



Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development

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Community Animal Health Network / CAHN project in Syunik Region

Animal Health is the primary concern of farmers, livestock product processors, consumers and government organizations. To ensure good health and good look of farmed animals in Armenia USDA supported CARD's initiation to develop Community Animal Health Network by providing trainings, technical assistance, as well as passing on information on new medicine and technologies. One of the key goals in this project is to increase awareness of community veterinarians, local authorities and farmers, aiming at preventing or managing outbreaks of serious animal diseases, and in doing so support the farming industry, protect the welfare of farmed animals and safeguard public health from animal borne diseases.

CAHN Project launched in Syunik Region in October 2009. This region was selected due to its suitability for animal husbandry and very rich history of farming, dating back to Soviet and post Soviet times. However, even having a long experience in animal health services and farming under the Soviet regulation, nowadays many private veterinarians in the regions lack networks, information on innovative methods and new medicines. Through a baseline study conducted by CARD Animal Health team and analyzing the current situation in the region, CAHN project came to support the regional veterinarians in three main aspects, namely: providing trainings

CARD AH team organized three trainings in three towns of Syunik region: in Sisian, Goris and Kapan. Totally 67 veterinarians out of local 84 participated in the training.

The trainings were organized in an interactive methodology providing theoretical, as well as some demo activities, specifically presenting medicine and some medical tools, videos, as well as group discussions and individual questions-answers.

The participants evaluated trainings as very productive and expressed a high interest in ensuring their participation in the upcoming practical component, i.e. *Field trainings* that will be organized for 4-5 communities in each region.

Neighboring village veterinarians will be invited to participate in the workshops. Workshop participants will have an opportunity to use their knowledge gained during theoretical trainings and to strengthen their capacities through practical exercises, which will help them to improve the quality of their services and gain the trust of farmers in their communities.

The third training component will focus on *AH medicines*. During the implementation of this component CARD Animal Health experts will



and technical assistance, setting up a community Farm Service Center in Sarnakunq village and supporting service provision and network building, as well as introducing high quality medicines.

CARD Animal Health team has already completed one of the training components, i.e. theoretical/ classroom training covering topics such as: (a) **Parasitic diseases prevention, control and new methods of treatment and economical impact of parasitic diseases;** (b) **Reproduction problems, obstetrical diseases;** (c) **Infectious diseases management by the example of African Swine Fever;** (d) **Housing and Care of Small Ruminants: Sheep/goats;** and (e) **Dehorning and hoof trimming of cattle.**

The topics were identified, designed and developed by the facilitation of CARD specialists and in close collaboration with the local veterinarians and regional chief veterinary offices, National Food Safety and Veterinary Inspection Agency, ARID goat center specialists, Lecturers of Armenian State Agrarian University.



import, register and introduce new high quality medicines to local veterinarians and farmers. Very limited animal health medicines are officially registered in Armenia and most of them are smuggled in small quantities.

Currently AH team is in a registration process of 10 name medicines from the world leading companies, which may take 6-8 months. Also, AH team will provide informative trainings on the use of the medicine, translate the medicines instructions, and provide them through the farm service center and in the pharmacies. These facts will support veterinarians to have access to high quality AH medicines, better understand and analyze the market of AH medicines, to identify which medicines are efficient and effective to use for a particular disease and not be cheated by low quality drugs. For the beginning, veterinarians will get those medicines by cost sharing basis, which will give them an opportunity to become acquainted with medicines, to check the quality, and ground to start private business.

Supporting of Organic Production in Akunk Village, Kotayk Region

Women can play a significant role in developing new food product, starting new initiatives and taking responsibility to improve income level of their families.



CARD has started women's initiative in agribusiness and food production since 2008. New project launched to support a small group of women with purchase of asparagus seeds and plantation of experimental 60 sqm area. Shortly after, the group approached CARD asking for support to expand production capacities and product varieties.

Another Stage Ahead

The project "Poverty Reduction and Confidence-building in Border Areas of Georgia and Armenia by Strengthening Civil Societies in Sustainable Rural Development" (Stage II) is implemented in Armenia and Georgia over a year already. During this period of time several trainings, meetings, a study tour, diversity festival and similar activities were organized by project partners in the Northern Armenia and Southern Georgia.

In August 2010, from 18th to 20th, training on "Coalition Building, Networking and Advocacy" was organized in Gyumri. The participants of the training were 2 to 4 representatives from each civil society organization targeted by the project, namely "Shirak Com-



petitiveness Centre", "Spitak-Farmer" Association and "Yerevak" NGO. Other NGOs such as "Black eye" NGO from Noyemberyan, "Limen-Spitak" NGO and "Women and Youth of Spitak" NGO from Spitak and "Sustainable" NGO, Shakharov Foundation and "Bioso-

With the support of CARD Foundation, the women's group was introduced to new 18 high value vegetables, such as: organic basil, cabbage, spinach, two types of beans, onions, green beans, lentil, parsley, tomatoes, sunflower, fennel, two types of radish, carrots and red chicory. Technical and small financial assistance was ensured on time in developing women farm business. CARD also linked the group with "Shen" NGO for organic farming production and management training.

With CARD initiative and support, aiming at extending the yield season of greens and vegetables women established a 100sqm mobile greenhouse, which ensures an opportunity to meet the market demand during off-season with supply of products and make additional profits for sustainable development of the business.

This initiative received positive responses from many consumers. Also, the US Ambassador to Armenia, Ms. Marie Yovanovitch visited the women's group in Akunk village, Kotayk region on August 5th, 2010. The visit of the Ambassador aimed at meeting entrepreneurs who started high value crop production in order to develop small business and ensure quality of life of their families.

Ms. Ambassador encouraged the women and promised to be their first client of organic asparagus in Spring 2011.

phia" from Gyumri were also invited to participate in the training.

While bringing many different NGOs together the training aimed at increasing awareness on advocacy, networking and coalition building among 14 NGO representatives from Tavush, Lori and Shirak regions. The training targeted also to identify local community and regional problems and look for practical and realistic solutions to those issues.

The training covered aspects such as Public advocacy; Concept of Advocacy, Government's position and Civil Society Organization's role in Advocacy; Directions and policy of advocacy; Levels of advocacy; Types of information and sources; Strategy of Advocacy; Steps of developing a strategy on Advocacy; Proper prioritization of the problem; Advocacy campaigns; Coalitions, building coalitions, advantages and limitations in coalition building; PR for advocacy, working with the mass-media; Realistic strategy for Advocacy.

Based on the given concepts and group works, the participants identified several problems in the bordering areas, among them environmental pollutions, lack of cross-border cooperation, damaged irrigation systems and such, which will be further discussed during Joint Workshop for Armenian and Georgian CSOs planned in the beginning of October 2010.

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