

## **Innovations and technologies for supporting responsible ownership of pets.**

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Communities around the world face challenges with poorly managed dog populations, such as community health and safety concerns including bites and zoonotic disease, animal welfare concerns and impacts of roaming dogs on local livelihoods through livestock and tourism. While programs to address these issues take many forms, there is little data-based evidence to support the impact of these interventions, in part because of the difficulty in monitoring impacts of these programs in the field without significant expert assistance. However, new options for using integrated technological solutions, based on the International Companion Animal Management Coalition (ICAM) guidance tool: “Are We Making a Difference?” are being piloted to ensure that key impacts can be monitored and evaluated by experts in a seamless, intuitive process.

One example of a project employing these innovative tools is Humane Community Development (HCD), which is a method of using direct community engagement and accessible community data to develop humane, sustainable dog management plans at the community level, which align with OIE and national standards. Community attitudes and practices, as well as dog demographic information, is collected via tablets by community members using a phone/tablet app (Device Magic) which syncs directly with a web-based system provided by Wise Monkey Foundation, providing seamless data-to-database collection and storage. Analysis utilizes a simple visual dashboard designed for human health by the US CDC which directly reads the data output from Wise Monkey. By utilizing this suite of IT tools, the data can be collected and presented to the community in a tactile, user-friendly format for use in community decision-making, goal setting, and program evaluation. The HCD process, with its simplified data collection and decision-making tools, leads to dog population management plans that communities can monitor and track themselves, resulting in sustainable, resilient dog population management plans.

Key words: community engagement - dog population management – ICAM – indicators - monitoring and evaluation (M&E) - responsible pet ownership.