




WSAVA
FOUNDATION

Improving
Animal Care
Through Science
And Education



Project funded by: 

WSAVA Foundation Launches 'African Small Companion Animal Network'

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Foundation, which funds improvements in the veterinary care of companion animals worldwide through science and education, has unveiled a ground-breaking scheme to advance standards of veterinary care across Africa.

The African Small Companion Animal Network (AFSCAN) aims to facilitate the creation of a sustainable network of companion animal veterinarians, associations and specialist groups in Sub-Saharan Africa in order that they go on to form new small animal veterinary associations (SAVAs) across the continent. It is the creation of these veterinary associations leading, as they do, to enhancements in collaboration, training and best practice sharing, which have proved pivotal in driving enhancements in overall standards of veterinary care in other regions of the world, notably Eastern Europe.

The AFSCAN project, the first phase of which runs from April 2014 until April 2016, has been developed by the WSAVA Foundation with the backing of the global animal health company Zoetis and a Consortium of other supporters. It aims to achieve its goal through initiating activities in key areas, including:

- Offering grant funding for specific veterinary projects and establishing links between African veterinary researchers and those in institutions in American or European countries.
- Increasing support for and coordination of rabies control projects and setting up new projects
- The expansion of training and CE programmes for veterinarians and other veterinary professionals
- The support of surveillance systems to monitor infectious and parasitic diseases in companion animals
- The quest for new funding opportunities and co-operation with current and future Consortium members

"Africa is the world's second largest continent and contains some of the world's fastest growing countries," said Dr Gabriel Varga, President of the WSAVA Foundation and Director of Business Operations for Zoetis North Europe region. "Unfortunately, it is also plagued by many of its most dangerous diseases and, while small animal veterinarians work hard, their numbers are few, they are geographically isolated and often held back by a lack of training and support.

"Through AFSCAN we aim to harness global support to build a networked community of individuals and institutions across Africa which can give immediate help in tackling zoonotic, infectious and parasitic diseases in a more coordinated way. Longer term, it will help to create the sustainable infrastructure which is so important in supporting small animal veterinarians across the continent and driving up standards of veterinary care. We have a range of projects planned for the next two years in areas including rabies reduction, education, and health and welfare and will announce a more detailed project plan shortly.

"The challenges in Africa are great but, with AFSCAN, we have a real opportunity to help advance the veterinary profession across the continent and, in so doing, improve the lives of millions of animals and humans," said Professor Michael Day, Vice President of the Foundation and current President of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA). "We're grateful to the organisations that are already supporting AFSCAN and to Zoetis, which as a founding sponsor, has provided significant resources through its commercial and strategic alliance colleagues in ensuring the success of this initiative."

The [World Small Animal Veterinary Association \(WSAVA\)](#) is an umbrella organisation representing 145,000 veterinarians globally through 91 member associations. The [WSAVA Foundation](#) was founded in 2009 with the aim of acquiring funds for activities that can be delivered by clinical and laboratory specialists for the benefit of veterinarians globally.

Notes to editors:

AFSCAN Consortium supporters are:

- Zoetis, a global animal health company
- Circa Healthcare - a health care communications specialist
- The OIE - World Organisation for Animal Health
- The North American Veterinary Community (NAVCA) and Vetstream, a leading supplier of digital resources to the veterinary profession
- The Morris Animal Foundation, a foundation dedicated to funding research studies to protect, treat and cure animals
- Worldwide Veterinary Service, a veterinary charity which supports animal charities and non-profit organisations all over the world
- The University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Kosice, Slovakia
- The WSAVA