



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

# INFOSAN SECRETARIAT STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025



INTERNATIONAL FOOD  
SAFETY AUTHORITIES  
NETWORK

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# Acronyms

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)

Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

European Commission (EC)

European Union (EU)

European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN)

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN)

Information Technology (IT)

Next Generation Sequencing (NGS)

Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Thirteenth General Programme of Work (GPW 13)

variant Creutzfeldt–Jakob disease (vCJD)

Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS)

World Health Organization Health Emergencies Programme (WHE)

World Health Organization (WHO)

# 1. Executive Summary

The International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) operates in a constantly changing environment which requires the capacity to react to food safety challenges, new technologies, and evolving environmental and political realities of member countries. As such, INFOSAN operations and management are designed with the flexibility required to adapt to changing circumstances as well as new challenges. The increasing use of INFOSAN by members demonstrates the confidence in the services provided within the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

However, beyond outlining the day-to-day operations, there is a need to provide a strategic vision that describes the future role of the network. This strategic document describes the process undertaken by the INFOSAN Secretariat with the aim to inform the decision-making process within FAO and WHO together with the INFOSAN Advisory Group.

This strategy starts with a description of the objectives and methodology of the strategic thinking process, continues by providing an overview of the history, current status and contextual factors influencing INFOSAN operations, and concludes with a description of six strategic objectives by outlining the key challenges as well as actions to be taken by the INFOSAN Secretariat to achieve these objectives.

We hope that this document will serve as a source of inspiration for future discussions that will further inform the strategic thinking process and shape the future direction of INFOSAN. This document should be referred to during the development of specific project proposals that will aim to address specific actions to achieve the identified objectives.

INFOSAN members should note that this document has been drafted by the INFOSAN Secretariat in consultation with the INFOSAN Advisory Group and complements other documentation that has been published with the support of the broader INFOSAN membership. The table below outlines the purpose, authors and primary users of the different reference documents:

Documents	Purpose	Authors	Primary users
INFOSAN Secretariat Strategic Plan	To guide overall management of INFOSAN by the Secretariat	INFOSAN Secretariat together with the INFOSAN Advisory Group	FAO/WHO INFOSAN Secretariat
Regional strategies to strengthen INFOSAN	To outline regional-specific actions for members to strengthen INFOSAN	INFOSAN Secretariat, together with Regional Food Safety Officers/Advisers and regional INFOSAN Members	INFOSAN Members in respective regions
INFOSAN Members' Guide	To ensure all INFOSAN members understand their roles and responsibilities	INFOSAN Secretariat together with the INFOSAN Advisory Group and all INFOSAN members	All INFOSAN Members

## 2. Objectives and methodology of the strategic planning process

### 2.1 Objectives

This strategic plan was developed to provide the INFOSAN Secretariat with a clear path to guide the future development of the network in terms of membership, activities and expansion. This will include the continued provision of an efficient and enabling environment for the exchange of information and experiences to better manage food safety incidents, prevent outbreaks, strengthen food safety systems globally, and connect INFOSAN members to encourage greater intersectoral collaboration related to food safety.

The objectives of the strategic planning process are to:

- Describe the current INFOSAN mission and vision
- Set direction and priorities for INFOSAN for the next six years
- Provide guidance on simplified decision-making for the INFOSAN Secretariat with respect to future activities
- Drive alignment among global, regional and national stakeholders
- Communicate the future impact of INFOSAN for Member States

### 2.2 Methodology

The INFOSAN Secretariat engaged the INFOSAN Advisory Group members in 2016 in an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) related to INFOSAN. The input received was used in a participatory manner to document a strategic plan for the network that was developed by the INFOSAN Secretariat with additional input from the INFOSAN Advisory Group members and other FAO and WHO staff.

This visionary mapping and planning exercise is not considered a one-off activity, but the basis of a continuing process that will accompany the INFOSAN Secretariat's work in the coming years.

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