



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JUL-SEP-2024

HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided Technical and Logistical Support to 583 VFUs
- 40 New VFUs Established
- 1,446 FEGs Train 24,456 Farmers, Support 5,555 HHs with Feed for 22,040 Lambs
- 250 Herders Receive Business Skills Training and Support
- 175 Vulnerable HHs and Herders Receive Churning Machines
- 300 Milk Drums Distributed to Female Beneficiaries
- 3 Farmer's Field Days Conducted
- 70 Farmers Receive Training and Fodder Crop Packages
- Beekeeping
- 70 Self-Help Groups Established
- 763 Herders Benefit from 19 Urea Treatment Sessions
- 5 Workshops on Rangeland and Water Management Held
- 100 Participants Receive One-Health Training
- One Water Reservoir Constructed
- 175 VFUs Linked to Reliable Suppliers
- Internship Program
- 5,000 Skilled Jobs Created for Women
- 15 Wool-Washing Pools Built
- 6,820 Female Herders Receive BES Training
- 20 SSES Events Held
- 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.



Beekeeper Harvesting Honey, Badakhshan Province, July 2024.

Support to the Veterinary Field Units (VFUs)

Under the European Union (EU) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)funded 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, 583 new and existing veterinary field units (VFUs) received continuous technical and in-kind support. The projects' support includes refresher training 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.

As mentioned above, the 583 VFUs provided fee-based deworming services to 349,414 various species of animals, treated 1,434,163 sick animals, and vaccinated 2,196,401 animals.

Through the subsidized vaccination campaigns, 585,011 small ruminants were vaccinated and 213,855 animals were dewormed.



During Subsidized Deworming Campaigns, Bamyan Province, August 2024.

40 New Veterinary Field Units Established Following Successful Training

In July 2024, DCA organized a graduation ceremony for the 40 new veterinary paraprofessionals/paravets in Kabul and Herat provinces. These graduates completed a six-month intensive practical and theoretical courses as part of DCA's EU/AESLSP project.

Following the ceremony, inclusive veterinary kits, motorbikes, and other necessary equipment were distributed to the newly graduated trainees. This support empowers them to provide quality veterinary services to pastoralists and local herders in unserved and remote areas of the country. The graduates expressed their gratitude to DCA for facilitating such a valuable opportunity, as they returned to their home provinces and districts to enhance animal health services.



Paraprofessionals/paravets Received Inclusive Veterinary Kits, Balkh Province, July 2024.

As a result of this initiative and project, 40 new Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) have been established and are now operational, providing essential animal health services in their respective villages. Each VFU is staffed with trained veterinary professionals equipped to deliver preventive and curative services, including vaccinations, treatment of common diseases, and basic surgical procedures for livestock.

Farmers Training Through Extension Groups

Providing education and training is the main focus of the projects supported by the EU and IFAD international donor agencies. This involves sharing best practices for farming and animal care, promoting hygiene, and raising awareness of common animal diseases.

To date, 1,446 Farmer Extension Groups (1,352 male and 94 female) have been established in the targeted provinces. These FEGs have provided in-depth extension training on livestock-related topics to 24,456 farmers and herders (22,566 males and 1,890 females).

Through this quarter, DCA under the EU and IFAD-funded projects, 5,555 local and pastoralist households having 22,040 lambs, trained and provided with a feed package of 551 MTs (25 Kg per lamb) to practice lamb fattening activity across the 22 provinces. These efforts aim to enhance farmers' and herders' livelihoods and boost livestock production.



During a Training Session for Female Farmers, Targeted Provinces, July 2024.

Empowering Sales Point Members with Training and Livestock Vouchers for Business Growth

During the quarter, under the DCA-IFAD-funded project, 250 herders received business skills and animal husbandry training, along with voucher support for their livestock inputs in Khost and Logar provinces. These sales points 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.

The sales points 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.



250 Herders Received Business Skills and Animal Husbandry Training, Khost & Logar Provinces, July 2024.

Households Receive Churning Machines to Boost Livelihoods

Throughout the quarter, 175 vulnerable households and herders in the targeted provinces received improved manual churning machines from DCA's IFAD/Crisis Response Initiatives (CRI) project.

The development of the dairy industry will be helped by these churning machines, allowing disadvantaged women to process and produce hygienic, high-quality dairy products without difficulty or workload. The livestock sector needs an initiative to promote gender equality and economic growth.



175 Vulnerable Households and Herders Received Improved Manual Churning Machines, in Target Provinces, July 2024.

Dairy Initiative Empowers Afghan Herders and Pastoralists with Enhanced Milk Collection Centers

The DCA has been successfully implementing a dairy initiative funded by the EU-AESLSP project. As part of this effort, they have established 100 milk collection centers (MCCs) across 16 provinces.

The project aims to enhance the dairy value chain and increase income for dairy producers in the targeted provinces. In a significant boost to efficiency, 300 milk transportation drums were also distributed to beneficiaries in Badakhshan, enabling them to transport surplus milk while ensuring hygiene standards.

This program not only supports local herders and pastoralists but also improves their market access, contributing to the region's economic growth. As these centers continue to thrive, the future looks promising for Afghanistan's dairy industry.



300 Milk Transportation Drums were Distributed to Female Beneficiaries, Badakhshan Province, September 2024.

Three Farmer's Field Days Conducted

Throughout the quarter, the DCA under its EU-AESLSP-funded project, organized and conducted three farmer's field days in Helmand, Bamyan, and Ghor provinces. Over 310 individuals including farmers, herders, NGO representatives, DFA representatives, customary leaders, DCA staff, processing companies, stop-shop owners, and local media 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 Days Celebration, Helmand Province, August 2024.

Farmers Received Training and Fodder Crops Packages

Fodder crops are plants grown to feed animals. They can be used as hay (dried green plants), silage (fermented under sealed conditions), or forage (freshly cut green plants). Animals can also get energy from seeds and sprouts if they are fed to them.

Through the EU-funded project, DCA provided basic training and fodder crop kits to 70 interested farmers in Badakhshan, Balkh, and Herat provinces. The kits included improved fodder seeds, fertilizer, a shovel, a crony, and rope.



Farmers' Received Fodder Crops Packages, Herat Province, September 2024.

Beekeeping Initiative Boosts Income for Women-Headed Households

A new initiative supporting beekeeping has been launched in the regional provinces of Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar to enhance income diversification for women-headed and vulnerable households. In this quarter, 200 households (both male and female) received training and essential honey production packages as part of the EU-funded project under DCA's livestock programs. Each package included bee colonies, empty beehives, protective gear, and tools necessary for honey production.

The comprehensive training covered all aspects of beekeeping, from honey extraction to marketing. Initially targeting 200 beneficiaries, the project has exceeded expectations by including 25 additional beneficiaries in the Rodat district of Nangarhar, bringing the total to 225. This increase reflects the strong demand for sustainable beekeeping as a livelihood option in these communities.

During the reporting period, the honey harvesting initiative has shown remarkable success. In Badakhshan, beekeepers harvested approximately 200 kg of honey, using best practices to ensure high-quality production. The harvested honey was processed and packaged to meet quality standards, enhancing its marketability and significantly increasing the income of the beekeepers. Beneficiaries have reported positive experiences, attributing their improved livelihoods to the project's support. Overall, the initiative has effectively met its objectives of boosting honey production and enhancing economic conditions for local beekeepers.



Monitoring Process from the bee hives, Badakhshan Province, July 2024.

17 Female Self-Help Groups (SHGs) Established

A self-help group (SHG) is a grassroots community organization where individuals facing similar challenges come together to support one another. These groups pool their resources, such as finances and skills to address shared problems and pursue collective goals. In rural areas, SHGs often emphasize economic self-sufficiency by encouraging savings, providing loans, and investing in initiatives like small businesses or agriculture and livestock. This approach significantly empowers members, particularly women, fostering financial independence and contributing to overall community development.

As part of the EU-AESLSP-funded project, DCA aimed to establish 100 SHGs with a target of 2,000 active members across 16 provinces in Afghanistan. During this quarter, 17 new SHGs were successfully formed: three in Nangarhar, five in Laghman, five in Faryab, one in Herat, and three in Badakhshan. Each group received essential startup capital to facilitate their initial activities.



Establishment of Female Self-Help Groups, Faryab Province, July 2024.

This initiative not only enhances economic opportunities for participants but also strengthens social ties within the community, paving the way for sustainable development. Continued support and monitoring will be crucial to ensure the long-term success of these groups and to maximize their impact on community resilience.

Herders and Pastoralists Empowered Through Urea Treatment Demonstrations

During the quarter, DCA through the EU-funded project, successfully conducted 19 urea treatment-making demonstration sessions across nine districts in Kabul province, benefiting over 763 herders and pastoralists, including 655 men and 108 women.

Urea treatment is the process of adding urea, a compound high in nitrogen, to low-quality feed like straw and hay. This helps increase the protein content and makes the feed easier for animals to digest. It's an important method for improving the health and productivity of livestock, especially in places where good-quality feed is hard to find.

These sessions equipped herders and pastoralists with the skills and knowledge to produce urea treatment independently, enabling them to implement effective feeding strategies at home. Participants praised the low-cost, high-digestibility solution that can be easily integrated into livestock diets.



Urea Treatment Demonstration Session to Female Farmers, Kabul Province, September 2024.

Five Training Workshops on Rangeland and Water Management Conducted

Under the EU-funded project, DCA has made significant progress in strengthening sustainable pasture and rangeland management practices in Afghanistan. This quarter, five Pasture Management Committees (PMCs) were successfully established across Badakhshan and Herat provinces. Two committees were set up in Badakhshan, and three in Herat. Each committee consists of 20 members, including local leaders such as Maliks, Shura members, and other key stakeholders.



Establishment of Pasture Management Committee Units, Badakhshan Province, July 2024.

These committee members were trained on sustainable pasture management practices, focusing on the proper use of both common and private pastures. The aim is to foster cooperation among farmers, herders, pastoralists, and community leaders to ensure these resources are managed equitably and remain sustainable for future generations.

In addition to the establishment of the PMCs, DCA organized five one-day workshops on rangeland and water management. A total of 100 local leaders, including Maliks, Shura members, and Jirga representatives from both provinces, participated in these workshops. The training sessions focused on equipping these leaders with the skills and knowledge needed to make informed decisions on managing rangeland and water resources sustainably.

Strengthening Afghan Communities Through One-Health Training Initiative

On July 23, 2024, the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA), as part of an EU- European Union-funded initiative, conducted a one-day training session at Kabul. The training aimed to train and empower 100 participants from various sectors, including 20 para-vets, 60 herders, and 20 other stakeholders. These participants traveled long distances from nine different districts within Kabul province to attend the session. The main focus of the training was on 'One-Health', a concept that integrates human, animal, and environmental health. Participants learned about the interconnectedness of these areas and the importance of holistic approaches in health management.



One-Health Training Conducted, Kabul Province, July 2024.

DCA plans to conduct two more training sessions in the coming quarter, targeting 200 beneficiaries from the eastern and western regions of Afghanistan. The objective is to expand the reach of the One-Health initiative, building capacity, and awareness among rural communities across regions.

The training provided valuable lessons in health management and fostered stronger collaboration among diverse community groups. Through continuous engagement, DCA is dedicated to enhancing health and resilience for people, livestock, and the environment, contributing to a healthier and more resilient Afghanistan.

New Irrigation Initiative Launches to Provide Clean Water and Support Livestock

DCA, under the EU-funded project, is setting up eight low-technology irrigation systems in watershed areas to improve surface and rainwater availability. These systems will be managed by community-elected water groups. Once built, the land will be used for growing fodder and plants that benefit livestock and herders, promoting local empowerment and sustainable resource management.



Constructed Water Reservoir, Bamyan Province, August 2024.

Recently, a water reservoir was completed in Kham village, Yakawlang district of Bamyan province. Previously, a small spring provided contaminated water, which posed health risks to both animals and humans.

The new reservoir, along with concrete water taps for animals, ensures access to clean, safe water, reducing the risk of waterborne diseases. This development will benefit over 100 pastoralists and provide clean water to thousands of sheep, goats, and wild animals.

Enhancing Animal Health by Connecting 155 Veterinary Field Units with Trusted Suppliers

DCA, under its EU-funded project, has made significant progress in enhancing the Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) across 16 provinces, with a focus on linking these units to reliable suppliers of veterinary medicines and vaccines. Throughout the reporting period, 155 VFUs in targeted provinces including Kabul, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Balkh, Faryab, Laghman, and Helmand have successfully established these crucial connections.

This effort ensures that VFUs have regular access to high-quality veterinary products, which are essential for good animal health. The project has identified trusted suppliers to ensure the quality of medicines and vaccines and has improved supply chains for timely deliveries.

This initiative not only meets the immediate needs of VFUs but also builds a foundation for sustainable veterinary care by creating strong relationships with reliable suppliers.



VFUs Linkage to Reliable Suppliers, Target Provinces, August 2024.

The successful connections made through this project are expected to greatly benefit animal health, leading to healthier livestock and increased productivity in the regions. Overall, this initiative aims to provide better care for animals and support local herders, pastoralists, and communities effectively.

Internship Program Enhances Skills and Employability for Rural Youth Graduates

DCA under the EU/AESLSP-funded project is making significant strides in reducing unemployment, particularly in rural areas, by offering internship opportunities to recent graduates. The initiative Intended to hire 90 graduates from 16 targeted provinces, the project has already seen 57 interns complete their six-month programs, including two in finance and administration. Out of these, 29 have been hired, demonstrating the program's effectiveness.



57 Interns Complete Their Six-Months Programs, 2024.

Additionally, four more interns are anticipated to be hired in the upcoming quarter, further contributing to local employment growth. This initiative not only helps graduates gain valuable experience but also supports economic development in underserved regions.

These internships provide graduates with valuable practical experience, enabling them to use what they have learned in the classroom and connect in their chosen field. Important guidance is also provided to participants, which may result in employment offers.

The program focuses on veterinary medicine and animal health, offering practical experience through fieldwork and training. DCA is dedicated to developing a skilled workforce in the animal health sector, improving job opportunities for new graduates, and supporting economic growth.

5,000 Skilled Jobs Created for Vulnerable Women

On July 18, 2024, the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA), through the DAI/ACEBA project, has successfully completed a two-day Business and Entrepreneurial Skills (BES) training program for 5,000 vulnerable women across 13 provinces of Afghanistan. The training aimed to equip women with valuable skills in production of yarn from wool, helping to boost their income and improve their livelihoods.

The training covered key topics such as wool harvesting, sorting, grading, washing, and hygiene. Participants also learned about factors that affect wool quality and how to spin yarn from wool via a spinning machine. The women were trained in the use of wool spinning machines, learned the difference between wool spun by hand and machine, and carried out practical sessions on different types of yarn production.

Along with the training, each of the 5,000 beneficiaries received a wool spinning machine and a personal protective equipment (PPE) kit. These tools will help the women start or expand their own wool-based businesses, supporting their economic independence and improving food security for their families.



Vulnerable Women Received Wool Spinning Machines, Target Provinces, July 2024.

The training reached women in the following 13 provinces: Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Herat, Baghlan, Bامyan, Ghazni, Kunduz, Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan, Sari Pul, and Parwan. The project aims to create 5,000 skilled jobs in the wool industry, especially in rural areas.

By providing both training and equipment, DCA is helping to empower women and promote sustainable livelihoods. This initiative is an important step in supporting women's economic independence and contributing to Afghanistan's recovery.

Construction of Wool-Washing Pools to Support Afghan Wool and Carpet Industries

Through the DAI-ACEBA project, DCA established 15 wool-washing pools across eight provinces of Afghanistan to support the wool and carpet production sectors. The initiative (prototype) aims to enhance the quality of Afghan wool, boost carpet manufacturing, and increase local businesses' competitiveness in the global market.

DCA established 15 wool-washing pools for carpet production in eight provinces including Kabul, Ghazni, Nangarhar, Parwan, Baghlan, Balkh, Jawzjan and Herat.

The carpet industries clean dry wool using a tumbler (wool cleaner) and wash it in the pools. After cleaning, they give the wool to women who were trained and received spinning machines through the project. The women spin the clean wool into yarn, which is then sent back to the carpet industry for production. Each washing pool can clean at least 100 kilograms of wool per hour.



Established Wool-washing pool, Jawzjan province, 2024.

The facilities are designed to provide a centralized, efficient washing process, improving wool quality and reducing production costs for local businesses. This infrastructure project is expected to have a significant impact on the wool and carpet industries, which are crucial to Afghanistan's economy. By improving wool processing, Afghan producers will be able to meet international standards, strengthen the value chain, create jobs, and support sustainable economic growth. DCA is working to strengthen key industries and boost economic development in the rural areas of Afghanistan.

Improving At-Risk Herders' Resilience in Afghanistan with Training and Vouchers

Through the DAI-ACEBA project, DCA has supported 6,820 at-risk herders affected by the earthquake in Herat and the drought in Nimroz, Helmand, and Kandahar provinces.

To support the well-being and productivity of herders and pastoralists, the project allocated a \$50 voucher to each at-risk herder. The voucher provided \$10 for animal health services (like dewormers) and \$40 for purchasing two bags of quality animal feed.



Business and Entrepreneurial Skills Training to the Female At-risk Herders, Nimroz province, Jul-Sep, 2024.

The project provided Business and Entrepreneurship Skills training to 6,285 herders (5,820 men and 1,000 women). It also gave them dewormers (\$10) and quality animal feed (\$40) through stop shops. This support helped improve the health of their livestock and boosted their livelihoods.

Stop Shops Experience Sharing Events Empower Local Entrepreneurs Across Afghanistan

The Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA), through the DAI-ACEBA project, organized 20 Experience Sharing Events in 20 provinces of Afghanistan. The events were held in Balkh, Jawzjan, Faryab, Baghlan, Herat, Badghis, Ghor, Kabul, Parwan, Khost, Nangarhar, Laghman, Bamyan, Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Ghazni, Badakhshan, Takhar, and Paktia provinces, bringing together 479 relevant stop shopkeepers to share their business experiences and growth strategies.

The sessions focused on conducting a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to help participants assess challenges and identify opportunities for business improvement. The events provided a collaborative space for entrepreneurs to exchange best practices and discussed practical solutions to enhance their operations.



Stop Shops Experience Sharing workshop, Balkh province, September 2024.

These events are part of DCA's broader initiative, implemented to strengthen local entrepreneurship and improve economic resilience in Afghanistan. By equipping shopkeepers with business tools and connecting them with key stakeholders, the stop shop experience sharing events are fostering a sustainable future for Afghanistan's small businesses.

Animal Welfare

The Donkey Sanctuary Project (TDS) aims to improve the welfare of donkeys. It works by educating people in three targeted provinces about how to care for them. This includes training extension workers, religious leaders (Mullahs), and volunteer teachers to spread important messages. The campaign focuses on providing enough space, good food, clean water, and proper hygiene for donkeys, all to enhance their well-being and diversify their diet.



Community engagement (Handi Craft Competition among the children to develop and improve stable donkey models), Bamyan Province, during the quarter, 2024.

Throughout the quarter, DCA under the TDS-funded project, trained 2,106 donkey owners on proper care. Educated seven people on how to provide first aid to donkeys, and increased awareness among 4,500 people about treating donkeys with more compassion through various extension messages.

The TDS project management team improved 171 animal stables, offered high-quality services and care to 3,837 donkeys, and monitored 46 Private Local Service Providers (PSPs). Overall, the project is making significant progress in educating people and improving the well-being and welfare of donkeys.



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