

DCA Advisory Board Meeting January 2012

The 6th of January, the DCA Advisory Board met with the DCA Board to provide the Board with their expert advice and judgment. The Advisory Board and the Board meet twice annually, in January and August. During this January 2012 meeting, three DCA staff members from Afghanistan were attending the meeting as well, i.e. Dr Raymond Briscoe (DCA Country Programme Director), Dr Fakhri (Deputy Director Field / Regional Programme Director Herat), Dr Chalachew Niguse (Programme Officer). Also Dr Daad Amir who is the Director of VetServ attended the meeting. The DCA staff members gave presentations to the (Advisory) Board showing the present status of the DCA projects, success stories, lessons learned, and new developments for the future. Daad Amir presented the participants of the meeting the success achieved in 2011 by VetServ, the commercial vaccine and medicine company that was established in January 2011, as spin-off of DCA-VET.

Discussions of the Advisory Board meeting focused on the DCA extension activities (increasing the awareness of farmers on animal health services and animal production) and impact assessment. All DCA extension is demand driven and bottom up oriented. Several extension methods are used, ranging from group extension (farmers) to face-to-face extension (especially women), depending on the target group. Staff of the VFUs (Veterinary Field Units) are pivot of the DCA extension: they are transferring the messages on animal health to the farmers. Besides the farmers VFU staff are benefiting by extension, as it increases their business. Therefore the Advisory Board advises to focus on extension messages that directly yield additional income to the VFUs.

See below a picture of all but two participants of the meeting. Lucy Maarse (adv Board) had to leave earlier and Gert Jan Duives (Board) made the picture.



Upper row, from left to right: Henk Moll (Adv B), Marjolein Munsterman (DCA HQS), Peter de Leeuw (Board), Ab Emmerzaal (CEO), Cees de Haan (Adv B), Henk Arends (Board)

Lower row, from left to right: Chalachew Niguse (DCA Kabul), Akke van de Zijpp (Adv B), Ria Heuckeroth (DCA HQS), Daad Amir (VetServ), Dr Fakhri (DCA Herat), Raymond Briscoe (Country Program Director), Bram Schreuder (Board).

Surveys on the impact of DCA activities are scarce or not officially published. The studies by Bram Schreuder in the mid nineties are the only scientifically published assessments by DCA. In many projects some kind of assessment is included, but these surveys remain rather hidden. The Advisory Board would welcome more recent impact surveys by DCA, being available to a broader public. Instead of conventional reference studies, also client contentment studies could be used to show that the DCA activities are yielding a positive impact for the livestock farmers.