

## Celebration 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of DCA-VET in the Netherlands



Two years ago, DCA-VET had his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At that time, however, it was not possible to celebrate this event properly. In order to not let this milestone pass unnoticed, now two celebrations were planned: one in Holland and one in Afghanistan. The celebration ceremony in Holland took place the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2015; in Afghanistan the event will be celebrated in October.

In Holland, a small symposium was organized to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> (+2) anniversary, and also to launch publication of a book on 25 years of DCA engagement in Afghanistan, compiled by Bram Schreuder. The book depicts how a small group of Dutchmen, united in the NGO DCA, managed to develop a country-wide animal health system, and grew into a professional organization with 300 Afghan staff. The symposium was opened by the chairman of the DCA-VET Board, Dr P.W. de Leeuw.

Around 80 friends and relations of DCA visited the symposium.

In four presentations, prominent Board and staff members of DCA-VET highlighted the history of DCA, showing successes achieved as well as challenges encountered. Dr Gert-Jan Duives, Secretary of the Board, depicted the start of DCA and the establishment of the Veterinary Training Centre in 1988 with a lot of pictures from that period. He stressed the loyalty and long-term commitment of staff as one of the success factors of DCA. The presentation of Dr Bram



Schreuder, delegated Board member and one of the founders of DCA, gave a broad and in-depth overview of the development of DCA's programme.



After the break, Bram Schreuder presented the first copy of the book *"Afghanistan, a 25-years' struggle for a better life for its people and livestock"* to HE Dr. Obaidullah Obaid, Ambassador Extraordinary of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in the Netherlands. During his speech the Ambassador recalled the work and achievements of DCA-VET for the people of Afghanistan and thanked the organization for its long-lasting commitment.

The third speaker, Dr Noor Jahan, DCA Extension Officer, focused on the gender approach of DCA-VET, within the organization as well as in its projects.

In short: 25% of the DCA staff are women, and DCA strives to reach 30% female beneficiaries through an effective women-to-women approach. Last but not least, Dr Fakhri, DCA Programme Director, summarized the developments over the last five years. He listed all current projects and showed how DCA expanded its activities, covering now almost all provinces of Afghanistan.

During the reception and the buffet following the symposium there was ample opportunity for socializing. With so many current and previous staff members being present, some from the starting period of DCA, it was a great joy meeting old friends again.

