

Colophon

Contributions

Ab Emmerzaal
Chalachew Niguse
Marjolein Munsterman
Raymond Briscoe
Ria Heuckeroth
Susan Chadima

Photos

Mutasha Safi: cover, p2/3, 4, 6, 10, 14
DCA-VET monitor: p 12
Zia Formuly: p 15
Momena Mohammadi: p 17
Erick Gerstner: p 18

Final editing

Marjolein Munsterman
Ria Heuckeroth
Susan Chadima

Lay-out and production Dutch edition

Defero
Ermelo, the Netherlands
www.defero.nl

Production Afghan edition

Daimon Hallmark Group
Kabul, Afghanistan
www.dhgroup.af

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Looking back

For DCA-VET, 2013 was a remarkable year. The Board assigned more organizational responsibilities to our Kabul office, a new Strategic Plan was drafted, and we had to wait longer than expected for the start of new projects, which fortunately came through by the end of 2013 and the start of 2014.

Changes in management

In the first months of 2013, DCA-VET made an important step towards further 'Afghanization' of the organization by assigning the responsibility for direct management of our projects to our country headquarters in Kabul. The Executive Director is now located in Kabul, assisted by a Program Director and a Financial Controller. These three key staff, together with the Program Manager, Head of Finance and Head of Administration make up the Core Management Team. The CMT serves as the primary planning and decision-making body for DCA-VET project preparation and implementation in Afghanistan. The DCA-VET Board holds end responsibility for the organization, with help of the staff at the former Headquarters in Holland, now renamed the 'Liaison and Support Office'. The Secretary General, also based in Holland, supports the programme in Afghanistan.

Funding challenges

2013 was a challenging year for DCA-VET in terms of funding as previous projects were completed, but there were delays in the awards of new projects. DCA-VET's financial reserves enabled the organization to carry on during this time, and with the support of our dedicated staff, work continued. The first of the expected projects was contracted in December 2013, and two more large contracts are coming through in the very beginning of 2014. So by the start of 2014 the challenging period fortunately will have come to an end.

Security

In 2013, as in previous years, the fragile security situation in Afghanistan has compelled DCA-VET to take measures, and to maintain a low profile. Fortunately, in the 25-year history of our work, there have been no serious incidents involving our staff. DCA-VET continues to take security concerns seriously, especially those associated with the national elections in 2014 and subsequent change of government. DCA-VET is working for all communities both urban and rural in almost all provinces of Afghanistan, sometimes under difficult circumstances. To help protect our staff, in 2013, the CMT in Afghanistan worked with a professional security firm to draft new security guidelines that will offer increased protection for our staff while enabling effective delivery of services.

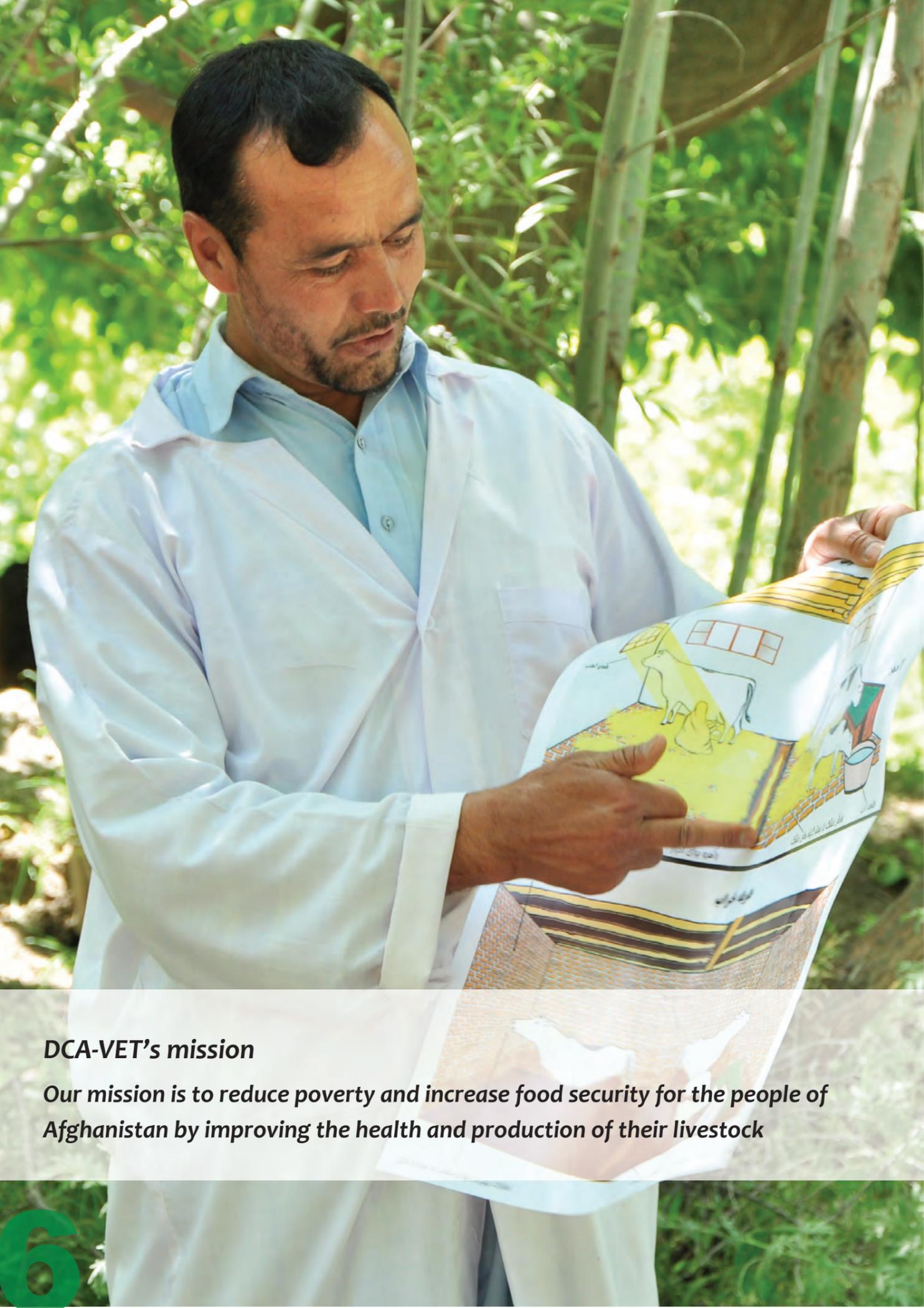
Veterinary Malumat Newsletter

Four years ago, DCA-VET published the first Veterinary Malumat Newsletter, providing news and updated information on animal health and animal production issues to VFU staff throughout the country. Since then, the Magazine, funded by the EU, has been published on a quarterly basis, an important contribution for the continuous improvement of knowledge about animal health and production topics.

Successfully starting up new projects

Thanks to the success of the just completed EU livestock project, DCA-VET was rewarded a new and follow-up EU project for the next four years. At the same time the IFAD funded RMLSP project, coordinated and managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), was extended by two years with an additional budget of US\$ 1.5 million. In the beginning of 2014, these projects will be followed by a new IFAD project on livestock development among Kuchi, and a subcontract under the USAID funded RADP project in the south of the country. All projects are implemented in good cooperation with MAIL, and thanks to this project portfolio DCA-VET will be working in most provinces of Afghanistan. In 2014 therefore there will be a lot of work to do!

Ab Emmerzaal, Secretary General



DCA-VET's mission

Our mission is to reduce poverty and increase food security for the people of Afghanistan by improving the health and production of their livestock

Our expertise

During the 25 years that DCA-VET has worked in the field of animal health services in Afghanistan, it has become a renowned, professional, effective, and highly respected development organization. Projects implemented by DCA-VET have significantly improved the food security and income of many Afghan livestock owners.

Our focus: Afghan livestock owners

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a Human Development Index ranking of 175 out of 186 countries. More than one out of three people are living on less than the official poverty line with income below US\$ 1.25 per day. The vast majority of the poor (84%) live in rural areas, and are highly dependent on agriculture and livestock. Knowledge of animal husbandry and healthcare among the Afghan population is limited. Therefore, targeted livestock health and production interventions can greatly enhance the health and productivity of livestock, and thereby the living conditions of all livestock owners.

Our approach: build a solid animal health delivery system within the framework of MAIL

DCA-VET strives to build an easily accessible, private veterinary system for the livestock farmers of Afghanistan. Our approach has been refined over the years, but is still based on the four pillars established 25 years ago: training of veterinary service providers, support of veterinary field units, quality supply of vaccines and medicines, and outreach to the farmers. Over the years, DCA-VET has established and supported some 500 veterinary field units (VFUs) in 26 provinces (76% of the country). Some of these VFUs are run by DVMs (Doctors of Veterinary Medicine), but many of them are operated by paravets, trained by DCA-VET.

Through quality training and refresher courses, paravets are capable of diagnosing most of the important common livestock diseases, treating the animals effectively, and preventing the spread of contagious diseases through timely vaccination and reporting to MAIL (Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock). Especially during the first years of operation, the VFU staff can count on technical support from DCA-VET, providing them all necessary equipment. Monthly facilitation and advisory visits are part of the support, as are regular refresher courses. Ultimately, VFUs become self-sufficient and are able to serve the livestock farmers without any material assistance by DCA-VET.

During the years, outreach – awareness campaigns and extension training – has become an increasingly important element of DCA-VET's approach. DCA-VET develops special extension packages and organizes outreach training for farmers, teaching them best practices for the optimal care of their animals, and making them aware of all benefits VFUs have to offer them. Quality vaccines and medicines provided to VFUs by VetServ, an independent veterinary supply business, originally created under the DCA-VET umbrella, is but one example of the significant difference DCA-VET programmes make.

New concepts: 'Value Chain' and 'One Health'

In recent years, DCA-VET has introduced new concepts and emphasis within its projects to provide greater impact. Value chain development emphasizes adding value to animal products through increased production, improved and hygienic harvesting of animal products, and linking farmers and their products to traders and markets. Milk, cashmere, wool, pelts, eggs, and meat are examples of value chain products that DCA-VET has worked with to help farmers improve their incomes.

UN Human Development report 2013

National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/08

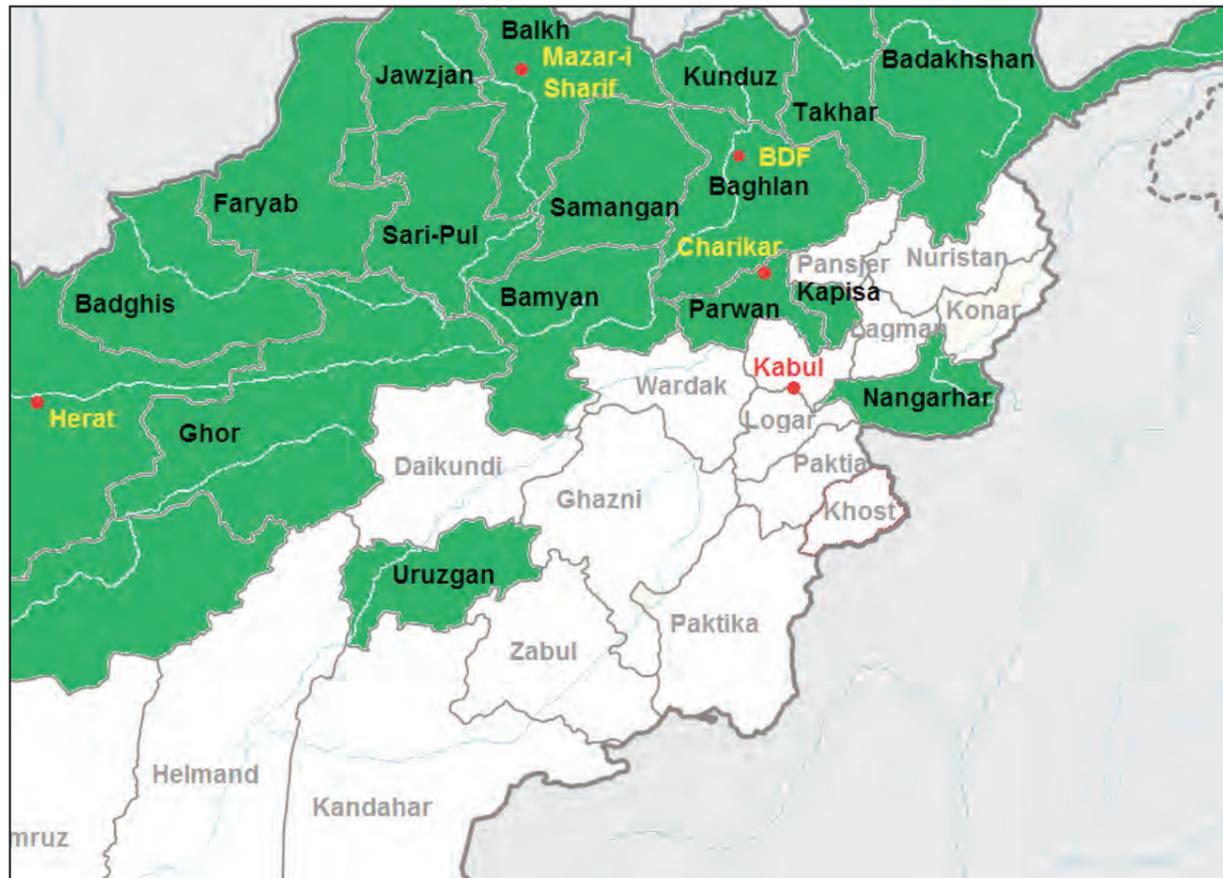
One Health refers to the connections and important relationships between animal health, human health, and environmental health. Increased knowledge by livestock owners helps safeguard the public from animal transmitted diseases.

Projects in 2013

During the 25 years that DCA-VET has worked in the field of animal health services in Afghanistan, it has become a renown, professional, effective, and highly respected development organization. Projects implemented by DCA-VET have significantly improved the food security and income of many Afghan livestock owners.

DCA-VET, active in over half of Afghanistan

As in previous years, in 2013 DCA-VET project activities covered more than half of Afghanistan, comprising 20 out of 34 provinces, 198 out of 398 districts, and almost 2400 villages. All western, northern, and most of the central provinces were included in the DCA-VET programme, ranging from Herat in the west, Badakhshan in the north-east, to Bamyan in the centre. As DCA-VET has many years of experience in this part of the country, it can rely on its expertise here and continue to develop a coherent and effective system for animal health – the VFU network. DCA-VET continues to work towards nationwide support of VFUs so that all livestock owners in the country have access to professional care for their animals.



Our projects in 2013

The DCA-VET project portfolio of 2013 consisted of 12 projects, both large and small, funded by several international donors. Most projects focused on our core area of expertise: animal health and production, value chain development, and outreach/extension. Some of the projects had a narrower focus, like the GIZ BAP project, which specifically targeted dairy extension and production, thus supporting the Baghlan Dairy Factory, which was initially started by DCA-VET, but now is an independent business. The three large, long-term projects successfully completed in 2013, were DCU2, EU, and IDEA-NEW.

Project overview 2013

Donor	Programme	Project	Region	Months in 2013
EU		Animal health	West	11
IFAD / MAIL	RMLSP	Veterinary services	North-East	12
USAID / ACDI/VOCA	IDEA-NEW	Livestock production	North	11
The Brooke UK		Equine health	5 provinces	12
USDA	AAEP	Livestock extension	3 provinces	12
GIZ	BAP	Dairy	Baghlan	12
USAID / DAI	IDEA-NEW	Livestock extension	Badghis	9
JICA		Livestock development	Bamyan	11
Royal Netherlands Embassy	DCU2	Veterinary services	Uruzgan	3
World Bank / MAIL	NHLP Poultry	Poultry (Bagram / Charikar)	Parwan	3
French Embassy	Pole de Stabilité	Livestock chain assessment	Kapisa	2
World Bank / MAIL	HLP	Veterinary services	National	1

DCU2 project: scaling up veterinary services under insecure conditions

From 2008 onwards, DCA-VET operated as part of the Dutch Consortium of Uruzgan (five Dutch NGOs) to improve animal health services in Uruzgan. In this volatile and insecure province DCA-VET managed to establish 17 VFUs, serving almost 80% of resident farmers and nomadic Kuchi population. A VetServ store now provides quality vaccines and medicines to VFU staff and farmers. To enhance the sustainability of animal health services beyond the DCU2 project, a Uruzgan VFU Cooperative has been established for mutual cooperation and support of the veterinary service providers.

EU project: addressing public health as well as animal health

The final year of the EU project focused on raising awareness; all four DCA-VET extension packages were disseminated to VFU staff and farmers. Four new, neighbouring provinces (Faryab, Kapisa, Parwan and Sar-e-Pul) were added to the project, and refresher training and technical support have strengthened the 77 VFUs in these provinces. In the EU project, much attention was paid to implementing a One Health approach. By awareness raising and vaccination campaigns, DCA-VET reduced the spread of rabies as well as of CCHF, a tick-borne disease.

IDEA-NEW project: moving a step forward in the Karakul value chain

As in the EU project, outreach to farmers was a primary focus of the IDEA-NEW project. Over 100,000 farmers received training on different topics of livestock extension. And the results were dramatic: farmer awareness on the need for vaccinations and best feeding practices increased from 64% to 97%, leading to an increase in the lambing rate from 79 to 91%! Special attention was given to extension for women, resulting in 530 women entering the livestock sector, enabling them to earn their own incomes and contribute to their family's livelihoods. To the benefit of owners of Karakul sheep, a new method of drying of Karakul skins was developed, building on an innovative method used in Namibia. This method produces clean and shiny pelts without wrinkles, which can be sold at a higher price than that received for traditionally dried pelts.



494 VFUs and 170 BVWs
Reaching 1.27 million farmers
Gross sales US\$ 3.65 million

Building the VFU network

Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) and their staff are the backbone of the animal health network in Afghanistan. Well-trained and fully equipped, they effectively provide veterinary services and extension training to the rural Afghan farmers, so they are able to increase the animals' productivity.

Supporting the existing network

In 2013, DCA-VET relied on the previously developed network of VFUs in its coverage area of 20 provinces. Therefore, only 19 new paravets needed to be trained, to fill the gaps in the network or replace retired staff. This year, we supported 494 VFUs and 170 Basic Veterinary Workers (BVWs). As each VFU can support 2500 livestock farmers, and each BVW 200 households, 1,270,000 farmers had access to affordable, quality veterinary services. To support the VFU staff, and ensure the quality of the work, each VFU is monthly visited by a DCA-VET monitor. This monitor gathers monthly vaccination and medication data for the project's records, gives technical advice, introduces new training topics and methods, and checks if all equipment are in working order.

Expanding VFU services

Although the development of a network of VFUs has greatly increased access to veterinary services, livestock productivity in Afghanistan is still low. The principal causes are inadequate winter nutrition, poor herd management and inefficient harvesting of products such as wool and cashmere. The next step in building a viable animal health network and improving animal production, is to expand VFU services to tackle these challenges. To this end, VFU staff received refresher training in extension, nutrition, good practices in herd health management, the cashmere value chain, and artificial insemination. In total 410 refresher courses were provided to VFU staff to enhance their knowledge and skills to the benefit of their clients, at the same time increasing their own income. In 2013, gross sales of the 494 VFUs amounted to US\$ 3,649,373, i.e. US\$ 7387 per VFU.

Powerful tools to raise awareness

During the past years, outreach activities by DCA-VET have reached a new and professional level. To support VFU staff and extension workers, several 'Herd Health Packages' were developed: on small ruminants, large ruminants, poultry, and for female farmers. This year, a new extension package was created, the 'Veterinary Public Health Package' (VPH). This VPH package focuses on awareness of zoonotic diseases (those diseases able to be transmitted from animals to people), proper disease prevention, hygiene in handling animals, and safety in food preparation. It was developed in close participation with several ministries, Kabul University, provincial public health and veterinary officers, as well as with the target population. Target beneficiaries include livestock farmers, traders of livestock products, slaughters and butchers, and Afghan consumers. This One Health approach, improving animal as well as human health, so successfully implemented in the EU project during 2013, will gain more importance in the coming years as part of DCA-VET's overall strategy.

Working closely with government

To achieve an efficient national animal health network, close coordination with both local and national government is essential. VFU staff are the eyes and ears for the provincial veterinary authorities as they are the first to recognize outbreaks of contagious diseases. They assist the government in controlling these diseases by reporting every outbreak, collecting tissue samples for diagnostic purposes, and implementing vaccination campaigns to bring the outbreaks to a halt. Another element of the cooperation between DCA-VET and the government is mutual learning. Many of the refresher courses for paravets are also of interest to public veterinary staff. In 2013, 87 public veterinary officers joined the DCA-VET refresher courses to build their capacity.

Baquir Ali – Paravet

“Self sufficient and providing services to livestock owners”

Baquir Ali was 21 years old, and had been facing a future without prospects because his family’s financial constraints had forced him to leave school two years earlier. Being the eldest son in a family of eleven people, his father had been ill for many years, and the family was struggling for basic economic subsistence.

As an individual with promise and committed to his community, he was selected for DCA-VET’s 6-month paravet training course with input from his village and the RMLSP project. After successfully graduating from the course, he returned to his remote village near Band-e-Amir, to establish his own VFU.

DCA-VET provided the initial setup for Baquir Ali’s VFU, including a solar refrigerator for proper cold chain storage of vaccines, and a motorbike to be able to visit farmers and livestock owners. He now works with the farmers in his community to provide vaccination, deworming and other treatments to their sheep and goats as well as other animals.

The fodder cutting machines provided through RMLSP help the farmers to make silage for additional animal feed, thus supporting Baquir Ali’s efforts to improve livestock health and production. In addition to treating animals, Baquir Ali also has responsibilities for providing extension training to groups of farmers.

Baquir Ali is now a respected and successful paravet. He earns a monthly income of 10,000 Afs, and his VFU is economically self-sustaining. He is now able to support his family, and buy necessary medicine for his father. He is also helping the farmers in his community to improve their livelihoods. Thanks to his increased knowledge and skills, he has been able to improve his family’s own small piece of land to grow high quality alfalfa. The proceeds from the alfalfa harvest allow him to further invest in the VFU to expand its services in addition to providing economic support for the family.

In two years he has moved from having no obvious future, to having an economically and socially important position in his village providing positive impacts for all of the farmers in the area.

Improving farmers’ lives

Over the years, DCA-VET has developed a series of effective services to improve the lives of Afghan livestock owners. Among these services ranges quality animal health care, outreach of good herd health practices, developing of feed banks, and establishing value chains for animal products.

Raising healthy animals

In 2013, many permanent farmers as well as nomadic Kuchi livestock owners in the DCA-VET working area visited the VFU in their village or region for advice, vaccination, or diagnosis and treatment of their livestock. This year, VFU staff in the DCA-VET region performed 6,938,484 vaccinations and 4,216,182 treatments to improve the health and productivity of local livestock.

Spreading good animal health practices

Among the Afghan livestock owners, knowledge and skills of animal husbandry are still weak, hence animal production is low. Community outreach by VFU staff and special extension workers, and the use of the herd health extension packages, is helping to mitigate this problem. In 2013, 104,551 farmers (84,383 male and 20,168 female) participated in extension training sessions, some of them being single sessions discussing just one topic, others consisting of monthly courses and dealing with a complete extension package. 2250 farmers participated in on farm demonstration sessions on animal housing and learned how to build a hygienic animal barn, which provides natural ventilation and daylight. The farmers also learned the importance for their animals to have dry bedding, fresh water and adequate food.

Creating feed banks for the hungry herds

Lack of feed, especially in wintertime, is a major challenge for many livestock owners. To assist in providing adequate winter feed supplies, DCA-VET established several feed banks in its working area and promoted the production and timely selling of quality forage, to be stored in the feed banks till wintertime. At the same time, the participants of the feed bank were trained on how to compose a balanced diet for each animal species. To the poorest farmers, those who cannot afford to participate in a feed bank, winter feed was distributed directly.

Encouraging farmers to become producers

In the 1970s, Afghanistan had significant exports of animal fibre products, like carpets and skin garments. But thirty years of war and a succession of drought years reduced livestock economy severely. DCA-VET is working hard to restore value chains of animal fibres and skins as well as other profitable animal products. In the IDEA-NEW project, 1300 cashmere goat farmers were trained on proper cashmere harvesting and linked to the main cashmere trader in the region. In that same project, some 1770 karakul sheep farmers were trained in the Namibian pelt drying method to produce a high quality product. In the GIZ Dairy project (BAP), seven milk collection centres were established facilitating 200 farmers to deliver their milk to the Baghlan Dairy Factory. Farmer cooperatives were developed to manage these centres. Thus, by improving the quality of animal products, by organising the livestock owners, and by linking them to a trustworthy trader, DCA-VET supported many farmers to increase their income.

Beneficiaries

In 2013, a large part of the rural population of Afghanistan benefitted directly, or indirectly, from DCA-VET projects and activities. An estimated 1,270,000 households had access to veterinary services. Over 105,000 farmers, male and female, received various levels of extension training support. On top of these numbers, several millions of Afghan farmers benefitted indirectly by DCA-VET projects. Indirect benefits to the rural population included access to advice on animal health and herd management topics, which were broadcasted by radio, or transmitted by word of mouth, farmer to farmer, from directly trained beneficiaries.





Feed banks for livestock

“Providing animal food and creating business models for farmers”

Shortages of animal food during the winter season are a major challenge faced by farmers in many parts of Afghanistan. A hard winter with limited feed has devastating impact on farmers’ herds. As part of its mission to enable farmers to improve their own herds and the livestock sector, DCA-VET has been pioneering the creation of feed banks through its projects.

The Okhuwat Agriculture and Livestock Cooperative Feed Bank was started two years ago under DCA-VET’s RMLSP (Rural Microfinance Livestock Support Program) in Baghlan Province, and continues to operate successfully today. The farmers in this area recognized the problems of proper feeding during the winter, and organized themselves as a Cooperative with 91 members, properly registered with MAIL. DCA-VET provided assistance to help build the feed bank and initially stock it with 11,900 kg of cotton seed cake for animal feed.

In addition to providing feed for animals, business training has been provided to the Cooperative and Feed Bank members to support them becoming sustainable and financially successful. Animal feed is purchased in bulk when prices are low, and stored to be resold when needed by the farmers. This allows them to use market conditions to the Cooperative’s advantage. Members pay a small percentage on top of the base price, and a higher percentage is charged to non-members to create a revolving fund. In addition to providing winter feed, the Cooperative and Feed Bank is now able to purchase and sell other agricultural products such as fertilizer.

Following the initial establishment of the feed banks, DCA-VET provides technical and logistical support, and monitors their successes and challenges. This ongoing facilitation and evaluation also helps DCA-VET to develop the best working models for new feed banks in other regions of the country based on local needs and conditions.



6.9 million animals vaccinated
4.2 million livestock treated
105,000 farmers participated in extension sessions

Empowering women

Women in Afghanistan play a very important, but frequently unrecognized, role in the country's livestock sector. DCA-VET recognizes the critical contribution made by women, and DCA-VET programmes and projects incorporate women at every level, in addition to developing specific methods and materials for increasing their capacity and outputs.

Gender inequality and constraints

Women face many cultural constraints and have high levels of illiteracy. Adequate education is a challenge for the entire country, but only 5.8% of women complete a secondary level of education compared to 34% of men. Women have primary responsibility for all tasks associated with the care of their families, but also a primary role in the care of the family's animals and livestock. It is with women's roles in animal husbandry and production of animal products that DCA-VET has some of its greatest impact – for improved animal health and production and for women themselves.

DCA-VET approach

Within the cultural context, DCA-VET tries to involve women as much as possible in its project activities. Approximately 25% of DCA-VET professional and support staff is female who work with equal responsibilities and for equal pay as their male counterparts. The female staff are involved at all levels of project development and implementation and serve as both role models and directly as trainers and facilitators for DCA-VET projects at the provincial, district, and village levels. Of the six extension packages that DCA-VET has developed, one of them is 'The Role of Women in Livestock Health and Production', which is specifically used for training women at the field level in the care of their animals. The newly developed extension package on 'Veterinary Public Health' is another important training tool.

Women-to-women training

DCA-VET women trainers, field monitors, extension officers and workers, paravets and LFEWs (volunteer livestock female extension workers) are all components in DCA-VET's overall approach. Female paravets work with both male and female animal owners, while female extension workers interact specifically with women's groups. Women readily embrace their new knowledge and apply new techniques and approaches directly to their own animals and farms.

Empowered outcomes

Rural Afghan women – individually, and as part of women's self help groups – are benefitting from DCA-VET's activities and realizing health, economic and social gains as they gain knowledge and increased control over their own lives, and provide greater inputs for their families. Some women's backyard poultry flocks have expanded to small commercial operations. Women's groups have formed cooperatives to increase the marketing of their dairy products. Quality and quantity of milk and quroot (dried cheese) production have increased. Improved harvesting of cashmere has benefitted owners of goats. Better knowledge about the care of pregnant and newborn animals has increased birth and survival rates. The incidence of animal diseases has been reduced, and health for women, their families, and their livestock have all improved.

As women gain confidence, knowledge and input into family finances, the overall livelihood for families increases, their children are more likely to gain higher levels of education, and the future becomes brighter for all.

DCA-VET will continue to listen to women's needs associated with the livestock sector, and respond with effective approaches to meet both those needs and those of the entire community to build for a brighter future.

Female extension workers

“Serving others through extension and outreach”

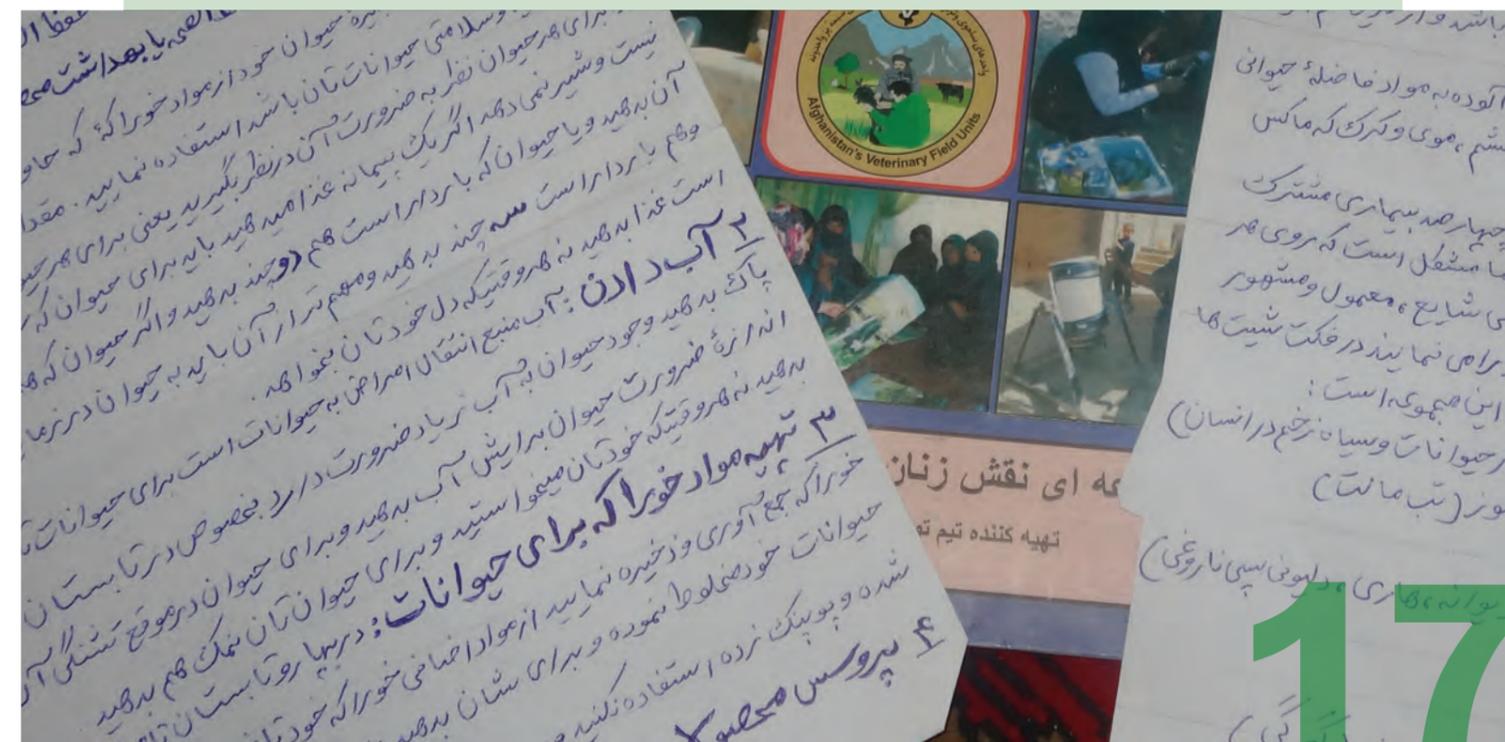
Livestock Female Extension Workers are the result of a unique and innovative programme that DCA-VET created which is proving extremely successful as an effective way of engaging with women and their role in the livestock sector. Initiated in Herat, and quickly expanded to eight provinces, DCA-VET now has over 200 LFEWs doing volunteer work as valued providers of extension training and support for women's groups through all DCA-VET projects.

LFEWs are women who give of their own time to serve their villages and communities to bring education and training about livestock topics to other women. Coming from a variety of backgrounds, LFEWs receive training from DCA-VET about extension messages for farmers on household hygiene, and safe production and handling of animal products. Training provided by DCA-VET includes courses and workshops on Veterinary Public Health, Poultry, the Role of Women in Animal Health and Production, and more.

Ms. G. G. is from a village in Herat province and has been working as an LFEW for two years. She is a teacher, but holds regular meetings with the ladies in her village, and also passes extension and hygiene messages to the students in her school. She has a special interest in zoonotic diseases, and uses the DCA-VET materials to teach women how to protect themselves and their families from diseases that can be passed from animals to people.

On her own, G. G. has translated many of the messages from Dari to Pashto, and she writes and copies these by hand so they can be shared with her Pashto speaking neighbours. She writes other messages by hand in Dari, and sends them to neighbouring villages, even if she is not able to go there. G.G. feels that her work is making a difference, especially for hygiene of animal products, and this is important for human health, and she says that she loves to serve people through extension and outreach.

Providing education, supporting women's groups and linking animal owners to veterinary services from VFUs, LFEWs are an important component of the animal healthcare network.





5.4% of Afghan women completed secondary education
25% of DCA-VET staff are women

Organization

With a 25-year history, and a dedicated and well-trained national staff of 144 Afghans, DCA-VET has an established track record in Afghanistan for the successful implementation of animal health activities to improve the well-being of rural livestock owners. Having its roots in the Netherlands, project management is centred in Kabul, while DCA-VET is governed by a committed and experienced Dutch Board, and supported by a small liaison office.

Foundation

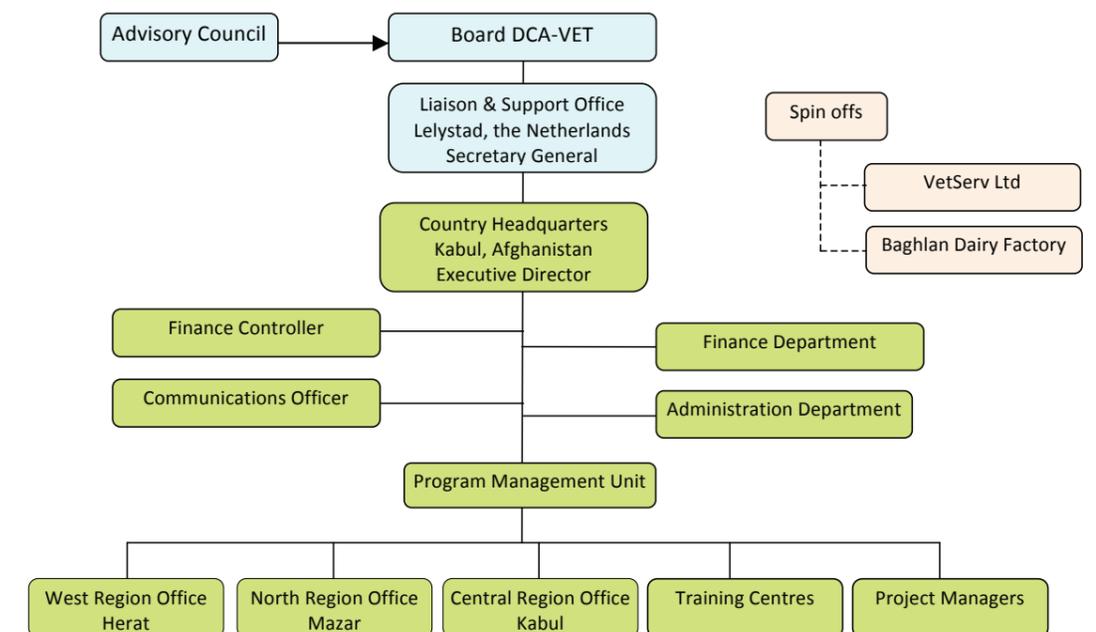
After the Russian invasion in Afghanistan in 1979, a group of Dutch volunteers, caring about the plight of the Afghan people, commenced organizing humanitarian support for Afghanistan. In 1988, this group changed its focus to veterinary projects, realizing that improving health and production of the Afghan livestock is a sustainable approach to help the rural Afghan population out of poverty. In 1994, DCA-VET's status was formalized by registration as a foundation at the Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands. In Afghanistan, DCA-VET has been registered as the INGO DCA since 2005.

Our staff

In 2013, DCA-VET employed about 144 staff in Afghanistan, 98% of them being Afghan nationals. Among them are expert veterinarians, trainers, extension specialists, as well as support staff. 25% of the local staff are women, working at all levels in the organization. Four expats are part of this staff, one of them being our Executive Director, Dr. Raymond Briscoe. Most of the staff is based in our main office in Kabul, or in the regional offices in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif. Our primary training centre is located in Charikar, north of Kabul. In Holland, a small liaison office in Lelystad houses the part-time Secretary General, being the liaison between the Board and the Executive Director, as well as two part-time staff members.

Board and Advisory Council

The Dutch DCA-VET Board holds final responsibility for operational activities and overall policy. The Board, consisting of three veterinarians, and a financial expert, meets monthly. Additionally, an Advisory Council of four experts on animal production, livestock, agricultural development economics, and international development supports DCA-VET. The Advisory Council meets twice a year with the Board.



finances

DCA-VET's projects are funded by a diverse group of major international donors including the EU, IFAD, USAID, the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) and others. This broad base of funding reflects the quality of DCA-VET programmes, the effectiveness with which they are implemented, and the impact they are having in Afghanistan.

The dynamics of our project portfolio

During 2013, several large projects reached their successful completion such as the RNE funded DCU project in Uruzgan. The ACDI/VOCA project funded by USAID received a 3-month extension, and that project was also fully completed in September. Another completed project, the EU project, was followed up with a new contract for a second phase (EU II), which will expand the area covered to sixteen provinces for an additional four years. At the end of 2013, the IFAD funded RMLSP (Rural Microfinance Livestock Support) project was extended for an additional two years, and two other large, multiple year projects were about to be granted.

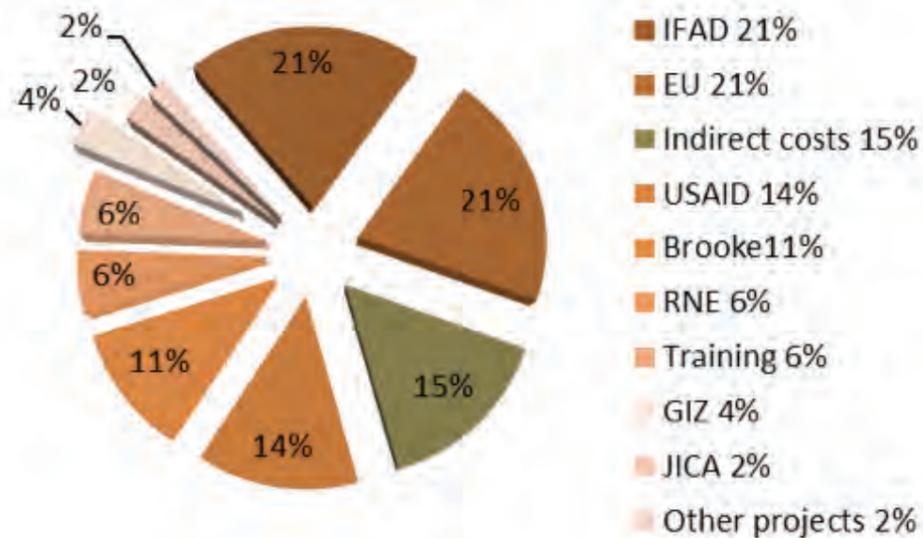
Well-considered bridging

Being a year of transition between completing projects and the start of new ones, DCA-VET did face some interim cash flow challenges. Costs were reduced, and a much-appreciated short-term loan from Cordaid facilitated this bridging period, allowing DCA-VET to continue its work for farmers and VFUs while retaining key staff. With new projects secured, and improved financial controls in place, DCA-VET is looking forward to a fiscally sound future while continuing to deliver the quality of services that donors rely on.

Expenditures in 2013

DCA-VET's total expenditures in 2013 amounted to US\$ 4,289,629, from which 85% was spent on direct programme costs.

Expenditures DCA-VET 2013 in USD



Our strategy 2013-2017

In keeping with its 25-year commitment to rural Afghans and their country, and to continue to maximize the effectiveness of its approach, DCA-VET has developed a Strategic Plan for the next five years (2013-2017) to guide its programme and projects in order to achieve the goals of its vision and mission for the entire country.

Vision

DCA-VET believes in a future in which:

- All livestock owners in Afghanistan have access to veterinary care and livestock extension services through a nation-wide network of VFUs (Veterinary Field Units);
- The delivery of animal health care by VFUs is a sustainable business model, and VFU staff are able to deliver veterinary services without external funding;
- Private and public (regulatory) veterinary sectors

Strategic goals 2013 – 2017

1. **Create sustainable livestock production systems**
 - o Expansion of the VFU system nationwide
 - o Extension training for farmers
 - o Development and support for animal product based value chains
2. **Promote and support effective public-private partnerships in the livestock sector**
 - o Increased partnership with government and input for development of livestock policies
 - o Training of VFU staff in government sponsored programmes such as Sanitary Mandate Contracts (SMC) for animal disease control
 - o Ongoing capacity building training for government staff as well as private sector
3. **Support innovation, knowledge management and organizational learning**
 - o Delivery of the highest quality paravet training and extension services
 - o Effective and standardized monitoring and evaluation (M&E)
 - o Development of best practices models and guidelines
 - o Ongoing review and improvement of DCA-VET training curricula
4. **Promote gender equity**
 - o Commitment to gender awareness in the livestock sector
 - o Increased recognition and opportunities for women
 - o Effective embedding of gender equality and equity within programmes and staff
5. **Support environment and One Health**
 - o Promote awareness and knowledge of the interconnected relationships between Animal Health – Human Health – Environmental Health (One Health approach)
 - o Rangeland resources management
 - o Efficient use and management of animal waste for fuel and manure

Collaboration and partnerships

Fruitful cooperation with donors, NGOs and government is essential for successfully achieving these strategic goals. Donor funded projects (EU, IFAD, USAID, WB, JICA, GIZ, and others) provide opportunities to expand geographic support for VFUs and farmers. Collaboration with NGOs and other organizations working in animal health and production creates depth of services and a broader reach. Working with government builds regulatory capacity and develops sound policies for disease control and enhancement of the livestock sector.

2014 and beyond

While the world's attention is focused on the political and military situation in Afghanistan, and amid the uncertainty surrounding the 2014 presidential elections and western troop reduction, DCA-VET's work and commitment to the people and livestock of Afghanistan continues unabated.

Strategic future

In 2013, DCA-VET's core values and operating principles of quality programme implementation, technical expertise and working in partnership with communities and government, have been refined with the adoption of the new Strategic Plan and five specific strategic goals which provide the principles and framework within which DCA-VET will continue to operate. During the years, the VFU network has expanded, and is beginning to reach nationwide coverage. With increased numbers of veterinary professionals, DCA-VET is also able to expand and deepen its work of providing extension training to farmers, developing male and female groups, linking farmers to VFUs as well as markets, and working on value chain development for animal products.

New projects and new opportunities

DCA-VET has signed contracts with donors to implement three major new projects over the next several years:

- The 'Kuchi Project' sponsored by Afghanistan MAIL and funded by IFAD is a 6-year project focusing specifically on the nomadic and pastoralist Kuchi populations in three central provinces.
- EU – Phase II. This project builds on DCA-VET's successful completion of an initial EU project, has a four year timeline, and covers sixteen provinces in all regions of Afghanistan. This will help expand the DCA-VET supported VFU network into new provinces. An additional new opportunity is the creation of an Afghan Advisory Committee on livestock issues.
- RADP-S is a USAID funded project focused on the four southern provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan and Zabul for five years. DCA-VET will be establishing a regional training centre in Kandahar, and will establish up to 75 new VFUs in an area that has not received as much structured support for the livestock sector as the rest of the country.

These new projects, in addition to ongoing current ones, will allow DCA-VET to have an expanded presence in delivering quality veterinary health care services throughout the entire country. Increased access to quality medicines and vaccines, to professional veterinary services, and to herd health knowledge through extension training, will enable Afghan farmers to improve their family's livelihoods.

Partnerships and support for government

DCA-VET works closely with Afghan government and public sector, to contribute towards building their capacity as well as to provide inputs for the important regulatory and disease control functions that government provides. We perform a coordinating function between government, donors, projects, and other NGO partners, and recognize the importance of strong links between the public and private sectors. With government support and oversight, DCA-VET will continue its long-term commitment and implement its vision of accessible and affordable high quality animal health care for livestock owners, and improved livelihoods for all rural Afghans – men, women, and children. One must innovate, strengthen, and document best practice models so as to transfer knowledge to all stakeholders and partners. Shared learning is vital.

In summary, we will face many challenges going forward, but together with our committed staff these will be met and successfully navigated to ensure a better future for all farmers in Afghanistan.

Dr. Raymond Briscoe, Executive Director

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Abbreviations

AAEP	Afghanistan Agricultural Extension Project
ACDI/VOCA	Agricultural Cooperative Development International / Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
Afs	Afghani, currency of Afghanistan
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BAP	Baghlan Agricultural Program
Brooke	Master of Public Administration
BVW	Basic Veterinary Worker
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMT	Core Management Team
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer
DAI	Development Alternatives Inc.
DCA-VET	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan – Veterinary Programmes
DVM	Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HAS	University of Applied Sciences, Den Bosch, NL
IDEA-NEW	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LFEW	Livestock Female Extension Worker
MAIL	(Afghan) Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MPA	Master of Public Administration
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NHLP	National Horticulture and Livestock Project
NL	the Netherlands
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy (academic degree)
RADP	Regional Agricultural Development Program
RMLSP	Rural Microfinance and Livestock Support Project
RNE	Royal Netherlands Embassy
SMC	Sanitary Mandate Contract
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UR	(Wageningen) University and Research centre
US	United States (of America)
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VPH Package	Veterinary Public Health Package



Dutch Committee for Afghanistan – Veterinary Programmes

Country Headquarters Kabul, Afghanistan
South of Barakee Square, First Street,
House #10, Kart-e-Parwan, Kabul
Tel: + 93 799 375 552 (R. Briscoe)
Dr. Raymond Briscoe, Executive Director
Email: briscoe_raymond@yahoo.co.uk

Liaison and Support Office, the Netherlands
Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 8200 AB Lelystad,
NEW Office location: Meentweg 1, Lelystad
NEW Tel: see website
Ab Emmerzaal, Secretary General
Email: ab.emmerzaal@dca-vet.nl

www.dca-vet.nl



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