

Concept note

Regional Animal Welfare Training Conference

Feb 25-26, 2026

Vang Vieng, Lao PDR

Background

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), in collaboration with its partners, provides support to its Members to strengthen the capacity of National Veterinary Services to implement animal welfare standards. Under the framework of the Global Animal Welfare Strategy (GAWS) adopted in 2017 by WOAH Members, the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (RAWS) for Asia and the Pacific was developed in 2008 to support the implementation of WOAH standards and improve knowledge and understanding of animal welfare in a region encompassing over half of the world's population of both people and animals.

Over recent years, the region has encountered the incursions and spread of various Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs). Following the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) in Asia in 2018, there has been increasing concern over this disease. Considering that the ASF-decimated pig populations are being replaced, there is an opportunity to provide WOAH Members with practical training to ensure implementation of the provisions of WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code on the Killing of animals for disease control purposes as per [Chapter 7.6](#) and Animal welfare in pig production systems as per [Chapter 7.13](#).

In this context, WOAH with the technical assistance of the University of Melbourne (as part of the Animal Welfare Science and Bioethical Analysis, David Bayvel Consortium, and a WOAH Collaborating Centre for Animal Welfare) organised two Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshops on Humane Killing for Disease Control organised in Vientiane, Lao PDR from October 8-15, 2025 followed by the ToT Workshop on Animal Welfare in Pig Production Systems in Da Nang, Vietnam from 29 October – 5 November 2025. A ToT approach was adopted, enabling participants to gain both technical expertise and the pedagogical skills required to organise and deliver cascading training in their respective countries. Encouragingly, Members have drafted a plan to deliver training programmes while some have already taken the initiative to integrate ToT components into their national and regional training programmes.

The regional animal welfare training conference will be organised within the framework of the joint WOA–International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW) project to support the implementation of WOA–Animal Welfare standards in South-East Asia. The event will be funded by WOA– thanks to the financial support of Coefficient Giving, previously known as Open Philanthropy (OP).

The rationale for this training conference is to strengthen regional capacity to implement WOA– animal welfare standards by uniting trainers from both ToT programmes into a harmonised network.

The event serves as a regional platform to showcase technical and pedagogical competencies, enhance stakeholder coordination, and review the progress of (and next steps for) cascading training.

Objectives

- 1) **Collaboration amongst Trainers:** Bring together the national cadre from both ToT programmes to create a unified pool of trainers who can collaborate, share experiences, and harmonise training approaches for the implementation of WOA– animal welfare standards (Chapter. 7.6 and Chapter 7.13).
- 2) **Showcase Training Competencies:** Provide a regional platform for national trainers to demonstrate their technical expertise and pedagogical skills to a wider audience.
- 3) **Enhance Stakeholder Awareness and Coordination:** Strengthen , collaboration, and information exchange among stakeholders through updates on global guidance, and research related to WOA– standards on animal welfare and partner updates.
- 4) **Review Progress and future:** Assess the status of cascading training within national Veterinary Services and other sectors and outline next steps.

Outcomes

- 1) Participants are updated with the latest WOA– animal welfare standards, guidance, and related developments, enhancing their understanding and ability to apply these standards consistently in national and regional training, policy, and implementation activities.
- 2) A consolidated sub-regional network of trainers is established.
- 3) Draft national action plans for cascading training are developed and reviewed by the four target Members (countries).

Participants

- **WOAH Member participants (target countries)**
 - Trainees (trainers now) of the ToT's from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam who were officially nominated and completed the course.
- **Experts**
 - University of Melbourne (as part of the Animal Welfare Science and Bioethical Analysis, David Bayvel Consortium, and a WOAH Collaborating Centre for Animal Welfare) experts and researchers.
- **Partners**
 - International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW)
 - Academia /research/NGOs/ global another relevant stakeholder
 - Private Sector
 - Observer
- **WOAH staff**
 - WOAH HQ, RRAP and SRR SEA

Nomination Guidelines

- The participants should be the trainees (trainers now) who were officially nominated and who subsequently completed the ToT courses namely Humane killing for the disease control purposes and Animal welfare pig production systems held in Vientiane, Lao PDR (Oct 8-15,2025) and Da Nang, Vietnam (Oct 29-5 Nov,2025) respectively.
- Please note that trainees nominated for the two past ToT's and this upcoming regional training the conference are committed to incorporate training components into existing training programmes and implement cascade training activities to train others in their respective countries at appropriate time.