



World Organisation
for Animal Health



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WOAH REGIONAL ANIMAL WELFARE STRATEGY (RAWS) THIRD ACTION PLAN (2024 – 2028) ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

1. Introduction

This is the Third Action Plan issued to support the implementation of the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (RAWS) for Asia and the Pacific. It was developed following the reactivation of the RAWS Advisory Group (RAWS-AG) for Asia and the Pacific in May 2022.

This Third Action Plan takes account of the needs agreed by World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Members of the Regional Commission for Asia Pacific, the outcomes of the implementation of two previous RAWS action plans issued in 2012 and 2015, and the findings of surveys of animal welfare focal points and Delegates in 2019 and 2021. It also incorporates feedback from WOAH Delegates and Animal Welfare Focal Points. The Third Action Plan builds on achievements under the previous two action plans, addresses gaps and updates actions according to current priorities, knowledge, and activities.

The intended impact of this Action Plan is enhanced animal welfare alongside progress and socioeconomic development in the region, through a focus on the development and implementation of WOAH animal welfare standards; capacity building and education; and communication to promote respect and awareness of animal welfare.

This Action Plan was developed by the RAWS-AG. The RAWS-AG supports collaboration between regional members and animal welfare stakeholders who share the common vision and support the implementation of activities in this Action Plan. For more information on the RAWS and to see a list of RAWS-AG members and observers, see: <https://rr-asia.woah.org/en/projects/animal-welfare>.

Farmer milking cow, Mongolia. Edwin Tan | Getty Images



2. History of the RAWS and previous achievements

The RAWS was the first regional animal welfare strategy issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as the OIE). It was developed to provide an overarching, agreed framework and guidance for WOAH Members, non-WOAH members and partners in the region when implementing WOAH standards for animal welfare, and to serve as the basis for the development of Action Plans.

- o 2007 – The Australian Government led and funded the development of the RAWS to provide WOAH Members and partners with general guidance to improve the welfare of animals through activities (i.e., education, regulation, and research and development). RAWS was created as an outcome of the 4th OIE Strategic Plan (2006-2010); to emphasise the importance of animal welfare and aimed to directly influence adoption of the OIE guidelines for animal welfare in the region.
- o 2008 – RAWS first edition endorsed by the OIE 78th General Session (May 2008).
- o 2010 – meeting and workshop for WOAH National Focal Points for Animal Welfare in Asia and the Pacific region in Bangkok, Thailand (28-29 April 2010) to further progress implementation of the RAWS and to address questions regarding the implementation plan document (i.e., ongoing coordination, monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the RAWS, key constraints affecting implementation within WOAH Members, and priority projects which could be considered for funding). Management of the RAWS was established under a Coordination Group.
- o 2011 – Regional Seminar for WOAH National Focal Points for Animal Welfare, Tokyo, Japan, 2 December 2011.
- o 2013 – RAWS second edition 2013-2015 endorsed by the Regional Commission in May 2013 and released.
- o 2014 – Animal Welfare Workshop, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Fiji, November.
- o 2015 – Second Action Plan released by RAWS Coordination Group.
- o 2015 – RAWS management was established under the Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania and a new RAWS-AG; agreed at the 29th Conference of the WOAH Regional Commission in Ulaanbaatar.
- o 2022 – RAWS-AG was reactivated after COVID-19 pandemic. The Regional Commission Core Group for Asia and the Pacific agreed to new membership and terms of reference at its meeting on 16 May 2022.

3. Achievements of the second action plan 2015-2023

The second action plan was issued in 2015 by the RAWS Coordination Group for Asia, the Far East, and Oceania, which was the predecessor group to the current advisory group. It reflects the previous name of our region, which is now called Asia and the

Pacific. The second action plan laid out several activities under the RAWs Goals and Objectives. Key achievements since that time include:

- o 2016 – RAWs-AG established; first in person meeting and contribution to the WOAHP Global Strategy for Animal Welfare, December 2016.
- o Numerous examples of regional activities by WOAHP Members and partners supported by the RAWs to promote animal welfare and support capacity building, including:
 - ✓ Malaysia’s Animal Welfare Act 2015, enforced in 2017,
 - ✓ Iran’s National Veterinary Day and photo competition,
 - ✓ Bhutan’s response to a rabies outbreak,
 - ✓ global animal welfare seminar at the 33rd World Veterinary Congress in the Republic of Korea,
 - ✓ improved pig production through group housing adopted by key producers in Asia supported by World Animal Protection (WOAHP partner),
 - ✓ recognition of animal welfare in African Horse Sickness control in Thailand in 2020,
 - ✓ from 2021 to 2023, People's Republic of China successively released three animal welfare standards, including one agricultural sector standard, namely NY/T 4028-2021 Welfare Criteria of Broiler during Transport and Slaughter issued by Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Affairs, and the other two national standards issued by National Standards Administration, namely GB/T 42071-2022 Welfare on Killing Animals for Disease Control Purposes and GB/T 42304-2023 Welfare criteria for animals to be slaughtered,
 - ✓ Chinese Horse Industry Association launch of the Yuanshangdu Horse Welfare Convention, calling on the Chinese horse industry to abide by WOAHP animal welfare standards and strive to improve the welfare of equine animals,
 - ✓ the Commonwealth Veterinary Association (CVA) in collaboration with the Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University (KVAFSU) established an Animal Welfare Research Centre, the first of its kind in India, at the Veterinary College in Bengaluru (Bangalore). Staff received advanced animal welfare training (Jeanne Marchig International Centre for Animal Welfare Education and the Animal Welfare Centre, University of Melbourne), and held one international and two national workshops on animal welfare. The centre will undertake research in animal welfare utilising the facilities of the dairy, poultry, piggery and sheep farms of the University at Bengaluru (Bangalore).
 - ✓ activities by Brooke India to improve the welfare of working equids in India, across thematic areas including community development and livelihood, animal health and welfare, and advocacy and networking.



Fishmonger at market, Vietnam. Nikada | Getty Images

- o 2017 – Fiji workshop on emergency preparedness and disaster response, November 2017, back-to-back with a subregional meeting for the Global Frameworks for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADS) with the Pacific Community, WOA and FAO for the Pacific Islands and Territories. This multi-sector workshop involved government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private sector as well as military to discuss the challenges, possible solutions, and ways forward for the region to be prepared for a variety of emergency situations affecting animals and communities such as natural disasters like cyclones or volcanic eruptions or disease outbreaks of livestock, aquatic animals and zoonotic diseases. An introductory training on Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) was also given.
- o 2018 – Survey of WOA Focal Points for Animal Welfare on training needs and animal welfare issues to support future regional planning under the RAWS.
- o 2019 – Regional training and seminar for WOA Focal Points for Animal Welfare, Bali, Indonesia, 11-14 November (<https://rr-asia.woah.org/en/events/regional-training-seminar-for-oie-national-focal-points-on-animal-welfare>).
- o 2019 – International Coalition for Working Equids (ICWE) session on working equids, back-to-back with WOA Focal Points for Animal Welfare training, Bali, Indonesia. ICWE is a coalition of four NGOs: Brooke, The Donkey Sanctuary, SPANA, and World Horse Welfare. The aim of the coalition is to provide a united voice for work with WOA and to help WOA Members to implement the WOA Terrestrial Code Chapter 7.12 on the welfare of working equids.

- o 2020 – One World One Welfare webinar organised and held by the Iran Veterinary Organization (IVO) on 29th July 2020 in Tehran, coordinated by the WOAHP National Focal Point for Animal Welfare for Iran and members of RAWWS-AG.
- o 2020 – RAWWS News special issue on equine welfare.
- o 2022 – WOAHP–ICFAW Open Philanthropy Project - both organisations have joined forces to implement a 3-year project to contribute to the improvement of animal welfare in pig production systems in this region, in targeted countries Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. The project will enable ICFAW and WOAHP to support WOAHP regional and sub-regional representations in Asia and the Pacific in the achievement of WOAHP RAWWS goals.
- o 2023 – RAWWS-AG members endorsed by Dr Huang Baoxu, President WOAHP Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific, June 2023 (following the Regional Commission meeting in May 2023).
- o 2023 – a webinar titled, ‘World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAHP) Animal Welfare Webinar 2023: Using WOAHP Standards to support good animal welfare in Asia and the Pacific’, covering priority topics of transport, slaughter, emergency killing, and dog population management.
- o RAWWS newsletter restarted November 2023.
- o WOAHP regional web pages for Asia and the Pacific (<https://rr-asia.woah.org/en/projects/animal-welfare>).
- o Action Plan revised and Third Action Plan developed for 2024-2028.

4. Purpose of this document

The RAWWS Third Action Plan is a living document developed by the RAWWS-AG in 2023 to define and track activities that support the implementation of the RAWWS. The activities also align with the vision and mission of the Regional Commission’s Third Regional Work Plan Framework 2021-2025.

The Action Plan contains the activities and actions under the RAWWS that are either currently underway or are yet to be progressed. The timing and mode of implementation for each activity is contingent upon the availability of resources and support from WOAHP Members and its Partners. Actions are agreed each year and may be deferred or deleted if no longer supported. The Action Plan is intended to be updated and amended each year by those with responsibilities under each activity, and progress reported to the Regional Commission annually.

5. Scope

Like the RAWWS, the Third Action Plan relates to the care of, use of, and direct impact of human activity on all sentient species of animals in the region. The emphasis is on the welfare of farm animals during handling, transportation, killing and slaughter according

to WOA standards for animal welfare covering both terrestrial and aquatic animals (see [Terrestrial Code – World Organisation for Animal Health](#), and [Aquatic Code – World Organisation for Animal Health](#)). It covers animals in all situations covered by the standards, including emergency situations, and provides a framework for sustainable improvements in animal welfare outcomes that are based on scientific evidence and social, economic, and ethical considerations.

This Action Plan contains activities that will be progressed by the RAWs Advisory Group and WOA regional and sub-regional offices for Asia and the Pacific, to support the implementation of the RAWs Second edition. The activities also contribute to achieving the goals in the WOA Global Strategy for Animal Welfare.

6. Objectives of the third action plan for 2024-2028

Impact (Long-term objective)

The intended impact of this Action Plan is enhanced animal welfare alongside progress and socioeconomic development in the region, through a focus on the development and implementation of animal welfare standards for transport, slaughter and killing; capacity building and education; and communication to promote respect and awareness of animal welfare.

Outcome objectives (short/mid-term objectives)

The RAWs describes four objectives and several activities. This Third Action Plan suggests the following related priority activities under each objective:

Key RAWs objectives	Priority activities
Goal 1: Promotion and achievement of a high level of understanding and awareness of animal welfare in the region through effective coordination, communication, education, and training.	<p>1-1: Communications with focal points and key stakeholders</p> <p>1-2: Support capacity building activities for focal points</p>
Goal 2: A coordinated regional approach to the implementation of WOA standards for animal welfare.	<p>2-1: Continued focus on the implementation of WOA standards for transport and slaughter</p> <p>2-2: Promote understanding of animal welfare as part of One Health (the nexus between the welfare of animals, humans/communities, and the environment)</p>

Goal 3: Sustainable improvements in animal welfare, based on regional and international research and development.

3-1: Support the WOAHA Collaborating Centre for Animal Welfare Science and Bioethical Analysis: the David Bayvel Consortium (the Collaborating Centre) with regional focus

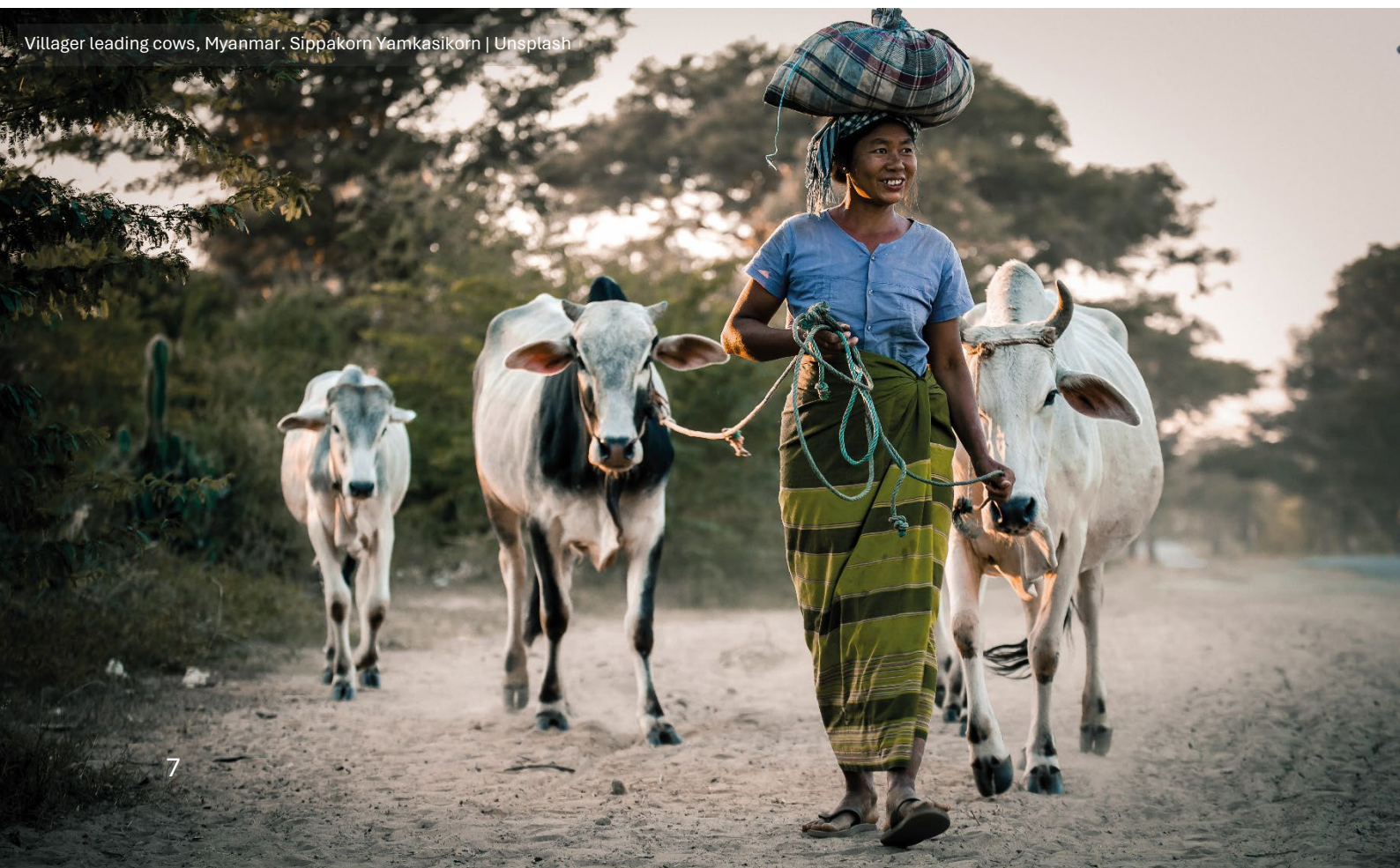
Goal 4: Sustainable mechanisms to coordinate and promote animal welfare programs and priorities.

4-1: Ensure that focal points under WOAHA mechanisms have the information they need to take part in WOAHA standard setting processes, including commenting on draft chapters

4-2: Sensitise policy makers and decision makers on importance and benefits of animal welfare and the implementation of WOAHA standards on animal welfare

While there are many possible activities that could be chosen, only seven were selected as priorities. This recognises that it is more effective to have a smaller number of priorities where real progress can be made through targeted actions, than a large number that lead to less focussed effort. The activities, and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to measure achievement, need to be practical and well-supported by WOAHA Members.

Villager leading cows, Myanmar. Sippakorn Yamkasikorn | Unsplash



7. Activities of the Third Action Plan

Specific actions and KPIs for each goal and related priority activities are shown in the following tables.

The timing and mode of implementation for each activity listed in the tables below are contingent upon the availability of resources and support from WOAAH Members and its Partners. Actions are agreed each year and may be deferred or deleted if no longer supported.

GOAL 1: PROMOTION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF A HIGH LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS OF ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE REGION THROUGH EFFECTIVE COORDINATION, COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING	
1-1: Communications with focal points and key stakeholders	
1-2: Support capacity building activities for focal points	
Specific actions <i>* Refer to cross-cutting actions at the bottom of these tables.</i>	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
WOAAH webinars are developed with involvement from the Collaborating Centre on priority topics and delivered for WOAAH National Focal Points for Animal Welfare and interested stakeholders in accordance with a schedule determined each year. The RAWS-AG may appoint a small working group of members, including the Collaborating Centre member, to plan each webinar. Topics: 2023 – WOAAH standards 2024 – Links between animal welfare, biodiversity, climate change, pollution, health, food security and livelihoods (One Health/One Welfare nexus).	✓ Number of webinars delivered each year

Specific actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Animal welfare training is delivered to WOA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare virtually or in person, following a schedule developed each year and organised by WOA regional and sub-regional offices. The Collaborating Centre is invited to contribute.	✓ Number of trainings conducted for WOA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare
RAWS-AG encourages awareness of regional animal welfare events by publishing a list of events in each RAWS News and sharing updates at RAWS-AG meetings and on social media as appropriate.	✓ Relevant events are listed and promoted in every issue of RAWS News
<p>RAWS-AG raises awareness of WOA capacity building activities for veterinary services and WOA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare, amongst regional Focal Points and other key stakeholders, including veterinary statutory boards, academia, and faculties. This is through a range of activities about WOA capacity building (presentation) e.g. PVS pathway, Platform for Training of Veterinary Services, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Webinar presentations ✓ Invited speakers to RAWS-AG ✓ RAWS News items ✓ WOA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare induction pack material ✓ Encourage Animal Welfare Focal Points to attend WOA Flash Webinars. 	✓ Number of presentations of WOA capacity building material to WOA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare in the region

GOAL 2: A COORDINATED REGIONAL APPROACH AND ONGOING COMMITMENT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WOAHS ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

2-1: Continued focus on the implementation of WOAHS standards for transport and slaughter

2-2: Promote understanding of animal welfare as part of One Health (the nexus between the welfare of animals, humans/communities, and the environment)

Specific actions	KPIs
Promote/support networking between organisations that have a focus on animal welfare by holding a regional forum of WOAHS Members and partners to share updates, at least once every two years, virtual (to mirror the format of the global animal welfare forum).	✓ Number of regional animal welfare forums
Promote awareness of <i>ISO/TS 34700:2016 Animal welfare management General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain</i> through RAWs News (including case studies from Focal Points and special issue on implementation of WOAHS AW standards), focal point trainings and focal point induction material.	✓ Number of RAWs News special issues and articles in RAWs News about ISO Standards ✓ Number of webinars and trainings for WOAHS National Focal Points for Animal Welfare with a presentation on ISO/TS 34700
Take actions to promote understanding of animal welfare as part of the One Health nexus, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ circulating updates to regional members on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) developments in the Nexus work, ✓ sharing information about the RAWs and animal welfare at WOAHS One Health events (where relevant and possible), ✓ encouraging WOAHS National Focal Points for Animal Welfare to contact their country UNEP representatives. 	✓ Number of WOAHS One Health events that have an animal welfare presentation

Specific actions	KPIs
Support the work of the WOAAH observatory to encourage implementation of animal welfare standards at a country level.	✓ Number of webinars, RAWs News and regional social media posts that refer to the observatory and encourage involvement

Shepherd guiding flock, India. Manoj Kulkarni | Unsplash



GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENTS IN ANIMAL WELFARE, BASED ON REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

3-1: Support the WOAHA Collaborating Centre with regional focus

Specific actions	KPIs
RAWS-AG members will promote objectives and results of the WOAHA-ICFAW CC research on pig management (WOAHA regions/sub-regions and ICFAW) through publications, social media etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CC provides quarterly updates at RAWS-AG meetings ✓ Number of articles published in Bulletin or online
RAWS-AG seeks to provide opportunities for PhD students to attend WOAHA RAWS events and meetings, through the CC representative member on the advisory group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of RAWS-related events and advisory group meetings that are attended by invited PhD students
RAWS-AG seeks to encourage twinning and other opportunities to extend support for countries or regions without opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of opportunities identified to the CC
RAWS-AG to ensure that CC activities and publications are shared with WOAHA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare and Delegates in the region through RAWS News and advisory group reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of CC updates reported in RAWS News ✓ Number of focal point trainings that include relevant research updates from CC

GOAL 4: SUSTAINABLE MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE AND PROMOTE ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES AND PRIORITIES

4-1: Ensure that focal points understand WOAHA mechanisms and have the information they need to take part in WOAHA standard setting processes, including commenting on draft chapters

4-2: Sensitise policy makers and decision makers on importance and benefits of animal welfare and the implementation of WOAHA standards on animal welfare

Specific actions	KPIs
Share WOAHA Member comments on animal welfare standards with focal points.	✓ RAWs-AG encourages focal points to share comments on standards under development or review two times every year (following WOAHA standard-setting cycle)
<p>Promote animal welfare and share information about the RAWs and WOAHA standards for animal welfare at international and regional meetings, scientific conferences, and workshops (wherever appropriate and feasible), by supporting RAWs-AG members and WOAHA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare in the region to contribute to conferences as speakers. This includes conferences organised by partners including the International Society for Applied Ethology, and the CC. Opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 5th AP Environment Minister meeting (Columbo) planning to also discuss the Animal Welfare, Environment and Sustainable Development Resolution from UNEA 5.2 in preparation for UNEA 6 (Nairobi, Feb 2024), which lists WOAHA as a partner✓ 22nd Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations (FAVA) Congress 3-5 November 2023 at Borneo Convention Centre Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia✓ 13th Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock, Thailand, October✓ FAO Sustainable Livestock Transformation conference which discussed the developments of livestock farming, which WOAHA President attended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Number of meetings, webinars and conferences where animal welfare is raised in relation to the RAWs✓ Number of invitations received by RAWs-AG members to present on animal welfare and RAWs

ALL GOALS: CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Specific actions	KPIs
Restart RAWS News.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RAWS News issued at least two times each year beginning 2023 ✓ Content for RAWS News is contributed by all RAWS-AG members
Refresh focal point induction pack to include items referred to the activities above, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ information about RAWS for communication to Delegates and senior leaders ✓ information on the PVS Pathway and Training Platform in the induction pack for new WOAHA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare in the region ✓ cycle of standard setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Induction pack updated for review by RAWS-AG at May 2025 meeting ✓ Number of new focal points who have received new induction pack
Update website on regional activities and RAWS-AG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Website is updated with new RAWS-AG members and information by end of each year
Explore social media sharing of relevant information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of WOAHA social media posts and RAWS-AG member posts that refer to RAWS or 3rd Action Plan activities
Review the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for Asia and the Pacific to update terminology and inform timeline for future review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommendations for revision of the RAWS document are with the RAWS-AG for consideration by end December 2024