

## **Lilongwe SPCA Malawi Police Service Animal Protection Act Sensitization Trainin, 22-25<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

### **Introduction**

The Lilongwe Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (LSPCA) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) were honoured to be invited to partner with the Malawi Police Service (MPS) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to deliver training on the enforcement of the Protection of Animals Act (Cap 66:01, 1970). LSPCA, through its collaboration with the MoA, has been working closely with the MPS over the past two years to support the Lilongwe police service in its efforts to improve the welfare of animals through improved enforcement of the Act.

The purpose of the meeting was to assess the appreciation and augment the law enforcers' understanding of the Act and how the law was violated I their various areas. Groups discussions interestingly mentioned: Long distance transport of animals with no food and water, road side selling of animals, slaughtering by strangulation; cruel slaughtering of animals, Chickens transported up-side down, beating donkeys/cattle, overloading of animals and neglect as the most common cases of animal welfare violation.

Nonetheless it was also mentioned that effecting the law had several constraints like; Ignorance of the law by the public – neighbours wouldn't report issues of animal cruelty; most people think its new or for Europeans, Lack of awareness re how many animals can be kept, Lack of space to accommodate impounded animals, Attitude problems by the public, police and courts, Lack of resources to preserve evidence (e.g. problems with lack of cameras) and Lack of co-ordination between stakeholders (e.g. MoA, Ministry of Health, media).

The participation of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Judiciary, the media and animal welfare charities greatly raises the impetus of the subject and provided the necessary information and motivation to enable the Malawi Police Service, in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture, to contribute to the improvement of animal welfare in Malawi through their role in the enforcement of animal welfare legislation. Recommendations were also suggested for consideration between the key stake-holders for the benefit of the animals.