

# SOWAH 2026 — Stats at a Glance

EMBARGOED UNTIL 13 MAY 2026, 13:00 CET

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## THE BIG PICTURE

More than **20%** of global animal production is lost to disease every year

Animal diseases continue to reduce livestock productivity globally, with major consequences for food security, trade and farmer incomes.

Source: Sheahan & Barrett (2017), *Ten Striking Facts about Agricultural Input Use in Sub-Saharan Africa*; WOAHA State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAHA Technical Item (2026), *Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services*.

**75%** of emerging infectious diseases in humans originate in animals

Animal health systems are a frontline defence against emerging disease threats and future pandemics.

Source: World Health Organization (WHO); World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH); United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) One Health estimates; WOAHA State of the World's Animal Health 2026.

**1.3 billion** people depend on farmed animals for food and livelihoods

Livestock remains essential to nutrition, income and resilience for communities worldwide.

Source: Salmon et al. (2020), *The Future of Livestock in Food Systems*; WOAHA State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAHA Technical Item (2026), *Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services*.

**18%** of countries assessed show declining veterinary capacity

**22%** show declining paraprofessional capacity

These trends risk weakening disease detection and emergency response capacities.

Source: WOAHA PVS assessments; WOAHA State of the World's Animal Health 2026.

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## THE INVESTMENT GAP

Animal health receives only a small share of global health investment

The global animal health market is estimated at approximately US\$64 billion annually, compared with more than US\$11 trillion in global human health spending — highlighting how little global investment is directed toward animal health.

Source: *Animal Health Market Report 2026*; WHO / World Bank Global Health Expenditure Database; WOAHA State of the World's Animal Health 2026.

Development assistance for health declined to approximately **US\$39.1 billion** in 2025, with animal health receiving **less than 2.5%** of that total

Despite their critical role in prevention and preparedness, Veterinary Services remain chronically underfunded globally.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance

Committee (DAC) analyses; Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) Financing Global Health Database; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.

Global defence spending reached a record **US\$2.9 trillion** in 2025

At the same time, investment in prevention and Veterinary Services remains comparatively limited.  
*Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Military Expenditure Database; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

Approximately **US\$2.3 billion** per year could bring Veterinary Services closer to international standards

This represents a relatively modest investment compared with the economic cost of major disease outbreaks.

*Source: World Bank (2022), People, Pathogens and Our Planet; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAAH Technical Item (2026), Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services.*

Based on WOAAH assessments, an average **52% budget increase** would be required to meet the actual annual cost of effective Veterinary Services

More than half of countries participating in recent PVS activities reported increased financial resources following the process.

*Source: WOAAH PVS Pathway analyses; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAAH Technical Item (2026), Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services.*

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## THE COST OF INACTION

COVID-19 caused **multi-trillion-dollar global economic losses**

The pandemic demonstrated the enormous consequences of delayed detection and insufficient preparedness.

*Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) pandemic economic analyses; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) could cause **39 million human deaths by 2050**

AMR is also projected to generate nearly US\$1 trillion in animal production losses globally.

*Source: Global antimicrobial resistance modelling studies; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026, Eco-AMR*

Foot and mouth disease alone costs farmers up to **US\$21 billion** annually

Major animal diseases continue to generate severe economic losses worldwide.

*Source: Knight-Jones & Rushton (2013), The Economic Impacts of Foot and Mouth Disease; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAAH Technical Item (2026), Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services.*

Six major animal disease outbreaks caused approximately **US\$80 billion in losses** between 2000 and 2012

Preventive investment remains significantly less costly than emergency response.

*Source: World Bank (2012), People, Pathogens and Our Planet; WOAAH State of the World's Animal*

*Health 2026; WOAH Technical Item (2026), Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services.*

African swine fever caused losses exceeding **US\$141 billion in China alone**

The disease also disrupted global trade, feed markets and food systems.

*Source: Li et al. (2019); Frezal et al. (2021); WOAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAH Technical Item (2026), Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services.*

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## **GLOBAL DISEASE SITUATION 2025–2026**

**2,121 avian influenza outbreaks** were reported across 64 countries and territories

More than **140 million poultry** were culled or lost due to avian influenza

**19,034 foot and mouth disease outbreaks** were reported globally

**15,759 African swine fever outbreaks** were reported globally

**37,389 New World screwworm outbreaks** were reported across 18 countries and territories

WOAH monitoring systems show animal diseases are spreading faster and affecting more regions simultaneously. Figures reflect officially reported outbreaks through WOAH's World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) during the 2025–early 2026 reporting period.

*Source: WOAH World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS); WOAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

Lumpy skin disease was recorded for the first time in Western Europe

FMD serotype SAT1 was detected outside its historical range

These events highlight shifting disease patterns linked to globalisation, trade, climate and ecosystem change.

*Source: WOAH epidemiological reporting and WAHIS; WOAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

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## **ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE**

Antimicrobial use in animals increased by **4% globally between 2022 and 2024**

19% of Members still report antimicrobial use for growth promotion

Reducing preventable disease through vaccination, surveillance and stronger Veterinary Services is critical to lowering antimicrobial use responsibly.

*Source: WOAH Antimicrobial Use (AMU) Monitoring Programme; WOAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

## THE RETURNS ON INVESTMENT

Investments in animal health systems can generate returns of up to **86% annually**

Prevention, preparedness and early detection consistently deliver strong economic returns.  
*Source: World Bank (2012), People, Pathogens and Our Planet; Jonas (2019), Pandemic Risk, Resilience and Response; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026; WOAAH Technical Item (2026), Investing in Animal Health to Secure Everyone's Future: A Financing Framework for Veterinary Services.*

Norway reduced antimicrobial use in salmon farming **by 99% through vaccination**

*Source: Norwegian aquaculture antimicrobial stewardship programmes; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

Georgia reduced rabies cases by **more than 60% through sustained mass vaccination**

*Source: WOAAH / WHO rabies programme evaluations; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

The UK contained its 2007 FMD outbreak in 58 days at a fraction of the cost of the 2001 crisis

Strong Veterinary Services produce measurable economic and public health benefits.  
*Source: UK Government outbreak analyses; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*

## NUMBER OF MEMBERS, PVS EVALUATIONS, PROGRAMMES, ANIMUSE PARTICIPATION

183 Members

140 Members supported through PVS evaluations since 2006

99 Members supported through PVS Targeted Support programmes

148 Members participated in WOAAH's latest antimicrobial use data collection

*Source: WOAAH data; WOAAH State of the World's Animal Health 2026.*