

## UPDATE FROM THE FIELD:



**Safe Haven  
for Donkeys**

From:  
Dr Rakan Salous,  
Nablus Rescue Centre

New arrival:	Clara
Age:	20 years old
Brief description:	Severely neglected donkey in desperate need of teeth and hooves treatment

Clara arrived at our clinic about a month ago. She is around 20 years old, and presented with extremely overgrown hooves that I assessed would require months of treatment.

We let her settle in our clinic while she got some rest. Clara is exhausted. For the past 17 years, she has been chained in front of the feeder or in the backyard, where she ate grass or bushes.

Our professional farriers Nour and Wael put together a plan to help her. This involves taking her hooves down to the right level in managed stages. Clara received the first hoof trimming two weeks ago. She is doing very well, but she needs a few more trimming treatments to reach the ideal level.

Sadly, Clara's hooves were just part of the problem. She also had a very poor appetite. This is because her teeth were in such poor condition, sharp points that were rubbing against the inside of her mouth. I think she has been in great pain for a long while, which has clearly affected her attitude to food. I've now rasped her teeth and everything is well inside her mouth. She will still need some encouragement with her eating as she understandably remains cautious about chewing.

I'm trying to address that by walking her near our clinic every day and letting her eat some dry hay and a little green grass (which she is used to from her previous owner). She is improving with oral vitamins and appetite stimulants but she needs time to adapt to our hay and grains.

An additional problem is that in all the years she spent with her owner, she was never in the same space as another donkey. So she cannot cope with other animals beside her. We are working on that issue by socialising Clara with some of our calmer donkeys. The aim is to find Clara another animal with whom she can bond, which in turn will make her feel happier and more at ease with the herd.

I'm delighted to report that she is making great progress. It's proof that however old a donkey is, they are always worth caring for.

Dr Rakan Salous