



## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

APR-JUN-2024

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided Technical and Logistical Support to VFUs
- 15 Para-Vets Graduated
- Farmers Training Through Extension Groups
- Stop Shops Received Support and Refresher Training
- Distributed Churning Machines & Mineral Blocks to Vulnerable Women-headed HHs
- Established 44 New Milk Collection Centers
- Conducted 12 Farmer's Field Days
- Herders Received Emergency Response Feed Packages and Training
- Farmers Received Training and Fodder Crops Packages
- Beekeeping
- Self-Help Groups Established
- Urea Treatment Demonstrations
- Pasture Management Committee Units Established
- Training Workshops on Rangeland and Water Management Conducted
- Animal Welfare

### VISION:

Food security and food safety in Afghanistan are supported through the provision of livestock services in the private sector in coordination with other stakeholders such that livestock owners/keepers have access to veterinary care and livestock extension services, and they can increase their income by applying improved animal production and product processing practices.

### MISSION:

To reduce poverty and increase food security for the people of Afghanistan through improved animal health, welfare, production, and value chain measures which sustain.



*Subsidized Vaccination Campaigns, Kabul Province, 2024.*

## Support to the Veterinary Field Units (VFUs)

Under the IFAD and EU-funded initiatives and projects, the DCA-Livestock Programs seek to meet the needs of vulnerable farm households while also increasing the profitability of on-farm activities.

During the quarter, a total of 535 new and existing veterinary field units (VFUs) were provided with continuous technical and in-kind support. The projects' support includes refresher trainings and technical advice to help para-vets improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities in providing quality veterinary services. These professional-oriented trainings and guidance are designed to enhance, refresh, and update their expertise in the field.

The VFUs as mentioned above provided fee-based deworming services to 946,600 various species of animals, treated 1,797,241 sick animals, and vaccinated 2,333,962 animals.

Through the subsidized vaccination campaigns, 789,997 small ruminants were vaccinated and 1,778,076 animals were dewormed.

Furthermore, as part of the IFAD-funded initiative, DCA provided refresher trainings on biosecurity, one-health, and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) to 69 existing VFUs.



*During Subsidized Vaccination Campaigns, Balkh Province, Apr-June 2024.*

## 15 New Veterinary Paraprofessionals/Paravets Graduated from DCA- Veterinary Training and Support Centers

On May 16, 2024, the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) organized a graduation ceremony for the 15 new veterinary paraprofessionals/paravets in the Inter-Continental Hotel, Kabul City, who had recently completed the six-month intensive practical and theoretical course as part of DCA's IFAD/Crisis Response Initiatives (CRI) project. The inclusive veterinary field unit (VFU) kits were distributed to all freshly graduated trainees to provide and deliver quality veterinary services to pastoralists and local herders in the unserved and remote areas of the country.



*Veterinary Paraprofessionals/Paravets Graduation Ceremony, Kabul, May 16, 2024.*

Finally, the graduation certificates were distributed to the freshly graduated paravets. They were happy and committed to returning to their home provinces and districts to provide quality animal health and veterinary services to the vulnerable pastoralists and local herders.

They appreciated the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) for providing and facilitating such opportunities.

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## Farmers Training Through Extension Groups

A major focus of the IFAD and EU-funded projects is to provide training and education. This involves raising awareness about common animal diseases, promoting good hygiene, and sharing best practices for animal care, and farming.

During the quarter, a total of 1,037 Farmer Extension Groups (987 male and 50 female) have been established. These FEGs have provided in-depth extension training on livestock-related topics to 17,311 farmers (16,326 male and 985 female). Additionally, the extension services have helped strengthen connections between farmers, local service providers, and (VFUs), leading to increased demand for their services.



*Farmers Training Via Extension Groups, DCA's Projects Targeted Provinces, June 2024.*

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## Stop-Shops/Sales Points Owners Receive Support and Refresher Training

Throughout the quarter, 49 existing Sales Point Owners have received two-day refresher training under DCA-IFAD-funded initiatives. Topics covered include processing animal products, business skills, beekeeping, and establishing linkages with regional and national traders.

These Stop-Shops are the main point of contact for all stakeholders involved in the supply chain of animal products, such as cashmere, wool, milk, and eggs. These stakeholders include sales point owners, herders, pastoralists, middlemen, and businessmen.

Furthermore, 3,208 (2,092 male and 1,116 female) herders received business skills and animal husbandry training, along with voucher support for their livestock inputs. These sales locations would link the relevant stakeholders to improve and strengthen the whole chain and facilitate the proper market for animal main and by-products. They will sell their main and by-products at a reasonable price to nearby-stop shops.



*49 Stop Shops/Sales Points Owners Received Two-day Refresher Training, Apr-June, 2024.*



## Churning Machines Were Distributed to 1,989 Women-Headed HHs, and 4,685 Farmers Received Mineral Blocks

During the quarter, as part of DCA's- IFAD/Crisis Response Initiatives (CRI) project, distributed 1,394 improved manual churning machines to 1,394 vulnerable women-headed households, and herders (595 males and 799 females) across the targeted provinces.

Additionally, 595 vulnerable women-headed households received 595 improved manual churning machines in the targeted provinces throughout the quarter under the DCA-EU-funded project. For demonstration purposes, 188 farmer extension groups, consisting of 3,743 farmers, were provided with one mineral block. Additionally, 942 mineral blocks were distributed as a demonstration to vulnerable farmers to familiarize them with the use of new technologies.



*1,989 Women-headed HHs Received Churning Machines & 4,685 Farmers Received Mineral Blocks, Apr-June, 2024.*

These churning machines will enable vulnerable women to process and produce hygienic and high-quality dairy products without the burden and avoid workload, contributing to the growth of the dairy sector. This initiative is essential for the livestock industry to grow economic empowerment and gender equality.

## 44 New Milk Collection Centers Established

During the quarter, the DCA under IFAD and EU-funded projects worked together to establish and equip 44 milk collection centers (MCCs) in Laghman, Samangan, Badghis, Kabul, Nangarhar, Baghlan, Paktia, Herat, Parwan, Logar, Wardak, Badghis, Badakhshan, Helmand, Kandahar, Balkh, and Takhar provinces. These MCCs are crucial for pastoralists and local herders as they help sustain and improve their livelihoods through milk collection, milk processing, and selling dairy products. Each milk collection center is expected to collect 200–250 liters of milk per day. These MCCs are linked with the herders for milk collection and with the dairy markets and Milk Processing Centers (MPCs) for marketing their milk, thus strengthening the linkages of the whole value chain.



*Milk Collection Center Establishment, Kabul Province, June 2024.*

Additionally, to facilitate and enhance milk collection and transportation to MCCs, 640 active members (420 men and 220 women) in Nangarhar, Baghlan, Paktia, Laghman, Herat, Kabul, Parwan, Logar, Wardak, and Badghis provinces received milk cans through the support of IFAD-funded project.

## 12 Farmer's Field Days Conducted

In this quarter, the DCA, under its IFAD-funded project, organized and conducted 12 field days in Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Parwan, Kabul, Logar, Paktia, Paktika, Bamyan, Samangan, Herat, and Wardak provinces. A total of 1,516 individuals including farmers, herders, DFA representatives, customary leaders, DCA staff, processing companies, and stop-shop owners attended the events.

The events aimed to share knowledge, experience, and best practices, establish linkages, and promote community development among local and pastoralist herder communities.

The Farmers Field Day featured various activities and speeches, including farmers-to-farmers exchange visits, delivery of essential livestock-related messages, sharing project information, creating links between livestock keepers and their respective veterinary field units, introduction of new extension materials, demonstration of various improved veterinary equipment, tools and kits, and providing networking opportunities for the community.



*Farmers' Field Day Celebration, Bamyan Province, Apr-June 2024.*

Additionally, awareness-raising campaigns are essential for enhancing the wool supply chain and marketing.

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## 3,500 Herders Received Emergency Response Feed Packages and Animal Husbandry Training

In a recent initiative, DCA under the IFAD-funded project a total of 3,500 (2,426 males and 1,074 females) at-risk herders from multiple provinces including Balkh, Samangan, Kabul, Logar, Wardak, Paktia, Khost, Paktika, Laghman, Parwan, Kunar, Badghis, and Bamyan were identified and supported. These herders received animal husbandry training to improve their livestock management skills and practices.

Additionally, each household was provided with a 100-kilogram package of animal-concentrated feed to aid in the sustenance of their herding operations. This intervention aimed to strengthen the herders' capabilities and address their immediate needs in a challenging environment.



*3,500 Herders Acquired Training & Feed Packages, Bamyan Province, Apr-June 2024.*

## 257 Farmers Received Training and Fodder Crops Packages

The fodder crops are plant species grown and collected for animal feeding. The feed can be provided in the form of hay (dehydrated green fodder), silage (kept under anaerobic conditions), and forage (cut green and fed fresh). Animals can benefit from the plant's and seed's energy if fed the seeds and sprouts.

Through the EU-funded project, DCA provided basic training and fodder crop kits to 257 interested and eligible farmers in Nangarhar, Herat, Nimroz, Ghor, and Badghis provinces.

The kits included improved fodder seed, fertilizer, shovel, crony, and rope.



*257 Farmers Obtained Training & Fodder Crops Packages, Targeted Provinces, Apr-June 2024.*

## Beekeeping: Honey Production Initiative Boosts Income for Women-Headed Households

To enhance income diversification for women-headed and vulnerable households, a new initiative has been launched to support beekeeping in four regional provinces Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar.

As a part of the EU-funded project under DCA's livestock Programs, 200 (male and female) households received training and essential honey production packages. Each package included bee colonies, empty beehives, a smoker, protective clothing, headgear, gloves, wax sheets, a brush, a spray pump, a honey extractor, a wax cutter, a feeder, a bottle of honey, a barrel, a saw, tent, wire, pliers, and sugar.



*200 HHs (Male & Female) Received Training, and Honey Production Packages, Targeted Provinces, Apr-June 2024*

The comprehensive training covers all aspects of beekeeping practices, from honey extraction to marketing. The initiative aims to aggregate honey harvests to secure better market prices and foster local economic growth. The successful distribution and training ceremony involved various provincial officials and district elders, highlighting the project's commitment to developing a sustainable beekeeping industry.

## 10 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the form of MSMEs Established



Under the EU-AESLSP-funded project, DCA intended to establish 100 self-help groups (SHGs) with 2,000 active members across 16 provinces in Afghanistan. This quarter, ten new SHGs were established: 6 in Bamyan province (2 in the center, 3 in Yakawlang, 1 in Saighan districts), and 4 in Nangarhar province (2 in Dari-e-Noor, 2 in Khogyani districts). Each group received startup capital.

A self-help group (SHG) is a local community group where people with similar needs and challenges join forces to support each other. They combine their resources, like money and skills, to tackle problems and pursue common goals. In rural areas, SHGs often focus on economic self-sufficiency by saving money, offering loans, and investing in projects like small businesses or farming. This helps members, especially women, become more financially independent and supports community development.



*10 Self Help Groups Were Established, Targeted Provinces, Apr-June 2024.*

## Improving Livestock Nutrition Through Urea Treatment Demonstrations

Urea treatment practices are a vital process designed to boost the nutritional value of low-quality forages and crop residues such as straw and hay. Urea treatment involves the addition of urea, a nitrogen-rich compound, to these materials. This process enhances their protein content and improves digestibility, ultimately benefiting livestock health and productivity.

During this reporting period, DCA under the EU-AESLSP-funded project conducted five urea treatment-making demonstration sessions, reaching a total of 100 farmers across the Almar, Khwaja Sabzposh, and Pashtunkot districts of Faryab province. These sessions were aimed at equipping farmers with the knowledge and skills needed to independently produce urea treatment at home.



*DCA Conducted Five Urea Treatment-Making Demonstration Sessions, Faryab Province, Apr-June 2024.*

This initiative not only empowered farmers with practical skills but also encouraged collaboration and knowledge-sharing among livestock herders. By learning and applying urea treatment techniques, farmers can now optimize their feed resources more effectively, leading to better livestock health and increased productivity.

## Ten Pasture Management Committee Units Established

Coordination and collaboration are crucial for effective project management and implementation. During the quarter, DCA under the EU-funded project, worked closely with local authorities, community leaders, and livestock owners to establish ten Pasture Management Committees (PMCs) across various regions including one in Kabul, three in Nangarhar, one in Laghman, one in Balkh, two in Faryab, and two in Takhar provinces. Each committee consists of 15-20 members, including Maliks, customary leaders, local Shura members, and other stakeholders, who all received a one-day training session on pasture management.



*DCA Established 10 Pasture Management Committee Units, Targeted Provinces, Apr-June 2024.*

The PMCs are responsible for educating farmers and pastoralists about the proper use of both common and private pastures. Their goal is to promote a collaborative approach to preserving and managing these pastures, ensuring they remain a sustainable resource that benefits everyone fairly.

## 12 Training Workshops on Rangeland and Water Management Conducted

Under the EU-AESLSP-funded project, DCA planned to hold 20 workshops and meetings to boost the skills of local decision-makers like Shuras, Malik, Jirgas, and other community leaders in managing rangeland and natural resources.

During this period, we conducted a one-day training workshop for 240 participants across 12 provinces including Balkh, Faryab (2 workshops), Ghazni (2 workshops), Kabul, Nangarhar (3 workshops), Takhar (2 workshops), and Laghman. This training helps local leaders make better decisions and offer advice on sustainable management of natural resources.



*Skills Building Training to Local Decision-maker, Takhar Province, Apr-June 2024.*

## Animal Welfare

The Donkey Sanctuary Project (TDS) is working to improve animal welfare, especially for donkeys. The project focuses on spreading the message about how to take care of donkeys



through extension workers, religious leaders (Mullahs), and volunteer teachers in three targeted provinces. The awareness campaign addresses essential aspects such as ensuring adequate space, appropriate feed, clean water, and proper hygiene for livestock, aiming to enhance their well-being and diversify their diet.

During the quarter, DCA under the TDS-funded project, trained 1,625 donkey owners on proper care. Educated seven people on how to provide first aid to donkeys, and increased awareness among 7,150 people about treating donkeys with more compassion through various extension messages. The TDS project management team improved 1,045 animal stables, offered high-quality services and care to 4,945 donkeys, and monitored 46 Private Local Service Providers (PLSPs). Overall, the project is making significant progress in educating people and improving the well-being and welfare of donkeys.



*Capacity Building Training to Agriculture and Veterinary Institute Students, Takhar Province, Apr-June 2024.*



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