

VetServ ready for take-off

After a long period of preparation DCA now can launch VetServ. From the beginning of January, 2011, VetServ will officially start its activities as a private, commercial company for import and delivery of high quality veterinary vaccines and medicines. The company takes over the distribution of vaccines and medicines from DCA. By this transfer, DCA ensures the delivery of high quality drugs to the (private) veterinary sector in Afghanistan in the long term, independent from NGO involvement.

As early as 1995, DCA started to import quality veterinary vaccines in Afghanistan for distribution among the veterinary field units (VFUs) all over the country. For years, DCA has been sole importer of vaccines in Afghanistan and in this way served its own VFUs as well as those of other NGO's. From 1995 onwards, DCA distributed more than 150 million doses of vaccines all over Afghanistan, via an own implemented cold chain to keep the quality and effectiveness. Besides that DCA has imported and distributed many veterinary drugs. However, the last couple of years through markets and bazaars in Afghanistan still many vaccines and drugs are sold; often of poor quality, improperly stored, and sometimes even counterfeit. Apparently, a trustworthy importer of high quality veterinary drugs is essential to maintain and improve animal health in Afghanistan. DCA initiated and supported the development of a private successor to guarantee the level of high quality vaccine and drug supply in Afghanistan.

After preparing a business plan, policy statements and articles of confederation, VetServ is now officially registered as a company with shares per 5 January 2011. As a starting capital, DCA supplies her vaccine and medicine stock to VetServ. This stock is provided as a loan by the Foundation DCA-VET in The Netherlands, to be paid back in five years time. After the official registration, VetServ also receives a starter's grant of US\$ 150,000 by the Foundation DCA-VET in the Netherlands as well as a grant of US\$ 300,000 by ASMED (USAID - Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development). Besides, DCA in Afghanistan takes the responsibility to guide VetServ through the first critical years. Therefore, the Foundation DCA-VET in The Netherlands keeps 80% of the VetServ shares and is amply represented in the Shareholders Board. In the coming years, DCA-VET will gradually transfer its shares to private shareholders and to VFU Cooperatives and/or Associations. The aim is to reach a close cooperation between all VFUs and VetServ for their mutual benefit and the benefit of all livestock owners in Afghanistan.

Dr Daad Mohammad Amir is the Chief Executive Technical Director of VetServ and has 20 % of the shares with the aim to obtain more. He is an experienced veterinarian who worked for DCA in the vaccine and medicine distribution for many years. Avikshit Saras is the Chief Executive Commercial Director. The team of Directors is supported by staff to manage the stores of VetSev in Kabul, Herat, Mazar, Maimana, Badakhshan and Jalalabad.

17 January 2011