

Closing of the RADP-South project

In a well-attended closing ceremony, the RADP-South program concluded on November 2, 2017.

At this final ceremony, Raymond Briscoe, Executive Director of DCA Livestock Programs, gave a presentation on the importance of livestock in Afghanistan, and in particular the work undertaken in the RADP-S project.



The USAID-funded RADP-South program started four years ago in January 2014. It was part of a series of four Regional Agricultural Development Programs in Afghanistan. The RADP-South program covered the provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan and Zabul. The main purpose of this program was to support the rural Afghan people in improving their food and economic security. The focus of the program was on improving production and productivity of value chains in the wheat, high-value crop and in the livestock sector. The program was planned to end in October 2018, but was closed a year early by the donor for internal reasons.

To DCA, RADP-South offered the unique possibility to develop quality animal health and production facilities in a region that previously had been rather neglected by the international donors. It meant a big challenge but also a big opportunity to strengthen the network of veterinary services and to raise awareness on animal health and production in these southern provinces.

During the project, DCA trained many new paravets and extended the original number of 23 Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) to 97. In addition, several Farmer Extension Groups (FEG) and VFU Extension groups were established to raise the awareness of the farmers. Farmer Extension Groups (FEGs) are composed of 15 to 20 male and female livestock farmers. Regular sessions were established, conducted over a period of two years. During these sessions, the farmers are trained in detection, prevention, and treatment of animal diseases. VFU Extension Groups are composed of 10 to 15 male members who are usually clients of the VFUs. The paravets conduct lessons once a month for a period of four months. The aim of these lessons is to raise the members' awareness of animal health and of the services offered by the VFUs.

For women empowerment, special Self-Help Groups (SHG) were established. These groups are comprised of 20 to 30 women who already attended the FEG training. The members of such a group make periodic saving deposits to a common fund, which will be used to start a small enterprise agreed upon by the SHG members.



DCA provide small business training to these groups and support them with start-up materials such as milk-churning machines and hygiene kits. The most successful SHG projects have been in dairy and dairy by-products such as yoghurt and qurut (dried yoghurt).

Nevertheless, despite the premature closing, DCA can look back at a successful project. Big steps have been taken to improve the living conditions of the livestock farmers, and to strengthen the economic situation of the livestock sector in the south of Afghanistan.