

Vétérinaires
Sans Frontières



Annual report

2021

VÉTÉRINAIRES SANS FRONTIÈRES
NETHERLANDS

MEMBER OF VSF INTERNATIONAL





Millions of people in Africa depend on their livestock. Vétérinaires Sans Frontières-Netherlands (VSF-NL) works together with African farmers to keep their animals healthy. This helps these farmers to build up better lives themselves.

One of the concepts used is training Community Animal Health Workers, for example in Malawi for the past eleven years. Thanks to the animals, training, materials and animal health care, small-scale farmers can produce sufficient food for themselves and for the market.

www.dierenartsenzondergrenzen.nl

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healthy people,
healthy environment**
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This is the annual report of the activities of the foundation Vétérinaires Sans Frontières the Netherlands (VSF-NL) in 2021.

Despite the second pandemic year, the foundation has had a good year. Once again there has been intensive cooperation with our local partners in Malawi. Just like us, they are experiencing the consequences of the pandemic. Our program manager Gilbert Banda, on site, summarized it as follows.

“The impact of Covid has not spared anybody. CAHWs and livestock farmers alike were affected. Most (over 95%) of animal veterinary drugs and equipment used in Malawi are imported. Covid slowed the rate of importation of such products, as such prices of veterinary drugs and equipment went up. In some cases essential veterinary drugs were unavailable.

As such CAHWs had to pay more to access the products due to an increase in demand of the product and that the products were in limited supply. This meant that CAHWs would also charge more for the services they offer to farmers. Restrictions on the number of people that could gather at one place meant that farmers could no longer meet for their savings and loan activities that are a major source of ‘soft’ loans. Ultimately, Covid affected farmers’ income. In these times of Covid, community animal health service has become increasingly important. CAHWs are already in their respective localities and are able to work with individual farmers who are in need of animal health services.”

VSF-NL can contribute to recovery in Malawi by continuing and expanding its current project program in Malawi. After 3 years, VSF-NL has evaluated the cooperation with VSF-Belgium and identified several important steps for further fruitful cooperation in the near future. The next phase of the cooperation will start in 2022.

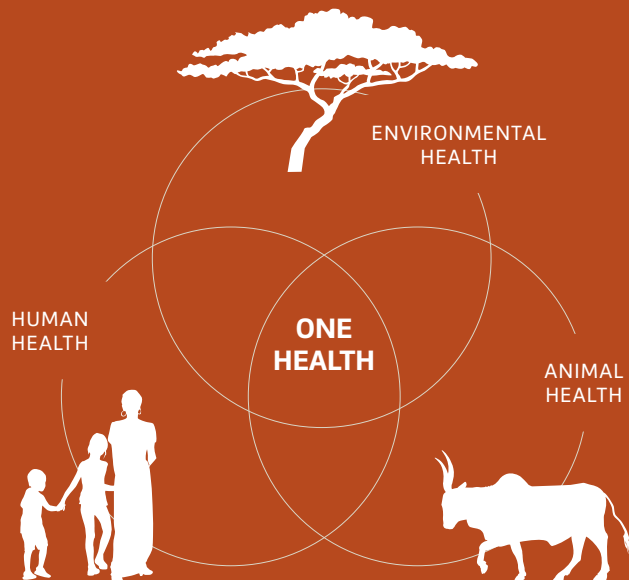
VSF-NL wants to expand its activities in Africa in the coming years. To achieve this, international cooperation is needed and the fundraising activities in the Netherlands and together with international partners need to be expanded.

— The board

**More than ever in 2021, now and for the foreseeable future:
healthy animals, healthy people,
healthy environment.**



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‘One Health’ is a cooperative approach focused on developing optimal conditions for health and wellbeing. It takes the coherence between people, animals, plants and their shared environment into account.

www.vsf-international.org



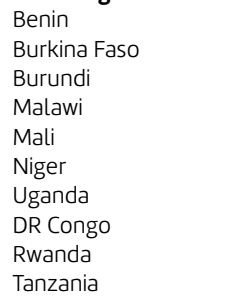
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Healthy animals, healthy people, healthy environment

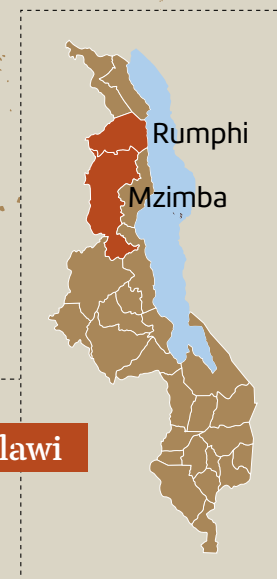
An international network

We are member of the network **Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International**. This network consists of thirteen different non-profit organizations in Europe, Canada and Australia. Together we are committed to improving the living conditions of small-scale farmers worldwide and strengthening local animal health and welfare initiatives. Within the network we exchange knowledge and combine resources to make the greatest impact. For example, in 2021 we have:

- Started a partnership with the World Organization for Animal Health, the OIE, to start preparations for a new international project; this involves research to improve the conditions of animal health professionals, by developing guidelines for competences and curricula.
- Joined the [Action for Animal Health](#) coalition: we call on governments and international organizations to invest more in One Health and in animal health systems as a way to protect animals and people from future disease outbreaks.
- Contributed to the report [“Are livestock always bad for the planet”](#); a report explaining the difference in climate impacts of livestock farming in rich, industrialized countries compared to extensive livestock farming systems (with relatively less climate impact), on which millions of people worldwide depend. The report provides recommendations for involving pastoralists in debates about the future of food.
- Added a new member to our network: [Vets Beyond Borders Australia](#).



Countries where VSF International works





01.

Malawi

The experiences of farmers' families in Malawi show that improving (access to) animal health services can have a huge impact on the animals and the entire community. On the following pages you can read a number of experiences from people we have supported and trained.



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CAHW Reddings Nkhata tells us that the goats are a living bank for him. The goats he has been given have already had two young goats each. With the money he earns from the animal health services, Reddings has bought additional goats to increase the herd. He sells goats to pay for his children's school fees and to provide for the basic needs of the family.

"I was delighted to receive the two goats from the project. It was a clear sign that livestock farmers and my fellow CAHWs appreciated my efforts to protect animals against diseases. I am very grateful to VSF-NL for giving me goats through CCEI," says Nkhata.

There is a shortage of veterinarians in Malawi. When an animal gets sick, the farmer often does not know what to do. If the animal dies, a source of manure, food and income is lost. That is why we train **Community Animal Health Workers**, or "**CAHWs**" who keep animals healthy in their own communities. They provide information to farmers about housing, nutrition, reproduction and health. For example, vaccination and deworming campaigns are also organised in cooperation with the government. In this way, animal production increases and small-scale farmers can produce sufficient food for themselves and the market.

Since April 2021, CCEI has been implementing the **Livestock For Empowerment (L4E)** project with the help of VSF-NL and Wilde Ganzen. With L4E we want to ensure that women and young people in Malawi have more capacity to increase and improve the productivity of their livestock in a sustainable and responsible way. The starting point of the project was the training of 15 community animal health workers in Mzuzu, Malawi. In addition, previously trained animal health professionals have received a refresher course, as well as artificial insemination technicians and a number of veterinary (para) professionals employed by the government. L4E aims to promote animal health, believing in the power of empowering and educating the community itself. The CAHWs are selected from their own community and then trained to ensure that they can take care of the animals themselves. During the training, various theory lessons and practicals take place. The CAHWs then accompany an **Assistant Veterinary Officer** from their own region to put their knowledge into practice. This also contributes to a good relationship between the various veterinary (para) professionals and the government. Every month, animal health workers provide information about animal diseases in their environment, so that it can be used in the government's monitoring programs.



80%

of the population depends on small-scale agriculture and animal husbandry



50%

of the people live below the poverty line, so under \$2 per day

The reactions of the farmers and CAHWs in the areas where we carry out our projects are positive. Especially the availability of animal health services has improved substantially by training farmers to CAHWs. Additionally, farmers and CAHWs notice that with minor and simple actions, enormous improvements can be made with regard to animal health. This strongly increases the animals' productivity and this makes the existence as a cattle farmer a lot more attractive.

Testimonial

**Mary Kumwenda
and Zakeyu Chima**



In the annual report of 2020, Mary Kumwenda from the village of Kazizwa, Malawi, told the story that after participating in the training (ECAHS project) of VSF-NL and the social enterprise Ziweeto Enterprise, she completely focused on raising livestock. She said the following in it: “We used to be dependent on growing crops like tobacco, there was little attention for cattle-farming and we did not realise that money could be made by that. I am a farmer myself, but did not know how to look after animals,” she says. The year before the training, Mary lost seven goats, because she lacked the knowledge to look after them. After the training, not a single goat died.

Thanks to donors to Give a Goat, Mary and her husband, Zakeyu Chima, have received two goats. Mary says: “The project gave me two goats as a way to encourage me to work even harder and after seeing the problems we faced as a family. Year after year we faced hunger. My house was small and in disrepair. Some of my children go to school, they need school fees. I bought more goats with the money I earn from providing animal health services.” Mary went on to explain why goats are of great value to her and her husband: “Goats have very good qualities that make it easy for us to keep them. Unlike pigs, goats do not compete with humans when it comes to food. Goats grow fast and can give birth twice a year. Goats are also resistant to many diseases. This makes keeping goats relatively cheap.”

We are therefore proud of the results we achieved in 2021 with the Livestock For Empowerment project:



45

**Community Animal Health
Workers trained**



19.875

farmers visited



156.854

animals helped



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The goals of the ECAHS-project included increasing the farmers' access to affordable and high-quality animal health services in remote areas and strengthening the connections between the government, farmers and suppliers of services and products for animal health. In the long term, these goals contribute to improved animal health and wellbeing and an improved financial position for small cattle farmers.

02.

What we do in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, we are raising awareness with regard to sustainable cattle-farming and food production. We lobby for decision-making in favour of small-scale farmers in Africa.



In the Netherlands, VSF-NL employs one person as a coordinator for two days a week: Sarah Farrand. She takes care of the day-to-day affairs and communication with and fundraising for the projects in Malawi. She consults with the board and VSF-student (see paragraph below).

The organisation

The board sets the direction of the foundation, defines new strategic plans and supervises and gives guidance and feedback to the coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for the financial administration, internal and external communication and fundraising.

The members of the board of Vétérinaires Sans Frontières in 2021 in the Netherlands are:

- **Marc Joolen**, chairman
- **Bart Balis**, treasurer
- **Sarah Farrand**, secretary
- **Hans de Smit**, general board member
- **David Speksnijder**, general board member
- **Marieke Le Poole**, general board member



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We involve veterinarians and students of Veterinary Medicine in our work via various actions, such as the Vaccinate For Africa campaign, Run4Rabies and Give a Goat. We lobby for decision-making in favour of small-scale farmers in Africa.

In 2021 VSF-NL invested in expanding communication and fundraising, among other things, by taking on trainees again. Thereby, the social media content could be greatly expanded. A great deal of attention was also paid to fundraising, among other things by developing communication materials for legacies and active fundraising for the realisation of the L4E project and a new rabies vaccination project that was developed in the end of 2021.

VSF-Student 2021

VSF-Student is the student branch of VSF-NL and has been operating under this name for 3 years now. The student board consists of six Veterinary Medicine students and there are six committees. The student board is located at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Utrecht. Our main goal is: *'Improve animal health and thus public health in developing countries, with due regard for the protection of the environment and in a perspective of cooperation and sustainable development.'* This comes together under the motto: *'Healthy animals, healthy people, healthy environment!'*

The impact of the **corona pandemic** was still clearly noticeable in 2021. Creative solutions had to be found in order to still hold campaigns and organize fun activities for interested parties. This is how we started the year with online activities, but during 2021 we were certainly able to organize fun physical activities.

At the beginning of the year, there was still a lockdown, which meant that students were not (often) allowed to come to university. Nevertheless, a number of fun online activities have been organized. For example, the **International Veterinary Student Association (IVSA)** had organized a lecture on 25 February about what Vétérinaires Sans Frontières is doing as an organisation. Then, on March 17, another online lecture was held about the illegal wildlife trade. Our Semi-Annual Donors' Meeting took place online on March 24, during which 1 board member was replaced.



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On April 7, the first physical activity took place again. Two volunteers were allowed to give a guest lesson about **Veterinary Medicine** at IMC on tour in Amersfoort. The **Bubbles&Bones Outdoor** event took place physically on April 25th and two board members were present to tell the enthusiastic participants more about the activities of VSF-NL.

A number of online activities took place in the period before the summer holidays, such as a cuttings exchange, the **Animal Fighting** mini symposium, a lecture about animals in the fur industry and a lecture in cooperation with the study associations Archaeopteryx and Hygieia about Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary.

With the start of the new academic year, many corona measures were also released. This mainly meant that we were allowed to be present at many events with VSF-Student to show students of Veterinary Medicine who we are and what we do. For example, we were present at **Peerdepieten** on 29 August and we told the new students about VSF-Student during the First-year weekend and the introduction days in early September. They were also able to get acquainted with our new house style right away, because on 1 September VSF-Student switched to a new house style with earth tones, following VSF-NL.

2021 in a nutshell

An overview of the activities that took place in 2020 follows below. These concern activities organised by DZG-Student as well as events in which the student board was present to provide information, to network and/or build up brand awareness.

February 25

Lecture 'Meet Veterinarians without borders' by the IVSA (online)

March 17

Lecture **Illegal wildlife trade** (online)

March 24

Bi-annual General Donors Meeting (online)

April 7

Guest lesson IMC on tour

April 25

Bubbles&Bones Outdoor event

Gilbert Banda



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Since 2018 we have been working together with our programme manager in Malawi: Gilbert Banda. He gained a lot of experience in training community animal health workers in his previous work for Heifer and other NGOs in Malawi. On average, he works 50% for Vétérinaires Sans Frontières-Netherlands and the other 50% for a social enterprise, Ziweeto. Gilbert is occupied with the design and implementation of new projects, trains community animal health workers and connects them to the existing veterinary infrastructure and finally, he monitors and evaluates the projects.

VSF-student

From left to right, top to bottom, the student board introduces itself: Tim Haverkort, Stella Steenbergen, Annika Stokvis, Femke Castellino, Amber van Beek, Max van Straaten.



26 to 30 April
Online cuttings exchange

May 7
Animal Fighting
Minisymposium (online)

7 to 21 June
Vaccinate For Africa
campaign

June 8
Lecture Libassa wildlife sanctuary
together with Archeopteryx
and Hygieia (online)

June 21
Lecture Animals in the
fur industry (online)


20 to 26 September
Online Run4Rabies

September 18
World Clean Up Day

September 7
Introduction day Veterinary Medicine

September 1
Transition new corporate identity

August 29
Peerdepieten
(horse racing event)



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DONATE

To our bank account
NL67 TRIO 0379 3388 66

or online
www.dierenartsenzondergrenzen.nl

September 22

General Donor
Meeting



September 24

Physical Run4Rabies event

November 6

Climate March Amsterdam

November 22

Project Lecture (online)

**November 29 to
December 3**

Christmas card promotion

The **Vaccinate For Africa campaign** took place in the week of 7th to 13th June. 26 practices participated in the campaign and together we raised €5621.35.

Volunteers from VSF-Student have also been active in making the Uithof cleaner during **World Clean Up Day** and attended the climate march in Amsterdam.

After experimenting with an online version of the **Run4Rabies** last year, there was also the opportunity to participate online this year. In addition, runners have also started during the physical event at the Uithof. The online event, physical event and the raffle together generated a profit of €192, after deduction of the organizational costs. This year there was a special cooperation with Jim Lasseur who lost his father to rabies. He set up a crowdfunding campaign and was sponsored for the Berlin Marathon. The fundraising results were divided between the IC Connect foundation and FCIC and VSF-NL, and ultimately yielded no less than € 6,000. With this money, a rabies project can be set up by VSF-NL.

The **General Donors' Meeting** took place on September 22 and 1 board member was replaced.

In the autumn, the corona virus flared up again and this unfortunately meant that the symposium that was planned could not take place. A replacement date is being sought for this in the spring of 2022.

The project lecture that was planned has been converted into an online lecture. Unfortunately, we ended the year without our annual **Christmas campaign** where we sell so-called "oliebollen", a Dutch delicacy, but due to the Christmas card campaign, 84 cards were sent to the National Elderly Fund and these have probably brought a wide smile to the face of many people.



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