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Stop African swine fever (ASF): Public and private partnering for success

Report of the online event
14–28 June 2021



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Introduction

African swine fever (ASF) virus continues to spread across the globe resulting in significant impacts on swine production systems. Coordinated efforts among all relevant stakeholders are needed to control this deadly disease. Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) can optimise the unique strengths of both sectors when they are well planned and well implemented. Moreover, such partnerships can often accomplish things that would be impossible were either sector operating on its own. By joining forces to strengthen animal health systems through PPPs, we can make the global control of ASF a reality.

Objectives

The objectives of the ‘Stop ASF: Public and private partnering for success’ virtual event were to:

- understand the impact of ASF on the public and private sectors;
- identify the needs and common ground of all stakeholders regarding the effective control of ASF;
- showcase how PPPs can help prevent and/or control ASF with proven efficiency and impact;
- identify partnership opportunities, and current and future win–win scenarios;
- promote the engagement of stakeholders and facilitate PPPs in the implementation of the ASF Global Initiative.

Background

Recognising the global threat that ASF poses and its impact on swine production, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) responded to the request made by its Members in 2019 at its General Session to ‘define the guiding principles and key pillars required for the successful global control of ASF’.¹ In July 2020, the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) Global Initiative for the Control of African Swine Fever (ASF) was launched jointly by the OIE and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

In order to initiate and promote a global call for action to adopt and implement the GF-TADs Initiative for the Global Control of ASF, a series of webinars on African swine fever was held by GF-TADs, a joint FAO and OIE framework, on 26–30 October 2020. The series

entitled ‘An unprecedented global threat – a challenge to livelihoods, food security and biodiversity. Call for action’ brought together specialists from national Veterinary Services, industry, research, academia, and regional and international partners. These specialists reviewed existing and recently developed tools, mechanisms and practices to address the introduction and spread of ASF.

In the context of the ASF Global Control Initiative and in connection with the call for action event, FAO and the OIE, in collaboration with the International Meat Secretariat (IMS), organised this virtual event on PPP between 14 and 28 June 2021 to highlight the central role of PPPs in the ASF Global Control Initiative and to promote the engagement and collaboration of the public and private sectors in the Global Initiative.

¹ OIE 87/GS Resolution No. 33, available at: www.oie.int/app/uploads/2021/03/a-reso-2019.pdf (accessed on 8 July 2021).



Summary

Over the course of the two-week event, a total of 1,351 participants from 132 countries registered to attend the event. The breakdown of participants by region and by sector was as follows (see also Fig. 1):

Regions	Number of participants
Africa	297
Americas	325
Asia and the Pacific	441
Europe	284
Middle East	4

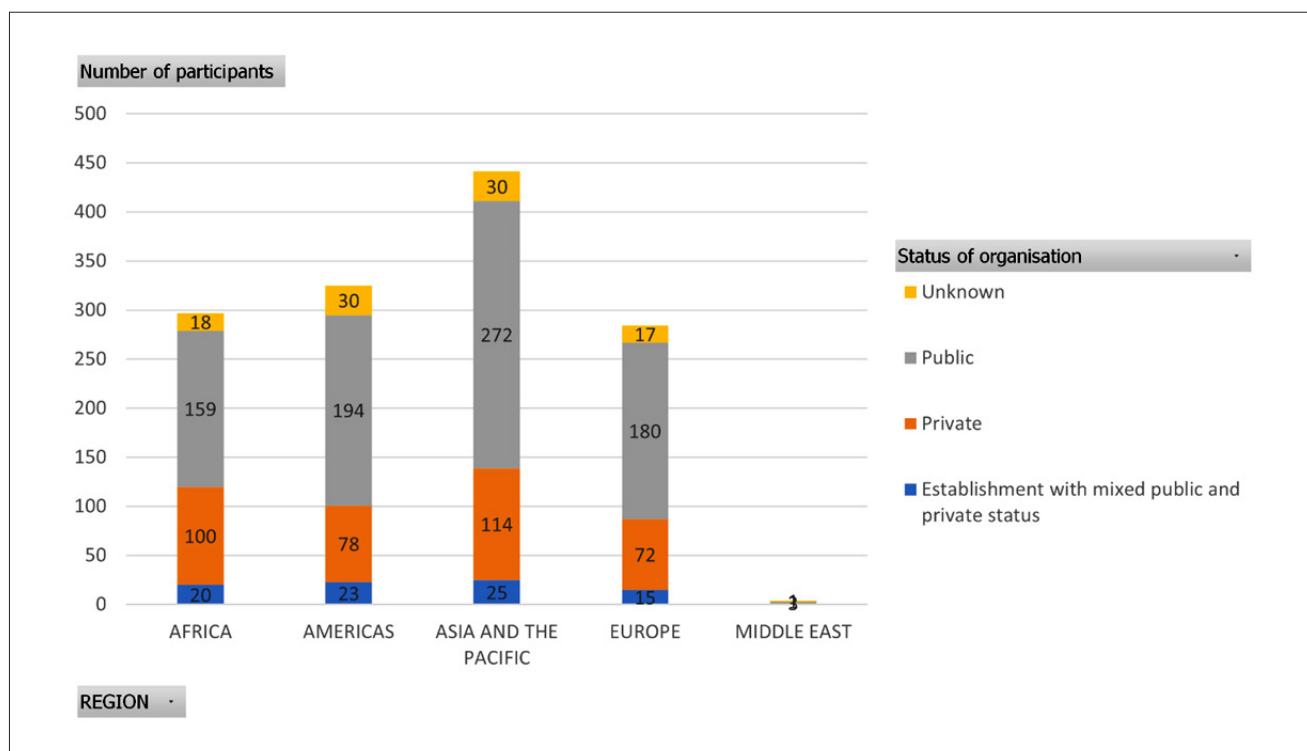
The majority of participants were from the public sector (60%), notably from the Veterinary Services, followed by the private sector (27%) and those who had a mixed affiliation (6%), while some participants did not indicate their affiliation (7%).

The large number and diversity of the stakeholders who participated in the event reflects the interest of the swine sector, and its associated value chain, in PPP, signalling substantial potential in the development of PPP for activities to prevent and control ASF.

Main background of participants (85% of participants responded, multiple options were allowed)

Background	%
Veterinary Services	35
Laboratories	11
Pig producers	9
GF-TADs	7
Research	6
Agriculture development	5
Private vets	5
Meat industry	4
Consultants	4
Feed industry	3
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	3
Wildlife – hunters	2
Finance	2
Pharmaceutical industry	2
Media	1
Transport sector	<1
Customs	<1

FIGURE 1 Participation by region and by sector





Word cloud generated from key words raised during the virtual event.

The event was held on a virtual platform that was specifically designed for this purpose and included three sessions: **pre-recorded videos**, a **live question-and-answer session** and a **live panel discussion**. In total, 722 participants navigated through the videos and participated in the live sessions, 219 of whom used the networking tools provided to interact with other participants.

- **Pre-recorded videos**

A total of 16 pre-recorded videos were made available. The topics covered ranged from transversal PPP concepts to the implementation of PPPs by the public and private sectors in the prevention and control of ASF, including the role of important actors such as the feed industry, hunter associations and private veterinary practitioners.

- **Live question-and-answer session**

The live question-and-answer session, which had over 400 participants, took place on 21 June 2021. The session was opened by Dr Monique Eloit, Director General of the OIE, and by Ms Beth Bechdol, Deputy Director General of FAO. Five international experts from the public and private sectors discussed their experiences in implementing PPP in the context of ASF control. The session raised important questions on the importance of regional coordination in ASF control and the relevance of PPP, incentivising the private sector to invest in PPPs and supporting small producers in ASF control.

- **Live panel discussion**

On 28 June 2021, more than 300 participants connected to the live discussion and interacted with the panellists on opportunities to enhance PPPs in the prevention, early detection and reporting, and effective response to ASF. The session was opened by Dr Keith Sumption, FAO Chief Veterinary Officer, and was closed by Dr Jean-Philippe Dop, OIE Deputy Director General of Institutional Affairs and Regional Activities. As co-chairs of the GF-TADs management committee, Dr Sumption and Dr Dop both emphasised the importance of the development of sustainable national PPPs, and the role of GF-TADs in facilitating this under the GF-TADs strategy.

The pre-recorded videos and recordings of the two sessions, as well as the responses to questions raised by the participants are available at <https://stop-asf.gf-tads.org/en>, while the agenda of the event can be found in the Annex to this report.



Potential opportunities to enhance public–private partnership aimed at ASF control

During the event, speakers and participants discussed potential opportunities to enhance PPP aimed at ASF control based on their own experiences in establishing PPPs for the prevention and control of ASF and other transboundary animal diseases. The following text summarises the potential opportunities identified during the event.

ENABLING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STRONG PPPs

Building bridges between the public and private sectors by involving key actors along the swine industry value chain

The control of ASF requires the joint effort of all those involved in the swine industry value chain. It includes not only pig keepers, but also those in input supply, processing, marketing, trading and consumption. To this end, multi-stakeholder platforms that enable coordination and communication between the public and private sectors should be created to facilitate knowledge exchange, increase awareness and build the trust needed for the implementation of ASF control strategies.

Multi-stakeholder platforms can take many forms, depending on the context. For example, in some countries, local and national inter-professional organisations already exist and may be utilised. In others, it may be necessary to foster the development of similar organisations, while simultaneously creating multi-stakeholder groups. Establishing an enabling environment that allows different stakeholders to work alongside each other collaboratively during peacetime, when ASF is absent, can go a long way in supporting an effective response in the event of ASF incursion.

Supporting PPPs through the establishment of governance mechanisms

Underlying governance mechanisms for PPPs, such as a memorandum of understanding, letter of intent or legal framework facilitates the effective implementation of partnering strategies for ASF control. The governance framework should describe the roles and responsibilities of the parties, and the key performance indicators of the partnership. It should also be linked to the material, financial and human resource contributions that will be required.

Ensuring sustainable financial and human resourcing

Sound planning with clearly identified objectives and commitment of resources is key to enabling the implementation of sustainable ASF prevention and control measures. Public–private funding mechanisms such as insurance and compensation schemes are important to incentivise producers to engage in the early detection and reporting of ASF and to apply control measures when ASF has been detected. The PPP mechanisms should facilitate access to quality animal health services by key value chain players, including small producers.

PPPS TO ENABLE ASF CONTROL

Application of science-based, accepted and feasible control measures

ASF control is feasible when disease control measures are science-based and accepted by the public and private sectors. National and regional control strategies for ASF should be based on international standards published by the OIE, and best practices developed and implemented following consultation with relevant stakeholders. At the international level, Veterinary Authorities should recognise science-based ASF control measures, including measures facilitating safe trade, such as zoning, compartmentalisation and specific risk mitigation measures applied to the different commodities traded.

Biosecurity and public awareness

Biosecurity is considered to be one of the most cost-effective tools to prevent ASF. The public and private sectors should establish best practices for biosecurity and should create the appropriate framework through which to monitor and evaluate the implementation of biosecurity measures. Capacity building for biosecurity along the value chain and increasing public awareness of ASF risks are essential to prevent and control the disease. Critically, PPPs should endeavour to create an enabling environment for the adoption of measures to protect against the risks of ASF.

Research and development of control tools

The public and private sectors, in particular producer associations, academia, private industry and governments should promote innovation, exchange information and invest in research on existing knowledge gaps in the epidemiology of ASF. This innovation could include the improvement of existing diagnostic methods and the development of safe and effective vaccines.

Emergency preparedness and simulation exercises

Both the public and private sectors are involved in the preparedness, detection and response to ASF. Jointly designed and implemented simulation exercises provide a good environment from which to identify gaps and to better design ASF control policies. In addition, they serve to ensure that the private sector understands the risks and benefits of preparedness and early response, facilitating compliance with national regulations and emergency preparedness plans.

Targeted stakeholder intervention and capacity building

- **Pig producers and other actors in the value chain: improving access to knowledge and services**
Access to animal health services and knowledge on ASF prevention and control, especially by small-scale pig producers, may be improved through enabling PPPs and establishing a network of stakeholders, including producers' associations and veterinary paraprofessionals. In some instances, the public sector

should take the lead in galvanising actors to come together. An important area for PPPs could be the investment in biosecurity throughout the value chain, especially at the domestic swine–wildlife interface.

- **Veterinarians: education and workforce training**

Private veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals play a key role in preventing the entry of ASF to the farm, as well as detection, notification and response in the event of an incursion. There is a need to raise the capacity of private and public veterinary services and to facilitate collaboration to enable rapid detection and efficient response to outbreaks. Where feasible, training activities targeting both public and private veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals should be encouraged.

Regional and global coordination in efforts against ASF

In view of interconnectedness of swine supply chains and the potential for ASF to spread across national borders, partnerships need to extend beyond the national level to enable exchange of knowledge and concerted efforts to control ASF at the regional level.

At the global level, FAO and the OIE under GF-TADs, in collaboration with global private organisations such as the IMS and others, should continue to promote the development of PPPs and the creation of synergies in the control of transboundary animal diseases, including ASF.

Conclusions

Outbreaks of ASF can result in serious adverse impacts on the swine sector and all those in the value chain, from the public and private sectors alike. Therefore, all parties need to make dedicated efforts to prevent and control ASF. Public-Private Partnership provides the foundation for the development of mutually beneficial partnerships through which to better control the disease, allowing the public sector to fulfil its mandates more efficiently, and providing enabling conditions and opportunities for the private sector in terms of business continuity and growth.

The absence of safe and effective vaccines against ASF requires an even greater amount of vigilance, collaboration and trust among all stakeholders involved in the swine value chain to prevent the introduction and spread of ASF. It also demands information exchange and innovation to develop control tools for ASF. Compared to other farmed livestock, the swine industry is well developed in many regions, and thus well placed for the application of PPPs. Notwithstanding, PPP should also be inclusive of smallholder production systems, which predominate in many parts of the world, and strategies should therefore also consider this stakeholder group.

At this event, experts and participants all contributed to identifying opportunities for the improved control of ASF via PPPs, involving a range of potential private partners alongside the public Veterinary Services and throughout the value chain: producers, veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals, the pharmaceutical industry, diagnostic laboratories, slaughterhouses, trading companies, exporters, training institutions, consultants, etc. PPPs are instrumental in leveraging the respective strengths, knowledge, expertise, and human and financial resources of both public- and private-sector partners, to allow ASF control to be achieved more rapidly and efficiently.

PPP is a collaborative mechanism that may similarly be applied to many difficult-to-reach objectives where public and private sectors share interest and needs, in particular other priority transboundary animal diseases, such as foot and mouth disease, peste des petits ruminants or avian influenza, which are endemic in many countries. The OIE and FAO, under GF-TADs, continue to support the development of PPP to collaboratively increase impact and accelerate progress towards the control of diseases with high socio-economic burden.

Call for action

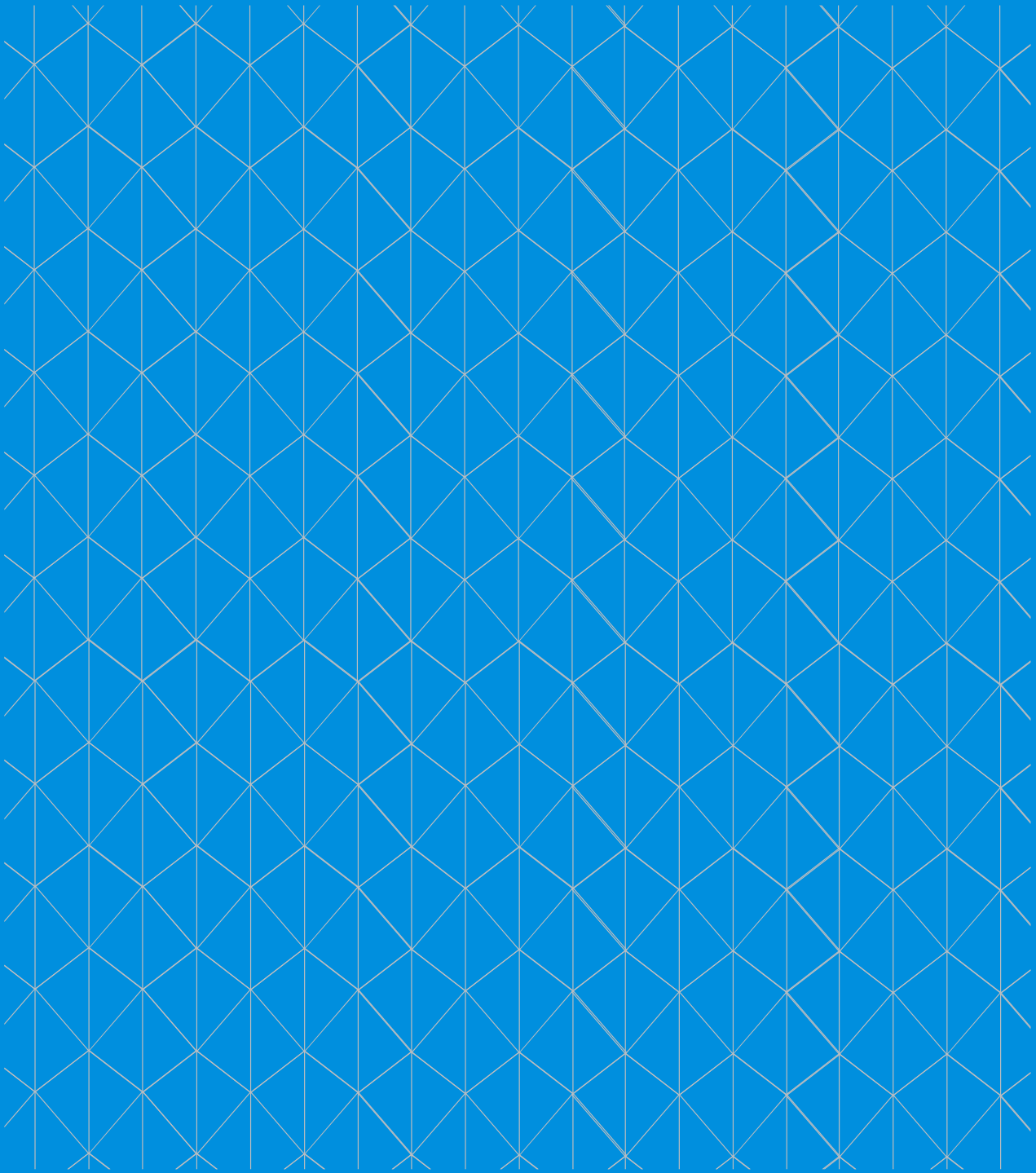
ASF prevention and control requires the transformation of ideas into actionable plans. It is time to follow-up on the preliminary steps, taken by some countries and regions, to implement sustainable PPPs towards better prevention and control of ASF.

Stakeholders from the public and private sectors are encouraged to consider the opportunities discussed during this event and to explore how ASF control in the different regions may be enhanced by the adoption of effective PPP.

The regional ASF Standing Group of Experts under GF-TADs is ready to provide the coordination platform needed to facilitate the dialogue between the different sectors and the establishment of PPP.

We need to join forces against this deadly pig disease. It is through strengthening PPPs that we will create much stronger, more sustainable and resilient animal health systems to make the global control of ASF a reality.

Annex



Agenda of the event²

Pre-recorded videos	
Topics	Speakers
Welcome	
Enhancing public private partnership by structured approach	Monique Eloit, OIE
Public-Private partnership. The vision of the private sector	Guillaume Roué, IMS
Public-Private partnerships in driving the development of sustainable agriculture and food systems	Beth Bechdol, FAO
African swine fever control in smallholder Pig Value chains: examples from Uganda and India	Michel Dione, ILRI
The OIE PPP Handbook "Guidelines for Public-Private Partnerships in the veterinary domain"	Isabelle Dieuzy-Labaye, OIE
ASF Compartmentalization guidelines	Gregorio Torres, OIE
Get ready for ASF incursion. Simulation exercises	Dan Donachie, OIE Mark Hovari, FAO
The role of hunters in ASF control	Torsten Mörner, CIC
Air transport and Pandemic Resilience Partnerships	Jon Godson, IATA
Feed industry and ASF prevention	Leah Wilkinson, American Feed Industry Association
The role of veterinary practitioners in ASF control	Patricia Turner, World Vet Association
Intersectoral Communication to prevent and control ASF	Samuel Hinneh, OIE Ki Min, FAO
Preparedness from the America point of view. The private sector perspective	Mario Eduardo Peña González, OIPORC
ASF Outbreaks: Public Private Partnership South African Experience	Peter Evans, SAPPO
Eradication of ASF in wild boar in Belgium – key success factors	Joris Coenen, Belgium Meat Office
The role of PPP in ASF research	Denis Kolbasov, GARA

² These materials will be available online until March 2022.

Live Q&A Session - 21 June 2021 - Live from 12.30 pm to 2pm (CEST)	
Topics	Speakers
Opening	Monique Eloit, OIE Beth Bechdol, FAO
Facilitator:	Gregorio Torres, OIE & Andriy Rozstalnyy, FAO
Multi-stakeholders collaboration for sustainable pork production and ASF control	Nitya Ghotge, GASL
Business continuity. The French experience	Didier Delzescaux, INAPORC
Public-private partnerships to keep African swine fever at bay. The Canadian experience	Tom Smylie, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
PPP to support small producers. The civil society perspective	Antoine Lury, Veterinary Sans Frontiers International
The experience of Asian Development Bank in helping the private sector stop ASF	Martin Lemoine, Asian Development Bank
Discussion	
Closing	

Live Panel Discussion -28 June 2021 - Live from 12.30pm to 2pm (CEST)	
Topics	Speakers
Opening	Keith Sumption, FAO
Panel facilitator:	Isabelle Dieuzy-Labaye (OIE)
Live panel: PPP for the prevention, early detection and response to ASF	Jaspinder Komal, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
	Richard French, Ohio Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, USA
	Dirk Pfeiffer, City University of Hong Kong
	Zhichun Jason Yan, New Hope Lihue, China
	Paco Reviriego Gordejo, European Commission
Wrap up and next steps	
Closing	Jean-Philippe Dop, OIE



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