

Child Family Health International

2026-2030 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The CFHI 2026–2030 Strategic Plan outlines a forward-looking roadmap that strengthens CFHI’s role as a global leader in ethical, community-based global health education. As the organization approaches its 35th anniversary, the plan responds to shifting realities in global health, higher education, and international mobility. CFHI will continue to deliver value-aligned programs rooted in Fair-Trade Learning principles, expand opportunities for underrepresented learners, and ensure excellence in participant safety, curriculum innovation, and equitable partnerships. Central to this vision is a commitment to advancing locally led models, robust quality improvement systems, and inclusive pathways that ensure global health education remains accessible, ethical, and transformative.

Sustainable enrollment and expanded access are essential for CFHI’s path forward. The plan outlines strategies to grow enrollment through enhanced recruitment, strengthened academic partnerships, expanded virtual and hybrid programs, and targeted scholarships. Innovation will guide curriculum development by continuing to integrate planetary health, global health competency frameworks, and thoughtful uses of technology and AI. CFHI will also maintain and deepen its commitment to fostering student wellness and program safety through comprehensive annual reviews, training initiatives, and strengthened coordination between Central and Global Teams. New programs, partnerships, and collaborations will be pursued thoughtfully and intentionally, ensuring alignment with CFHI’s mission and values.

The plan also emphasizes organizational sustainability through strengthened fundraising, board engagement, and operational excellence. CFHI will expand its role as a thought leader through publications, conference participation, and accessible educational resources. Faculty development initiatives and a revitalized alumni engagement strategy will reinforce CFHI’s global learning community and long-term impact. Across all priorities, the Strategic Plan commits CFHI to a future defined by reciprocity, inclusion, adaptability, and shared leadership, ensuring the organization remains resilient and mission-driven for years to come.

Introduction

Child Family Health International (CFHI), a United Nations-recognized non-profit organization

based in the Bay Area, California, is a distinguished leader in global health education for undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate trainees through both faculty-led and non-faculty-led program structures. CFHI has been providing standard-setting community-based study abroad programs for nearly 35 years. The organization has received Diversity Abroad's Award of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion, the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE)'s Award of Excellence for Outstanding Leader in Experiential Education: Community-Based Organization, and Great Non-Profits Top Rated Award. CFHI contributes to and engages with industry and professional organizations including the Forum on Education Abroad, NAFSA, the Consortium of Universities for Global Health, The Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative, Health Information for All (HIFA) and many more. CFHI partners and collaborates with over 100 universities to provide global health education opportunities for pre-health, health professions, social science, and inter-disciplinary learners. CFHI has a three-pronged mission that includes Global health education programs, research, and thought leadership.

As CFHI approaches its 35th year in 2027, we reflect on the successes and challenges of our organization. Through shrewd financial stewardship, a deep commitment to ethical global health education, and thoughtful, value-aligned and collaborative leadership practices, our organization has sustained and thrived through global economic downturns, pandemics, periods of full and partial program closures due to security and health concerns, and much more. As we draft this in 2025, the world is experiencing extreme uncertainty and changes across all sectors that intersect with and impact CFHI's work: higher education, global health, study abroad, and global travel. Therefore, it is timely that CFHI engage in a strategic planning process to ensure we can continue to thrive and fulfill our mission for many years to come.

The intent of this strategic plan is to capture CFHI's current positionality, strengths, as well as areas of opportunity. Our goal is to pave a path forward that is intentional while enabling creativity, flexibility, inclusion, and responsiveness to shifting trends, realities, and opportunities.

CFHI Mission Statement

Child Family Health International is dedicated to transformative global health education programs, research, and thought leadership emphasizing community leadership, global citizenship, and ethical engagement.

CFHI Vision Statement

We exist because Global and Planetary Health are foundational and essential pursuits. To achieve our ideals, we must seek understanding while embracing humility, diversity, the primacy of local communities and sustainable approaches utilizing reflective practices that challenge neocolonial assumptions.

CFHI's Organizational Values

CFHI strives to be the leader in Global, Local/Global and Planetary Health Education Programs and Field Experiences—setting quality, ethical, and safety standards and promoting sustainable, locally-led, systems-based Local/Global Health interventions aimed at improving health and wellness worldwide.

CFHI endeavors to lead in the areas of Global Health Education programs, research, and thought leadership. We do this through community empowerment including locally-led narratives, exploring know-do gaps, emphasizing the potential of reverse innovation, translating international Global Health experiences to local professional pursuits, and decolonized approaches to engagement and program execution. Our organizational values are informed by our global partners, and we also ensure that they are available to our global partners to optimize alignment.

Values:

- Global Health is a foundational, interdisciplinary pursuit
- Humility is required to achieve Global Health
- We are committed to inclusion, connected in our humanity, and share one planet
- Health is a human right
- Poorly designed voluntourism and programs based on neocolonial assumptions are dangerous, regressive, and antithetical to the field of Global Health
- We believe in high impact programs
We strive for Fair-Trade Learning ideals

CFHI Programs & Products

Offer Value-Aligned Global Health Education Programs & Products to Learners

1. Fair-Trade Learning Principles & Continuous Quality Improvement of Programs

CFHI's strength lies in its approach to partnerships and collaborations that are rooted in Fair-Trade Learning Principles (FTL) (CFHI 2025 version), which in turn drive high quality global health education programs. As an educational organization, our focus is on facilitating a learning journey for our program participants and academic partners, which allows us to focus on openness and willingness to learn over existing experience or knowledge when considering our program participants and potential academic partners. As part of its commitment to humility and inclusion, CFHI centers learning around local, national, and regional health systems, highlighting their strengths and contexts while challenging deficit-based or neocolonial narratives. By upholding Fair Trade Learning Principles including co-creation of program themes and learning objectives, CFHI ensures that global team members are not only represented but actively co-leading and shaping the future of CFHI's work and the field of global health education, and leading cycles of continuous quality improvement of programs.

2. Enrollment in Global Health Education Programs

CFHI generates revenue through program enrollment to support over 90% of its fixed and variable expenses. While the organization has expanded new revenue streams since 2020 including new fundraising initiatives and revenues from new products (such as virtual electives and internships, and the asynchronous Pillars of Global Health modules), revenues from place-based and virtual programs remain at the core of our mission, work, and budget. In order to achieve our mission and vision while adhering to our values, we plan to leverage outreach initiatives across channels and audiences, while ensuring excellence in our programs and offerings, to sustainably and reasonably grow program enrollment. We strive for a healthy mix between individual participants and enrollment through academic partnerships (generally in the 65-80% Academic partners; 20-35% individual range), each of which offer different strengths in terms of staff engagement and sustainability.

3. Equity and inclusion of Underrepresented Learners in CFHI's Educational Opportunities

CFHI is committed to broadening access to global health education for program-seekers with financial need. This work centers on reaching underrepresented and diverse global student populations through adaptive recruitment strategies, alternative funding models, and institutional collaborations rooted in shared values. Recognizing that enrollment is both a key source of operational sustainability and a powerful tool for equity, CFHI pursues growth

strategies that align with its commitments to supporting historically excluded and underrepresented learners, anti-colonial values, and ethical global health engagement. By intentionally prioritizing access for underrepresented groups and reducing structural barriers and inequities, CFHI strives to ensure that global health education is welcoming, inclusive, and impactful for learners of all identities and backgrounds, regardless of shifting political or economic conditions.

4. Innovation in Global Health Curriculum

In recent years, global health education has changed dramatically due to emerging technologies, increased global communication, and new focus on neocolonial dynamics and structural inequalities. As a result, expectations for global health curricula have changed, calling for more focus on creativity and inclusivity. As we plan for 2026–2030, we remain committed to developing global health education that is ethical, forward-thinking, and focused on equity, and that fulfills the needs of both the present and the future. This commitment extends beyond reimagining course content—it also encompasses how we teach, integrating cutting-edge tools, diverse global perspectives, and community-driven knowledge into every aspect of our programs.

5. Student Safety, Security, and Wellbeing

CFHI is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of health, safety, and wellness across all programs and host communities. Fostering the well-being and security of participants, faculty, staff, Global Team, and host partners remains a core priority. CFHI recognizes that promoting a safe and supportive environment is a shared responsibility that involves participants, faculty, CFHI staff, and global team working together to uphold practices that foster a culture of care, a holistic understanding of wellbeing, and minimize health and safety risks. Many health and safety realities are dictated by external circumstances and factors outside of CFHI's control that may be environmental, political, social (etc.) in nature. We strive to prevent what is preventable and respond as well as possible in such cases. CFHI's approach is proactive, culturally sensitive, and informed by best practices in the field. By prioritizing both prevention and preparedness, CFHI continues to cultivate safe, inclusive, and supportive environments for participants of all identities and backgrounds while also contributing to broader dialogue and evolving standards in global health program safety and risk management.

6. New initiatives, partnerships, and programs

As CFHI looks ahead to the coming five years, our vision for upcoming initiatives and collaborations will remain focused on the values of equity, community involvement, and Fair-Trade Learning. We acknowledge that the current global health environment is changing rapidly, influenced by advances in technology, educational approaches, and societal demands. CFHI's forthcoming initiatives will prioritize relevance, adaptability, sustainability

and innovation. Our goal is not merely to increase our reach through new initiatives, partnerships and programs, but to strengthen relationships, promote lasting impact, and guarantee that programs address the needs of both the communities and the learners involved, with a continued commitment to ethical engagement, safeguarding, and building mutual capacity.

CFHI Thought Leadership & Research: Advancing Best Practices in Short-Term Global Health Experiences & Engagement

1. Thought Leadership & Research

CFHI's approach to thought leadership is rooted in inclusion, humility, and transformation and strives to co-create and represent knowledge with our global team, alumni, faculty, and students. We aim to amplify ethical models of education and engagement that shape the future of global health. CFHI's thought leadership is expressed both through our own programming and research through supporting others to do global health education more ethically, equitably, and sustainably.

2. Faculty and Administrator Development

Rooted in our 3-pronged mission of offering global health education programs, thought leadership, and research, CFHI aims to deepen its role as a space for collective learning and growth within the academic global health community, where ideas evolve, collaborations are sparked, and new paths in ethical, equity-driven education are forged. We strive to cultivate and support a vibrant network of educators and institutions committed to reimagining global health learning through shared purpose, reflection, and innovation and in line with Fair Trade Learning Principles. As a platform for connection and thought leadership, CFHI will continue to reach beyond its program participants and create spaces that shape the future of global health education.

3. Alumni Engagement

CFHI will activate, strengthen, and consolidate its global alumni network as ambassadors of the program, promoting mentorship, professional leadership, a sense of belonging, visibility of their career paths, and their contribution to global health impact, while also supporting CFHI's expansion and sustainability. A strong alumni engagement program nurtures a lasting sense of belonging, pride, and commitment to CFHI's mission and values; promotion of equity, inclusion, and diversity, fostering professional growth and global leadership, and transparency, collaboration, and ongoing communication.

4. Outreach and Marketing

A strong outreach, communications, and marketing strategy is essential to CFHI's future, not only for expanding program growth and increasing enrollment and access to global health information and resources, but also for advancing CFHI's 3-pronged mission of offering global health education programs, thought leadership, and research. We focus on "attraction" over "promotion" by ensuring deep focus on program quality, commitment to Fair-Trade Learning Principles, and by acting as a thoughtful partner to our global team and universities/institutions.

A Thriving and Sustainable Nonprofit Organization: Ensure Optimal & Compliant Organizational Practices

1. Fundraising & Organizational Sustainability

Fundraised revenue (primarily from donors, occasional from private grants) enables CFHI to provide robust scholarships for students and individuals with financial need, expand support for Global Team-led Community Health Projects and Professional Development opportunities, and maintain organizational sustainability. These funds also ensure continuity during periods of low program enrollment caused by external factors such as global pandemics and economic downturns. Unrestricted donations are especially critical as they cover fixed operational costs, sustain research and thought-leadership activities, and underwrite program quality initiatives. Recognizing ongoing global uncertainties, CFHI will strengthen its fundraising strategy by expanding donor support, deepening alumni and community engagement, and building a stronger financial cushion. These efforts will help safeguard CFHI's core operations and global team, ensuring resilience and impact through both lean and abundant times.

2. Organizational Operations:

As a growing and innovative organization offering global health education programs to hundreds of students each year, CFHI relies on strong, transparent, and regularly reviewed operational systems. Excellence in operations ensures sound financial management with clear bookkeeping and reporting and alignment with non-profit best practices; gold-standard compliance approaches, proactive risk management, excellent human resource practices and talent management, and data-informed decision-making.