



agronomes
vétérinaires
SANS FRONTIÈRES

African Swine Fever Context, approach and update on activities



Introduction

Field overview of ASF impacts and challenges (1/2)

- Field observations during ASF outbreaks in Lao PDR and Cambodia:
 - Information of villagers on ASF precautionary measures were very scarce during the first outbreaks, and still differs greatly depending on villages/districts;
 - Death of pigs are rarely reported by farmers: dead or sick pigs were usually sold by farmers to middle-men (due to a lack on information & control, but also a survival strategy in the absence of compensations), therefore accelerating the spread of the virus locally and nationwide, while many others were dumped in rivers or around villages, therefore durably infecting the environment;
 - Tremendous lack of information of development partners (DPs) on precautionary measures while visiting villages and farms: the use of PPE and disinfection procedures are rarely implemented, if not non-existent;
 - Pigs have been generally replaced by poultry, which only slightly offset the losses (very high mortality rate, poor feed conversion ratio, lesser profitability) and increase the risk of (re-)emerging animal diseases, including HPAI;
 - **When villagers were raising their pigs in pens, even very simple ones, pigs did not get infected while all their neighbours lost their herd.**

Introduction

Field overview of ASF impacts and challenges (2/2)

- ASF significantly impacted rural households, especially the poor:
 - Impact on food security and nutrition, while households (HHs) already suffer from malnutrition and severe climatic events, and have no or few alternatives;
 - Economic and social impact, by cutting off a mobile capital that is essential for buying food, investing and accessing basic social services;
 - Some producers who invested to cope with the increasing demand for pork meat in urban areas went bankrupt;
 - Everyone, from producers to consumers, is also facing a general increase of food prices (for pork, and as consequence for other meat and food products).
 - Ecological and health impact: pork is a key factor for converting food waste into organic matter. This crisis thus presents the risk of:
 - an overutilization of chemical fertilizers, but also drugs (although ineffective), with a direct impact on human/animal health and the environment (One Health and AMR);
 - the potential extinction of local breeds, which are the most adapted to agro-climatic conditions and are thus much more resilient and profitable.
 - **In some villages or districts, pigs cannot be found anymore.**

Need assessment

Quick analysis of main gaps and challenges (1/3)

➤ Main impediments to ASF understanding, project formulation and advocacy:

- Tremendous lack of consolidated data (on ASF-infected pork populations), scientific research (on ASF pathways, specific epidemiologic characteristics in SEA, etc.) **and field studies**, especially on;
 - ASF impact on HHs regarding food security, nutrition, access to social services and economic reliance/business development potential;
 - ASF impact on local and regional value-chains;
 - Animal services availability and efficiency (public/private veterinarians, CAHWs, pharmacies, private sellers): need assessment at district/provincial levels, but also at national level (national policies & regulatory frameworks, especially for CAHWs);
 - Technical and social constraints to the transition from backyard to full or part-time penning schemes (according to the different typologies of farmers): penning systems, animal feeding practices, etc. but also behavioral change factors;
 - The identification and inventory of local breeds (domestic and wild) as a priority, and the analysis of its genetic characteristics, husbandry needs and market potential.
- **None or few consolidated data are currently available in this regard, therefore impeding policy-making decisions and advocacy towards DPs;**

Need assessment

Quick analysis of main gaps and challenges (2/3)

➤ Main impediments to ASF funding from DPs:

- Besides this lack of data, DPs' funding remain constrained by the reluctance of partner countries to publicly declare ASF as a “national catastrophe”: until now, no official request for funding support was submitted to DPs as far as we know;
- Another constraint is that “animal health and husbandry” (AHH) is generally not included in the country or regional priorities of DPs, whose staff is rarely hosting veterinarians or animal husbandry professionals.

Yet, animal health situation is worryingly deteriorating worldwide (endemic and emerging transboundary animal diseases, AMR, etc.), especially in SEA, with a direct and significant impact on local and international economies, but also on environmental and human health as revealed by the COVID-19 zoonosis.

The COVID-19 crisis could be a unique opportunity to advocate for the inclusion of the “One Health” (OH) approach (including animal health and veterinary services) as a priority in their country/regional strategies (e.g. EU MFF 2021-2027 currently under preparation).

Need assessment

Quick analysis of main gaps and challenges (3/3)

- Main impediments to a global and effective ASF prevention and response:
 - Due to the lack of funding for animal health in general, and ASF in particular, ASF prevention and response actions are mostly limited to institutional support and capacity-building activities at central level, with the help of OIE and FAO;
 - Although essential, those actions have still limited impacts locally due to a lack of means in terms of budget and human resources at district/provincial levels;

Therefore, there is a urging need to complement those institutional supports with operational projects in support to rural communities and local veterinary services (public/private veterinarians, CAHWs*, etc.).

Those projects could be done at a pilot scale first of all, before being up-scaled.

* CAHW: *Community Animal Health Worker*.

- In this context, AVSF approach is focused on 4 main priorities:
 - **[1] The (refresher) training of CAHWs**, who can play a key role in coordination with district public veterinarians in
 - detecting and reporting animal diseases to public authorities;
 - swiftly communicating on safety measures and good practices within their community;
 - coordinating vaccination campaigns (outside ASF);
 - providing first animal health care and husbandry services;
 - controlling that biosecurity measures are properly adopted;
 - guaranteeing the quality of the production standards towards buyers (e.g. middle men);
 - **[2] The development of proper biosecurity models at village-level**, through:
 - financial support to farmers to progressively shift from backyard to full or part-time penning schemes, depending of the different typologies of farmers and local contexts, taking into consideration that they should be simple, low-cost, efficient and sustainable;
 - dedicated trainings (by the CAHWs) on animal feeding, waste management, animal welfare, antimicrobial resistance, etc.

- In this context, AVSF approach is focused on 4 main priorities:
 - **[3] The support of quality and bio-secured local value chains**, through:
 - the development of local traceability schemes that would be financially incentivizing for the producers that decided to shift to biosecurity models, but also for the middle men and slaughterhouse operators;
 - the development of new market outlets for local quality and safe meat: business development skills of farmers, microfinance mechanisms, capacity-building of farmers' groups (FGs), market structuration, etc.
 - **[4] The protection and sustainable development of local breeds**, through both of those last two above-mentioned actions.
 - Our main focus remain to support rural communities (and local stakeholders), especially smallholders and semi-commercial farmers, since :
 - Smallholders represent 70-80%% of the pig production (in Lao PDR and Cambodia)
 - Semi-commercial farmers are very exposed yet still very weak (high potential vectors)

It should be noted that the approach should not be necessarily restricted to ASF and pig production, but could (and should) be extended to poultry/other livestock.

- Since 2019, AVSF implemented the following actions:
 - Within our ongoing projects:
 - Adaptation of OIE leaflets and FAO manual into simple documents and posters (in local languages, with illustrative pictures) to inform villagers and local stakeholders about essential precautionary measures;
 - Distribution of ASF biosecurity kits (PPE, boots, disinfection materials, etc.) to supported CAHWs and training (of CAHWs and partner NGOs) on biosecurity procedures to adopt while visiting farms and villages;
 - Data collection on ASF impacts and trends (ongoing on our projects' areas).
 - At the global and regional levels:
 - Close coordination with OIE and FAO, as well as with local authorities and partners (e.g. CIRAD, WCS, VSF International networks, France Vétérinaire International, etc.). Partnership agreements are currently under discussion with all those actors. In 2019, AVSF participated to EMC-AH missions in May (Cambodia) and June (Lao PDR);
 - Advocacy towards DPs (EU, AFD, USAID, etc.) to raise awareness on AHH/OH challenges and its necessary inclusion in donor funding priorities for the next years;

➤ Since 2019, AVSF implemented the following actions:

- Public communication : position papers, press articles/interviews, video editing, etc.

Positions papers:

Acting in the South to fight zoonosis is an urgent necessity (AVSF, Mars 2020)

On [AVSF website](#) or [full pdf document](#).

One Health to address future crises (VSI International, April 2020)

On [AVSF website](#) or [full pdf document](#).

One Health implementation in the Global South (VSI International, June 2020)

[Policy brief](#) and [Technical document](#).

Videos on social media:

The dangers of African Swine Fever in Lao PDR (AVSF, June 2020)

On [AVSF website](#) or [YouTube](#) (click on subtitles for English)

Fundraising campaign (AVSF, April 2020)

On [AVSF website](#) or [YouTube](#).

- Currently, AVSF is working on the formulation of several projects:
 - ASF pilot action in Lao PDR within AHAN project (AVSF):
 - In March 2020, a fundraising campaign was launched by AVSF in France (still ongoing) to address ASF impacts in AHAN project area (Savannaketh, Saravane, Attapeu);
 - Activities will be undertaken under the four main axis of intervention previously described (slides 7 to 8), starting November 2020 (after rice harvests).
 - TA support for the improvement of biosecurity in SEA (FVI, AVSF, CIRAD):
 - Since January 2020, AVSF, FVI and CIRAD are working on a joint proposal to provide complementary TA support (to ongoing projects from OIE and FAO), covering both (i) institutional/technical support at central level, (ii) operational support at district/provincial levels and (iii) scientific research and support;
 - The financing is still under negotiation with the donor. Expected start date in 2021.
 - One Health/Eco Health “research-action” project in SEA (CIRAD, AVSF, WCS...)

Other projects are under preparation in Lao PDR and Cambodia, with prospects to extend our support to: Vietnam (where we worked until 2018); Myanmar, Indonesia and Timor Leste (where we conducted preliminary missions in 2019) or other SEA countries in need.

AVSF Presentation

Quick outlook of AVSF and activities in SEA (1/2)

Agronomists and Veterinarians Without Borders (AVSF) is an independent French NGO, resulting from the merger of two NGOs in 2004: Veterinarians Without Borders (VSF), created in 1983, and CICDA, an NGO of agronomists created in 1977. The objective of this merger was to pool the expertise of both organisations to support smallholder farmers and rural families through an **integrated and agro-ecological approach at farm level**: livestock-agriculture integration, recycling of animal waste (organic matter, biogas, etc.), animal feed production, certification and traceability schemes, “One Health” & AMR, etc.

➤ AVSF in key figures (2019) :

- 19 countries of cooperation in Africa, Latin America and Asia
- 58 ongoing projects, supporting more than 700 000 beneficiaries
- 235 staffs, of which 87% are local professionals
- A budget of 14,5 M€ in 2019, of which 89% was directly used into projects

➤ AVSF started operating in SEA in the early 1990's in Cambodia, and then Vietnam and later on in Lao PDR (since 2011). In Cambodia, AVSF was one of the first NGOs to support the creation of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs). **For about 30 years, AVSF worked on training CAHWs and structuring the sector as a whole**: recognition by national regulations, development of sustainable financing models, etc.

AVSF Presentation

Quick outlook of AVSF and activities in SEA (1/2)

- Besides animal health and husbandry, AVSF has a longstanding record in the promotion of local and international fair trade value chains. In Mongolia, AVSF supported the creation of sustainable yak and cashmere fibre value chains, operated by local farmers' organizations, reaching out to PPP schemes with major private buyers.
- AVSF has played a leading role in the creation of several professional platforms:
 - VSF International, a network of 12 professional veterinary NGOs
 - Fair Trade France, Ethiquable and SPP Global
 - Technical WG in Agro-ecological Transitions (GTAE)

AVSF is also a member of France Vétérinaire Internationale

- AVSF is not only acting as a project operator, but also as technical assistant to state bodies or local partners, and service provider for short/medium term expert missions.
- Today, AVSF has permanent offices with active projects in Cambodia and Lao PDR, after the closure of AVSF Vietnam in 2018. Taking into consideration the worrying epidemiological context and the lack of professional veterinary NGOs in SEA, AVSF conducted several preliminary missions in 2019 (Myanmar, Indonesia, Timor Leste) to assess the relevancy of extending its support to additional countries.

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Thanks for your attention !

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