coalition



- Guidance through a process
- With local stakeholders
- To assess the local situation and needs
- To determine the most effective solution for managing the local dog population
- Sustainably (long-term)
- In a humane manner.

Dog population management

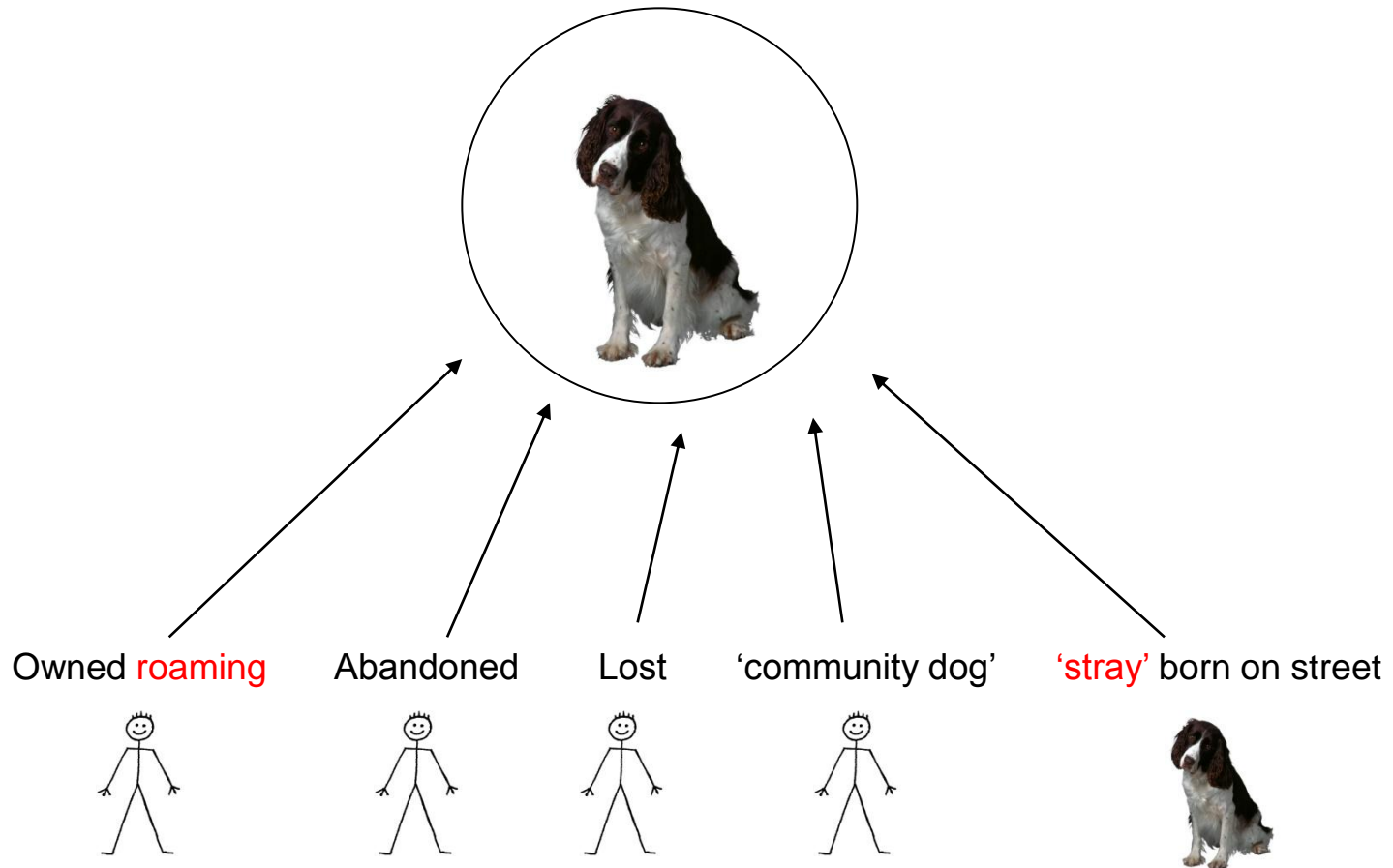
One size does not fit all



ICAM, 2007

Where are the dogs coming from?

- the make-up of the roaming dog population
- the source(s) of the roaming dogs



What do we need to know (basics):

- Dogs

- Public Attitude (What people think, what people want)

- Human Behaviour (What people do)

- Number of dogs on the street
- Dynamics of the 'stray' population (owned vs stray, welfare, sex, age, *females lactating/pregnant*, puppies)
- Resource access: what keeps the dogs alive and reproducing
- Size of owned dog population

- Public attitudes toward strays? Toward their own dogs?
- *Public awareness of connection between stray and owned* ('stray' might be owned roaming, but creating puppies)
- Public awareness and attitudes toward principles of responsible pet ownership (vaccination, sterilisation, controlled reproduction)
- What are people's concerns? Rabies? Bites? Barking?
- *Do people want dogs on the street? vs. Do people want dogs killed?*
- *Will people tolerate community dogs if safe/healthy, not aggressive and sterilised?*

- Why do people own dogs?
- How do they treat their owned dogs? Training?
- Do people let their dogs roam? Abandon?
- What do they do with unwanted puppies when their dog gets pregnant?
- What are most common issues that people cannot cope with (causing abandonment)? Disease, behaviour, money, etc.

Dog population management

Initial assessment

Management strategies should aim to target the source of the 'problem' and not only treat the 'symptoms'

- What is the current size of the population and what are the characteristics of the specific dog population.
- Where are the dogs coming from? Where are these sources?
- What are the problems perceived and what is currently done to control these problems?
- Who is responsible for this control?
- Who are the relevant stakeholders?
- What is the prevailing public opinion/attitudes to this issues? What people think/what people do?

RELEVANT FACTORS FOR ANALYSIS: Why does this problem exist?



Human attitudes/behaviour

Owned animals

Unowned animals

Abandoned animals

Environmental factors

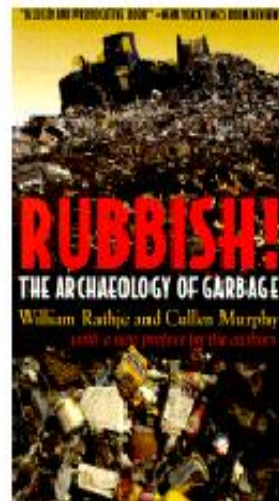
Community resources and
stakeholder actions

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS



Human behaviour
Reproduction
Access to resources
Zoonoses
Public and dog welfare

Key Elements



COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME

Education
Legislation
Basic veterinary care
Registration, identification
Sterilisation
Holding facilities/
rehoming centres
Euthanasia



DESIGNING THE INTERVENTION



Sustainability

Aims, objective and
activities

Defining policy and setting
standards

Municipalities, Local Authorities



Animal Welfare Associations



National legislation

Citizens



Local resources

"Responsible ownership"
promotion & education

National and Regional Government



Dog population control programs

Media



University



Private vets



Public Veterinary Service



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To improve performance,
highlight problems

To be accountable to
stakeholders, and
demonstrate success



Dog population management

Remaining challenges

Public attitudes / perception – societal dimension

Political will – right motivation for DPM vs. quick fixes

Improve enforcement of the existing laws

Set clear competencies for DPM

Develop infrastructure and resources

Education and training at all levels



Dog population management

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Dog population management

Policy and research needs

- Defining key outcome indicators to precede DPM intervention and to measure impact.
- Baseline data collection to measure effectiveness, economic sustainability and determine what works while safeguarding the principles of good welfare.
- Monitoring, evaluation and review to feed back into policy making/refinement.
- Developing specific indicators to address the multiple facets of this issue.



Thank you!
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