



**PAMIR RECONSTRUCTION BUREAU
(P R B)
ANIMAL HEALTH & LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION PROGRAM
VETERINARY SERVICES IN AFGHANISTAN**

INTRODUCTION:

Livestock, as a major part of national wealth, is the most vital segment of agricultural sector being the back bone of Afghan economy. Providing living resources and employment opportunities, the agricultural sector traditionally engages 85% population of this agrarian country.

In the pre-war period, before 1978, over 80% of foreign exchange brought to the country were generated through export of animal products such as Karakul, Wools, Rugs, Galeems, Skins and intestines to international markets.

During the period of Russian invasion of the country and thereafter internal fighting, drastically damaging all social and economical resources, livestock and veterinary services were crucial affected. Population of livestock enormously dropped. A large number of animals was exterminated due to military operations and land mines. Disruption and lack of veterinary services contributed to the escalated occurrence of livestock diseases, inducing higher losses of livestock.

In the prevailing devastating conditions, UNDP/FAO adopted a strategy to address the problems and sufferings of Afghan populace by rehabilitation and restoration of veterinary services in the country. Finally they initiated veterinary program inside Afghanistan, entrusted to a number of NGOs including Pamir Reconstruction Bureau (PRB).

Since then this organization (PRB) is vigorously engaged in provision of veterinary services inside Afghanistan to protect livestock against ailments and thus save enormous resources of the country.

VETERINARY CLINICS OPERATED BY PRB INSIDE AFGHANISTAN:

Pamir Reconstruction Bureau started activities in the field of veterinary in 1991, establishing 6 veterinary clinics inside Afghanistan. Currently this organization operates 54 veterinary clinics in various provinces as follows:

<u>Provinces</u>	<u>No.of Clinics</u>
1. Badakhshan	3
2. Takhar	13
3. Kunduz	7
4. Parwan	7
5. Kapisa	6
6. Paktika	18
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Total	54

The clinics are being operated on the basis of FAO/PRB regular structure & setup required for activities. Technical staff entails veterinarian, Para-veterinarian & Basic Veterinary Workers (BVW).

While setting up buildings of clinics, PRB facilitates logistic, technical support and other services required for operation of the clinics. In order to improve quality and to clinch efficiency of veterinary services, PRB regularly organizes refresher courses and additional training programs to all categories of technical field staff. For expansion of services in the radius of coverage of the clinics, it conducts training for BVWs for self reliance and their adhesion to veterinary activities.

SITUATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN AFGHANISTAN:

Observation and findings of our field veterinarian and FAO technical personnel, reveal that variety of infectious diseases prevalent in Afghanistan are inciting yearly tremendous direct and indirect losses of livestock. Amongst the most serious contagious and fatal diseases striking massive losses of livestock are Enterotoxemia, Anthrax, Caprin contagious pleuro pneumonia (CCPP), Contagious agalactia, hemorrhagic septicaemia, foot and mouth disease, strangles, sheep pox, infectious coryza, new castle, fowl pox, fowl cholera, coccidiosis, salmonella pullorum, chronic respiratory diseases (CRD).

The livestock is contemporarily being provided protection against the most dangerous and fatal diseases as stated above through regular vaccination campaigns and treatment extended by veterinary services conducted by PRB and other NGOs.

Afghan farmers and villagers were not willing to vaccinate their animals and take advantages of veterinary services due to lack of their knowledge and awareness about importance of veterinary services in their life. Even when the services were extended free of cost. Operation of veterinary services, conducted by PRB and other NGOs and extension work of field personnel, have improved the situation. Villagers and farmers are now accustomed to get vaccinated their livestock and utilize veterinary services and pay for the costs. Farmers and villagers have gotten complete awareness of the importance and benefits of veterinary services in their day to day life through extension work and operation of veterinary clinics.

Wide range of diseases (bacterial, viral, fungal, parasitic and others) of livestock are being diagnosed by field Veterinarians on the basis of clinical grounds and extended necessary treatments accordingly.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF VETERINARY SERVICES:

Major world wide responsibilities of veterinarians are as follows:

- a. Protection of livestock, part of national wealth, by preventive and curative veterinary measures.
- b. Control of zoonoses and thus protecting human health.
- c. Elevation of animal production (meat, milk and eggs) required for human diet.

Meat, milk and eggs, containing essential amino acids, are the most precious products of animals. Amino acids are having various functions in the body. They are necessary for growth, physical and mental development of human body. Their deficiency causes wide range of disorders such as undergrowth, anaemia, lower protection of body with subsequent increased affinity towards ailments, increased mortality of women & children and others.

WHO standards estimates 35 gr. of animal proteins intake per 24 hours for an individual for normal growth and maintenance of activities. While FAO statistics in view of the existing resources of the world estimates possibility of only 27 gr. of animal proteins intake per individual for 24 hours. In the developed countries, with high level of animal production, the rate of animal proteins intake per capita is estimated 40 to 50 gr. per 24 hours. In contrast to this in developing countries, the intake rate of animal proteins per capita is estimated 14 gr. and even less than that per 24 hours.

Population growth of 1.7 - 2.2 % per year and development of resources on 1% per year, obvious imbalance, indicates adverse news for inhabitants of our planet that they will face serious threat of hunger and calamity.

The concept of compensating deficiency of animal proteins in human diet with plants proteins will not eliminate malnutrition of essential amino acids and therefore, cannot be a solution of the problem.

Afghanistan falling in the group of poor countries, hardly can provide intake of 14 gr. of animal proteins and even less per capita to population per 24 hours.

This chart show the number of animals and their losses before operation of veterinary services (30% losses generally accepted) in 3 districts.

District	Estimated number of Animals according to livestock census conducted by PRB in 1995.				Losses of livestock before operation of veterinary services 30% estimated.			
	Cattle	Sheep/Goats	Equine	Poultry	Cattle	Sheep/Goats	Equine	Poultry
Khoja Ghar	12768	82719	5056	41613	3830	24815	1516	12485
Bagram	8004	3467	1181	24896	2401	1040	354	7469
Jaji Maidan	43036	18505	859	19529	12910	5551	257	5858
Total	63808	104691	7096	86038	19141	31406	2127	25812

Note: To calculate the value of each animal lost on the basis of current market rates, the economical losses of each district will come up to millions of Afs.

This chart shows number of animals and their losses in 3 district after operations of Veterinary Services in the area. It indicates that the number of losses has significantly decreased.

Year	District	Type of Animals	No. animals in district	No. Animals vaccinated	No. animals at risk	No. animals affected	No. of mortality animals	No. of animals vaccinated %	No. of animals affected %	Mortality of affected animals %
1995	Khoja Ghar	Cattle	12768	4979	7789	2298	1276	39%	18%	10%
		Sheep/goat	82719	35155	47563	18198	12407	42.5%	22%	15%
		Poultry	41613	8072	33540	14564	12483	19.4%	35%	30%
1995	Bagram	Cattle	8004	2625	5378	1325	960	32.8%	16.5%	12%
		Sheep/goat	3467	1397	2069	658	485	40.3%	19%	14%
		poultry	24896	11950	12945	9958	8962	48%	40%	36%
1995	Jaji Maidan	Cattle	43036	11490	31546	8521	6025	26.7%	19.8%	14%
		Sheep/goat	18505	8604	9900	3705	2960	46.5%	20%	16%
		poultry	14529	4784	14744	6835	6054	24.5%	35%	31%

CONCLUSION:

Going through the above mentioned charts (I and II), it appears that before the initiation of veterinary services losses of livestock were approximately 30% per year due to the existence of foci (endemic) of various infectious diseases in the area. Now after five years operation of veterinary services, the losses have reduced to approximately 10-16% in cattle and sheep/goats per year, as the foci of various infectious diseases have been controlled and reduced.

It means that livestock holders were losing milliards of Afs, each year before the operation of veterinary services. Thanks to those services, Afghan farmers are now saving milliards of Afs, each year since then.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Since there is no representative of central government in Afghanistan, the ongoing veterinary services are vitally needed to prevent losses of livestock, part of national wealth, these services would be necessary to be continued.
2. Ensuring effectiveness and better quality of veterinary services, laboratory facilities would be necessary to be established in different localities in Afghanistan to help field veterinarians in diagnostic techniques of diseases so far not detected.
3. To increase animal production in Afghanistan, which is in the lower range for various factors, it is necessary to improve local animal breeds mainly cattle by reintroduction of artificial insemination and improvement of traditional feeding.
4. Pastures, as feeding source free of cost, would be imperative to not only preserve but also to improve. Further more drinking water sources for livestock would be vitally needed and would be possible to made it available nearby pastures through digging wells.
5. The increasing incidence of external parasites, causing enormous indirect losses, would require to be tackled with arranging pools for showering animals.
6. In the localities with limited agricultural lands, poultry rearing would be the only potential alternative to be adopted.
7. Short term courses, seminars and workshops would be necessary to arrange for farmers in practical aspects of the livestock management and poultry.

8. Traditional feedings could be improved through introduction of simple techniques of non traditional feedings such as silage making, treatment of straw with urea etc. by practical demonstrations and extension activities.
9. To minimize the risks of transmission of infectious diseases, arrangements for quarantine and control of livestock moving from one place to another place would be necessary, specially at the borders areas.
10. Besides improvement of knowledge of veterinarians in technical matters, special attention would be necessary to be paid to the practical aspects of livestock management on the refresher courses being provided to field veterinarians. organizing refresher courses