

TOP 10 FACTS

ABOUT **ONE HEALTH**
IN AFRICA



FACT 1

One Health recognizes that human, animal, and ecosystems health are inseparably linked.

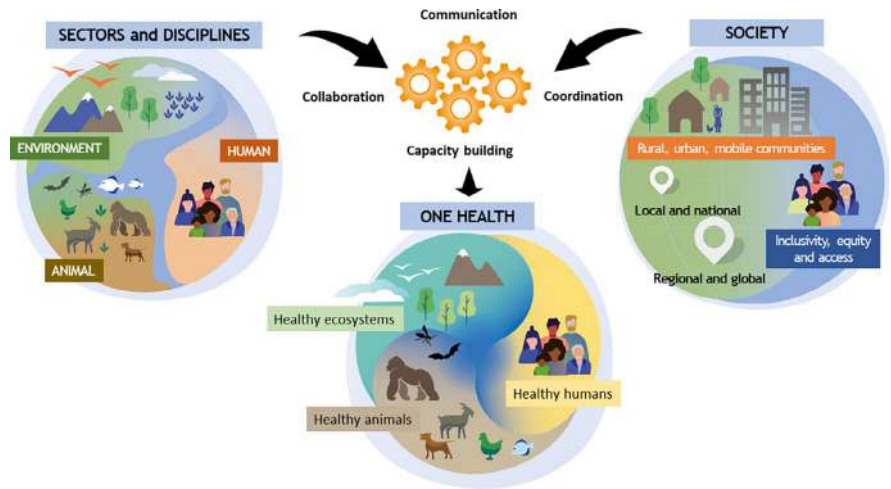


Image: Mettenleiter et al., 2023
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s42522-023-00085-2>

- Over 60% of emerging infectious diseases in humans originate from animals, often at the human-animal-environment interface.
- Environmental change (land use, biodiversity loss, climate variability) alters disease dynamics across species.
- Integrated approaches outperform sector-specific responses for complex health challenges.

FACT 2

One Health is a proactive, preventive, and systems-based approach to safeguarding health.



- Early risk identification at animal and environmental interfaces enables timely action before human outbreaks occur.
- Integrated surveillance strengthens anticipation and coordinated management of zoonoses and antimicrobial resistance.
- Strategic prevention investments generate substantial public health and economic returns.

FACT 3

Africa plays a pivotal role in addressing zoonotic disease risks at the human-animal-environment interface.



- Rich biodiversity and dynamic human-livestock-wildlife interactions require strengthened surveillance and risk management.
- Recurrent zoonoses such as Ebola, Rift Valley fever, Lassa fever, and anthrax highlight the importance of sustained preparedness.
- Climate-informed approaches improve anticipation of shifting vector ranges and transmission patterns.

FACT 4

One Health is critical for Africa's food security and livelihoods.



- Livestock diseases directly affect income, nutrition, and resilience of smallholder households.
- Animal health, crop health, and ecosystem services are interdependent in agri-food systems.
- One Health strengthens sustainable intensification and climate-smart agriculture.

FACT 5

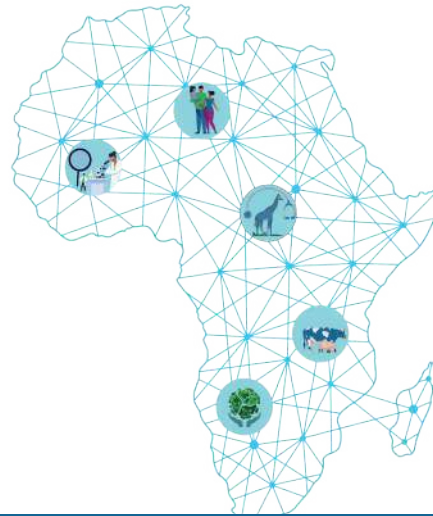
Several African countries have institutionalized One Health governance.



- Countries across Eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia), Western Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Benin, Senegal, Nigeria, Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone), Northern Africa (Egypt), Central Africa (Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo), and Southern Africa (Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa) have established national One Health platforms.
- These platforms convene relevant ministries and agencies responsible for human, animal, and environmental health to ensure coordinated action.
- Institutionalization improves preparedness, data sharing, and policy coherence.

FACT 6

Africa is advancing regional One Health coordination.



- Initiatives such as the Capacitating One Health in Eastern and Southern Africa (COHESA) project, alongside programs by Africa CDC, AU-IBAR, and UNEP frameworks, strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration.
- Regional surveillance and data-sharing mechanisms address transboundary health threats through harmonized systems.
- One Health integration aligns with African Union Agenda 2063 and strengthens regional preparedness and response.

FACT 7

**One Health
strengthens
pandemic
preparedness and
health security in
Africa.**



- Integrated surveillance accelerates detection of zoonotic and antimicrobial resistance threats.
- Cross-sectoral coordination reduces response fragmentation during disease outbreaks.
- One Health supports implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR).

FACT 8

Environmental stewardship is a foundational pillar of One Health in Africa.



- Healthy ecosystems reduce disease risks and safeguard water and food systems.
- Environmental monitoring strengthens early warning for vector- and water-borne diseases.
- Ecosystem protection delivers co-benefits for health, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

FACT 9

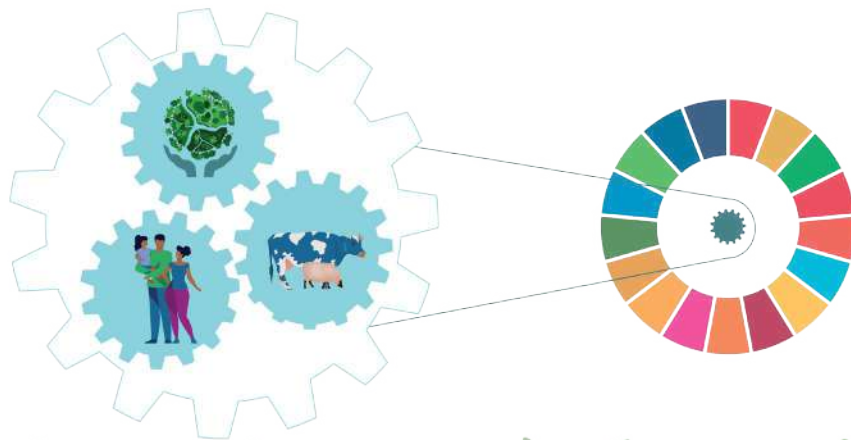
**One Health
promotes
equitable,
community-
centered solutions.**



- Local and Indigenous knowledge improves relevance and uptake of health interventions.
- Community engagement builds trust across human, animal, and environmental sectors.
- Gender-responsive One Health approaches enhance effectiveness and sustainability.

FACT 10

**One Health
accelerates Africa's
sustainable
development
trajectory.**



- One Health contributes directly to SDGs on health, food security, climate action, and ecosystems.
- Integrated governance reduces duplication and maximizes limited public resources.
- Investing in One Health yields long-term social, economic, and environmental returns.



Citation: Godfrey M. Ngure, Margaret Karembu (2026). Top Ten Facts about One Health in Africa. International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) AfriCenter, Nairobi, Kenya