



international
stillbirth alliance

**INTERNATIONAL STILLBIRTH ALLIANCE
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND GOALS FOR 2009-2013**

This document outlines the mission, vision, guiding principles and strategic goals for ISA over the next 5 years.

For more information about ISA's strategic direction and goals over the next 5 years please contact the International Stillbirth Alliance secretariat at info@stillbirthalliance.org.





STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND GOALS 2009-2013

Introduction

A Stillbirth is the death of an unborn baby. In most cases the baby died prior to labor, but many die during labor and birth, in particular in developing countries.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that among births of babies weighing more than 1000 grams, more than **3.2 million stillbirths occur each year worldwide** - 98% occurring in developing countries. Many countries have different definitions of stillbirth, but the WHO defines a stillbirth as the birth of a deceased a baby weighing more than 500 grams, or after 22 weeks of pregnancy. No numbers of the total number of stillbirths globally exist. In developed countries, one in 100-200 babies born are stillborn as many as one of every thirty babies are stillborn in developing countries... **Many of these deaths are avoidable.**

The International Stillbirth Alliance (ISA) is an alliance of member organisations and individual supporters which works towards evidence based strategies for stillbirth prevention and bereavement care world wide and promotes and supports high quality stillbirth research.

Both for the ultimate goal of stillbirth prevention, as well as to provide better care for those affected, ISA sees a need for a wide range of research. Basic research in the physiology of pregnancy and labor, understanding disease mechanisms in the many different causes of stillbirths, the genetic susceptibilities, environment, understanding effective prenatal care, maternal risk factors, socioeconomic disparities, psychosocial care and bereavement - and many more. All will provide keys to stillbirth prevention and improved care for affected families.

A global collaboration is required to reduce stillbirths, which includes the sharing of perinatal audit protocols, bereavement support and prevention strategies. **ISA provides a forum for collaboration in stillbirth research**, including international workshops and an annual international stillbirth conference.

The highest quality research will be futile in saving babies lives, if it is not implemented and known and implemented in maternal health care. **ISA works to make results of stillbirth research known, and in particular to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge.** ISA provides scholarships for professionals from developing countries for attendance at the international stillbirth conference.



Mission

why we exist

To raise awareness of stillbirth and to promote global collaboration in the prevention of stillbirth and provision of appropriate care for parents whose baby is stillborn.

Vision

what we aspire to

To reduce the risk of stillbirth and to enhance bereavement care of families who experience stillbirth through public awareness initiatives, community engagement, development and promotion of best clinical practice standards and facilitating high quality collaborative research.



Guiding Principles

what we believe

Collaboration

- ISA promotes collaboration between all health care professionals, researchers and affected families as well as between organizations and countries and continents.
- ISA provides opportunities to meet and build networks, share information and knowledge, experience, culture and history in the scientific and bereavement areas of stillbirth which will accelerate progress toward best care.
- ISA provides a forum for better understanding and prevention of stillbirths and in so doing prevention of related adverse pregnancy outcomes such as neonatal death and serious neonatal morbidity.

Understanding

- ISA works toward understanding of stillbirths in broader society: supporting activities to understand why stillbirths occur, how they can be prevented, and how to provide optimal care for those affected; but also in terms understanding and awareness by the public and society.
- ISA works to facilitate the development and implementation of international standards with regard to monitoring the definitions, evaluation management, data collection and classification of stillbirths.
- ISA works for improved quality of physical and emotional care for affected families, both in health care and through parental support.

Prevention

- In developing countries, vast improvements could be achieved at very low cost compared to health care expenses in developed countries.
- In developed countries, many important and largely inexpensive practice improvement opportunities exist.
- Research, education and awareness are key to stillbirth prevention.



Goals and strategies **what we aim to achieve and how**

Goal 1 **Collaboration**

Promote collaboration between organizations and individuals including parents, bereavement carers, health care professionals, researchers and policy makers

Strategies

- I. Establish collaborations with organizations world-wide through membership or partnership with ISA
- II. Ensure that all relevant organizations and collaborators are well informed about the activities of ISA through regular newsletters, other website materials and annual reports
- III. Host and/or co-host regular meetings and conferences addressing stillbirth priority areas covering geographic, cultural and economic diversity
- IV. Hold additional workshops and meetings as required to progress activities in stillbirth priority areas
- V. Engage and support volunteers who wish to work with ISA.

Goal 2 **Capacity building**

Enhance local capacity to address stillbirth

Strategies

- I. Facilitate and promote meetings and workshops to engage local community, government and health care professionals
- II. Seek out and support local champions in establishing networks and organisations to address the goals of ISA
- III. Establish regional offices of ISA to assist in taking forward the work of ISA within the local context



Goal 3 Awareness

Enhance the availability of high quality evidenced based information on stillbirth

Strategies

- I. Synthesis and disseminate new findings of high quality research and other high quality information on stillbirth suitable for a wide range of users
- II. Develop and disseminate evidence based responses to frequently asked questions on stillbirth for parents and clinicians
- III. Ensure ISA website is up-to-date and meets the needs of member organizations and individuals seeking information
- IV. Ensure ISA meetings and conferences provide a forum for dissemination of high quality information on stillbirth and educational opportunities for stillbirth prevention and bereavement call
- V. Provide respected speakers on stillbirth from around the globe

Goal 4 Prevention

Promote best practice in stillbirth prevention and facilitate high quality research and audit which addresses causes of stillbirth

Strategies

- I. To enhance the quality of data for stillbirths through standardisation of registration, comprehensive investigation, including autopsy, data collection and classification
- II. Identify research, clinical practice and policy priority areas in stillbirth prevention
- III. Promote and facilitate the development and dissemination of evidence-based risk management guidelines
- IV. Support and conduct educational programs for health care professionals and other activities aimed at increasing the uptake of best practice in stillbirth prevention



Goal 5 **Bereavement care**

To enhance the delivery of appropriate care for parents

Strategies

- I. Connect parents with existing support services
- II. Facilitate and promote the establishment of adequate support services
- III. Support and promote educational programs in bereavement care for health care professionals and carers.
- IV. Collect and disseminate information on bereavement programs, web-link resources, on-going programs and conferences

Goal 6 **Sustainability**

Ensure a strong and healthy organisation

Strategies

- I. Actively seek new member organisations
- II. Establish partnerships with global organisations
- III. Establish regional offices to support the work of ISA globally
- IV. Procure sufficient funds to allow successful undertaking of activities according to this strategic plan
- V. Review and amend ISA by-laws as required to ensure the ability of ISA to adapt to changing needs in meeting our goals

