



**Humane
World for
Animals™**



Building a Humane World for Street Dogs and People

**Over a decade of high-quality, high-volume
animal birth control**

by Humane World for Animals India



About Humane World for Animals India

For over 70 years, Humane World for Animals—formerly Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International—has worked to tackle the root causes of animal cruelty and suffering and create permanent change.

With millions of supporters and work happening in over 50 countries, we are focused on creating long-term solutions to the biggest problems facing animals, working to end the cruellest practices, caring for animals in crisis and building a stronger animal protection movement.

We work across borders to shift human behaviour and drive policy change, bring diverse expertise to the most complex issues, and do it all with a compassionate and welcoming approach. Driving for the greatest global impact, we aim to achieve the vision behind our name.

Incorporated in India: 2012

Type: Section 8 not-for profit company

Reach: Organization's presence across 10+ states in India

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Acknowledgements

It is a proud moment as we present this report to you. This moment has come through many challenges, steep learning, some failures, and a lot of trial and error, but most importantly, it has come through the dedication and perseverance of people.

This report is a composite of the many years of hard work, dedication and perseverance by so many animal care officers, veterinarians, community engagement team members and people managers. A team that has been at the forefront of challenges, that never backed down and never said stop. To this team, we dedicate this report.

We express gratitude for those who came before us, who set the foundation, for the ones who currently hold the fort, and for those to come. May at the heart of what we do always remain the aim to strengthen the bond between people and animals.

There are over 100 animal welfare officers and veterinarians who have played a key role, along with many animal advocates and experts who helped build this programme from the start. We want to thank the late Mr. Ratan Tata; Dr. Andrew Rowan; Tata Trust; Smt. Maneka Gandhi; Gauri Maulekhi; Rahul Sehgal; Shreya Paropkari; Joy Lee; Matt and Lindsay Backhouse; Soham Mukherjee; Dr. Ashutosh Joshi; Dr. Varun Aggarwal; Dr. Arvind Rao, Additional Municipal Commissioner, Lucknow Municipal Corporation; Dr. Abhinav Verma, Animal Welfare Officer, Lucknow Municipal Corporation; Shri Amrit Abhijat, Principal Secretary Urban Development; Major General (Retired) R.M Kharb., ex-Chairman, AWBI; Dr. Devesh Patel, Vadodara Municipal Corporation; Dr. Vijay Panchal and Janani Krishnamurthy, Kodaikanal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Written by Dr Vrushti Mawani and compiled by Aditi Bardia. Dalia Jacob, Dr. Piyush Patel, Dr. Neeraj Kumar, Ratnesh Rao, Dr. Sanjay Ahir, Manish Ganganallimath, and Anju Murali have supported the compilation of it.

With such a strong foundation, we move forward together towards peaceful coexistence.

Keren Nazareth
Senior Director, Companion Animals

Dr. Piyush Patel
Director, Street Animal Programme



Welfare of street dogs in India

Humane World for Animals, formerly called Humane Society International, began its animal birth control work, or street dog population management, in India in 2013. What started as an effort to create a welfare-centred model for mass spay/neuter and vaccination of street dogs has, over thirteen years, evolved into a comprehensive, integrated programme to promote human-dog coexistence. Our programme now includes spay/neuter and vaccination, community engagement, government liaising, media engagement, policy advocacy, regulatory compliance, programme management, technology-based data collection and capacity building. This report traces that evolution across more than 20 cities and towns, and the sterilisation 300,000 and vaccination of 450,000 dogs.

Our earliest work in Jamshedpur and Haryana laid the foundations for the key distinguishing features of our programme, which included intensive and strategic community engagement. It was here that our team pioneered hand-catching, now a skill we formally teach to other organisations and agencies, and developed community kennel standards, surgical quality protocols, and facility care practices. It was here, too, that we first encountered the acute shortage of trained personnel capable of providing high-quality animal care and how communities experienced such programmes. This experience helped us recognise capacity building and community engagement not as a peripheral concern but as a long-term institutional priority.

Haryana, our first large-scale pilot, delivered on its targets and demonstrated that high-volume, high-welfare spay/neuter was achievable within one and a half years. More importantly, though, it brought to light the complexities involved in an endeavour of this nature, including coordinating across multiple government entities, managing resource timelines, striking the right balance between numerical targets and animal welfare and bringing in communities as active participants.

A series of shorter interventions—in Kodaikanal, Noida, Dindigul, Malappuram, the Thar region and Sitapur—ran alongside these larger programmes, adding to our operational knowledge in different ways. Investment in dog population survey methodology and the development of a dedicated app for field data collection during this period reflected a growing commitment to transparency and accountability.

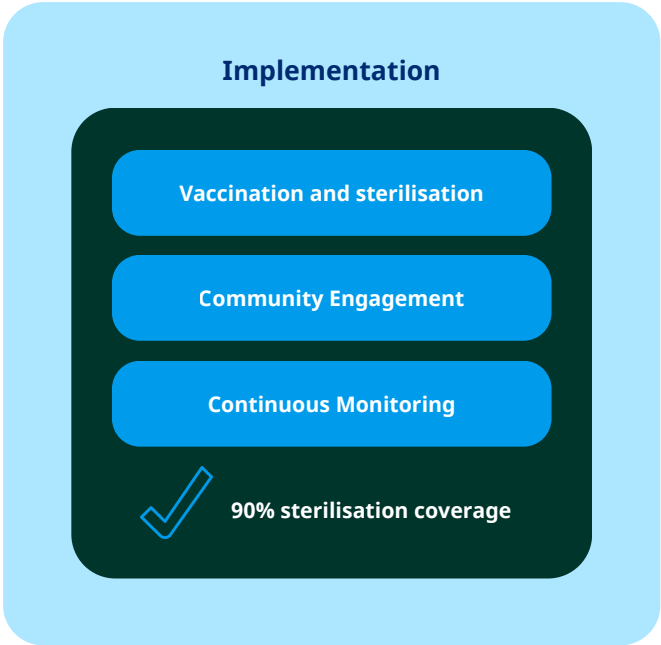
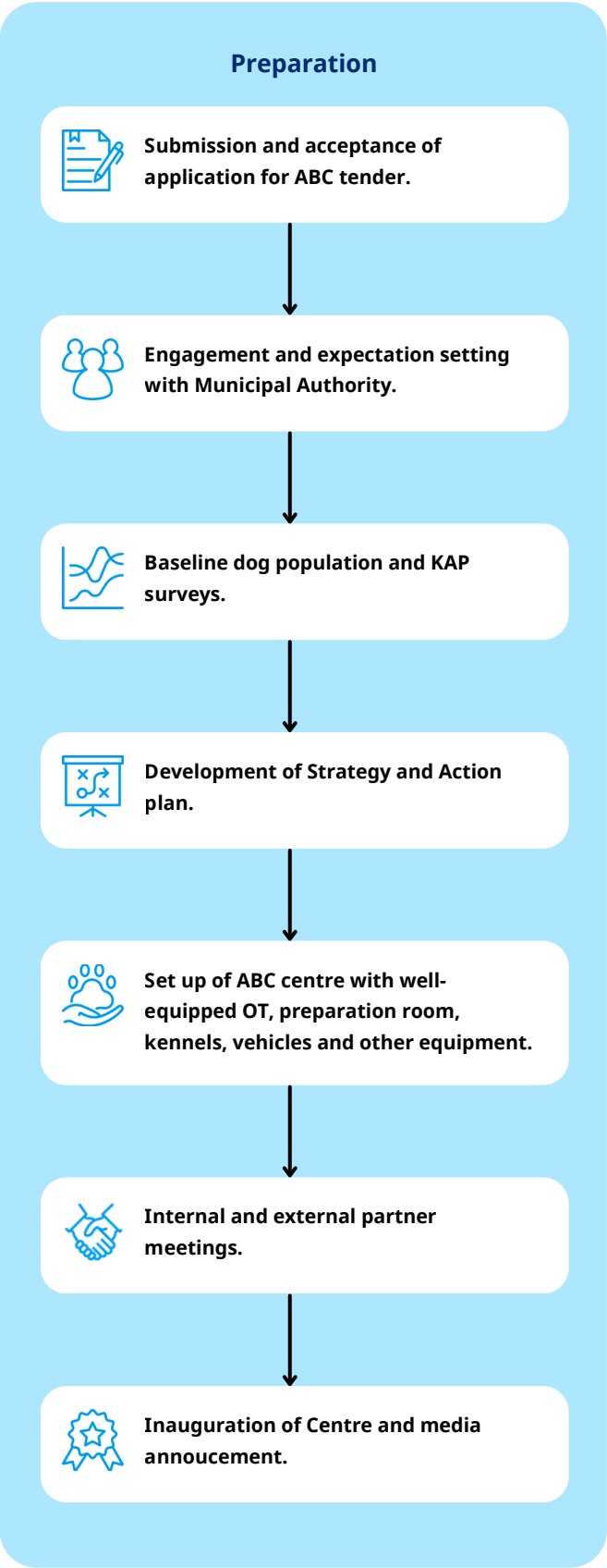
Subsequent programmes in Vadodara, Lucknow and across Uttarakhand tested the integrated model at new levels of scale and complexity. And it was through these programmes, particularly in Vadodara and Dehradun, that our community engagement approach found its fullest expression in the Abhay Sankalp strategy. Integrated directly into the animal birth control programme, Abhay Sankalp has demonstrated measurable impact in every city where it has been replicated.



Abhay Sankalp is the community engagement programme implemented alongside our animal birth control programmes. It engages with communities across cities, building awareness and capacity to create peaceful coexistence between people and street dogs. Abhay Sankalp, which translates to “resolution to live without fear”, was designed to address the mutual fear that exists between street dogs and urban communities in India.

Simultaneously, alongside field operations, we engaged actively in national policy development, including providing substantive inputs to the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023. The revised rules now reflect several principles we advocated for, including the importance of population surveys, community engagement and recognition of community dogs.

The image below demonstrates the process we follow for our dog management work.



Now, in 2026, our work is informed by over a decade of accumulated experience and shaped by risk mitigation, innovation and a consistent prioritisation of both dog welfare and human well-being in every decision we make. As a result of our journey so far, three principles have become non-negotiable for us:

- Our firm stance against dog relocation.
- Our commitment to complete transparency (any partner is welcome to observe, question or visit our programmes).
- Our consistent engagement of and messaging to communities on dynamics that foster peaceful coexistence between humans and street dogs.

These are not principles we arrived at easily. They emerged from years of working through difficult conditions, navigating competing pressures, and learning, sometimes the hard way, what it actually takes to create lasting change. Working in alignment with these values has generated growing demand for knowledge sharing across India's animal welfare movement. Our focus going forward is on building sector-wide capacity for quality animal birth control and community engagement, alongside improving conditions for owned pets and ending the most harmful practices still in use.



Dog management programme in India:

Phases of development

Phase I: 2013–2016.

Building a high-welfare / high-volume model

This phase of our work was driven by our intent to build a dog management programme which conducted high-volume animal birth control humanely and scientifically. While we were successful in building a programme of this nature, this process also revealed that surgery and vaccination alone would not help achieve more peaceful coexistence. It was in this phase that we realised that engaging communities and the media was not optional; it was essential to the programme's legitimacy and longevity. The seeds of what would become our integrated model were planted in these early years.

Phase II: 2016–2018.

Streamlining processes

This phase involved critically questioning, streamlining programme processes and operational systems, actively listening to communities and the willingness to try new ideas. We sharpened our understanding of the gaps in our processes, particularly relating to our interactions with communities, media and other partners. Community engagement shifted from instinct to strategy, deliberately designed to support and complement the animal birth control work. Longer-term planning was prioritized and, with it, genuine investment in the welfare and professional development of our teams. Sustained focus on these aspects through this phase led to meaningful improvements in animal welfare outcomes, greater stability for field teams and more rigorous monitoring.

Phase III: 2018–2023.

Integration and impact

This phase marked a turning point for our programme. Animal birth control and community engagement, previously complementary but distinct, began functioning as a single, unified programme. The results were significant. Complaints and calls from citizens about street dogs (ranging from barking to more serious issues such as biting or rabies) and requests for sterilisation and vaccinations became entry points into communities rather than obstacles; these interactions brought support from new partners such as feeders and volunteers. It was during these years that we refined our process of finding participatory solutions to conflicts between humans and community dogs. We started to see slow but unmistakable shifts across our project locations: people were willing to talk, to volunteer, to engage.

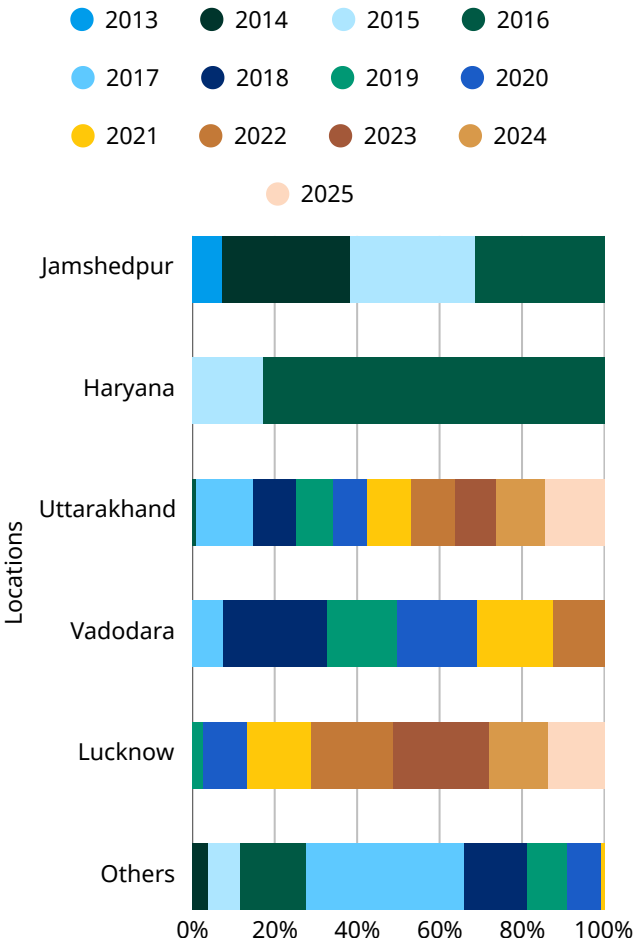


Community engagement team member addressing community concerns

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, for all its disruption, opened up an unexpected opportunity. Supporting communities in their relationships with street animals—through compassionate feeding programmes and direct engagement with online training programmes—deepened trust among residents, local governments and our teams in ways that might have taken years of conventional outreach to achieve.

The practical knowledge accumulated across this period directly shaped national policy. Our on-the-ground experience became the basis for our substantive contributions to the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023. And in 2022, our first-ever strategic programme exit from Vadodara created a new space for two important considerations: (a) what long-term sustainability for animal birth control in India should look like, and (b) how governments can use high-volume spay/neuter as a resource-efficient tool to manage street dog population growth over time.

Year-on-year spay/neuter numbers



Phase IV: 2024-present. Building for the future

This phase has been focused on consolidation and extension. We have built teams with genuine, well-rounded expertise across all aspects of street dog population management and community engagement. Our priority now is to ensure that this expertise does not remain confined to this organisation alone. Capacity building across the wider animal welfare movement is our defining ambition for the years to come.

We recognise that this will require constructive, sustained engagement with communities, governments, media and other external collaborators. It will entail bringing data, field stories and hard-won experience into public discourse in credible, compelling ways. It will also mean embracing new research opportunities to expand our understanding of the full ecosystem, including the largely unaddressed welfare challenges facing owned dogs and cats. This phase is about extending what we have learned to those who need it most.

The next two sections dive deeper into the specifics of programmes that have shaped our work over the years.



Team member collecting data on street dogs for our research study with the University of Sydney



Early lessons: Jamshedpur and Haryana

The programmes in Jamshedpur and Haryana laid the foundation for the current animal birth control model followed at Humane World. Together, they explored a central question: Could animal birth control be delivered at scale without compromising animal welfare? Both programmes demonstrated that it could and, in doing so, established practices and standards that would shape and drive all subsequent work.

Jamshedpur (2013-2016): Introducing and institutionalising hand-catching

Launched in April 2013, the Jamshedpur project was a partnership between Humane World for Animals (formerly known as Humane Society International), the Animal Health Foundation, TATA Trusts and the local civic authority Jamshedpur Utilities and Services Company. The programme began with a citywide dog population survey, which estimated approximately 25,000 free-roaming dogs across Greater Jamshedpur. Animal birth control targets were set at 18,000 sterilisations over three years (around 6,000 per year) to work toward the 70% coverage threshold considered necessary for effective dog population and rabies management by the World Health Organisation.

A key focus of our efforts from the outset was improving conventional dog-catching methods. Traditional approaches (net-catching, loop poles, tongs) were widely used across India but associated with negative welfare outcomes, causing stress and fear in animals. Hand-catching was pioneered by the Humane World team in Jamshedpur and involved animal welfare officers

approaching dogs calmly, offering treats and handling them gently, thus, reducing fear and risk of bites. The approach had a visible effect on how community members perceived street dogs. Those who already cared for them became more actively supportive of the programme, while those who had feared or avoided dogs responded with curiosity and, in time, greater openness. Over the course of the project, more than 70% of dogs brought into our facilities were caught by hand. The remaining 30% were brought in through net-catching.

“

Abhay Sankalp is the community engagement programme implemented alongside our animal birth control programmes. It engages with communities across cities, building awareness and capacity to create peaceful coexistence between people and street dogs. Abhay Sankalp, which translates to “resolution to live without fear”, was designed to address the mutual fear that exists between street dogs and urban communities in India.”

Dr Ashok Kumar
Manager, Street dog programme

Our community engagement approach also started to take shape in these early years. Animal welfare officers spoke with residents during both collection and release, sharing practical

guidance on dog behaviour and bite avoidance. Workshops on human-dog relationships and the role of dogs in urban life were held in schools and community settings. Jamshedpur also served as an early pilot for field data collection using Android devices to capture GPS locations, photographs and individual dog records—early versions of the more systematic data practices that would develop in subsequent years.

The project concluded in December 2016 with 19,447 sterilisations (approximately 80% of the estimated dog population) completed and was formally handed over to Jamshedpur Utilities and Services Company for continuation.



Team members of the Jamshedpur programme

Haryana (2014–2016): Building a high-volume/high-welfare model

Where Jamshedpur built and refined the model, Haryana tested what it could withstand at a much greater scale. Selected by the central government as the location for a large national pilot to demonstrate the viability of mass sterilisation and vaccinations, the programme was jointly implemented by the National Centre for Disease Control, the Animal Welfare Board of India, the Haryana State Government and Humane World for Animals India.

statewide dog population survey conducted between June and October 2014, the first of its kind in India, estimated 18 lakh free-roaming dogs across Haryana. The data-driven programme was formally launched in April 2015 with two key components: sterilisation and mass vaccination.

“

This programme taught us that sustainable impact in street dog welfare hinges on collaboration—with government, communities and within our own teams. Building internal strength and leveraging public resources is essential, but we must also acknowledge the immense effort and investment required to keep these programmes going.”

Dr Piyush Patel,
Manager, Street dog programme

The resources required to truly create impact in a single year were extensive. It included a team of 92 people—veterinarians and animal welfare officers—as well as seven vehicles to catch and return dogs. Through this effort, we were able to sterilise an average of 100 dogs and vaccinate an average of 1,000 dogs per day.

Working across rural Haryana brought its own set of challenges. Survey roadmapping required significant adaptations due to gaps in available satellite imagery, and the rural geography meant vaccination teams were in near-constant movement between villages—a logistical and physical demand that placed strain on staff over time. Despite these challenges, more than 90% of dogs were caught by hand throughout the programme, and GPS technology was used to return each dog to the precise location from which they had been collected. Individual records, including photographs, were maintained for every animal sterilised.

In the first year, teams covered:

- 601 villages across five districts (Bhiwani, Fatehabad, Jind, Sirsa and Hisar), vaccinating 74,014 and sterilising and vaccinating 18,550 dogs at the two centres.
- By the programme's close in December 2016, 40,067 dogs had been sterilised and vaccinated through the animal birth control centres, and 171,917 dogs vaccinated across rural areas of the district.

This makes it the largest animal birth control programme ever undertaken in India in such a short time span to date.



Team members setting up a vaccination camp on World Dog Lovers' Day in Haryana

The programme ended earlier than planned because of funding-related considerations. This was a significant setback, and it raised important questions about the conditions required for large-scale government partnerships to function reliably. The experience informed how subsequent programmes were structured, particularly in relation to resource planning, government coordination and the need for clear accountability on both sides.



Ongoing long-term programmes: Uttarakhand, Vadodara, Lucknow

The programmes in Uttarakhand and Vadodara represented a significant step forward in the maturation of Humane World's approach. Both moved beyond the foundational question of whether high-welfare, high-volume animal birth control was possible and into the more complex work of making it sustainable, including refining operational systems, building community relationships and developing the institutional partnerships that such programmes depend on.

Uttarakhand (2016–present): India's first statewide programme

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We have seen a visible change in public perception of stray dogs in Dehradun over the years. It is heartwarming to see people taking care of them. Today, over 90% of dogs brought in for animal birth control/anti-rabies vaccinations are caught by hand and with the help of community members.”

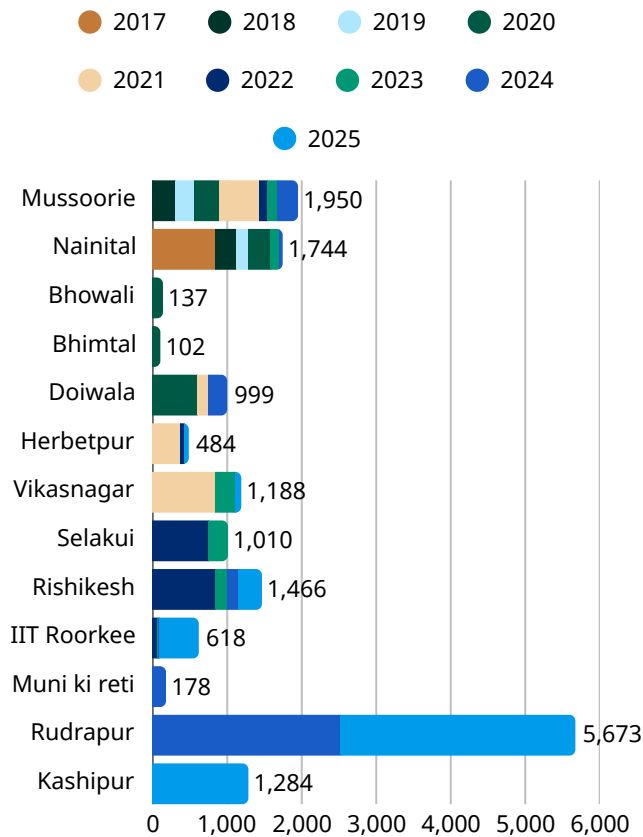
Sanjay Rawat
Assistant manager, animal care

Uttarakhand holds a singular place in India's animal birth control landscape as the only statewide street dog population management programme in the country. A key feature of this programme's design was the coordination between state government and municipal authorities, which allowed smaller towns to be served from Dehradun. This allowed a more efficient use of resources than a fully decentralised structure would have permitted. Humane World India was also selected as an expert organisation and formally empanelled with the State Animal Welfare Board.



Post-op care of dogs by team member

Uttarakhand year-wise spay/neuter numbers



Nainital

Humane World entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Nainital Nagar Palika Parishad in 2016, aiming to sterilise and vaccinate 70% of the street dog population. A baseline survey in October 2016 recorded approximately 770 dogs in the town. Within the first year, sterilisation coverage reached approximately 56%, rising to 100% by October 2020, reflecting both consistent operational delivery and close monitoring. This number fell however to 91% in 2021, which prompted a detailed review. The monitoring and evaluation team identified pet abandonment as a likely contributing factor, a finding with implications well beyond Nainital. For the first time in Humane World India's work, the abandonment of owned dogs was formally recognised as a meaningful contributor to street dog population dynamics and, by extension, to human-dog conflict more broadly.

The review also highlighted the geographic dimension of the challenge. In a town like Nainital, where free-roaming dogs can move relatively easily across administrative boundaries, sterilisation programmes that operate only within municipal limits will always face the risk of population replenishment from surrounding areas. Post-COVID data added a further nuance—female sterilisation rates dropped and the proportion of lactating female dogs increased after the pandemic, reinforcing the value of the female-centric approach to animal birth control that Humane World has long advocated for and research continues to support.

As of October 2023, the programme stands at 93% sterilisation coverage, with 1,744 dogs sterilised and vaccinated since 2017.

Rishikesh

The animal birth control and anti-rabies virus programme in Rishikesh began in June 2022 in response to rising street dog density and an increase in public complaints. The programme strategically focused on sterilising female dogs, achieving over 87.7% of female sterilisation coverage in 2025. The programme included sterilising 219 male dogs that came in through requests or complaints from the community, and in 2024, all male dogs across the city were given an anti-rabies vaccination. This programme saw a decline in the total density by 24.3% within three years.

Rudrapur

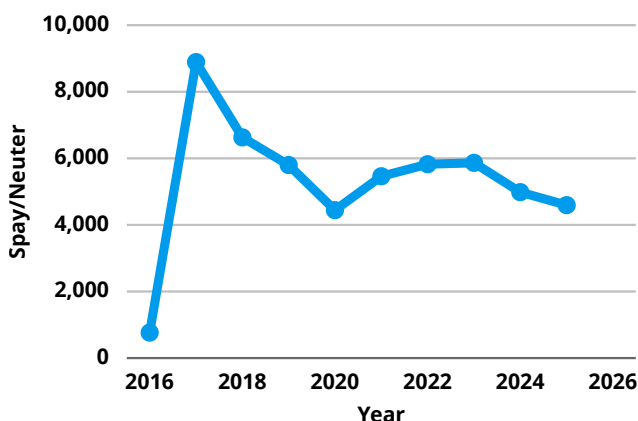
The Rudrapur programme began in December 2023 and achieved a 95.3% sterilisation rate (as surveyed by the government) in 2025, within just 19 months. Total programme sterilisation numbers as of December 2025 were 5,673. This programme was implemented by a team of six animal care officers and one veterinarian, demonstrating the potential of sterilising and vaccinating over 90% of street dogs in small towns by streamlining resources. There is potential for the Rudrapur facility to be used for surrounding towns, and that is being explored.

Dehradun

Humane World began working in Dehradun in October 2016. A baseline survey across the city's 60 wards at that time recorded a street dog population of 20,078. sterilisation and vaccination work began immediately, while a parallel education and awareness programme, initially run by only two members, was launched in 2017 to address human-dog conflict. The success of that early engagement work led to the formal launch of the Abhay Sankalp community engagement programme in September 2018, which is described in greater detail in the section on Vadodara below.

Dehradun has since expanded considerably. In 2020, 40 new wards were added to the Dehradun Municipal Corporation. Between October 2016 and December 2025, 53,259 dogs were sterilised and vaccinated in the city. As of October 2025, overall sterilisation coverage stands at 89%.

Dehradun year wise spay/neuter numbers



Vadodara (2017-present): Deepening community engagement

Humane World India first conducted a dog population survey for the Vadodara Municipal Corporation in 2014, which recorded approximately 46,018 street dogs in the city. When the Vadodara Municipal Corporation invited Humane World to implement animal birth control and anti-rabies vaccines in 2017, following the failure of a previous programme to deliver satisfactory results, we brought our scientific and welfare-centred approach to Vadodara.

Our team began sterilising and vaccinating dogs in Vadodara in July 2017 and achieved a nearly 70% sterilisation rate by May 2018. Yet, despite this progress, complaints from residents did not decline. Residents continued to report unprovoked attacks, dogs chasing vehicles, barking nuisances, cruelty incidents and broader concerns about dog overpopulation. This gap between sterilisation outcomes and community experience made clear that the programme needed a substantive community engagement dimension—not as a supplementary activity, but as a core component of the work.



Life-size snakes and ladders game for preschool children on World Stray Day

Before launching our community engagement work, we conducted a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices survey across a respondent base of 16 lakh people. The findings were profound: fewer than 40% of people sought medical treatment after a dog bite; only 44% had even heard of rabies; and most were unaware of its symptoms. Apart from that, over a quarter of respondents expressed a desire to eradicate dogs from the city. These results shaped the community engagement strategy that followed.

A dedicated community engagement team was established in 2018, initially handling responses to complaints received via the Vadodara Municipal Corporation helpline and Humane World India's own helpline, established in 2019. These interactions became an entry point into communities and an opportunity to listen, explain the purpose of animal birth control and begin building trust. From this foundation, the Abhay Sankalp programme was developed.

Abhay Sankalp, which translates from Hindi as a **“resolution to live without fear”**, was designed to address the mutual fear that characterises much of the relationship between street dogs and urban communities in India. The programme was built around the idea that meaningful, lasting change in relationships requires the active participation of communities themselves. Through the Abhay Sankalp programme, the community engagement team conducted meetings with residents, held dog behaviour workshops, and raised awareness of animal welfare laws and guidelines.

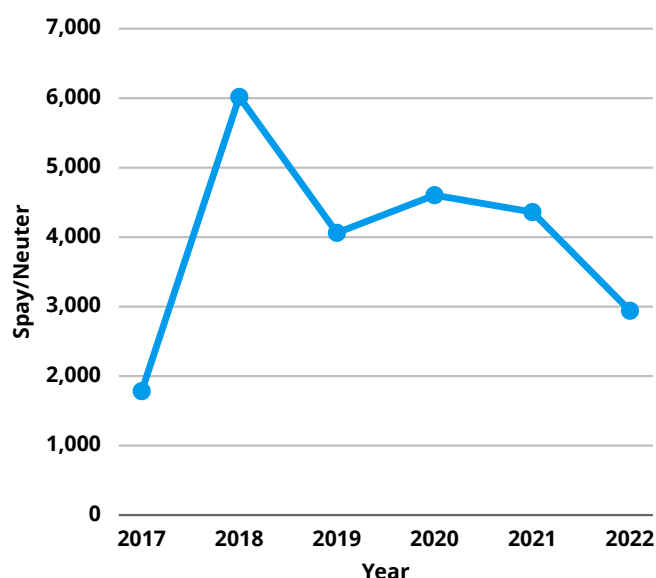
Programme closure and transition

By September 2022, our team had sterilised and vaccinated 87% of Vadodara's street dogs. Humane World and the Vadodara Municipal Corporation jointly decided to close the animal birth control programme in Vadodara, marking Humane World's first strategic exit from an animal birth control programme in India.

The closure of the sterilisation programme by Humane World did not mark the end of our involvement in Vadodara. Our community engagement team has continued to support the Vadodara Municipal Corporation in building the community infrastructure needed to sustain outcomes and pave the way for a full handover to local government, expected in 2027. This phase of the work—consolidating gains and transferring ownership to communities—has in and of itself become an important part of the model, informing how future programmes design exit strategies to sustain the gains.

Humane World's continued community engagement in Vadodara has led to innovative efforts such as a new community-wide animal welfare directory and a fun and engaging version of the Slides and Ladders game in a life-size format, which is used to reinforce positive messaging on human-dog interaction, rabies prevention and dog behaviour training in over 100 *anganwadis* (government-run preschool centres).

Vadodara year wise spay/neuter numbers



Lucknow (2017-present):
Fine-tuning systems to reduce human-dog conflict

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When I joined Humane World in 2019, I initially understood that our work focused on sterilisation and vaccination. As I delved deeper into the work, I realized that alongside sterilisation, raising awareness among people is equally crucial. The root of the problem lies not with the dogs but with the fear people harbour toward them, often ingrained since childhood. This fear leads to cruelty toward animals. When people understand how to coexist safely and learn that their actions contribute to dog aggression, we can reduce cruelty and human-dog conflicts significantly. By addressing this fear from a young age, we can foster empathy toward dogs. In my experience, awareness among residents is as vital as animal birth control and anti-rabies vaccination efforts. Through this dual approach, I've seen communities develop a softer attitude toward dogs.”

Shruti Singh,
Community engagement officer

Humane World India began conducting spay/neuter work in Lucknow in 2019. A dog population survey conducted in December 2019 estimated the city's street dog population at 75,678, establishing the baseline against which the programme would be measured. The animal birth control facility was established in 2019, and despite the significant disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the team sterilised 10,641 dogs by the end of 2020.

Community engagement ran alongside the sterilisation programme from the start. Initial sessions were held on World Rabies Day in 2019, and the programme expanded steadily—adapting to virtual formats during the pandemic and reaching residents across 100 Abhay Sankalp societies (residential housing associations or neighbourhoods) registered with the organisation. By December 2023, the community engagement team had conducted 100 dog behaviour workshops with a range of collaborators across the city.

In 2022, the team played an active role in shaping state-level policy. Through sustained engagement with the Urban Development Department and the Animal Welfare Board of India, including multiple rounds of consultation and careful incorporation of field-level insights, the team helped finalise a statewide policy for street dog population management. The policy had two significant outcomes: additional funds were allocated to city corporations across Uttar Pradesh to run animal birth control programmes, and the Humane World Lucknow

facility was designated as an animal birth control training centre for implementing agencies across the state.

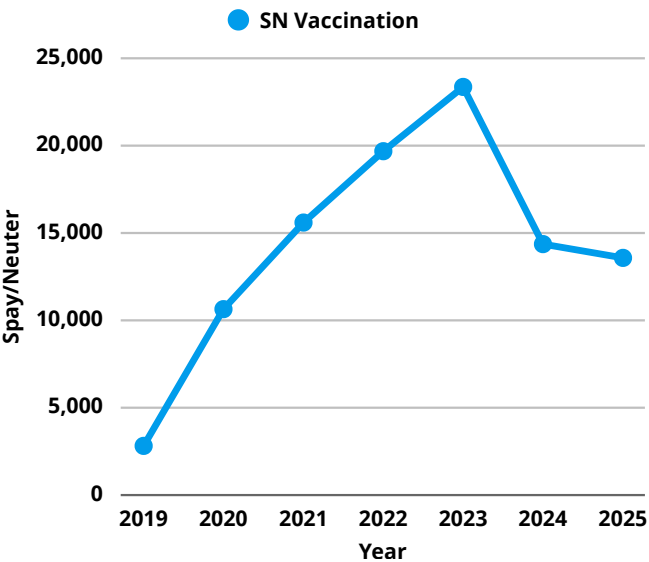


To improve animal welfare, the standard operating procedures were reviewed and revised, bringing in new protocols with gas anaesthesia and improved pain management for all dogs brought into the programme.

A No Relocation campaign was launched in Lucknow in 2024 in response to a surge in calls and complaints from residents demanding that dogs be moved from their areas. The campaign, which received the formal support of Lucknow Municipal Corporation officials through a public pledge, reinforced two of the programme's core principles: relocation is not a solution to human-dog conflict, and lasting change requires engagement rather than displacement.

As of December 2025, Humane World had sterilised over 1 lakh dogs across Lucknow and achieved a sterilisation rate of over 80%. In 2026, the programme in Lucknow expanded to reach even more wards. This achievement reflects both the challenge's scale in a city of Lucknow's size and the capacity of a dedicated team to meet the city's needs.

Lucknow year-wise spay/neuter numbers



Short-term programmes

Alongside its larger, multiyear programmes, Humane World has undertaken several shorter interventions, in collaboration with local administrations, including crisis responses, community-initiated projects and targeted sterilisation camps. Each of these projects has shaped our learning and expanded the reach of our work.

Location	Year	Highlights	
Bhuj	2016	A neighbourhood-initiated sterilisation of 50 dogs offered an early proof of concept for community-led dog management.	NA
Noida	2016-2017	4,162 dogs sterilised and vaccinated. Programme suspended due to inadequate partner infrastructure and payment defaults; reinforced the need to ensure reliable institutional partnership and adequate facilities before operations begin.	
Sitapur	2018	A rapid crisis response involving field assessment, advocacy to halt indiscriminate dog culling, and the sterilising and vaccinating of 302 dogs using hand-catching demonstrated both the value of on-ground presence in volatile situations and the persuasive power of humane handling in communities gripped by fear.	
Jamnagar	2018-2020	108 Abhay Sankalp societies enrolled; 200 active society representatives. 155 dogs sterilised across two camps. The programme closed due to absence of municipal partnership.	
Malappuram	2017	2,451 spay/neuter surgeries completed across Calicut University, Ponani, Manjeri, Kozhikode, Chungathara and Areekode. This programme was closed due to low dog numbers in the district and teams were unable to find more dogs for sterilisation.	
Kodaikanal	2017 and 2019	This programme had two phases of work, with a female-centric approach in the second phase. 377 sterilisations and 852 Anti-Rabies Vaccination in Phase II; 80.6% female sterilisation coverage achieved.	
Dindigul	2019-2020	1,202 sterilisations (1,118 female); 1,848 total vaccinations. 69.7% female sterilisation coverage; early decline in puppy population observed.	

In addition, we conducted projects in institutional campuses with great success. These were short-term projects lasting less than a year. They were taken up as requests from campus administrations for sterilisations or training. These programmes included training of security and maintenance staff, supporting the identification of feeding and watering spots away from canteen areas and hostels, and providing resource material to be posted around the campuses.

Campus	Year	sterilisation
IIT Roorkee	2012	105
ISB Hyderabad	2012	32
IIT Kanpur	2021	100
IIT Gandhinagar	2016	50
IIM Ahmedabad	2011	98
IOCL Vadodara	2021-2022	137
Art of Living	2012	78
IIFM Bhopal	2013	29
Let's Live Together Bangalore	2013	65
Fatehabad-Haryana	2013	600



Key learnings and programme expansion

This section recounts our key learnings from implementing animal birth control in India and how those learnings have shaped the scope and expansion of our work.

Community and media engagement for sustained impact

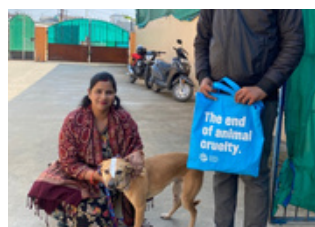
One of our earliest learnings was that community participation and media support are indispensable for effective animal birth control work. In our early years, when our street dog management teams were focused solely on sterilising, vaccinating and releasing dogs back to their communities, their efforts were consistently challenged and jeopardised by conflicts with community members.

On the one hand, there were the dog lovers and community caretakers who were suspicious of animal welfare organisations and burnt from prior experiences. On the other hand, our team faced contentious dealings with those who had negative perceptions or experiences with dogs. This group did not want dogs—whether they were sterilised and vaccinated or not—in their neighbourhoods at all and posed difficulties for our release team. Interactions with these groups often turned into conflicts between dog catching/release teams and the community, obstructing the implementation of effective animal birth control. It was through these repeated experiences that we learned how crucial community engagement was and began developing a comprehensive community engagement strategy.

Our community engagement programme, which is now an integral part of all our dog management work and what we now use to train other animal welfare organisations, has two main objectives:

- Reducing human-dog conflict.
- Increasing the number and percentage of community dogs brought in for sterilisation and vaccination by community members.

The programme is centred on Abhay Sankalp, i.e., a resolution to be free from fear, and focuses on increasing community participation in animal birth control by creating a sustainable network of local animal welfare resources and building local community capacity to serve as first responders to conflict and care. Core activities include educating the public about dog behaviour and sterilisation benefits, conducting vaccination drives, building volunteer capacity, and facilitating responsible feeding and watering practices. Currently, between 20-40% of the dogs brought in for sterilisation each month are brought in by community members, a clear indicator of the importance of this community volunteer role.



Street dog brought in for sterilisation by community members



Community engagement team member with an active volunteer of Humane World

An integral partner in creating systemic change is the media. Consciously and strategically, we engage with both social and traditional media, providing evidence-based stories of positive change and clear examples of our work's impact from the mouths of companion animal owners themselves. In addition, we supply multiple reliable data sources that demonstrate our impact and transparency, as well as the welcoming and inclusive policy at all of our facilities.

Across our programme cities, many of the calls we receive are not complaints at all, but requests for dog sterilisation and vaccination. In some cities, these requests make up over a quarter of all calls, while in others they account for nearly two-thirds.

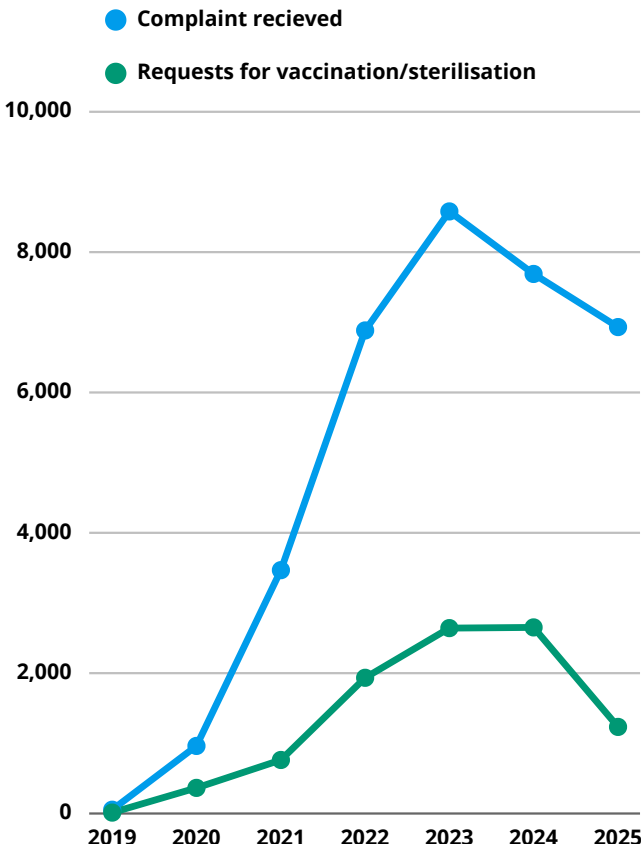
This reflects growing awareness of humane street dog management and increasing community participation in animal birth control efforts.



Community engagement team member addressing community concerns

Complaints trends for Lucknow

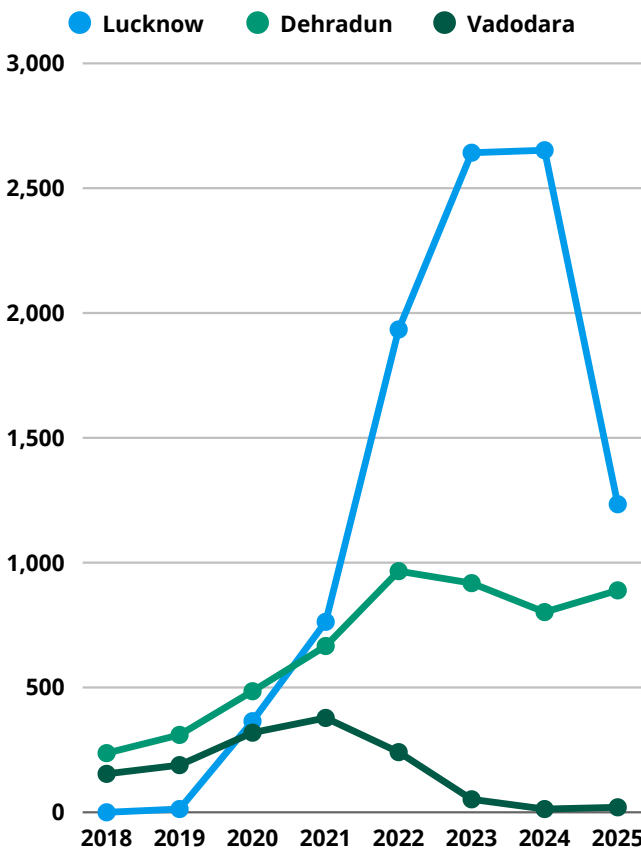
Total calls vs. sterilisation/vaccination request



Interestingly, a rise in complaints during the early years of a programme is often a sign of success. As people become aware that there is a responsive team they can reach out to, more residents begin reporting issues, seeking advice and requesting support. We observed this pattern in cities such as Dehradun, Lucknow and Vadodara, where complaints initially increased as community engagement improved.

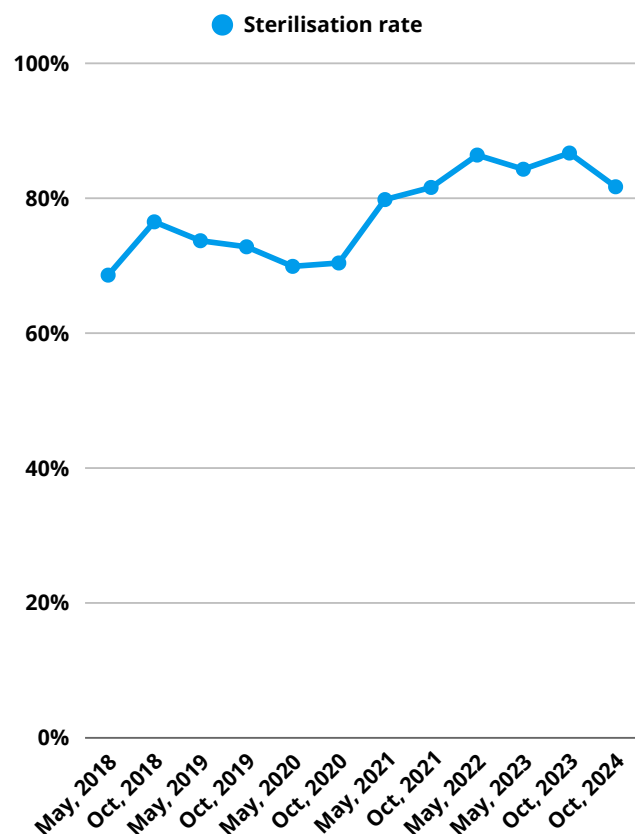
Sterilisation requests received overtime

Comparision between Lucknow, Dehradun and Vadodara

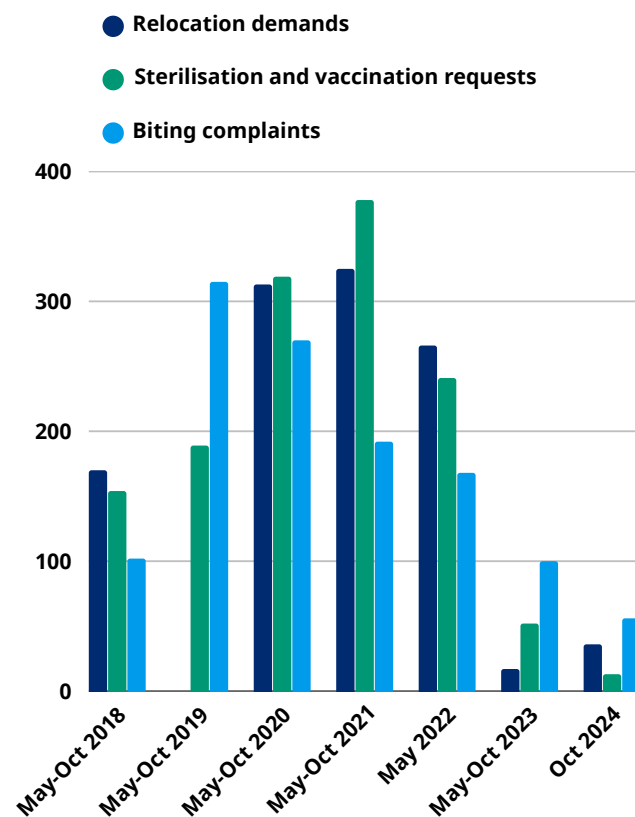


Over time, however, complaints begin to fall. In both Vadodara and Lucknow, total calls, biting complaints and relocation demands started declining once sterilisation rates crossed 80%. This suggests that high sterilisation coverage, combined with community education and support, helps reduce human-dog conflict and improve coexistence.

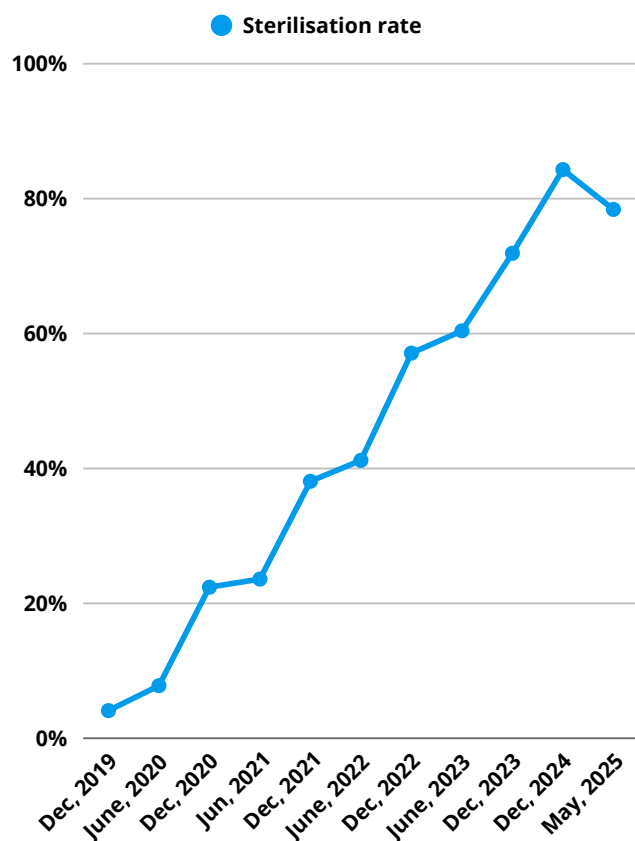
Vadodara sterilisation rate



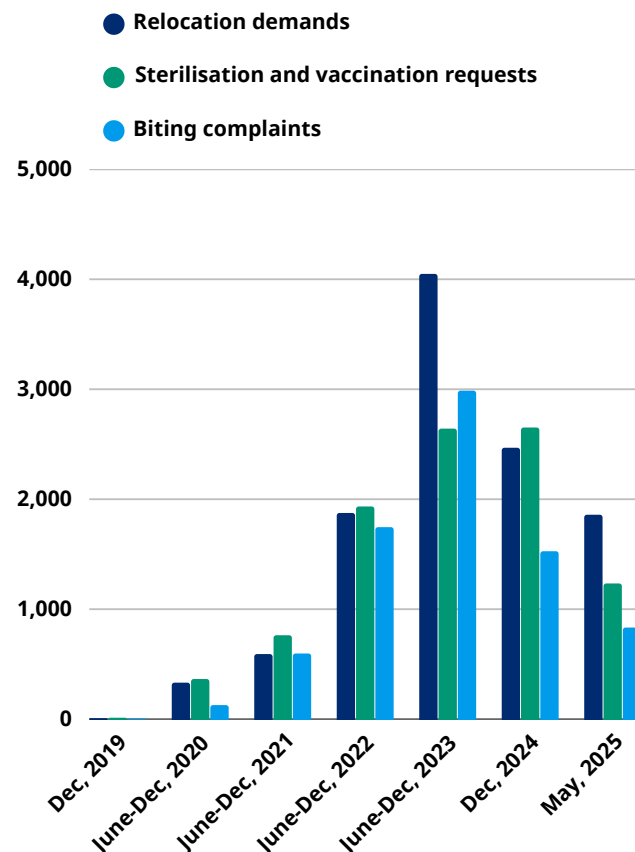
Vadodara relocation demands, sterilisation requests and biting complaints



Lucknow sterilisation rate

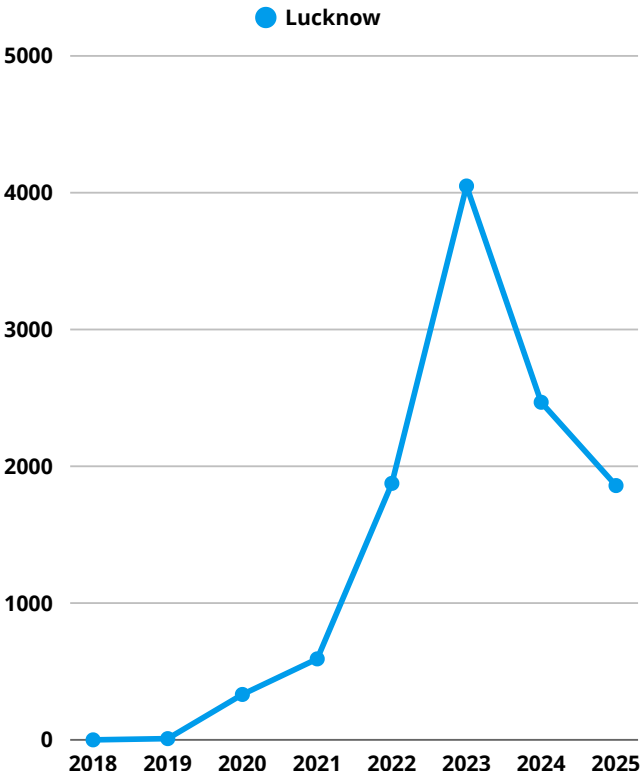


Lucknow relocation demands, sterilisation requests and biting complaints

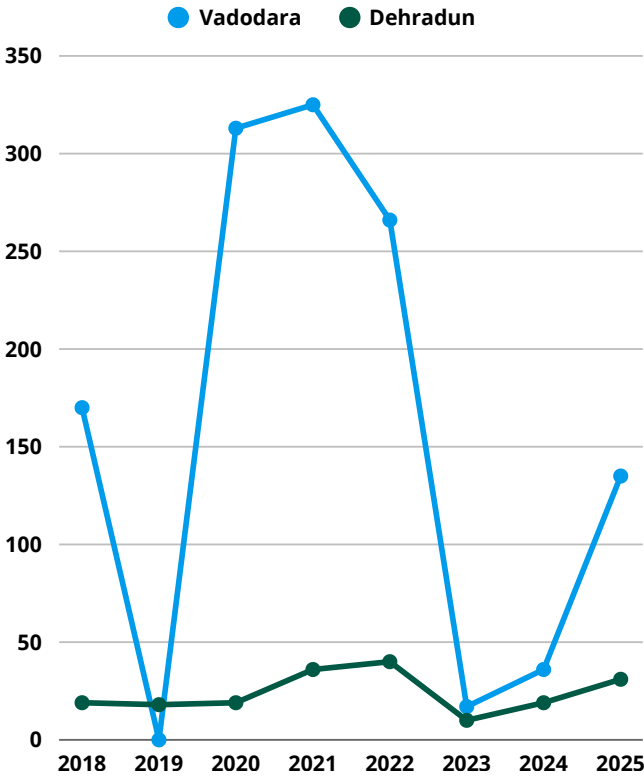


Relocation demands show a similar trend. They may increase initially as more people learn about the programme but generally decline over time as communities better understand dog behaviour, conflict management, Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, and the benefits of sterilisation and vaccination.

Lucknow: Relocation demands



Vadodara and Dehradun: Relocation demands



These experiences have shown us that community engagement is not an add-on to animal birth control work but rather essential to its long-term success. This form of engagement has helped highlight the role of both government and community members in the forward-looking compassionate vision of a world where all animals and humans live in harmony.

Accurate street dog population estimations and robust data collection

Another crucial lesson in our learning journey has been to track progress using robust data on street dog populations across animal birth control programmes. We realised early on that conducting baseline surveys and estimating the dog population in urban areas before initiating a new management programme is essential. A survey of this nature provides critical insights into the distribution of dogs, which helps in effective resource allocation, staff mobilisation, and setting both monthly and annual targets for sterilisation efforts. Understanding population dynamics also ensures that the programme achieves a meaningful impact by determining the number of dogs that need to be sterilised. Subsequent biannual surveys are similarly important, as they help us understand population trends and inform course correction if required.

Furthermore, we realised that collecting robust and reliable street dog population data requires tools such as apps and centralised databases. A well-maintained database ensures transparency and fosters trust among community members and government partners. Systematic data collection aids in tracking progress, assessing programme effectiveness and making informed decisions based on real-time insights. Digital records also help identify sterilised dogs, map high-density areas and forecast future intervention needs.

These realisations led us to develop a programme through which scientific dog population surveys are designed and implemented. By providing actionable insights and supporting evidence-based projects, the programme has integrated the following:

- **Data-driven insights:** Collecting and analysing data, which enables informed decision-making.
- **Scientific approach:** Using scientific methodologies to ensure credible and data-driven outcomes.
- **Technological innovation:** Developing tools such as Humane World Apps to facilitate efficient data collection and transparent reporting.

Over the years, the programme has expanded its reach to 30 cities, undertaking comprehensive research on street dogs in 17 cities and owned dogs in two cities, while also conducting dog population surveys alongside Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices surveys to gauge community perspectives.



Use of Humane World Apps for recording data of dogs picked up for sterilisation

Skill development and increasing welfare standards of ABC in India

Successful animal birth control is impossible without a skilled team of veterinarians, paraveterinarians, animal welfare officers and community volunteers. Building team members' skills is key to effective dog management. Dog catchers and veterinarians must have a thorough knowledge of standard operating procedures to ensure humane and efficient handling of animals. High welfare standards, with minimal post-operative complications, need to be a top priority. It is these learnings that led us to more formally develop our veterinary training and capacity building initiative in 2024.

While this work began modestly, with trainings delivered at the Jaipur Veterinary Training Centre in 2014, its scope soon started growing. In 2015, the team conducted its largest training to date and reached 112 veterinarians in collaboration with Blue Cross of Hyderabad. In 2015, in Uttarakhand, we trained 52 government veterinarians and a team of vets and animal handlers from the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. Since then, Humane World for Animals India has conducted training and capacity building for government and private veterinarians across India.



Inauguration of India's first Animal Birth Control training Centre

The veterinary training and capacity building programme has field-based initiatives designed to strengthen the capacity of veterinarians, paraveterinary professionals and dog-handling teams working in animal welfare organisations conducting animal birth control projects across India. Its focus is practical: improving the quality of spay/neuter surgeries and raising operational standards through hands-on training and structured field engagement.

Each training is tailored to the needs of the partner organisation or institution and covers anesthesia, surgical preparation, operative technique, post-operative care, data documentation, humane dog handling, kennel management and community engagement. Six organisations have received hands-on training as of March 2026.

In 2025, an historic shift began with the establishment of a physical training centre in Lucknow by the Lucknow Municipal Corporation, supported by state government and the Animal Welfare Board of India. This training centre is open to any veterinarian, para-vet or animal handler who wants to undertake full training on animal birth control. The first training was conducted in February 2026, with seven veterinarians successfully completing the training.

This programme reflects a conviction that has run through Humane World's work from its earliest days in Jamshedpur: the quality and humanity of animal birth control implementation depends, above all, on the skill, knowledge and values of the people delivering it. By investing in those people, the veterinary training and capacity building programme aims to raise standards across the wider sector and create more consistent, humane and effective street dog population management over the long term.

Place of training	Number of trainees	Participants	Year of training	Participant affiliation
Jaipur Veterinary Training Centre	100+	Veterinarians	2014-2016	From across India, and other countries in Africa and Asia.
Hyderabad	112	Veterinarians	2016	Held in collaboration with the Blue Cross of Hyderabad and the government of Telangana. All participants were government veterinarians.
Dehradun	48	Veterinarians	2017-2018	Uttarakhand government vets
Dehradun	4	Veterinarians	2018	From Royal Government of Bhutan, Bhutan
Dehradun	5	Animal welfare officers	2018	Uttarakhand Livestock Department
Dehradun	5	Animal welfare officers	2016	All 5 from Afghanistan; were trained in humane handling.
Vadodara	1	Veterinarians	2018	From Mozambique
Dehradun	8	Animal welfare officers	2023	From Royal Government of Bhutan, Bhutan
Dehradun	3, 10	3 Veterinarians; 10 animal welfare officers	2021	Indo-Tibetan Border Police
Thi Nguyen, Viet Nam	45	Veterinarians; vet students	December 2023	Made up of government veterinarians and final year students.
Ahmedabad	39	8 Veterinarians; 31 paraveterinarians/ animal handlers	April 2024	Jivdaya Charitable Trust, Ahmedabad
Thi Nguyen, Viet Nam	16	Government veterinarians	June 2024	Government of Viet Nam

Place of training	Number of trainees	Participants	Year of training	Participant affiliation
Manali	9	1 Veterinarian; 8 paraveterinarians/ animal handlers	July 2024	Manali Stray Animal Program
Dong Nai, Viet Nam	15	Government veterinarians	December 2024	
Dharamshala	9	1 Veterinarian; 8 paraveterinarians/ animal handlers	January 2025	Dharamshala Animal Rescue Trust
North Goa	14	1 Veterinarian; 13 paraveterinarians/ animal handlers	February 2025	Alpha Angels for Animals, North Goa.
Lucknow Animal Birth Control Facility	1	Veterinarian	April 2025	People For Animals, Calcutta.
Lucknow Animal Birth Control Facility	1	Veterinarian	September 2025	Pople For Animals, Calcutta.
Guwahati	6	2 Veterinarians; 4 paraveterinarians/ animal handlers	2025	Just Be Friendly, Guwahati
Bengaluru	21	2 Veterinarians; 19 paraveterinarians and animal handlers	December 2025	Spandana Animal Welfare Organisation, Bengaluru
Lucknow Training Centre	7	Veterinarians	February 2026	
Bengaluru	21	3 Veterinarians, 18 paraveterinarians and animal handlers	March 2026	Sarvodaya Sevakshahi Samstha, Bengaluru
Lucknow Training Centre	21	6 Veterinarians, 3 paraveterinarians; 12 animal handlers	April 2026	

Seven organisations have received training at their facilities on the holistic animal birth control process, community engagement, and Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, and compliances since 2024.

These organisations are: Jeevdaya Charitable Trust, Ahmedabad; Dharamsala Animal Rescue, Dharamsala; Manali Strays; Alpha Angels Trust, Goa; Just Be Friendly, Guwahati; Spandana Animal Welfare Organisation; and Sarvodaya Sevakshahi Samsthan, Bangalore.

Collaborations with government and other animal welfare organisations

As the scope of our work expanded across India, we learned that establishing strong working relationships with government partners and local animal welfare organisations is crucial to the success of animal birth control work. These partnerships facilitate smoother programme implementation, optimize resource utilization and enhance operational efficiency. A symbiotic relationship with partners allows for the sharing of knowledge, infrastructure and financial resources, ultimately saving significant energy and costs. Collaboration with over 20 municipal corporations, veterinary departments and non-governmental organisations ensures that efforts are aligned with regulatory requirements and best practices.



Training in collaboration with Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation for vets and animal welfare organisations

Adherence to Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, and regulations



Team members weighing a dog before sterilisation

Strict adherence to the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, is necessary to create a lasting impact. Following each guideline and protocol ensures ethical and effective implementation of sterilisation programmes. Regular monitoring and supervision by designated committees, including organ verification teams and the State Animal Welfare Board, help maintain programme integrity and compliance with regulatory standards. Detailed reporting and audits also contribute to accountability and continuous quality improvement. Providing regular refresher trainings to teams that implement animal birth control is essential to maintaining high-quality animal welfare standards and adherence to the most humane protocols and compliances.



The team

Abhinandan Kumar Jha, Abhishek Kumar Pandey, Aditi Bardia, Aditya Mohan Gupta, Ajay Rana, Ajit Kisve, Akanksha Mukherjee, Akash Kumar, Alka Singh, Alpesh Dave, Aman Khurana, Anil Kumar, Anisha Iyer, Anju Murali, Anubhav Khajuria, Arti Rawat, Ashish Mistry, Ashok Kumar, Ashok Kumar Gupta, Ashok Verma, Badal Singh, Bhumi Khandhar, Bhuwan Chandra, Bimmy Painuly, Chandershaker, Chandrika Singh Yadav, Changdi Ram, Chirag Patel, Col. Harsh Deep Sharma, Dalia Jacob, David Kumar Das, Deepak Bisht, Deepak Kumar, Deepak kKmar S/O rampal, Deepu Rawat, Dev Prakash Yadav, Devnath Das, Dhruv Gurjar, Dinesh Prasad Gupta, Divyanshi Pandey, Dr. Hemanth, Eva Veroeveren, Faizan Jalil, Gabbar Singh, Hari Sahay Rawat, Harishanker Singh, Harishanker SIngh, Harshad Solanki, Harshita Mittal, Hemant Gupta, Hosiyar Singh, Jaswant Cherwal, Jigar Jasani, Jyoti Rawat, Kamal Kishor, Kamlesh Adiwasi, Keren Nazareth, Kiran Singh Kirmoliya, Krishan Kumar, Kuldeep Singh, Kumar Manish, Lalit Kumar Khatik, Lallu, Mahantesh Channammanavar, Mahendra Singh Yadav, Mahendrapal, Malleshwari, Mandeep Kumar, Manish Pande, Manish Parmar, Manjit Kumar Yadav, Manoranjan Kumar, Mehar Chand, Meghana Kotak, Mishi Aggarwal, Mukesh Bhyan, Mukesh Kini M A, Narendra Bhatt, Naresh Kumar, Neeraj Kumar, Neeraj Periwai, Nidhi Avinash, Nimavat Kaushik Kumar, Niteshkumar Vasava, Onkar Nath Upadhyay, Pankaj Lal, Pankaj Singh Rawat, Pappu Chandra, Pappu Rawat, Parul Dholakia, Parvinder Singh, Pawan Kumar, Piyush Patel, Pooja Bhatt, Pooja Parmar, Prakash Thakor, Pratima Mehta, Praveen Suresh, Preeti Menon, Puneet Kumar Mishra, Rahul Lakhani, Rahul Raj, Rahul Sehgal, Rahul Yadav, Raj Deep Yadav, Rajdeep Yadav, Rajdipsinh Gandadal Rathod, Rajeev Kumar, Rajendra Singh, Rajesh Pandey, Rajesh Ramotar, Rakesh Raushan, Ramesh, Ramesh Bajantri, Ranjeet Kumar Singh, Ravi Das, Ravi Kumar, Ravi Mishra, Richa Singh, Ritesh Kagra, Robert Tigga, Rohit Bhawar, Sachin Kumar Yadav, Sally Varma, Sampat Singh, Sanjay Kumar Ahir, Sanjay Kumar Jilowa, Sanjay Rawat, Sanjeet Kumar, Sanjit Kumar, Santosh Jadhav, Santosh Kumar, Sapna Sachan, Satish, Satish Kumar, Satish Kumar S/O Premshankar Singh, Satish S/O Rameshkumar, Satyanarayan Choudhary, Saurabh Kumar, Saurav Kumar, Shaili Shah, Shankar Kushwaha, Sharda Prasad Tiwari, Shashank Kumar Dubey, Shikha Subhash Jain, Shiv Kumar, Shiv Prakash Giri Goswami, Shivanand Verma, Shivendra Pratap Singh, Shrikant Verma, Shruti Singh, Shyam Chandra, Siddharth Sharma, Simranjeet Singh, Sitaram, Sitaram S/O Dharampal, Subhash Chander S/O ramdas, Subhash Chandra, Suchitra Rawat, Sudeesh R, Sunny, Suraj Kumar, Surendra Kumar, Surendra Singh, Suresh Kumar, Suresh Kumar S/O Ramkumar, Suresh kumar S/O Ramswarup, Surja Ram, Surya Prakash Mishra, Tej Kumar, Tejovanth Anupoju, Tripti Pandey, Tulika Mehra, Uma Biswas, Umesh Chandra Yadav, Utkarsh Mishra, Valmiki Ashwinbhai Dahyabhai, Varalaxmi Madura, Vasava Dasrathbhai Jayantibhai, Vasava Mukeshbhai Maganbhai, Vijay Singh Mehla, Vikas Yadav, Vikash Kharab, Vineeta Poojary, Vinod, Vinod Kumar, Vishal Kumar, Vishal Kumar Maurya, Vrushti Mawani

Media



Reporting on the Sometimes Loved, Mostly Tolerated Street Dogs of India

- The New York Times



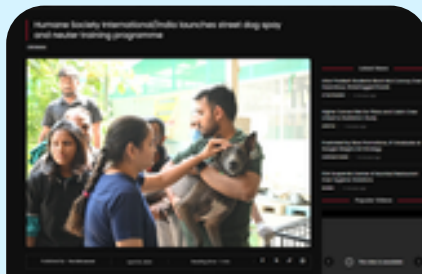
Focus on community dogs

- The Hindu



Veterinary Day: Veterinary training promotes humane, innovative street dog care

- India Today



Humane Society International/India launches street dog spay and neuter training programme

- The CSR Journal



Street dog sterilisation drive achieves target in Dehradun | Dehradun News

- Times of India



How Vadodara managed to sterilise 80% of its street dogs

- Citizen Matters



Curbing dog menace: 50,000 sterilisation surgeries of street dogs completed in Lucknow | Lucknow News

- The Indian Express



Stray Dogs: 70% of Stray Dogs sterilised and Vaccinated in Lucknow: LMC | Lucknow News

- Times of India

Annexures

Survey location	Survey type	Time period
Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	November 2010
Srinagar Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	September 2012
Jamshedpur Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	April 2013
Mumbai Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	January 2014
Haryana State	Street dog pupulation survey	May 2014
Vadodara Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	October 2014
Trivandrum Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	September 2014
Rural settlements around Corbett National Park	Street dog pupulation survey	May 2015
South Delhi Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	August 2016
Dehradun Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	October 2016
Mussoorie Nagar Nigam, Uttarakhand	Street dog pupulation survey	October 2016
Nainital Nagar Nigam, Uttarakhand	Street dog pupulation survey	October 2016
Noida Municipal Corporation	Street dog pupulation survey	December 2016
Kodaikanal Nagar Nigam	Owned dog population survey	June 2017
IIT Campus, Gandhinagar, Gujarat	Street dog pupulation survey	June 2017
Vadodara Municipal Corporation	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and owned dog population surveys	November 2017
Jamnagar Municipal Corporation	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and street dog population surveys	October 2017

Annexures

Survey Location	Survey type	Time period
Kalhaar Bungalows, Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and street dog population surveys	November 2017
Nainital Nagar Nigam, Uttarakhand	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and owned dog population surveys	July 2017
Mussoorie Nagar Nigam, Uttarakhand	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and owned dog population surveys	July 2017
Coimbatore Municipal Corporation	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and street dog population surveys	July 2018
Ranchi Municipal Corporation	Street dog population survey	December 2018
Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices and owned dog population surveys	June-August 2019
Bhimtal town and Bhowali town, Uttarakhand	Street dog population survey	July 2020
Doiwala town, Herbertpur town and Vikasnagar town, Uttarakhand	Street dog population survey	October 2020
Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation	Free-roaming dog population survey	March 2022
Rudrapur Municipal Corporation	Baseline street dog survey	January 2024
Rudrapur Municipal Corporation	Baseline Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Survey	March 2024
Mumbai Municipal Corporation	Free-roaming dog population survey	January 2024 June 2024
Rajkot Municipal Corporation	Free-roaming dog population survey	October 2024



**Humane World
for Animals™**

Formerly known as
Humane Society International India

Our mission

Together, we tackle the root causes of animal cruelty and suffering to create permanent change.

Humane World for Animals India, formerly Humane Society International India, is making India a better place for animals through direct care programs, policy change, capacity-building and humane education.

We are one of India's largest not-for-profit animal protection organisations and one of the only groups that works to protect all animals. We are a global organisation with a footprint in more than 50 countries, and we believe animal welfare is the key to creating a more humane world, one that's free from violence and discrimination.