

FAO PPR III, a small project with impressive outputs

For the third consecutive year, FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) funded DCA to implement a PPR (Peste des Petits Ruminants) campaign in collaboration with the General Directorate of Animal Health and Production at the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock.

PPR is a highly contagious disease among goats and sheep that is considered to be one of the most damaging livestock diseases in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. To control PPR, FAO and the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health) formulated a Global Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR. Recently a global conference on PPR was held, at which the Executive Director of DCA was one of the keynote speakers (see the news item *DCA keynote speaker at global PPR Congress, September 2018 – Brussels*).

The first FAO PPR campaign in 2015/16 was a pilot project, encompassing only three provinces. In the second PPR project (2016/2017) twenty provinces were targeted, while in this third PPR project (2018) 24 provinces were included. The PPR campaigns specifically targeted the Kuchi, Afghanistan's pastoralists who own 50% of all small ruminants in Afghanistan. These Kuchi animals migrate through vast parts of the country and thus can be a major source of spreading of the disease all over Afghanistan.



The recent PPR project was only small in terms of funding (US\$ 345,851) and project duration (four months), but the targeted area and the output were impressive.

In the four months duration of implementation in 2018 DCA managed to:

- Select and mobilize **348 Veterinary Field Units in 24 provinces** to implement the PPR campaign

- Train the staff of these VFUs together with FAO in PPR vaccination, vaccine storage / cold chain requirements, vaccination registration, blood sampling, and PPR awareness raising
- Establish vaccine distribution centres
- Establishing cold chain facilities for keeping the vaccines between 2 and 8 degrees C, including cold boxes and icepacks for all VFUs
- Select 20,995 Kuchi tribal leaders (equalling **62,985 Kuchi households**) as beneficiaries
- Have **2,638,868 sheep and goats** vaccinated by the VFU staff
- Have **1890 blood samples** collected to assess the baseline prevalence of PPR and **379 blood samples** to assess the efficacy of the vaccination
- Organize **431 joint monitoring visits** to VFUs in all targeted provinces, together with staff from MAIL, DAIL, Kuchi Department and FAO

So, although being one of DCA's smaller projects, the 2018 PPR project clearly demonstrates DCA's capacity to efficiently and effectively organise a nationwide campaign by involving the extensive network of private Veterinary Field Units working in a public private partnership.