



Annual Report

2023



BONS AMIGOS ASSOCIATION



INDEX

INTRODUCTION.....	3
OUR TEAM.....	4
OUR VISION.....	6
OUR MISSION.....	6
OUR WORK.....	6
1. Brava Island, Cape Verde	8
2. Fogo Island, Cape Verde	11
3. São Nicolau Island, Cape Verde	14
4. Boa Vista Island, Cape Verde	19
5. Flores Island, Azores, Portugal.....	19
CAPACITY BUILDING.....	23
REASERCH AND DISEASE SURVEILLANCE	23
FINANTIAL REPORT	26
CONCLUSIONS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.....	27
PARTNERS AND FUNDERS	28



INTRODUCTION

Bons Amigos Internacional is a non-governmental, non-profit organization registered in Austria (ZVR: 387764682). The association was founded in the year 2000 by a group of veterinarians and Austrian volunteers who participated in the first sterilization campaign organized in Cape Verde. Between 2000 and 2022, the international organization worked in close cooperation with the Bons Amigos Association in Cape Verde (founded in 2005), organizing and implementing all activities together, with the aim of contributing to the improvement of animal health and public health, improving environmental conditions, and animal welfare in Cape Verde.

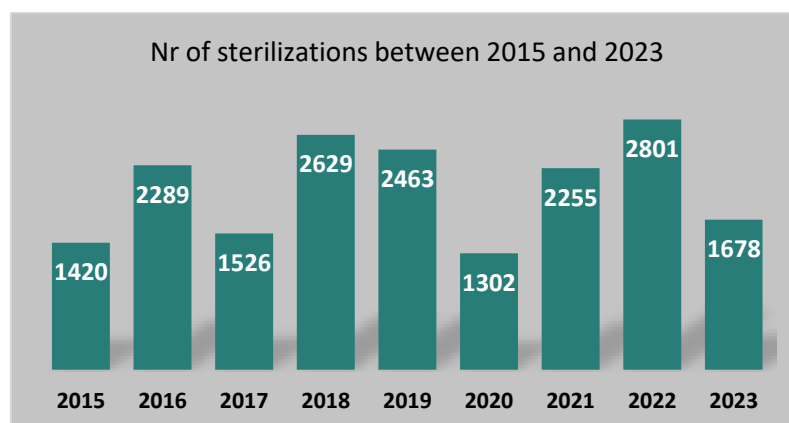
Given the differing work visions, the desire to diversify areas of intervention, and the need to respond to new challenges, it was decided that the two organizations would start working independently from the beginning of 2023. This would give both organizations the opportunity to develop projects tailored to their orientation and areas of focus.

And so it was, 2023 was a year of change for the Bons Amigos Association based in Austria. We developed and implemented a new work strategy that not only allowed us to respond to projects that had already been initiated but also to other projects that were pending due to limited capacity. Our condition was the collaboration with responsible local entities and the commitment to continuous, long-term interventions. In addition, we initiated a process of changing our name and logotype, to better reflect our new identity.

The foundation of our work remains unchanged. We embrace the concept of "One Health," believing that animal and human health and well-being are interconnected, emphasizing continuous intervention and an integrated approach for effective management of dog and cat populations. Our working method follows the dog population management guidelines developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), and the International Companion Animal Management Coalition (ICAM), and is subsequently adapted to the reality of each location where we work.

The work is 100% funded by donations from private individuals, local and international companies, and foundations. Donations are monetary, material, or services.

Since its foundation, Bons Amigos based in Austria has participated in the sterilization of more than 21,000 animals and the deworming of more than 67,000 animals.



Graph 1 - Descriptive diagram of the number of sterilizations performed over the last nine years by the Bons Amigos Association (data prior to 2015 is not available).



OUR TEAM

Our team is composed of a group of veterinarians from Austria, Portugal, and Germany, who remotely organize projects on the islands, directly coordinating with the municipalities, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, and other local partners. The team then travels to the location on missions to implement the previously organized projects and to address the gap caused by the shortage of veterinarians and other professionals in the field of animal health and welfare in the country.

During the year 2023, a group of nine veterinarians and volunteers travelled to Cape Verde and the Azores to participate in the missions, some on more than one occasion. Additionally, we also had the participation of veterinary technicians and volunteers from Cape Verde during the missions.



“Ao envolver-me ativamente, sinto que contribui para o bem-estar dos animais, mas também ajudei a construir uma comunidade mais consciente e responsável. Sem dúvida, um momento único e construtivo para o meu crescimento pessoal. O meu muito obrigada!”

São Nicolau, Outubro 2023 - Cristina Monteiro, Açores, Portugal

“Foi a minha primeira experiência deste género. Esperei e desejei muito tempo conseguir fazê-lo. Vim de lá com o coração cheio, com muitos amigos, muitas experiências e muitas coisas novas para colocar na minha prática clínica veterinária diária. Além de encantada com as paisagens de Cabo Verde!”

São Nicolau, Outubro 2023 - Filipa Valente, Ansião, Portugal



“O calor intenso e os imprevistos intrínsecos a estes projetos, são facilmente esquecidos pelo sentimento de contribuição que trazemos para casa, e pela oportunidade única de explorarmos as particularidades da ilha e de conhecermos e estabelecermos novas amizades, que tornam esta experiência ainda mais significativa e valiosa.”

São Nicolau, Outubro 2023 - Rita Jorge, Lisboa, Portugal



“Para mim foi muito gratificante e enriquecedor trabalhar com a associação Bons Amigos Internacional na campanha realizada em Tarrafal-São Nicolau. Em termos profissionais, gostei da organização, da distribuição das tarefas, do material disponível para a realização das capturas, dos protocolos utilizados e principalmente da forma humana como os animais eram tratados desde a chegada no local da campanha como no decorrer de todo o processo até serem entregues novamente aos tutores. A equipa era fenomenal, todos com um ótimo espírito proporcionando um ótimo ambiente. Também fomos muito bem recebidos e muito bem tratados. Já tinha ido a São Nicolau mas dessa vez posso dizer que foi muito mais marcante. Trabalhar em algo que nos dá prazer, conhecer e fazer novas amizades, conhecer novos lugares, apreciar uma boa comida, enfim foi uma experiência incrível.”



São Nicolau, Outubro 2023 - Danielson Aldevino, Ponta do Sol, Santo Antão, Cabo Verde



“Conheci grandes veterinárias que gostam de partilhar os seus conhecimentos, e com isso aprendi muitas coisas novas. Também foi um grande trabalho em equipe, cada um se esforçava para dar o seu melhor. Foram duas semanas intensivas e cansativas, porém no final do dia todos estavam satisfeitos e contentes. A ilha tinha pessoas acolhedoras que nos trataram super bem, gostei imenso dessa experiência foi muito bom ter trabalhado com a Associação Bons Amigos internacional e todos os que estavam a apoiar a campanha.”

São Nicolau, Outubro 2023 - Marisia Lopes, Ponta do Sol, Santo Antão, Cabo Verde



OUR VISION

We envision communities where animals and human beings can live healthy and in harmony with each other and the environment.

OUR MISSION

To provide veterinary care for street dogs and cats, raise awareness and support communities to responsibly care for their animals.

OUR WORK

We are present where we are most needed, where we can provide support through sharing our knowledge acquired over several years of experience, and/or where there is a lack of specialized human resources in the field of animal health and/or welfare. In collaboration with local entities, we develop ongoing and integrated programs for managing the population of stray dogs and cats.

The pillars of our work are:

- ❖ Animal welfare
- ❖ Good veterinary practice
- ❖ One Health approach
- ❖ Community Engagement
- ❖ Capacity Building
- ❖ Evidence based work
- ❖ Collaboration

Our specific objectives in each program we participate in are:

- To improve animal and public health and welfare.
- To reduce the turnover of the population and maintain a stable and healthy stray animal population.
- To ensure that veterinary work is carried out to the highest standards of excellence and reaches as many animals as possible, especially in the most remote areas.
- To increase/improve knowledge regarding the occurrence/prevalence and transmission of diseases, and to prevent, monitor, and treat zoonoses and other diseases.
- To reduce conflicts and issues that may arise from overpopulation of dogs and cats (social, economic, environmental).
- To listen to and observe the problems, and use capacity building, education, and communication to engage the local community and provide them with tools to improve the health of their animals and community animals.



- To address the root causes of problems, recognizing that people, their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors are central to achieving changes in animal welfare and health.
- To create changes in human behavior towards animals, starting at the individual level.
- To work with key groups to ensure that animal welfare and health are considered in local, regional, and national decisions and that programs align with the needs of each community.

In the locations where we work, there are no veterinary clinics, so we set up and dismantle mobile clinics. On the scheduled date, we organize all the necessary materials, which are stored in a warehouse in Praia, and depart by boat or plane for our projects. During the missions, we carry out various activities to achieve the outlined objectives:

- (1) Mobile Sterilization Campaigns** – We travel from community to community with our team, materials, and equipment, setting up a mobile clinics for the days or weeks needed, depending on number of animals. This approach allows us to reach more people and reduce the number of unwanted litters.
- (2) Deworming Campaigns** – During these campaigns, we deworm all animals and also provide door-to-door deworming for animals that have already been sterilized.
- (3) Health Check-ups and Other Medical and Surgical Treatments** – During the campaigns, we perform health check-ups and deworming for all animals. Additionally, we provide other treatments that may be necessary.
- (4) Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)** – When animals do not come to us, we go and retrieve them, helping to maintain a stable and healthy street population and reducing turnover among stray populations.
- (5) Identification and Registration of Owned Animals** – We use microchipping (in some locations) to identify and register owned animals and mark stray animals with an ear notch.
- (6) Collection of Biological Samples** – We collect biological samples for disease research.
- (7) Biannual stray animal surveys** – We conduct surveys to monitor long-term changes in the stray animal population (e.g., abundance, density, health status, % sterilization, etc).
- (8) On-the-Job Training and Organization of Specific Training Activities** – We provide hands-on training and organize specific training sessions.
- (9) Awareness Campaigns** – We conduct awareness activities in schools, universities, community centers, cultural organizations, and/or for the general public.
- (10) Organizing Events with Official Entities** – We organize events to share the results and recommendations and to discuss future needs with.
- (11) Meetings with livestock producers and conservation organizations** – We hold meetings to assess the situation regarding attacks by dogs and cats on production animals and wildlife, respectively, and discuss potential solutions.

During the year 2023, we participated in five missions in Cape Verde and two in the Azores, Portugal. We continued the projects we had previously started on Brava Island and Fogo Island. We also initiated a new project on São Nicolau Island, where we had been requested for support several times. Additionally, we provided support to the organization Nerina on Boa Vista Island. For the first time, we engaged in a project in Portugal, in the Azores, with our long-time partners, the Veterinários Sem Fronteiras – Portugal Association.

1. Brava Island, Cape Verde

Bava, an island and municipality located in the *sotavento* region of Cape Verde (14° 49' N and 14° 54' N, 24° 40' W and 24° 44' W), is the smallest of the inhabited islands, with an area of 67 km² and an estimated population of 5,000 inhabitants. It is an isolated island with no airport and few connections to the other islands, which contributes to a high level of emigration among its population, often leaving animals abandoned. It is also worth noting that there is no veterinarian on the island.

Since 2016, Bons Amigos Association has been managing a dog and cat population control program on the island, in cooperation with the City Council, the Delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Brava Island, and more recently with the non-governmental organization for conservation, BiFlores.

1.1 Activities 2023

From July 9th to 12th 2023, our team, consisting of 4 members, was on Brava Island participating in the 7th sterilization campaign held on the island (see figure 1).



Figure 1 – Bons Amigos Internacional team: Valentina Schuster, Alice Matos, Jersley Fortes and Lara Baptista (on the left). On the right side, Luis Semedo and Adilson Martins from the Brava City Council and José Furtado from the MAA Delegation of Brava.

- A total of 180 patients with owners or captured were observed (see Figures 2 to 5).
- 15 patients were picked up from their home, and 18 patients were captured on the streets.
- 90 patients were sterilized.
- Medical treatments and other necessary surgeries were performed.
- 180 patients were dewormed.
- Samples were collected for studies on vectors and vector-borne diseases in 11 patients.
- All sterilized animals were identified with a tattoo and/or an ear notch.
- A collar was provided to all sterilized animals present at the campaign.
- Awareness and door-to-door deworming were conducted for animals that did not appear at the campaign.



Figure 2 and 3 – Fajã is one of the most well-known dogs on Brava. She lives in Nova Sintra, is cared for by many people, and accompanies hikers on their walks around the island. The photograph on the left is from after she had a litter in 2019, when she was out searching for food. She was finally sterilized in October 2021. Since then, she is very happy to see us and always shows up whenever we are on a campaign in Nova Sintra to receive her parasite treatments and plenty of affection. The photograph on the right was taken in October 2022, during one of her visits.



Figure 4 - Tripod (standing) underwent an amputation of the left front limb in October 2019, after arriving at the campaign with an open fracture. Since then, it has been a joy to see her whenever we visit Brava. She lives in Nova Sintra, is cared for by several people, and has an inseparable friend (on the wall).



Figure 5 - Strelinha was sterilized in October 2022 but experienced a complication a few days after the surgery. She managed to open the sutures! After stabilization and medication, we performed an emergency procedure to thoroughly clean all the tissues and close the sutures properly. In July 2023, when we returned to the island, it was so wonderful to see her in good health and happy in her home in Fajã D'água.

1.2 General Activities (2016-2023)

- So far, **7 sterilization and deworming campaigns** have been carried out on Brava Island, totalling 1,304 animals sterilized on the island (see Table 1).
- The campaigns have been organized in **different locations** over the years, according to detected needs and logistical possibilities (see Table 2).
- Since 2021, **awareness activities** in schools focusing on animal welfare, basic animal care, and public health have been conducted. To date, we have reached over 300 children.
- In 2022, we conducted a **door-to-door survey** estimating that the abundance of owned dogs on Brava Island is 1,007 dogs, with a dog-to-human ratio of 1:5.



- In 2022, we held a **training course on "stray dogs and cats capture"**, led by trainer Brian Faulkner, with 17 trainees from 3 islands (Brava, Fogo, and Santiago). The in-person training lasted 5 days and included both theoretical and practical components. The objective was to introduce trainees to teamwork, trapping strategies, animal behavior assessment, trapping equipment, and operator and animal safety.
- The canine and feline populations on the island show good overall health, good body condition, and low levels of parasitism. Few animals are observed on public roads, and most of the animals observed are already sterilized. **This is the result of 7 years of work.**

Table 1 - Details of the species and sex of animals sterilized between 2016 and 2023

Date	Nr of days in campaign	Sterilizations				TOTAL
		Canines		Felines		
		Female	Male	Female	Male	
March 2016	4	73	63	14	8	158
December 2016	4	64	51	14	7	136
November 2017	5	61	69	8	4	142
September 2019	4	78	66	24	7	175
October 2021	8	90	76	41	23	230
October 2022	14	106	122	74	71	373
July 2023	4	16	29	22	23	90
TOTAL	43	482	472	197	142	1304

Table 2 – Details of the areas where the sterilization campaign was conducted each year and the number of animals sterilized in each area.

Location	March 2016	December 2016	November 2017	September 2019	October 2021	October 2022	July 2023
Cachaço			26			25	
Campo Baixo			26				
Cova Joana					32		
Cova Rodela			28	51	19	17	
Fajã D'água						13	
Furna					43	52	19
Lem					30	31	
Lomba						18	
Mato			34			37	
Mato Grande						53	
N. S. Monte				45	47	55	28
Nova Sintra			28	79	59	72	43
TOTAL	158	136	142	175	230	373	90



2. Fogo Island, Cape Verde

Fogo Island, located in the Sotavento group of Cape Verde (15° 03' N and 14° 48' N, 24° 16' W and 24° 30' W), is a volcanic island with an area of 476 km² and an estimated population of 66,500 inhabitants, distributed across three municipalities: São Filipe, Mosteiros, and Santa Catarina. It was the second island to be populated, with São Filipe being the third oldest city in the archipelago. The island is best known for the highest mountain in Cape Verde – Pico do Fogo – with an altitude of 2,829 meters. The last eruption began on November 23, 2014. It is a relatively isolated island, without an international airport and with few air or boat connections to the other islands. It is also noteworthy that there is no permanent veterinarian on the island.

Since 2021, the Bons Amigos Association has managed a dog and cat population control program on the island, in the Municipality of São Filipe, in close cooperation with the City Council, the Delegation of the MAA of Fogo Island, and the conservation NGO Projecto Vitó.

2.1 2023 Activities

Between June 26th and July 7th 2023, our team, consisting of 5 members, was on Fogo Island, in the Municipality of São Filipe, participating in the 3rd Sterilization Campaign held on this island (figure 6).



Figure 6 - Bons Amigos Internacional team, consisting of 5 members: Lara Baptista, Valentina Schuster, Alice Matos, Jersley Fortes, and Gilson Lopes. Locally, we had the participation of Bemvindo Teixeira, Edmilson Ribeiro, Manuel Gonçalves, and Marcos Barbosa from the São Filipe Municipal Council, and Helga Amado, a volunteer resident on Fogo.



- A total of 290 animals were observed during the campaign, either owned or captured on the street (see figures 7 and 8).
- 64 patients were collected from their homes, and 74 patients were captured on the street.
- 234 patients were sterilized.
- Other necessary treatments and surgeries were performed.
- 283 patients were dewormed.
- Samples were collected from 52 patients, for vector and vector-borne disease research.
- All sterilized animals were identified with a tattoo and/or an ear notch.
- Collars were given to all sterilized animals present during the campaign.
- An awareness activity was conducted in collaboration with Atelier Beto Diogo and artist Anderson Fernandes, which included the development of a painting, used later for raising awareness during the campaign. Other recreational activities such as games, music, and storytelling were also conducted.
- A street dog count was performed using the Talea app.
- Overall, the canine and feline populations in the Municipality exhibit a good general health condition, with a good body condition. Most animals are parasitized, and several show symptoms of tick fever. Additionally, 16 patients with Sticker's sarcoma were observed and treated. There are still unsterilized animals on public streets, and there are reports of dog attacks on livestock and wildlife (sea turtles and birds) in some localities.



Figure 7 – This female lives in a car workshop. She was captured with the help of the workshop owner and brought to the campaign. During the examination, she was diagnosed with Sticker's sarcoma and it was found that she was nursing. We can hardly imagine the discomfort such a mass can cause, especially after giving birth. She was sterilized and received treatment. This image was taken on the day of the second treatment, showing a considerable reduction in the mass.



Figure 8 – Most animals in Cape Verde are friendly. We use the campaigns and the visits from children to show them that animals also have a beating heart, just like ours, and they experience emotions such as joy, fear, and sadness.



2.2 General Activities (2021-2023)

- So far, **three sterilization and deworming campaigns** have been carried out in the Municipality of São Filipe on Fogo Island, totalling **875 animals sterilized on the island** (see table 3);
- The campaigns were organized in **different localities** over the years, according to detected needs and logistical possibilities (see table 4);
- Since 2022, **awareness-raising activities** have been carried out focusing on animal welfare, basic animal care, and public health.
- In 2023, we started **monitoring the street dog population in the City of São Filipe** by conducting biannual population counts along a specific transect using the Talea app. This count is not representative of the entire city and does not allow for an estimate of the dog population. The objective is to monitor changes in the number and health status of the dog population over time.

Table 3 - Details of the species and sex of animals sterilized between 2021 and 2023.

Dates	Nr of days in campaign	Sterilizations					TOTAL
		Canines		Felines		Species and/or sex unknown	
		Female	Male	Female	Male		
August 2021	13	121	224	54	41	14	454
March 2022	6	62	73	29	23	0	187
July 2023	11	78	86	47	23	0	234
TOTAL	30	261	383	130	87	14	875

Table 4 – Details of the areas where the sterilization campaign was conducted each year and the number of animals sterilized in each area.

Location		August 2021	March 2022	June 2023
City	São Filipe	176	125	180
São Filipe North Area	São Jorge	51	34	
	Ribeira Filipe/Galinheiro	19		
	Inhuco		13	
São Filipe South Area	Patim	69		35
	Jardim	47		19
	Monte Largo	16		
	Monte Grande	37	15	
	Luzia Nunes	39		
TOTAL	454	187	234	



3. São Nicolau Island, Cape Verde

São Nicolau Island, located in the *Barlavento* region of Cape Verde (16° 29' N and 16° 40' N, 24° 00' W and 24° 25' W), is a mountainous island with an area of 242 km² and an estimated population of 12,000 inhabitants. It is divided into two municipalities: Ribeira Brava and Tarrafal de São Nicolau, with approximately 5,000 residents being from the Tarrafal de São Nicolau municipality. The island is relatively isolated, lacking an international airport and having few air or sea connections to other islands. Notably, there is no permanent veterinarian on the island.

Since 2023, Bons Amigos (based in Austria) has been managing a program for the population control of dogs and cats on São Nicolau Island, in the municipality of Tarrafal de São Nicolau, in close cooperation with the City Council and the Delegation of the MAA São Nicolau Island.

3.1 February 2023

Between February 28th and March 11th 2023, our team, consisting of 6 members, was in the municipality of Tarrafal on São Nicolau Island, participating in the first sterilization campaign held on this island (Figure 9).



Figure 9 - Bons Amigos Internacional team, consisting of 6 members: Lara Baptista, Valentina Schuster, Alice Matos, Verena Riedherr, Gilson Vieira, and Gilson Lopes, was supported by Francisco Soares, Jaime Silva, Emerson Duarte, and Avelino Santiago from the City Council of Tarrafal de São Nicolau.



- A total of 381 animals were observed during the campaign, either owned or captured from the streets (Figures 10 and 11).
- 24 patients were collected from homes, and 45 patients were captured from the streets.
- 329 patients were sterilized.
- Other necessary medical and surgical treatments were performed.
- 380 patients received parasite treatment.
- Samples were collected from 67 patients, for vector and vector-borne diseases studies.
- All sterilized animals were identified with a tattoo and/or an ear notch.
- Collars were given to all sterilized animals present at the campaign.
- School visits were carried out, involving over 215 children and teenagers.
- A street dog count was carried out using the Talea app.
- Overall, the canine and feline populations in the Municipality present good general health status, with good body condition. Ticks and/or fleas were detected in about 50% of the observed animals. Seven patients with symptoms consistent with tick fever and eight patients with symptoms consistent with sarcoptic mange were detected and treated.
- Currently, there are no reports of animal poisoning, but about 3 months ago, several street dogs were reported to have been poisoned.



Figure 10 – The capture team: Gilson Lopes from Bons Amigos Internacional, and Francisco Soares and Jaime Silva from the City Council of Tarrafal de São Nicolau.



Figure 11 – José Freitas, President of the City Council of Tarrafal de São Nicolau, and Lara Baptista from Bons Amigos Internacional, after signing of the Cooperation Protocol between the aforementioned institutions.

3.1 October 2023

Between October 10th and 21st 2023, our team, composed of 6 members, was in the Municipality of Tarrafal on the island of São Nicolau, participating in the 2nd sterilization campaign conducted on this island (see Figure 12).



Figure 12 - Team of Bons Amigos Internacional, consisting of 7 members: Lara Baptista, Verónica Cabral, Cristina Monteiro, Filipa Valente, Rita Jorge, Danielson Aldevino, and Marísia Lopes. Together with some of the trainees from the “Dog Training for Trainers” course: Francisco Soares, Bemvindo Sequeira, Belisário Rosário, Jersley Fortes, Inês Oliveira, and Filipa Oliveira, and the trainer Maria Baptista.

- A total of 234 animals were observed, owned or captured on the street (Figures 16 and 17).
- 22 patients were collected from their homes, and 18 patients were captured on the street.
- 124 patients were sterilized.
- Treatments and other necessary surgeries were performed.
- 243 patients were dewormed.
- Samples were collected from 63 patients, for vector and vector-borne disease studies.
- All sterilized animals were identified with a tattoo and/or an ear notch.
- Collars were given to all sterilized animals present at the campaign.
- Various awareness activities were carried out, including school visits, mural painting, and cinema sessions, involving over 570 children and teenagers (Figures 13 to 15).
- A “Dog Training for Trainers” course was initiated with trainer Maria Batista, involving 7 trainees from 3 islands (São Nicolau, Santo Antão, and Santiago). The training will last 6 months, with a total of 75 hours, and is being conducted both in-person and online. Evaluation and course closure will occur between April 2nd and 6th, 2024.
- A street dog count was conducted using the Talea application.
- Overall, the canine and feline populations in the municipality are in good general health and good body condition. About 43% of the observed animals had ticks and/or fleas. 10 patients with symptoms consistent with tick fever and 3 patients with symptoms consistent with sarcoptic mange were detected and treated.
- Unfortunately, we received reports of street dogs being poisoned, which appears to have been done privately.



Figure 13 – Cristina Monteiro giving a presentation on basic animal care to a class at Lucília Freitas Elementary School.



Figure 14 – Belisário Rosário giving a presentation on ticks to a class at Lucília Freitas Elementary School.



Figure 15 – Students from the Educarte Project assisting artist Janilson Faria in painting a mural.



Figure 16 – Princesa appeared on the first day of the campaign with a skin laceration, after being bitten by another dog. We performed the sterilization and wound closure, and she went home with a custom body suit. Her owner brought her to the campaign every day for re-evaluation and medication.



Figure 17 – Susu was sterilized in March 2023 during the first campaign. This time, he came for a visit to pick up his deworming treatment and a leash so he could go for walks with his owner.

3.3 General Activities (2023)

- To date, **two sterilization and deworming campaigns** have been carried out in the Municipality of Tarrafal in São Nicolau, totalling **453 animals sterilized** in the Municipality (Table 5);
- The campaigns were organized in **different locations** according to the needs detected and logistical possibilities (see Table 6);
- In both campaigns, **awareness-raising activities** were conducted focusing on animal welfare, basic care for animals, and public health. So far, we have reached over 785 children and adolescents.
- In 2023, we began **monitoring the street dog population** in the City of Tarrafal through biannual counts of the population in a specific transect using the Talea app. The count is not representative of the entire city and does not allow for an estimate of the dog population. The goal is to monitor variations in the number and health status of the dog population over time.



- In October 2023, we started a **course “Dog Training for Trainers”**. The objective of this training is to provide an opportunity for people interested in animals in Cape Verde to understand the natural behavior of the canine species and acquire skills that enable them to help pet owners to better understand their animals, modify unwanted behaviors, and improve animal welfare. After the training, participants should be capable of planning and implementing a basic obedience and behavioral modification training plan, using the appropriate method for each situation. **We are training dog trainers in Cape Verde** to contribute to the reduction of abandonment due to behavioral problems.

Table 5 - Detail of the species and sex of the animals sterilized in the 1st and 2nd Campaigns.

Dates	Nr of days in campaign	Sterilizations				TOTAL
		Canines		Felines		
		Female	Male	Female	Male	
March 2023	11	145	139	25	20	329
October 2023	11	29	39	28*	28	124
TOTAL	22	174	178	53	48	453

Table 6 – Details of the areas where the sterilization campaigns were conducted and the number of animals sterilized in each area.

Location	March 2023	October 2023
Cidade do Tarrafal	233	124
Praia Branca	44	
Ribeira Prata	12	
Hortelã	22	
Cabeçalinho	18	
TOTAL	329	124



4. Boa Vista Island, Cape Verde

Boa Vista, an island and municipality located in the *Barlavento* region of Cape Verde (15° 58' N and 16° 13' N, 22° 40' W and 22° 58' W), is the third largest island in the country, with an area of 620 km² and an estimated population of 12,600 inhabitants. It is known for its extensive beaches and high level of tourism activity. The island has an international airport and several air and sea connections to the other islands. On the island, there is a private veterinary clinic with a veterinarian and a non-governmental organization working in the area of animal welfare, the Associação Nerina.

In 2023, a member from our team travelled to Boa Vista Island to support a sterilization campaign organized by Associação Nerina. The campaign took place from February 20 to 24, during which 140 animals captured on the street (82 cats and 58 dogs) were sterilized and dewormed, and additional treatments and necessary surgical procedures were carried out.

5. Flores Island, Azores, Portugal

Flores Island is located in the Western Group of the Azores Archipelago (39° 28' N, 31° 13' W). It is a mountainous island with an area of 141.7 km² and an estimated population of 3,739 inhabitants, distributed between two municipalities: Santa Cruz das Flores and Lajes das Flores. The latter is the westernmost point of Portugal and Europe. In 2009, the entire territory of the island and the adjacent marine area were included in the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It is considered one of the most beautiful islands in the archipelago. However, unstable weather conditions, heavy rains, and strong winds result in irregular air and maritime connections. The port of Lajes das Flores, the island's only commercial port, was destroyed by Hurricane Lorenzo in October 2019, leading to ongoing supply constraints for the population. It is worth noting that there is only one veterinary practice on the island, working part-time. Additionally, the only municipality with an official animal collection center is Lajes, which is currently temporarily without a Municipal Veterinarian.

Since May 2023, we have been collaborating with the Municipality of Santa Cruz das Flores, the Municipality of Lajes das Flores, Associação Animais de Rua, and Veterinários Sem Fronteiras Portugal (VSF-PT) in organizing and implementing a cat population management program on the island. In partnership with VSF-Portugal, we are responsible for organizing, managing, and carrying out all the medical aspects of the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) campaign. Our team visited the Island of Flores on two occasions during 2023 to participate in the TNR campaigns.



3.1 May 2023

Between April 29th and May 9th, 2023, our team, in partnership with VSF-PT, consisting of 4 members, was on the Island of Flores to participate in the 1st TNR campaign held on the island (figure 18).



Figure 18 - From left to right: Cristina Monteiro, Alice Matos, Lara Baptista, and Verónica Cabral. The team from Bons Amigos Internacional and Veterinários Sem Fronteiras Portugal during the 1st campaign on the Island of Flores.

- A total of 443 felines were observed by the veterinary team (figure 19 and 20).
- 427 felines were sterilized and received parasite treatment.
- 35 pregnant females and more than 50 lactating females were spayed.
- Additional treatments and necessary surgeries were carried out.
- 9 female canids with owners were observed, sterilized, and dewormed due to the lack of local sterilization options.
- Samples were collected for studies from 98 patients.
- All sterilized felines were identified with microchips and ear notches.
- The capture and return of animals were managed by the municipalities and the Associação Animais de Rua.



Figure 19 – Medical team.



Figure 20 – Female Cat Sterilized During the Campaign.

3.2 September 2023

Between September 9th and 16th, 2023, our team, in partnership with VSF-PT, consisting of 5 members, was on the Island of Flores to participate in the 2nd TNR Campaign held on this island (see Figure 21).



Figure 21 – From left to right: Raquel Santos, Lara Baptista, Cristina Moreira, Verónica Cabral, and Beatriz Martins. The team from Associação Bons Amigos Internacional and Veterinários Sem Fronteiras Portugal during the 2nd campaign on the Island of Flores..

- A total of 330 felines were observed by the veterinary team.
- 318 felines were sterilized and received parasite treatment.
- 16 pregnant females and more than 24 lactating females were spayed.
- Other necessary medical and surgical treatments were performed (see Figures 22 to 24).
- 7 canines with owners were observed, sterilized, and dewormed, as there was no sterilization option on the island.
- Samples were collected from 34 patients for research studies.
- All sterilized felines were identified with a microchip and an ear notch on the left ear.
- The capture and return of the animals were the responsibility of the Municipalities and the Association Animais de Rua.



Figure 22 – This male belongs to a colony and showed symptoms consistent with squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) on the edges of both ears. We performed bilateral partial ear amputations. He recovered well and was returned to the colony after a few days of observation and medication.



Figure 23 e 24 – Indy was found on the street during the campaign, with irreversible ophthalmological changes (photograph on the left). We opted to perform a bilateral enucleation. The procedure went well, and fortunately, Indy was adopted with the assurance that she would have a safe place to recover and grow. Recently, we received an updated photograph of Indy (photograph on the right) and feedback that she is doing well and has adapted very well to her condition.





3.2 General Activities (2023)

- Until now, **two TNR campaigns** have been conducted on the Island of Flores, resulting in a total of **761 animals (both canines and felines) sterilized on the island** (see Table 7).
- Surgical procedures were carried out at the Official Collection Center of Lajes. Felines were captured from locations previously identified in the survey conducted by the Municipalities and with the support of caretakers (see Table 8).
- Throughout 2023, all Parishes of the Island have been covered. However, each colony was only addressed in one of the campaigns. This means that litters identified in April/May and September will require future intervention to prevent unwanted reproduction of these young animals.

Table 7 - Details of the species and sex of the animals sterilized in the 1st and 2nd Campaigns.

Dates	Nr of days in campaign	Sterilizations				TOTAL
		Canines		Felines		
		Female	Male	Female	Male	
May 2023	11	9	0	234	193	436
September 2023	8	5	2	187	131	325
TOTAL	19?	14	2	421	324	761

Table 8 – Detail of the areas of capture of the felines present in the sterilization campaign and the number of felines sterilized from each zone.

Location		May 2023	September 2023
Município das Lajes das Flores	Costa do Lajedo		7
	Fajã Grande	67	1
	Fajãzinha	28	
	Fazenda	42	2
	Lajedo	47	
	Lajes das Flores	5	101
	Lomba	61	
	Mosteiro	12	2
Município de Santa Cruz das Flores	Caveira	8	6
	Cedros	22	7
	Ponta Delgada	37	17
	Santa Cruz das Flores	98	175
TOTAL	427	318	



CAPACITY BUILDING

- Between January 15th and 20th 2023, one of our veterinarians participated in a practical surgical training organized by International Veterinary Consultants (IVC) and Associação pela Redução Populacional e Abandono de Cães e Gatos (ARPA). The training took place in Vila Nova de Poiares, Portugal.
- Between September 28th and 30th 2023, we attended the XXIX World Echinococcosis Congress, where we presented the paper “Transmission of *Echinococcus granulosus sensu lato* genotype 7 in Cape Verde.” The congress was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- One of our veterinarians obtained a Certificate of Pedagogical Competencies (CCP) between November 14th and December 14th 2023. The training was conducted at Phmais, Lisbon, Portugal.
- Our staff and volunteers receive ongoing training before and during our missions. Our goal is to have a well-prepared team upon arrival at each mission, understanding the objectives, preferences, and challenges of each team member. During missions, each department is staffed with an experienced member and a supporting member who is receiving training. The involvement of a local team is essential.

REASERCH AND DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

1. ONESVEC Project – Surveillance of vectors and vector-borne diseases in Cape Verde

- This project is the result of a collaboration between the Portuguese National Health Institute Dr. Ricardo Jorge, the National Health Institute in Cape Verde (INSACV) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment in Cape Verde (MAA) with the participation of the National Institute of Agricultural Research and Development (INIDA) and the General Directorate of Agriculture, Forestry and Livestock (DGASP). Other partner organizations in Cape Verde are the Bons Amigos and the National Institute of Meteorology and Geography (INMG);
- The objective of the project is to improve the knowledge regarding vectors and vector-borne diseases affecting animals and humans in Cape Verde and to contribute to health promotion.
- The project is financed by Aga Khan foundation, for three years and started on March 17th 2022;
- Bons Amigos Internacional has been collecting ticks, fleas and biological samples from the patients observed during the campaigns.
- By the end of 2022, samples from 272 hosts had been collected in Santiago, Brava, Fogo and Sal.
- **In 2023 we collected samples from 229 hosts from Boa Vista, S#ao Nicolau, Fogo and Brava.**



2. Canine Transmissible Venereal Tumour (CTVT) from the University of Cambridge

- Since 2021, we have been collaborating on a study by the University of Cambridge that uses genetic and molecular methods to study the origin, evolution, disease dynamics and host interactions of CTVT. The group is also studying the genetic factors that influence the host's susceptibility to the disease, the pathogenesis of the disease and the response to treatment. The objectives of this research are to understand how CTVT developed and adapted to the host, to develop methods to prevent and control the disease and to gain knowledge about the evolution of cancer and the dynamics of pathogens.
- Bons Amigos collaborates by sending samples collected from animals with Sticker Sarcoma, a disease that is still quite prevalent on some Cape Verde islands.
- By the end of 2022, samples from 32 hosts had been taken on Santiago, Fogo, and Sal. No patients with CTVT were found on Brava.
- **In 2023 we collected samples from 13 hosts in Fogo Island. No patients with CTVT were found on Brava, São Nicolau or Boa Vista.**

3. Pilot project to assess the presence and transmission of Echinococcosis in Cape Verde

- This project is the result of a partnership between Bons Amigos, the Institute of Parasitology at the University of Zurich and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAA) in Cape Verde.
- Samples were taken in Santiago, Fogo, Brava, Maio, São Vicente, Santo Antão, Boa Vista and Sal.
- The presence of *Echinococcus granulosus sensu lato* G7 was confirmed in environmental samples and cysts collected from cattle and pigs in Santiago, São Vicente, and Sal.
- The study results were published during the year 2023 – Gonçalves Baptista L, Laurimäe T, Muchaamba G, et al. (2023) First isolation of *Echinococcus granulosus sensu lato* genotype 7 in the archipelago of Cape Verde. *Parasitology* 150(8):734-743. doi:10.1017/S003118202300046X
- The results suggest that the parasite could be controlled through the implementation of coordinated and systematic One Health strategies. Therefore, our recommendation is to develop a national dog population management program to promote the control of stray animal populations and regular deworming. This should be combined with improvements in public veterinary health conditions in slaughterhouses and other locations where slaughtering occurs, particularly during carcass inspection and proper destruction of rejected viscera and carcasses.

4. Study of Salmonella presence in poultry and egg production in Cape Verde

- This project is a partnership between the Bons Amigos Internacional, the Food Safety and Hygiene Institute of the University of Zurich (UZ), and the DSP of the MAA of Cape Verde. A master's student from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at UZ supported the DSP team in Cape Verde by assisting with sample collection.
- The project aimed to collect preliminary information on the prevalence of Salmonella in industrialized or semi-industrialized poultry production on Santiago Island. Poultry production is a growing industry in Cape Verde, particularly focusing on egg production.
- A total of 47 environmental and fecal samples were collected from 9 farms.
- Salmonella presence was confirmed in 5 farms (11 positive samples out of 47). Additionally, 6 serotypes were detected: Enteritidis, Rubislaw, Mbandaka, Muenster, Bredeney, and Infantis.



- Since serotypes that pose a risk to public health were detected, it was recommended the establishment of a Salmonella detection method at the DSP laboratory and the implementation of a monitorization and surveillance plan.

5. Study on *Cryptosporidium spp.* and *Giardia duodenalis* in Dogs on São Nicolau Island, Cape Verde

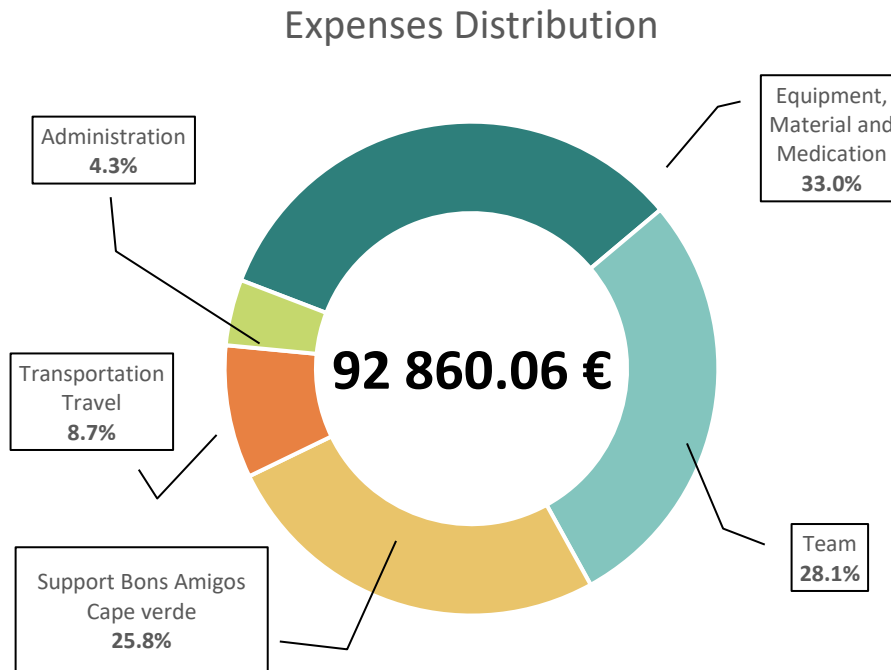
- This project is a collaboration between Associação Bons Amigos Internacional, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Lisbon, and the DSP from the MAA of Cape Verde.
- Cryptosporidiosis and giardiasis are two diseases caused by intestinal parasites that infect a large number of animal species, and some species or genotypes are zoonotic.
- The objective of the project is to identify the prevalence and the species and/or genotypes present.
- **In 2023, samples were collected from 48 hosts on São Nicolau Island.**



FINANTIAL REPORT

The work of the Association is 100% funded by private donors and a Foundation.

In 2023, a total of 92,860.06 Euros was spent. The percentages spent in each category are detailed in Graphic 2.



Graph 2 – Description of expenses done in 2023.

The largest portion of the budget was spent on materials, medications, and equipment (33.0%). All the equipment and materials we previously had were left for the Bons Amigos Association in Cape Verde. Therefore, in 2023, we needed to acquire basic equipment, as well as medications and consumables for use in our campaigns.

Expenses with Staff also represent a significant part of the annual budget (28.1%). This is mainly due to the need to maintain a team of specialists in animal health to ensure high standards in animal care and to supervise team members who are in train. We work with professionals who are familiar with the projects, the working methods, the partner organizations, and the people and animals in each of the communities. The presence of these professionals on each mission is essential to ensure that the work is carried out safely, with quality, and has an impact on those we aim to support.

Additionally, we included in this year's budget support for the Bons Amigos Association in Cape Verde to ensure they have the means to continue their work.

The transportation costs include the international transport of the material and equipment that is not available in Cape Verde for sale, and the local transport to and from the campaign locations. The travel expenses are necessary due to the lack of professionals in this field in Cape Verde. Over time and with the training of local people, we hope to reduce that part of the costs.



CONCLUSIONS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In 2023, despite all the challenges, we achieved the planned objectives. We continued missions in the municipalities of Brava and São Filipe in collaboration with our partners. We initiated a dog and cat management program in the Municipality of Tarrafal São Nicolau. Additionally, we had the opportunity to participate in a TNR program on Flores Island in the Azores, Portugal, in collaboration with the municipalities, VSF-PT, and the Animais de Rua. Working together allows us to achieve better results in managing the dog and cat populations and addressing the negative consequences of overpopulation, including environmental, economic, and social impacts.

Throughout the year, we performed a total of 1,678 sterilizations, 1,971 dewormings, and other necessary medical and surgical treatments for cats and dogs. Additionally, during the campaigns, we collected biological samples for research on parasitic and infectious diseases, the results of which will provide crucial information for our activities.

Community involvement is crucial for sustainable change. Our approach includes working with community members, listening to the challenges faced by each community and group, and developing solutions that address the root causes of the problem, in this case, the causes of abandonment and overpopulation of street animals. In addition to awareness activities in schools and cultural centers, where we reached over 800 children, we also conducted activities with other groups. During the campaign, we maintained close contact with animal owners to provide information about basic animal care and responsible ownership. We organized meetings with livestock owners to discuss the issue of dog attacks. Additionally, at the end of each campaign, we organized a public event to share the results of the activities and discuss future needs.

We recognize that to be effective, it is necessary to conduct ongoing and evidence-based work. As such, we are currently carrying out semi-annual monitoring of the stray animal population in the Municipality of São Filipe, Fogo Island, and in the Municipality of Tarrafal de São Nicolau. This data is essential for planning activities and for continually adapting our work to the needs of each location.

We are also committed to training the local and external team. As such, we have been developing a practical training program during the campaigns in all areas: registration, animal preparation, surgery, post-surgery care, trapping, and awareness. We hope to have an increasing number of locally trained professionals.

Next year, we will continue to increase efforts to maintain the activities and collaborations that have been developed so far and to integrate new activities and partnerships, always with the goal of improving animal health and welfare, with positive consequences for communities and the environment.

2024 will be another challenging year. It is year of local elections in Cape Verde, which will impact the availability of our partners to organize and participate in activities. Additionally, the association will continue its restructuring by moving forward with the name change and developing tools to share and communicate our work.

Stay tuned. We will have news soon!!



PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Government and City Councils in Cape Verde:



Ministério da Agricultura e Ambiente

Direcção Geral da Agricultura, Silvicultura e Pecuária
Direcção Serviço da Pecuária



Ministério da Agricultura e Ambiente

Direcção Geral da Agricultura, Silvicultura e Pecuária

Organizations with activity in Cape verde:



Associazione Nerina
Via Mare (Cabo Verde)



International Organizations:



Foundations:



Other private Funders

Contacts:

We will soon announce the link to our website and social media

The emails geral@bons-amigos.com and bonsamigos@gmx.at remain active but will also be replaced soon.