

2022 Year in Review: *Behind the Numbers*



Rwanda has quadrupled its registration of deaths in the country with Vital Strategies support. At this hospital in Kigali, Sister Fortunata Nzwige (midwife and vital events notifier) and Happy Mwkizu (data entry clerk) enter data.



On Nov. 17, the city of Buenos Aires carried out a tactical urban planning project aimed at redistributing the use of streets, gaining space for pedestrians, and achieving a real change in drivers' behavior so that they adapt their speed to 20 km/h in school environments. Children and adults painted streets with messages calling for slower speeds and dedicated bike lanes.



Local leaders discuss the challenges of lead poisoning at a site in Indonesia as part of Vital's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention program.

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Ghana's Drivers Slow Down

In 2015, Vital Strategies began work in Accra, Ghana—as part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety. A study showed that the percentage of drivers exceeding the speed limit dropped from 81% when the work began to 51% in 2022. The number is still too high, but evidence that progress is possible.



Page 20

Counting Bangladesh's People

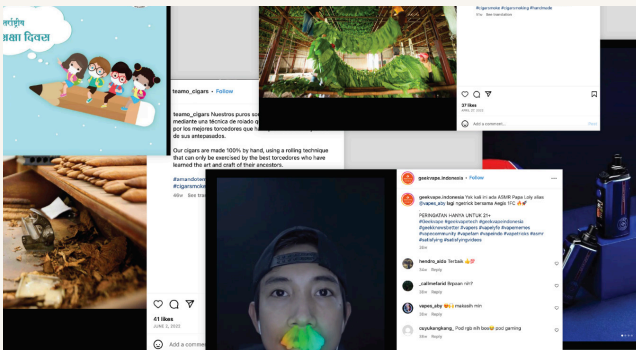
40% of the world's people go uncounted. In 2016, Bangladesh began innovative approaches to increase birth and death registration in one sub-district. By 2022, the country had increased its birth and death registration fivefold nationally with Vital's support.



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Colombia's New Beverage Tax

In December 2022, Colombia's president signed a hefty tax on sugar-sweetened beverages into law—topping out in 2025 at 20% for the drinks highest in sugar. Vital was a part of the seven-year communication and advocacy effort that built support for passage of the law.



Page 30

Exposing Online Tobacco Marketing

Tobacco companies market their deadly products on social media—often using hidden strategies to circumvent marketing restrictions. Vital's Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement (TERM) uses AI-driven, expert-verified monitoring to collect examples of tobacco marketing in India, Indonesia and Mexico, to reveal rich insights into predatory marketing practices. It's the kind of evidence governments need to strengthen tobacco control policies.

Behind each number is a story of success in public health.

34%

drop in the number of drivers
observed speeding in Accra, Ghana
from 2019 to 2022.

20%

top tax to be levied on sugar-
sweetened beverages by 2025 in
Colombia.

500%

increase in birth and death
registration in Bangladesh from
2015 to 2022.

These aren't just cold data points: They represent stronger health systems, more productive and prosperous communities, and millions of people living healthier, longer lives.

Since 2004, Vital Strategies has partnered with governments, communities and organizations to design and implement evidence-based, locally driven policies and practices to advance public health using four key approaches: policymaking for health, strategic communication and advocacy, program implementation, and data-driven decision-making.

The cities and countries we work with own these successes and they are the ones who will sustain them. Here, we unpack the numbers and tell the stories behind them.



Dustin Hunt, artist and founder of Muralmatics, in front of one of three murals Vital Strategies commissioned to symbolize the impact of the drug overdose crisis in partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and City Walls Detroit. The murals promote the message that substance abuse disorder is a chronic health condition, not a moral failing.

From the President and CEO

Dear friends,

Working at the population level—with the potential to affect millions of lives—takes investment and patience but can also lead to big rewards. At this stage in Vital Strategies' history, we are seeing more and more of these rewards.

When I look our programs' results, I see number after number, percentage after percentage, showing how we have moved the needle—each number representing thousands or millions of people's lives extended, the quality of their lives improved. And then I reflect on what it means when one person lives a long life, instead of short one, in the way it affects their family, their community, the economy and the next generation. This is what drives the urgency and expansion of our work.

In Vital Strategies' 2022 Annual Report, we take you behind these numbers to show you the multi-pronged strategies we use to address the drivers of some of the greatest health crises of our time—from noncommunicable diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes to preventing injuries and deaths caused by road crashes and drug overdose. Vital Strategies is focused on implementation and has an extensive network of partners and programs. In this review of 2022, you will see examples of how our sustained local partnerships across more than 80 countries are strengthening health systems for the future.

We invite you to explore our digital report—and join us in feeling hopeful about the potential for a healthier world.

Sincerely,



José Luis Castro

President and CEO



From the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

Dear friends and supporters,

I am immensely proud of Vital Strategies. In 2022, I completed my tenure as chair of the Board of Trustees—a role that has been one of the greatest privileges of my professional life. During these past 15 years, I have marveled at the ambition of this organization to solve some of the most intractable health challenges of our time, often in complex political contexts and through a pandemic. And somehow, each year, each stage, our ambitions have been achieved.

This 2022 Annual Report and looks “Behind the Numbers,” providing a window into how Vital Strategies strategically and methodically works in partnership with governments and civil society to make sustainable changes that improve people’s health and promote equity. Dramatically increasing the number of births and deaths registered across entire countries throughout the world reflects the expert support and close partnerships that only Vital Strategies can provide. Reducing the number of cars speeding on city roads demands data analysis, strategic communication and coordination that Vital has provided in dozens of cities. Building public support for groundbreaking food policies requires years of patience and partnership. Exposing thousands of examples of hidden tobacco marketing calls for innovative technology, thoughtful analysis, and commitment to reducing tobacco’s toll on people and communities.

My aim as board chair has been to champion Vital’s ambition and match the rapid growth of our programmatic areas with investment in operations and infrastructure. Under the leadership of the board’s new Chair Bruce Mandell and his fellow trustees, and with the vision of President and CEO José Luis Castro, Vital brings a fresh perspective and passion for addressing public health challenges at this complicated time in history. The world needs Vital Strategies, and I look forward to the many ways Vital will advance its programs and policies to enable people around the world to lead longer, healthier lives.

I would like to thank our donors and partners, whose continued support and trust has been essential for the accomplishment of our goals, and our team around the world for their talent, expertise and dedication.

Sincerely,



Louis James “Jimmy” de Viel Castel

Chairperson



Results of Clinical Trial Change the Landscape for Treatment of Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis



Pharmacists in Ethiopia prepare medicines for STREAM participants.

The STREAM clinical trial is the world's largest multidrug-resistant tuberculosis trial ever conducted, with over 1,000 participants recruited from eight countries on three continents. In November 2022, STREAM released results in *The Lancet* showing that two new shortened treatment regimens are both safe and effective in treating MDR-TB, and also result in lower direct costs to patients. In addition to transforming treatment standards, STREAM offers important implementation lessons for future trials. STREAM was sponsored by Vital Strategies and implemented with global partners, including the Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit at University College London, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, and Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

[Read the results.](#)

Reimagining Public Health

Vital Strategies carries out its mission—to work in partnership to reimagine evidence-based, locally driven policies and practices to advance public health—with programs focused on five key domains: Urban Health, Environmental Health and Climate Change, Noncommunicable Diseases, Injury Prevention, and Public Health Systems. Read more here about our 2022 work in each of these focus areas.

Urban Health

Our world has urbanized so rapidly that by 2050, 68% of the people in the world are expected to live in cities. Our city-focused work encompasses [Road Safety](#) in up to 30 cities and [Air Pollution and Health](#) in urban areas, primarily in Indonesia and India. In addition, Vital implements the [Partnership for Healthy Cities](#), a network of 70 cities focused on preventing noncommunicable diseases and injuries.

VITAL STORIES: [How 8 Cities Worked Quickly To Slow COVID Infections, Distribute Vaccines and Address Health Disparities](#)

VITAL STORIES: [Jakarta Clean Air Partnership's Grand Design for Air Pollution Control](#)

RESEARCH ARTICLE: [Urban pandemic response: Survey results describing the experiences from twenty-five cities during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

VITAL STORIES: [Cities Commit to Slowing Down and Safer Streets](#)

Environmental Health and Climate Change

Our health as humans is deeply connected to the health of the environments where we live. The vast majority of people in the world—90%—breathe polluted air, and WHO air quality guidelines show that no safe level of air pollution exists. Our [Air Pollution and Health](#) team provides technical expertise and consultative services to inform policies and influence public discourse around air pollution and its health impacts. Children are at particular risk from environmental hazards: Vital's [Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention](#) program works with governments in India, Indonesia, Peru and the Philippines to improve surveillance, treatment and policies to prevent lead poisoning.

EXPERT Q&A: [Prioritizing Children: Environmental Health Indicators for China](#)

STATEMENT: [Vital Strategies Joins Pure Earth to Protect 9 Million Children From Toxic Lead](#)

RESOURCE: [Integrated Use of Low-Cost Sensors to Strengthen Air Quality Management in Indian Cities](#)

POLICY BRIEF: [Reducing Childhood Lead Poisoning in Indonesia](#)

Noncommunicable Disease

NCDs such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease are responsible for 71% of all deaths globally. Vital's [Food Policy](#) and [Tobacco Control](#) programs use policy advocacy and strategic communication to address two of the biggest drivers of NCDs. The Partnership for Healthy Cities supports a variety of NCD prevention programs across its 70-city network. In 2022, Vital launched RESET Alcohol, part of our [Alcohol Policy](#) program. RESET brings together national governments, civil society, research organizations, and global leaders in public health and alcohol policy to develop and implement evidence-based alcohol policies from the World Health Organization's [SAFER](#) technical package.

COMMENTARY: [“Warning: ultra-processed—A call for warnings on foods that aren't really foods,”](#) authored by Trish Cotter, Alexey Kotov, Shuo Wang and Nandita Murukutla, published in *BMJ Global Health*

PRESS RELEASE: [New Initiative Launches To Address Neglected Global Health Crisis of Alcohol Harms](#)

OP-ED: [“The Kennedy Center should stop promoting Big Tobacco,”](#) from Rebecca Perl, VP of Partnerships and Initiatives, featured in *The Washington Post*.

VITALTALKS: [Deadly Sway: Harmful Industries and the Global Goals](#)

Injury Prevention

Injuries are the leading causes of death among children and young adults—and most injuries are preventable. Vital's [Road Safety](#) program, part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety, uses a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to reduce road crashes, injuries and deaths in up to 15 countries and 30 cities. Our [Overdose Prevention](#) program uses a public health approach to address rising drug overdose deaths, promoting harm reduction and emphasizing a just, nonpunitive approach to treatment. And, as part of our crosscutting focus on gender equity, Vital's Data for Health team studies ways to identify gender-based violence from data on deaths and injuries—providing essential information to governments and the public on a widespread but underreported issue.

CAMPAIGN: [Vital's award-winning #SupportHarmReduction campaign counters the stigma faced by people who use drugs by telling their stories in print, broadcast and digital media.](#)

VITAL STORIES: [16 Cities Call for Justice During World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims](#)

OPINION: [Writing in the Philadelphia Inquirer, Kate Boulton, Legal Technical Advisor, explains how access to medication for opioid use disorder is critical.](#)

PUBLICATION: [Analysis of Deaths Due to Gender-Based Violence: An Autopsy-Based Cross-sectional Study from Mumbai](#)

Public Health Systems

To strengthen and embolden public health, institutions such as ministries of health and local health departments need the capacity to collect, analyze and use data. Vital's [Data for Health](#) programs—encompassing [Civil Registration and Vital Statistics \(CRVS\)](#), [Data Impact](#), [Cancer Registries](#) and the [Global Grants Program](#)—support our country partners as they build robust data systems, including assisting with tools to analyze available health data, inform policy solutions and maximize resources for greatest impact.

VITAL STORIES: [Tracking Cancer Data To Get to the Root of the Global Burden](#)

RESEARCH: [New National Data Paints Picture of Pandemic Life in Brazil, With Chronic Diseases Posing New Wave of Long-Term Health Concerns Among Brazilians](#)

OP-ED: [Civil registrations and vital statistics: Here's why they're fundamental to society](#)

EXPERT Q&A: [Accelerating Action To Address TB: Lessons Learned From the STREAM Trial](#)

Vital's Global Presence

Vital Strategies' seven global offices—in Addis Ababa, Jinan, New Delhi, New York City, Paris, São Paulo and Singapore—engage with governments, change-makers and advocates with deep local knowledge to advance scalable, sustainable policies that ultimately prevent illness and injury and save lives. Our offices serve as hubs for our dedicated team of experts—330 employees, plus consultants—implementing programs in more than 80 countries. We are primed to take on new opportunities from start to finish and bring global best practice to new locations.

[Learn about our offices.](#)

We're grateful to the funders who have made our lifesaving work possible.



American Endowment Foundation
 Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
 Chest Foundation
 Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW)
 Dr. Otto under Swiss Lung Foundation
 Global Health Development
 Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, U.K.
 Instituto Cactus
 Instituto Clima e Sociedade
 Instituto Ibirapitanga
 International Association of Chiefs of Police
 Janssen Research & Development
 JSI (John Snow, Inc.)
 Lydia Hill Holding
 National Association of Transportation City Officials (NACTO)
 National Philanthropic Trust (Bloomberg Philanthropies and Minky Family Fund)
 NCD Alliance
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 Sam Schwartz Consulting, LLC
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 UMANE
 United Kingdom Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions (through WRI)
 UNICEF
 United Nations Foundation
 United States Agency for International Development (through CEEW, JSI and WRI)
 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 Wellspring
 World Health Organization
 World Resources Institute (WRI)

SPOTLIGHT

Slowing Down Drivers and Preventing Deaths on Ghana's Roads



"[Schoolgirl: It's 30 for a Reason](#)" was Accra, Ghana's first anti-speeding mass media campaign. Supported by Vital Strategies, the campaign aired on television in 2019 and contributed to a decrease in speeding throughout the city in the years since then.

More than 90% of the world's fatalities on the roads occur in low- and middle-income countries, even though these countries have 60% of the world's vehicles. Speeding makes crashes more likely and more deadly. Vital Strategies has helped Accra make fast progress to slow drivers down:

34%

**decrease in speeding on
Accra's roads from 2019 to 2022.**

How did Accra get more of its drivers to slow down?

Since 2015, the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety has worked in Ghana and around the world to implement proven strategies to reduce road traffic crashes. Vital Strategies' Road Safety program plays three main roles in the initiative: coordinating among the partners and local and national governments; strengthening cities' capacities in road crash surveillance; and supporting strategic communication efforts to shift driver behavior and change narratives about road safety. Vital Strategies has worked with Accra and Kumasi, Ghana's largest cities, and with the national government to reduce road crashes.

“Schoolgirl: It’s 30 for a Reason” was the first campaign airing in Ghana with the aim of reducing speeding on roads. When drivers in Accra, where it aired, were asked if the campaign made them less likely to speed, 60% said it made them much more likely not to speed, and 30% said it made them somewhat more likely not to speed.



To reinforce the campaigns, Accra also enhanced its enforcement by police. Here, the Ghana Police Service receive six new TruCAM II speed detection devices from the city’s mayor to help with enforcement.

Vital Strategies plays a key coordination role across the road safety initiative, forging productive relationships between the international partners and local governments, and supporting recruitment and co-management of embedded staff in each partner location.

“Although our dear city has recorded a slight decrease in deaths, we cannot rest until our roads are safe for all users. This decrease must stir us up to double our efforts in our various interventions leaning against the confidence that we can achieve so much by putting in more effort.”

ELIZABETH SACKEY
MAYOR OF ACCRA

“In Ghana, we knew we had to work at both the local and national level to make the greatest difference and to slow drivers down. We worked with local partners to coordinate an anti-speeding campaign, paired with enforcement. The results have been great, and we are optimistic that this drop in speeding rates will ultimately save lives.”

ASMERET NIGUS
VITAL STRATEGIES

What does Vital Strategies do?

We provide technical expertise.

Vital’s technical assistance as part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety supports city and national partners to: strengthen road crash surveillance systems; develop city-specific road safety reports to inform and monitor implementation of interventions; develop and implement work plans; and create strategic communication to improve road safety.

We serve as the main liaison across the initiative.

Vital’s coordination team connects the initiative’s multiple global partners, governments, and city agencies to align efforts in infrastructure, enforcement, communication and surveillance.

We create media campaigns.

In partnership with the cities and countries, Vital supports the creation, testing, production and implementation of mass media campaigns designed to change risky driver behaviors, shift narratives and social norms, and promote policy changes.

We co-manage embedded staff with governments.

Vital Strategies supports recruitment of staff who are then embedded in key government agencies such as roads agencies, traffic police, and city mayors’ offices, and co-manages the staff with the cities.

Challenges and Solutions

How do we understand and track how many people are dying in road traffic crashes when they have traditionally been underreported?

Vital's surveillance team worked with major trauma hospitals in the city to access road traffic injury and fatality case data and linked it to police crash data to provide a basis for re-estimating road traffic mortality.

How could the city of Accra coordinate and align across departments and sectors without a history of doing so?

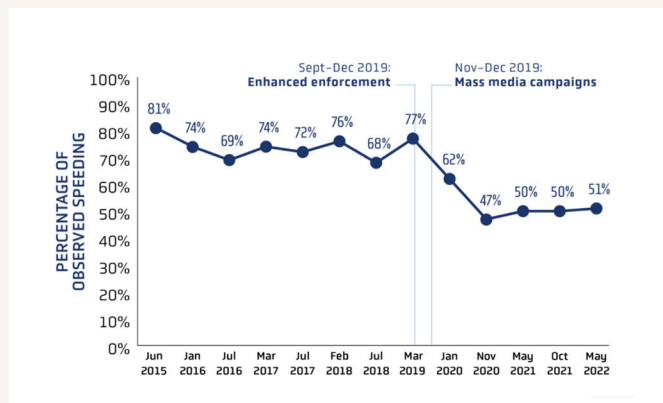
Vital's coordination team guided the formation of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly's Road Safety Council in collaboration with the mayor's office. This council brings together senior-level directors of road safety agencies for quarterly strategic meetings aimed at addressing road safety issues in Accra.

How did we scale the work in Accra to the national level?

Our team ensured that stakeholders at both city and national levels were engaged throughout every step of the campaign development process, including research, design and evaluation of the campaign materials.

Our Impact

A 77% speeding rate in Accra in March 2019 decreased to 47% in November 2020. The rate has increased slightly since then, to 51% in May 2022, reinforcing the need for continued communication and enforcement efforts (observational data collected by the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit).



To increase impact, Kumasi, Ghana's second-largest city, also developed and aired an anti-speeding campaign featuring James Musah, who lost his wife in a fatal bus crash. And "Surgeon," a campaign featuring a surgeon in an operating room urging drivers to slow down, aired nationally.



LASTING RESULTS

Mass media campaigns paired with enforcement have been shown to change road user behavior in Ghana and many of the 30 cities Vital works in on road safety, but the campaigns need to be regularly implemented to sustain improved behaviors. Government commitment, sustainable funding and inclusion of mass media campaigns within long-term road safety strategies are key to sustainability.

SPOTLIGHT

Everyone Counts: Bangladesh Increases Registration of Birth and Deaths by 500% in Five Years



Officials from a local civil registration center (the Pirojpur Union Parishad Office) meeting with local health workers and others to discuss the process for the timely civil registration of birth and death.

In Bangladesh, most births and deaths went unregistered, depriving people of critical legal rights. To complicate the situation, many births and about 80% of deaths occur outside of hospitals. Vital Strategies has supported Bangladesh in rapidly transforming its system to count its people:

500%

**increase in birth and death registration
achieved in five years with Vital's support.**

Birth and death registration allows governments to understand their populations, make investments and help individuals gain legal rights, protections, entitlements and services including attending school, voting and inheriting property. Vital's Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) program has supported governments in 29 countries to improve their CRVS systems.

How did Bangladesh strengthen its civil registration and vital statistics system so quickly?

In 2015, Vital Strategies began working with the Bloomberg Data for Health Initiative, which identified countries interested in improving their CRVS systems. The countries were supported with technical assistance and given catalytic funding every two years. Vital Strategies then supports governments to make it happen.

In 2016, Bangladesh began by exploring innovative approaches to increase birth and death registration in one pilot location—Kaliganj, a sub-district in the Gazipur District with a population of around 300,000—with a plan to scale up successful approaches.



In Bangladesh, there were many government ministries and departments that would have to work together, many for the first time, to make sure that births and deaths are registered locally and nationally and that the CRVS system functions optimally.

Vital Strategies helped Bangladesh create the office of the Registrar General and other governance structures to oversee the coordination of birth and death registration in the country.

“Getting government agencies to work together is non-trivial. You’d think it’s like working in one company, but it’s like working in many separate companies. To have data from each and share data and have processes where the data is being handed over from one to another is daunting. But, with political will it’s possible. One of the reasons Bangladesh was chosen is that there was strong buy-in and leadership with a willingness to go through the process.”

MARTIN BRATSCHI
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR CRVS, VITAL STRATEGIES

“Without that identification, you are not visible in the system. So women, underserved citizens in the rural areas, indigenous populations, persons with disabilities, widows, they remain outside the system and we cannot serve them, even though we want to in the government.... Civil registration is a matter of rights for a person. It’s also a matter of dignity for that person.”

ANIR CHOWDHURY
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

What does Vital Strategies do?

We collaborate.

We have collaborated with governments in more than 20 countries to count every human life and death and enable high-quality cause of death data to be available to policymakers.

We catalyze.

We provide catalytic funding to demonstrate solutions which can then be brought to scale.

We provide technical expertise.

We provide technical assistance that balances country ownership and leadership, technical rigor, and operational feasibility. Examples of our expertise include legal and regulatory review, trainings on medical certification of cause of death, implementing verbal autopsy in areas where deaths commonly occur outside of hospitals and using CRVS data to develop policies that improve health.

We help countries meet international standards.

Five countries—Bangladesh, Ghana, Rwanda, Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka—that were not using the international death certificate at the outset of their work with Vital changed their death certificate to align with international standards during their work with Vital.

We share best practices across countries.

Vital Strategies’ Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Program has trained more than 60,000 government professionals on strengthening CRVS systems since 2015.

Challenges and Solutions

How do you track deaths when the majority happen outside of hospitals?

Create intricate local networks of community health workers and village leaders who know their communities and learn when their neighbors die.

How do you make CRVS systems more proactive and get government workers to register deaths?

Train community health workers and police on the importance of death registration and build the number of deaths registered into their performance expectations for their jobs.

How do you put less of a burden on families when they are dealing with a loved one's death?

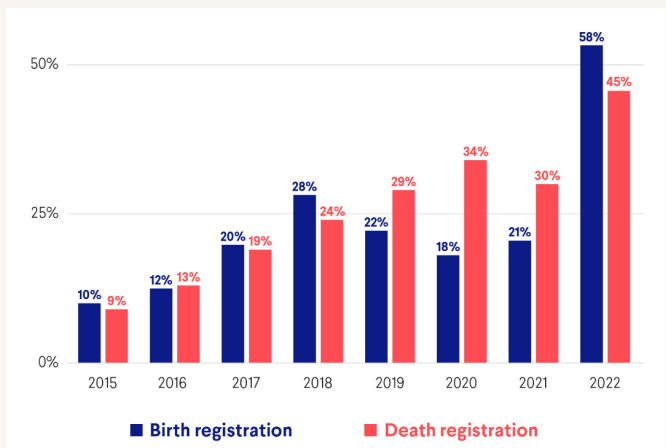
Establish systems that track the performance of government officials with regard to birth and death registration, and when going to people's homes, bring a letter of condolence from the government and all the necessary forms to facilitate the process.

Our Impact

A family registering their baby's birth.



Birth and death registration increased rapidly in the six years since Vital has been working in Bangladesh.



LASTING RESULTS

Bangladesh continues to work to strengthen its system. The government now invests their own money in strengthening their system, and Vital continues to provide technical support.

SPOTLIGHT

Colombia's Legislature Passes a Tax Designed To Reduce Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages



"Healthy Taxes Now" (#ImpuestoSaludableYa) was a mass media campaign that aired in Colombia in 2022 to build support for proposed taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.

To reverse the rapidly rising trend of noncommunicable disease—including heart disease, diabetes and cancer—diets must shift away from ultra-processed products and sugar-sweetened beverages. Vital has supported partners in Colombia in their efforts to promote health over beverage industry profits. In 2022, lawmakers took action.

20%

**tax on sugar-sweetened beverages,
to be fully implemented in Colombia by 2025.**

People who regularly consume sugar-sweetened drinks—1 to 2 cans a day or more—have a 26% greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes than people who rarely consume such drinks. Taxation is one of the most effective ways to reduce purchases: Evidence from the U.S. shows that a tax on sugar-sweetened drinks that raises prices by 20% can lead to a reduction in consumption of around 20%. In Mexico, two years after the introduction of a tax on sugar-sweetened drinks, households reduced their purchases of those products by 7.6% and households with the fewest resources reduced their purchases by 11.7%. ([Sources](#))

How did Colombia’s legislature approve the groundbreaking tax on sugar-sweetened beverages despite big lobbying efforts by multinational beverage companies?

In 2012, Latin America became the world’s leading consumer of sugar-sweetened beverages. When Vital Strategies’ Food Policy Program began in 2016, advocates and civil society organizations in Colombia were already pushing for a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. In the seven years since then, there have been seven mass media campaigns, 10,224 signatures of support, a global pandemic, fierce opposition from the food and beverage industry, three changes of president and one mighty effort from Colombian civil society partners. The result? In December 2022, Colombia’s president signed the tax reform that includes a hefty tax on sugar-sweetened beverages—topping out in 2025 at 20% for the beverages highest in sugar.

When opponents of the tax organized a hearing, civil society arranged demonstrations to draw media attention, including this one organized by Vital’s partner CAJAR. It featured a batucada (a marching band) and stilt walker—a strategy discussed and approved by the entire coalition of civil society organizations working on food policy in Colombia. The demonstrations brought media attention to the issue.



“Healthy Taxes Now,” (#ImpuestoSaludableYa) was one of seven campaigns that ran in Colombia to build support for the proposed taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.

Together with partners, Vital Strategies supported seven media campaigns that reached more than 14 million people in Colombia.

“With this, we seek [to allow] consumers to make informed decisions about their diet and to reduce the consumption of ultra-processed products that have a negative impact on the health of Colombians.”

CAROLINA CORCHO MEJÍA
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION IN 2022

“Passage of the ‘healthy tax’ on sugary drinks and ultra-processed food is inspirational and paves the way for improving the diets and health of Colombians. It also allows other countries to see what is possible.”

TRISH COTTER
GLOBAL LEAD, VITAL STRATEGIES FOOD POLICY
PROGRAM

What does Vital Strategies do?

We catalyze.

Vital supports local partners in five countries to research and develop strategic responses to policy proposals related to food and its impacts on health.

We develop and test mass media campaigns.

Vital has helped to develop close to 600 mass media campaigns to change behaviors and build support for policies on tobacco, road safety, food policy, overdose prevention and more.

We build evidence.

Vital’s Food Policy program works in five countries and shares lessons learned between countries. In 2022, Vital and The Heart Foundation of Jamaica published an article in the journal *Nutrients* showing that a mass media campaign increased Jamaicans’ knowledge about the dangers of sugary drinks and increased their support for a tax on sugary drinks. Vital has also built evidence on the effectiveness of similar taxes in Mexico and South Africa.

We help countries meet international standards.

Vital Strategies awards Healthy Food Policy Fellowships to support future leaders and build research and legal capacity in focus countries. Successful applicants are awarded a multiple-year fellowship for the duration of their Ph.D. program (up to five years) to support their studies at top universities in their home country or abroad.

Challenges and Solutions

How do you talk about new taxes when the cost of living is increasing in Colombia?

We positioned the tax as necessary to improve health, and only affecting people buying unhealthy sugar-sweetened beverages.

How did Vital and our partners adapt the campaign messages so they can make the biggest impact?

We built public support for the tax by presenting it as a healthy tax that would help, not hinder, the economy. We highlighted the negative impact that sugar-sweetened beverages have on people's health and the environmental damage caused by producing these products.

How do you choose one policy to advocate for when the issues affecting the food environment are so complex?

Taxes have been the most effective intervention to reduce purchases of harmful products including tobacco, alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverages.

Our Impact

The coalition of civil society organizations in Colombia, together with Vital Strategies and Global Health Advocacy Incubator, participated in the debates on the tax reform law, which includes the taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.

In December 2022, Colombia's president signed the tax reform that included taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages—beginning at 10% for the drinks highest in sugar in 2023 and increasing to 20% by 2025. Carolina Corcho Mejía, the Minister of Health and Social Protection at the time, tweeted the news right away.

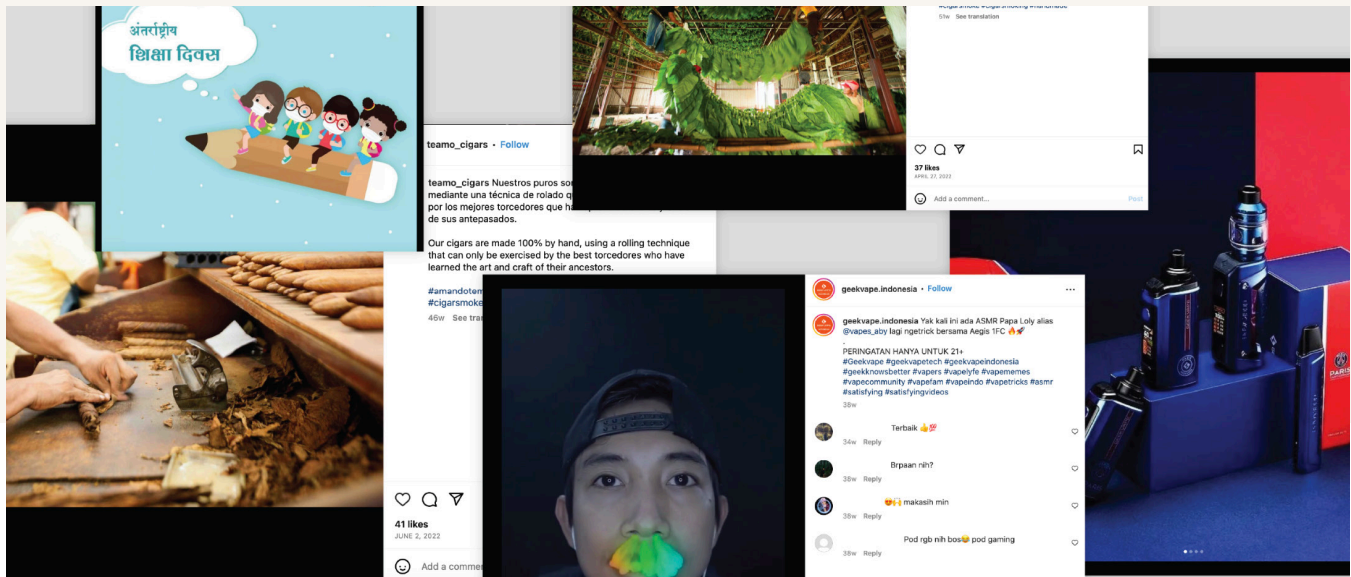


LASTING RESULTS

Vital Strategies continues to support partners in Colombia so the tax can be fully implemented without manipulation from the beverage industry. We expect the tax on sugar-sweetened beverages will be a model for other countries that are grappling with the challenge of addressing poor diets and the resultant increase in noncommunicable diseases.

SPOTLIGHT

Vital Strategies Uncovers Thousands of Online Tobacco Marketing Posts in India, Indonesia and Mexico



Vital Strategies' Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement (TERM), a real-time digital media monitoring system that tracks tobacco marketing online, has identified 47,000 online tobacco marketing instances in India, Indonesia and Mexico since 2019—30,000 of them in 2022.

Tobacco companies use social media to market their deadly products—often using surreptitious strategies to circumvent marketing restrictions.

47,000

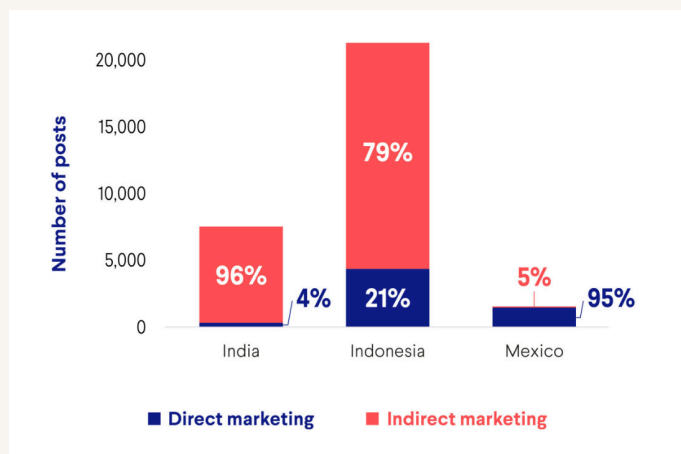
online tobacco marketing instances observed in India, Indonesia and Mexico since 2019—30,000 of them in 2022.

Many countries have strong controls on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, but social media—with its 4.7 billion users—remains a major platform for tobacco companies to hook a new generation. Vital Strategies' Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement (TERM) uncovers examples of these online marketing tactics, which are often indirect and hard to identify.

What is TERM and how did it uncover thousands of examples of online tobacco marketing in India, Indonesia and Mexico?

In 2019, Vital’s Tobacco Control team in India created a Facebook campaign page to crowdsource tobacco marketing instances. Analysis of the examples collected, along with content systematically collected from social and news media sites, revealed rich insights into predatory marketing practices—the kind of proof governments need to strengthen tobacco control policies. TERM, a real-time digital media monitoring system, was formalized in 2020 and expanded to Indonesia and Mexico late in 2021.

In 2022, TERM’s 12 publications, engagement with policymakers and 98 press mentions drew attention to online tobacco marketing and the need for strengthened policy and enforcement. In the photo, Indonesia’s Secretary General of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Suhajar Diantoro, reads the TERM report on online electronic cigarette marketing in Indonesia.



The TERM real-time digital media monitoring system uncovered 30,312 instances of direct and indirect online marketing of tobacco in India, Indonesia and Mexico in 2022. In India, where tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship is banned, 96% of the posts observed were indirect marketing—compared with 79% in Indonesia and 5% in Mexico.

TERM's reports provide governments and other partners with immediate, actionable data. Special periodic issue reports offer a deeper dive into emerging trends, such as bidi marketing in India.

Impact by country

Mexico

In Mexico, a collaboration between TERM and the National Commission Against Addictions (CONADIC) was initiated in 2022 that will enable them to identify and address lingering online tobacco marketing in the wake of a new law comprehensively banning tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

India

TERM contributed to national policy discussions in India on enforcing the electronic cigarette ban; extending to online streaming platforms a policy regulating tobacco use in films and TV programs; and monitoring online tobacco marketing on social networking platforms. A 2022 counter-marketing campaign to challenge industry messaging uncovered by TERM reached more than 432,000 people.

Indonesia

Joining forces with its partners in Indonesia, TERM has amplified its findings and pushed for action, adding momentum to existing Ministry of Health efforts such as the drafting of a joint ministerial decree to regulate online tobacco marketing and the establishment of a government-civil society task force to monitor online tobacco marketing.

“Monitoring advertising and churning out data for rapid reporting is a novel way of providing policymakers with a ‘dipstick’ into the invisible world of online tobacco advertising. Agile digital media monitoring systems, like TERM, can play a crucial role in complementing current tobacco control efforts to respond to the constantly adapting industry tactics in digital environments, and in targeting counter-marketing schemes such as media campaigns.”

VIRGINIA ARNOLD
UNIT HEAD, AMBASSADOR TEAM, SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

“While India has strong bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, surreptitious forms of tobacco marketing, including surrogate tobacco marketing, are known to still reach consumers. TERM data helps us to better understand this landscape and identify these emerging challenges to meeting our tobacco control goals.”

DR. L. SWASTICHARAN
ADDITIONAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH SERVICES AND DIRECTOR (EMERGENCY MEDICAL RELIEF) AT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF HEALTH SERVICES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, INDIA

What does Vital Strategies do?

We use AI-driven, expert-verified monitoring.

An artificial intelligence-driven tool gathers data from publicly available posts on purposively identified social media platforms and from online media articles. Data is coded according to a comprehensive codebook developed by the Vital Strategies team in collaboration with local experts, and verified by Vital's experts and trained coders, lending TERM findings their particular validity and rigor.

We align our research with policy priorities.

In partnership with governments and institutions, we periodically update our keyword-based queries to ensure that the monitoring system evolves with the changing landscape of online tobacco marketing and the policies needed.

We present findings directly to policymakers.

Our easy-to-understand country situation reports and special issues reports empower policymakers and advocates to turn results into policy and enforcement action.

We amplify our results in the media.

We conduct media outreach to help elevate the issue of tobacco marketing on the public and policy agenda. We conduct communication campaigns to expose and counter industry messaging and tactics.

Challenges and Solutions

India has strong laws banning tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, so marketers use indirect tactics.

TERM has helped identify the nature and extent of these types of marketing online—such as brand extensions or surrogate marketing—which was largely unknown. This has included finding that many brand extensions are for ultra-processed foods, which are also a health risk.

In Indonesia, an enabling policy environment has resulted in a flood of tobacco marketing.

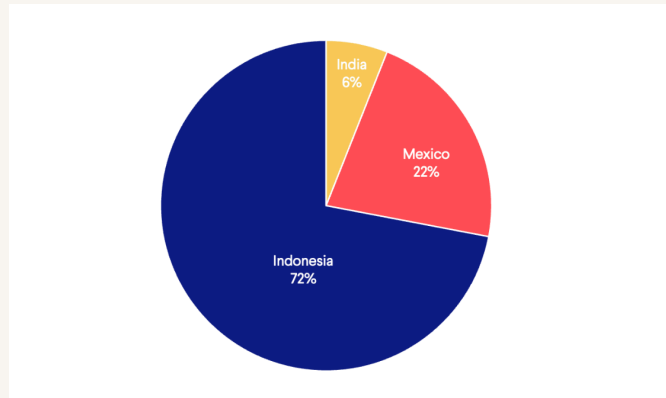
Using promotions observed on social media, TERM is able to succinctly explain the tobacco marketing environment, including which products are being promoted and how. TERM data provides policymakers with an overview of the issues and with impetus to address them.

Mexico banned tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship in 2021, but enforcement is a challenge, especially online.

By monitoring and reporting marketing instances, TERM provides the Mexican government with an idea of some of the gaps that remain in implementation of the new law.

Our Impact

A paper published in the peer-reviewed journal *Frontiers in Public Health* in November 2022 offered a look at e-cigarette marketing on social media and provided an idea of where policies have been effective and where there are gaps. The chart at right shows the percentage of all posts observed that referred to e-cigarettes: 6% in India, where e-cigarettes were comprehensively banned; 22% in Mexico, where e-cigarettes were partially restricted; and 72% in Indonesia, where there were no restrictions.



Vital and partners in Indonesia launched a report on online e-cigarette marketing in March 2022. TERM unites partners from diverse angles, including consumer protection, digital rights and public health, behind the issue of online tobacco marketing.



LASTING RESULTS

TERM is continuing to uncover and draw attention to new tactics used to market tobacco online, such as the expansion to non-tobacco products to indirectly market tobacco companies and products, and the use of evolving digital trends, such as the metaverse.



As a part of the Partnership for Healthy Cities initiative, high-fatality intersections in the downtown of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic were given crosswalks and other pedestrian protections and traffic-calming measures to reduce speeding.



जन्म के तुरंत बाद (24 घंटे के भीतर)	हेपेटाइटिस बी	जन्म के समय की खुराक	0.5 मि.ली.	IM	बायीं माथ 'बा' ब बायीं हिस्से में
जन्म के तुरंत बाद (15 दिन के भीतर)	पोलियो	'0' खुराक	2 बूंद	Oral	मुंह
जन्म के तुरंत बाद (1 वर्ष की उम्र तक)	बी.सी.जी	जन्म के समय की खुराक	0.05 मि.ली. यदि एक मात्र खुराक दिया जा रहा है तो 0.1 मि.ली. है	ID	बायीं 'बा' ऊपरी हिस्से में
6 सप्ताह पर (डेढ़ माह पर)	पोलियो रोटा वायरस IPV पी.सी.जी. पेन्टावैलेंट	पहली खुराक पहली खुराक पहली खुराक पहली खुराक पहली खुराक	2 बूंद 5 बूंद 0.1 मि.ली. 0.5 मि.ली. 0.5 मि.ली.	Oral Oral ID IM IM	मुंह मुंह दाहिनी 'बा' का ऊपरी हिस्सा 'जा' के ऊपरी हिस्से में बायीं माथ 'जा' के ऊपरी हिस्से में
10 सप्ताह पर (तीसरी खुराक के अंतराल पर) (6 माह पर)	पोलियो रोटा वायरस पेन्टावैलेंट	दूसरी खुराक दूसरी खुराक दूसरी खुराक	2 बूंद 5 बूंद 0.5 मि.ली.	Oral Oral ID	मुंह मुंह बायीं माथ 'जा' के बाहरी हिस्से में
15 सप्ताह पर (चौथी खुराक के अंतराल पर) (9 माह पर)	पोलियो	तीसरी खुराक	2 बूंद 5 बूंद 0.1 मि.ली. 0.5 मि.ली.	Oral Oral ID IM	मुंह मुंह बायीं माथ 'जा' के ऊपरी हिस्से में बायीं माथ 'जा' के ऊपरी हिस्से में

Vital Strategies trains Accredited Social Health Activists, professionals who act as a bridge between the health care system in India and the community, on air pollution and how to mitigate its effects on health.



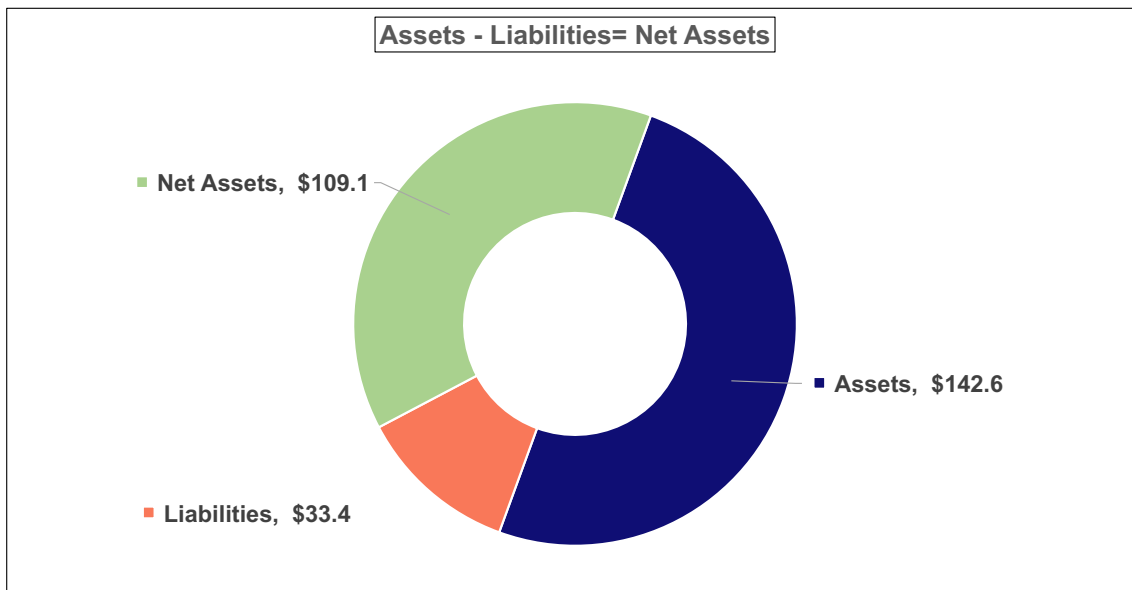
Terrell is a harm reduction advocate and worker who appeared in Vital Strategies' Overdose Prevention Initiative's national Support Harm Reduction campaign, which was launched in February 2022 and seen over 5 million times.

Financials

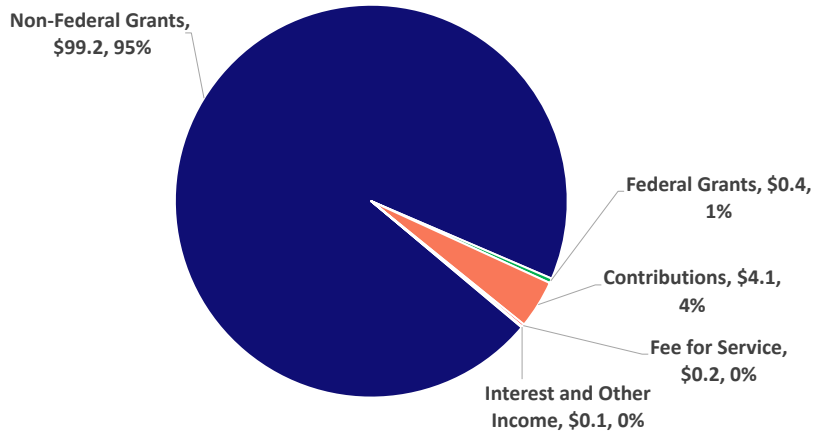
FY 2022 Balance Sheet Summary

Budget Line item	As of 12/31/2022
Total Assets	\$142.6
Total Liabilities	\$33.4
Net Assets	
Without donor restrictions	\$(0.8)
With donor restrictions	\$110.0
Total Net Assets	\$109.1

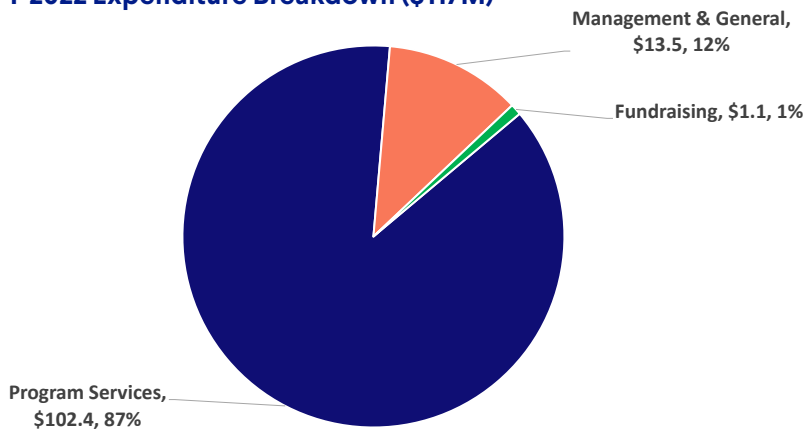
FY 2022 Balance Sheet



FY 2022 Revenue Breakdown (\$104.1M)



FY 2022 Expenditure Breakdown (\$117M)



Functional Expenditure breakdown- FY 2022

Category	Program	Management & General	Fundraising	Total
Personnel & Fringe	25.0	7.8	1.0	33.9
Grants & Awards	49.7	1.7	-	51.3
Contracts & Consulting	14.6	2.2	0.0	16.8
Travel/Meetings/Workshop	3.2	0.3	0.0	3.5
Program Service Agreements	6.5	0.0	-	6.6
Other Direct Cost	3.3	1.5	0.0	4.9
Total	\$102.4	\$ 13.5	\$ 1.1	\$ 117.0
Percentage of Total	87%	12%	1%	



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