

The Brooke / DCA-VET partnership goes on

Recently, The Brooke and DCA-VET signed a grant agreement for another year of cooperation, starting from the 1st of April 2012. The partnership between Brooke and DCA-VET on improving equine health and welfare in Afghanistan started in April 2008.



The Brooke is an international animal charity organization dedicated to improving the welfare and lives of working horses, donkeys and mules in some of the world's poorest communities. The Brooke provides treatment, training and programmes around animal health and wellbeing, operating across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In Afghanistan, according to the FAO census (2003) there are 1.73 million donkeys (92%) and horses (8%). Many of these animals are suffering from wounds, diseases, poor feeding, poor access to drinking water, lack of access to quality health services, and beating and other bad practices. Most important reasons for this welfare issues are the owners' lack of awareness of their animals' welfare needs, a shortage of quality services, and a lack of policies on working equines within the Afghan government.

In 2012/2013, The Brooke/DCA will be working on equine health and welfare in the provinces of Herat, Balkh, Kabul and Nangarhar . Some 14,000 working equines will benefit from the activities implemented. This year is the second one of a 5-year strategic plan which targets 34,000 equines.

The main objectives for this year's project are:

- Enhance the technical capacities of private service providers such as Paravets, Saddlers, farriers and Traditional Healers to provide quality services
- Networking between the service providers and the equine owners/users to improve the availability, accessibility and affordability of the services to benefit at least 4,132 working equines in a sustainable manner.
- Train 3,815 equine owners on good equine care and support them to organize into 60 self-help groups
- Increase the awareness on equine welfare of representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and involve them in the monthly M&E programme of the project.

Innovations by DCA-VET include the recruitment of a woman paravet and the training of women extension workers, to reach women equine owners on animal welfare as well. Besides, DCA-VET is planning to develop a special Herd Health Package for equine animals to be used by extension workers and paravets for training the equine owners.