

AIHI Strategic Plan 2004-2008

Introduction

The Australian International Health Institute (AIHI) strives for a world where developing nations are able to meet the health needs of their populations.

Established in 1998 as a not for profit company by the University of Melbourne, **AIHI aims to increase the capacity of health workers and planners across the Asia-Pacific region to respond to the health needs of their populations through education, research, leadership development and health specialist services.**

AIHI is uniquely located in one of Australia's foremost universities regarded highly for its research and quality of education. Drawing on 150 years of University experience and expertise, AIHI is the institutional locus for international health at the University of Melbourne. Recognising that sectors other than health make a major contribution to the health of societies, AIHI brings a multidisciplinary approach to international health. This includes engagement with the faculties of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, Law, Education, Arts, Engineering and Economics and the many research units and Centres of Excellence at the University.

AIHI's focus areas of primary health care and disease burden acknowledge the critical and emergent health issues facing countries of the region. Our primary health care approach aims to advocate for, and develop, effective responses to neglected and emerging health needs. This includes responses to disability, mental health promotion, water and health, adolescent health, women and children's health, indigenous health, security and health, mobile populations, tobacco control and other non-communicable diseases.

In seeking to mitigate the burden of disease, AIHI is involved in projects that lead to improved programs of prevention, care and treatment. It does this through partnership in development assistance projects and consultancies for international donors, funding agencies, philanthropic trusts and non-government organisations. There is a major focus on communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and vaccine preventable diseases.

AIHI actively seeks to expand its contribution to capacity building and workforce development in South Asia, primarily India; North Asia, primarily China; South East Asia, primarily the Mekong Sub-region and Indonesia; and the Pacific: primarily Papua New Guinea.

AIHI is committed to the principles of:

- Social justice and equity;
- Sustainability of health outcomes through building capacity within health systems;
- Partnership approaches that embrace cross cultural learning and exchange for the design; management, implementation and evaluation of programs;
- Integrity demonstrated through ethical practices;
- Evidence based planning for international public health programs;
- Working with communities to promote healthy practices and environments; and
- Maximising the multi-disciplinary contribution within and beyond of The University of Melbourne to international health.

The 2004-2008 Strategic Plan sets a framework through which AIHI will strive to achieve its mission. The program priorities and strategic approaches will direct and inform future planning and development at AIHI.

Program Priorities:

1. Education and Training in International Health

Goal:

To strengthen the capacity of health workers and planners to respond to priority health needs through a regional program of international health education, training and workforce development.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Promoting and expanding postgraduate education in international health in existing awards of the University of Melbourne and through institutional linkages within the Asia-Pacific region. This includes the existing Masters of Public Health (MPH), Masters of Social Health (MSH) and Masters of International Development (MID) and may lead to a Masters of International Public Health (MIPH) in Australia and offshore.
- 1.2 Promoting undergraduate education and research in international health. This includes the identification of research placement and supervision for Advanced Medical Science students, curriculum development and offshore residential courses.
- 1.3 Nurturing the growth and diversification of the Sir Gustav Nossal International Leadership Program. This may include the streams of indigenous health, health policy development, immunisation and child health and health promotion.
- 1.4 Identifying partners for the delivery of innovative non-award education & training in the Asia-Pacific region. This may be in the areas of adolescent health, reproductive health, safe motherhood, research methods, harm reduction, HIV/AIDS, disability and tobacco control.
- 1.5 Strengthening health workforce development by upgrading skills for public health practitioners, and planners in development settings. This may include government officials, allied health workers, researchers or students seeking to advance international health.
- 1.6 Strengthening leadership and professional development of younger Australian international health professionals.

Targets:

- To secure regular annual increases in student enrolment in international health subjects.
- To establish an offshore program of public health education (by award) delivered by flexible mode.
- To establish a program of workforce development in countries of the region through non-award education and training.
- To facilitate the establishment of a Melbourne or Australian consortium delivering a Masters in International Public Health.
- To extend the undergraduate research year in international health beyond University of Melbourne (B.Med.Sci) to other medical schools and allied health disciplines.
- To design and deliver a minimum of one leadership training program annually.
- To ensure a financially self sustaining education and training portfolio from 2004.

2. Research in International Health

Goal:

To build capacity in the Asia Pacific region to conduct and disseminate international public health research in collaboration with regional partners.

Objectives:

- 2.1 Securing collaborative and independent research grants that contribute to sustainable health outcomes in resource constrained settings.
- 2.2 Responding to requests for short-term technical inputs that strengthen the evidence base within health systems. This may include rapid assessments, situation analyses, planning community interventions, impact assessments, evaluation of effectiveness, and qualitative or quantitative surveys.
- 2.3 Conducting training in research methods and evaluation of public health interventions both in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.
- 2.4 Attracting students from the region for higher research degrees addressing relevant international health issues.
- 2.5 Holding research grants within which higher research degree students and young researchers are mentored and supervised.
- 2.6 Providing supervision and mentoring for undergraduate and postgraduate degree students, post-doctoral and visiting fellows and new researchers.
- 2.7 Integrating evidence based practice into all AIHI program activities.

Targets:

- To ensure all research activities demonstrate methodological rigour, be of publishable quality and are disseminated to contribute to international knowledge.
- To demonstrate evidence based planning and evaluation for all AIHI activities.
- To increase annually the number of post graduate students and post doctoral fellows being supervised by AIHI.
- To attract increasing numbers of visiting fellows to AIHI.
- To secure a minimum of one major research grant per year.
- To ensure a financially self sustaining international health research program from 2005.

3. Leadership and Advocacy

Goal:

To provide leadership in the development of appropriate responses to critical international health issues through advocacy and public awareness.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Raising awareness of international health issues and best practice through public forums and seminars.
- 3.2 Engaging internationally in health policy revision and development and health program planning and evaluation to ensure sustainable health outcomes.
- 3.3 Identifying critical and contemporary health issues for dialogue with government and industry policy-makers.
- 3.4 Demonstrating responses to issues largely neglected in international health settings such as disability and mental health promotion.
- 3.5 Strengthening networks and health information access through AIHI led Special Interest Groups to strengthen advocacy approaches.
- 3.6 Contributing to public debate on the role of Australian-based international health research.

Targets:

- To expand the AIHI public forum and seminar series.
- To secure an increased involvement in government health policy and planning, primarily in relation to health in low and middle income countries.
- To invest AIHI resources in promoting neglected international health issues.

4. Health Specialist Services

Goal:

To engage in project implementation and technical assistance consultancies which strengthen the health systems of developing nations.

Objectives:

- 4.1 Participating in development assistance projects that strengthen AIHI engagement in education, training, research and leadership activities.
- 4.2 Engaging in consultancies that reflect the vision and key strategies of AIHI and build a reputation as a provider of quality health specialists.
- 4.3 Positioning AIHI as a preferred adviser to government, donors, multilateral agencies, international non government organisations and Australian managing contractors for the design, implementation and evaluation of development assistance projects.
- 4.4 Increasing consultancy that grows the University of Melbourne staff participation and exchange in international health.

Targets:

- To maintain a project implementation portfolio which reflects AIHI's guiding principles and focus areas.
- To demonstrate an increasing contribution from AIHI to technical assistance in international health.
- To increase annually the involvement of staff from the University of Melbourne in international health programs.
- To generate revenue surplus from consultancies and projects for re-investment in AIHI programs.

Strategic Approaches:

5. International Program Development

Goal:

To secure new work that significantly contributes to the growth of AIHI.

Objectives:

- 5.1 Securing major development assistance project contracts that identify AIHI as the lead agency or project associate where AIHI brings existing project management strength and technical or geographical expertise.
- 5.2 Securing project implementation partnerships that identify a subcontracting or supporting agency role for AIHI.
- 5.3 Seeking funds for innovative activities in support of international health from philanthropic agencies and foundations.
- 5.4 Establishing an effective and analytical tracking system which identifies new work, potential partners and funding sources.
- 5.5 Establishing systems and capacity for rapid response to technical assistance requests.
- 5.6 Applying effective processes to identify winning projects and new program initiatives.
- 5.7 Providing technical assistance to collaborative applications for the Global Fund to combat HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM).

Targets:

- To secure a minimum of one major health project contract annually that identifies a 3-5 year management fee for AIHI.
- To secure a minimum of two sub-contracts within major development assistance projects annually.
- To secure funding to resource the implementation of new AIHI programs for disability and other under-resourced international health areas.

6. Partnership and Alliances

Goal:

To consolidate AIHI partnerships and alliances that result in a greater impact and effectiveness of health interventions.

Objectives:

- 6.1 Fostering cross cultural and institutional collaboration to bring collective strengths and experience to low and middle income countries.
- 6.2 Identify partnership agreements through formal Memorandum of Understandings with like-minded organisations to scale-up long-term regional collaboration in response to communicable and non-communicable disease.
- 6.3 Fostering the formation of partnerships and alliances in education, training, research and leadership development that leads to the award of collaborative research grants and development assistance contracts.
- 6.4 Sustaining the existing AIHI Health Promotion Alliance with academic institutions, health promotion foundations and agencies in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region to expand the application of successful health promotion models and applications within international development practice.

Targets:

- To demonstrate successes in a partnership approach that result in collaborative programs, grants and/or project contracts.
- To demonstrate effective alliances in the areas of health promotion, HIV/AIDS and disability initially, with progressive expansion to other areas.

7. Marketing and Promotions

Goal:

To increase engagement with AIHI through greater understanding of the institution's role and work.

Objectives:

- 7.1 Maintaining an up to date AIHI website which profiles programs, courses, research findings, effective health models and lessons learned from AIHI partnerships in international health for greater public understanding.
- 7.2 Publishing promotional materials that increase participation in AIHI programs and education and training courses.
- 7.3 Attracting corporate sector participation in AIHI programs.
- 7.4 Developing a communication strategy which promotes liaison and communication with University of Melbourne and increases engagement in the work of AIHI.
- 7.5 Documenting and reporting the direct and indirect benefits AIHI brings to the University of Melbourne.

Targets:

- To secure a reputation for AIHI as a leading International Health Institute in Australia and the region recognised for expertise in program development and specialist advice.
- To establish AIHI as a primary contact point for international health in Australia.
- To secure corporate sponsorship for AIHI initiatives.
- To report annually the mutually beneficial outcomes of AIHI and University of Melbourne cooperation.

8. Governance and Management

Goal:

To contribute to the sustainability of AIHI through ethical management, financial security and effective governance.

Objectives:

- 8.1 Ensuring effective governance of AIHI through Board and Sub-Committee participation in strategic planning; risk assessment; policy and legal compliance; performance monitoring; and active communication with AIHI stakeholders.
- 8.2 Demonstrating AIHI is an employer which values equity and equal opportunity.
- 8.3 Valuing and maintaining quality staff with complementary skills.
- 8.4 Embracing the culture of a learning organisation committed to professional development, mentoring and coaching for AIHI staff.
- 8.5 Providing a policy framework which supports staff to achieve the highest standards of performance in a professional, safe and aesthetic work environment.
- 8.6 Maintaining the highest standards of financial management and accountability.
- 8.7 Maintaining annual planning and evaluation processes to ensure performance against AIHI key strategies and targets are measured and assessed in a timely manner.

Targets:

- To establish a Governance Charter.
- To retain a competent core staff who demonstrate high satisfaction levels with their workplace.
- To maintain an annual operating surplus with reinvestment back into the activities of AIHI.