



PROJECT BRIEF:

SURGE+MET:

Strengthening Livelihoods Through Animal Health & Veterinary Services in South Sudan

July 2021 - December 2024



LOCATION:

- Jonglei State (Kassingor and Jebel Boma)
- Warrap State (Tonj South and Tonj North)
- Northern Bahr el Ghazal (Aweil East County)

OBJECTIVES:

- Strengthen capacity of livestock herders to improve animal health and safeguard food security.
- Build synergy in delivering support through SURGE+ emergency response deployments.

TARGET GROUPS:

- Pastoralist and agro-pastoralist households
- Livestock-dependent communities

FUNDING PARTNERS:

- USAID
- Action Against Hunger (ACF)

BACKGROUND:

Agro-pastoralism has long been a cornerstone of livelihoods in South Sudan, with livestock serving as both a financial asset and a key source of nutrition. However, ongoing challenges—including disease outbreaks, limited access to veterinary services, and displacement due to conflict—have weakened the resilience of livestock-dependent communities. For many households, livestock losses translate directly into food insecurity, economic instability, and worsening malnutrition, particularly among children and pregnant or lactating women.

South Sudan is home to an estimated 12 million cattle, 20 million sheep, and 25 million goats, making it one of the world's most livestock-rich nations per capita. Despite this, pastoralist communities struggle to protect their herds from preventable diseases, as animal health services remain scarce in many rural areas. Outbreaks of livestock diseases can lead to rapid herd depletion, exacerbating poverty and increasing tensions over dwindling resources.

Recognizing these challenges, Veterinarians Without Borders (VWB) worked alongside humanitarian partners to strengthen veterinary services, safeguard livestock assets, and promote peaceful cooperation among pastoralist groups.

The SURGE+MET project provided critical animal health services to protect livelihoods, improve food security, and build community resilience in some of South Sudan's most vulnerable regions.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

From July 2021 to December 2024, VWB implemented the livestock component of the SURGE+MET project, a multi-sectoral emergency response funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) and led by Action Against Hunger (ACF). The project aimed to reduce malnutrition-related morbidity and mortality in vulnerable communities by addressing key drivers of food insecurity.

Within this broader framework, VWB focused on safeguarding and restoring livestock herds while fostering peaceful cooperation among pastoralist groups. By reducing livestock mortality and increasing access to veterinary care, the project helped stabilize communities that depended on healthy herds for survival. It also promoted peaceful coexistence among cattle keepers through structured dialogue sessions in cattle camps.

The project began with a pre-response assessment, collecting data to tailor interventions based on community needs. Livestock disease surveillance strengthened early detection and response mechanisms, while cattle camp dialogues facilitated peaceful cooperation among herders. To enhance veterinary services, the project provided refresher training for Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) and delivered treatment and vaccination services to protect livestock from preventable diseases.

Additionally, community awareness campaigns educated communities on zoonotic diseases and disease symptoms, and water source management awareness promoted sustainable water use for livestock health.

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Key Achievements:

Trained and equipped 200 Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) to deliver animal health and veterinary services.

Vaccinated 106,486 livestock across Jonglei, Warrap, and Northern Bahr el Ghazal states.

Provided veterinary services to 5,916 households, protecting livelihoods and food security.

Trained 40 community members on participatory disease surveillance, improving local detection and response.

Conducted 392 community dialogues in cattle camps to strengthen social cohesion and promote peaceful coexistence among herders.

For more information about our work in South Sudan or to support similar initiatives, visit www.vwb.org.