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IFAKARA HEALTH INSTITUTE

research | training | services

Generating Evidence. »»»» Transforming Lives.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023»2028 »»»» IN A NUTSHELL



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1 The Basis for The 2023-2028 Strategy

This new strategic plan is a continuation of IHI's long standing tradition of issuing 5-year strategic plans to guide its development. Through this strategic plan, IHI wants to consolidate its long-term sustainability and scale up its impact in delivering health outcomes. It also aspires to effectively complement the Government's and DPs efforts towards improved health in Tanzania as set out in Tanzania's main development frameworks: Vision 2025 and the Five-Year Development Plan 2021-2026.

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Background

We're IFAKARA!

Ifakara Health Institute (IHI) – or simply Ifakara - is a leading health research organization in Africa, with a strong track record of developing, testing and validating innovations for health. We are driven by core strategic mandate for research, training and services. Ifakara encompasses a broad range of scientific disciplines, spanning from basic biomedical and ecological sciences to clinical trials, health systems research, policy translation, and health program implementation.

More >> (<https://www.ihl.or.tz/>).

Over 60 Years of Impact on Public Health

A visit to Ifakara by Swiss zoologist Prof. Rudolf Geigy in 1949 marked the beginning of over 60-year history



of IFAKARA. Geigy [1920-1995], sought a fieldwork location for researching on tropical diseases. Eight years later, he opened the Swiss Tropical Institute Field Laboratory (STIFL) there. The name "Ifakara" refers to "a place you go to die", a reflection of the historically high burden of disease in the area, before major control efforts started.

In the years after the 1961 independence, STIFL played a central role in training medical officers who could serve the country after independence. The Government of Tanzania mandated the STIFL to play the role

In 1996, IFAKARA was made a trust and renamed, 'Ifakara Health Research and Development Centre (IHRDC). This name lasted until 2008 when it was changed to the current one of 'Ifakara Health Institute.



2. The Operating Context

>> Political

While Tanzania has made progress in various aspects of its health sector, significant challenges persist. Improving healthcare infrastructure, strengthening the healthcare workforce, addressing communicable diseases, and expanding health insurance coverage is critical for enhancing the overall health system and ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare services for all Tanzanian citizens. This strategic plan aims to respond strategically to this dynamic and ever-evolving context.

Top of Form

Tanzania is regarded as one of the safest and politically stable country in Africa. This trend is projected to continue in the next 5 years that will ensure a conducive political environment for the implementation of this strategy.

>> Economic and Environmental

Climate change is expected to have an adverse effect on Tanzania's economy and the health of the population. Agriculture, manufacturing, and energy are among the key sectors most vulnerable to climate change, with drought affecting agriculture and reliable power supplies.



IFAKARA has the opportunity to generate evidence that will ensure efforts to improve health outcomes in Tanzania and beyond should integrate climate change considerations into health policies and address economic disparities, promoting inclusive growth, investing in healthcare infrastructure, and strengthening social protection systems.

>> Social-cultural

Understanding and addressing sociocultural factors, including gender, is crucial for designing effective health interventions and promoting health equity in Tanzania. It requires engaging with local communities, respecting cultural diversity, and collaborating with traditional

and religious leaders to ensure culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate healthcare services.

>> Technological

The rapid growth of mobile technology and digital innovations presents an opportunity for improving healthcare delivery in Tanzania. Digital health solutions, such as telemedicine, mobile health applications, and electronic health records, can help bridge gaps in healthcare access and improve service delivery.

The integration of digital health innovations in the next 5 years can enhance healthcare provision, data management, and health information systems, leading to more efficient and effective healthcare services.

Our Stakeholders

1. Communities	2. Funders
3. Collaborators	4. Government Entities
5. Local Health Facilities	6. Training Institutions
7. Investors	8. The Media
9. International Expert / Advisory Groups & Regional Blocks	
10. Parliamentary Committees & Private Hospitals/Clinics	
11. Private sector companies and service providers	

3. Strategic Direction

IFAKARA re-affirms its purpose and aspirations as part of its long-term positioning in the industry. Furthermore, our statement of identity depicts the services we offer, the reasons for why we exist; our target beneficiaries and stakeholders.



Our core values are beliefs that guide us in our daily activities and decision making. The core values define our culture in providing services to our target groups and other stakeholders to ensure that we provide good services.



>> Legal Identity

IFAKARA is registered as a Trust under the provisions of the Trustee’s Incorporation Act (CAP, 318, R.E. 2002). The registered Trustees are drawn from the Governments of Tanzania and Switzerland.

>> Key Strategic Choice Research and Programs

This represents a key strategic choice in this new strategy to bridge the gap between generated



evidence through research and its application for health outcomes to accelerate our path towards our mission. It will entail the expansion of programme implementation to the level of at least 40% of the Institute's portfolio by year 5.

>> Thematic Focus Areas

1. Evidence Based Solutions

The choice of this strategic objective was informed by our realization that addressing societal needs and challenges requires the translation of basic scientific discoveries into tangible applications that benefit society and bridge the gap between scientific knowledge and real-world applications, such as the development of new interventions, technologies, or policies.

Furthermore, in an era where resources are limited, and the health landscape is constantly evolving, it is imperative that we make informed decisions and prioritize interventions that have proven effectiveness and maximize outcomes. This choice is a commitment to delivering high-quality, efficient, and impactful research and services.

2. Policy and knowledge Translation

The choice of this strategic focus articulates our commitment to bridging the gap between research, policy, and practice. This focus will enable us to actively contribute to the development and implementation of evidence-informed policies and ensure the translation of research findings into practical interventions. It also enables us to contribute to shaping health

policies at local, regional, and national levels, ensuring that they sustainably contribute to positive health outcomes.

3. Community Empowerment for Health

We recognize that sustainable improvements in health outcomes require collaborative efforts, shared decision-making, and the empowerment of communities at various levels to take an active role in shaping their own health.

For IFAKARA, community empowerment for health refers to the process of enabling individuals and communities to gain control over the determinants of their health and take action to address their health needs. It recognizes that communities possess valuable knowledge, resources, and capabilities that can contribute to improving health outcomes.

4. Institutional Development

IFAKARA aspires to be a leading health Institute in Tanzania and beyond, known for excellence in research and program implementation. This calls for a significant investment in its institutional development over the next 5 years. This 5-year strategic plan builds on past successes, experiences, expertise, and lessons learned.

4. Implementation Framework

>> Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system is multi-faceted performance monitoring tool, allowing us to track key indicators and assess the success of our interventions and programs; and conducts rigorous evaluations to assess the impact and effectiveness of specific interventions, policies, or programs.

Through these evaluations, we gain valuable insights into whether our efforts are achieving the desired outcomes and identify factors that contribute to success or failure. These findings help us allocate our resources efficiently and improve the effectiveness of our programs.

Moreover, our MEL system is designed to foster a culture of learning and knowledge generation. By capturing and analyzing data systematically, we identify best practices, learn from past experiences, and promote innovative approaches. This enables us to continuously adapt and improve our services, ensuring that we provide the highest standard of quality.

Transparency and accountability are fundamental



principles of our MEL system. By measuring performance, evaluating outcomes, and reporting findings, we ensure that stakeholders have access to accurate and reliable information. This transparency builds trust among our key stakeholders, facilitating collaboration and informed decision-making.

Lastly, the MEL system plays a crucial role in strategic planning and improvement. It helps us identify strategic priorities, set realistic targets, and develop action plans based on evidence. Through continuous monitoring and evaluation, we can track progress towards our goals and make data-driven adjustments to our strategies, ensuring that we remain responsive to the evolving healthcare needs of our community.

>> Governance and Management Set up

Strategic governance for IHI is the foundation for success and sustainability. To ensure smooth strategy execution, IHI will maintain its governing structure that has 3 layers: the Board of Governors (BOG); the Board of Trustees (BOT), and the Management Committee (MC).

The Boards: provide strategic leadership, guidance, direction and support the IHI business in its ongoing quest for sustainability and viability.

Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC): provides strategic leadership in review of our scientific strategies and advise the Boards on the most appropriate pathways.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FARC): handles financial management and organizational operations.

5. Connect With Us



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Ifakara Street, Mikocheni. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



@ifakarahealth



info@ihi.or.tz



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