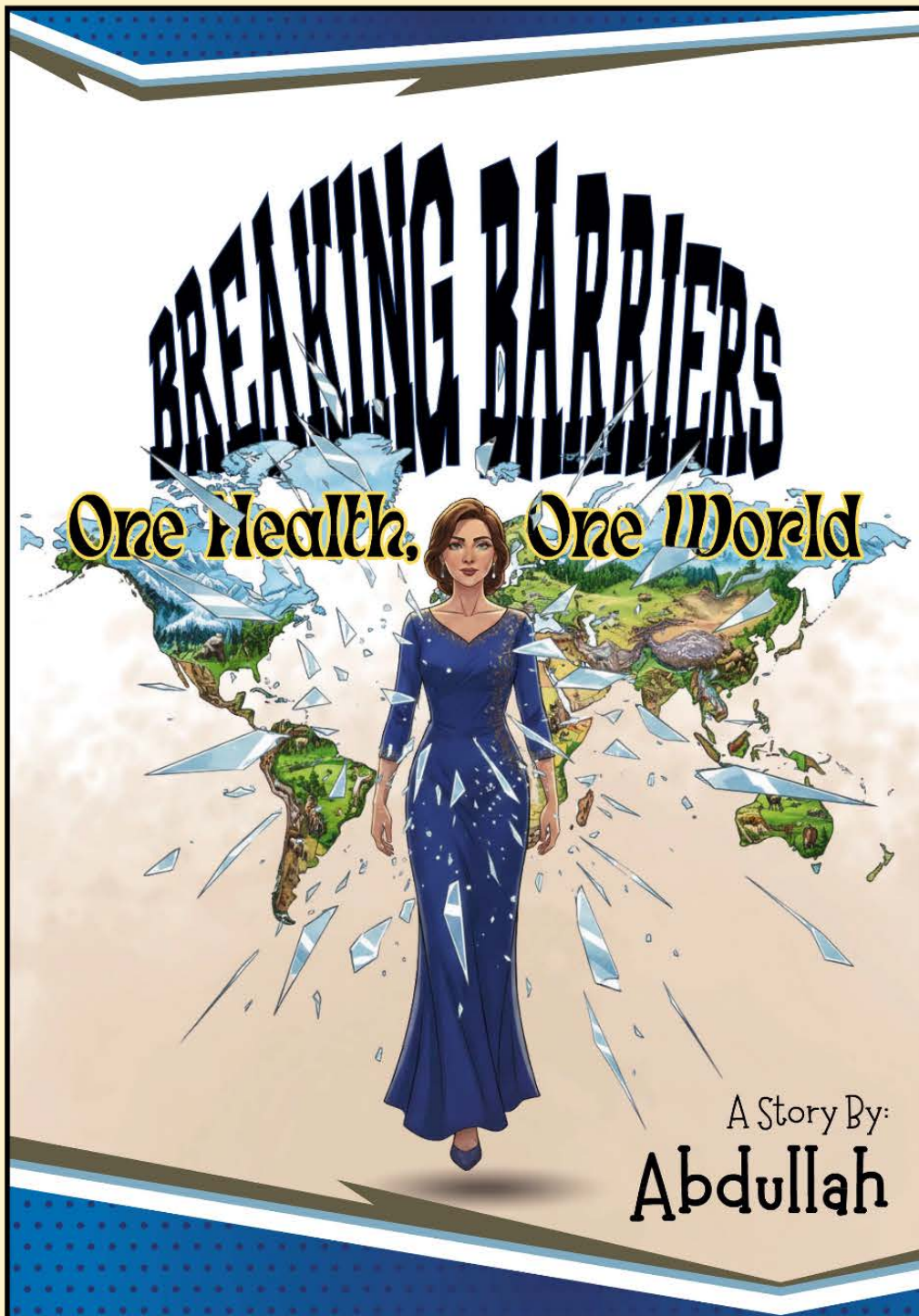




World Organisation  
for Animal Health

# **SKETCHING CHANGE**

**TALES FROM VETERINARIANS ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC**





Scan the QR code to access the comic stories in this publication in digital format, and to read several others.

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Note: Designations, statements and opinions in the material do not imply any official position of WOA or partner organisations, and responsibility for interpretation lies solely with the reader.

## ABOUT THIS VOLUME

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is committed to strengthening gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) within the veterinary sector. Our recent work in Asia and the Pacific has shown that, while there is a growing number of qualified women and diverse professionals in the sector, many still face barriers shaped by longstanding norms, insufficient adjustments and unequal opportunities.

As noted in regional studies conducted by WOAH in Asia-Pacific, gender stereotypes influence perceptions within the veterinary sector, and the absence of reasonable accommodations reinforces the exclusion of persons with disabilities. These findings highlight the need for continued awareness and action across institutions, training systems, and professional communities.

To foster this change, WOAH has expanded its GEDSI initiatives, including awareness raising events and partnerships with veterinary associations and networks in Asia and the Pacific region, in particular the Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations (FAVA), the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools (AAVS) and the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA). The Comics Competition Promoting GEDSI in the Veterinary Sector, organised between December 2025 and January 2026, invited veterinary students and professionals to reflect creatively on what an inclusive profession looks like.

The competition aimed to celebrate storytelling, artistic talent, veterinary commitment and GEDSI values, and to inspire dialogue through accessible and engaging narratives. Among the winning submissions, the comic presented here captures the imagination, concerns, and aspirations of veterinarians in different parts of the Asia and the Pacific region. The story reminds us that inclusion is not only a policy goal—it is a shared cultural commitment that strengthens the profession and the communities it serves. While we could not award all participants with prizes, we appreciated all entries and will be sharing additional comic stories of note on our website (see QR code on the cover inner page).

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the winners of this competition, and thank all participants for adding their voices to this important conversation. This comic enriches WOAH's ongoing efforts to promote a veterinary sector where everyone can thrive, advancing our mission to improve animal health and welfare globally and ensure a better future for all.



**Dr Tomoko Ishibashi**  
**WOAH Regional**  
**Representative for Asia and**  
**the Pacific**



**Dr Naree Ketusing**  
**WOAH Sub-Regional**  
**Representative for South-East Asia**

# Introduction

This story follows Maya, a determined girl from rural Pakistan. Her path from a small village to becoming the President of the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) proves that veterinarians are vital to global security. After facing and overcoming gender bias during her university years, she moves from helping local animals to leading global health strategies. She proves that veterinary medicine is a main pillar of Public Health.

As an Essential Healthcare Provider, Maya protects the food supply from diseases like FMD and stops deadly threats like Rabies and Anthrax. Her work shows that veterinarians are the first line of defense against pandemics like COVID-19. She acts as a shield where animal and human health meet.

Maya's leadership also tackles "silent pandemics" by enforcing Rational Medicine Use (RMU) to stop Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). By creating official rules for GEDSI (Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion), she makes sure the veterinary field includes everyone, including marginalized and indigenous people. Ending at the 2026 World Veterinary Conference in Tokyo, Maya's story proves that an inclusive veterinary team is the only way to keep our planet safe.

Note: This story represents the real challenges veterinarians face. It highlights their role in protecting both animals and people, from treating a single animal to preventing global disease outbreaks.

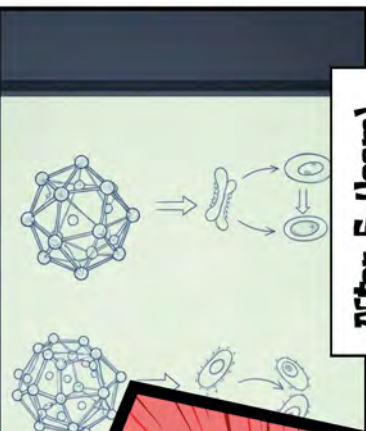
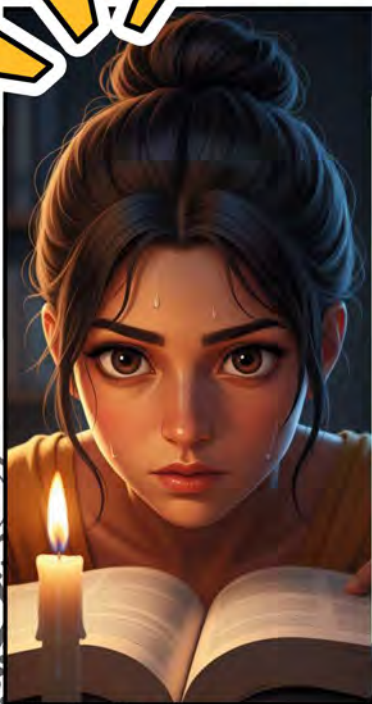
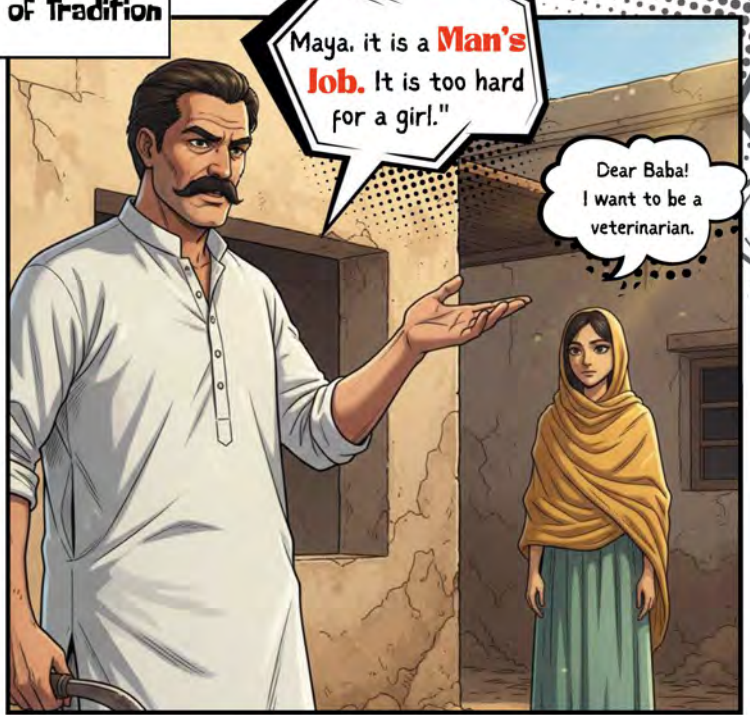
## About the Author:

As a 4th-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) student at the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore (Jhang Campus), I wrote and illustrated this story to honor our shared journey. This path ranges from the hands-on care of animals to the complex handling of pathogens, and from local clinics to the heart of global health.

We are the guardians of the pulse of the planet.

# Abdullah

# The Barrier of Tradition



After 5 Years!

Despite the hardships and skeptical society barriers, Maya won the Gold Medal from the veterinary degree on her graduation and now become Dr. Maya. Expertise has no gender.

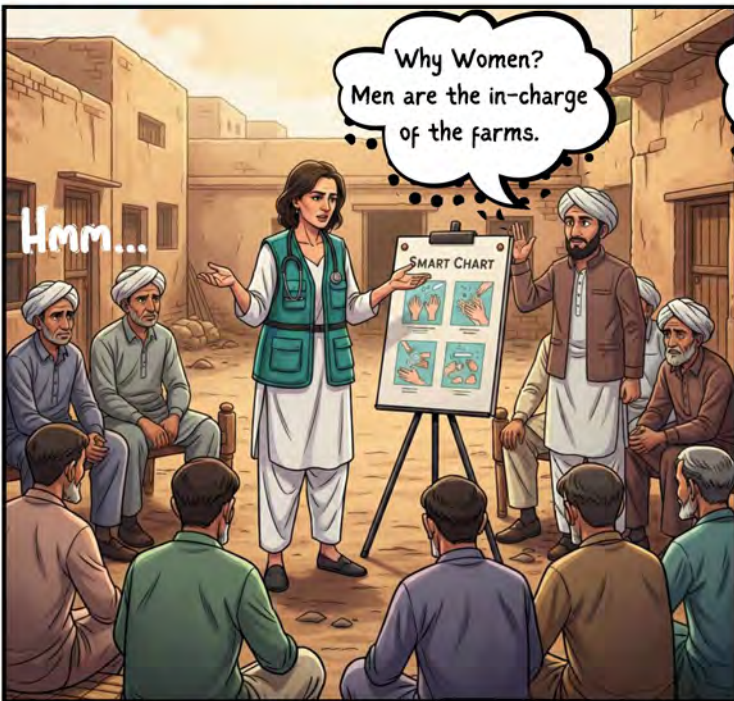


# The Silent Caretakers

Somewhere in the Pakistani Village!



While an outreach activity in a village, Dr. Maya saw the women working an interacting with the animals she call them to join her.



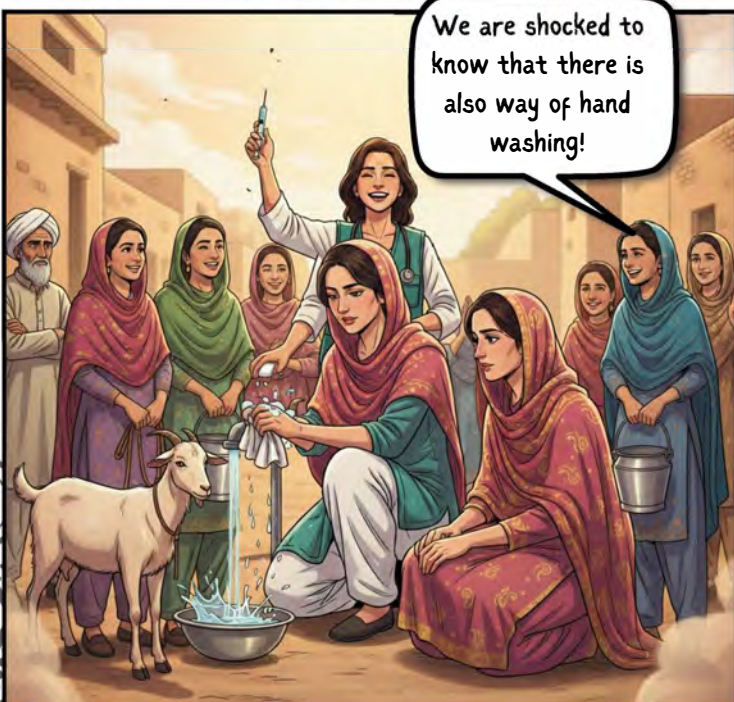
Why Women?  
Men are the in-charge of the farms.

Hmm...



If your wife knows how to prevent from disease, then you and your family will be safe!

Hmm?



We are shocked to know that there is also way of hand washing!



Mainstreaming, is including everyone: who touches the animals.

# The Dystocia Crisis

On the Farm at village, to solve the Dystocia case



Dr. Maya  
Dr. Ali



Ohhh!!!  
she is too  
heavy!



Dr. Ali got kicked by the  
Cattle. Now Dr. Maya as  
to save the 2 lives!



She takes the Calf  
Extractor and then  
attended the Dam!

IT'S  
OKAY



Wao!  
A beautiful Calf

Wow!



"In our field, Equity means ensuring the best minds  
have the right tools, regardless of gender. True  
expertise is defined by skill, not by stereotypes."

The WOAAH Appointment

At WOAH Office!



WOAH

Dr. Maya,  
Field Epidemiologist



WELCOME

Guys!  
Say "Hello" to  
Siddharth

Hello Guys!  
I'm grateful to WOAH family for selecting  
despite my disability



Global Foot and Mouth (FMD)  
Disease outbreak



I found you.  
You bad strain!



See Dr. Maya!  
This Strain follows the specific pattern and  
spread across World. This strain is the  
mutated form of the Asia-1 strain.



"Siddharth sees the  
patterns we miss. This is  
why we need every mind."

# The Underrepresented

Meet! Dr. Tara, a women from an indigenous population group.



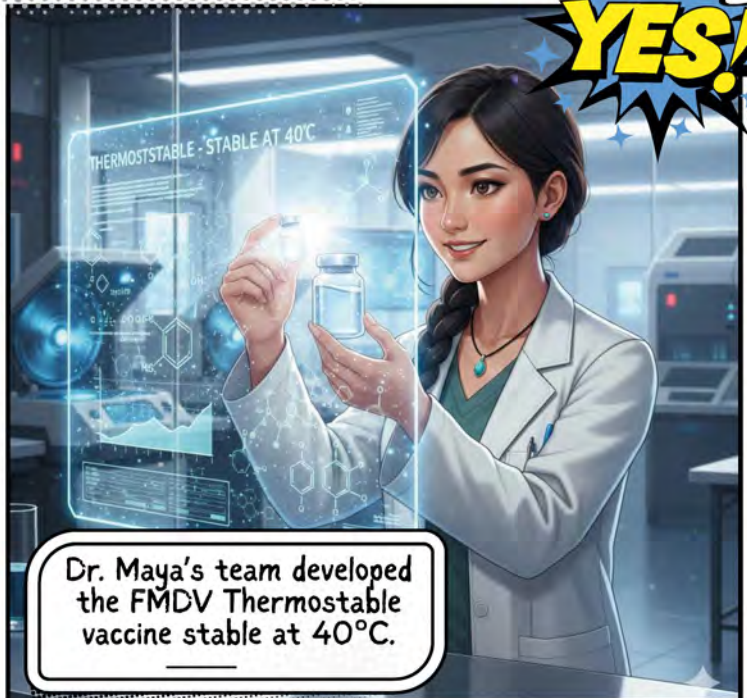
DR. Tara.  
Virologist, WOAH



We both, Me & Dr. Tara  
developing thermostable  
FMDV Vaccine



Dr. Maya, we are  
making progress.

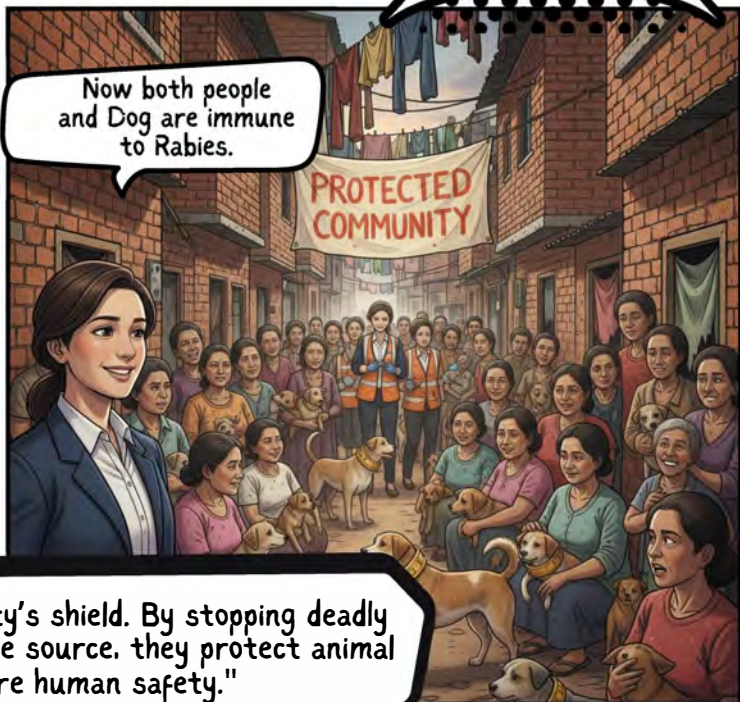
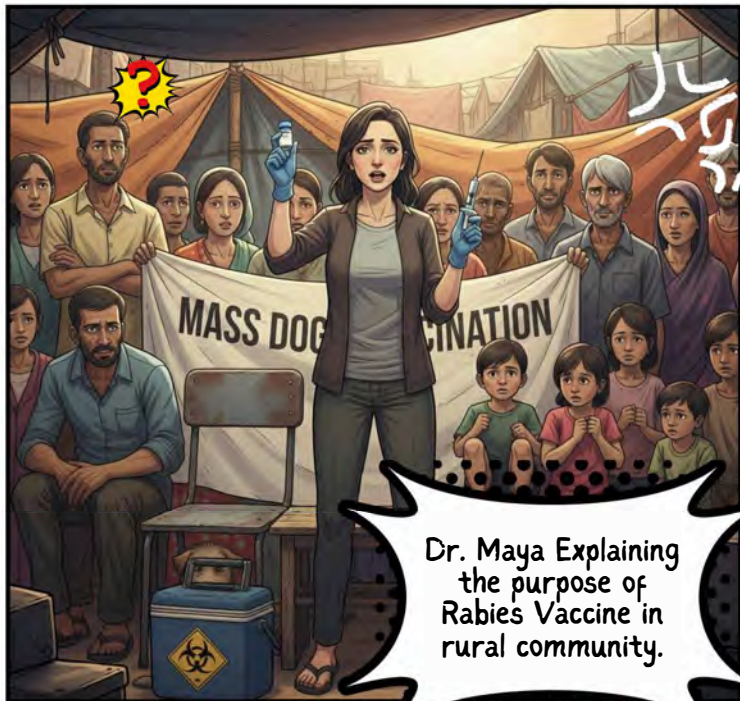
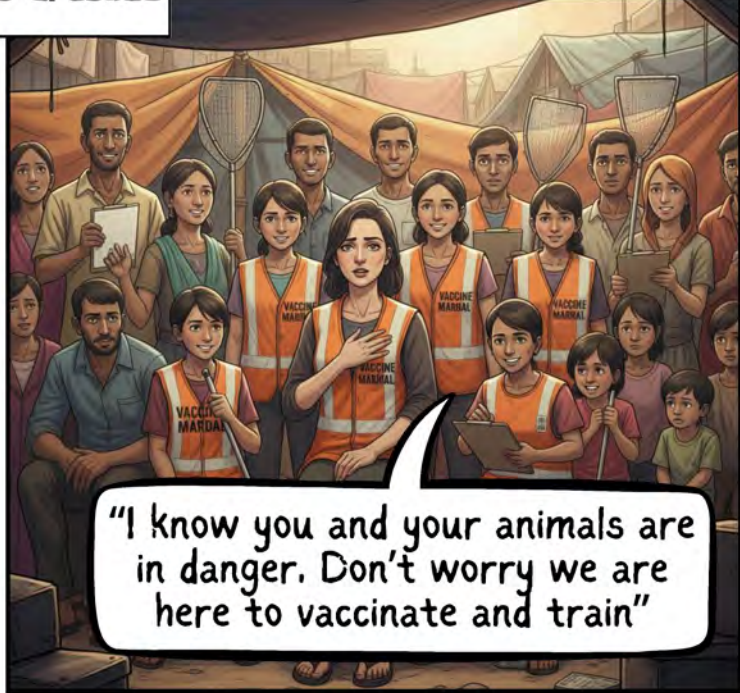


Dr. Maya's team developed  
the FMDV Thermostable  
vaccine stable at 40°C.

"Global health needs every brain. Including the disabled and overlooked people from Indigenous communities aren't just a value, they're the veterinary field's greatest scientific asset."



# The Rabies Crusade



"Vets are the community's shield. By stopping deadly threats like Rabies at the source, they protect animal lives to ensure human safety."

In the forests of Asia, for Wild Disease outbreak

The Harmony of the Wild



"Drone footage is showing them nearby!"



# The Halls of Policy

"We must legislate food safety and veterinary standards while embedding gender equality and inclusivity into the law."



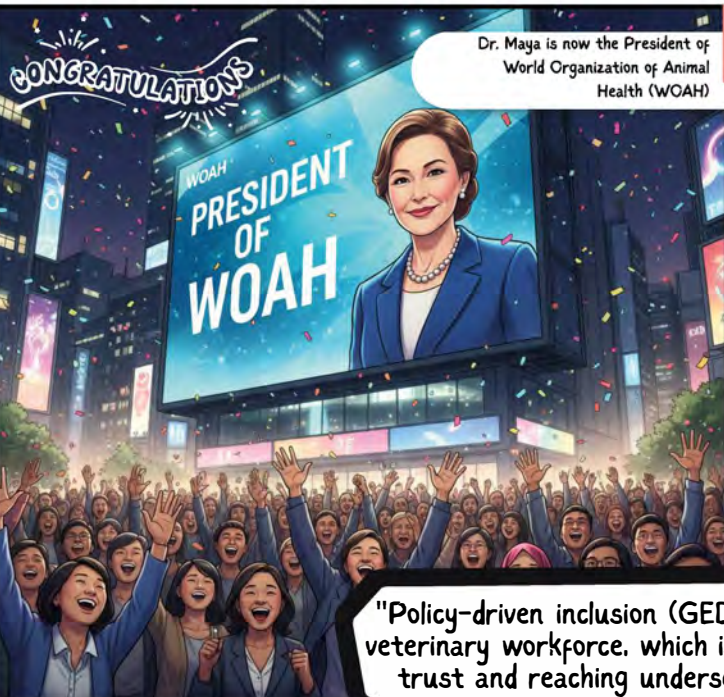
## National One Health & GEDSI Act:

"The Council ratifies the landmark legislation, mandating Gender Inclusivity and the strategic integration of Indigenous experts under the GEDSI (Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion) Framework. This law ensures that our biosecurity is led by a workforce as diverse as the world it protects."

"As a result of legislation, health sector where 50% of leadership is held by women. Indigenous experts, and persons with disabilities. Diversity is no longer an invitation, it is the global standard."



"Veterinary Taskforces serve at the interface of human and animal health, protecting both lives to ensure global security."

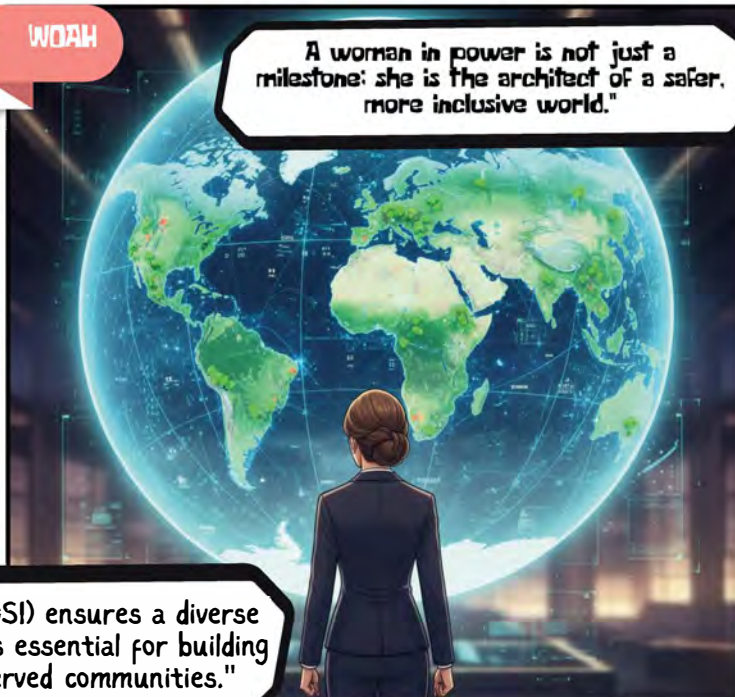


Dr. Maya is now the President of World Organization of Animal Health (WOAH)

WOAH

A woman in power is not just a milestone: she is the architect of a safer, more inclusive world."

"Policy-driven inclusion (GEDSI) ensures a diverse veterinary workforce, which is essential for building trust and reaching underserved communities."



# The Pandemic Shadow (COViD-19 Role)



## LOCKDOWN



"President Dr. Maya Ali convenes global leaders to officially designate veterinarians as Essential Healthcare Providers, making the veterinary workforce a permanent pillar of global health security."



## COVID-19 TESTING

Veterinary labs pivoted to test millions of human COVID-19 samples

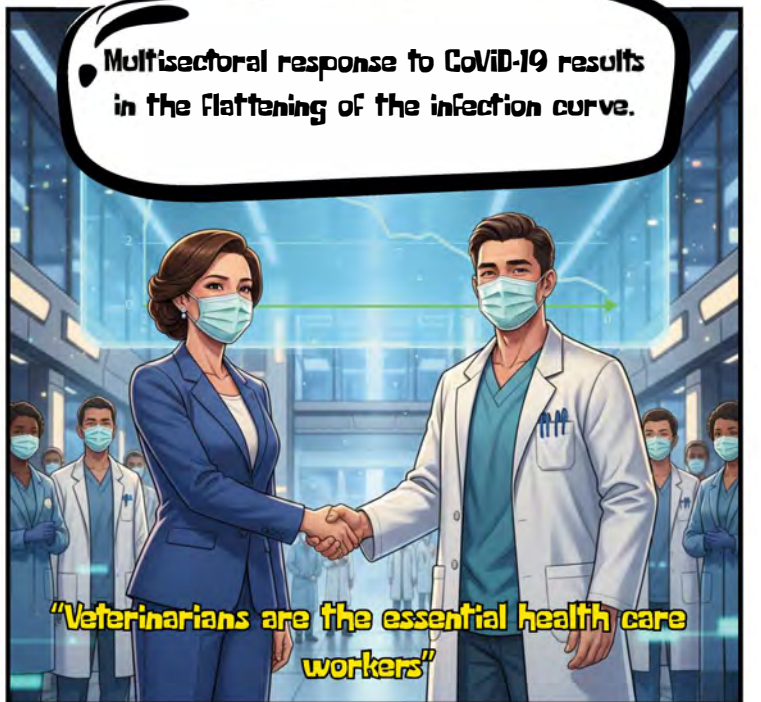


## Vaccination Development

Veterinary scientists were key in developing mRNA vaccines. Their decades of experience with animal coronaviruses (like MERS) provided the blueprint for the COVID-19 vaccine.



"One Health: One shared future."

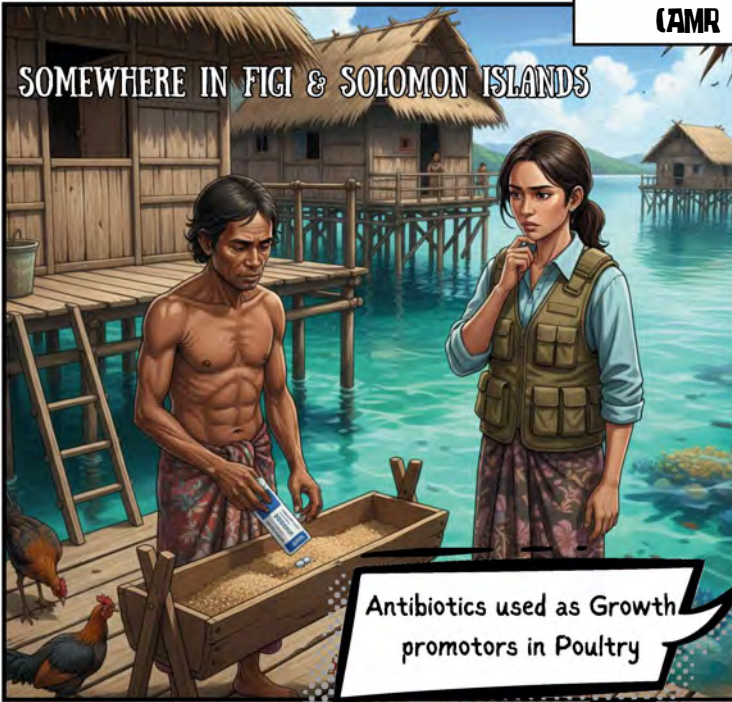


Multisectoral response to CoViD-19 results in the flattening of the infection curve.

"Veterinarians are the essential health care workers"

# The Silent Pandemic (AMR & WASH)

SOMEWHERE IN FIGI & SOLOMON ISLANDS



Antibiotics used as Growth promoters in Poultry



We can't overuse Antibiotics, they must be taken after a prescription from a doctor/Veterinarian.



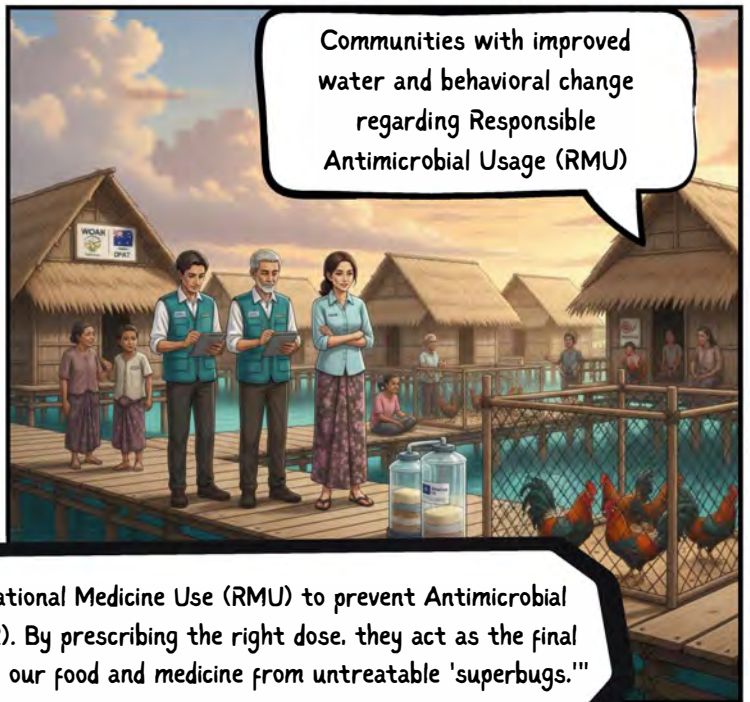
Development of Water filter plants from grant of Australia DFAT.



Clean and Drinkable Water for Communities



Water dips on the farm entrances ensuring Biosecurity protocols.

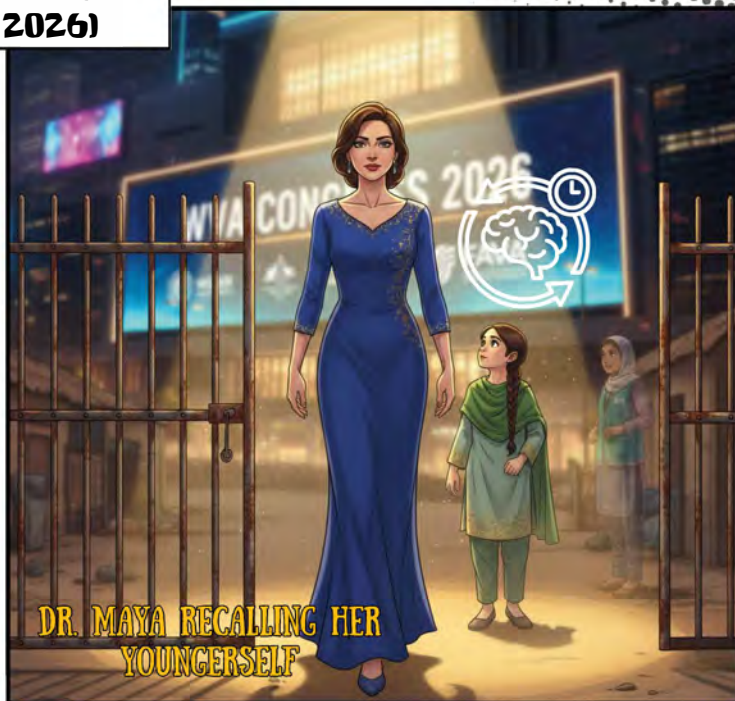


Communities with improved water and behavioral change regarding Responsible Antimicrobial Usage (RMU)

"Vets ensure Rational Medicine Use (RMU) to prevent Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). By prescribing the right dose, they act as the final barrier protecting our food and medicine from untreatable 'superbugs.'"

The Kaleidoscope  
(Tokyo 2026)

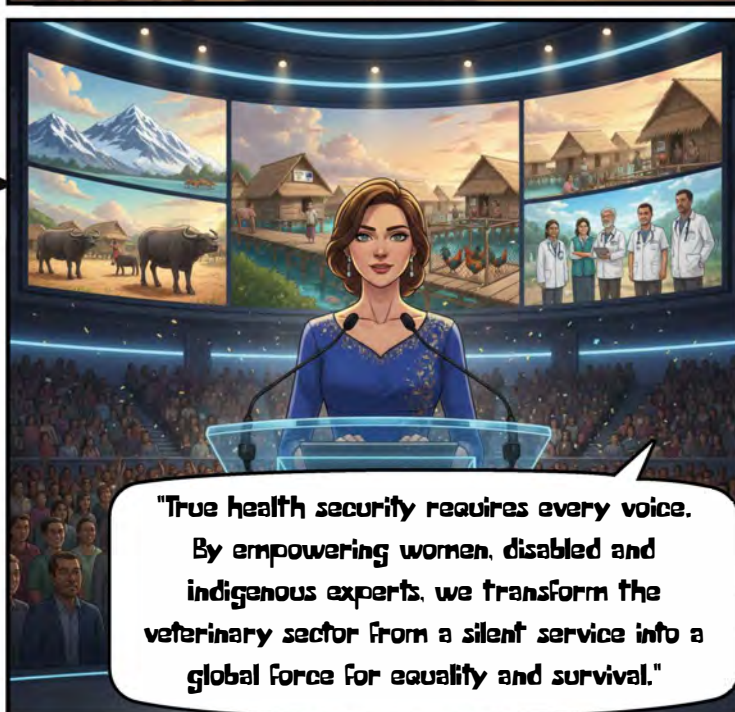
World Veterinary Association and World Organization of Animal Health (WOAH) Conference 2026, Tokyo



DR. MAYA RECALLING HER YOUNGERSELF



THE AWARD FOR PROVEN LEADERSHIP



"True health security requires every voice. By empowering women, disabled and indigenous experts, we transform the veterinary sector from a silent service into a global force for equality and survival."



For a Better Planet.  
To be Continued.....






One health, many voices

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