

DCA keynote speaker at global PPR Congress, September 2018 - Brussels

The Disease

Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) is a highly contagious transboundary disease that affects many goats and sheep in developing countries. It has a severe negative impact on the livelihoods, food security and income of livestock farmers of vulnerable rural communities. The OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) and the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), at the 2015 conference in Abidjan, proposed a PPR Global Control and Eradication Strategy aimed at eradicating PPR by 2030.

The PPR conference

Following this Conference in 2015, the OIE and FAO organised a second Global Conference, *'Partnering and investing for a PPR-free World'*, to establish consensus to implement the first 5-year action plan towards eradication of this disease. This conference was held in Brussels, on September 6th and 7th, 2018. Some 200 professionals and representatives from civil society, pastoralists, traders, NGOs, women's associations, veterinary authorities and ministries from around the world attended the meetings. The 6th of September, a Stakeholders' Forum was held, followed by the Ministerial Global Conference on the 7th of September.

Contribution of DCA

Dr Raymond Briscoe, Executive Director of DCA Livestock Programs, was one of the three keynote speakers during the Stakeholders' Forum. The topic of the presentation was "Engaging the private sector veterinary paraprofessionals in partnership with Government for the national control of PPR in Afghanistan" He explained to the audience that PPR is a serious threat to the livelihoods of 75% of the Afghan population being largely dependent on sheep and goats.



Awareness raising by the paraprofessionals working in the Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) resulted in herders and farmers voluntarily purchasing 36 million doses of PPR vaccines prior to the start of the official vaccination program. In addition to these private initiatives, effective control and eradication requires a coordinated government program. Since 2015, FAO, through funding from the Government of Japan, is enabling the implementation of a national PPR control and eradication program in Afghanistan. In this PPR eradication program, the VFU network of veterinary para professionals (paravets) plays a crucial role. These private sector paraveterinarians are contracted by the Afghan Government through the Sanitary Mandate Contracting Scheme to implement the national PPR control campaigns. The results of these campaigns are encouraging with 12.5 million sheep and goats belonging to the pastoralist community vaccinated so far with the objective to bring the country into Stage 2 of the Global Pathway of the PPR control and eradication program. Importance was placed on the benefits of a strong Public Private Partnership which resulted in strengthening the national veterinary services.

Ministerial Declaration

At the end of the Conference, the Ministerial Declaration stressed that political commitment and investment at national level offer a first step towards PPR control and eradication. The participants also supported the conclusion of the Stakeholders' Forum that poor pastoralists and farmers are most at risk and should be the first beneficiaries of PPR eradication. The Conference urged the donors and development community to join forces to fill the critical funding gaps to eradicate PPR. Several multilateral and bilateral donors attended the Conference and made commitments to helping to bridge this funding gaps. The joint OIE-FAO PPR Secretariat will keep the PPR Programme on track to help countries to reach a complete eradication of the disease by 2030.