

# Singapore

## Asia Pacific Regional Hub



Vital Strategies | Singapore  
6A Shenton Way, #04-01,  
Singapore 068807  
+65 6914 9824  
asiapacific@vitalstrategies.org

### Current Activities

#### COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Vital Strategies has partnered with more than 50 countries to strengthen capacity to respond to the pandemic and to promote learning across national and municipal borders. Vital Strategies' Singapore office helped develop technical guidance for rapid mortality surveillance to assist countries in collecting more accurate mortality data so they could make better public health decisions during the pandemic. We are supporting implementation of the guidance in 14 countries, including Bangladesh and China.

#### Environmental Health

Vital Strategies is working with governments and partners across Asia to reduce preventable deaths and diseases caused by environmental exposures. We collaborate closely with policymakers and stakeholders to compile and analyze critical data, highlight pressing environmental health threats, and advocate for innovative policy solutions to control air pollution, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and reduce exposure to toxic chemicals and other environmental hazards. In Indonesia and India, we are helping to strengthen clean air surveillance and shape public discourse on air pollution. In Myanmar and China, we are filling knowledge gaps in children's environmental health data and indicators, and in Indonesia, we are supporting the government in efforts to prevent childhood lead poisoning.



Staff from Jakarta's environmental agency monitor local air quality as part of the "Jakarta Clean Air Partnership," a collaborative air improvement program Vital Strategies is supporting.



**As the hub for the Asia-Pacific region, the Vital Strategies Singapore office develops and implements evidence-based programs addressing air pollution, data for health and road safety, among other issues.**

The 4.6 billion people in 47 countries and territories across the Asia-Pacific region face a range of public health challenges as a result of emerging economies, population growth and environmental threats. Tobacco use, air pollution, inadequate road safety and unhealthy diets contribute to millions of deaths each year. With 18 staff based in Singapore, and more than 40 employees and consultants in the region, Vital Strategies is well positioned to create partnerships with policymakers, administrators, the media and civil society groups to build capacity and advance progress—directly affecting the health of millions of people.

## Data for Health Initiative

Vital Strategies has four programs under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, which supports governments in gathering accurate information about the health of their citizens to improve public health decision-making:

### Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS)

Vital Strategies' CRVS Program collaborates with governments to make sure every human life is counted. Since 2015, we have assisted 20 countries in the region to improve CRVS systems, guided by the principles of country ownership, capacity building and sustainability. In Bangladesh, an improved approach to civil registration that closely involves the health sector is boosting civil registration completeness. In Sri Lanka, the establishment of an interagency coordination committee and efforts to improve the accuracy of cause-of-death data have led to better mortality data and a stronger CRVS system.

### Global Grants

The Global Grants Program supports focused, results-oriented, country-owned projects that improve public health data in the thematic areas of the Data for Health Initiative so that governments are equipped with the tools and systems to collect and use data effectively. The program has funded 44 projects in 18 countries, including two in the Asia-Pacific region. In Pakistan, a team from the Technical Support Unit (CRVS, Ministry of Planning) is improving medical certification of cause of death to give the government an accurate understanding of the leading causes of death. This project and other activities undertaken by the team are strengthening the CRVS system in Pakistan.

### Cancer Registries

The Asia-Pacific region shoulders half of the world's cancer burden. Vital Strategies currently supports Viet Nam—and is expanding to two additional countries in the region—to bolster existing population-based cancer registries to track cancer data and to establish new ones. We help health ministries establish central coordination units for enhanced surveillance of cancer registries with the aim of providing higher-quality data on cancer as a cause of death. And we support the production of annual national cancer registry reports for each country that inform decision-making to improve cancer outcomes.

### Data Impact

The Data Impact Program works with governments across 18 countries to improve the use of public health data for the prioritization of health issues, development of policies and programs, and communication with stakeholders and the general public. In Sri Lanka and the Philippines, the team mentored government staff to develop and advocate for policy recommendations based on health impact and economic analysis. In the Philippines, for example, this led to improvements in regional water quality, local government actions to prevent tooth decay in children and new efforts to collect better data on the causes of maternal mortality. In Bangladesh, an analytic unit was established to provide detailed data on priority topics for the Directorate General of Health Services, and in Cambodia, the first vital statistics were produced in the form of a provincial report.

## Working in Partnership

Under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, Vital Strategies partners with the Pacific Community and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to strengthen civil registration systems across the region.



In Sri Lanka, the Data Impact team worked with staff from the Ministry of Health's Noncommunicable Disease Unit to identify policy options to tackle the country's pressing health issues.

### Partnership for Healthy Cities

The Partnership for Healthy Cities is a global network of 70 cities—including 19 cities in the Asia-Pacific region—committed to reducing noncommunicable diseases and injuries by implementing one of 14 interventions that span leading urban health challenges. For example, the Partnership's work contributed to new smoke-free laws being adopted in Melbourne, Australia, and Bandung, Indonesia, that will protect the health of urban residents by prohibiting smoking in most public spaces.



Through the Partnership for Healthy Cities, we've supported cities in their COVID-19 response and vaccine rollout. In Bandung, Indonesia, we helped the city set up mobile hand-washing stations in schools.



Before the 2018 Tet holiday, Ho Chi Minh City launched the speeding campaign “The Faster You Drive, the Deadlier the Consequences” in coordination with enforcement efforts.

## Road Safety

The Asia-Pacific region experiences some of the highest rates of road traffic deaths in the world. As part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety, Vital Strategies works in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia and Viet Nam as the primary liaison with governments on behalf of Bloomberg Philanthropies and diverse international expert organizations. We co-manage embedded road safety professionals within each government and manage the interface between governments and international technical partners. We guide strategic communication, including mass media campaigns and media engagement, to change road user behavior, raise the profile of road safety as a public health issue and build support for strong road safety policies. Vital Strategies also helps strengthen road crash surveillance systems by supporting governments in improving outcome data collection, management and use.

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## About Vital Strategies

### Vision

A world where everyone is protected by equitable and effective public health systems.

### Mission

We work in partnership to reimagine evidence-based, locally driven policies and practices to advance public health.