# Table of Contents

**WHO WE ARE**  
Our members 3  
Vision 3  
Mission 3

**THE VSF INTERNATIONAL NETWORK IN 2019**  
Where we work 4  
2019 in numbers 5

**THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019**  
Towards joint regional strategies in Africa 6  
Local Milk value chains in West Africa 7  
One Health Working Group: How VSF International is institutionalizing the One Health approach 8  
Promoting an official recognition of CAHWs 9  
Strengthening NGOs’ participation in GASL 10  
Vaccinate for Africa International: a successful first edition 11  
VWB/VSF Canada: Volunteers for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities 12

**FINANCE**  
13

**GOVERNANCE**  
14

© VSF International 2020  
Graphic layout: Beltza, Brussels.
Our mission is to reduce poverty, contribute to food and nutrition security and improve the livelihoods and well-being of vulnerable populations by supporting smallholder farmers and livestock keepers, promoting food sovereignty and implementing the One Health approach.

VSF International and its members contribute to poverty alleviation through the following interventions:

1. Ensure equitable access to natural resources (water, land, pastures, forests) and services (credit, technical advice, training, etc.).

2. Improve animal health, welfare and productivity through strengthened public and private veterinary services, training of Community based Animal Health Workers and ensuring recognition of traditional and local knowledge through ethnoveterinary practices.

3. Improve human health through informed action and capacity building around zoonoses, nutrition, hygiene and through partnering with human health and environmental organisations under a One Health approach.

4. Reduce risks of spread of zoonotic and epizootic diseases through improved epidemiology surveillance, disease control and food safety measures.

5. Promote sustainable natural resource management, agricultural and herding practices inspired by the concept of One Health and agroecology and contribute to a better environment while also mitigating climate change impacts.

6. Support the development of value chains for animal products (dairy, meat, leather, wool etc.) and connect smallholders to markets.

7. Support victims of catastrophes and improve emergency preparedness.

8. Raise awareness on the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, livestock keepers and pastoralists, get better recognition for the role they play in society and advocate for better policies that defend their rights.
Where we work

The VSF International network supports families and farmers’ organizations in **35 countries** in Africa, the Americas and Asia. In 2019, the members of VSF International reached over **2.16 million families (direct beneficiaries)**, with an overall budget of **51.1 million €**.
2.16 million direct beneficiary households

35 country programmes

€ 51.1 million total income

42,000 animals distributed (of which 43% to recover from emergency)

270,000 people improved their professional and/or life skills thanks to empowerment, capacity building or income generation activities (of which 51% are women)

485,000 livestock keepers gained access to animal health services

27 million animals treated

825 staff worldwide 91% in the field and 9% at HQ

6,000 animal health professionals supported (including 4,850 Community Animal Health Workers)

155 awareness raising events targeting European and Canadian youth

2019 IN NUMBERS

825 staff worldwide 91% in the field and 9% at HQ

6,000 animal health professionals supported (including 4,850 Community Animal Health Workers)

155 awareness raising events targeting European and Canadian youth

2.16 million direct beneficiary households

35 country programmes

€ 51.1 million total income

42,000 animals distributed (of which 43% to recover from emergency)

270,000 people improved their professional and/or life skills thanks to empowerment, capacity building or income generation activities (of which 51% are women)

485,000 livestock keepers gained access to animal health services

27 million animals treated
THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

The members of the VSF International network are autonomous organizations that directly implement projects in the field. As members of the network they share the VSF International mission and are committed to coordinating their activities in order to increase the overall VSF impact. The network facilitates exchanges, lesson learning, the development of quality standards and coordinates common advocacy and communication activities.

In this report we will present the key achievements of 2019 showcasing the successful collaborations and joint efforts between different member organizations. For more details about the field activities of each member, please refer to their respective annual reports.

Towards joint regional strategies in Africa

Greater Horn of Africa

VSF Germany and VSF-Suisse launched in 2019 the Joint Strategy for the Greater Horn of Africa. Both organizations have been working in the region since the late 1990s, with a combined presence in Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and seeking entry into Uganda, Eritrea and Djibouti.

In 2018 of all VSF International Network members expressed interest in developing closer collaborations in the field. As a result, VSF-Suisse and VSF Germany agreed on a bilateral partnership and elaborated a joint strategy for the Greater Horn of Africa. The strategy includes the eventual inclusion of the other VSFs active in the region to forge a more united front guided by the overall VSF mandate.

The five-year strategy (2019-2023) identifies four joint development objectives, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- Contributing to the control and eradication of Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) and other transboundary animal diseases (TADs);
- Leading One Health initiatives with a special focus on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), zoonotic neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), natural resource management (NRM) and poverty-related diseases (PRD);
- Strengthening the support to smallholder livestock value chains in the rain-fed high agricultural potential areas to widen the VSFs portfolio; and
- Continuing the emergency livestock response and humanitarian assistance on a need basis.

The regional strategy also seeks to optimise the efficiency of the collaboration between the two organizations and stipulates additional partnership objectives that include the improvement of internal communication, the overall quality and performance of the actions and enhancement of visibility and recognition.
West Africa

Similarly to the process undertaken in the Greater Horn of Africa, the members of VSF International have engaged in a joint West Africa regional strategy. In September 2019, AVSF, VSF Belgium, VSF Suisse and VSF Italy organised a Regional workshop in Senegal, to establish a strong basis for a more coordinated presence in the region.

The workshop participants included Regional and Country Coordinators, Executive Directors and expert staff from each organization. Three priority themes were put forward in the joint strategy:

- One Health, local animal health services, integrated services
- Pastoralism adapted to the new challenges of the 21st century
- Sustainable dairy systems connected to the markets

During the workshop and while developing the joint strategy it became clear that a stronger coordination would allow the network members to strengthen their presence and actions in the region, particularly in the areas of agriculture, livestock, food security and public health. This increased visibility and influence, along with a stronger thematic coherence would allow the network as a whole to achieve a more comprehensive impact.

A steering committee has been established and will guide the five organizations active in the region in developing a joint strategy for West Africa during 2020/2021.

Local Milk value chains in West Africa

In June 2019, a VSF delegation participated in the 3rd edition of the «Milk, driver of development» symposium in Dakar, organized by the Senegalese Institute for Research in Agriculture (ISRA), the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the French National Institute for Agronomic Research (INRA). The symposium brought together approximately 200 delegates, including researchers, NGOs, livestock keepers’ organizations, industry representatives and policy-makers, for an important exchange on sustainable dairy production practices and experiences.

During the symposium VSF International showcased the experience of the various VSFs and their local partners in the Sahel region in support of the local dairy sector. Promoting an integrated approach, VSF International highlighted the need to combine the value chain development (from producer to consumer) with consumer awareness activities and advocacy on the importance of local dairy development. Experiences in Senegal, Niger,
One Health Working Group: How VSF International is institutionalizing the One Health approach

A new Working Group on One Health was created within the VSF International network in 2019. The Working Group is composed of experts from the different member organizations, both in the field and from respective headquarters offices. The Working Group aims at supporting VSF International in institutionalizing the One Health approach in its way of working, partnering, designing and implementing projects. A continuous learning process is needed in order to improve the way we build One Health in the field as the core of VSF International’s vision “healthy animals, healthy people, healthy environment”.

Although widely recognised, the One Health approach is still sparsely implemented in the field. VSF International aims to increase public support for One Health implementation in development and humanitarian interventions in the Global South.

First meeting on “Controlling PPR at the livestock / wildlife interface”, 27-29 March 2019, FAO-HQ Rome.

Conference “One Health for the Mediterranean Region in the Big Data age”, 30 September - 1 October, Sardinia, Italy.

Congress on One Health by GISPE / Actualités du Pharo, 2-4 October, Marseille, France.

1st International One Health Forum, 14-15 November, Addis Ababa.

In West Africa, the widespread presence on the market of milk powder remains a major concern for local milk producers, who have difficulty in competing with the low price of this product, imported largely from the European Union.

In response to these challenges, Western African civil society and producers’ associations, supported by international NGOs (including AVSF and VSF Belgium) are carrying out an advocacy and awareness-raising campaign called “Mon lait est local” (My milk is local) in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. The campaign targets consumers and governments to support local dairy producers through improved access to livestock feed and inputs and the adoption of commercial and fiscal policies favoring local milk instead of imported milk powders. In addition, a European coalition was developed in Belgium and France in support of the West-African initiative entitled “N’exportons pas nos problèmes!” (Let’s not export our problems!). This coalition, in which VSF-Belgium is actively involved, develops activities targeting EU decision makers through improved access to livestock feed and inputs and the adoption of commercial and fiscal policies favoring local milk instead of imported milk powders. In addition, a European coalition was developed in Belgium and France in support of the West-African initiative entitled “N’exportons pas nos problèmes!” (Let’s not export our problems!). This coalition, in which VSF-Belgium is actively involved, develops activities targeting EU decision makers through events, meetings and conferences organised in Brussels, such as the initiative “72 hours of local milk” organised in Brussels in April 2019.

Burkina Faso and Mali have demonstrated that this integrated approach generates tangible economic impacts and an improvement in the livelihood of the various actors all along the value chain.
This will be achieved by reinforcing the capacities of VSF International’s members through improved knowledge exchange and lessons learning on One Health interventions, but also through external actions, to create visibility around the One Health expertise of the network, promote partnership with stakeholders from different sectors, and lobby donors for the allocation of additional funds directed to integrated service delivery under the One Health approach.

During part of the year, the Working Group produced a technical paper and a policy brief on One Health implementation in the Global South, that will be published in June 2020.

As part of the efforts towards mainstreaming One Health, in 2019 VSF International participated in several meetings, conferences and events on topics related to the interconnections between animal, human and environmental health, taking the opportunity to bring insights from the projects in the field, lessons learned and exchanges about practices and methodologies.

Promoting an official recognition of CAHWs

VSF International is continuing its advocacy efforts to promote an official recognition of Community-based Animal Health Workers (CAHWs). Although CAHWs are essential actors for the provision of quality animal health services and advise in remote areas, their role and function are still poorly recognized, which sometimes hinders their access to training and adequate support.

Selected by their communities and in collaboration with private veterinary doctors, the veterinary public services and supporting bodies (projects and NGOs), Community-based Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) provide basic services and give husbandry advice to livestock keepers. They are in charge of disseminating certain farming techniques in order to optimize animal production. They also play an important role in epidemiological surveillance.

Selected by their communities and in collaboration with private veterinary doctors, the veterinary public services and supporting bodies (projects and NGOs), Community-based Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) provide basic services and give husbandry advice to livestock keepers. They are in charge of disseminating certain farming techniques in order to optimize animal production. They also play an important role in epidemiological surveillance.
National governments and the veterinary statutory bodies have an important role to play in the official recognition of CAHWs in each country. At the global level, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) sets the criteria and definitions for the different categories of animal health providers. To date, CAHWs are not included in the OIE official guidelines and standards, but several countries have included them within the Veterinary Para-professionals (VPP) category.

In consultation with many stakeholders, OIE prepared and published two important documents within the last two years: the “OIE Competency Guidelines for Veterinary Paraprofessionals” and the “OIE Curricula Guidelines for Veterinary Paraprofessionals”. The next step could be to commonly define some international guidelines for key-competencies and curricula for CAHWs. In parallel, OIE recently published a Handbook for “public-private partnerships in the veterinary domain”, in which CAHWs are recognized as an important private actor that ensure service delivery in partnership with veterinary public services.

These examples show that at the international level there is more and more willingness to clarify the roles and responsibilities of CAHWs in order to ensure the qualified delivery of services through standardized curricula and definition of minimal competences. Far from being the optimal solution to assure animal health worldwide, the current situation shows that CAHWs are often the only available option in many remote areas, where millions of livestock keepers live. A better regulation of their roles and responsibilities would therefore hugely benefit the maintenance of public health. For this reason, VSF International is committed to continuing the dialogue with international and national stakeholders to ensure that CAHWs can operate under optimal conditions.

VSF International is sharing the coordination of the NGO cluster together with Anthra/LIFE Network (Local Livestock for Empowerment). The cluster comprises 25 NGOs from all over the world representing specific issues relevant to small-scale livestock production and provides a voice of expertise on topics such as sustainable environmental management, small-scale livestock systems, pastoralism, animal health and welfare, poverty reduction, livelihoods and development.
In 2019, the NGO Cluster produced a policy brief to bring the NGOs’ perspective on the main topic selected for the GASL annual meeting: innovations for sustainable livestock. The Policy Brief “Smallholder Livestock Systems – Innovations for Sustainability” was presented at the annual meeting of GASL, held in Kansas in September 2019.

VSF International is also active in some of GASL's Action Networks, in particular, the “Livestock for Social Development” and the “Livestock Antimicrobial Partnership” groups. These are research-led projects that aim to collect and share evidence on specific topics, building on the contributions from multiple stakeholders’ groups.

Vaccinate for Africa International: a successful first edition

In 2019 VSF International launched the Vaccinate for Africa campaign internationally. Nine out of the 12 VSF members participated – a big success for a first run!

Vaccinate for Africa is an international campaign that aims to engage veterinary clinics and pet owners to support African livestock keepers. In 2019, the campaign ran during one week in Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, Sweden, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Czech Republic and Portugal. During the campaign week, veterinary clinics collected fees from vaccinations and other treatments and donated part of them or their entirety to VSF in their country. These donations support the work of VSF in Africa to keep animals and people in good health. In 2019 the campaign was supported by 1,400 veterinary practices throughout Europe, and we hope that in 2020 this number will be increased!

Vaccinate for Africa provides the opportunity for veterinarians to participate in an international campaign and talk about their support for VSF to their clients. But it’s not only about the veterinarians: pet owners can also contribute by bringing their companion animals to a participating clinic during the campaign.

For the VSF International network, the organization of Vaccinate for Africa was an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between the communication and fundraising departments in each country, design common
tools and define common objectives for the campaign. It also allowed to strengthen the links and relations with veterinarians in the different European countries and make our actions known among a broad public of practitioners and pet owners!

The second edition of the campaign will take place in 2020. However, due to the Covid-19 crisis, we had to adapt and modify its organization. While the participating countries usually schedule their campaigns in spring every year, several had to postpone to allow a maximum number of veterinary practices and pet owners to make their contributions.

For more information on the campaign details visit vsf-international.org/vaccinate-for-africa/

VWB/VSF Canada: Volunteers for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities

Since 2015, VWB/VSF Canada has been implementing the international volunteer sending program “Volunteers for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities”, funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The program supports the deployment of Canadian volunteers to a number of countries including Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Laos and Vietnam. Veterinarians, veterinary technologists, animal and human nutritionists, professors of veterinary medicine, veterinary clinic managers, rural development specialists, business development advisors, monitoring and evaluation specialists, gender specialists are the most desired profiles for placements ranging from three weeks to two years, depending on the position. The volunteers are assigned to work in the field to support the activities of local organizations and local partners.

Within the context of the new GAC-funded “Volunteers Engaged in Gender Responsive Technical Solutions (VETS)” project, running for the next seven years, VWB/VSF Canada is establishing collaborations with other members of VSF International. The VETS program will support the women’s associations in Senegal through a project run by AVSF, focusing on strengthening the role of women in the poultry and cashew value chains. In Cambodia, also in partnership with AVSF, VETS will support rural farmers (particularly women) to improve livestock and crop production systems of smallholders and animal health services through One Health / Eco-health and agroecology approaches.
Overall, in 2019 the VSF International network had a total income of 51.1 million €.

With different budget size and structure, the members of the VSF network implement projects in the field, organize education and awareness raising activities in their own countries and support the common activities of the network.

The VSF International coordination office is financially supported by the members’ contributions, and is responsible for knowledge management, developing common quality standards and coordinating joint advocacy and communication activities, all the while ensuring that exchanges and network dynamics are running smoothly.
GOVERNANCE

VSF International is a non-profit organisation (a.i.s.b.l. for its French acronym) registered in Belgium. It is governed by a General Assembly, which is composed of all the members of the network and represented by the Managers in charge. The General Assembly meets annually and defines the global vision and strategy of the organisation, approves the financial statements and budgets, and elects the Board every two years. The Board is responsible for the implementation of the General Assembly’s decisions while supporting the day-to-day activities of the coordination office in Brussels. Board members also participate in different thematic working groups, along with other technical experts from the national VSFs.

The Board members were elected in October 2019 at the General Assembly meeting held in Dublin.

VSF International is managed by a coordination office in Brussels (Belgium), which is responsible for fostering collaboration between members, coordinating joint projects and campaigns, leading external communication and representing the network at the international level. The VSF International’s coordination office is hosted by VSF Belgium at its headquarters. In May 2019 VSF Belgium and VSF International moved to a new and bigger office in Brussels. You are welcome to come and visit us!
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

- Giorgia Angeloni (VSF Italy) – President
- Constanze Bönig (VSF Germany) – Vice-president
- Koen Van Troos (VSF Belgium) – Treasurer
- Ana Batalha (VSF Portugal)
- Sonia Fèvre (VWB/VSF Canada)
- Nicole Litschgi (VSF-Suisse)
- Manuelle Miller (AVSF)

MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Frédéric Apollin (Executive Director, AVSF)
- Elina Åsbjer (President, VSF Sweden)
- Mike Burke (Executive Director, VIVA)
- Piero Casale (President, VSF Italy)
- Katie Clow (President, VWB/VSF Canada)
- Sarah Farrand (Coordinator, VSF Netherlands)
- Christian Griebenow (Managing Director, VSF Germany)
- Marc Joolen (Executive Director, VSF Belgium)
- Nicole Litschgi (Programme Director, VSF Suisse)
- David Modrý (Managing Director, VSF Czech Republic)
- Maria Conceição Peleteiro (President, VSF Portugal)
- Dagmar Schoder (President, VSF Austria)

© Hervé Bossy / VSF Belgium