



STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Federation of Fertility Societies (IFFS) is a global leader in education, research, and advocacy, striving for universal access to the highest quality fertility care. As a Non-State Actor in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), we promote and develop educational initiatives in the field of reproductive health in support of WHO aims and objectives and the renewed focus and prioritization the WHO has given to infertility as a disease.

Vision: All women and men have access to quality fertility and reproductive health care.

Mission: Our worldwide mission is to stimulate research, disseminate educational information, and promote the superior clinical care of patients in all aspects of reproductive and fertility medicine.

Beginning in June 2019, IFFS leadership initiated a strategic planning process to set a course for the next three years. The work built upon past strategic plans but maintained an eye toward the future. Over a series of phone calls and extensive email exchanges throughout the summer, pre-planning efforts set the stage for a face-to-face strategic planning session spanning two days in Philadelphia in October 2019. From that meeting, work by breakout groups continued, leading to the development of strategic goal-setting in each of seven sections. The results are summarized in this document, with IFFS leadership utilizing a more extensive working document to execute the plan and make adjustments as needed.

Please contact the IFFS Secretariat if you are interested in learning more about the strategic plan or IFFS in general; secretariat@iffs-reproduction.org or 856-423-0047.

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IFFS Executive Committee and Board of Directors 2019-2022

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 Alan DeCherney, MD, *Global Reproductive*
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February 7, 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you the Executive Summary of the IFFS Strategic Plan 2020-2022.

As you know, our organization is robust, and the recent strategic planning process (see below) will enable us to move IFFS to next level, so important in the life-course of organizations. IFFS is highly respected in the international arena for disseminating high quality educational and scientific information relevant to reproduction, reproductive medicine, and health care delivery, as well as human rights and reproductive rights across the globe. In addition, we are a nonstate actor (NSA) in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO). Among IFFS leadership are five members of academies of science or medicine, including: the U.S. National Academy of Medicine (Alan DeCherney, Bart Fauser, Linda Giudice, Joe Leigh Simpson) and the Chinese Academy of Science (Zi-Jiang Chen). This is in addition to our highly professional and dedicated clinical, research, and policy leadership, members, and staff globally. Our educational and scientific programs span 37 countries and attract hundreds of attendees at each event. With that said, there is always room for improvement and the need to change with the times. The new Strategic Plan is aimed at these goals.

The Strategic Planning meeting was held in Philadelphia in October 2019 after months of preparatory work by dedicated members of the team. The day-long session was a rigorous process in which we critically reviewed our organization - its successes, challenges, and potential for the future, culminating in a 3 year “road map” for the path forward. Over the past 3 months we have worked hard to construct the Executive Summary, which contains the vision, background, challenges, opportunities, and 3-year goals for each of seven strategic areas:

- Education
- Communications
- Membership
- Standards and Best Practices
- Research
- Advocacy
- Finance

The Strategic Plan will guide our organization over the next 3 years in its vision that all women and men have access to quality fertility and reproductive health care *and* in its mission to stimulate research, disseminate educational information, and promote superior clinical care of patients in all aspects of reproductive and fertility medicine. Huge appreciation is extended to all those involved for their time and thoughtful contributions.

We hope this Executive Summary will give insights into the IFFS and the value it brings across the globe, and we welcome your feedback about directions and collaborations. We have much work ahead, and I am confident we shall succeed with continued collegiality, energy, focus, adaptability, foresight partnering, and innovation.

This is a great step forward and an exciting time for the IFFS!

Sincerely,

Linda C. Giudice, MD, PhD, FACOG, FRCOG
President, International Federation of Fertility Societies
Member, U.S. National Academy of Medicine (elected 2002)
Distinguished Professor
Director, Center for Research, Innovation and Training in Reproduction and Infertility
Founder, UCSF Program for Reproductive Health and the Environment
University of California, San Francisco

1. EDUCATION SUMMARY

VISION:

To increase access to high quality education in reproductive health for practitioners with special emphasis on emerging economies and LMICs.

BACKGROUND:

The IFFS has evolved its activities in the last two decades to become a committed provider of education in reproductive medicine in emerging economies/low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The educational program that launched in 2001 under the leadership of Ian Cooke is a core component of the IFFS work plan, and a fulfilment of our responsibility as a Non-State Actor in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO).

The educational program has taken the form of face-to-face workshops, typically in collaboration with a local fertility society, academic institution, or obstetrics and gynaecology society. IFFS has held workshops in 37 countries in all geographical regions except North America, Western Europe and Australasia. In 2017, the IFFS Board approved a strategy for education which included broadening our educational activities to include a future web-based educational resource that is now near realization. The format of the workshop program began as 1-2 day, mainly topic-based agenda. More recently IFFS has introduced the curriculum-based workshop, a 3-day event with a broad infertility and ART syllabus, accompanied by documentation to support local capacity-building in training in reproductive medicine.

A further evolution has been the broadening of the target attendees to include embryologists and nurses. Workshops follow various financial models blending varying combinations of IFFS support, local support, and external support (e.g. non-restricted industry support). The introduction of an online education portal will supplement the existing educational program while adding additional opportunities to reach new audiences with nuanced educational offerings. Regional/international symposia represent another aspect of IFFS educational programming.

Educational aims and objectives include:

1. To increase health practitioner's knowledge and skills in reproductive health, particularly in LMICs
2. To support increased local training capacity and capability in reproductive health in LMICs
3. To increase research capability in reproductive health particularly in emerging LMICs
4. To promote high standards and safe, evidence-based practice through educational content
5. To increase access to IFFS educational content for health care practitioners globally
6. To increase knowledge and awareness on reproductive health and infertility matters for commissioners and funders of healthcare programs, departments of health, members of the public, and those who suffer from infertility and use infertility and reproductive healthcare services

CHALLENGES:

1. Educational program outcomes have not been formally and independently evaluated
2. Competition in the field
3. Ensuring IFFS educational outputs are addressing real needs
4. Additional external support (industry, philanthropic) is required to support expansion of the program

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. IFFS has a unique experience gained over two decades delivering educational activity in LMICs upon which to build.
2. While there is no shortage of educational offerings in the field of reproduction and fertility, IFFS has an opportunity to identify and fulfill unmet needs in LMICs; there is a global hunger for knowledge.
3. The needs for education vary geographically according to demographics, epidemiology of the disease of infertility, State economics and stage of development of reproductive health and infertility services within States.
4. There is interest in IFFS certification of educational activities in some States.

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Have an established online educational program that addresses the breadth of the ART curriculum and is providing, or poised to provide, some form of certification for participants
- GOAL #2: Establish a formal process of knowledge evaluation to enable a certifiable web-based curriculum
- GOAL #3: Expand the IFFS workshop scope and reach and integrate live streaming technology where appropriate
- GOAL #4: Establish a list of 30+ potential faculty capable of delivering high-quality IFFS programming
- GOAL #5: Create a systematic and consistent approach for obtaining educational program feedback (from individuals and from States) and cycling feedback into future improvement

2. COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY

VISION:

IFFS has a robust, efficient, and responsive communications program, ensuring timely contact and engagement with our constituents: members, affiliates and coalition partners, collaborators, non-member healthcare providers, and corporate partners.

BACKGROUND:

IFFS communicates information to the members, member societies, and other stakeholders through several routes. The main information source is the webpage, which should contain all of the important information from the description of the society (mission and vision) to details of IFFS activities (e.g. World Congress, workshops, other). IFFS has experienced challenges in ensuring updated contacts for member societies, and in maintaining a strong social media presence. By addressing these areas and driving more traffic to an updated website, IFFS will be able to improve its overall standing and impression on members and the wider public. Members could also be asked for suggestions to improve the usability and content of the IFFS website. IFFS also maintains a strong academic journal in *Global Reproductive Health* and seeks to grow the journal's audience and influence. A communications plan is required to maintain and manage all of these outlets.

CHALLENGES:

1. Generally, many people feel overwhelmed by communications and there is high competition for individuals' attention in the digital space: social media and email in particular
2. Identifying the right resources and structure to maintain an ongoing communications plan year-round
3. Maintaining up-to-date contact lists in a constantly changing landscape

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. IFFS can amplify its member societies' messaging in the online sphere, and by doing so will help amplify its own message.
2. By thinking creatively, IFFS can identify unmet needs and then design communications around those needs to maximize the chance of connecting with individuals.

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Maintain a website that is relevant, up-to-date, and has demonstrated improved traffic across all metrics (increased time on site, decreased bounce rate, traffic from all continents, etc.)
- GOAL #2: Maintain a fully functional social media presence across at least three platforms (regular updates and engagement with followers) with a 100% increase in followers from 2019 numbers
- GOAL #3: To specifically encourage uptake of our journal *Global Reproductive Health*, utilize communications as a vehicle for increasing submissions and journal website traffic
- GOAL #4: Have a comprehensive communications program which includes the above-mentioned efforts plus email and print campaigns as needed to project a consistent image and message across all IFFS-sponsored and partnership activities

3. MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY

VISION:

Individual practitioners and national societies value IFFS membership for professional development, scientific knowledge related to infertility research and clinical best practices, and participation in a community advocating for access and equitable fertility care globally.

BACKGROUND:

IFFS was constituted over 50 years ago as a result of the desire of national fertility societies across the globe to become members of a federation with common goals.

1. IFFS has a unique mission: education, advocacy, access to care, information (*Surveillance*), support (local, global)
2. Where IFFS can provide leadership, partnership and value to its members: education in LMIC, support for governments, patients, corporate partners, WHO
3. Why be a member society or individual member? Access to education, leaders, journal, consulting, strategic development, networking, from anywhere: DELIVERING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE *LOCALLY*
4. How do we encourage participation? Remove barriers, give appreciation, provide resources, contact regularly

Attractiveness

- Global workshops
- Online education
- *Global Reproductive Health Journal*
- Global reach/influence, including a multilingual approach

Value

- Free communication: GRH Journal, newsletter
- Reduced registration rates for live activities
- Reduced or free online education
- Exposure for member society on IFFS website
- Connection to other member societies (collaboration, upcoming events)

CHALLENGES:

1. While IFFS has provided educational programs in 37 countries around the globe, membership would be increased with improved name recognition, a strong social media/online/email presence has been wanting
2. Timely payment of dues by societies; affordability of individual dues for some has been a challenge
3. Recruiting new member societies and new individual members is a challenge

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Enhancing the organization's image and impact by better engaging current members and increased recruitment of new members (societies and individuals)
2. Establishing a role as a resource for societies globally

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Increase individual membership by 15% above 2019 levels
- GOAL #2: Maintain complete and accurate contact information for – and open communication with – 100% of Member Societies, and dues payments from >80% of Member Societies
- GOAL #3: Identify the status of all non-member countries and take steps to invite them to join IFFS (i.e. whether there is an existing national society to recruit or whether we can pursue the creation of an existing national society)
- GOAL #4: Establish a comprehensive individual membership marketing plan
- GOAL #5: Create a leadership development program including a pipeline for future volunteer leaders

4. STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES SUMMARY

VISION:

IFFS has raised standards of medical care in reproductive health globally through its educational programs and standards and practices documents. More universal standards and practices may be identified to achieve the overarching IFFS goal of raising standards of medical care in reproductive health and fertility care.

BACKGROUND:

IFFS is fortunate to have several resources already in place pertinent to standards and best practices, which have been developed over several years with input from several different constituencies. These materials include a body of Practice Standards and policy statements developed by the IFFS Practice Committee. Similar materials have been also developed by other large organizations (e.g. ASRM and ESHRE), but the IFFS products have the advantage of representing a broader international coalition with greater attention to environments with more limited resources and not just the most developed settings. IFFS has two additional forums: the journal *Global Reproductive Health* and the triennial survey, *Surveillance*, both of which occupy unique niches in reporting and promoting advances in reproductive health care. The existing IFFS documents can serve as a platform from which to expand and refine the current products to seek a broader global audience. In this manner, more universal standards and best practices may be identified to achieve the overarching IFFS goal of raising standards of medical care in reproductive health. All of these efforts could benefit from broader dissemination which should serve as one of the primary new strategic goals for standards and best practices.

CHALLENGES:

1. Keeping updated, evidence-based documents in a changing landscape of care

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Provide an extensive library of IFFS Standards and Best Practices documents for members and partners

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Via a Standards and Best Practices Committee, assess the accuracy of all existing standards and best practice materials and will take appropriate action on each item
- GOAL #2: Engage with additional constituencies to create mechanisms for identifying needs, disseminating standards and best practice materials, and soliciting feedback
- GOAL #3: Have a well-defined understanding of the WHO relationship, with metrics in place to assess impact of joint collaboration

5. RESEARCH SUMMARY

VISION:

IFFS is recognized as research-strong on a global level. IFFS is recognized globally as the “go to” organization for translating high income country (HIC) discoveries to low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). Our scientific reputation is reinforced by the reputation of our leaders.

BACKGROUND:

IFFS has always espoused high quality discovery research. Discoveries are presented at many IFFS meetings. Research areas can be laboratory-based, translation to clinical benefit, or implementation. IFFS is especially supportive of basic science, clinical investigation, and health care delivery in underserved regions. It strives specifically to contribute to development of young investigators in underserved regions. IFFS further has expertise and capacity for educational research, specifically curricula developing laboratory or clinical skills. Our partners include ICMART for research on utilization; ASRM, FIGO, ANARA, and AFS for research, effectiveness and safety of ART; WHO for standardization/ harmonization of ART infertility; and WES and WERF for endometriosis research and initiatives.

CHALLENGES:

1. Goals herein require support from funders (pharma, philanthropic, or individual)
2. Goals require buy-in from IFFS Corporate Advisory Board and IFFS officers

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Opportunities for IFFS to champion robust research in infertility and fertility care, training, and capacity building are nearly boundless.
2. IFFS can partner with well-established labs and companies to leverage resources to facilitate training slots in Preimplantation Genetic Testing and IVF.
3. IFFS Research Committee will bring focus and concentration to strategic goals.

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Increase number of lectures on carrier screening in all events by 50% over absolute numbers provided in 2019 IFFS workshops and conferences.
- GOAL #2: Increase lectures on pre-implantation genetic testing and screening by 50% in LMIC events and venues over the number of lectures in 2019.
- GOAL #3: Increase number of workshops worldwide dedicated to genetic testing (of any breadth) by 25%, compared to workshops offered in 2019.
- GOAL #4: Increase number of countries fully contributing to IFFS *Surveillance* by 30% over 2019 participation figures.
- GOAL #5: Develop a program of embryology training and biopsy in host labs worldwide, offering three sites.
- GOAL #6: Create a program for person-specific training in clinical reproductive medicine or laboratory testing. Offer positions for three trainees of one month duration, emphasizing recipients from LMIC.
- GOAL #7: Create a program for Laboratory Quality Management in embryology, including embryo biopsy and cryopreservation; to operate in three different sites.
- GOAL #8: Create a committee whose purpose is to identify gaps needing pursuit in reproductive medicine; prioritize and promulgate findings.

6. ADVOCACY SUMMARY

VISION:

To create a unique and relevant role for IFFS as a global fertility society with advocacy as part of its mission, providing salient information in the field of reproductive medicine for professionals and other stakeholders, and the public worldwide.

BACKGROUND:

The IFFS has evolved its activities in the last two decades to become a global fertility organization in the reproductive health space in several countries. Over the years IFFS has worked with several global organizations, e.g., WHO, FIGO, as well as regional fertility societies (e.g., ASRM, ESHRE, ASPIRE, AFS) among others. IFFS holds workshops on professional education and capacity building and scientific world congresses in different parts of the world. In all these programs a number of reproductive medicine concepts are reviewed. Advocating for access to universal fertility care, improved standards of practice, safety and efficacy in fertility care, and promotion of fertility as a human right is a major goal of IFFS.

CHALLENGES:

1. A new direction for IFFS as advocacy, broadly defined, has not yet been developed.
2. To date, the IFFS has performed no major advocacy on any reproductive medicine topics requiring urgent advocacy.
3. The ability to advocate with and on behalf of relevant stakeholders has fallen short of the global need and IFFS vision and mission.
4. Advocacy strategy must be aligned with the communications strategy, which is itself under development.
5. Metrics for success of the Advocacy Program need to be developed.

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. There are extensive fertility media platforms from which advocacy topics can be augmented in relevant communications.
2. Leveraging an enhanced IFFS Communications Program as a conduit to global advocacy is seen as great value.
3. Our journal, *Global Reproductive Health*, is an important platform for advocacy promotion.
4. Our *Surveillance* is a strong component of awareness and advocacy for the importance of accuracy and transparency in data reporting in ART cycles.
5. Partnering with other organizations focused on human rights and reproductive rights can advance common advocacy goals.

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Establish an annual IFFS advocacy topic to highlight items of seminal importance
- GOAL #2: Collaborate with local fertility, embryology, urology and OB-GYN societies, regional fertility societies, global health and reproductive health organizations, national Ministries of Health, academic institutions, and other organizations and foundations to promote safe, effective and accessible fertility care, fertility awareness and human reproductive rights.
- GOAL # 3: Develop metrics of success to evaluate the impact of advocacy campaigns locally, regionally and globally as well as the benefits with all the identified IFFS collaborators.
- GOAL #4: Establish a communication system designed for disseminating goals of the advocacy program and assuring prompt comment by IFFS on reproductive medicine topic requiring immediate comment.
- GOAL # 5: Develop a financial model to support and sustain the Advocacy program.

7. FINANCE SUMMARY

VISION:

IFFS is a financially secure organization with a reliable cash flow through sponsorship, membership and World Congress programs, philanthropy, as well as wisely managed investments as a safety net. IFFS attracts funding because of its global authority and successful education program.

BACKGROUND:

Main sources of income:

1. Sponsorships: unrestricted grants from corporate sponsors, which are generally negotiated annually.
2. Triennial World Congress: this has been the main source of income for IFFS.
3. Society membership fees in the aggregate amount to \$10,000-15,000 USD per year; individual dues currently have minimal impact.

Expenses include:

1. Management: through a contract with Talley Management Group, IFFS affairs have been coordinated (meeting/event logistics, board/committee management, administrative duties, website, social media, online education portal management). These services include office utilities and equipment, hardware and software, employees' salaries, training, registration and maintenance of membership and communication with member societies, and event logistics, and related online services like hosting and management of email accounts).
2. Educational activities: at a local, regional or International level, World Congress, workshops, symposia, and also the activities of specific committees and publications, like *Surveillance* and *Global Reproductive Health* journal.

IFFS revenues are used for its intrinsic management and our educational program. Recently IFFS has become a global educator and advocate, with expanding activities in all continents and a special interest in low- and middle-income countries. This is an exciting opportunity for the growth and visibility of IFFS but poses some risks and financial challenges in the future that need to be addressed as we move along.

There are significant opportunities for the organization going forward, to increase our income and revenues:

- a. GRH journal-related profits
- b. Individual membership
- c. Revenue from international meetings
- d. ART consultancy

CHALLENGES:

1. Dependence on World Congress (cash flow limitations particularly in the year prior to a World Congress)
2. Timely preparation of the budget and ongoing review of budget projections

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Assure IFFS has a sustainable financial prospectus
2. Fiscal sustainability can be enhanced by high-quality educational programming
3. Strategic approach of the Finance Committee will support all areas of the strategic plan: increased engagement of current and new members, and strategy for new partners and philanthropic benefactors

SUMMARY OF THREE-YEAR GOALS:

- GOAL #1: Develop a clear model for meeting sponsorship with expense transparency
- GOAL #2: Increase educational activity sponsorship by 100% over average annual support
- GOAL #3: Develop 2-3 additional revenue streams for predictable cash flow and assured sustainability