

GF-TADs

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
PROGRESSIVE CONTROL OF
TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES

Africa



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Organisation
for Animal Health



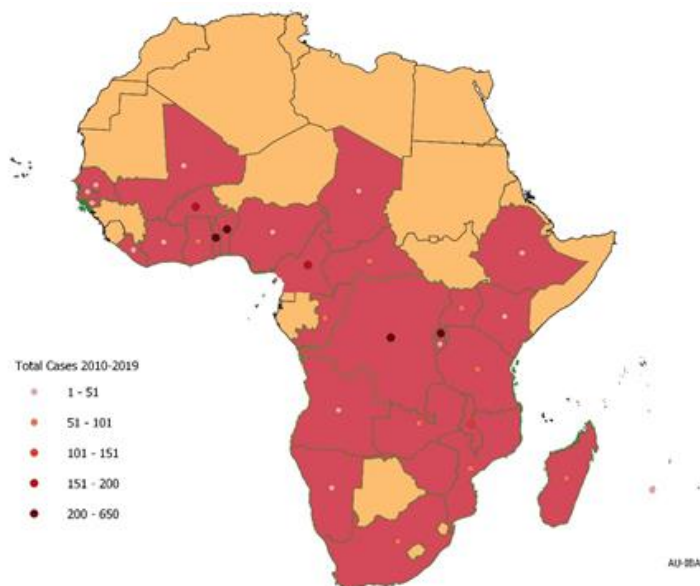
African
Union

Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever for Africa

(amended on 13 March 2025)

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”, the WOA *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

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

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, WOA, 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 WOA International Standards and to maintain transparency through effective information sharing and timely disease notification through WOA-WAHIS.

The FAO/WOA 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.woah.org/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/WOA 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.
- AU-IBAR, Regional Economic Communities (ECCAS-RAHC, ECOWAS-RAHC, IGAD-ICPALD and SADC-LTC), FAO and WOAAH 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 WOAAH 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, the Animal Health Institute (AHI), Sebeta-Ethiopia, Onderstepoort Veterinary Research (OVR), Pretoria-South Africa, the *Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles - Laboratoire National de l'Élevage et de Recherches Vétérinaires* (ISRA-LNERV), Dakar-Senegal and the Botswana National Veterinary Laboratory (BNVL), Sebele, Botswana.
- 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 (WOAH) 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, WOAAH 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 WOAAH.

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 WOAAH Regional Representation for Africa.

Meeting attendees

- **Founding Member Countries:**
 - WOAAH 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 WOAAH.**
- **Representatives of partner organizations:** upon agreement of the members of the group.
- **Meeting observers:** upon agreement of the hosting member.