

Another success story EU Herat project

Mrs. Iftikhar is a member of one of the many **Self-Help Groups** in Herat province. She says: "I am a 30 years old, married woman, with two sons and two daughters. In addition to being a housewife, I take care of our animals, being engaged in activities such as milking, feeding and collecting them to stable. Now I have 12 sheep and two cows to care for."

"I take my livestock keeping tasks seriously, so I participated in different extension courses and programs to increase my knowledge and learn applicable skills. Nevertheless, my knowledge and skills did not improve much. But then I heard through a village council that a different extension training was planned to be conducted in our village. I started to participate in the sessions that were facilitated by DCA. Here I learned about the various types of diseases animals may get infected with, what vaccines to use, how to milk my cows properly, what food to give to my sheep and cows, and how a good stable should look like. I also learned about diseases that can be passed from animals to humans, and how to maintain good hygiene."



Later on, with support from DCA and in collaboration with the participants of the extension sessions, we established a Self-Help Group, as a small income generating and business startup group. In this group, each member monthly saves 100 Afs in a cash box, finally to be used for starting up a business. After establishing the group, DCA also provided us with a course where we learned about small businesses, how to promote our business, marketing skills and other related topics."

"Seven months later, in consultation with the Group, we purchased 54,000 Afs silkworm cocoons and after two months of nurturing, we sold them for 66,000 Afs, which is a good achievement and profit. This motivated us to continue our group work and business."



"In addition, because of the lack of access to animal fodder during the winter season and to help our farmers to quality feed for their livestock, we constructed and established a fodder bank by our own expenses. In this fodder bank quality and enriched food materials are stored that farmers can purchase and utilise for their cows and sheep. We managed to buy bran, barley, maize, DCP powder and more to properly feed our livestock. We also already started to supply milk, eggs, yoghurt, ghee and other products to the local markets."

"The Self-Help Group has been extremely helpful to us. First of all, aside from the business activities, it helped the members of the group to come together and discuss monthly any relevant issues and concerns and suggest solutions. Secondly, we save money every month so later we can purchase what we need for our business. If we were to do this by our own separately, it would either fail or would take a long time to succeed. After a year, we now have saved 100,000 Afs in our box, which is quite a success. In this year, we gained more self-esteem and more respect from our family, as we are becoming financially independent and we can even be of financial support to our family.