

VETERINARIANS WITHOUT BORDERS

Member of VSF International



VÉTÉRINAIRES SANS FRONTIÈRES

Membre de VSF international



# Program Report 2017-2018

**Canadian Volunteers Making a Difference**

## A message from the Board Chair

With each passing year, we see VWB/VSF maturing into a more effective and resilient organization, better able to capitalize on opportunities and to deal with the inevitable challenges that occur in the process of creating positive changes under difficult circumstances.

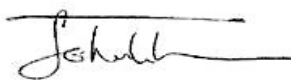
This year the board was very pleased with the progress of our flagship volunteer program, Volunteers for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities (V4H2). Not only are we exceeding our recruitment targets, but our volunteers have done excellent work, improving the productivity and lives of small scale animal owners around the world using socially progressive and environmentally sustainable methods. We are grateful for the ongoing support from Global Affairs Canada.

The end of our program in South Sudan led to a reduction in unrestricted funds which forced some adjustments in terms of staff numbers and office location. I am pleased to say that the necessary changes were made efficiently and without any disruption of programming. South Sudan is easily the most difficult environment that VWB/VSF has ever worked in. During our time there, we have dealt with active conflict and an ongoing humanitarian crisis, yet there is no doubt that our work there saved many lives of both people and animals.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Executive Director Chris Braeuel, who has left the organization and has found employment elsewhere. We thank him for his service during the two years that he led the organization. For now, the board has decided not to fill the position and has redistributed his responsibilities among the remaining staff. Thank you to our hard-working staff for cheerfully accepting these additional responsibilities.

The workshop we convened at the CVMA convention in Charlottetown in 2017 qualifies as one of the highlights of the last year. We brought together people who are engaged in improving the health of dog populations in remote northern Canadian communities, including community leaders as well as organizations and individuals who work or volunteer in those communities. The workshop resulted in a series of recommendations that put us on the road to creating more effective and coordinated animal health programming in the north. We offer a big thank you to PetSmart Charities and CVMA for their support for this event.

There is no doubt that VWB/VSF has become the “go-to” organization in Canada for international development involving veterinary practitioners, with a growing reputation for northern Canadian veterinary efforts as well. With a strong team, there is much reason for optimism in the future.



John VanLeeuwen  
VWB/VSF Board Chair



*Dr. John VanLeeuwen volunteering in Kenya.*

## Better lives for women and girls

Last June the Canadian Government took Canada's international development program in a bold new direction with the release of the Feminist International Assistance Policy. Focused support for education and economic opportunities for women and girls has been a part of Canada's development approach for many years, but this policy makes it the central priority in Canadian-funded development work.



*VWB/VSF helped Kakazi Vangi get started raising goats and continues to support her with education and veterinary services. Here, she has a good laugh at the antics of a team of VWB/VSF young volunteers.*

According to a government news release, “Canada believes that advancing gender equality and promoting equal rights for women and girls is the most effective way to reduce poverty. This vision is the key to growth that benefits everyone, and it will also help us achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Canada has a long-standing commitment to helping the poorest and most vulnerable, particularly women and girls around the world.”

Much of the work Veterinarians without Borders/Vétérinaires sans frontières has done in recent years fits easily within the new policy. More than two thirds of livestock keepers in the developing world are women. Small livestock—poultry, goats, sheep, and pigs—are among the few assets that poor rural women own, and the food and income from those animals is crucial to their own wellbeing and that of their children. In every country where we work, VWB/VSF focuses specific efforts on the needs of women and girls. We have provided women with their start as livestock keepers, providing training and stock – generally goats or chickens. We also recognize that many rural women have specific expertise when it comes to animal health, and VWB/VSF has made a specific effort to train women as community animal health workers. We have also supported the development of value chains, supporting women involved in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, and will focus more support on women and girls moving forward.

## Volunteers for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities (V4H2)

After three years of operation, VWB/VSF's flagship volunteer program has hit its stride. Sixty-nine volunteers have been recruited and deployed, exceeding the target of 61 for this stage of the program. Those volunteers have provided a range of hands-on animal health services, but more importantly, they have improved the knowledge and capacity of 12,417 smallholder farmers through training on a wide range of topics including biosecurity, disease treatment and management, animal feed and nutrition, artificial insemination, dairy production and animal health, artificial insemination, and food safety.

The capacity-building extends to VWB/VSF's partners who have received training and mentorship in monitoring and evaluation, epidemiology research and evaluation, animal husbandry, and animal health. Livestock are of particular importance to women and this program has taken steps to ensure that women benefit from the work of volunteers. Not only are women specifically included in training activities, volunteers include gender specialists who work with partners to help them ensure that their services and support are available and accessible to women.

V4H2 is active in six countries – Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Vietnam, and Laos. Two years remain in the program.

## Young Volunteers Program

2017 was another banner year for VWB/VSF's Young Volunteers Program. Over the summer 10 veterinary students and one Registered Veterinary Technician, who is currently an agriculture student, worked in Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda providing animal health services to smallholder farmers through VSB/VSF partner organizations.

The Young Volunteers Program is a fully integrated component of the Volunteers for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities (V4H2) program.

*Top Left: Nicole Sheedy (right) with Vivian Namale. Bottom Left: Olivia Bos Group: Hollyn Maloney, Alina Gardiner, Cheyene Nadbrzezna, Megan White, Cassia Michele, Kelly Hammond, Nicole Sheedy, Michelle Mak, Olivia Bos, Natalie Chow, Angie Castro*



## Dr. Laura-Anne Kutryck – Volunteer of the Year

It is an almost impossible job to select one volunteer for this award. VWB/VSF is blessed with an abundance of hardworking and talented volunteers. What set Dr. Laura-Anne Kutryck apart was her commitment to international volunteer work. Laura-Anne left a full-time veterinary job in Canada in order to use her skills to help livestock producers in the developing world. She started the year with a three week placement in Kenya and followed that up with a four month assignment in Uganda. In both cases her focus was on improving the health and productivity of dairy cattle. Since then she has completed a third assignment in Latin America with an organization that is affiliated with Veterinarians without Borders/ Vétérinaires sans frontières.



*Dr. Kutryck in Uganda treating a cow with East Coast fever.*

## Meet our volunteers

For a first-hand perspective on volunteering with VWB/VSF visit our video library. at <https://www.vetswithoutborders.ca/library/video-library>. We are regularly adding new profiles including Anne Drew (right), Laura-Anne Kutryck (above) and last year's volunteer of the year, Joseph Ansong-Danquah.



### Volunteer with VWB/VSF

Whether it is a new challenge at retirement, a mid-career break, a last adventure between graduation and settling in at a job, or a challenging summer during university, a volunteer assignment with VWB/VSF may be just what you need. To see if your skills line up with a current opportunity go to <https://www.vetswithoutborders.ca/volunteer>. For more information contact Allyson at [613.857.0521](tel:613.857.0521) or e-mail her at [Allyson@vetswithoutborders.ca](mailto:Allyson@vetswithoutborders.ca).

## Caring for dogs and supporting communities in Canada's North

VWB/VSF has supported animal care in the Canadian North for many years. In 2017 VWB/VSF partnered with four Canadian veterinary schools that combine the efforts of veterinary students, volunteer veterinarians, volunteer veterinary technicians, and support volunteers to deliver animal care services including spay and neuter surgeries, de-worming, and vaccinations. These programs also focus on community education, teaching children how to avoid dog bites and dog owners basic canine first aid. Local volunteers are also welcome to gain some hands-on animal care experience.



*Chinook Project, 2017*

### **University of Calgary Veterinary School (U of C)**

U of C has partnered with communities in the Sahtu region of the Northwest Territories for 12 years. As of this year 81 per cent of female dogs have been spayed. In February of 2018 the team vaccinated and de-wormed 276 dogs and 43 cats, spayed 22 dogs and 9 cats and neutered 14 dogs and 8 cats.

### **Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM), University of Saskatchewan**

WCVM has chosen to focus their efforts on the Lac La Ronge area of northern Saskatchewan. They host two clinics each year – spring and early fall – involving approximately 60 students and professional volunteers each time. In 2017 the teams performed 163 surgeries. Those animals, plus 156 others also received necessary vaccines, deworming treatments, and wellness exams.

### **Université de Montréal (U de M)**

The efforts of the U de M veterinary school have been focused in Nunavik (northern Quebec), primarily around the community of Kuujuack, working to reduce overpopulation, dog bites, and rabies exposure while improving the health of dogs and the interactions between dogs and humans. With VWB /VSF support a graduate student is working with school and health authorities to develop a program to reduce risky behaviours among Inuit children in their interactions with dogs.

### **Atlantic Veterinary School, University of Prince Edward Island -- Chinook Project**

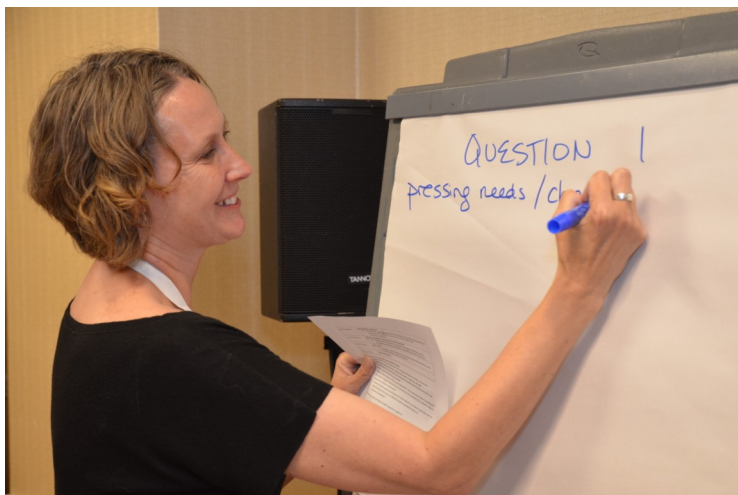
Over 12 years the Chinook Project has worked in 12 different communities – five in Nunavut and seven in Labrador. More than 1800 animals have been treated and 863 surgeries performed. The program focused its efforts on the community of Igloolik, Nunavut in the summer of 2017. In 2018 and for the next several years the program will work exclusively on Labrador in an effort to improve data tracking and sustainability.

## Workshop builds consensus around northern program

Participants at a workshop held in conjunction with CVMA's 2017 conference in Charlottetown, PEI concluded that VWB-VSF Canada is well-positioned to take the lead in coordinating sustainable solutions to building veterinary capacity and service provision in Canada's north.

The workshop reached consensus on a number of key points including the fact that building solid relationships with underserved communities is key to the success of initiatives in the north. Respectful, on-going consultations are

essential. Every community has its own unique needs and cultural context that must be taken into consideration. At the same time the group, which included representatives from underserved communities, Canadian veterinary schools and non-profit organizations, public health and veterinary officials from various levels of government, as well as interested veterinarians, stressed the need for unified guidelines and codes of practice for everyone engaged in this work. Another point of agreement was that people volunteering for animal care assignments in indigenous communities need to understand the historical and cultural realities of those communities. Workable solutions and realistic expectations can only occur in an environment of true cultural respect. This workshop was made possible through the generous support of PetSmart Charities of Canada and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association.



*Workshop Facilitator Trace MacKay.*

## Stepping up to support VWB/VSF's work

During 2017-2018 we have seen some creative and effective efforts to raise money in support of VWB/VSF's International and Northern programs. An arrangement with Paint Nite — a company that hosts fun art and cocktails events— provided VWB/VSF with a portion of every ticket sold when a specific code was used. A sold-out trivia night was held at an Ottawa and in Calgary a petting farm opened for a day, prior to its regular season, in support of VWB/VSF and a VWB/VSF volunteer heading out on assignment. All volunteers contribute a portion of their costs, making them important contributors of money as well as time. Once again, we saw revenues increase from our fall campaign and online auction. Help us out by making sure you are subscribed to our e-mail list (<https://www.vetswithoutborders.ca/contact-us>) and are following us on facebook, Instagram and Twitter (see back page). Please share our messages and posts, and encourage your family, friends, and colleagues to support us as well. We are so grateful for the generous people who keep our work moving forward. Thank you all for your support.



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## Financial Statements

Audited financial statements will be available at <https://www.vetswithoutborders.ca/who-we-are/financials-program-reports> after mid June.

## Thank You

Veterinarians without Borders/Vétérinaires sans frontières Canada is grateful for all of the individuals and organizations that support our work including those below.



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Front Cover — Volunteer of the Year, Dr. Laura-Anne Kutryck photographed during her assignment in Uganda.

**Veterinarians without Borders/Vétérinaires sans frontières Canada**

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