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**PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY GOZO SPCA 7<sup>th</sup> MAY 2008:  
GOZO SPCA INUNDATED WITH ABANDONED KITTENS AND PUPPIES**

During the past few weeks Gozo SPCA has been inundated with kittens and puppies (mainly kittens). Centre Manager Betty Berry says that the personnel at the Centre are sickened by the horrendous dumping of young, often new born kittens and puppies. Monday was a record day for the Society, although one they would prefer not to remember, when 20 animals were brought to the Rehoming Centre in the space of 10 hours. Kittens which were abandoned were variously picked up at Ta 'Pinu, Ghadira ta 'Sarraflu, Qala and outside the Gozo SPCA Centre. Puppies were dumped in a box in the public gardens.

It should be emphasised that all of these were tame domestic animals, used to being handled; all were hungry and thirsty, in varying stages of dehydration.

During the previous weeks kittens have been found near recycling bins, in skips and perhaps worst of all, put out in sacks for the garbage truck to die an agonising death in the jaws of the compactor. These are God's creatures with as much right to life as any one of us; this callous disregard for life is appalling – how can anyone be so cold hearted and indifferent to the suffering of these poor animals?

It is not only the kittens that suffer, one can only imagine the distress of the nursing mothers, whose kittens are snatched from them even before their eyes are open – the endless searching for their offspring and the discomfort and risk to health of mothers in full lactation with no kittens now to suckle.

This is all so unnecessary – if people don't want their dogs and cats to have puppies and kittens for goodness sake why don't they have their pets neutered? Gozo SPCA has been helping people with assisted neutering for many years. The Society is doing all it can to prevent these unwanted births, through education, example (all animals rehomed by Gozo SPCA are neutered) and helping with the cost of the operation. Anyone who thinks that it is 'unnatural' to neuter animals should also realise it is even more unnatural to throw those unwanted babies in the garbage!

It must be said that the situation is just as bad in Malta, with SPCA Malta also inundated with kittens and puppies.

