



# HIFA Strategy 2022-2024

Accelerating progress towards  
universal access to reliable  
healthcare information



# Accelerating progress towards universal access to reliable healthcare information

## Strategic shifts

Our priorities in the coming period are to:

1. Convene key stakeholders to develop a Global Action Plan on Universal Access to Reliable Healthcare Information
2. Implement the HIFA-WHO Collaboration Plan in official relations with the World Health Organization
3. Promote access to reliable healthcare information and global health communication in languages other than English
4. Strengthen the depth and breadth of our work through a comprehensive range of donor-supported projects
5. Harness collective intelligence through the new HIFA Voices 2.0 database
6. Strengthen our advocacy, including creation of an online advocacy toolkit for all to use
7. Include an explicit focus on protecting people from misinformation.

## Vision and mission

HIFA is a global human-rights-based movement that is committed to the reduction of avoidable death and suffering by working towards the vision of 'a world where every person has access to reliable healthcare information and is protected from misinformation'. HIFA's mission is to bring together all stakeholders to promote communication, understanding and advocacy to accelerate progress towards universal access to reliable healthcare information, in a spirit of solidarity and co-development.

## The challenge

To improve the availability and use of reliable healthcare information and thereby reduce avoidable death and suffering. Everybody needs reliable healthcare information, including families and caregivers, health workers, media and communications professionals, public health professionals and policymakers. Failure to access and apply reliable healthcare information is a leading cause of preventable death and suffering worldwide. Everyone has unmet healthcare information needs, which are highly contextual: they change from moment to moment. These unmet needs are especially pronounced in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and among those who are marginalised in the global population. Basic life-saving interventions are very often locally available, but not provided in time because of poor access to reliable information.

## Rationale and approach

A 2004 paper in *The Lancet* by Fiona Godlee, Neil Pakenham-Walsh and others argued that lack of reliable healthcare information is due to a dysfunctional global evidence ecosystem, below. The paper proposed a new global initiative to address three fundamental weaknesses: poor communication across the system; poor understanding of drivers and barriers in the system; and poor advocacy for healthcare information as a neglected global health challenge. HIFA was subsequently launched in 2006.

## Global Evidence Ecosystem



### History and achievements

Since 2006 HIFA has grown to more than 20,000 professional members from 180 countries representing every part of the Global Evidence Ecosystem: frontline health professionals, patients, general public, policymakers, researchers, publishers, systematic reviewers, guideline developers, producers of reference and learning materials, journalists, social scientists, library and information professionals (among others). HIFA members share experience and expertise around how to improve the availability and use of reliable healthcare information on six global forums in four languages (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish). They represent thousands of organisations around the world, of which more than 400 have officially endorsed the HIFA vision.

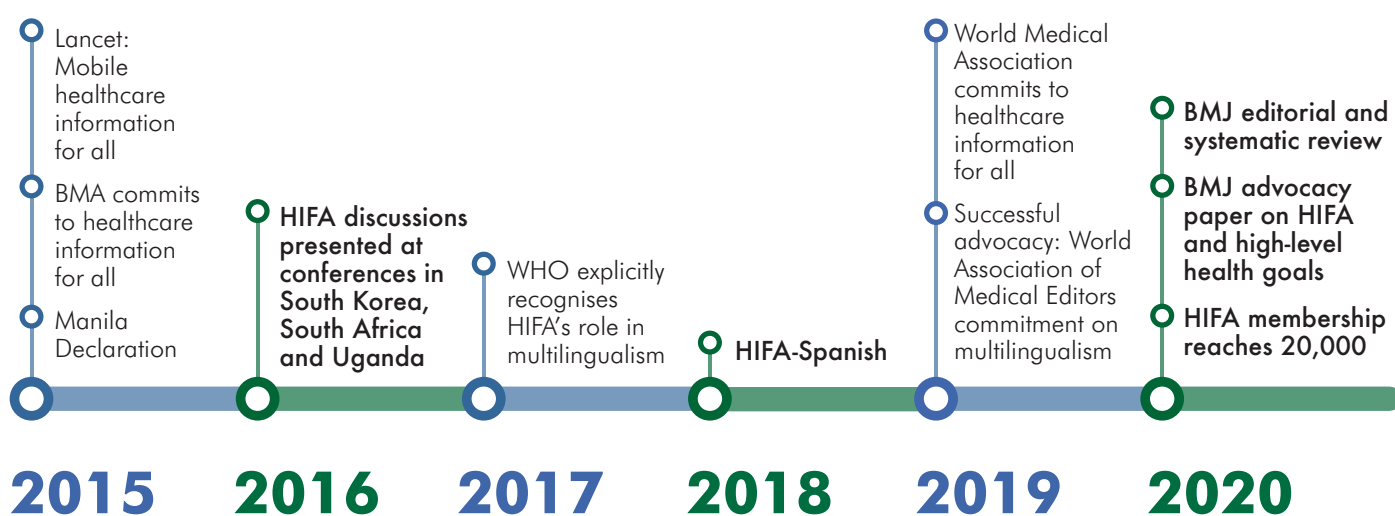
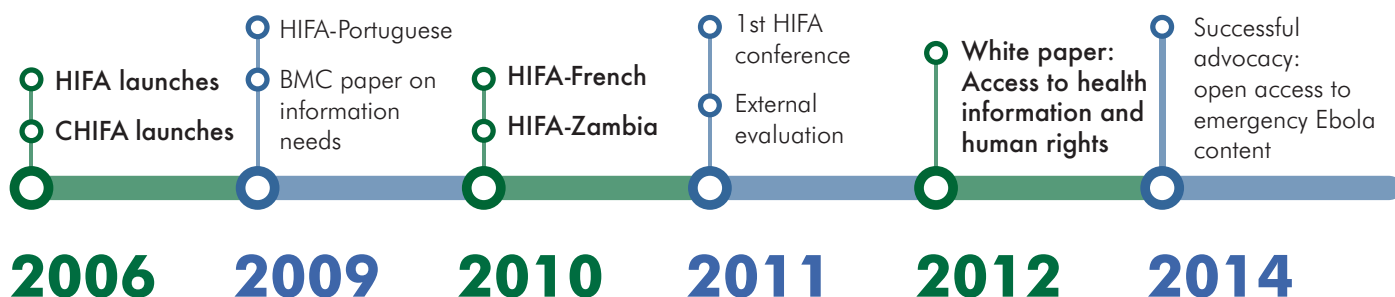
### Official relations with the World Health Organization

In January 2022 Global Healthcare Information Network, the non-government organisation that administers HIFA, was admitted into official relations status with WHO. The partnership is guided by a [Collaboration Plan](#). The plan has 10 activities organised into 5 priority areas:

1. To accelerate progress towards universal access to reliable healthcare information
2. To harness experience and expertise on information needs and how to meet them
3. To support WHO's role as a leading provider of reliable healthcare information
4. To support the dissemination and uptake of WHO publications
5. To support WHO's role in meeting information needs in languages other than English.

In 2023 we are focusing on Activity #1: A global stakeholder consultation on drivers and barriers to universal access.

## HIFA's milestones



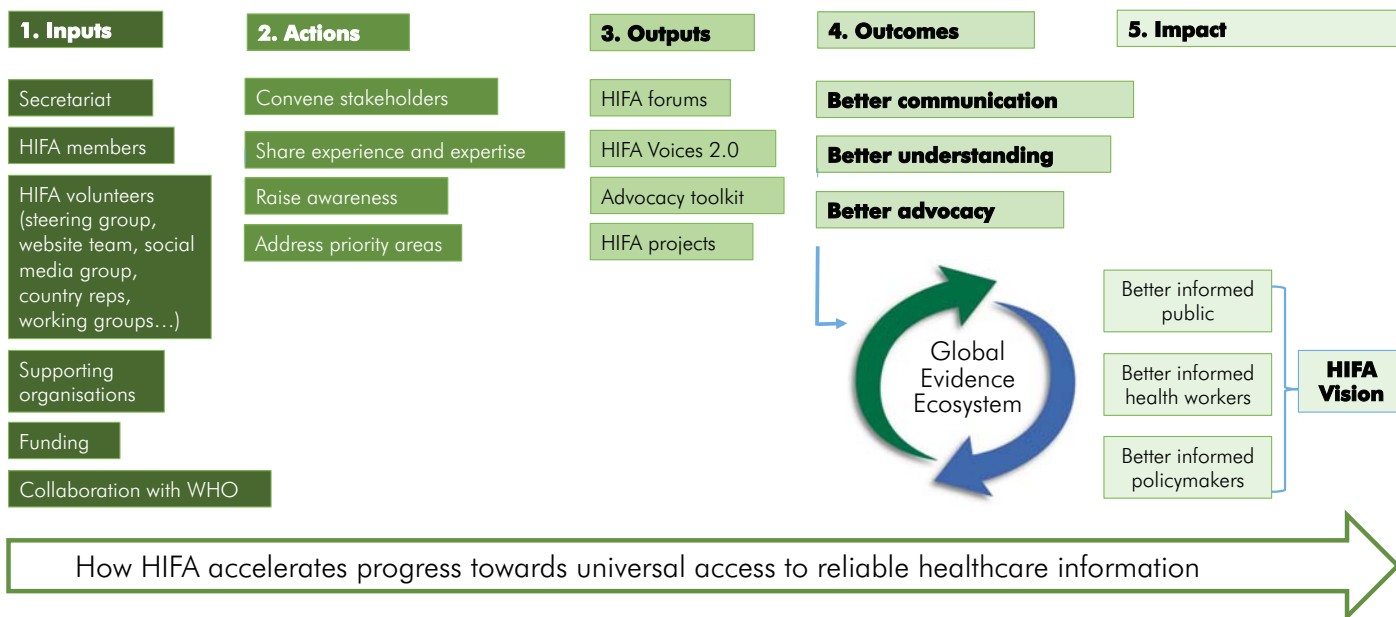
## The opportunity for transformative change

In 2020-2021 the COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the urgent need for reliable healthcare information and protection from misinformation. Now more than ever HIFA has **the opportunity and the enabling environment** to accelerate progress towards the HIFA vision building on: (1) HIFA's history of achievements; (2) a growing global membership; (3) evolving collaboration with WHO; (4) unprecedented public awareness of the importance of reliable information and the dangers of misinformation; (5) recognition of the role of healthcare information in human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals; (6) the World Medical Association Statement on Healthcare Information For All (2019); and (7) recognition of the need for environmentally sustainable

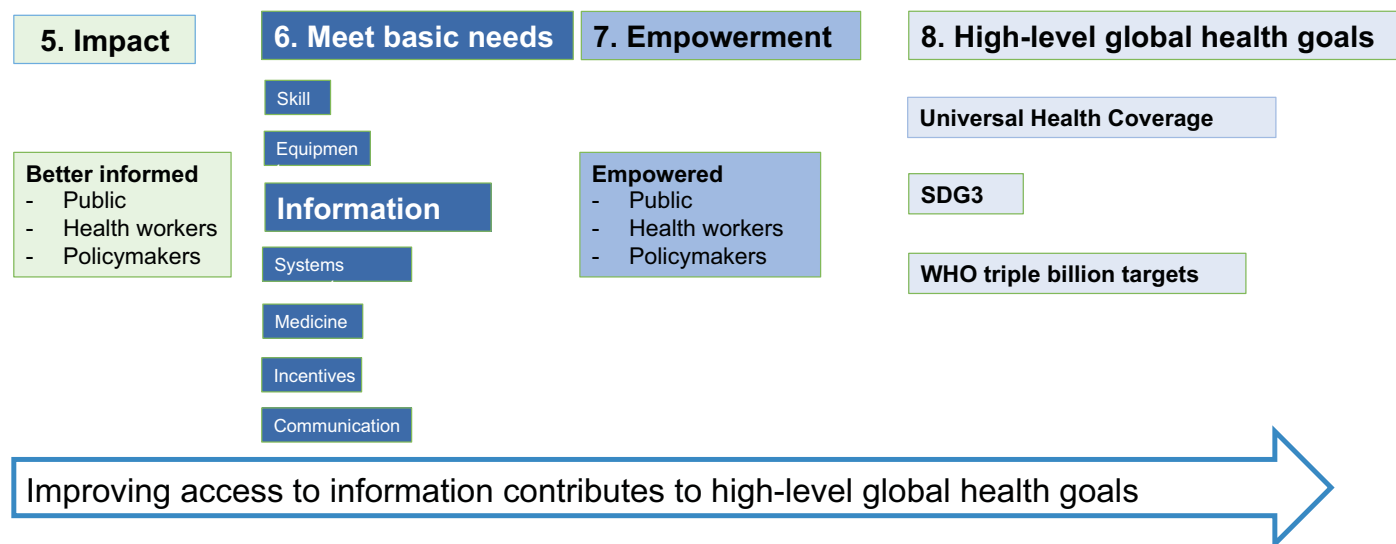
models of global health communication (as exemplified by the HIFA forums).

HIFA uses a **Theory of Change** (below) whereby HIFA's inputs, activities and outputs translate into outcomes and impact, thereby driving progress towards universal access to reliable healthcare information.

# The opportunity for transformative change



The impact of HIFA contributes to meeting basic needs, empowerment of people and health workers, and achievement of high-level global health goals:



Throughout, HIFA will **measure and evaluate value creation** across several domains, using quantitative and qualitative indicators, including value for individual HIFA members, for HIFA volunteers and

for participating organisations. Methods of evaluation will include statistics regarding members and forum messages, surveys, interviews and testimonials.

## Conclusion

HIFA's first priority is to 'Convene key stakeholders to accelerate progress towards universal access to reliable healthcare information'. Specifically, HIFA will bring stakeholders together to develop a Global Action Plan for Universal Access to Reliable Healthcare Information: a roadmap to accelerate progress through to 2030.

To achieve this transformative agenda, there is a pressing need to build the capacity of the HIFA Secretariat. The work of HIFA is constrained by lack of staff capacity: HIFA has only 1.5 staff, supporting a dynamic network of hundreds of volunteers. The priority for 2022-2024 is to engage at least one more professional staff member.

This 2022-2024 Strategy informs HIFA's annual Operational Plans and budgets. HIFA is actively seeking funding and collaboration to support all areas of work and looks forward to working with all partners to accelerate progress towards a world where every person has access to the healthcare information they need to protect their own health and the health of others, and is protected from misinformation.

For further information and/or to discuss opportunities for collaboration please contact Dr Neil Pakenham-Walsh, HIFA Coordinator. [neil@hifa.org](mailto:neil@hifa.org)

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## How you or your organisation can help...

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- **Join HIFA today:**  
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**HIFA** and **CHIFA** are part of **HIFA Global Forums**, which also include **HIFA-French**, **HIFA-Portuguese**, and **HIFA-Spanish** (in collaboration with WHO) and **HIFA-Zambia** (with the Zambia UK Health Workforce Alliance)

**HIFA** is administered by the Global Healthcare Information Network, a non-profit organisation registered in the UK.

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