



World Organisation
for Animal Health



Why Handling Matters: How Good Pig Handling Improves Animal Welfare and Makes Your Job More Enjoyable

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Presentation Overview

Part 1 : Short Bite Issue



What ‘good handling’ means



Why it matters for welfare + productivity + worker safety



Lao PDR context: main challenges



Evidence-based recommendations (WOAH 7.13 + behavior principles)

Part 2 : Hot Topic



TOT → National Integration and Pilot Implementation



How it will be applied in Lao PDR (Phase 2 village trainings)



Reflections (challenges and what works)



Future plan (scale-up through ADB + Korea-Lao PPP + other projects)

Part 1 - Introduction to Pig Handling

Pig handling = daily management

Definition of handling



Moving, catching, loading, restraining, treatment.



Link to welfare + safety + productivity.



Key message: Handling is not extra work; it is smart management.



Good handling improves welfare and makes work easier



Less fear and stress



Fewer injuries/bruises

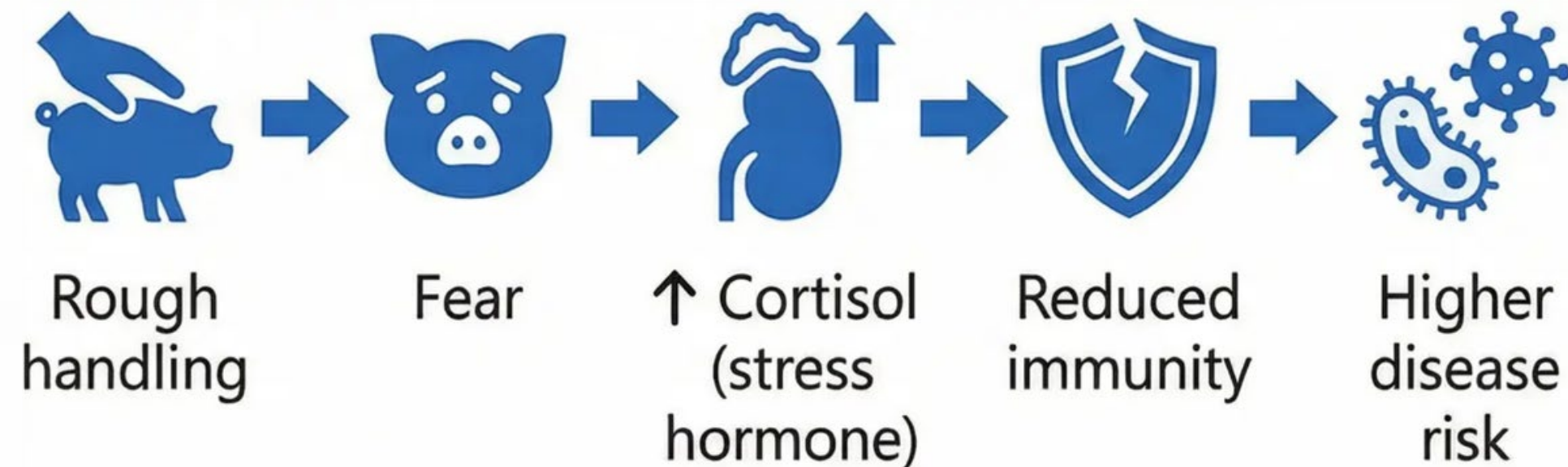


Better productivity and meat quality



Safer, calmer work for staff

Science made simple (stress mechanism)



The Stress Response Mechanism

Impact on Veterinary Work



Vaccination becomes harder



Handling stress can reduce treatment effectiveness

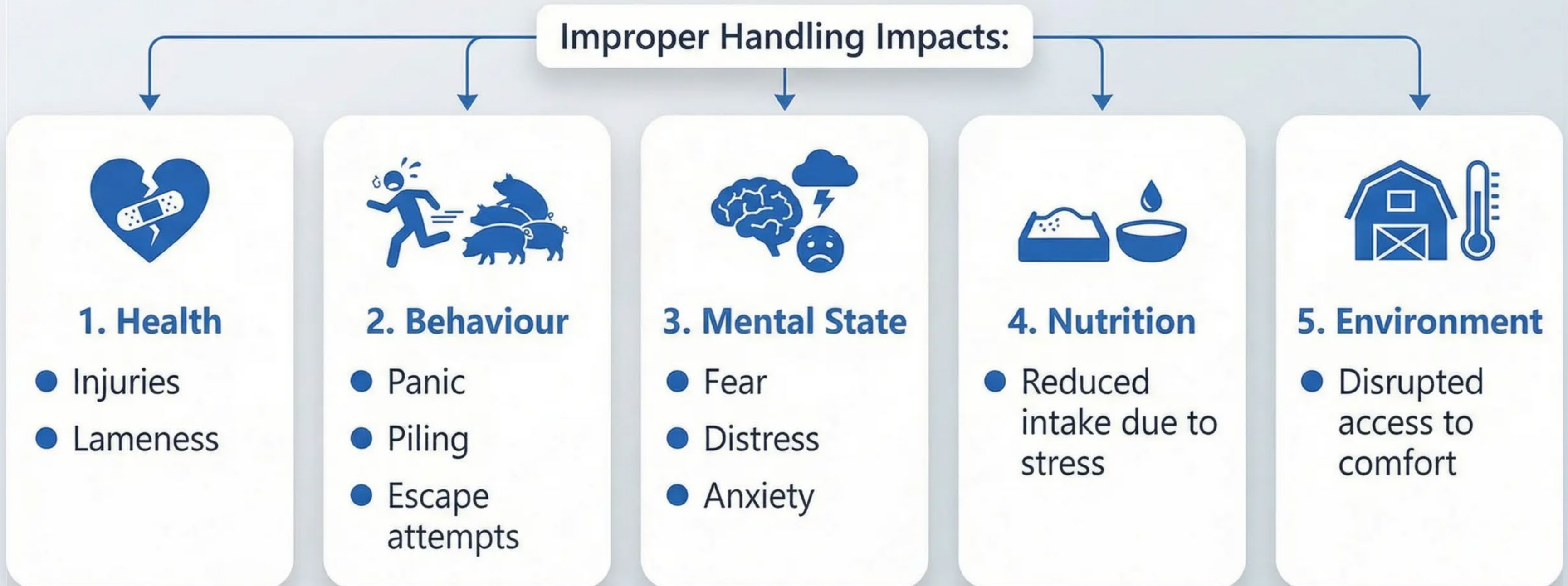


Outbreak response is more challenging

Stressed pigs are harder to handle, making veterinary interventions more difficult and less successful.

Handling affects multiple welfare domains

Using the Five Domains Framework



Why this matters now in Lao PDR



Growing pig production for livelihoods and food security



Many smallholder systems (limited facilities)



Increasing need to meet standards (regional trade/certification)



Training opportunity for rural communities and village vets



What makes handling difficult?



Limited training on pig behavior



Rough methods during vaccination/loading



Facilities: lighting, flooring, narrow passages, sharp turns



Low awareness of welfare indicators



Budget constraints for improvements



Improving Animal Welfare
3rd Edition
A Practical Approach



CABI

What to do: practical, low-cost improvements

Evidence-based recommendations (WOAH 7.13)



Handling techniques

- Calm movement, reduce noise
- Use boards, avoid hitting/prods
- Work with pig flow



Facility/environment

- Even lighting, non-slip floor
- Reduce shadows/obstacles
- Smooth corners and consistent surfaces



Training/monitoring

- Train stockpeople/vets
- Observe welfare indicators



Part 2: From TOT to National Cascading Training and Roll-Out



Integrating Pig Handling into the Field Epidemiology Program (FEP)



Will be delivered through the FEP framework



Align with disease surveillance tasks
(recognition/reporting/response)



Why integration is efficient (budget +
existing training platform)



Leverages existing training platform



What will happen next (March-May 2026)

Target Northern Provinces



Program Details

- Integration with FEP Activity 2.
- Target Groups: VVW (Village Veterinary Workers).

Pilot Phase: February – June 2026

- Scope: 9 target districts in 3 Northern Provinces.



Target Areas: Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Luang Namtha.

Key behavioral topics we will teach



Fear and exploration (why pigs stop/turn/pile)



Fear of humans (negative vs positive interactions)



Sensory characteristics (vision/lighting/surfaces)



Following behavior (moving pigs in groups)



Practical handling technique basics (board use, positioning, patience)



Lessons so far (planning & early integration stage)

What works



Hands-on demonstrations work best



Simple Lao-language key messages improve understanding



Linking handling to easier work increases acceptance



Integration into existing national programs is more sustainable than stand-alone training.

Challenges



Budget and scheduling constraints



Translation and material development needs



Facility variation between areas



Summary



Handling affects welfare, productivity, and worker safety.



Stress reduction supports disease control and easier veterinary work.



WOAH 7.13 gives practical guidance.



Lao PDR strategy: integrate into existing training (FEP) and pilot
→ scale-up through ADB/PPP and other programs.

Mainstreaming WOAH Chapter 7.13 is essential for sustainable pig production, stronger disease control, and improved animal welfare in Lao PDR.



References



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Mainstreaming WOAHP Chapter 7.13 is essential for sustainable pig production, stronger disease control, and improved animal welfare in Lao PDR.

Thanks For
Your Time

Cảm ơn nhiều

ขอบคุณครับ

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