



**Dr Edward Okoth Abworo**

Senior Scientist - Epidemiologist

## Epidemiology of African swine fever in Africa with emphasis on trade related risks



Regional training course (Africa)

Import risk analysis for African swine fever

9 November – 14 December 2021

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# Presentation outline



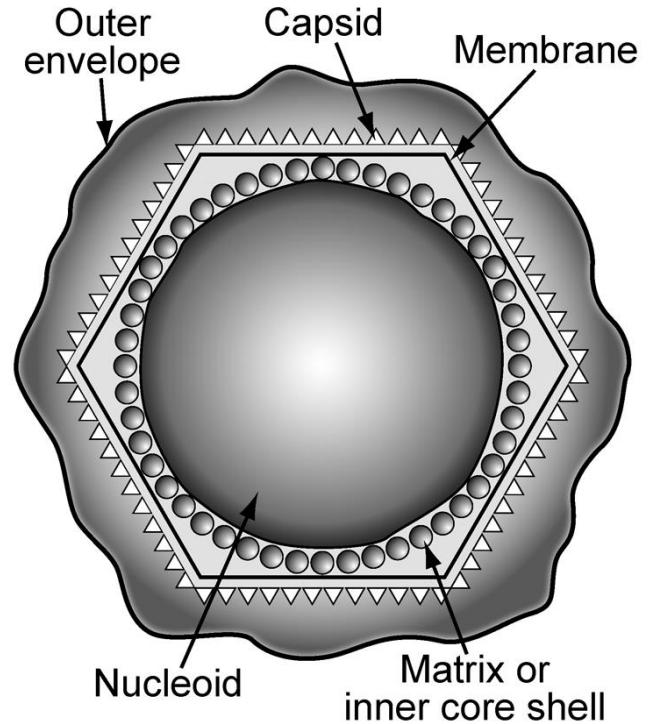
## African swine fever virus transmission and survival

- African swine fever (ASF)
- African swine fever virus transmission
- Distribution and survival of ASFV
- Conclusions

# African swine fever



- ASF is a lethal viral disease of domestic pigs and their ancestor the wild boar
- The causative agent is ASFV

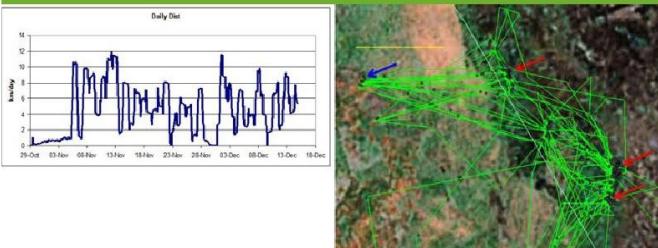


# African swine fever virus transmission



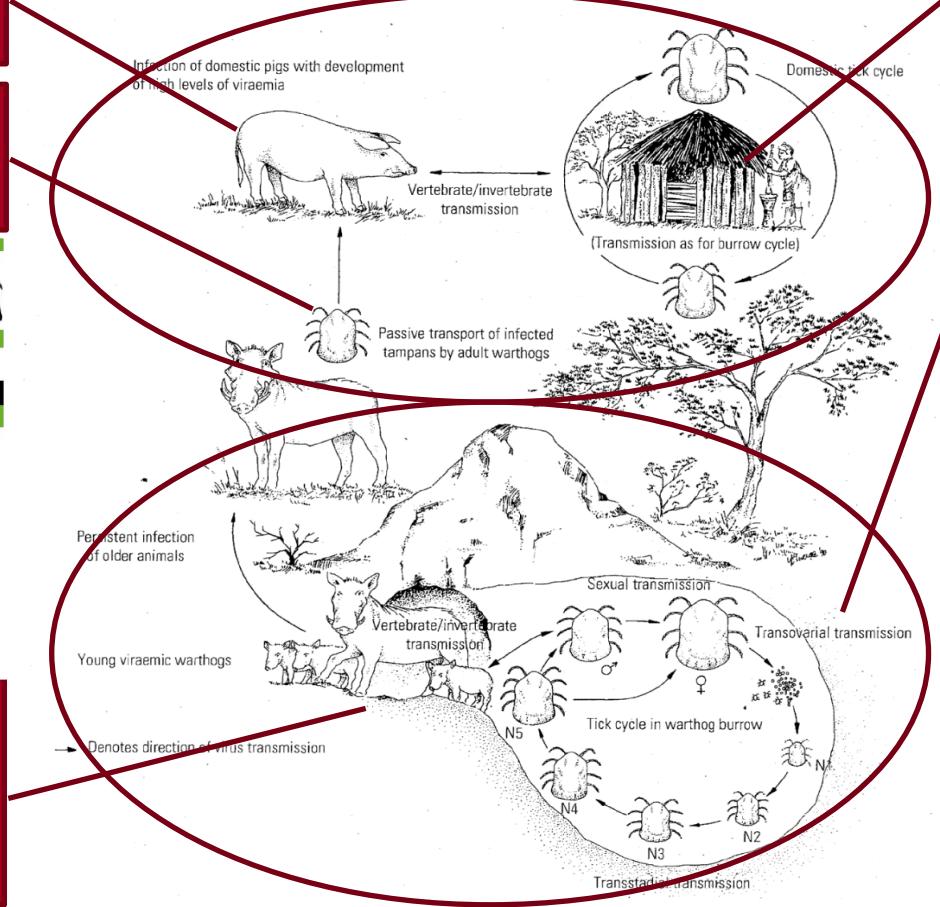
Pig-to-Pig transmission through direct contact

Tick-to-Pig through tick bite



Sylvatic Transmission (Tick-to-Warthog) – Reason for virus persistence

## Recap of Transmission Cycles



Indirect contact through contaminated shelter, vehicles, fomites and equipment

## Tick-to-tick Transmission

- Trans-stadial
- Trans-sexual
- Trans-ovarian

**JGV** Journal of General Virology

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African swine fever viruses with two different genotypes, both of which occur in domestic pigs, are associated with ticks and adult warthogs, respectively, at a single geographical site

Carmina Gallardo<sup>1</sup>, Edward Okoth<sup>2</sup>, Virginia Pelayo<sup>1</sup>, Raquel Anchuelo<sup>2</sup>, Elena Martín<sup>1</sup>, Alicia Simón<sup>1</sup>, Alicia Llorente<sup>1</sup>, Raquel Nieto<sup>1</sup>, Alejandro Soler<sup>1</sup>, Raquel Martín<sup>1</sup>, Marisa Arias<sup>1</sup> and Richard P. Bishop<sup>2</sup>

# African swine fever virus transmission



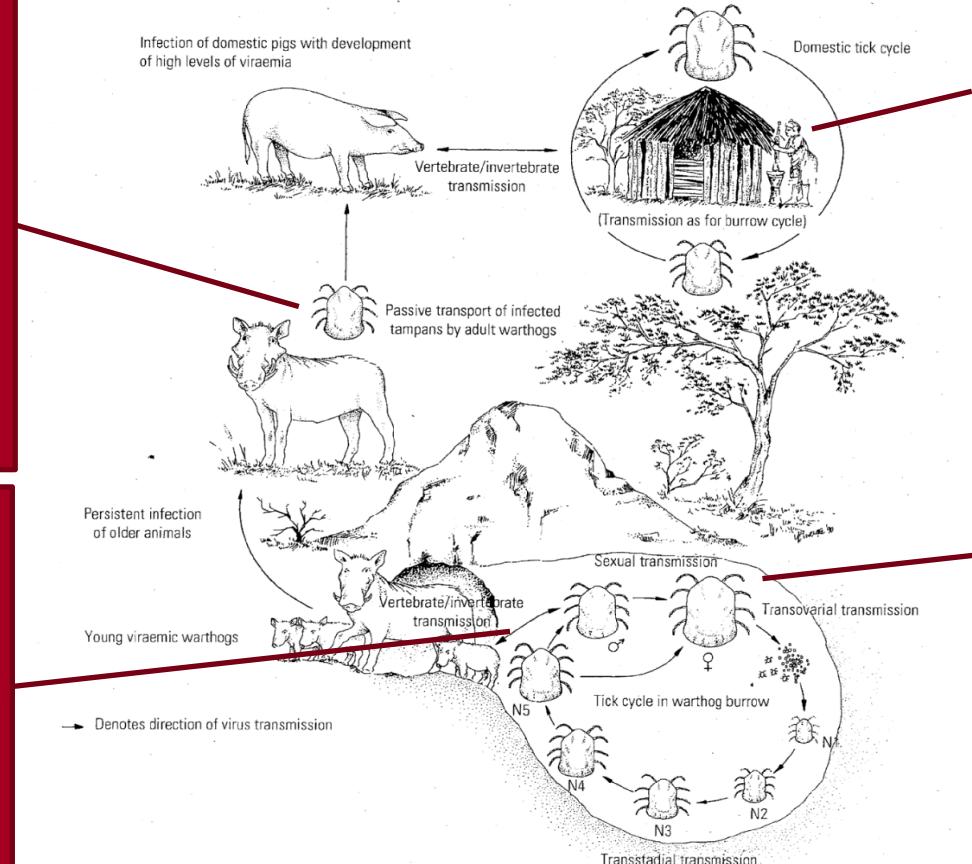
## Key features in Sylvatic, Tick-pig and Domestic transmission cycles

### **Tick-to-Pig transmission**

- Through tick bite
- Larvae, nymphs and adults crawl through the nest to find hosts
- Feed fast and at night
- Don't spend much time attached to a host
- Study in Kenya show 17% pig exposure to the ASF tick vector using tick specific ELISA (rtTSGP1)

### **Sylvatic Transmission (Tick-to-Warthog)**

- Young warthogs infested
- Followed by viremia and transmission to naïve ticks during feeding
- Warthogs are asymptomatic and remain infected for life
- No horizontal and vertical transmission in warthogs



### **Domestic cycle transmission**

- Pig to pig through direct contact
- Indirect contact through contaminated shelter, vehicles, fomites and equipment

### **Tick-to-tick Transmission**

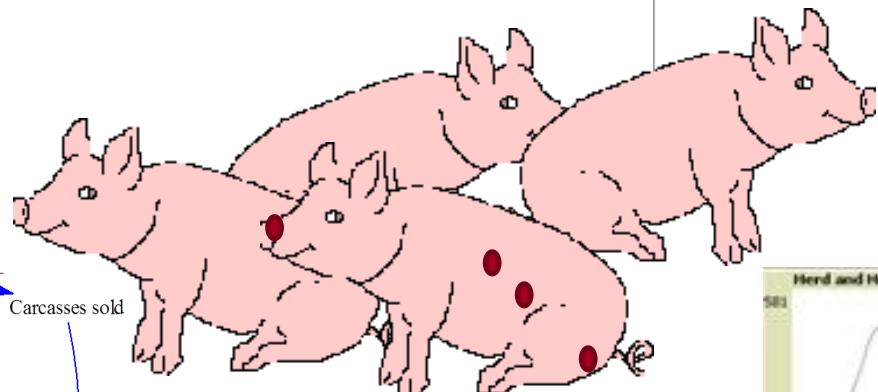
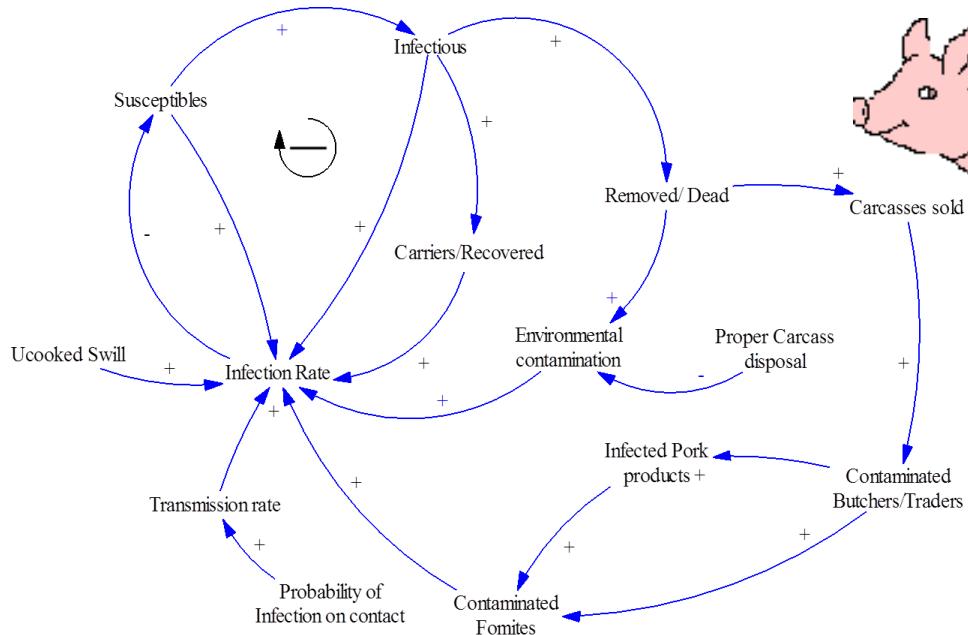
- Soft ticks generally live in animals' nests and burrows
- Females lay their eggs in their host's nest
- Virus transmission is trans-stadial, trans-sexual, trans-ovarian
- Tick colonies can maintain the virus infection for up to 15 months in absence of blood meals and for years with blood meal

# African swine fever transmission



## Agent based model with demographics

- Susceptible pigs peak at 13 days
- Epidemic peaks day 28
- Epidemic dies out within 60 days



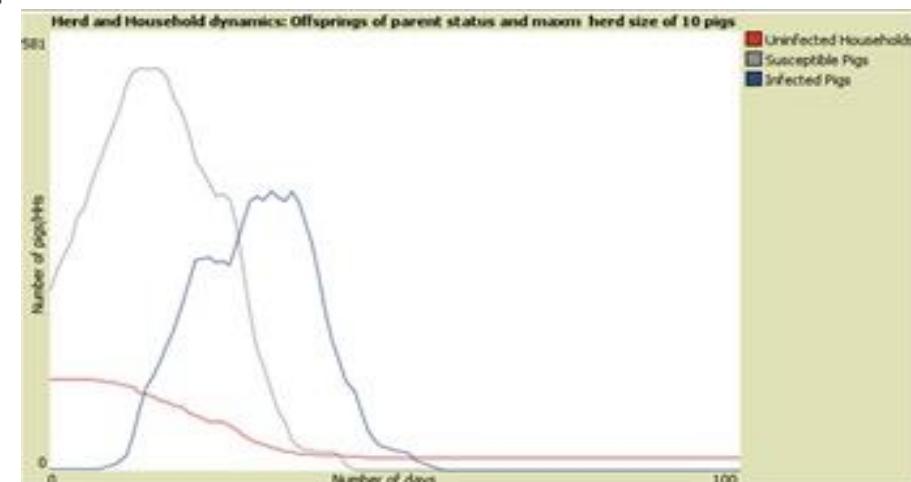
PLOS ONE

### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### A Mathematical Model that Simulates Control Options for African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV)

Mike B. Barongo<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Richard P Bishop<sup>1</sup>, Eric M Fevre<sup>1,2</sup>, Darryn L Knobel<sup>3,4b</sup>, Amos Ssematimba<sup>1,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> International Livestock Research Institute, P.O. Box 30700, Nairobi 00100, Kenya, <sup>2</sup> Institute of Infection

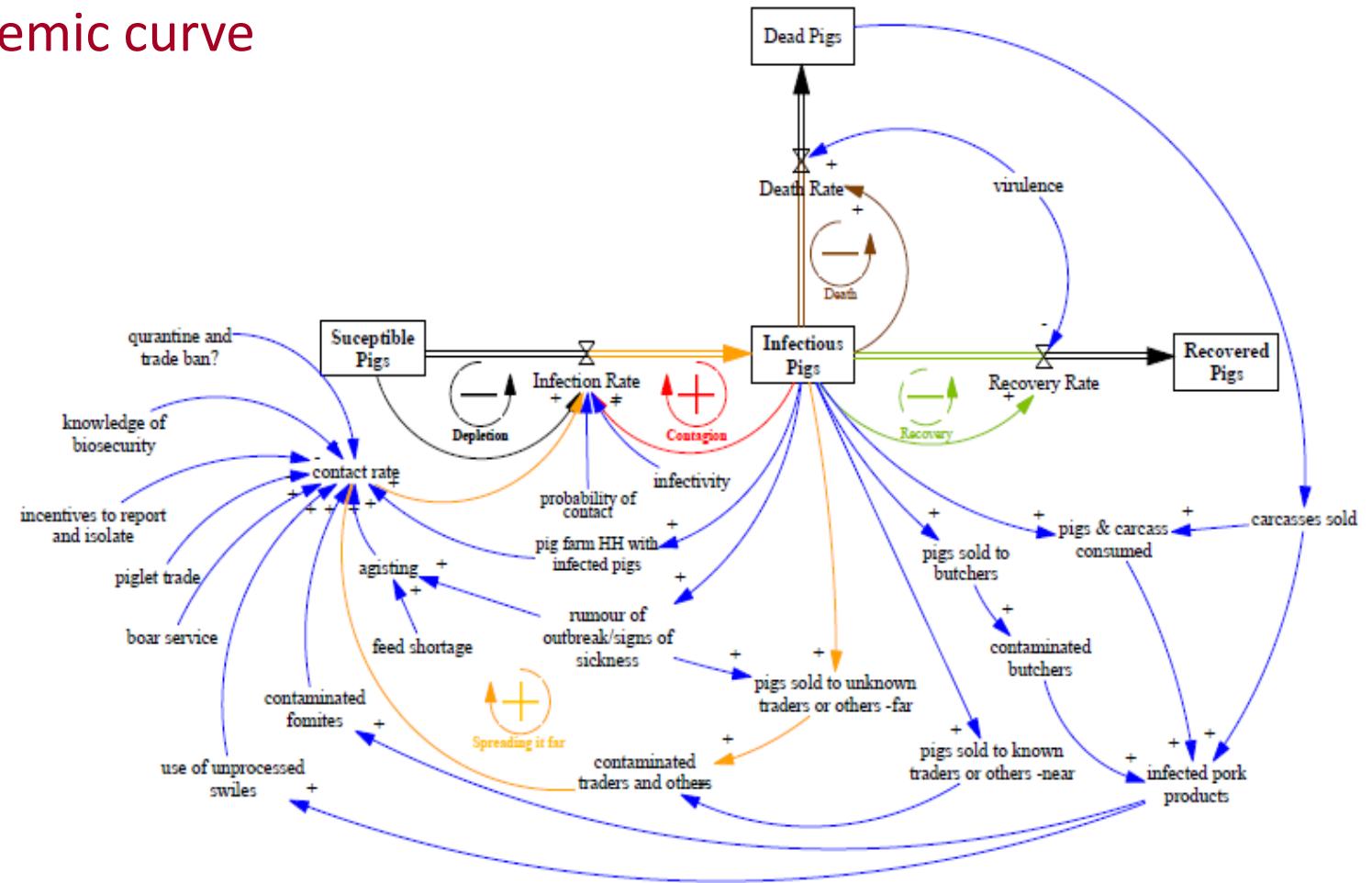
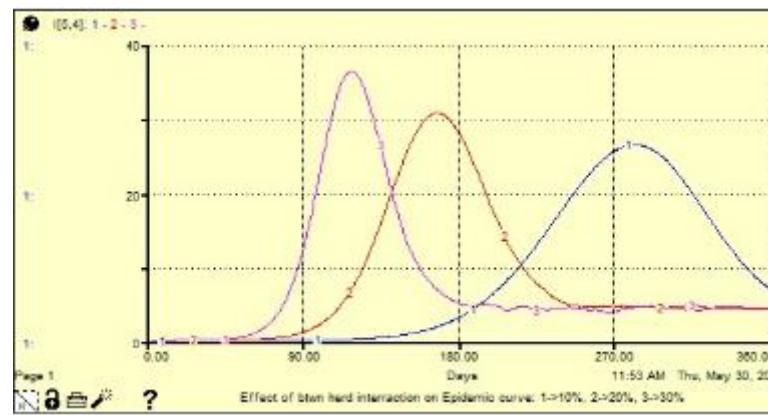


# African swine fever transmission



## Effect of herd interaction on epidemic curve

- Higher interaction results in earlier peaks.
- By reducing interaction from 30% to 10%, disease peak is traded for onset.
- Peaks increase with interaction



# African swine fever virus transmission

## Interactions and pig value chain actors

- Pig movement network very diverse –
  - Purchase of pigs for rearing and slaughter
  - Agistment
  - Boar service
  - Traders/Butchers
  - Animal health service providers
- Buying and selling of pigs occur between people who most likely are familiar to each other – near distance
- During outbreaks, sale is mostly to unknown persons who come from far off villages
- The key drivers of far distance disease spread in trading nodes are traders, transporters and butchers



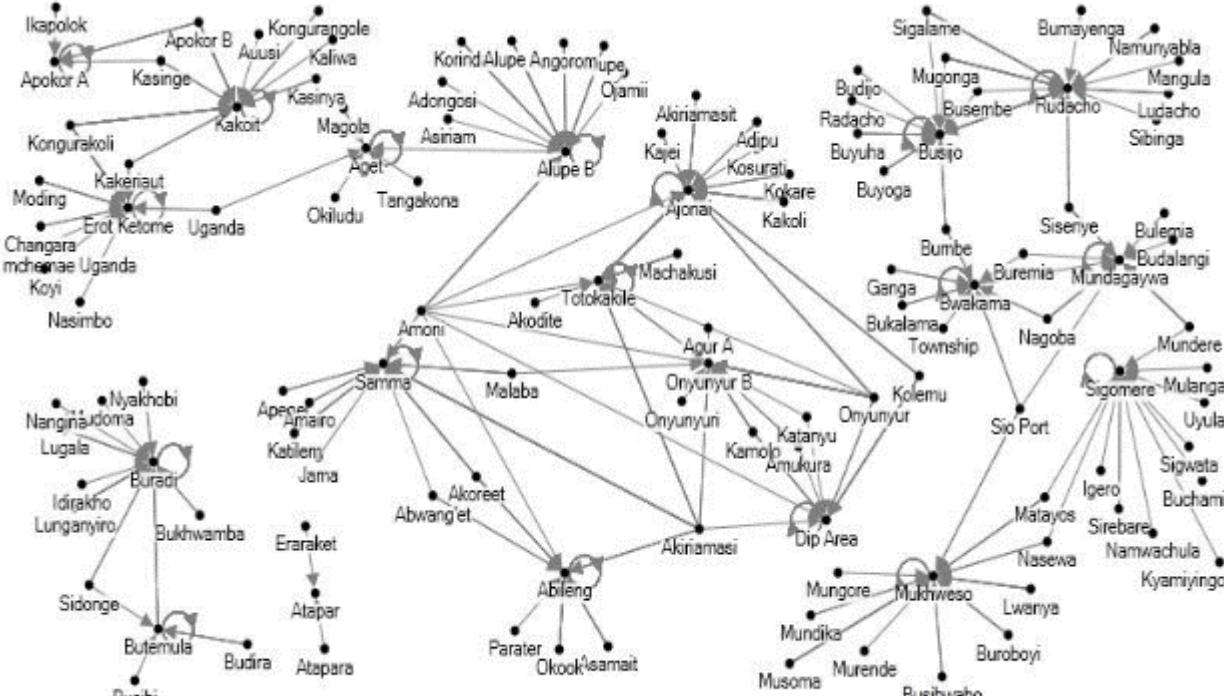
Preventive Veterinary Medicine

Volume 126, 1 April 2016, Pages 1-10



Social network analysis provides insights into African swine fever epidemiology

Jacqueline Kasiiti Lichoti <sup>a, c</sup>✉, Jocelyn Davies <sup>b</sup>✉, Philip M. Kitala <sup>c</sup>✉, Samuel M. Githigia <sup>d</sup>✉,  
Edward Okoth <sup>e</sup>✉, Yiheyis Maru <sup>b, e</sup>✉, Salome A. Bukachi <sup>f</sup>✉, Richard P. Bishop <sup>b, e</sup>✉



# African swine fever transmission



## Role of carrier pigs

- Role of carrier pigs not well understood –possible virus sequestration in tissues
- What is the window within which an infected carrier pig can shed the virus and transmit it to naïve pigs?
- Can pork and pork products from a carrier pig effect ASFV transmission?

JOURNAL OF  
GENERAL VIROLOGY

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abworo et al., *Journal of General Virology*  
DOI 10.1099/jgv.0.000848



Detection of African swine fever virus in the tissues of asymptomatic pigs in smallholder farming systems along the Kenya-Uganda border: implications for transmission in endemic areas and ASF surveillance in East Africa

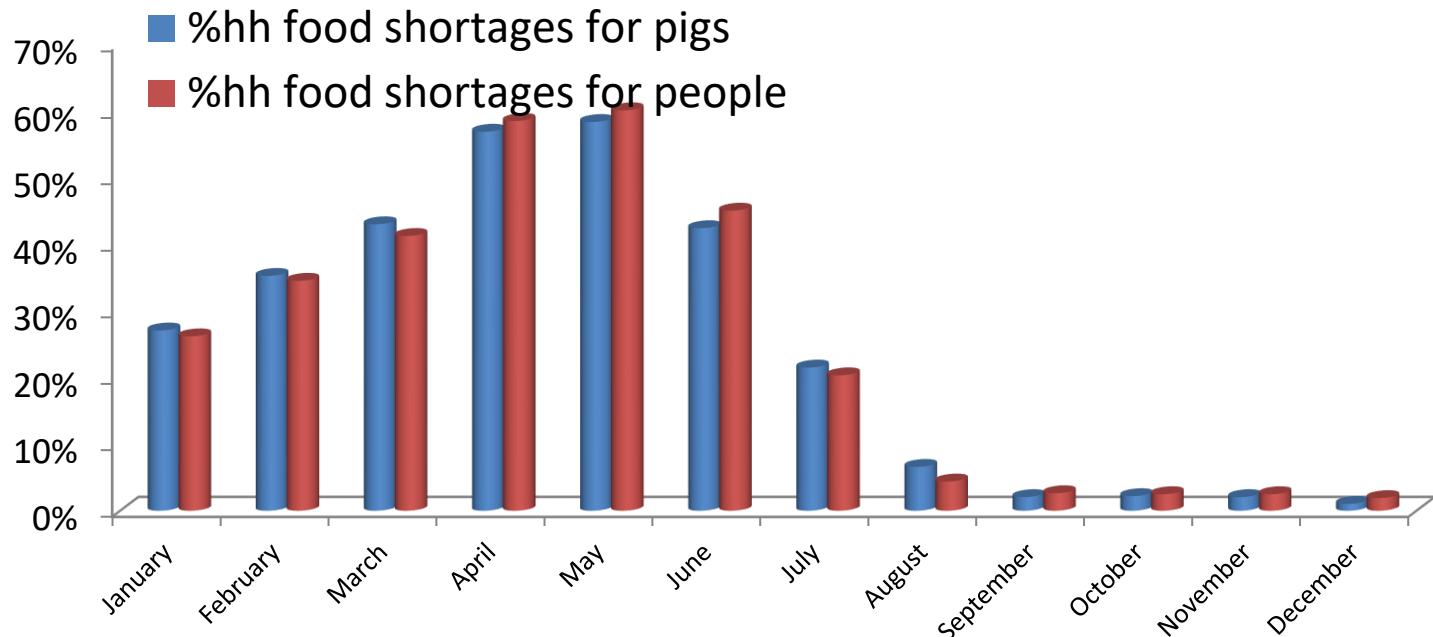
Edward Okoth Abworo,<sup>1,\*</sup> Cynthia Onzere,<sup>1</sup> Joshua Oluoch Amimo,<sup>2</sup> Victor Riitho,<sup>1</sup> Waithaka Mwangi,<sup>3</sup> Jocelyn Davies,<sup>4,5</sup> Sandra Blome<sup>6</sup> and Richard Peter Bishop<sup>1</sup>

# African swine fever virus transmission



## Role of seasonal food shortages

- Small holder farmers sell their pigs when food is in short supply
- And buy a new piglet either immediately, or when food is again available on farm

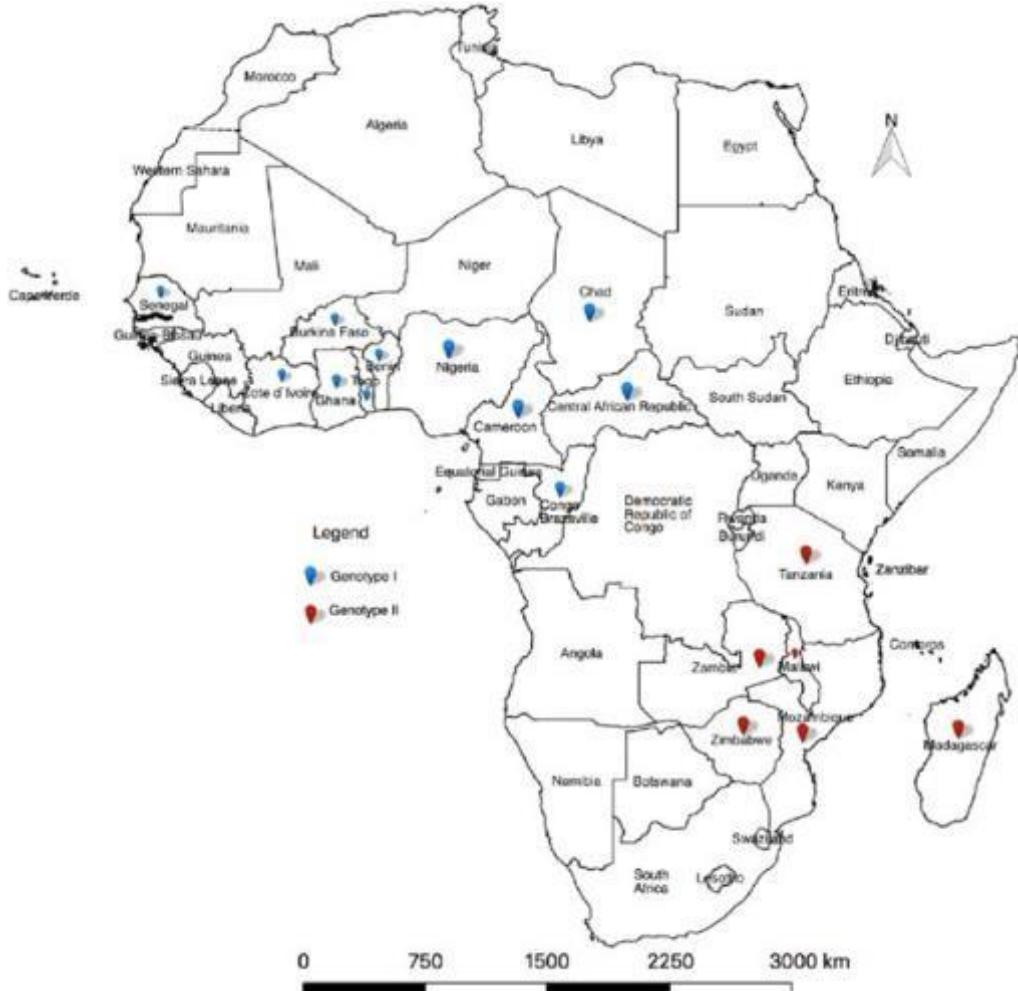


# African swine fever virus transmission



## Spread of ASFV outside Africa

- The first spread of the disease outside Africa was into Europe (Portugal) in 1957 - near Lisbon airport associated with feeding swill
- Further outbreaks occurred in 1960 in Lisbon
- ASF remained endemic in the Iberian peninsula until the mid-1990s
- Other ASF outbreaks in Europe during the 20th century; Malta (1978), Italy (1967, 1980), France (1964, 1967, 1977), Belgium (1985), and the Netherlands (1986)
- The disease was eradicated from each of these countries but has remained endemic in Sardinia since its introduction in 1978
- During the 1970s, ASFV spread to the Caribbean and South America. An outbreak in south Brazil in 1978–1979 was eradicated by stamping out, and Brazil regained its ASF-free status in December 1984
- These outbreaks of ASF, mainly caused by movement of contaminated meat products



# African swine fever virus transmission



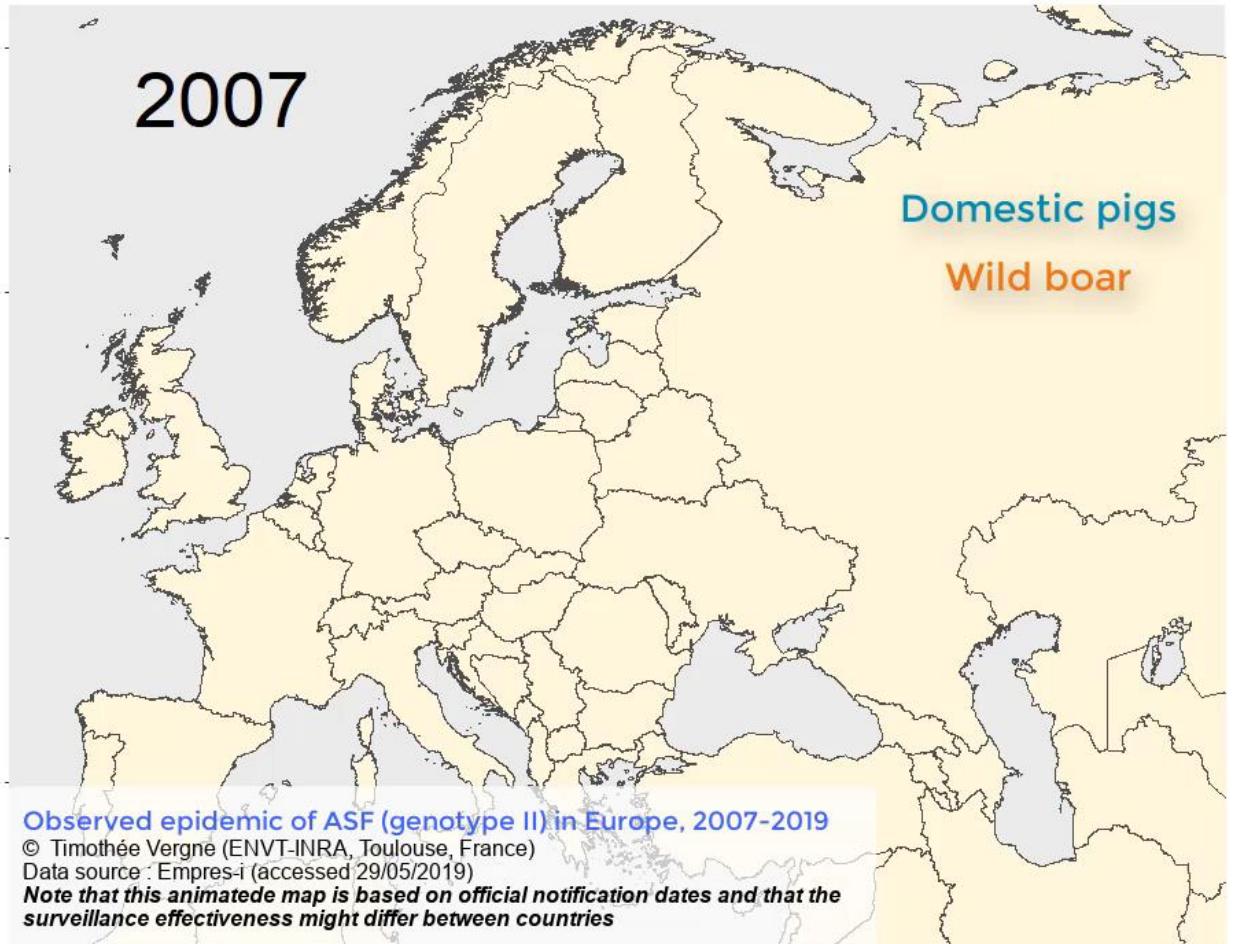
## Spread of ASFV outside Africa

- In June 2007 ASF was confirmed in pigs in the former Soviet republic of Georgia in the Caucasus region
- Source of infection was catering waste, including infected pig meat from ships in the Black Sea Port of Poti
- These outbreaks of ASF, mainly caused by movement of contaminated meat products and wild boar movement

RESEARCH

### African Swine Fever Virus Isolate, Georgia, 2007

Rebecca J. Rowlands, Vincent Michaud, Livio Heath, Geoff Hutchings, Chris Oura, Wilna Vosloo, Rahana Dwarka, Tinatin Onashvili, Emmanuel Albina, and Linda K. Dixon





## Spread of ASFV within or into Africa

- Genotype II isolate clusters very tightly with genotypes II covering the Asian and European continents (from Georgia 2007, to the more recent outbreaks in Russia, Eastern Europe and China)
- Genetic diversity of historical Genotype II isolates in southern Africa is higher than in other parts of the world including East Africa, Russia and Asia

[www.nature.com/scientificreports/](http://www.nature.com/scientificreports/)

scientific reports

Check for updates

OPEN

The first genotype II African swine fever virus isolated in Africa provides insight into the current Eurasian pandemic

Emma P. Njau<sup>1,2,4,7,8,9</sup>, Jean-Baka Domelevo Entfellner<sup>1,7</sup>, Eunice M. Machuka<sup>1</sup>, Edwina N. Bochere<sup>1</sup>, Sarah Cleaveland<sup>2,3</sup>, Gabriel M. Shirima<sup>2</sup>, Lughano J. Kusiluka<sup>2,5</sup>, Chris Upton<sup>6</sup>, Richard P. Bishop<sup>1</sup>, Roger Pelle<sup>1</sup> & Edward A. Okoth<sup>1</sup>

African swine fever (ASF) caused by the African swine fever virus (ASFV) is ranked by OIE as the most



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GENOME SEQUENCES



First-Time Presence of African Swine Fever Virus Genotype II in Nigeria

Adeyinka J. Adedeji,<sup>a,\*</sup> Pam D. Luka,<sup>a</sup> Rebecca B. Atai,<sup>a</sup> Toyin A. Olubade,<sup>a</sup> Dupe A. Hambolu,<sup>b</sup> Mary A. Ogunleye,<sup>c</sup> Vincent B. Muwanika,<sup>d</sup> Charles Masembe<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>National Veterinary Research Institute, Vorn, Nigeria

<sup>b</sup>Federal Department of Veterinary and Pest Control Services, Lagos, Nigeria

<sup>c</sup>Ministry of Agriculture, Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria

<sup>d</sup>College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

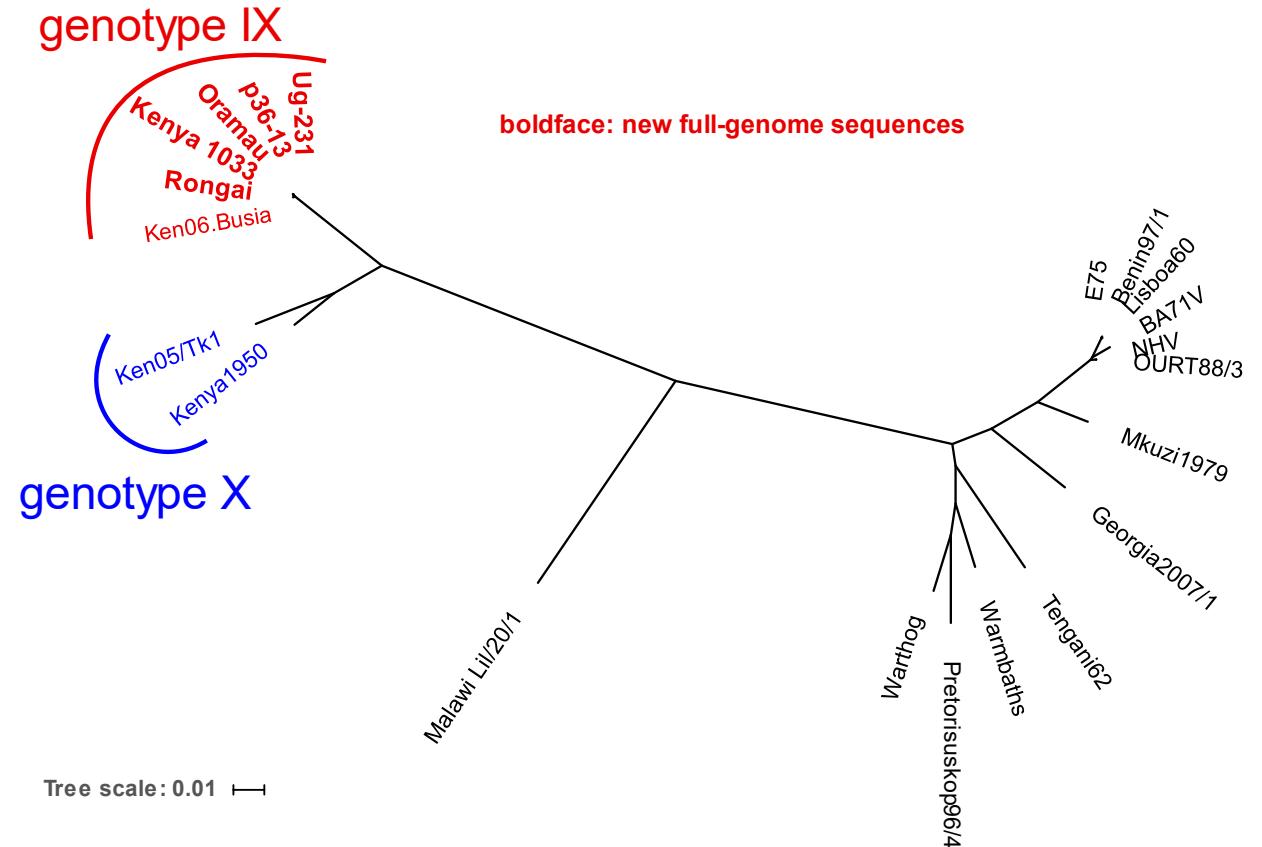
<sup>e</sup>College of Natural Sciences, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

# African swine fever virus transmission



## Virus tracking using phylogeny derived from full genome alignment

- Molecular Phylogeny of full ASFV genomes is used in disease surveillance to track transmission/spread of ASF viruses
- Molecular Phylogeny of full ASFV genomes of genotype IX and X show clustering of the East African Africa

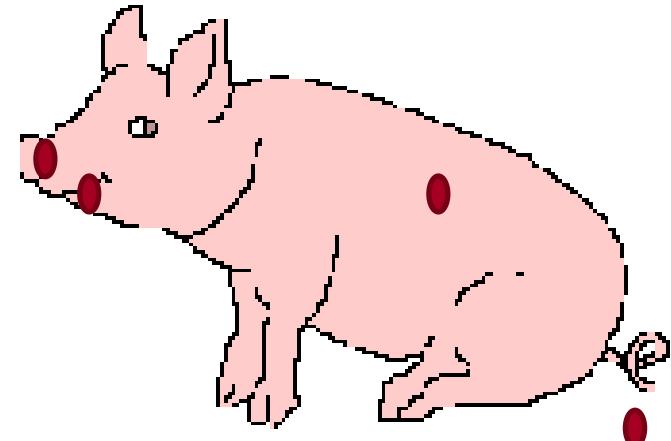


# Distribution and survival of ASF virus in various tissues/commodities



## Domestic pigs

- After infection, domestic pigs may shed infective amounts of ASFV for 24-48 hours before clinical signs appear
- During the acute stage of disease, enormous amounts of virus are shed in all secretions and excretions, and high levels of virus are present in tissues and blood
- Pigs that survive the acute disease remain infected for several months, but do not readily shed virus for more than 30 days
- Infective levels of virus are found only in lymph nodes, and other tissues are unlikely to contain infective levels of virus for more than two months post infection



# Distribution and survival of ASF virus in various tissues/commodities



## Vectors and reservoirs

- Tick colonies can maintain the virus infection for up to 15 months in absence of blood meals and for years with blood meal
- Wild pigs in Africa are asymptomatic and remain infected for life
- ASFV carrier state has been shown in domestic pigs where tissues from animals show minimum virus prevalence of 15.9%, based on positivity in four different PCR assays, supported by virus isolation
- Locally adopted pig, bush pig and warthog show strongest signals of selection, while such extremes are absent in the commercial pig breeds - evidence of introgression of bush pigs into locally adopted domestic pig genes

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GENERAL VIROLOGY

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abworo et al., *Journal of General Virology*  
DOI 10.1099/jgv.0.000848

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Detection of African swine fever virus in the tissues of asymptomatic pigs in smallholder farming systems along the Kenya-Uganda border: implications for transmission in endemic areas and ASF surveillance in East Africa

Edward Okoth Abworo,<sup>1,\*</sup> Cynthia Onzere,<sup>1</sup> Joshua Oluoch Amimo,<sup>2</sup> Victor Riitho,<sup>1</sup> Waithaka Mwangi,<sup>3</sup> Jocelyn Davies,<sup>4,5</sup> Sandra Blome<sup>6</sup> and Richard Peter Bishop<sup>1</sup>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Genetic diversity, breed composition and admixture of Kenyan domestic pigs

Fidalis Denis Mujibi<sup>1,2,\*</sup>, Edward Okoth<sup>3</sup>, Evans K. Cheruiyot<sup>2</sup>, Cynthia Onzere<sup>4</sup>, Richard P. Bishop<sup>4</sup>, Eric M. Fèvre<sup>3,5</sup>, Lian Thomas<sup>6</sup>, Charles Masembe<sup>7</sup>, Graham Plastow<sup>8</sup>, Max Rothschild<sup>9</sup>

# Distribution and survival of ASF virus in various tissues/commodities



## Inactivation of ASFV in tissues and environment

### ASFV is very resistant to inactivation:

- Stable at PH 4-10 and thus not affected by meat maturation
- Requires heating at 60°C for 20 minutes to be inactivated
- Smoked sausages and air-dried ham require smoking at 32-49°C for 12 hours and 25-30 days of drying to be free from the virus
- Pork cured pork products can remain infectious for several months
- The virus can persist in the environment in fomites such as clothing, shoes, equipment and vehicles for several days
- ASF virus, in a suitable protein environment, is stable over a wide temperature and pH range. It has been shown to survive in serum at room temperature for 18 months, in refrigerated blood for 6 years, and in blood at 37°C for a month.
- Putrefaction does not necessarily inactivate the virus, which may remain viable in faeces for at least 11 days, decomposed serum for 15 weeks, and in bone marrow for months

### Best ASFV inactivation:

- Sodium hypochlorite, glutaraldehyde, caustic soda and potassium peroxyomonosulfate



# African swine fever virus transmission



## Disease impact

### Documented ASF outbreaks

#### 1980-2017 in ECSA

Received: 9 October 2018 | Revised: 21 March 2019 | Accepted: 24 March 2019

DOI: 10.1111/tbed.13187

REVIEW



WILEY

## African swine fever: Update on Eastern, Central and Southern Africa

Léopold K. Mulumba-Mfumu<sup>1,2</sup> | Claude Saegerman<sup>2</sup> | Linda K. Dixon<sup>3</sup> | Kapanga C. Madimba<sup>1</sup> | Eric Kazadi<sup>1</sup> | Ndeji T. Mukalakata<sup>1</sup> | Chris A. L. Oura<sup>4</sup> | Erika Chenais<sup>5</sup> | Charles Masembe<sup>6</sup> | Karl Ståhl<sup>5</sup> | Etienne Thiry<sup>7</sup> | Mary Louise Penrith<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Clinical Sciences, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Kinshasa, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
<sup>2</sup>... . . . .

#### Abstract

Control of African swine fever (ASF) in countries in Eastern, Central and Southern

Location	Year	Pigs lost	Financial loss	Source
Cameroon, W Province	1982	54,432	\$2.5 million	Nana-Nukechap & Gibbs, 1985
Chad, Bassin Logone	2010	139,810	Not specified	Ban-Bo et al., 2012
DRC, Boende	2007	4,500	\$1 million	DRC CVL, unpublished report
DRC, Kinshasa	2010	>3,500	Not specified	DRC CVL, unpublished report
Kenya, Nairobi area	1997	5–6,000	Not specified	FAO, unpublished reports
Madagascar	1997–1999	>50% of ca 1.5 million	€21 million p.a.	Thierry & Capo-Chichi, 2008
Mauritius	2007	Ca. 15,300	\$1 million	Lubisi et al., 2009
Mozambique, South	1993	20,000	Not specified	FAO, unpublished reports
Tanzania, Rombo	2013	4,462	\$133,860	Swai & Lyimo, 2014
Uganda, Lira (one farm)	2014	>138 (herd)	\$20,000	Chenais, Sternberg-Lewerin, et al., 2017
Zambia, Kabwe (one farm)	1989	2,000	\$39,965	Samui et al., 1996
Zambia, Lusaka	2013	6,500	Not specified	Yabe et al., 2015

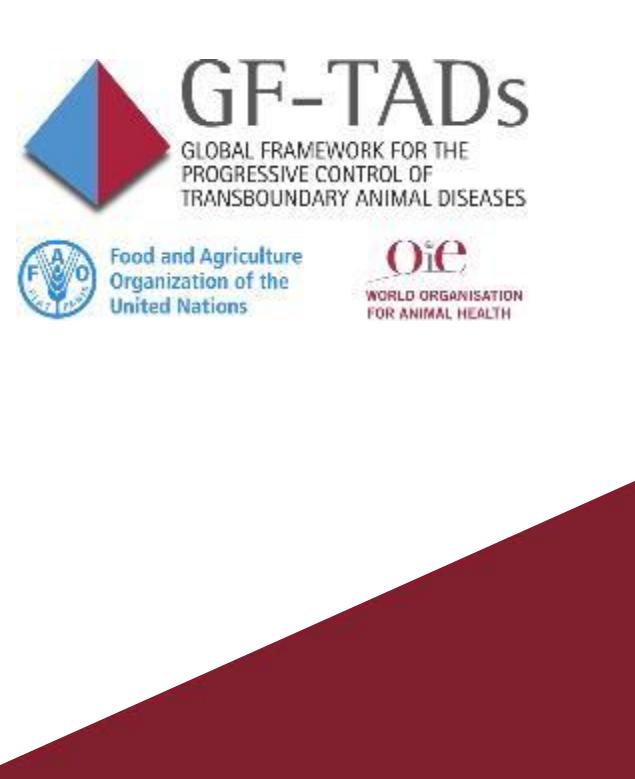
# Conclusions



- ASFV is very stable and can persist in hosts through varied transmission cycles
- Simple biosecurity measures can reduce ASF transmission
- Farmers need to invest in pig keeping in order to implement biosecurity (housing, feed), with co-benefits for increased productivity, higher returns and reduced zoonotic infection
- Farmers will act in their own self-interest to implement changes on farm if they trust that benefits are likely (requiring new knowledge) and have means to make changes (requiring capital, new feed sources, information and more open market access)
- Whether or not farmers have taken action to reduce risk of ASF entering their farms, if they do experience an outbreak, they will continue to act in their own self-interest by selling their pigs before they die, thus perpetuating ASF transmission, unless they have clear incentives not to (such as insurance or compensation)



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