

DCA - NHLP Poultry Project successfully completed

The family poultry production system, traditionally managed by village women, has always been the predominating poultry system in Afghanistan. Efforts by aid agencies to rehabilitate this system frequently failed due to poor technical knowledge of the beneficiaries and/or inadequate project design. In the "Improved Backyard Poultry Project (IBPP)" of the World Bank funded New Horticulture and Livestock Project (NHLP) the successful 30 layer model, piloted by the NHLP in 2012, has been replicated and expanded.

Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) was subcontracted to implement the NHLP Poultry Project in Bagram and Charikar districts of Parwan province. DCA started its activities on October 15th, 2013, by selecting 417 beneficiary women in each district and recruiting four female trainers. The poultry trainers took care of intensive training and capacity building of the women in the field of small-scale backyard poultry production.

Soon after this training, the beneficiaries were supported in building new chicken coops on their own costs. Coops were constructed on the bases of the layout supplied by NHLP. Once the coop was completed, each beneficiary received 30 pullets (3 months old) of the golden-type, 2 feeders, 2 drinkers, 250 kg of fixed feed, 4.5 meters of wire mesh, and the necessary amount of vitamins, vaccines, and antibiotics.

For self-help and sustainability of the project achievements, the project beneficiaries were assisted to organize Village Poultry Producers Groups headed by Village Group Leaders. Therefore, special training was given to the beneficiaries to become good team workers and to negotiate as a group with buyers in the local markets and with animal health providers.



To support the project beneficiaries and to eliminate unexpected chicken mortalities, the families were provided with the necessary preventive kits. Besides, the project staff made intensive house to house follow up visits in the first weeks of the distribution and solved the problems the beneficiaries were facing. This was a useful exercise as beneficiaries were practically trained inside their houses.

Small scale poultry production offers the women in the Afghan villages an excellent opportunity to start their own business and to increase the income of the family. Attending the training programmes and building their own coops has improved the social status of the targeted women among other family members. In order to strengthen social relations among the village households, the beneficiaries gave 85,773 eggs for free to their neighbours and relatives.

Impacts of this project can briefly be mentioned in terms of business expansion, enhanced poultry production skills of the beneficiaries, and improved poultry management systems, leading to reduced poultry losses and increasing incomes for the targeted village women. Introduction of birds with higher production capacities,

better management practices, and reduced chicken mortality thanks to regular vaccinations, were the main factors in enhancing the profitability of chicken rearing. The improved sanitation situation has not only improved chicken health, but also brought about significant changes in the health of the members of the households.

Last but not least: the value of the eggs increased as well, because cleaning the egg shells attracted buyers who were ready to pay premium for the quality of the eggs. The establishment of Poultry Producer Groups has been very effective in sharing best practices among the group members, in improving the availability, affordability, and accessibility of quality services, and in enhancing the access to the local markets.

The DCA-NHLP project has been awarded with three appreciation letters from the district departments of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) and other authorities in Bagram and Charikar. Moreover, the provincial department of MAIL in Parwan appreciated DCA- NHLP in Parwan province, and asked DCA to proceed with its support to those women who participated in this project.

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