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DUTCH COMMITTEE FOR AFGHANISTAN – VETERINARY PROGRAMMES



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کمیته هاند برای افغانستان



**Annual Report 2009**



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## DCA-VET mission

### Foundation

The Dutch Committee for Afghanistan – Veterinary Programmes (DCA-VET) was founded on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1994, by members of the Board of the already longer existing Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA). The latter was founded in 1980, shortly after the Soviet invasion. Whereas previous activities of DCA included humanitarian assistance in a broader sense, DCA-VET focuses on veterinary and directly related livestock activities.

### Mission Statement

The mission statement runs as follows:

***“To offer aid and assistance to the population of Afghanistan by improving the health and productive output of the local livestock”***

### Objective and Activities

The main objective of DCA-VET is to protect and improve the health of existing livestock, and to increase livestock production in Afghanistan.

To realise the objective, DCA-VET has developed programmes to:

- Train paraveterinarians (paravets) and basic veterinary workers (BVWs)
- Establish district-based veterinary field units (VFUs) throughout Afghanistan
- Provide for veterinary equipment, medicines and vaccines
- Support the sustainable delivery of animal health services at community level
- Support activities that enhance livestock production
- Support the integration of public and private veterinary services
- Enhance the range of services the VFUs can offer to their clients as well as their earning capacity.



## Director's Introduction

I am delighted to present to you the Annual Report 2009 to inform you about the work of DCA-VET regarding the ongoing development of the private veterinary services in Afghanistan. And, I am also pleased to tell you that we are making good progress in providing more and more quality services to the local livestock owners. The "paravet system" in Afghanistan is developing well. During the last decennium, the numbers of newly trained paraveterinarians (paravets) and the numbers of veterinary field units (VFUs) have increased considerably. DCA-VET is currently implementing projects in about 20 provinces in Afghanistan. At this moment, there are about 800 VFUs in Afghanistan, of which more than half are supported by DCA-VET.

In 2009, many refresher trainings on different veterinary topics are conducted and new Herd Health Packages are developed for the different farm animal species. The main scope of the DCA-VET approach is still on veterinary services, but the improvement of animal production gradually receives more attention. This is of benefit to the livestock farmers in Afghanistan, to the national production of food of animal origin, and to the economy of the country. The real actors of the private paravet system are the (para)veterinarians in the field who have their own independent businesses in delivering the services and who are making a living from that. In the different projects, DCA-VET pays a lot of attention to monitoring and facilitating the paravets in all districts, including the most remote areas, to ensure veterinary services are available to every local farmer.

DCA-VET only can operate thanks to the well skilled staff working from our national headquarter, regional and provincial centres. We have a crew of very reliable, hard working Afghan nationals on all levels, from highly educated veterinarians and financial staff to the employees looking after transportation and catering. In this Annual Report, I would like to acknowledge them for their valuable daily input to reach our common goal: a sustainable private veterinary system. Of course I am very grateful as well to the donors that rely on DCA-VET for the implementation of their projects. With pleasure, DCA-VET welcomes the European Union (EU) as a donor in 2009 again. And the EU is not the only new donor to DCA-VET. In the chapter "Prospects" you can read more about our future projects and donors.

There are still many outbreaks of highly contagious animal diseases in Afghanistan causing a lot of

economical damage. Under the given circumstances, the only way to control these diseases is to apply preventive vaccinations. However, vaccinations are only useful when quality vaccines are distributed to the service providers via a cold chain to guarantee the effectiveness. An important activity of DCA-VET is the distribution of good quality veterinary vaccines and pharmaceuticals to all the VFUs in the provinces. In 2009, important steps have been made in commercializing and privatizing this activity, resulting in 2010 in the foundation of VetServ Ltd.

DCA-VET is working under the authority of the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and maintains a good relationship with the Veterinary Directorate of that Ministry. Implementing different projects at the same time has to be coordinated well, and the veterinary infrastructure in Afghanistan has to be built up in a proper way. Fortunately, the communication between DCA-VET and the authorities to reach these objectives runs well. Good examples of public-private cooperation are the Sanitary Mandates (public veterinary tasks issued to private veterinary service providers). Another topic that is being worked upon is the legal position of the paravets including the training curriculum and the licenses for them to work. The paravets play a key role in veterinary services in Afghanistan and this role has to be officially recognized and legalized. DCA-VET is pleased to recognize that the Government of Afghanistan together with international support is able to improve the national economic situation, to restore the infrastructure and to facilitate more education for young people. These steps forward doubtlessly will facilitate the final development of a solid and sustainable system of private animal health care.

Dr. Ab Emmerzaal, Executive Director



## Afghan Livestock

The most recent estimate of Afghan livestock numbers is the FAO Census of 2003, recording 3.7 million cattle and 16 million small ruminants. Over 80% of the Afghan population depends on farming, which includes the raising of cattle, sheep and goats. Animals are not only kept to produce meat, milk, wool and leather but also for traction power during planting and harvesting of crops; manure is used for fertilizer and as a source of fuel, in the form of dried dung. Livestock is as well providing an income, as it is a store of value which enhances the household's food security. Livestock therefore is a vital part of the life of families and communities in rural areas. This dependency is greatest with the livestock herders of the remote mountain districts of the country and the nomadic Kuchi.

### Livestock management

There are two main livestock management systems in use in Afghanistan: a semi-nomadic extensive grazing system, and a more intensive grazing system where livestock is kept in irrigated areas, nearby the rivers.

The semi-nomadic system is applied by the Kuchi. They roam about the country side from the highland rangeland in summer to the lowland rangeland in winter. Natural pastures cover some 7.5 million acres but are being overgrazed and there are growing disputes over grazing areas. Kuchi raise especially goats, sheep, camels, horses and donkeys. While accounting for 7 to 8% of the Afghan population, the Kuchi are raising around 35% of the goats and sheep. On average each Kuchi household owns one cow and around 45 goats or sheep.



Under the sedentary irrigated system the animals are kept and fed in or near homesteads. The most suitable animals for this system are cattle and sheep. Each sedentary family is raising around one to two cows and three to ten sheep.

### Low productivity

Productivity of the Afghan livestock is very low. The principal causes are disease, inadequate winter nutrition, poor herd management, inefficient harvesting of products such as wool and cashmere and general lack of awareness of good raising practices.



Health problems threaten the animals and limit the expansion of herds. Contagious diseases as Anthrax, Blackleg, Enterotoxaemia, Sheep-Pox and Foot-and-Mouth Disease are still very commonly occurring in Afghanistan. At least half of the animals' diseases are linked to parasites (worms, liver fluke, ticks and mange mites). These afflictions gain importance when the condition of livestock is weakened by scarcity of feed. Weakening of the animals occurs particularly in winter, when food is scarce and the nutritious value of the feed is low.

### Private veterinary services

Within this context it is evident that animal health, production as well as husbandry issues should be addressed simultaneously and in conjunction with each other. So current private veterinary services in Afghanistan not only focus on preventive actions like vaccination against contagious diseases and medication against parasites, but also on extension on nutrition and animal husbandry, artificial insemination and extension on harvesting of animal products like wool and cashmere. By these combined interventions the private veterinary services are successfully increasing health and productivity of the Afghan livestock and thus improving the livelihoods of the Afghan people.

## About DCA-VET

The Dutch Committee for Afghanistan started its livestock oriented activities in 1988 by establishing the Veterinary Training and Support Centre (VTSC) in Peshawar (Pakistan). It took until 1994 before the VTSC in Herat, Afghanistan, could be opened. In the same year DCA decided to put its humanitarian activities to an end and to focus entirely on livestock. To formalize this change of activities the DCA Board members founded DCA-VET.

From the beginning, training of paraveterinarians (paravets), the establishment of veterinary field units (VFUs), and vaccine and medicine delivery are major components of the DCA-VET programmes. Various donors enabled DCA-VET to improve the health and productivity of the Afghan livestock. From 2004 onwards, DCA-VET experienced a period of significant build-up of its manpower and facilities thanks to the USAID-supported project *Rebuilding Agricultural Markets in Afghanistan Program* (RAMP).



At present, the main target areas of DCA-VET are in the entire northern region of Afghanistan, ranging from Herat in the west to Badakhshan in the northeast (see map on the last page of this report).

### Training

In 2009, DCA-VET runs three training centres: in Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Charikar. In these centres, DCA-VET trains new paravets and provides refresher training courses for (para)vets. Since its inception, DCA-VET has trained more than 750 paravets and over 600 basic veterinary workers (BVWs) for DCA-VET's own field programme as well as for other organizations.

The paravet course takes 24 weeks. Participants are recruited by monitors, in consultation with the shuras, in villages with a need for veterinary care. The training curriculum is based on a problem-oriented approach with emphasis on practical aspects. Topics are prevention, diagnosis and

treatment of common animal diseases, animal production and business development. After finishing their training, the paravets return to their villages to start animal health care services. The BVW training is a 4- to 5-week course (often in the field) on the major veterinary treatments. BVWs are taught to vaccinate animals and to perform the most basic veterinary care.

### VFUs

After graduation of the paravets, DCA-VET provides them with a working location, a so called veterinary field unit (VFU). In the ideal situation, each district comprises of one veterinarian or paravet-in-charge, two to four paravets stationed elsewhere in the district, and additional BVWs covering remoter areas. The (para)veterinarian acts as a liaison between the service providing agency and district paravets for supply and reporting purposes. DCA-VET supports the VFUs with the necessary veterinary equipment, a starting supply of vaccines and medicines, a refrigerator on solar energy, and a motorbike for visiting the farmers in the rural areas.

To reach self-sustainability of the VFUs, a system of cost recovery and fee for service was launched several years ago. To improve sustainability, the focus is now on diversification of services provided by the VFUs to improve livestock production, and on marketing and extension campaigns to enhance the farmers' awareness of the benefits of the VFUs.

### Vaccine delivery

From 1995, DCA-VET distributed more than 110 million doses of different vaccines. The necessary cold chain facilities are put in place by distributing refrigerators, cool boxes, and icepacks. Under the USAID-supported ASAP project, DCA-VET establishes a private, for-profit wholesaler and distributor of veterinary vaccines and medicines in Afghanistan. This private entity, called VetServ, should ensure delivery of quality drugs after NGO support has ceased.

### Integration of private and public care

From the start, DCA-VET is addressing the issue of cooperation of private and public veterinary care. In a national animal health system, private vets, paravets and BVWs should play an important role in day-to-day veterinary care. DCA-VET's ultimate goal is a system in which private and public veterinary services work successfully together for the benefit of the Afghan livestock, farmers and consumers without any additional support by NGOs.

## Current Projects

### ASAP – Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program - Broad-based Livestock Development

Term: December 2006 – May 2010  
 Total budget: US\$ 7,539,236  
 Funded by: USAID/Chemiconics  
 Programme Director: Dr. Raymond Briscoe  
 Project Manager: Dr. Resham Pd. Acharya

#### What is ASAP

Main objective of ASAP is to accelerate broad-based, market-led agriculture development, providing new economic opportunities for rural Afghans. The programme is covering 19 provinces in the northern part of Afghanistan. ASAP boosts farmer productivity by providing agricultural and livestock training, selling fertilizer, pesticides and seeds and introducing improved agricultural technologies and methods to Afghan farmers. ASAP's activities generated almost US\$ 4 million in exports, including dried fruits and nuts, grapes, pomegranates, cashmere and wool. The Livestock Program under ASAP focuses on two pillars: the veterinary field units and the cashmere value chain.



#### Veterinary field units

Around 80% of the citizens in the northern region of Afghanistan are dependent on livestock. That is why ASAP is supporting a network of 383 veterinary field

units (VFUs) in this region. These VFUs are private businesses, staffed mainly by (para)veterinarians, who provide animal health care and husbandry advice to herders in their neighbourhood and administer reliable, quality vaccines and medicines. To ensure sustainability of the VFUs, these veterinary services are carried out on a fee for service basis. The programme equips the VFUs with furniture, a cattle crush, a motor bike, a kit of veterinary instruments and pharmaceuticals.

#### Achievements VFUs 2009

This year, the VFUs administered more than 14 million vaccinations and medications to bolster livestock health. The VFU interventions increased the health and productivity of a large part of the livestock and controlled outbreaks of major livestock diseases. Together, the VFUs generated more than US\$ 3 million in gross sales.

Five new VFUs were established specifically for female paravets, who graduated from the Herat Training Centre. In addition, seven provincial offices were established. From these provincial offices monitors and extension staff are working in the field to support VFUs and through them provide extension training to herders. The offices facilitate close collaboration with local government officials.

#### Extension

A special veterinary extension team developed campaigns to teach farmers about animal health and production. These campaigns are also designed to promote the professional veterinary services and quality products provided by the VFUs. The extension team also trained the VFU staff in a 'Small Ruminant Herd Health Package', focussing on animal health care of goats and sheep and including information on winter feeding and cashmere harvesting. Herd Health Packages on Large Ruminants and Poultry are being prepared.



#### Women on the move

*Mrs. Momena Mohammadi (30 years old) graduated from a paravet course and began running a VFU in Herat more than two years ago. She is the sole breadwinner for her family, including her husband and three sons ranging in age from 5 to 16. She estimates that her gross sales are around US\$ 400 each month. When she drives to villages to treat farmers' livestock, other Afghan women ask her how they too can become a paravet. "Compared to some years ago, it is much different now," Mohammadi says, "Women are going to school and operating business. Things are changing."*



## VetServ

Since 1995, DCA-VET imports and distributes vaccines and medicines by itself to ensure that the VFU staff can rely on quality veterinary drugs. However, it is part of DCA-VET's exit strategy to transfer this activity to the private sector. Therefore, DCA-VET is working to establish VetServ as a private procurement and distribution business for veterinary vaccines and medicines to serve the growing VFU market. FLAG International, a US consulting company assisted DCA-VET this year in conducting a business appraisal and preparing a business plan for VetServ. ASMED (Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development) is providing logistical and financial support to this project. In November 2009, the registration of VetServ with the Ministry of Commerce has been completed. In 2010, VetServ will start its commercial activities under the lead of Dr. Daad Mohammad Amir, former DCA-VET Deputy Director Field Operations.



## Cashmere value chain

Nine out of ten Afghan goats produce cashmere, but only 35% of this valuable commodity is actually being harvested. Throughout 2009, ASAP strived to increase awareness of the value of cashmere and the best harvesting methods as well as to establish a cashmere value chain in Afghanistan. To this end ASAP trained farmers on harvesting methods, established marketing channels and encouraged national and international private-sector cashmere industry.

## Cashmere training

ASAP supported the training of 77 male and 17 female master trainers. These master trainers taught 2,250 VFU and Kuchi field trainers, male and female, to pass on this knowledge and skills. These field trainers, in turn, reached over 200,000 goat herders, 170,000 men and 40,000 women, with the extension on proper cashmere harvested methods. Some 180,000 cashmere combs were distributed,



as well as fact sheets and posters. Radios were also supplied to enable the farmers to listen to messages on cashmere and livestock health. DCA-VET's contribution to this cashmere training project covered 17 provinces and consisted of 17 male and 17 female master trainers and 400 VFU field trainers.

## Cashmere harvesting and trading

The VFUs were trained by ASAP how to procure and store the cashmere and were encouraged to become local buyers of the product. The VFUs then sold the cashmere to regional traders who prepared the product for export. In total 100 metric tons of cashmere were sold to the regional traders in Herat, who exported the Afghan cashmere to China and Europe.

## Veterinary clinic

During 2009, ASAP enabled the Nangarhar Faculty of Veterinary Sciences to establish a functional, modern veterinary clinic. This clinic features a surgery room, a laboratory, a pharmacy and a shelter for some domestic animals participating in demonstration and practical work. The clinic is officially to be opened on February 10, 2010. The clinic will be used for practical training of veterinary students and will provide veterinary services to 1,100 livestock owners in the area.

An experienced teaching clinician, Dr. Neville de Silva, was appointed to teach 100 Nangarhar veterinary students and eight faculty members for two months. Graduates of Afghanistan's University Veterinary Faculties often lack hands-on clinical training. Dr. de Silva filled in this gap with his practical courses on clinical knowledge and skills, especially in the fields of animal handling, physical examination, diagnosis and treatment.

## DCU

### Improving Basic Services and Capacity Building in Uruzgan, Animal Health and Production

Term: April 2009 – March 2013

Total budget: €2,369,953

Funded by: the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Royal Netherlands Embassy Afghanistan

Project manager: Dr. Zekria / Dr. Fazlullah

Subcontractor: AVA, Dr. Sayed Safi

#### Dutch Consortium for Uruzgan



Funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Kabul, five Dutch development aid organizations, (Save the Children, Cordaid, ZOA, HealthNet-TPO and DCA-VET) joined forces to improve basic services in Uruzgan. These organizations are focusing on physical and mental healthcare, capacity building, education and children's rights, agriculture, and animal health and productivity. The 4-year DCU programme was prepared during a so called Inception Phase from July 2008 – March 2009. During that period the first preparatory activities took place as well. DCA-VET subcontracted the Afghanistan Veterinary Association (AVA) for the fieldwork in Uruzgan, because of its previous experience in this province.

#### Veterinary services

In Uruzgan seven VFUs are present. To provide each of the nine districts with a VFU, two new field units have been established. Nine new paravets had been trained to reinforce the existing VFU staff. For capacity building purposes 15 paravets received refresher training. As in-kind support 18 motorcycles, four solar refrigerators and five kits of technical equipment were distributed to the VFU staff. From April through September 2009 (first half project year) the VFU staff vaccinated 96,000 animals and treated 65,000 animals.

#### Veterinary services for Kuchi

The nomadic Kuchi are coming to almost all Uruzgan districts, especially to Dehrawood, Tarin Kowt, Chora and Chinarto. It is estimated that around 30% of all vaccination and medications was provided to Kuchi livestock. In 2010, six Kuchi men will be trained as Basic Veterinary Worker to serve the Kuchi livestock in remote areas.

#### Diagnostics

To improve diagnostic facilities in Uruzgan during the Inception Phase five laboratory technicians and five artificial insemination (AI) specialists were trained. In 2009, ten other lab technicians received refresher training. In 2010, another three lab technicians and two AI technicians will be trained. The lab technicians reported some 950 cases of infected animals during the first half year of the project.

#### Animal productivity

The aim of the AI project is to increase cattle productivity by improving local breeds, for Uruzgan breeds of cows do not produce much milk or meat. During the first half year AI technicians inseminated more than 310 cows. They reported 60 offspring as the result of their AI activities in Uruzgan. These results surely can be improved in future.

Winter feeding started in December 2009 as the rice was harvested. In total, 160,000 kg of feed was purchased and distributed among 4500 animals (500 in each of the nine districts). So each individual animal received 35.5 kg nutritious winterfeed extra.



Four seminars on farmers' awareness were organized in Dehrawood and in Tarin Kowt. The aim of this activity is to enhance the knowledge of farmers on proper animal husbandry methods and animal feeding. The total number of participants was 420. In several seminars also nomadic Kuchi participated.

## EU

### Support to Animal Health in Afghanistan, with focus on the Western Region

Term: October 2009 – September 2012

Total budget: € 1,650,000

Funded by: European Union

Project manager: Erick Gerstner

#### Background

In October 2009, the European Union (EU) enabled DCA-VET to commence a new project on improving animal health care in four western provinces of Afghanistan, namely Herat, Farah, Badghis and Ghor, and the central province Parwan. Since 1994 onwards a start had already been made to implement a system of veterinary field units (VFUs) in that western part of Afghanistan, also through EU funding. After the fall of the Taliban regime, animal health care in the region was supported by financial aid of USAID through the RAMP and ASAP projects. Today, 133 veterinary field units are supported in the four provinces concerned. However, there still remains a lot of work to be done before all livestock owners in these provinces have access to quality animal health care.

#### Deliverables

In the framework of the EU-project, DCA-VET will build 33 new VFUs. Old VFUs will be repaired, when deemed necessary. To staff the new VFUs, 33 candidate paravets will be selected by local communities and trained in our national training centre in Charikar.



Among those will be at least ten female candidates to ensure that farmer's women, who traditionally play an important role in the care of livestock in Afghanistan, have access to veterinary services as well. For veterinary care in the more remote areas,

60 basic veterinary workers (BVWs) will be trained of whom 20 will be women. To provide for the animal health care needs of the nomadic Kuchi pastoralists, approximately ten paravets and at least 20 Kuchi basic veterinary workers will be trained as well.

The VFUs will be gradually transformed to livestock service centres. These centres will offer the farmers not only animal health services, but also the services of artificial insemination, pregnancy diagnosis, laboratory testing on parasites, and the purchase of feed additives. This extension of services provides the VFUs with extra income. The ultimate goal is that at the end of the EU program the VFUs are completely self-sustainable.

The EU funding will also enable DCA-VET to improve facilities at the Charikar Veterinary Training Centre in Parwan, which has developed as DCA-VET's central VTSC under the World Bank HLP programme. New refresher courses will be developed and all VFU staff will receive business skills training. DCA-VET will strive for an official recognition of the status of Charikar VTSC as the main educational centre for applied practical training of paravets as well as DVMs.

The Afghan veterinary system will only be robust and sustainable when VFUs are officially recognized and incorporated in a government animal health care framework. To strengthen this public-private partnership a district veterinarian will be stationed in every district, who will liaise with the provincial veterinary specialist. DCA-VET will also train VFU staff to participate in national investigation on contagious diseases and in vaccination campaigns.

#### First activities undertaken

In the first months of the project, 45 of the existing VFUs have been individually visited and monitored. Fifteen candidate paravet trainees have been selected and five already graduated paravets commenced a refresher course on artificial insemination.

In 29 districts, an evaluation was carried out to measure the impact of the Small Ruminant Herd Health Package, an overall extension package on nutrition and husbandry of sheep and goats that was developed under USAID funding. 47 Farmers were involved in this assessment. 78 Paravets were engaged in general extension work on animal nutrition and productivity. They visited 132 villages and reached no less than 14,000 farmers with their messages on improving health and productivity of the local livestock.

## World Bank

### Horticulture and Livestock Project – Training portion of veterinary component

Term: October 2007 – December 2009

Total budget: US\$ 1,377,880

Funded by: World Bank

Training coordinator: Dr. Naqibullah Durani

Curriculum Development: Dr. Abdul Ghafor Torylai

### Background

The veterinary part of the *Horticulture and Livestock Project* (HLP) was contracted to AVA (Afghan Veterinary Association). DCA-VET was responsible for the veterinary training programme as a sub-contractor to AVA.

In the HLP project, the World Bank on behalf of the Government of Afghanistan is striving towards an integration of the public and private sectors of veterinary medicine. The major aim is to create a sustainable and comprehensive system of animal health care in Afghanistan.

On the one hand, the HLP project promotes a clear separation of private veterinary tasks (daily animal health care) and public veterinary tasks (among other things surveillance and control of highly contagious diseases, regulation of importation and sales of vaccines and medicines, and formulation of veterinary policies). To reach this goal, 120 public veterinary clinics were to be privatized. The staff of these government clinics was trained to continue their profession in the private sector. On the other hand, a fruitful cooperation between the public and private sector is advocated. To this means, VFU staff was trained to participate in contractual work for the surveillance and control of major veterinary diseases present in Afghanistan, particularly the OIE listed diseases.

The HLP project consisted of three components:

- Refresher training for government veterinarians transferring to privatized clinics (120 vets)
- Training of VFU staff to broaden their scope of activities to livestock owners (1,500 staff)
- Training of selected VFU staff to properly undertake Sanitary Mandates (400 vets)

### Privatization courses

A total number of 116 trainees participated in the privatization courses. The curriculum of this 8-week course to prepare the veterinarians for entry to the private sector was drafted on the basis of an

assessment of more than 100 potential participants. Six privatization courses were conducted; the last one was completed in May 2009.

### Training for expanded services

In consultation with relevant organizations, five different refresher training courses on expanded VFU services were developed. Topics are:

- *Differential diagnosis of highly contagious diseases and zoonoses*
- *Protozoal diseases + Common ecto- and endoparasites*
- *Proper use of antibiotics, anthelmintics + Common poultry diseases*
- *Dairy health, production, nutrition + Necropsy techniques (sample taking and follow up)*
- *Equine health (developed in consultation with the Brooke Hospital)*

Of each topic 16 to 18 courses were conducted. Total number of trainees per topic varied between 305 and 309, all VFU staff members. The newly learned skills provide added benefit to the farmers, as well as added income to the VFU staff themselves.



### Sanitary Mandates

After the government had decided on the specific topics of the Sanitary Mandates, the following five training modules were developed in consultation with the EU Animal Health Development Project (AHDP) and AVA:

- *Introductory Module*
- *Topic 1: Viral diseases*
- *Topic 2: Zoonotic diseases*
- *Topic 3: Bacterial diseases*
- *Topic 4: Poultry diseases*

Hundred (para)veterinarians followed the introductory module, while 95 participants graduated in each of the four special topics. These graduates are now ready to assist the government in the surveillance, diagnosis and control of contagious livestock diseases in Afghanistan.

## AECID

### Integrated Livestock Sector Development Program in Badghis Province

Term: December 2008 – December 2010

Total budget: US\$ 1,037,512

Funded by: AECID, Spain

Acting Project manager: Dr. Abdul Qader Fakhri

#### Background

In Badghis province, a Spanish PRT is supporting reconstruction efforts. Accordingly, the Spanish government offered DCA-VET funding for an integrated development of the local livestock sector. The project consisted of two separate parts, a VFU strengthening project and a poultry project. The VFU project strived for better veterinary services to farmers of Badghis province, while the poultry project was especially devised to strengthen the household economy of poor women.

#### VFU project

In order to enlarge the VFU network in Badghis, 12 candidates from different districts of Badghis province were selected to conduct a paravet course in the training centre in Herat. Ten of them graduated, among whom were three women. After graduation, the new paravets returned to their home villages to start their animal health services. For seven of them new veterinary field clinics were established. All ten received a signboard, veterinary furniture, equipment and a clinical kit with veterinary tools.



29 existing VFU staff attended refresher courses on different topics in the VTSC of Herat. All of them were also trained in the Small Ruminants Herd Health Package, that was developed under the ASAP project. The Small Ruminants HHP is an

extension package that teaches farmers everything they need to know to keep their animals healthy and productive. Going with this package, the VFU staff received a lot of extension material such as posters, fact sheets, and tip sheets for clarifying and illustrating their extension messages.

The VFU staff also engaged in the Cashmere Harvesting Campaign that was conducted all over the western and northern part of Afghanistan. During this campaign, some 4000 radios were distributed to the farmers in Badghis, so they could listen to the broadcasted extension messages on cashmere and VFU services. To harvest the cashmere efficiently, over 5000 combs were distributed among the Badghis farmers.

In total 470,000 animals were vaccinated in Badghis and about 340,000 animals were treated with anthelmintics or other medicines. Total gross sales of all VFUs over 2009 amounted to US\$ 169,174.

#### Poultry project

Two female poultry trainers were appointed to coordinate the Badghis poultry project. They selected 15 villages from three districts. In each village the poultry trainers chose 40 poor women who were willing to start a small poultry farm. Some 40 additional beneficiaries from different villages joined the project, resulting in a total number of 640 beneficiaries. These women were all trained in poultry husbandry to prepare them for their new occupation. They also received a door, a window, a feeder and a drinker to build their own chicken coops as community contribution. When the coops were ready, each woman received 15 three months old layer chickens (9600 in total) as well as two turns of 200 kg chicken feed (128 metric tons in total). The women joined forces by forming a women group in each of the 15 villages. For animal health care and vaccination of the chickens 16 female BVWs were trained.

Regular monitoring of the beneficiaries showed that most of the chickens started laying eggs at six months of age. There is very few mortality and more than 90% of the chickens are still alive and laying eggs. Beneficiaries proved to be very pleased with this poultry project.

#### Sudden closure of project

Alas, on 3 April 2010, the project was prematurely closed by AECID. Although the donor expressed to be impressed by the huge impact of both projects, it had to terminate the contract with DCA-VET due to lack of adequate budget.

## Baghlan Cheese Factory

### Dairy Development in Baghlan Province

Terms: May 2008 – April 2010  
 Total budget: € 466,359  
 Funded by: the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Royal Netherlands Embassy Afghanistan  
 Project manager: John de Wolff  
 Operational manager: Zubair Haqani

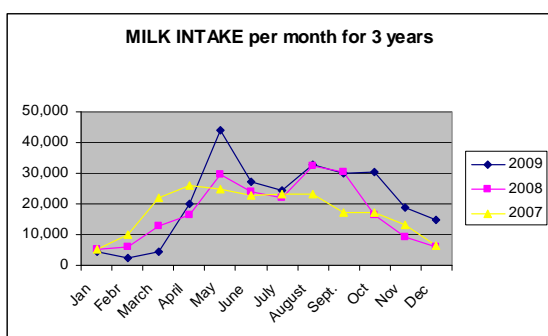
#### Background

Baghlan cheese is a well known product with a history dating back to the early seventies. After a start under the umbrella of the FAO, cheese production in Baghlan was expanded through a Swiss Development Cooperation project. The Baghlan Cheese Factory (BCF) was unfortunately destroyed in the 1980s but was recently rebuilt through DCA-VET, funded by the Dutch Government. In 2007 the production of cheese and other dairy products was resumed.

#### Dairy production

Some 550 farmers delivered milk to the factory during 2009. More than half of them brought milk to the factory rather irregularly, during less than 10 weeks, because most of the year they did not have any surplus milk for sale.

On average, the factory received 20,000 liters of milk per month. As in previous years, milk intake fluctuated considerably throughout the year, being very low in winter due to lack of feed, and highest in spring thanks to the fertile spring rains.



Most of the milk was used to produce Gouda (34%), mozzarella (22%), and fresh breakfast cheese / pizza cheese (19%). Gouda cheese is preferred by the expat community in Afghanistan, while fresh breakfast cheese is in fact very young Gouda and is appreciated very much by the Afghan population.

In terms of liters or kilograms produced, yoghurt and butter milk were highest on the top five list. This is



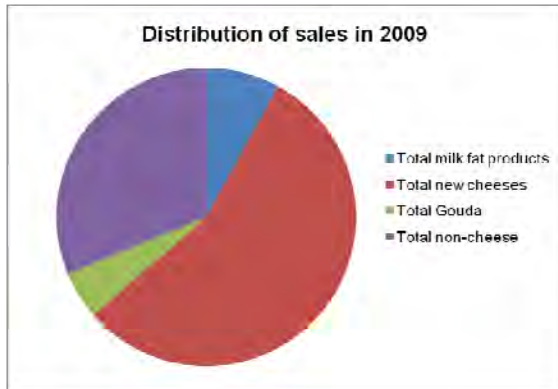
because these products are processed directly from milk, while for the production of 1 kg cheese some 12 to 14 liters of milk are needed.

Product	Production (kg or l) over 2009
Butter milk	24,300
Yoghurt	19,600
Gouda cheese	6,300
Mozzarella	4,300
Fresh breakfast cheese	3,600

#### Sales and marketing

Two BCF sales agents took care of the sales to hotels, restaurants, supermarkets and private customers in Kabul. While in 2008 sales in Kabul accounted for 94% of the market, during 2009 sales in Kabul dramatically fell down to 62%. This fall was due to the selling of inferior non-BCF mozzarella by one of the sales agents and because the Gouda cheese at the stores in Kabul strongly deteriorated due to high storage temperatures. These incidents lowered customers' confidence in the quality of BCF products. The Kabul sales losses were compensated for by a new, booming market for butter milk and yoghurt in Baghlan and Pul-i-Khumri, developed by the BCF operational manager.

In 2009, the new types of cheese, especially mozzarella and fresh breakfast cheese, contributed to more than 50% of all sales. The sales of non-cheese products were much higher than in previous years, thanks to the yoghurt and butter milk sold in Baghlan Province. Gouda cheese is produced when milk intake exceeds sales, and thus products have to be made that can be stored. However, stocks of Gouda cheeses are increasing, indicating that sales of fresh products do not keep abreast with milk intake and an excess of Gouda has to be made. The extremely low sales of Gouda cheese in 2009 were among other things due to the inferior quality of the Gouda cheeses in the Kabul stores.



Total sales increased from US\$ 78,000 in 2008 to US\$ 92,000 in 2009, which is still not sufficient to reach the break-even point of milk intake and sales. General constraints to profitable sales margins are the seasonal fluctuations in milk intake, the high milk price (Baghlan farmers got paid even more than Dutch farmers for their milk), and the high energy and transportation costs. The low intake in winter causes a reduction of fresh products on offer, while the high intake in summer leads to an accumulation of Gouda stocks. In May 2009, all Gouda cheeses left from 2007 had to be destroyed because of deterioration.

### Farmers' Cooperative

In 2008, a BCF Farmers' Cooperative was established. At present 96 members are registered, 22 of whom sold milk to the factory in 2009. So the majority of delivering farmers are no Cooperative members. It has become questionable whether the original intention to gradually hand over the ownership of the factory to this cooperative in the years to come, will be feasible. Up to now an independent BCF Board of representatives of DCA-VET and of the Farmers' Cooperative is responsible for the Baghlan Cheese Factory.

### Dairy extension

Funded by the Hungarian PRT in Baghlan, several dairy extension activities have been implemented during the year. Dairy extension services are a promising option for raising the milk production in the area. The extension focused on cultivation trials of different kinds of additional feed. The following crops were planted:

- hybrid Sudan grass for summer feeding (first half of April)
- maize for silage making in autumn (second half of June)

- fodder oats for late autumn and early winter feeding (last week of August/first half of September)

The number of participating farmers in the dairy extension program increased from 15 in 2008 to 63 in 2009.

### Prospects 2010

As yet, BCF is not profitable, despite of a cost reduction by lowering the number of employees and by reducing the energy expenses in 2009.



As marketing efforts have been weak so far, DCA-VET appointed a part-time commercial manager for one year, starting in January 2010, in order to improve the financial situation of BCF. The commercial manager will investigate possibilities to increase sales as well as sales margins. A start has been made to improve financial results by reducing the milk price. Besides, a marketing campaign will be launched in Kabul and the Mazar market will be explored as well. DCA-VET has selected an experienced consultant to assist in developing a feasibility assessment as well as a business plan for the Baghlan Cheese Factory. Cooperation with a Food Trading Company will be investigated.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, Dutch funding will end. This funding has enabled DCA-VET to establish the cheese factory, install all necessary equipment, build up a milk intake of 250,000 liters a year, develop the production process of various types of cheese and reach a sales value of almost US\$ 100,000.

From April 2010 onwards, DCA-VET will support the Baghlan Cheese Factory from her own funds. In the meantime, negotiations are going on with some new investors that are willing to bridge the coming years needed to put BCF on track towards sustainability.

## Other projects

### The Brooke/DCA Partnership on Equine Animal Welfare

In April 2009, DCA-VET and The Brooke extended their partnership by a second year. The Brooke Hospital for Animals is a UK registered charitable organization, which aims to improve the welfare of working equine animals in developing countries. During 2008, the Brooke and DCA-VET developed refresher courses for (para)veterinarians on equine health and welfare, which were conducted in 2009 as well.

In 2009, the project focused on training of 12 paravets in equine healthcare as well as in an equine targeted extension programme. These paravets treated equines and organized monthly extension sessions on equine welfare and husbandry. Some 700 selected equine owners attended the sessions and received enough awareness and knowledge on equine health, husbandry and preventive management to be able to apply this knowledge in the daily care of their animals.



The successful DCA/Brooke partnership is now extended again till May 2011.

### Goat Cheese Assessment – Nuristan

In 2008, DCA-VET facilitated the mission of the Dutch cheese and dairy consultant Ben Weijers to Nuristan. This mission, initiated by the Nuristan PRT and funded by USAID/DAI, was aimed at assessing the production of the traditional Nuristan goat cheese and investigating the marketing possibilities of this product in Kabul and other major Afghan cities.

In August/September 2008, the first 3-weeks fact finding mission was executed, revealing that with a few adjustments and small investments, the

artisanal produced cheese could easily be upgraded to a uniform, commercially profitable and food-safe product.

In May 2009, Ben Weijers returned to Nuristan to conduct three 2-days workshops on cheese making. In these workshops 45 cheese producers from the eastern, central and western valleys of Nuristan participated. Ben Weijers taught the farmers how they could get a food-safe cheese by applying some minor improvements on hygiene and sanitation in the production process. In the final report, recommendations were presented on the steps to be taken to reach a small-scale commercial production of Nuristan goat cheese.

### CERP Campaign VFU monitors

CERP (Commander's Emergency Response Programme) is a programme that enables US Army commanders to provide humanitarian aid rapidly. DCA-VET obtained CERP funding for implementing a campaign to monitor and facilitate VFUs in the four central provinces of Bamyán, Kapisa, Pansjhir and Parwan. A team of monitors visited all local VFUs to check quality of work and to measure the level of success of the VFUs. These monitors also assisted in extension work, providing the VFUs with brochures on VFU services and different diseases. The VFU staff used these brochures in extension meetings with farmers.

One of the participating farmers clearly expressed the importance of this extension:

*"I did not understand why my animals died and what was the cause of their death, but when I participated in the extension session and listened to the explanation of the veterinary doctor while he was showing me the pictures on the paper, I understood that microbes make my animals sick and eventually kill them. So now I will go to the VFU and vaccinate my animals to be healthy."*

### PV training courses for other projects

Regularly, DCA-VET is contracted by other organizations to train paravets for their programmes. In 2009, ACDI/VOCA asked DCA-VET to train 20 paravets in the provinces Paktia, Paktika and Khost. Funding for this project was granted by USAID. Also Mercy Corps often depends on DCA-VET for training of their paravets and recently FLAG International had some paravets trained by DCA-VET.



## Organization

The overall Headquarters of DCA-VET are located in Lelystad, the Netherlands. The Afghan Headquarters are in Kabul, with two regional offices in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif. The main training centre is located in Charikar, near Kabul.

In the Netherlands, the Executive Director, Ab Emmerzaal, has his seat, together with the office manager, a programme officer and a finance officer. From here the DCA-VET programmes in Afghanistan are controlled.

In Afghanistan, DCA-VET's Country Programme Director, Raymond Briscoe, is supervising the overall Afghanistan staff, in 2009 consisting of some 140 Afghan nationals, and two expats.

Being a foundation, DCA-VET has a Board that outlines the DCA-VET policy. Chairman to the Board is Peter de Leeuw, CVO of the Netherlands.

An Advisory Board of four professionals on livestock and development provides the Board for support and expert advice.



*Raymond Briscoe, Country Programme Director*

See next page for the DCA-VET 2009 organogram.

### **Board of DCA-VET 2009**

Mr. Peter W. de Leeuw DVM PhD Chairman	CVO of the Netherlands; chairman since mid 2003
Mr. Gert-Jan Duives DVM Secretary	Lecturer in Animal Health, Agricultural College, Den Bosch; former Director of VTSC Pakistan; member of the Board since its foundation
Mr. Henk J. Arends Treasurer	Accountant; member of the Board since October 2003
Mr. Bram Schreuder DVM PhD	DCA-VET Executive Director till October 2008; member of the Board since October 2008

### **Advisory Board of DCA-VET 2009**

Mr. Cees de Haan	Senior Livestock Advisor, World Bank, Washington DC., US
Mr. Henk A.J. Moll PhD	Former University Lecturer Agricultural Development Economics, University of Wageningen, the Netherlands
Mrs. Prof Akke J. van der Zijpp PhD	Professor and Head of Animal Production Systems Group University of Wageningen, the Netherlands
Mrs. Frauke de Weijer DVM	Veterinarian / Cultural Anthropologist, in 2009 Veterinary Services Monitoring and Coordination specialist in the EU Animal Health Development Project

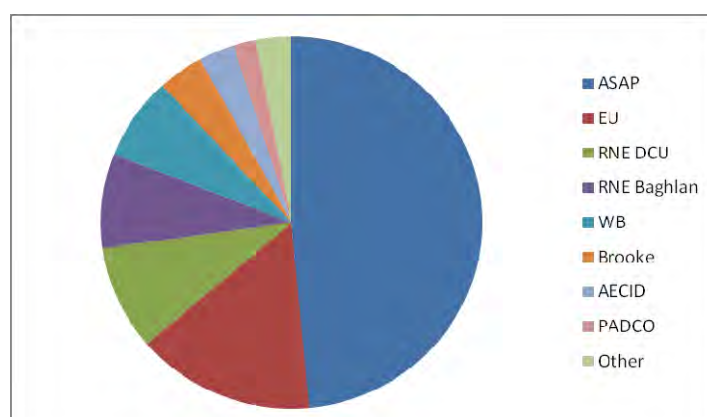


## Funding

The table below presents an overview of the projects DCA-VET has been implementing in 2009, the funding agents and the total budget of the projects.

Funding agent	Project	Total budget
USAID/Chemonics	<b>Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP)</b> <i>December 2006 – May 2010</i>	US\$ 7,539,236 (42 months)
Royal Neth. Embassy	<b>DCU-inception: Improving Basic Services and Capacity Building in Uruzgan – Animal Health and Production</b> <i>July 2008 – February 2009</i>	€ 184,401 (8 months)
	<b>DCU-2: Improving Basic Services and Capacity Building in Uruzgan - Animal Health and Production</b> <i>April 2009 – March 2013</i>	€ 1,823,038 (48 months)
EU	<b>Support to Animal Health in Afghanistan, with focus on the Western Region</b> <i>October 2009 – September 2012</i>	€ 1,650,000 (36 months)
World Bank	<b>Horticulture and Livestock Project – Training portion of veterinary component</b> <i>October 2007 – December 2009</i>	US\$ 1,377,880 (27 months)
AECID	<b>Strengthening of veterinary field units / Poultry Husbandry Program in Badghis Province</b> <i>December 2008 – November 2010</i>	US\$ 1,037,512 (24 months)
Royal Neth. Embassy	<b>Dairy Development in Baghlan Province</b> <i>May 2008 – April 2010</i>	€ 467,587 (24 months)
Brooke Hospital	<b>DCA/Brooke Partnership</b> <i>April 2009 – March 2010</i>	US\$ 219,810 (12 months)
USAID ACDI/VOCA	<b>Paravet Training Course in Herat</b> <i>June 2009 – 31 August 2009</i>	US\$ 46,000 (3 months)
CERP/ADT	<b>Animal Health Campaign VFU monitors</b> <i>April 2009 – March 2010 (VFU monitors)</i> <i>April 2009 – January 2010 (Printing extension material)</i>	US\$ 43,560

During the year 2009 the total income DCA-VET received amounted to US\$ 5,263,713.39. More than half of the annual income was contributed by USAID (50,4% [ASAP and PADCO]); the remaining funds came from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Kabul (17,3%), the European Union (15,2%), the World Bank (7,2%), The Brooke Hospital for Animals, AECID, and some smaller initiatives (other income).



## Prospects 2010-2011

We may conclude that at the moment DCA-VET is rather successful in acquisition of projects. While writing this chapter for the Annual Report 2009, DCA-VET is in the process of signing three new contracts for two new donors. GTZ (“Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit”) on behalf of the German government is contracting two projects to DCA-VET, and the other donor IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) works together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock to launch a 3-year project. All three projects focus on provinces in the northeast of Afghanistan. The IFAD project will be implemented in Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan and Bamyan, while GTZ will cover one province less; Bamyan is not included here. DCA-VET will have the important role to implement the projects in the same provinces, to coordinate the work for both donors in the field and to reach a synergetic effect. In collaboration with the donors the projects are designed to be complementary to each other. The IFAD project will focus on private veterinary services with special attention to the poorest farmers, while the GTZ livestock project will focus on animal production. The second GTZ project is a poultry project for the benefit of women.

In the 2008 Annual Report, the IDEA-NEW project (USAID) was mentioned as a perspective for 2009-2010. We are very happy that DCA-VET is subcontracted by ACDI/VOCA to implement the livestock component of this project in the five provinces around Mazar-i-Sharif. This 3-year project started in April 2010 and is managed from the Veterinary Training and Support Centre in Mazar.



Another achievement in 2010 is the extension of the ASAP project up to 30 April 2011. Because the provinces in the north are now covered by projects funded by EU, IDEA-NEW (USAID), IFAD and GTZ,

the ASAP extension will focus on the VFUs in the middle, the south and the east. The performance of the existing VFUs will be evaluated, improved and/or supported where necessary, and new VFUs will be established.

A disappointing event in the beginning of 2010 was the sudden and unexpected closure of the AECID project (funded by the Spanish government), while previously it looked like the project would continue for another year.



DCA-VET is still waiting for a follow-up of the World Bank Horticulture and Livestock Project. The training courses conducted for the World Bank in 2008 and 2009 in a subcontract to AVA would originally continue in 2010. However, at the moment of writing these prospects there is little progress; hopefully a follow-up will be effectuated in the second half of 2010.

In the meantime, since October 2009 an ambitious EU project is proceeding successfully as a start of a 4-year period. This project is implemented by the Veterinary Training and Support Centre in Herat and covers the four provinces in western Afghanistan. There is a close cooperation between DCA-VET and the Animal Health Development Project (AHDP), also funded by the EU, in collaboration with the Veterinary Directorate at the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock. This AHDP project is developing the veterinary infrastructure in Afghanistan, including monitoring and surveillance of emerging diseases. There is a role foreseen for the private veterinary service providers (veterinarians and paravets) in the field; their actions should be based on so-called Sanitary Mandates. In each province where DCA-VET is active (so not only the provinces covered by the EU project) a lot of attention is given to the communication and cooperation between private and public veterinary services.

For many years already, DCA-VET is active in importing vaccines and medicines into Afghanistan and in distributing these to the Veterinary Training and Support Centres and from there to the VFUs in the provinces. Vaccines, medicines, de-worming treatments and veterinary equipment are essential tools for the veterinarians and paravets, for sure in a country like Afghanistan. However, import and distribution is not a typical NGO activity; that is why DCA-VET since a few years has been investigating different opportunities to privatize this activity. It is quite sure now that in 2010 the grounding of VetServ, a commercial entity for importing and distributing veterinary pharmaceuticals, really will happen. Legal procedures have been started up and finances have been arranged by the Board of DCA-VET and the USAID supported organization "Afghan Small and Medium Enterprises Development" (ASMED). VetServ Ltd. will be an independent business, owned by shareholders, with an own Board separate from the DCA-VET Board. The first year(s) VetServ will operate from DCA-VET premises and the VetServ sales promotions will be supported by DCA-VET, but the target is to become fully independent. VetServ has its own staff, including a technical and a commercial director, and will extend its sales and distribution centres to more provinces.

After more than four years of financial support, the funding of the Royal Netherlands Embassy to the Baghlan Cheese Factory (BCF) came to an end in April 2010. It is disappointing to note that the sales of the different products of the factory are not yet covering the costs made for milk collection and processing. Recently, DCA-VET appointed an expat project manager who works now part-time as a commercial project manager for the BCF. A new feasibility study will be executed based on a more

promising dairy product range and cooperation with the private sector for marketing these products will be sought. The Board of DCA-VET decided to support BCF in order to achieve a sustainable business.



The veterinary component in DCU (Dutch Consortium for Uruzgan) is subcontracted by DCA-VET to the Afghanistan Veterinary Association, that finds some difficulties in implementation, mainly due to constraints in security. Now the Dutch Military Forces will be replaced by USA Military Forces we have to await how the safety situation will develop.

Overall, the prospects for the DCA-VET support to Afghanistan are good, although not all implementations are running smoothly and continuous efforts will be needed to meet our high standards of quality performance.

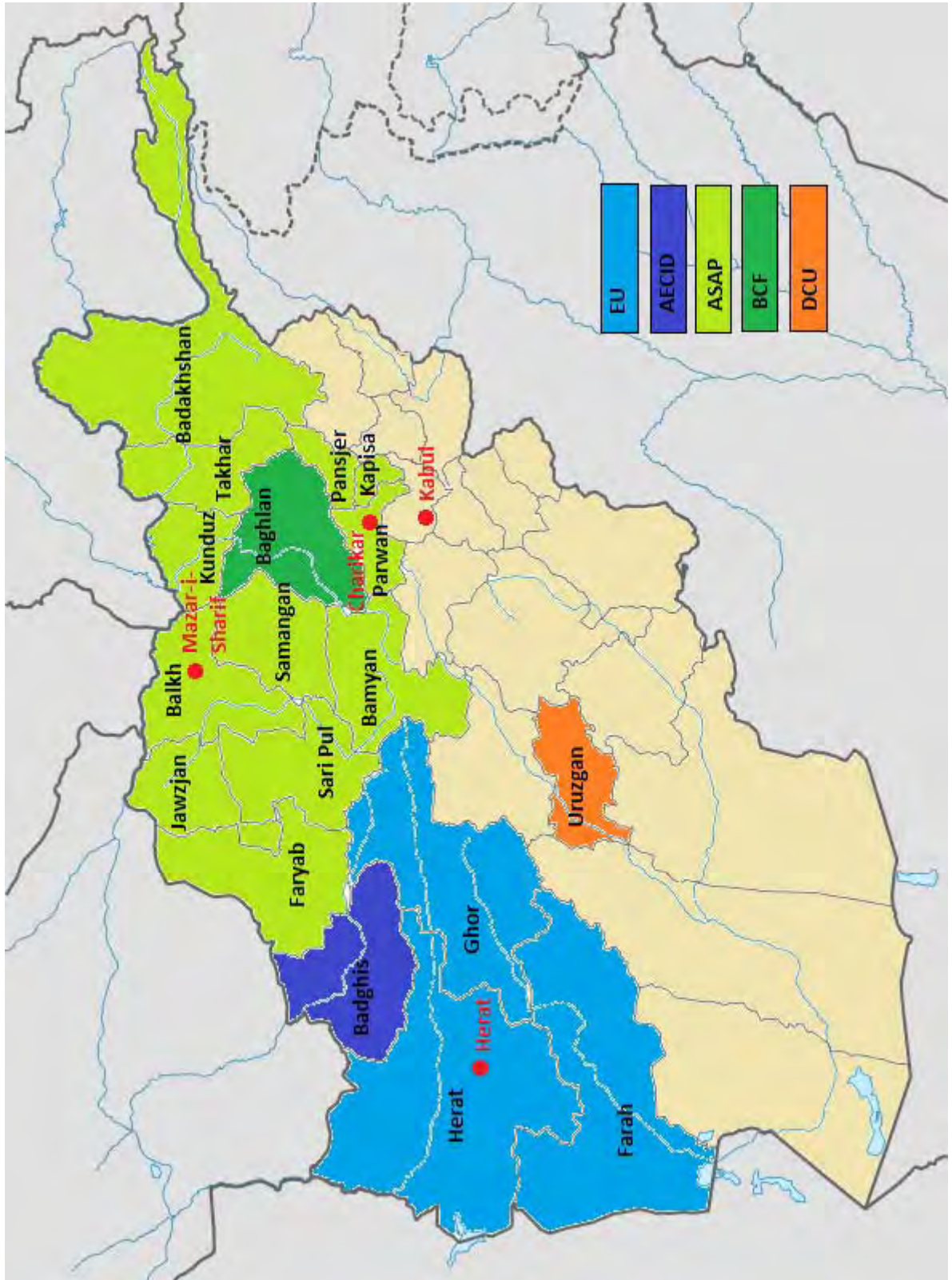
### **Timetable of DCA-VET projects**

*Green = ongoing and closed projects; Light green = foreseen extensions and new projects*

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>World Bank</b>	Oct 07 – Dec 09				
<b>AECID</b>		Dec 08 – April 10			
<b>ASAP</b>	Dec 06 – May 2010			May 2011	
<b>Brooke</b>	Apr 08 – Mar 09	Apr 09 – Mar 10	Apr 10 – Mar 11		
<b>IDEA-NEW</b>			Apr 10 – Mar 12		
<b>EU</b>		Oct 09 - Sept 12			
<b>Baghlan</b>	May 08 – Apr 10		Continued by DCA / external funding		
<b>DCU</b>	Jul 08–Mar 09	Apr 09 – Mar 13			
<b>GTZ</b>			Jun 10 – May 11	– May 13	
<b>IFAD</b>			3 year project		

## Abbreviations

ACDI/VOCA	Agricultural Cooperative Development International / Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AHDP	Animal Health Development Project
AI	Artificial Insemination
ASAP	Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development
AVA	Afghanistan Veterinary Association
BCF	Baghlan Cheese Factory
BVW	Basic Veterinary Worker
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Programme
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer
DAI	Development Alternatives Inc.
DCA & DCA-VET	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan – Veterinary Programmes
DCU	Dutch Consortium for Uruzgan
DVM	Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FLAG International	Firm-Level Advisory Group International
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HHP	Herd Health Package
HLP	Horticulture and Livestock Project (World Bank)
IDEA-NEW	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West Program
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MAIL	(Afghan) Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OIE	Office International des Epizooties
PADCO	Planning and Development Collaborative International Inc.
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RAMP	Rebuilding Agricultural Markets in Afghanistan Program
TPO	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
UK	United Kingdom
USAID	US Agency for International Development
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VTSC	Veterinary Training and Support Centre





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