



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



GF-TADs for Africa
African Swine Fever (ASF)
Standing Group of Experts (SGE)
for Africa
Inaugural meeting
23 – 24 March 2022



May 2022





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Introduction and background to the meeting

The situation of *African swine fever* (ASF) has become of increasing concern, not only in Africa where it originated, but globally. Indeed, beyond Africa, despite the best prevention and control efforts, ASF continues to spread in domestic and wild pig populations in Europe and Asia and now also the Americas. In response to this global threat the OIE World Assembly of Delegates passed Resolution No. 33 at the 87th General Session on ASF and tasked the OIE to work in collaboration with FAO to launch an initiative for the global control of ASF. The Initiative for the Global Control of ASF (“the Global Initiative” or GI) was developed under the GF-TADs umbrella. GF-TADs has identified key roles to be played by countries, FAO, OIE and the private sector for the global control of the disease.

The Global Initiative identifies coordination at regional and global levels as key to enhancing national control programmes. The *Standing Group of Experts* (SGE) format allows countries with similar socio-economic and epidemiological situations to share information, challenges and best practices, and to discuss regional solutions and approaches to enhancing control.

The *Terms of reference* (ToR) of the SGE ASF for Africa were adopted during the 10th *Regional Steering Committee* (RSC) meeting for Africa, held in October 2021. The ToR of the SGE are presented as **annex 1**.

Objectives and narrative report of the meeting

The establishment and launch of SGE ASF for Africa was undertaken by the OIE Regional Representation for Africa, in its capacity as the Secretariat of the GF-TADs for Africa RSC, with the support of the FAO, AU-IBAR and the GF-TADs ASF Working Group.

The meeting was held via video conference (Zoom platform) on 23 and 24 March 2022.

The launch meeting was attended by 8 out of 9 founding member countries (Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo and Uganda) that have reported ASF in the recent past. Also present was the African Union *Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources*, the *Regional Animal Health Centre for the Economic Community of West African States* (RAHC for ECOWAS), FAO and OIE Regional Representations, the *International Livestock Research Institute*, OIE and FAO Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres as well as selected national / regional laboratories : *Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre* of the African Union (AU—PANVAC); *National Veterinary Research Institute* (NVRI), Vom, Nigeria; *National Animal Health Diagnostic and Investigation Centre* (NAHDIC), Sebeta – Ethiopia; *Onderstepoort Veterinary Research* (OVR) Institute, Pretoria, South Africa; and the *Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles - Laboratoire National de l’Elevage et de Recherches Vétérinaires* (ISRA – LNERV), Dakar, Senegal. In addition the meeting was attended by two observer countries (interested future Members) i.e. Cabo Verde and Mali and two observer SGEs (Europe and Asia-Pacific).



Overall the meeting was attended by 56 participants over the two daily meetings (up to 51 participants per day). The list of participants is presented as **annex 2**.



Based on the expected outcomes of this meeting and follow-up activities, being:

1. The SGE - ASF for Africa is established and launched to guide on ASF control technical aspects at the national and regional level, through the SGE ASF for Africa;
2. The SGE - ASF for Africa Terms of Reference are shared ;
3. The topics to be covered by SGE - ASF for Africa are identified and validated;
4. The support of FAO and OIE to the Member Countries is strengthened, in line with the GI.

...the following agenda was prepared, fostering as much exchange of information and discussion between participants as possible, without engaging into technical discussions as such (agenda as delivered).

Time	Date >	Wednesday 23 March 2022	
08:30 - 09:00 (GMT)		Check-in online : Zoom room opens, recording starts, interpretation channels (draft agenda, GDPR disclaimer, housekeeping rules)	P. Bastiaensen Lyne Iyadi
09:00 – 09:15		Opening session : FAO RAF OIE RRAF AU-IBAR / AU-PANVAC	Charles Bebay Karim Tounkara Nick Nwankpa
09:15 – 09:25		Objectives and expected outputs of the meeting	Karim Tounkara
09.25 – 09:30		Election of the chair (Charles Bebay) and rapporteur (the RSC Secretariat) of the meeting	Nick Nwankpa
09:30 – 09:40		Presentation of the terms of reference of the SGE, adopted in 2021	P. Bastiaensen
09:40 – 09:50		Presentation of the current state of implementation of the <i>Global Initiative</i> (GI)	Andriy Rozstalnyy
09:50 – 10:00		Current status of ASF worldwide (based on OIE-WAHIS reporting)	Paolo Tizzani
10:00 – 10:45		Updates on the ASF situation in the nine SG ASF founding member countries Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo (no presentation made) Uganda and Zimbabwe (not present at the meeting)	(5 minutes each) Jean-Marc Feussom Douyeri T. Ouattara Florent Ngamuna Sam Kahariri Maimuna Habib Livio Heath Owoningbin Akakpo Paul Lumu Josphat Nyika
10:45 – 10:55		Presentation by the representative of the SGE for Europe on lessons learnt from the work of the SGE	Bernard Van Goethem



10:55 – 11:05	Presentation by the representative of the SGE for Asia and the Pacific, on lessons learnt from the work of the SGE	Caitlin Holley
11:05 – 11:20	Brief presentation of the rapporteur on the recurring themes and challenges mentioned by the member countries and the other SGEs, in order to guide the development of a draft work plan with priority topics to address.	
11:20 – 11:40	Discussion, led by the chair	Chair : Charles Bebay

Time	Date >	Thursday 24 March 2021	
08:30 - 09:00 (GMT)		Check-in online : Zoom room opens, recording starts, interpretation channels (draft agenda, GDPR disclaimer, housekeeping rules)	P. Bastiaensen Lyne lyadi
09:00 – 09:20		Presentation of draft work plan (12 months) on technical topics and on the <i>modus operandi</i> of future meetings (revised country membership, additional experts, etc...)	P. Bastiaensen
09:20 – 09:40		Update on the ongoing revision of the 2017 Regional strategy for the control of African swine fever in Africa (AU task force)	Fredrick Kivaria
09:40 – 10:00		Private sector perspective and feedback on draft work plan	Sharon Tsigadi
10:00 – 10:20		Diagnostic challenges with regards to ASF and what the reference laboratories can do to help (Onderstepoort Veterinary Research, Pretoria)	Livio Heath
10:20 – 10:40		Discussion, led by the chair (SamuelWakhusama)	Charles Bebay
10:40 – 10:50		Presentation of the ASF pages on the GF-TADs global and regional websites and invitation to contribute. Proposals for sharing of content within the SGE (OneDrive, SharePoint, Teams,...)	A. Fediaevsky P. Bastiaensen
10:50 – 11:10		Presentation of the revised draft work plan (joint writing team)	P. Bastiaensen
11:10 – 11:30		Discussion, amendment and adoption of the draft work plan	Samuel Wakhusama
11:30 – 11:40		Next steps and dates and venue for the second meeting	Karim Tounkara
11:40		End of the first SGE ASF meeting	



General considerations and work programme for the SGE (2022 – 2023)

Resulting from the various presentations made on day one and the comments from the private sector representative, Dr Sharon Tsigadi (Farmers' Choice Ltd KE), the following considerations were drafted, and technical items or topics identified, based on country presentations, regional presentations (Europe and Asia-Pacific) and the comments of (private sector) representatives and scientific experts, to guide the work of the SGE over the next 12 – 24 months, depending on the frequency of meetings ---

Considering:

1. The revised African Union Regional strategy for the control of African swine fever in Africa (AU-IBAR, FAO, ILRI)
2. That strict biosecurity is important for the control of ASF, Founding Member Countries of the SGE are urged to work with key private and public sector entities to enhance biosecurity and implement this along the value chain;
3. That control of ASF will be facilitated with the development of safe and efficacious vaccines, research institutions and the pharmaceutical industry are urged to prioritise the development of such vaccine(s) in their short- to mid-term R&D strategies;
4. That national Reference Laboratories in Founding Member Countries of the SGE are encouraged to interact and where possible to join the regional laboratory network for ASF in Southern Africa, initiated by the OIE Reference Laboratory at ARC-OVR in Onderstepoort, South Africa;

...the following technical items or topics were identified (in order of priority and logic/sequence of implementation) with comments (where appropriate) on possible secondary items or topics, some of which apply to several identified topics:

1. Value chains	Understanding the production features and value chains in Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Backyard sector (extensive);• Small holder (semi-intensive);• Industrial (intensive) sectors.
2. Biosecurity	Strengthen biosecurity for the control of ASF along the value chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of best practices• Management of swill feeding;• Training on biosecurity using existing available guidelines.



3. Surveillance	Enhanced surveillance and diagnostic capabilities for ASF control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhancing surveillance in domestic and wild pigs (novel tools);• Diagnostic capabilities (proficiency testing);• (Sub)regional networks (CVOs, laboratories);• Field-based challenges to reporting (poor recognition of clinical signs, fear of stamping-out measures, lack of restocking or compensation schemes);• Field-based reporting requirements or tools (EMA-i – FAO, others);• Risk communication (awareness in producers and actors in value chain).
4. Outbreak management	Outbreak response capability and capacity for ASF control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training on 3Ds (depopulation, disposal, decontamination);• Financial incentives such as compensation of farmers, restocking and insurance schemes;• Compensation plans (CP) as part of emergency preparedness and response plans;• Risk communication (awareness in producers and actors in value chain).
5. Socio-economics	Regional ASF risk assessment and socio-economic impact for effective prevention, control and evidence-based advocacy	
6. Cross-border	Official border control measures and informal cross-border transit and trade of pigs and pig products, leading to spread of ASF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official border control measures;• Standards and the national regulatory framework;• Informal trade and movement of pigs and pig products across borders;• Appropriate regulatory frameworks;• Risk communication.
7. Policy	Policy issues, control strategies and National and Regional Strategic Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevention and control strategies;• Compartmentalisation and trade facilitation (business continuity);• Appropriate legislation and regulations;• National Strategic Plans;• Regional Strategic Plans.



8. Transparency

Issues related to **transparency** and sharing of information between neighbouring countries and with trading partners

- Understanding the importance of timely submission of immediate notifications and six-monthly reporting to the OIE through OIE-WAHIS;
- (Sub)regional networks (CVOs, laboratories)



Screen capture of some of the participants

Regarding the frequency and hosting of upcoming meetings, it was clarified that :

1. Every upcoming meeting will only deal with one of the 8 above-mentioned topics;
2. Subject to availability of funds and the easing of Coronavirus related travel restrictions, face to face meetings will be progressively encouraged;
3. Founding Member Countries will be invited to host on a rotational basis (and chair the meeting). The representative of Cameroon will enquire whether it is feasible to host the first face-to-face session of the SGE later this year;
4. The next SGE meeting (2) will be online and will address a topic that can best be presented through an online format;
5. The frequency of SGE ASF meetings hasn't been detailed, but 8 topics to be addressed in the next 24 months at most, represents a frequency of 3 months between sessions. For the Europe region, the frequency has been of 4.6 months between SGE meetings on average (since 2014).

Furthermore, a dedicated SGE page has been opened of the GF-TADs for Africa website in order to facilitate the sharing of information amongst members of the SGE (click the link) :

[African Swine Fever - Standing Group of Experts \(SGE\) - OIE - Africa](#)



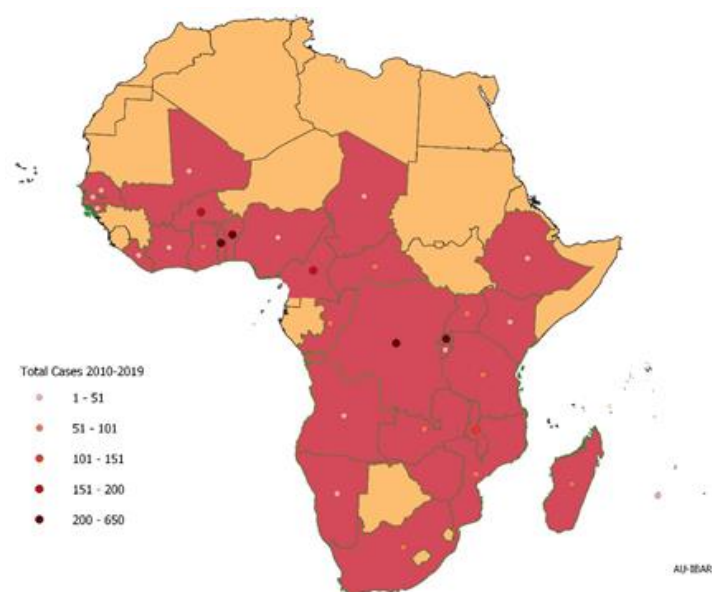
Annex 1. Terms of reference of the ASF SGE for Africa

Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever for Africa

Introduction

The situation of *African swine fever* (ASF) has become of increasing concern globally. ASF has its roots in (a sylvatic cycle in) Sub-Saharan Africa, with reservoir hosts in wildlife (wild boar, warthogs or other feral swine), inanimate fomites, and competent arthropod vectors including soft ticks. Between 2018 and 2020, ASF outbreaks were reported to AU-IBAR in 27 countries in Africa¹.

Beyond its “immediate notifications” or IN, the OIE *World Animal Health Information System* (WAHIS) also captures ASF notifications in the six-monthly reports submitted by member countries. Unlike for most transboundary animal diseases, there is still no vaccine or specific treatment to subdue ASF. Therefore, ASF control relies on strict sanitary approaches.



The 2017, Joint AU-IBAR/FAO/*International Livestock Research Institute* (ILRI) Africa Strategy for the Control of ASF clearly spells out that ASF outbreaks lower the productivity of the pig sector, compounded by not well understood epidemiology and dynamics of ASF, socio-economic impact and the role of wildlife in the spread of the disease. The revised Continental ASF Control Strategy

(2021) is expected to upscale regional capacities of veterinary services.

Beyond Africa, despite prevention and control efforts, ASF persists in domestic and wild pig populations in Europe and Asia, which has led to an unprecedented crisis in the global pig sector.

The current situation not only presents a global risk to animal health and welfare, national and international economies, but also to livelihoods, particularly of the rural communities, and the private sector to face the complexity of ASF, multisectoral and multi-institutional cooperation is required. Therefore, the **Initiative for the Global control of ASF** was developed under the GF-TADs umbrella. GF-TADs has identified key roles to be played by countries, OIE, FAO and the private sector for the global control of the disease. Achieving ASF global control, requires adequate risk management through the development and implementation of national control programs. Risk communication is a crucial component of these programs to effectively address risk pathways and practices. GF-TADs calls on countries to manage risks by implementing OIE International Standards and to maintain transparency through effective information sharing and timely disease notification through OIE-WAHIS.

¹ Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Congo (Democratic Rep. Of), Congo (Rep. Of), Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe



The FAO/OIE GF-TADs platform has developed the Global Initiative which intends to achieve an effective regional and global coordination and cooperation to control ASF (outcome 2 of the global control of ASF a GF-TADs initiative 2020-2025), through Effective regional and global expert networks and strengthening inter-sectoral coordination and cooperation (intermediate outcome 2.2) for effective prevention and preparedness measures, and minimising the adverse effects of ASF.

More information: <https://rr-africa.oie.int/en/projects/gf-tads-for-africa/african-swine-fever/> and <http://www.gf-tads.org/asf/asf/en/>

The Standing Group of Experts on ASF (SGE-ASF) for Africa is set up within the FAO/OIE GF-TADs to promote regular exchange of information and best practices among concerned national veterinary authorities, international and national experts, and the private sector.

The SGE-ASF for Africa will start with a core group of 9 founding members countries drawn from Central, Eastern, West and Southern Africa, with the aim to progressively extend to more countries.

Objectives - Strengthening Africa regional cooperation and dialogue on ASF control through:

- Regular information exchange on ASF situation preparedness and control measures applied,
- Technical support for regular review of national and regional ASF control strategies by experts, based on experiences and best-practices, with a view to provide scientific and technical advice,
- Technical formulation of disease control policies and scientific guidance to aid in the coordination of ASF prevention and control efforts
- Enhance / foster / promote regional collaboration on;
 - laboratory diagnosis by exchange of best practices and support capacity building,
 - applied research or adaptation of existing tools, including ASF epidemiology, biosecurity, socioeconomics and ASF vaccine development
 - technical support and guidance on awareness raising campaigns by exchange of best practices and tools to improve *risk communication, and community and stakeholders' engagement* (RCCE) and drive behaviour change,
 - technical support and guidance on cross-border surveillance and concerted risk management measures along the pig value chain, among countries in the Africa region
- Regular communication/information exchange/sharing on the outcomes of the group discussions to other member countries and all stakeholders,
- Coordination on:
 - consultation processes to provide regional feedback to the GF-TADs Working Group on ASF,
 - technical support and guidance on identification of priorities for the development and adaptation of existing tools, training needs, and ASF control projects relevant for the region,
 - contribution to the development of awareness campaigns to engage other countries in ASF control programs,
- Collaboration on pig diseases of public health importance to advocate for One-Health related activities in the implementation of the on-farm biosecurity measures that will also address pig diseases of public health concerns e.g. porcine cysticercosis.

Composition

- The founding member countries (**Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe**) will establish the SGE ASF for Africa. Experts from other countries in the region will be included in SGE ASF when relevant according to the extension of the engagement of more countries to active ASF control strategies.



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- AU-IBAR, Regional Economic Communities (ECCAS-RAHC, ECOWAS-RAHC, IGAD-ICPALD and SADC-LTC), FAO and OIE regional representations, ILRI, and other regional organizations active in the field of animal health control strategies.
 - Regionally and internationally recognized ASF experts with experience working in Africa will be included in the group on an ad hoc basis.
 - Representatives of OIE and FAO Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centers, as well as selected national/regional laboratories : Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre of the African Union (AU-PANVAC) Debre-Zeit-Ethiopia, National Veterinary Research Institute, Vom-Nigeria, National Animal Health Diagnostic and Investigation Centre (NAHDIC), Sebeta-Ethiopia, *Laboratoire National Veterinaire* (LANAVET) Garoua-Cameroon, Onderstepoort Veterinary Research (OVR), Pretoria-South Africa and *Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles - Laboratoire National de l'Elevage et de Recherches Vétérinaires* (ISRA-LNERV), Dakar-Senegal.
 - Additional international recognized experts drawn from universities/academia, partners and donors on ASF or other technical topics to be invited by the group to support the SGE-ASF on an ad hoc basis.
 - Note that the composition should be diversified in origin, with experts drawn from veterinary services, pig industry, academia, research institutions, NGOs acting on ASF or pig production development, private sector along the value chain.

Governance

The *Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever* (SGE-ASF) will be established under the umbrella of the GF-TADs for Africa. It will report to the GF-TADs *Regional Steering Committee* (RSC) for Africa and will liaise with the GF-TADs WG on ASF.

Chair: The meetings will be rotational hosted by founding member countries of the SGE-ASF with host to chair the meeting upon agreement of SGE-ASF.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Regional Representation for Africa, based in Bamako, Mali (RR AF) will act as Technical Secretariat in coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Africa (RAF).

Funding mechanism

- Meeting costs of representatives from African Member Countries and costs for the logistical organization of meetings will be covered by the three organizations (FAO, OIE and AU-IBAR).
- Other members are expected to cover their own expenses or seek funding from partner organizations.
- The costs of the operation of the Technical Secretariat will be covered by the OIE.

Meeting mechanism

- The meetings will take place in the SGE-ASF member countries, on a rotating basis;
- The SGE-ASF will meet in person at least once a year, electronic consultations and online meetings may be organised between meetings;
- Language: English and French with simultaneous interpretations;
- Host country to assist technical Secretariat in identification of appropriate meeting venue / hotel and provide logistical support, including transfer from the hotel and, if



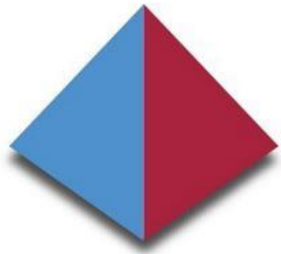
possible, either welcome dinner or social evening;

- Summary minutes of the meeting to be prepared by the SGE-ASF Technical Secretariat, circulated to participants by email and published on the website of the OIE Regional Representation for Africa.

Meeting attendees

- **Founding Member Countries:**
 - OIE Delegate (CVO or appointed representative of CVO),
 - National ASF technical experts in the topic being covered.
 - Total number from each founding member country should not exceed two persons (with exception of host in case it is physical meeting)
- **Subject-matter experts** selected from recognized international and regional ASF and/or swine disease experts.
- **Representatives of AU-IBAR, FAO and OIE**
- **Representatives of partner organizations:** upon agreement of the members of the group.
- **Meeting observers:** upon agreement of the hosting member.

Annex 2. List of participants



GF-TADs

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
PROGRESSIVE CONTROL OF
TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES

Africa

Inaugural meeting Standing Group of Experts for African Swine Fever (Africa)



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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23 - 24 March 2022 (online)
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