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FAO activities in the Balkans with a focus on Community ASF Biosecurity Interventions

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TCPE: Emergency Response to ASF outbreak in the Western Balkans (TCP/RER/3907)

Target countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

Planned impact: Improved and protected livelihoods against ASF in targeted countries of the Western Balkans.

Timeline: August 2023 – August 2025

[Parallel Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities \(SFERA\) project with similar objectives in Kosovo¹ ended on 17 March 2025.](#)

¹ As per United Nations Security Council resolution 1244





Training on ASF and Stamping out

Six trainings held, further three planned

- Kosovo, Pristina 20 November 2024, 17 participants
- Kosovo, Gjilan, 21 November 2024, 12 participants
- Kosovo, Istog, 22 November 2024, 12 participants
- Albania, Tirana, 25 November 2024, 35 participants
- Albania, Fier, 26 November 2024, 22 participants
- Albania, Shkodra, 27 November 2024, 33 participants

Montenegro trainings are planned for June 2025.

Albania supported with 30 captive bolts and 115 cartages (delivery imminent).





ASF Simulation Exercise North Macedonia



Simulation exercise in collaboration with Food and Veterinary Agency of North Macedonia

11 – 12 March 2025, in Veles

Objectives:

- improving preparedness and response planning for ASF through testing national procedures in place;
- ensuring coherence, interoperability, and coordination between the local, national, and international levels;
- ensuring coordination between the competent authority and other stakeholders at the national and regional levels;
- guaranteeing coordination of risk communication at local, national, and international levels;
- improving preparedness for communication and decision-making challenges in crisis situations.



Training on ASF and hunting biosecurity

Training of hunters in Serbia in collaboration with Vojvodinašume

- 13 November 2024. Deliblato, Kovin. 21 participants;
- 18 November 2024. Bač. 23 participants;
- 27 November 2024. Subotica. 36 participants.
- 4 December 2024. Klenak, Ruma. 25 participants
- 11 December 2024. Kać, Novi Sad. 26 Participants

Further trainings are planned in North Macedonia,
Montenegro and continuing in Serbia.





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Virtual Learning : African Swine Fever Introductory Course

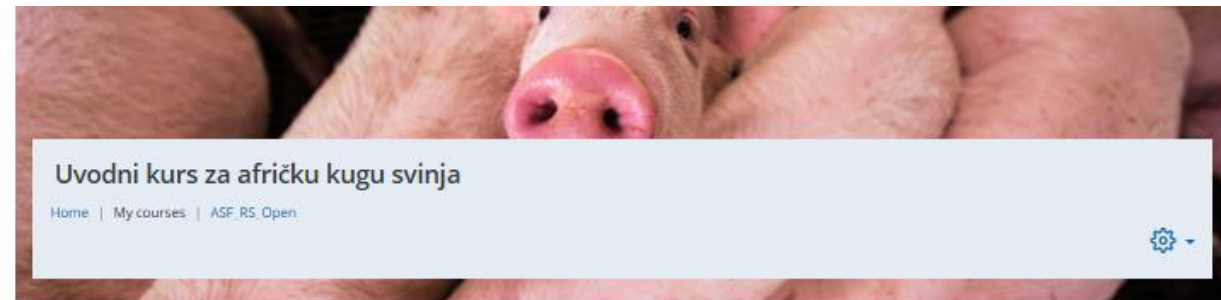
The Open Access African Swine Fever Introductory Course translated to Serbian

Currently submitting for accreditation to the Serbian Veterinary Chambers

Accreditation received from Veterinary Continuing Education in Europe ([VetCEE](#))

The course will be announced shortly!

For more info contact us under: reu-vlc@fao.org



Dobrodošli na naš samostalni virtuelni kurs učenja o afričkoj kugi svinja (AKS). Kurs ima za cilj da podigne svest o AKS i da razvije kapacitete za njeno otkrivanje i prevenciju.

Počnite tako što ćete posetiti uvodni deo ispod.





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Educational videos on ASF



**Sampling of live domestic
pigs to rule out African swine
fever**



**Clinical examination
of live domestic pigs for
African swine fever**



**Sampling of dead pigs to rule
out African swine fever**



**Packaging of suspected African
swine fever virus samples**



Community ASF Biosecurity Interventions (CABI) in Western Balkans (WB)


Piloted in the Philippines by FAO Regional Office of Asia and Pacific

Aligned with the principles of FAO's [Progressive Management Pathway for Terrestrial Animal Biosecurity](#) (**PMP-TAB**)

Focuses on **backyard / small-producers** using participatory approach to improve ASF knowledge and farm biosecurity

Adapted for Western Balkans and conducted in:

- Albania (On-going till May 2025)
- Kosovo¹ (Finished)
- Montenegro (On-going till June 2025)
- North Macedonia (On-going till June 2025)
- Serbia (On-going till May 2025)



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Community African swine fever Biosecurity Interventions

Helping smallholder farmers and communities fight ASF

Fight against African swine fever

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly fatal infectious disease affecting domestic and wild pigs of all breeds and ages. Although humans are not infected by the virus, it poses significant risks to food security and the livelihoods of farmers.

At least 60 percent of the global pig production is concentrated in East and Southeast Asia, with the majority of pigs kept in low-biosecurity smallholder farms with minimal resilience to disease incursion.

As the disease becomes endemic in the region and expands into new areas, it is crucial to constantly adjust preparedness and control activities to the situation in the field.

Biosecurity

Biosecurity involves physical measures to mitigate the risk of introducing, maintaining, and spreading diseases among animal populations.


Implementing biosecurity practices is essential for maintaining the health and well-being of animals.

Be a champion farmer with biosecurity practices

Restrict movements

No swill feeding

Report unusual events



Wash hands with soap

Disinfect frequently

Clean farm regularly

Biosecurity is a key to stop ASF.
Be a champion farmer and keep your pigs free from ASF!



CABI WB: Pre-implementation phase



Pre-implementation survey

Selection of communities / villages in agreement with competent authorities.

Currently 300 pig backyard farmers) under CABI WB
Constant forms for participation.

Pre-implementation survey:

- Farm level data – pig production parameters
- ASF knowledge – 13 questions True/false/don't know
- Farm biosecurity – multiple aspects

Surveys collected via [Epicollect5](#) by national consultants.



CABI WB: Implementation phase

Community level trainings

Considering needs of backyard pig backyard producers:

- Feeding and breeding of pigs
- ASF and pig diseases
- Cleaning and Disinfection and Biosecurity

All lectures contain information on ASF!

In Kosovo¹ combined with presentations on subsidies available for farmers and provided support with application.





CABI WB: Implementation phase



Biosecurity Intervention Packages

For each pig farmers under CABI we hand out:

- Broom and brush
- Hand-held sprayer
- Rubber boots
- Detergent
- Disinfectant
- Visitor logs and other material



CABI WB: Implementation phase

Awareness Raising

- Posters
- Educational videos
- Inviting local veterinarian and key community leaders
- Viber groups





CABI WB: Post-implementation phase



Repeat visit and post-implementation survey

Visited by national consultants (veterinarian) to see changes and to discuss questions.

Final visit to repeat surveys on:

- ASF knowledge – 13 questions True/false/don't know
- Farm biosecurity – multiple aspects

Closing workshop presenting results to beneficiaries.

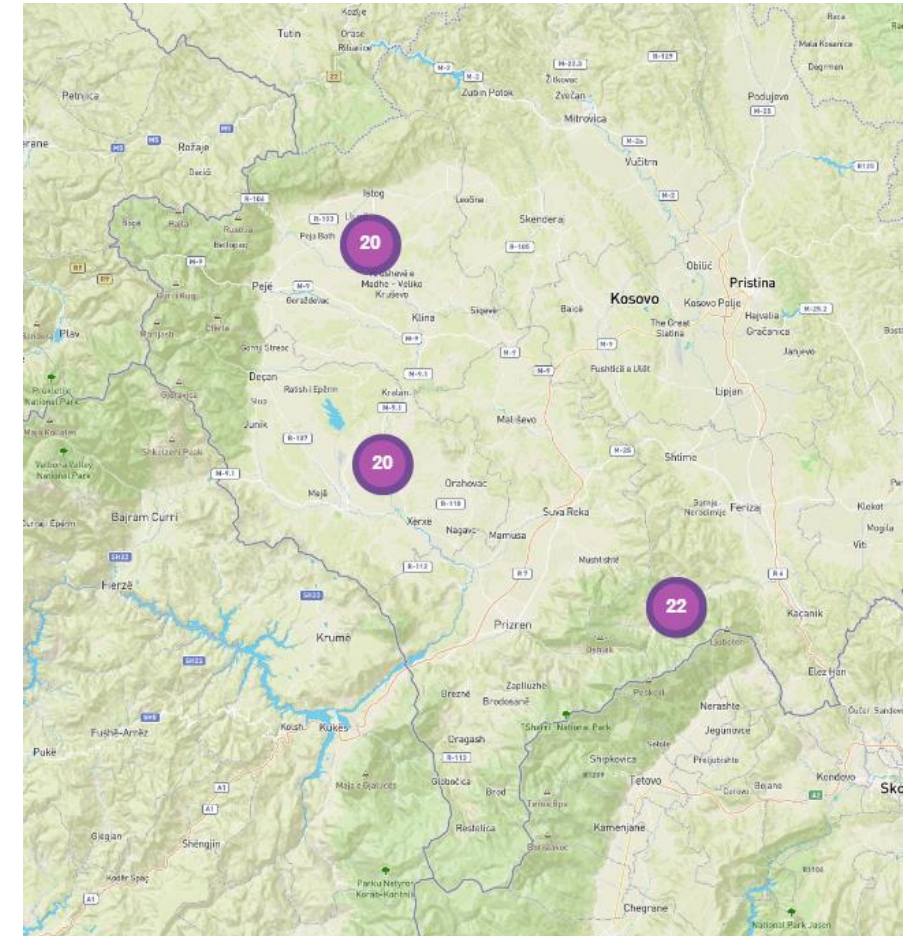


CABI Kosovo: Villages

Communities / villages in Kosovo¹:

- Strpce (Serbian community) southern part of Kosovo,
- Doblibare (Albanian community) west part and
- Gjurakoc (Albanian community) west-north part

62 backyard pig farmers under the program.





CABI Kosovo – Change in perception

Statements (1 fully disagree – 2 disagree – 3 neutral – 4 agree – 5 fully agree)	Before	After	Difference
Fences can help to protect my pigs from diseases	2.95	3.95	1.00
Regulating the movement of people, animals and vehicles on my farm can help to protect my pigs from diseases	3.03	4.45	1.42
Vaccinating my pigs can help to protect them from diseases	4.21	4.68	0.47
Regular cleaning and disinfection can help to protect my pigs from diseases	3.65	4.74	1.10
Changing how I raise my pigs can protect them from diseases	3.15	4.11	0.97



CABI Kosovo –improvement in ASF knowledge

The clinical signs of ASF are discharge from the eyes and nose; lethargy, inappetence; diarrhoea; fever; sudden death; reddening, discoloration of legs, ear tips.	Before	17.74%
	After	96.77%
	Change	5.45
ASF can make people sick.	Before	66.13%
	After	100.00%
	Change	1.51
ASF can be spread through equipment.	Before	32.26%
	After	82.26%
	Change	2.55
ASF can be spread by vehicles that have not been cleaned and disinfected after each use.	Before	17.74%
	After	83.87%
	Change	4.73
ASF can be transmitted by contact with sick pigs.	Before	96.77%
	After	100.00%
	Change	1.03
Proper cleaning and disinfecting your boots and other farm equipment can help to reduce the spread of ASF virus.	Before	77.42%
	After	100.00%
	Change	1.29
Clinical signs of ASF can look like other pig diseases.	Before	6.45%
	After	56.45%
	Change	8.75

People can spread ASF.	Before	17.74%
	After	95.16%
	Change	5.36
Sharing equipment with other farmers is a good biosecurity practice.	Before	8.06%
	After	33.87%
	Change	4.20
ASF can be spread through pig meat products (e.g. sausage, salami, etc.)	Before	12.90%
	After	90.32%
	Change	7.00
Kitchen leftovers (swill feed) can be fed to your pigs without any concerns.	Before	67.74%
	After	69.35%
	Change	1.02
Free roaming pigs are high risk in getting the disease and spreading the disease to other pigs.	Before	25.81%
	After	22.58%
	Change	0.88
Live or hunted wild boars are a risk to introduce ASF in your farm.	Before	24.19%
	After	69.35%
	Change	2.87



CABI Kosovo –improvement in farm biosecurity



- Improved availability of work clothing (boots) (from 79.09 to 100%)
- Improved personal hygiene: handwashing (from 30.65% to 58.06%)
- Improved cleaning, by using soap/detergent (from 3.23 to 93.55 %)
- Improved availability of disinfectant (from 0% to 100%)
- Improved usage of disinfectant (from 0% to 95.16%)
- Reduced number of visitors (mostly redacting neighbor and friends)
- Improved biosecurity when having visitors (96% did nothing before, now 87% request disinfection of shoes)
- Improved visitor's log availability (from 0% to 100%)
- Reduce of visiting vehicles (private vet not to enter farm directly)



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Thank you for your attention!

