

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Dutch Committee for Afghanistan – Livestock Programs

Colophon

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DCA Livestock Programs

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under the name DCA since 2005, # 119

Seat: Amersfoort, the Netherlands
Main office: Kabul, Afghanistan
Working area: Afghanistan
Focus: Livestock Health,
Production, and Welfare

Staff members: 308
Board: 5 members
Chairman of the Board: Theo Lam
Advisor to the Board: Ellen Geerlings
Advisory Council: 5 advisors

Mission: To reduce poverty and increase
food security for the people of Afghanistan
by improving the health and production of
their livestock.





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1. Preface



PVs-Practical Training, Herat VTSC

DCA is 35 years old! In September 1988, Bram Schreuder and Gert Jan Duives established the first Veterinary Training and Support Centre (VTSC) in Peshawar, Pakistan, and then started training veterinary paraprofessionals. Both have supported the continuity of DCA, and still sit on the board of the Dutch foundation.

2023 was also a special year for DCA-Livestock Programs regarding the total funds received in donations: USD 11 million in 1 year was available for project implementation. The funding is all direct because donors did not yet enter into contracts with the current authorities of Afghanistan. However, many of them are the same donors as before, such as the EU, IFAD and USAID when much of the budget for DCA was still channelled through Afghanistan's government budget. Obviously, these donors have confidence in our organisation.

It was also a special year as the training sessions for veterinary paraprofessionals resumed after a period of stagnation. Training "paravets" and forming VFUs is the backbone of the DCA-LP program.

We are fortunate that our experienced trainers were able to train dozens of veterinary paraprofessionals in DCA training centres in Charikar and Herat this year.

By the beginning of 2024, the organisational structure in Afghanistan also changed particularly in the top structure.

Dr Chalachew Agonafir became Executive Director from Country Director, and Dr Abdul Qader Fakhri is now Deputy Executive Director. Dr Faridoon Sherullah has

succeeded Dr Fakhri as Program Director. Furthermore, we are delighted that Dr Raymond Briscoe, the former Executive Director still wishes to remain part-time with DCA as Consultant Director - External Relations. Among other tasks he is managing DCA's lobbying activities.

In 2023, a DCA delegation visited IFAD and FAO in Rome, while another delegation visited the EU in Brussels. Another important event was that an IFAD delegation came to see first-hand the implementation of the RPSF and CRI projects both projects which they fund.

The evaluation turned out well and our staff received well-deserved compliments on what had been achieved. I travelled with the IFAD team, and we have seen well-run VFUs, productive Feed Banks and Milk Collection Centres, among others. Backyard Poultry implemented activities also of course were included. The poultry activities are so important for the poorest women in the communities.

Last year, we also started working on a new Strategic Plan for DCA-Livestock Programs. The current SP runs from 2020-2024, and we want to have another SP ready for the next 4 years by 2025.



Ab Emmerzaal
Secretary General DCA

2. Afghanistan Today



Vaccination & De-worming Campaign

In the concluding year, diplomatic interactions between certain countries and the DFA improved, with acceptance of some ambassadors and consulates enhancing trade and business prospects. Diplomats and ambassadors stationed in Doha regularly visited Afghanistan, fostering engagement with the DFA authorities. UNAMA, the UN Secretary Special Envoy, and the UN Country Team actively contributed to the development of Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG) worked diligently to secure funds for the nation, holding regular meetings in various countries with participation of the UN, EU, WB, ADB, donor countries, and international organisations. Development projects such as the Qush Tipa canal that irrigates more than 500,000 hectares, the repair of Salang, Wakhan Corridor to China, and Qashqari Fuel mine exploitation are in progress carried out by the DFA, China and other partners. Measures against corruption, poppy cultivation, and the narcotics business were steps in the right direction.

However, Afghanistan faced persistent confronts comprising global political and military conflicts, lack of legitimacy and international recognition, and internal issues like the education ban on girls, and the ban on women working for NGOs. Natural disasters, particularly a drought extending to 2024 continued to be a challenge. The UN reported that more than 28 million people (70%) are food insecure. A large earthquake in Herat and forced deportations of refugees (more than 1 million) by neighboring countries added to the complexities. Trade challenges, border closures, the exodus of educated individuals, and economic deflation presented ongoing hurdles. Further to these challenges, donations for

Afghanistan remained insufficient, prompting the initiation of few funding programs, and projects. DCA experienced a notable success in reaching 3.8 million individuals, creating jobs, and implementing various projects in 29 provinces. Innovative approaches such as the ECHO model, were employed to overcome bans on women and enhanced project impact. Efforts to address the challenges faced by herders and pastoralists included access to affordable veterinary services, revising the paravet curriculum, addressing the topics like anti-microbial resistance (AMR), and one health which showcased our proactive initiatives and alignment with the WOA standards. Immediate responses were undertaken to disasters, such as the Herat earthquake and drought in Badakhshan. Meeting with donors, participation in international events, and coordination with relevant authorities contributed to organizational success. Despite the overarching complexities, DCA's daily presence in the national and local media, and coordination with various stakeholders highlighted a commitment to improving the lives of Afghanistan's farmers and pastoralists. As we continue our journey, hopes remain high for a positive outcome, with expectations of continued dedication and collaboration.

Dr Abdul Qader Fakhri
Program Director





3. The current position of DCA and its approaches

Validation Workshop, Kabul Province

The organisation is working from a very sound foundation currently. New projects have been added to the portfolio with a total funding that far exceeds 2022. We are now also receiving direct funding from donors which demonstrates the trust and performance of our dedicated team of staff.

Our focus has and will be on sustainable development, but we also now implement some critical emergency humanitarian projects. The challenge is to engage with donors now to advocate for more longer-term projects building on those emergency short term ones we now implement to transition that work with the best practices learned to more of a development approach.

Our approach has not changed but we have diversified some specific areas to meet the current needs of our beneficiaries. We still are community based and have a work ethos of using an integrated approach empowering communities both men and women.

We emphasise a market driven approach through our work on livestock which includes livelihoods, market links, value added livestock products and by-products, income generation, creation of jobs, food security, and safety, women empowerment, and above all education through awareness.

We need to take also the One Health approach the benefits of which encompasses above all the people we serve, and the environment in which they live. A lot has been written about this approach at a high level, but work needs to begin at the bottom being at



Validation Workshop, Kabul Province

the community level, and those that provide services, to further advocate for a partnership of change, so all stakeholders are on board, working together, and understand the importance of One Health. It will be difficult to go through again another pandemic such as COVID-19 without being prepared.

Our gender challenge has been well documented, but we again find solutions and strive for equality.



Dr Raymond Briscoe
Consultant Director - External Relations

4. Projects, Success Stories and Major Achievements

a. Major Achievements for DCA during 2023

Major Achievements, 2023

• Provinces Covered:	29	• Milk Collection Centers Established:	37
• Districts Covered:	304	• Milk Processing Centers Established:	5
• People Impacted:	3,837,750	• Feed Banks Established:	52
• New PVs Trained & VFUs Established:	85	• Lamb Fattening:	8,005 Individuals
• Backyard Poultry Farms Established:	2,590	• Sales Points/Stop Shops Established:	484
• Semi-commercial Poultry Farms Established:	6	• Seed Banks Established:	5
• Animals Vaccinated:	7,380,497	• Cash Distributed:	1,598 Individuals
• Animals Dewormed:	3,624,766	• Milking Goats Distributed:	176
• Animals Treatments:	4,205,870	• Central Hubs Established:	21



Cashmere Goats Breed, Herat Province



4b. EU-Livelihoods Support Project

Mr Lal Gul, EU-Project Beneficiary

A project funded by the European Union that responds to the needs of people in the country. The project aims to address the challenges of inadequate and expensive food due to conflict, severe drought, poor harvests, and the impact of COVID-19. It operates in 16 provinces and 137 districts, focusing on livestock and market systems that were previously unreachable due to conflict. The project aims to create and expand micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), increase employment opportunities, and improve the socio-economic conditions of communities in the VFU catchment areas. It also aims to improve animal health, increase dietary diversity, and enhance community resilience. The project targets 350,000 households, including 850 private sector actors, 49,000 pastoralist households, rural youth, elderly, disabled, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and women. Its main objectives are to safeguard livelihoods and diversify food intake by promoting private-sector development and enhancing the resilience mechanisms of rural communities through livestock-focused innovations. The project also addresses gender equality and one health as cross-cutting issues.

Massive Vaccination Campaign

Mr Lal Gul is a farmer from Qarabagh district in Kabul province. He relies on his 60 goats for his livelihood, as he supports his eight family members with his livestock.

Unfortunately, last year, his herd was infected with a disease. Five goats died, and 24 more aborted. Mr Lal Gul noticed strange symptoms around his goats' mouths, which appeared like lesions, and he became extremely worried. He took his sick animals to a local veterinarian, who prescribed medication. Despite spending 10,000 AFN (equivalent to 125 USD), some of his animals still died, while the rest recovered with a significant loss in weight and milk production. Mr Lal Gul was concerned about preventing the disease's recurrence and ensuring his animals' protection.

Thanks to the awareness raised by the DCA and the AESLSP project staff through extension services, Mr Lal Gul learned how to protect his livestock from dangerous diseases. He was able to vaccinate all his 60 goats against sheep and goat pox for only 120 AFN (equivalent to 1.5 USD). Mr Lal Gul is now confident that his animals are safe from these diseases, and he is grateful for the support provided by the DCA and the AESLSP project staff.



4c. CRI Project

Mrs Seya Moi and her daughter, MCC-Baghalan Province

The CRI project is designed based on the socio-economic impacts of the long years of conflict and the pandemic, the effects of the near collapse of the financial institutions, and the ripple effects associated with the Ukraine crisis. CRI resources were used to finance the production, processing, and marketing activities of beneficiaries in 15 provinces where the target groups are predominant and whose livelihoods are in the livestock dairy industry, poultry, lamb fattening, wool, and cashmere production. The overall goals and objectives of the project are to minimize the impacts of the Ukraine war crisis ripple effects on 100,000 vulnerable settled and nomadic pastoralist households in Afghanistan and to protect and restore the livelihood assets and production capacity with facilitating access to markets and financing.

Mrs Seya Moi's MCC is linked to the supply chain (herders and pastoralists) and signed contracts are made with businesses in the cities offering value addition to create the market linkages. "We have signed contracts with customers in the city of Baghlan to deliver processed dairy and receive fresh milk from 30-40 herder families in rural areas of Gawsawara village and beyond", says Mrs Seya Moi.

The project is designed in response to the rising prices of imported products such as flour, rice, oil, and fuel. due to the Ukraine-Russia war. The MCC members confirmed this at the discussion. Responding to the price increase, Mrs Seya Moi added, "the price of our products didn't change whereas the cost of imported items is more than double."

"I will establish a big dairy processing plant in the coming 5 years, Inshallah (God willing)", says Mrs Seya Moi confirming her empowerment.

Milk Collection Centers (MCC): Value Addition and Market Linkages

Mrs Seya Moi, one of the beneficiaries of the MCC in Gawsawara village of Baghlan Province. She is the breadwinner for a family of 9 members including a blind husband, 5 daughters and 2 sons. Mrs Seya Moi was very quick to expand her MCC right after DCA's intervention. "I established the MCC three weeks ago after selection and training in the last 7 months, and the amount of milk I collect has increased from 300Kg to 400Kg. "I didn't have a refrigerator before this project, and most of the fresh milk perished and was thrown out," Mrs Seya Moi recalls.



Milk collection Center, Logar Province

4d. RPSF Project



Hamidullah taking the temperature of a cow in the cattle crush, Barnavad village, Ghoryan District, Herat Province

The project intended to strengthen the mainstreaming of women and youth who play an important role in the agriculture and livestock sector and are one of the most vulnerable community groups due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, Kuchi and Pastoralist households including female-headed households do not have access to veterinary services or sufficient feed resources and are the most vulnerable, Kuchi and Pastoralist households from whom the youth have returned to the tribe because of the loss of their jobs and are facing hardship, dairy producers whose access to markets has been disrupted, market players including youth who are involved in the processing and marketing of dairy products and traders and managers of the livestock wet/live animal markets in the 10 targeted provinces.

Trust - the Key for Local Development: The Story of a Paravet in Ghoryan District, Herat

One of the recently graduated paravets that established a VFU in Barnavad village of Ghoryan District in Herat Province. The paravet named Hamidullah Abduljalil is a breadwinner of 7 family members including himself. Barnavad village has more than 10,000 animals and there is no Veterinary Field Unit (VFU) close by which makes it an ideal location for establishing a new VFU.

“Nomination of candidates for paravet training has a number of criteria at the outset”, says Hamidullah. “The fascination, honesty and trust are the key for the customary leaders to pick the right person”. According to Hamidullah, there were 12 candidates selected by customary leaders in the village. Each of them took the entrance exam at the DCA training center in Herat but “I was the one who proceeded to the next level and attended the 6 months training”.

After 6 months of training at DCA’s training center located in Herat, Hamidullah started to deliver veterinary and extension services to the communities in the village since mid-July 2023. “So far, I have been working with 149 household herders in 7 sub-villages and treated 497 different species of animals. “My clients are herders and kuchies (pastoralists). Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP), enterotoxemia (sheep and goats), internal and external parasites of cattle, sheep and goats are the main diseases I treated”. The herders are requesting for quality vaccines for sheep and goat pox, and enterotoxemia before the winter season commences. As a trusted member of the community, Hamidullah has the opportunity of his work being announced by the Religious Leaders on Friday prayers that attracted several customers. He also rides his motorbike to visit different villages to treat animals, advise the herders, and maintain the cold chain to preserve vaccines. In less than a month since the establishment of his VFU, he has earned AFN 5,000 as a profit due to sales of medicines and vaccines amounting to AFN 12,000.

With the funding of IFAD-RPSF and CRI projects DCA has trained 45 paravets in 2023 that provide fee-based veterinary services to the herders and pastoralists in 15 provinces of Afghanistan. More than 45,000 households benefit from the veterinary and extension services of these paravets per annum. The extension packages that target seasonal treatment and vaccination, gender integration, livestock and livestock products improvement, and hygiene benefit both the herders and the paravets given that productivity and income increase for the herders, and more customers visit the VFUs.



4e. BADILL Project

Vegetable Production, Kandahar Province

The project under Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan and Italian funding is designed to safeguard livelihoods and build resilience that will help communities generate social and economic benefits in Kandahar province through sustainable farm and off-farm livelihoods. The activities planned under the alternative development program aim to empower individuals, households, and communities to adopt sustainable livelihood options that enable them to not fall back into a humanitarian crisis, and adapting illicit coping mechanisms not limited to the illicit poppy production and sale industry. The focus of the project was to reduce poppy production and trade in Kandahar province through food security and alternative livelihood opportunities. The project aimed “to boost food security, improve livelihoods, increase income, and create jobs for 6,377 vulnerable households through engagement in licit agriculture, and value chain development in Kandahar Province”.

Food Diversification and Improvement

Mr Ahmadullah is 31 years old and is the breadwinner for his family of nine. They live in Kashani village, located in the Dand district of Kandahar province. Mr Ahmadullah was a beneficiary of vegetable production, which helps to supplement the income generated from his 0.4-hectare land. However, due to drought and lack of fertilizer, he has not been able to grow enough crops to sustain his family. As a result, they often have to survive on only white bread, or borrow food items from their relatives’ shop as a loan.

“In January 2023, the DCA-BADILL project staff visited my village to hold a meeting with the customary leaders. The meeting was held to discuss the criteria for selecting farmers who would be supported for vegetable cultivation. Fortunately, I was selected as one of the beneficiaries”, says, Mr Ahmadullah.

“After selection I received several trainings in all agricultural best practices for vegetable production and received 25 Kg DAP, 25 Kg urea fertilizer, and 1 kg of humic acid to produce seedlings, then I started to vegetable production on one Jerib of land”, Mr Ahmadullah recalls.

Mr Ahmadullah added, “I earned 45,000 AFN from selling the vegetable harvest of one Jerib of land to the local market, the income enables me to pay off my loan and purchase the basic food items for my family but in the past, my income from two Jeribs of land was less than 35,000 AFN and I expect to earn an additional 20,000 AFN by the end of the vegetable harvesting season”.



Improved vegetable seeds



4f. DAI-ACEBA Project

Ms Sugra (right) and Ms Kubra (left) are two of the herders benefiting from the project

The DAI-ACEBA funded project focused on inclusive livestock value and supply chains (specifically small ruminant inputs and their by-products) from the grassroots to district, provincial and national levels. Through implementation of inclusive value chains at each level of the production and marketing of the products, underserved people at high risk of vulnerability in the previously conflict prone areas were part of the project. The spread of COVID-19 was addressed through using WHO approved awareness creation and distribution of PPE throughout the project implementation. The overall goals and objectives of the project were to enhance access to livelihoods, and income using inclusive, market-driven and sustainable development to 27,471 direct and 192,297 indirect beneficiaries of the production and value chain actors through the establishment of new or already existing sales points (stop shops).

One Step Ahead - A Better Livelihood and Income through Sales Points

“My income has increased mainly due to the reduction of animal diseases and use of livestock feed that led to a better-quality wool to sell it to the stop shop keeper.”
Ms Sugra.

Ms Sugra who is the breadwinner of 8 children and Ms Kubra a breadwinner of 7 children from Zar Khawal village, expressed their happiness with the project that helped them improve their livelihoods. “My income has increased

mainly due to the reduction of animal diseases and use of livestock feed that led to a better-quality wool to sell it to the stop shop keeper”, said Ms Sugra. Ms Kubra on the other hand indicated that, “before the start of the project a year ago, mortality of animals was more than 50% in my neighborhood, but thanks to the project, now there is a high reduction in mortality rate.” A recent study in Afghanistan suggests that mortality reduced from 25-30% to 2-3% as a result of DCA’s interventions.

The rural herders are primarily trained on the collection of wool and cashmere, diseases that impact the quality of these products, seasonal vaccination, and linkages to a feed trader. Dr Amanullah explained to the herders during an extension training that, “you have the stop shop keeper in your village to sell your collected wool and cashmere to. The Veterinary Field Unit (VFU) is available nearby to provide seasonal deworming, treatment, and vaccination services for your sheep and goats. Feed can be purchased from nearby feed traders using the cash grant that has been distributed. We hope that this will lead to improved income and livelihoods for the community. There are currently 54 herders participating in this extension session, with 40% of them being women.

Stop shop keepers like Mohammad Ali not only buy wool and cashmere but also employ women to help them clean, sort and spin. Mohammad recruits 200 women for spinning and 15 women for washing of the wool. He pays Afs 70/kg for the spinning and Afs 300/day for washing. He has already collected 7 tons of wool in 2023 and expecting to increase the volume when the herders from



Mr Mohammad Ali - a stop shop keeper in Bamyán District Center

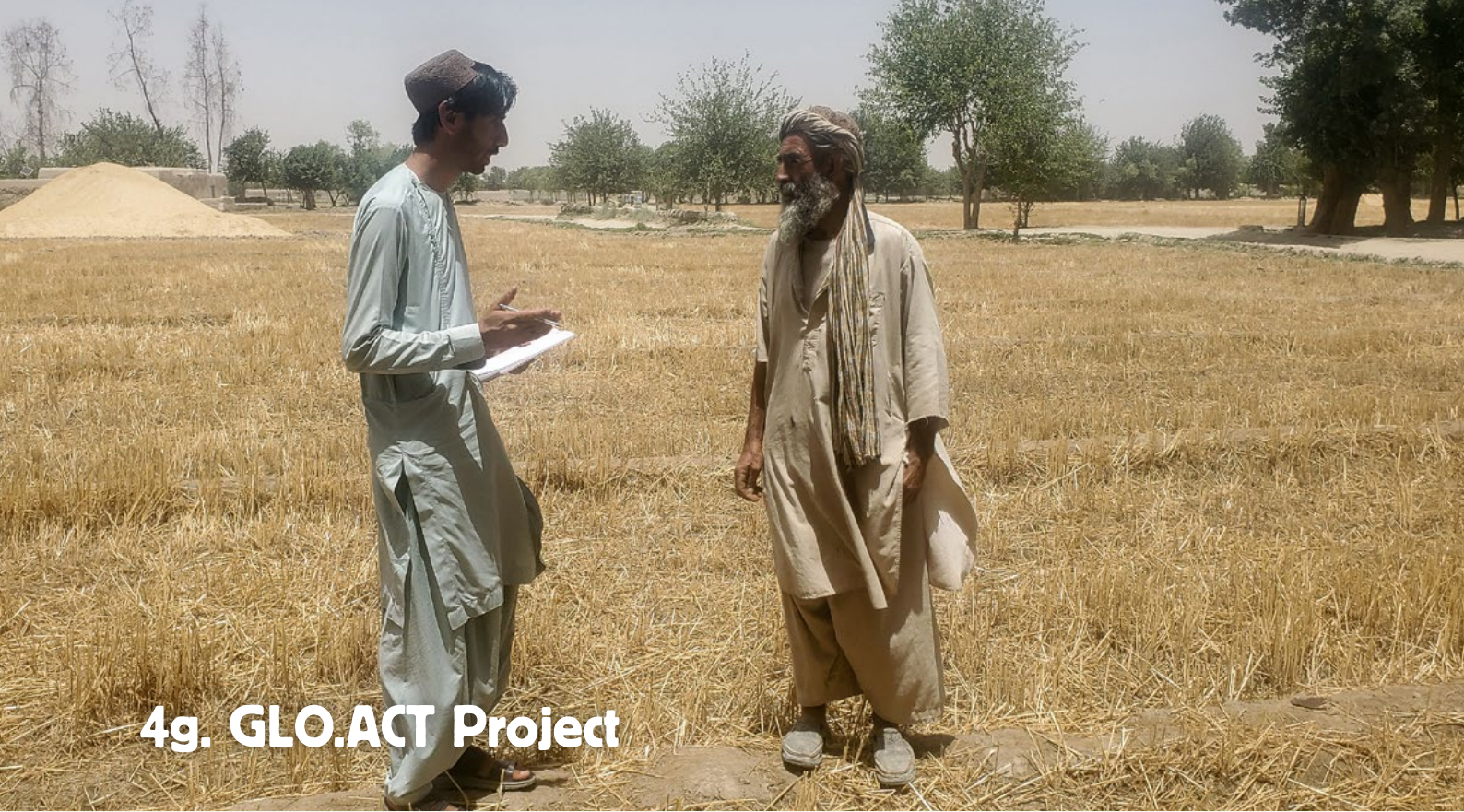
the mountains of Bamyán start to sell their products.

There are more than 10 feed traders in Bamyán Center with concentrated feed in their stock for dairy, beef, lamb fattening and poultry farms (both broilers and layers). The main ones I observed are sunflower meal, cottonseed meal, wheat bran, ground corn grain, ground wheat grain, ground barley grain, and mixed feed.

Ms Sugra and Kubra would appreciate it if the project activities were expanded geographically and include other livestock products such as dairy, skin, live animals, poultry, and similar products. This includes a demonstration of improved stable refurbishment, supply of churning machines, Quroot (locally made dry cheese), hygienic kits, access to vaccination, other animal health services, and marketing.

Dr Amanullah Mahir (DCA's Community Mobilizer) has trained 54 herders (40% women) on seasonal diseases, wool and cashmere collection processes, and linking herders with feed traders.





4g. GLO.ACT Project

Mr Agha Noor in his agricultural land

The project addressed some of the root causes of human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The response mainly focused on improving livelihoods through agricultural interventions and raising awareness to reduce the fundamental causes of vulnerability. This reduces escalating food insecurity, price increases, the growth of poppy production, and reduce vulnerability to prevent human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The overall objectives of the project were to reduce the root causes of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) through economic empowerment and awareness-raising regarding TIP and SOM, as well as their consequences, among the local population in Kandahar and Helmand provinces of Afghanistan.

“Illegal Immigration was Halted by Improved Agricultural Production.”

Agha Noor is a 55-year-old resident of Khalaj village, Nawa district of Helmand province. He has 11 family members, including a son who is blind, and he is also disabled due to illegal immigration. “I have had to immigrate to Iran illegally several times due to continuous conflicts, extreme poverty, and insecurity in my home country”, says, Mr Agha Noor.

Mr Agha Noor added, “I got lost in the mountains on a challenging illegal immigration route for about 35 days to reach the destination country. I worked there as a daily wage worker for a few days, but unfortunately,

I was arrested by the police due to illegal residency, after spending two or three months in prison, I was deported to my home country by the Iran border police with great cruelty”.

“Due to the severe effects of using poisonous gunpowder during the combat one of my sons lost his eyesight, I was unable to treat my blind son’s eyes due to extreme vulnerability and we only had potatoes in our daily meals at home, but couldn’t afford enough oil to cook them,” Mr Agha Noor recalls.

“I was planting wheat every year without crop rotation in my two acres of agricultural land but due to the lack of improved seeds and fertilizer, the yield of the land was reduced year by year”, says, Mr Agha Noor.

He was a vulnerable beneficiary of the Global Act project. He received maize cultivation training and learned the best practices of maize cultivation. He also received 25 Kg of maize improved seeds and 40 Kg of diammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilizer for one Jerib land. He has cultivated maize on his land with using the best practices as per the advice and instructions of project staff.

He expressed his happiness with the project and hopes that it will support them further in the agriculture sector to build their life in their own country better. He vowed not to immigrate to other countries illegally.



4h. TDS Project

Mufti Mohammad Baqir Qambari talking at stakeholders' workshop

The Donkey Sanctuary (TDS) funded project is designed to support and improve welfare services, husbandry practices, behavior changes, building capacities and outreach, compassion building, participatory monitoring, and networking for the welfare and well-being of equines, particularly donkeys and mules. The overall goals and objectives of the project are to sustainably improve and benefit 1,350 donkeys that are linked to the livelihoods and daily routines of 2,100 donkey owners in three provinces of Afghanistan.

Religious Leaders Encouraged and Motivated to Advocate for Equine Welfare

Mufti Mohammad Baqir Qambari, who is 48 years old, is in charge of managing the religious department in the Yakawlang district of Bamyan province. He gave permission to the TDS project to work with women. Mr Qambari also visited several project beneficiaries to advise them on equine welfare and compassion.

When asked about the TDS project, Mufti Mohammad Baqir Qambari said, "The TDS project is exceptional because it focuses on donkey welfare, rights, and well-being. Our holy book strongly emphasises compassion towards animals and their welfare. Therefore, I have informed all the religious leaders in mosques to talk to their followers about donkey compassion and welfare during the main prayers."

Qari Abdul Salam, a 45-year-old religious leader, was

initially unhappy with the activities and approaches of the TDS project. However, he attended the TDS project provincial stakeholders' workshop in Talukan city of Takhar province, where he was encouraged and motivated to advocate for equine welfare and compassion in farming communities. Thanks to his advocacy, 60 stables were improved for 90 donkeys and 180 ruminants.

A group of donkey owners from Khoja Khalil village of Talukan City, Takhar province, consisting of Mr Najibullah (53 years old), Mr Amanullah (34 years old), Mr Ahmad Ullah (22 years old), Mr Mohd. Hassan (44 years old), and Mr Bazar Ali (36), have stated that their behavior towards equine welfare have improved due to the advice and instructions of Qari Abdul Salam during Friday prayers. They now provide their donkeys with proper feed, water, stables, and ventilation.

A group of donkey owners in the Gara village of Yakawlang district, Bamyan province, along with Mr Ghafar, the community development council (CDC) leader, Mr Hussin, Mr Jan, and Mr Yaqub, have stated that religious leaders play a crucial role in promoting equine welfare and compassion. The farming community has now started following all the equine welfare and compassion measures, thanks to the guidance and speeches of these religious leaders. As a conclusion, the religious leaders have established a connection with the community members, school teachers, and private local service providers to ensure a better understanding of equine welfare focusing on donkeys' well-being, rights, and compassion.



4i. AHF Project

Roh Gul, 33-Year-Old Head of a Household with her children

The Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) funded the project in the three districts of Badakhshan province by providing unconditional food (cash) assistance to address the increased food and nutrition security risks and prevent the most vulnerable households from resorting to negative coping strategies. The project's overall objectives are to improve the food security of households affected by multiple shocks, under IPC Phases 3 and 4 as highly vulnerable and in need of emergency food assistance.

Cash Support Saves a Female Headed Household and her Children from Hunger

Roh Gul, a 33-year-old widow with seven children, depended on assistance from villagers for her livelihood. She received food (cash) assistance in the Pilar village of Jorm district of Badakhshan province.

"I lost my husband at the age of 24 when he was killed in a car accident while serving in the military. Since then, I have been responsible for supporting my 7 children (5 sons and 2 girls)", says, Mrs Roh Gul.

Two of her sons are currently ill and require medical attention. One of them has an eye condition that has resulted in the loss of one of his eyes, while the other suffers from a skin disease that requires treatment. Unfortunately, the provincial hospital is too far from their home and the roads are in bad condition, making it difficult to transport them there. The mother laments

that she was unable to save her younger son's eye due to insufficient funds for transportation and medical expenses. Her limited income only covered the cost of feeding her children. In exchange for food, she does laundry, cleans floors, and performs other household chores.

Fortunately, her situation improved when the AHF project survey team visited her village and deemed her the most eligible and vulnerable female-headed household. She received the first installment of 12,595 AFN, which completely transformed her life. She was able to take her son to the center of the province of Faizabad city, where he received treatment for his skin condition and medication. The doctor recommended an eye operation in Kabul for her other son, but she did not have enough money to take him there. Half of the money was spent on food items such as rice, oil, flour, salt, tea, and soap, as well as clothing for her children. She is grateful for the AHF project support and hopes that the project will continue in her village in the future.



Roh Gul with her young son on the left who lost his left eye while the right eye needs an operation

5. Organisation

DCA Livestock Programs is a community driven organisation based in the Netherlands and Afghanistan, implementing different projects funded by several donors in Afghanistan since 1988. In 1994, the organisation was officially registered as DCA-VET at the Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands. DCA's mission is built upon 4 pillars: food/nutrition security, livelihoods, and job creation; extension services; livestock products value chain development and institutional capacities to engage the Public Private Partnership. This new profile asked for a new name: since 2017 DCA-VET is called DCA Livestock Programs. DCA Livestock Programs has a Board that outlines the DCA policy. An Advisory Council provides the Board (bi)annually with support and advice.

Afghanistan

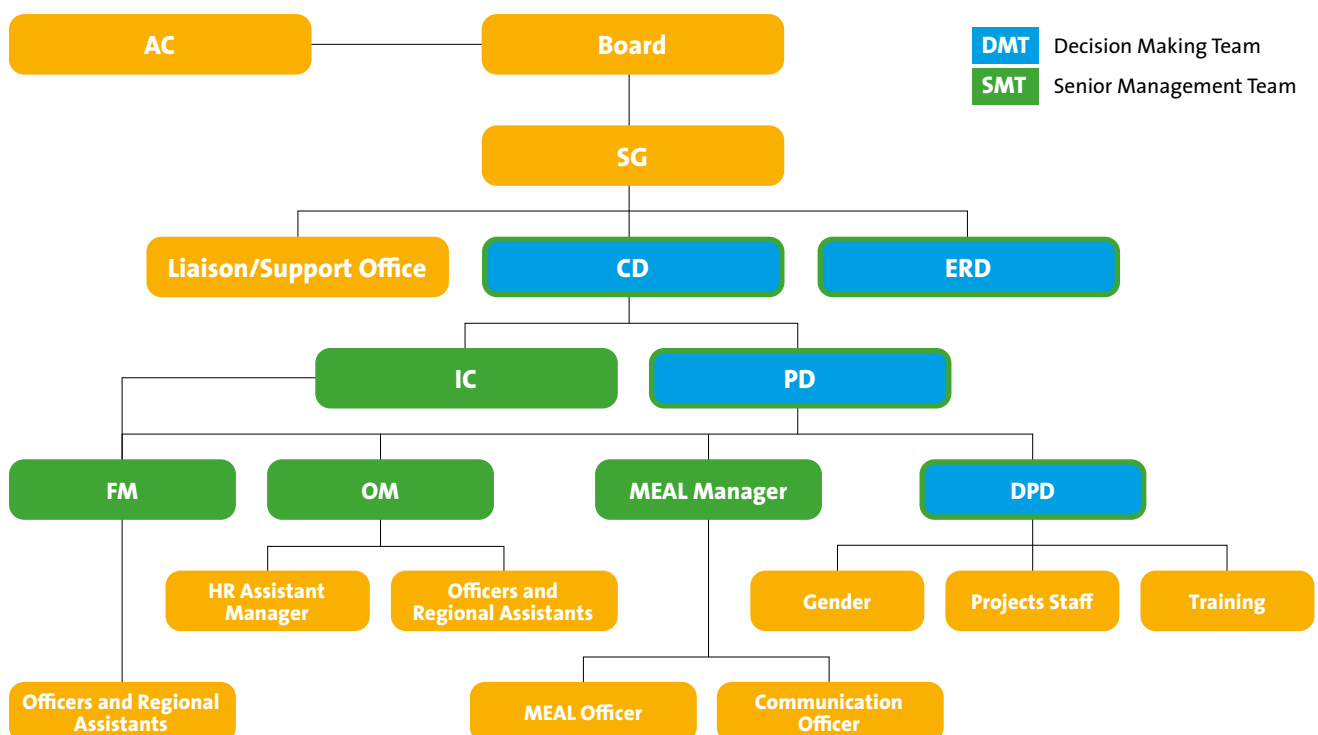
The DCA team in Afghanistan consists of around 308 staff, mainly Afghan nationals, with two expats one of whom is part time. The national staff represent all different ethnic groups. The staff work on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects, financial affairs, administration, HRM, and facilitation of services. The country director Chalachew Agonafir supported by the External Relations Director, Raymond Briscoe

oversee the strategic management, the acquisition of new projects, communication with donors, the Afghan government, and stakeholders. The Program Director, Dr Abdul Qader Fakhri, manages all project implementation. A decision-making team (DMT) consisting of the CD, ERD, PD, and two senior project managers serve primarily as the final decision-making body in Kabul for the preparation and implementation of DCA projects in Afghanistan. The Senior Management Team on the other hand is represented by the DMT, Internal Control, MEAL, Finance, and Operation departments.

In 2023, DCA offices are in Kabul (HQ) with regional offices in Herat, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Balkh, and Paktia with sub-offices in each region, the main training centre is situated in Charikar center of Parwan province.

Netherlands

The Directors in Afghanistan work closely with the Board in Holland through the Secretary General, Ab Emmerzaal. In Holland, the Liaison and Support office facilitates the monitoring, support to projects, finances, and the facilitation of the regular Board meetings.



6. Board and Advisory Council

Members of the Board



Theo Lam,
DVM PhD
Chairman



Gert-Jan Duives,
DVM
Secretary



Romke Steensma,
CA
Treasurer



Bram Schreuder,
DVM PhD
Member



Kees van Maanen,
DVM PhD
Member



Ellen Geerlings,
MSc PhD
Advisor to the Board

Board

As in previous years, in 2023 DCA was governed by a Board with its seat in the Netherlands. The Board comprises of 5 committed volunteers who devote their expertise to the benefit of DCA. The Board has one advisor, Ellen Geerlings. The Board met thirteen times in 2023, including two meetings with the Advisory Council. (AC)

Advisory Council

In 2023, the DCA Board met twice with the Advisory Council, discussing the current dynamics and the future of DCA's program, the strategy under the current circumstances in Afghanistan, and DCA's lobbying policy. Since 2021, the DCA Advisory Council consisted of five members. Cees de Haan resigned from the advisory council at the end of 2022 and Henk Mol resigned in 2023. 2 new members joined the AC in 2023, Hedwig Bruggeman and Henk Jan Ormel.

Members of the Advisory Council



Peter de Leeuw,
DVM PhD
Previous CVO Ministry of Agriculture NL



Frauke de Weijer,
DVM BA MPA
Development policy



Lucy Maarse,
MSc
Livestock & Livelihood



Henk Jan Ormel,
DVM
Former FAO expert



Hedwig Bruggeman,
MSc
Manager WUR

7. Partnerships

Partnership is an important aspect of DCA's operation because it allows an integrated, and multidisciplinary approach. Partnership stimulates communication, coordination, trust, avoids duplication, and fosters a sharing of knowledge. For partnerships to flourish we need funding, and an understanding of the roles each play.

Government

We work with and report to many Government Departments of different Ministries at Central, Regional, Provincial and District levels. The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) is our principal partner. Our recent work has been with the Ministry of Public Health where we have collaborated on One Health bringing awareness to rural communities on animal, human and environmental health. Our training centre at Charikar is registered with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA), and we report regularly to the Ministry of Economy. The Public Private Partnership is very important for both sectors to work together towards a sustainable outcome to the benefit of both parties.

Donors

We would like to express our appreciation to the donors who fund our various projects because we rely exclusively on them for the work we do. We acknowledge our current donors: IFAD, European Commission, DAI-ACEBA, UNODC, AHF, Department of State, the Brooke, Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA), and The Donkey Sanctuary (TDS).

NGOs, Other International Organisations and Clusters

The communication and coordination we have with other NGOs is very important to us. We acknowledge the support given by such organisations as Agha Khan Foundation (AKF), Relief International (RI), Afghanistanid, PRB, ICARDA, Concern Worldwide, Care International and MISFA to name but a few.

We are a member of the Afghanistan Food Security and Agriculture cluster (FSAC), of the FAO, Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF)/OCHA, and the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR).



8. Finance

Expenditures in 2023

The expenditures of DCA Livestock Programs to keep the overall program and the individual project running in 2023 amounted to USD 11.02 Million.

DCA received for the larger part funds from:

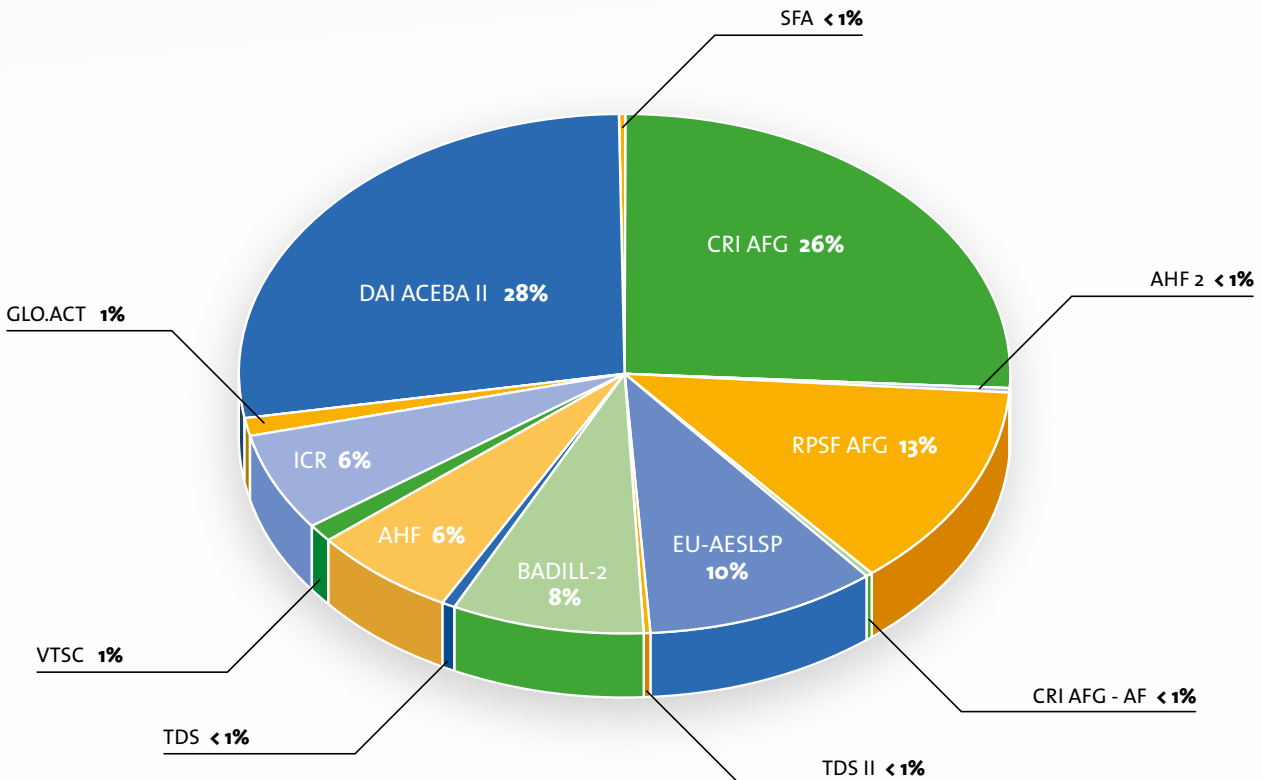
- DAI Global provided funds for ACEBA project.
- UNODC provided funds for Food Security, Livelihoods Protection and Alternative Development project.
- IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) provided funds for Rural Poor Stimulus Facility – Afghanistan (RPSF– Afghanistan), Crisis Response Initiative Facility – Afghanistan (CRI– Afghanistan) and additional fund for the expansion of (CRI– Afghanistan) projects.
- European Commission or EU, for Afghanistan essential services and livelihoods stabilization program.

For smaller projects, from:

- UNODC, for Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Smuggling (GLO.ACT).
- Sustainable Fibre Alliance, for Implementation of Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA) Standard in Afghanistan.
- The Donkey Sanctuary funded TDS project first phase and its expansion for further two years.
- AHF Food (cash) assistance to IPC Phase 3 and 4 vulnerable people of 3 districts of Badakhshan and Food (cash) Assistance to the Earthquake Affected Population 3 Districts of Herat Province, Afghanistan.

The below graph shows the expenditures per project expressed in percentages. From the graph, it can be concluded that 94% of all expenditures are used for projects implementation.

Total Expenditures 2023





9. The way forward

Lamb Weighing, Badghis Province

Looking back on accomplishments in 2023, I am immensely proud of the significant progress we have made across various sectors. With over 8 projects, 300+ staff and coverage of 29 provinces, our reach has expanded. Despite challenges, our collective efforts yielded substantial results, impacting over 3.8 million Afghans in 2023. The adoption of innovative approaches - the ground-breaking ECHO Model that brought women effected by the ban on board, traceability and certification of cashmere, and establishment and sustaining of the sales points in the livestock value chain development - is yielding positive outcomes. Our paravets, both new and existing, have surpassed expectations in their entrepreneurial expansions, providing essential animal health services based on a fee-for-services model. Leveraging our expertise, we are pioneering milk collection centers, milk processing plants, feed banks, poultry, and more. Our efforts in crop production and value chain development of high value crops such as saffron and vegetable processing are bearing fruits. I recognize the indispensable role of customary leaders in our project cycle management and their invaluable contributions to the success of our initiatives. These accomplishments signify not only the resilience of our

“Our expedition ahead is marked by robust learning and strategic scaling up at DCA.”

team, but also our commitment to adaptability and innovation in addressing evolving challenges.

As we step into the new year 2024, our commitment to grow remains unwavering, escalating our reach and perpetuating the positive impact we have achieved so far. Our expedition ahead is marked by robust learning and strategic scaling up at DCA. Our commitment to private sector development will remain the key areas of our learning and scale up processes. Equally vital is our focus on tracing and certification of livestock products, promoting gender empowerment, and nurturing partnership from the grassroots to the policy level. The ban on women and girls presents a formidable challenge, yet we keep on leveraging every possibility, including the adopted ECHO model, to bridge the gender gap and drive transformative change.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the communities we are privileged to serve, the esteemed customary leaders who play a pivotal role in organising our services, the resilient and dedicated team at DCA, and the unwavering trust bestowed upon us by our valued donors. Cheers to the successes of the past year and the promising journey that lies ahead.

Chalachew N. Agonafir
Country Director



Abbreviations

*Vaccination
Campaign,
Herat Province*

AC	Advisory Council	IC	Internal Controller
ACG	The Afghanistan Coordination Group	ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ADB	Asian Development Bank	IDPs	Internally Displaced People
ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
AELSP	Afghanistan Essential Services and Livelihoods Stabilization Program	IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
AHF	Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund	LH	Livelihoods
AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance	MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
AR	Annual Report	MCC	Milk Collection Center
BA	Bachelor of Arts	MEAL	Monitoring Evaluation Accountability Learning
BADILL	Boost Alternative Development Integrated Licit Livelihood	MISFA	Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan
CCPP	Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia	MoEC	Ministry of Economy
CD	Country Director	MoLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
CDC	Community Development Council	MPA	Master of Public Administration
CLAP	Community Livestock and Agriculture Project	MSc	Master of Science
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019	MSME's	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
CRI	Crisis Response Initiatives	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
DAI/ACEBA	Development Alternatives, Inc./Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-oriented Businesses Activity	OM	Operations Manager
DAP	Di-ammonium Phosphate	PD	Program Director
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan	PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
DCA-LP	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan Livestock Programs	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
DFA	De facto Authorities	PRB	Partners in Revitalisation and Building
DMT	Decision Management Team	PUR	PUR Project
DPD	Deputy Program Director	PV	Paravet
DVM	Doctor of Veterinary Medicine	RI	Relief International
ECHO	Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes	RPSF	Rural Poor Stimulus Facility
ERD	External Relations Director	SFA	Sustainable Fibre Alliance
EU	European Union	SG	Secretary General
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
FSAC	(Afghanistan) Food Security & Agriculture Cluster	SOM	Smuggling of Migrants
FS	Food Security	TDS	The Donkey Sanctuary
FM	Finance Manager	TIP	Trafficking in Persons
GLO ACT	Global Action	UN	United Nations
HH	Household	UNOCHA	UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
HQs	Headquarters	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
HRM	Human Resource Management	USA	United States of America
		USAID	US Agency for International Development
		VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
		VTSC	Veterinary Training and Support Center
		WB	World Bank
		WOAH	World Organisation for Animal Health
		WUR	Wageningen University Research

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