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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **The donkey hide trade in East Africa has reached unprecedented levels: Hundreds of thousands of donkeys may die.**

Lexington, KY – July 9, 2019 -- Donkeys across East Africa are being slaughtered for their hides to meet an ever-increasing demand for “Ejiao”, which is used in traditional Chinese medicine and beauty products. Ejiao is made from the gelatin produced from donkey hides.

The treatment of donkeys in this process is often gruesome and has a huge impact on the livelihoods of people in the geographic areas funded by Brooke USA. Donkeys are being stolen, horrifically mistreated and cruelly slaughtered—sometimes in the brush or street just outside their owners’ property. The current rate of theft, smuggling and slaughter in East Africa with Kenya at the epicenter has the potential to kill more than 1,000 donkeys every single day.

Not only are donkeys suffering and being killed at an unprecedented rate, but the loss of a donkey is crushing for the people who depend on these animals to survive. Families that lose a donkey can suffer colossal damage. By losing a donkey, many lose access to water, to earning money, to the ability to send their children to school, to putting food on the table—all setbacks that can plunge an already poor family even deeper into poverty.

Last year alone, 360,000 donkeys in Kenya were slaughtered for their skins. Over 90,000 donkeys were stolen from people who depend on them for daily life and to make a living. At this rate, donkeys will vanish from the African continent by 2023. Emily Dulin, Executive Director of Brooke USA stated, “we must do something—we must ban the trade of donkey



skins, crack down on smuggling, and protect these donkeys.” Brooke USA is supporting its sister organization Brooke in its call to public action by advocating for changes in local and national laws, protecting the innocent donkey owners, and safeguarding the donkeys. Brooke, already has a team working on the ground in Kenya.

Brooke USA is addressing this crisis by raising \$100,000, of which part of the goal is \$25,000 exclusively online at [www.donkeyhidecrisis.org](http://www.donkeyhidecrisis.org). To this end, the entire month of July is dedicated to this cause with posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Brooke USA is also asking friends and supporters to share the posts as many times as possible to garner attention for the impending crisis.

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*Headquartered in Lexington KY and with a satellite office in Wellington, FL, Brooke USA's mission is to significantly improve the welfare of working horses, donkeys and mules and the people they serve throughout Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Americas and the Caribbean by raising funds and responsibly directing them to the areas of greatest need.*

*We do this through a holistic approach to funding which includes capacity building, sustainability programming, female empowerment and international advocacy. Brooke USA connects private philanthropists with their passion for helping relieve the suffering of working equines and their owners.*

*For more information about Brooke USA, please visit [www.BrookeUSA.org](http://www.BrookeUSA.org).*

**Note to the Editor:** Due to graphic nature of the photography, Brooke USA has made a choice not to share photos. You may request photos at [Kendall.Bierer@BrookeUSA.org](mailto:Kendall.Bierer@BrookeUSA.org).