

Annual Report

2019



Cover Photo:

More than 2,000 schoolchildren marched in Depok, Indonesia in support of the city's smoke-free laws. (Photo: PAC Indonesia).



Annual Report

2019

This report describes Vital Strategies' work in 2019 to strengthen systems so that more people can live longer, healthier lives. Coronavirus (COVID-19) has transformed the world in 2020. While Vital Strategies has been deeply engaged in the COVID-19 response, our work on the key public health issues described in this 2019 report is continuing. The partnerships Vital Strategies built and strengthened in 2019 and before also created the foundation that is enabling us to provide direct support in 60+ countries for their pandemic response.

Table of Contents

6

Letter From the Chairman of the Board

7

Letter From the President and CEO

8

Our Vision

10

Who We Worked With

22

A Growing Global Impact

24

Timeline

26

Programs

32

Board of Trustees

33

Leadership

35

Financials

Letter From the Chairman of the Board



In 2020, all of our lives and societies have been transformed by the coronavirus pandemic. Vital Strategies has become a global leader in responding to COVID-19. This work is possible because of the strong relationships we have developed with national and local governments and civil society over the past decade.

To a reader in 2020, this 2019 Annual Report will feel like the calm before the storm. We hope that in these pages, you will instead see the public health advances that were made in 2019 that we must now fight to maintain—from obesity prevention to tobacco control, road safety to building effective data systems.

Here, we share the stories of the institutions and people we worked with in 2019, including some partnerships that may surprise you—from school stores in Quito and Lima to sheriffs in Pennsylvania and app developers in Bengaluru. Whole societies create health and depend on health, a concept that now feels more tangible than ever.

Vital Strategies was focused on making health a priority for all policymakers long before the pandemic demanded it become a priority. By understanding that work, we can chart a path forward together in this next year of uncertainty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. De Viel Castel'.

Louis James De Viel Castel

Whole societies create health and depend on health, a concept that now feels more tangible than ever.

Letter From the President and CEO



Vital Strategies' mission is ambitious: building solutions to the world's most pressing health challenges. In 2019, we worked in more than 70 countries to strengthen systems, often in partnership with governments at the national level. Our programs and campaigns reached more than 1 billion people.

At the very end of 2019, the world's attention turned to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Long before the first outbreak in China, our epidemic prevention team was working to identify gaps in epidemic preparedness in more than 30 countries and working intensively with five countries to strengthen systems. These are the systems that we are now relying on during what has become an unprecedented pandemic.

The pandemic has proven Vital Strategies' agility. We have risen to provide expert communication and support to governments and others dealing with COVID-19 and we are pushing forward the critical work we do to help all people live healthier, longer lives.

At the same time, we must not lose the progress we have made to reduce noncommunicable diseases. In 2019, we made significant progress on eliminating artificial trans fat from the global food supply, a major contributor to heart disease. We protected hundreds of millions of people through eliminating smoking in public places and restricting tobacco product advertising. We are leaders in a movement to bring global attention to noncommunicable diseases and their drivers, bringing these messages to the U.N. General Assembly, to the World Economic Forum and to the global public through hundreds of media outlets. We continue to do this work.

The year 2020 is one of the most challenging any of us has experienced. As we come together to contain COVID-19, we will continue to fight for the policies that prioritize health. We will make sure that we do not lose sight of our number one priority: to increase people's quality and length of life around the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "José Luis Castro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

José Luis Castro

Our Vision

We envision a world where everyone is protected by a strong public health system.

Our Work



Public Health Intelligence

We strengthen the collection and use of data to inform government action.



Strategic Communication + Advocacy

We mount campaigns that use storytelling and rigorous research to influence policies and behavior.



Institutional Strengthening

We support governments in key aspects of public health practice: policy development, legal analysis and regulatory enforcement.

Who We Worked With in 2019

*to Solve the World's Most
Pressing Health Challenges*

It may surprise you.



1.
Schools

page 12

2.
Lawyers

page 13

3.
Food Makers

page 15

Many people think that public health is about going to the doctor and listening to advice on how to eat better or take medicine that is prescribed. In reality, public health is about transforming the everyday spaces where we live, work and play so that they support health. At Vital Strategies, we recognize that health is inextricably linked to the people and institutions that shape our everyday lives—from the schools our children go to, to the government departments that manage the streets we use, to the businesses that shape the advertising that surrounds us.

At Vital Strategies, we have rapidly achieved exceptional results because we approach the most pressing health issues of our time—heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, tuberculosis, epidemics, smoking, drug overdose, road safety—in a comprehensive way. Our aims are ambitious, and our results are impressive. We have helped reduce fatalities from road crashes by as much as 50% in several cities. We build support for bans on smoking and tobacco advertising in countries where the majority of adults smoke. We are fighting and uncovering the deception of the tobacco industry, an industry that kills one out of every two of its customers. We help governments develop systems so that they have the data to understand

why people in their country are dying and how to allocate resources. We are committed to preventing 100 million people from dying prematurely of cardiovascular disease by eliminating artificial trans fat from the global food supply, reducing salt intake and consistently treating high blood pressure.

We are working in a time when we know the solutions that work, and when countries and cities can learn from each other's challenges and successes. And, when health is instead ignored and people's lives are exploited, there must be pushback to hold those in power accountable and to regulate. These are the roles that Vital Strategies plays.

In 2019, we worked with some of the powerful partners globally and nationally that you might expect, such as the World Health Organization, national ministries of health and clinicians who establish best practices. We also worked with some partners you may not expect. We know we will only untangle our world's most intractable health problems with an innovative approach to partnership—and that means working not just with health departments and doctors, but also with everyone from sheriffs in Pennsylvania to chefs in India to mayors in 70 cities worldwide.

4.
Investigative
Journalists

page 17

5.
Technological
Innovators

page 18

6.
Communities

page 20

We work with Schools



Schools have tremendous potential to positively impact children's health. Vital Strategies works with national and city governments to promote health in schools. In Jamaica, teen obesity has increased by 68% over the past seven years. In 2019, Jamaica banned sugary drinks—including soda and high-sugar fruit and energy drinks—from every school in the country, as well as the immediate area around each school's gates. In Jamaica, Vital Strategies supported development of a mass media campaign to build public support for the policy.

The capital cities of Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia and Cambodia have all focused on creating healthier food environments in schools through our Partnership for Healthy Cities. In Quito we worked with school stores in six schools serving 13,000 children to remove sugary drinks and processed food and bring in healthier, fresh food. The city also newly prohibits the marketing of junk food near schools. In Lima, water fountains were added to schools, so that soda is no longer the only option for thirsty children.

In Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, the Partnership supported the city's development of its first-ever food, nutrition and hygiene guidelines, including recommendations for reduced salt and sugar content. The city highlighted the risks of sugary drinks in particular in a mass media campaign that linked overconsumption to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), and is now monitoring food sold in schools and hospitals.

1. Schools

In Jamaica, Vital Strategies supported a mass media campaign to ban sugary drinks in schools, given that the country's teen obesity has increased by 68% in the past seven years.

We work with

Lawyers



For everyone in the world to be protected by a strong public health system, laws and policies must be in place that enable healthy choices and offer support—not punishment—to people facing health challenges. Vital Strategies collaborates with partners in the legal professions to support policies that improve health in areas as wide-ranging as civil registration and vital statistics, road safety, food policy, and drug overdose.

OVERDOSE PREVENTION The United States is facing a drug overdose crisis, with 190 people dying each day on average. But too

many laws and policies treat drug use as a crime to be punished, rather than a public health issue to be addressed with science-based interventions.

When someone is experiencing an overdose, quick emergency response is critical, but the potential legal consequences often deter others on the scene from calling emergency services. In October, Vital Strategies' Overdose Prevention Program convened more than 100 criminal defense lawyers and legal experts from across Pennsylvania to learn how to better fight a state law regularly used to charge people with homicide if they provided drugs to someone

who has died of an accidental overdose. Ostensibly aimed at major narcotics dealers, this law often ensnares the friends and family members of overdose victims. Since the Vital Strategies conference, the Philadelphia Inquirer ran an in-depth article about our event and the law, and an op-ed calling for its abolishment.

Our Overdose Prevention Program also worked on policies to promote opioid agonist treatment—medications such as buprenorphine and methadone—to people behind bars. After Vital Strategies supported trainings on overdose prevention for hundreds of sheriffs across

2. Lawyers

The Overdose Prevention Program's work on policies in Pennsylvania has helped make opioid agonist treatment accessible for people who are incarcerated.



Pennsylvania, in August, the Pennsylvania Sheriffs Association officially endorsed a policy statement favoring the use of opioid agonist treatment for people who are incarcerated and have an opioid use disorder. The policy statement helped other systems in the state overcome reluctance to make the treatment available, and the state corrections department has implemented a new policy in all state prisons to require continuity of medication treatment for opioid use disorder for new inmates.

Access to clean syringes is also essential to protect people who inject drugs. The Overdose Prevention team collaborated with Network for Public Health Law on a review of local ordinances in Michigan and an analysis of how they interact with the state syringe services program law to pre-empt the establishment of local syringe services programs. The legal team presented these findings to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

to demonstrate how the current law could be improved, resulting in the executive branch preparing to introduce this important legislative revision in 2020.

BETTER FOOD POLICY Artificial trans fat is a toxic food additive that contributes to heart disease and stroke. In 2019, Resolve to Save Lives developed implementation guides for countries developing trans fat elimination policies, part of WHO's REPLACE action package. Vital and Resolve, with WHO, then developed a legal/regulatory course based on the guides, focusing on policy development and enforcement strategies such as licensing rather than criminal charges; the course was held for 15 countries in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean region in June and adapted for nine countries in the PAHO region in July to support participants drafting legislation for trans fat elimination. Resolve has also provided expert inputs on legal provisions and policy

language for a number of countries, including Ethiopia, India, Turkey, Nigeria, Philippines and Brazil.

ROAD SAFETY Enacting and enforcing best-practice laws on road user behavior is key to reducing road traffic crashes, which cause 1.35 million deaths per year. Through our work with the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety, we have analyzed existing road safety laws and coordinated partnerships with police departments in 10 target cities around the world to enhance enforcement of speeding, drink driving, helmet and seat-belt laws, while running complementary mass media campaigns to deter drivers' risky behaviors. Vital's road safety team has supported creation of 45 mass media campaigns in 10 cities, and when the campaigns run, police hit the streets to enforce the laws, using data to guide where to focus their enforcement efforts.

We work with

Food Makers



Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death globally. Half of cardiovascular disease deaths in low- and middle-income countries are in people under 70, compared to one-fifth in high-income countries. We are partnering with the food industry in several countries to reduce salt content and to eliminate trans fat from the global food supply, two major causes of cardiovascular disease.

For example, fish sauce has been in use for more than one thousand years in Vietnam and accounts for 35% of the total sodium intake in the country. Vital Strategies' Resolve to Save Lives initiative has given a grant to Vietnam's National Institute of Nutrition and the George Institute for Global Health in Sydney, Australia to develop a low-sodium fish sauce together with leading food companies. The grant from Vital Strategies aims to support creation of a

new formula that replaces 60% of the sodium in fish sauce with potassium. Potassium helps on two fronts—it both reduces the sodium content of food, and it reduces blood pressure.

The partners are working with a few food companies, most notably a major producer that is fermenting the current batches—two formulations with different amounts of sodium—a process which takes a year.

3. Food Makers

Trans fat regulations now protect more than 2.4 billion people, in part because of Vital Strategies' work with the World Health Organization to call for a worldwide ban on trans fat, a major contributor to heart disease and stroke.



In another example, we investigated how much trans fat is in the food of street vendors in Delhi, India.

Vital Strategies has worked at the global level with the World Health Organization calling for a worldwide trans fat ban. Trans fat is a major contributor to heart disease and stroke. A total of 32 countries have implemented limits on trans fat, but such rules are difficult to enforce.

Since August 2017, India has limited trans fat to no more than 5% (down from 10% in 2015) in an effort to eliminate trans fat from the country by 2022, with support from Vital Strategies. Enforcement of this regulation is highly challenging.

In 2019, Vital Strategies conducted a study on 320 samples of ready-to-eat food from street vendors to see if vendors have made progress and are complying with the regulations. The

study found that 16% of all food had more than the banned trans fat level (5%) and that 48% of food had between 2% and 5%, which is a higher bracket than the government's next proposed regulation.

By sharing this study, we can help the government make more progress on enforcing the regulation.

We work with

Investigative Journalists



Vital Strategies partners with investigative journalists to expose the tactics of the tobacco and food and beverage industries that undermine public health.

Vital Strategies also conducts dozens of journalist trainings around the world annually on how to strengthen reporting and better use and understand data on a range of topics including air pollution, road safety and obesity prevention.

In January 2019, through a partnership with Vital Strategies, The Guardian published “Revealed:

the free-market groups helping the tobacco industry,” a searing exposé on think tanks that work with the tobacco industry.

In November 2019, through a partnership with Vital Strategies, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism published a report on e-cigarette company Juul, “Juul Spreads Over the World as Home Market Collapses in Scandal” that was syndicated in media outlets around the world. The report outlines how the company lobbied and pushed governments to ditch laws against e-cigarettes using health claims and marketing not allowed in the U.S.

Also this year, La Liga Contra El Silencio (The League Against Silence), an alliance of journalists and media companies formed to fight censorship in Colombia, published three investigative stories on how companies are still selling high-sugar low-fruit-content juice in schools despite laws banning this and how the food and beverage industry donates millions of dollars to political campaigns in Colombia, at all levels.

4. Investigative Journalists

Vital Strategies partners with investigative journalists to expose the tactics of the tobacco and food and beverage industries to undermine health, and trains journalists on how to strengthen reporting on public health issues.

We work with

Technological Innovators



We live in a time when data is plentiful, but it is useless and overwhelming if it is not easily accessible and understood by those who have the power to act. Vital Strategies uses technological innovation to improve the way that governments and clinicians access data.

Working closely with the government of India and local partners, our Resolve to Save Lives team supported their development of a free app called Simple, which is preventing heart attacks and strokes across the country by making it easier for health care workers to manage blood pressure measurements and medications.

In Bangladesh, the introduction of the Simple app is a partnership between Resolve and the National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's noncommunicable disease control program. Simple is being implemented in the "NCD corners" of four Upazila Health Complexes in the Sylhet division of Bangladesh.

The country is planning to expand its hypertension program, including Simple, to a total of 53 Upazila Health Complexes in Sylhet and other divisions. Resolve is working toward launching a diabetes feature for the app in Bangladesh in 2020.

In 2019, our Data Impact program helped create digital tools for governments in seven countries—Bangladesh, China, Ecuador, Ghana, India, Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka—to better understand and use their health data.

Ghana's tool has been one of the greatest successes. As Ghana is making progress toward universal health coverage, the government had been challenged by manual and basic excel templates for creating budgets without any linkage to health data or policy.

5. Technological Innovators

Our Simple app is transforming how high blood pressure is managed in public health facilities by making it easier for health care workers to keep track of blood pressure measurements and medications.



Vital Strategies worked with the Ghana Health Service and Harry Poku, a Ghana-based IT specialist, who is trained in computer science and statistics, to help develop a Planning and Budgeting Management Information System tool to integrate information coming from several different departments in the government. The result—a user-friendly dashboard displays bar charts of health coverage, budget, and burden of disease for each health problem (e.g. malaria) or intervention associated with a health problem (e.g. maternal health services). This chart is significant, as it depicts the current allocation of funds for each health area and can be viewed at the district, region, or country level.

In Peru, Vital's Civil Registration and Vital Statistics program worked with the ministry of health's IT staff to develop a dashboard which updates how and where people are dying across the country as the data is registered. This is a first for the country and a model for the region as it completely digitized their system.

We work with Communities



From cardiovascular health to tuberculosis to air pollution, the best way to understand health problems and the feasibility of solutions is to work directly with those affected by them.

TUBERCULOSIS RESEARCH Vital Strategies is the sponsor of STREAM-TB, the largest clinical trial for multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) in the world. As the sponsor, Vital Strategies mobilizes the necessary resources and oversees implementation of STREAM. With approximately 500,000 new cases of MDR-TB every year, MDR-TB remains one of the world's most significant public health challenges.

At our 13 STREAM sites in seven countries, we have community advisory boards (CABs) made up of representatives from community-based organizations, former TB patients, their families, and other community stakeholders. From Mongolia to Uganda, CABs play an important role in raising awareness of TB and the trial, and making complex information accessible to affected communities. They also provide psychosocial support to trial participants and family members, which can help improve retention and adherence rates to treatment. CABs act as a critical feedback link between affected communities and trial staff, sharing community views on key trial implementation issues.

TESTIMONIALS Vital Strategies is a world leader in using mass media campaigns to build awareness and support for public health policies. More than 1 billion people have seen our mass media campaigns, many of which feature testimonials from people who have been affected by disease or death of loved ones.

In 2019, the campaign we supported with the largest audience reached 600 million people in China and featured the harrowing true story of Li Xiang, a man who had a heart attack while riding on a train with his family. The ad "Tobacco

6. Communities

We amplified the story of Li Xiang, a man who is a smoker and had a heart attack while riding on a train with his family, so that it reached 600 million people in China.



Breaks Hearts. Every Cigarette is Doing Damage to You and Your Family” linked tobacco use to heart disease and ran nationwide on TV for three weeks, as well as on social media. China made tremendous strides in tobacco control this year, with several of its largest cities passing comprehensive smoke-free laws which ban smoking and restrict advertising in public places.

FOOD POLICY In Brazil, the government is conducting a consultation process to introduce clear front-of-package nutrient labels on

unhealthy foods. Vital Strategies worked with partners in Brazil to run a media campaign aimed at mobilizing Brazilians to participate in the public consultations opened by the National Health Surveillance Agency and support a black triangle warning design, which has proven to be the most understandable by the public. The campaign reached more than 22 million Brazilians and generated 23,000 submissions to the consultation process, a record for any public consultation ever held in Brazil. The final step to determine which front-of-package label approach will be used is expected in late 2020.

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION In Peru, the government has been forced to declare a “health state of emergency” in districts where dangerously high levels of lead and other heavy metals are found in water or soil. As a part of our work with the Peruvian Ministry of Health, Vital Strategies is conducting qualitative research with the general public—including potentially affected communities—to understand how they would like to learn about lead exposure and how to reduce risk.

A Growing Global Impact



\$717 million+

in grants administered through our programs over the course of our history

\$131 million

Annual Budget

73

Countries Reached

436

staff and consultants

5

global offices in: New York; Paris; Singapore; Jinan, China; and São Paulo

7.86 billion

media impressions in 2019

3,113

appearances in global and national media outlets



70

cities have signed on to become members of the Partnership for Healthy Cities

20

projects launched to prevent deaths from drug overdose in Pennsylvania and Michigan

2.4 billion

people protected by trans fat regulations

275

creative agencies and health organizations pledged not to work with the tobacco industry through our #QuitBigTobacco campaign

47%

reduction in traffic-related fatalities in Fortaleza, Brazil between 2014 and 2019

1,000

patients in the STREAM clinical trial.

429

public health facilities are using the Simple app to better manage care for high blood pressure



January

Our anti-smoking campaign reaches 100 million people in China.

The Guardian exposes 100+ think tanks paid to promote the tobacco industry's interests.

Jamaica bans sugary drinks in and around schools.



February

Vital Strategies helps mobilize opposition to tobacco industry foundation's attempt to work with WHO.

Environmental Health Division begins its Air Pollution Policy Investment Case program in Indonesia.

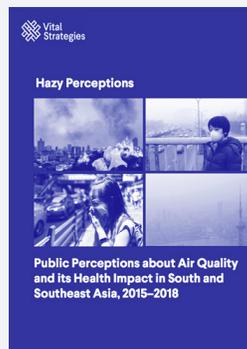
March

Our new breakfast series, Vital Talks, leads with Dr. Tom Frieden, focusing on government and society's responsibility for epidemic control, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Results from STREAM Stage 1 on the efficacy of a shorter treatment regimen for MDR-TB published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

"Hazy Perceptions," an analysis of 500,000 social media and news posts about air pollution in South and Southeast Asia, makes headlines.

The Data for Health Global Grants Program awards its first grants to enable countries to implement locally designed and led projects to collect, analyze and use data for public health.



April

CVS pledges to Quit Big Tobacco, promising not to hire creative agencies that also work with tobacco clients.

The Data for Health Data Impact Program launches an information hub on how data can be used to strengthen policy decisions and public health systems.

May

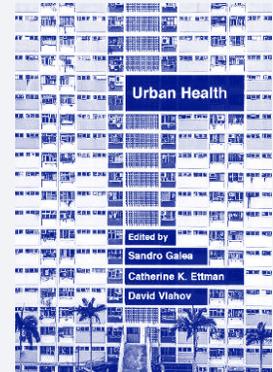
Vital Strategies partners with WHO to advance reproductive health via a Policy Academy—a series of webinars, mentoring sessions and intensive support to enhance policy advocacy—with 15 countries.

On World No Tobacco Day, Vital Strategies supports 10 countries to launch campaigns that promote stronger anti-tobacco policies, fight industry interference and encourage quitting.



June

The book "Urban Health," a comprehensive guide to the subject, is published with contributions from Vital Strategies experts.



Prevent Epidemics launches new website to spotlight gaps in preparedness and help governments and health organizations fill them.



July

STOP launches database exposing tobacco industry allies around the world.

WHO endorses simpler hypertension treatment regimen promoted by Resolve to Save Lives.

100 countries complete evaluations to assess their epidemic preparedness.

Overdose Prevention Program launches \$10 million in grants in Pennsylvania to respond to the overdose crisis.

The STREAM Stage 2 clinical trial enrolls 500th patient.



August

Pennsylvania sheriffs endorse medication treatment to help manage addiction for people who are incarcerated.

Vital Strategies' Brazil office officially opens in São Paulo.

Resolve to Save Lives advances India's countrywide expansion of hypertension control programs.

September

Vital Talks event held during U.N. General Assembly focuses on how fiscal policies can realign incentives in favor of NCD prevention.

India bans e-cigarettes.

Vital Strategies urges governments to redirect subsidies from health-harming industries.

Quit Big Tobacco shortlisted for PR Week award.

China debuts first-of-its-kind salt-reduction campaign.



October

Mexico passes a bill to add warning labels on processed food packaging.



Supervised injection facility in Pennsylvania ruled legal under federal law.

STOP Releases "Crooked Nine," a report that exposes the devious tactics used by the tobacco industry to undermine health policy.



November

Resolve to Save Lives announces winners of USD \$2.3 million in grants to promote cardiovascular health in low- and middle-income countries.

Research Division participates in the Union's 50th World Conference on Lung Health in Hyderabad, India.

More than 1,000 adults and kids march against tobacco in Indonesia.

With the support of Resolve to Save Lives, Nigeria conducts a midterm Joint External Evaluation of its epidemic preparedness that shows measurable improvement.

December

Partnership for Healthy Cities expands to 70 cities.

Mexico increases tobacco taxes by 41%.

In Myanmar, the Ministry of Health's NCD unit finalizes a plan to establish its first cancer registration coordination unit.

Reports surface of an unusual viral pneumonia in Wuhan, China. In early 2020, the Prevent Epidemics team supports countries responding to COVID-19.

Air Pollution and Health

Focus Countries
Indonesia
Peru

Vital Strategies provides technical expertise and consultative services to inform policies and influence public discourse around air pollution and its health impacts around the world. In 2019, Vital Strategies created a new Urban Air Quality Innovation Platform for cities to enable them to effectively monitor air quality, understand their own city's leading sources of emissions, and engage governmental agencies and civil society to make rapid progress. Our team also published "Hazy Perceptions," which reports on findings from an extensive study of more than 1 million social media conversations and press stories about air pollution in five Asian countries. The study will be used to design public education campaigns and inform policymakers about how to communicate the importance of their work. We grew the Inspire network of health workers promoting clean air policies. Inspire now connects more than 400 clinicians and five professional societies around the world. Vital Strategies also partnered with the office of the governor of the Jakarta metropolitan region to accelerate its clean air planning.

More than 90% of the world breathes polluted air, and 6 million people die every year because of poor air quality.



Cardiovascular Health

2.4 billion people in 32 countries are now protected by trans fat regulations.

Focus Countries
Bangladesh
Brazil
China
Egypt
Ethiopia
India
Mexico
Nigeria
PAHO region
Pakistan
Philippines
Thailand
Turkey
Vietnam

The Resolve to Save Lives Cardiovascular Health initiative aims to reduce preventable deaths from heart disease and stroke in low- and middle-income countries. We support countries and other partners to implement three proven strategies: eliminating trans fat from the food supply, reducing salt intake, and improving control of high blood pressure. Through our work with the World Health Organization, trans fat regulations protected more than 31% of the world's population by late 2019, with many more slated to take effect by 2023. Our work to improve blood pressure control also expanded in 2019; we supported program launches in Bangladesh, Turkey, and Ethiopia. Our partners in India treated more than 400,000 people and the India Hypertension Control Initiative announced plans for a national expansion that will cover 150 million people over the next four years. We also successfully applied to include four simpler drug regimens for blood pressure control in WHO's Essential Medicines List, a crucial step to improving access to these lifesaving medications. We developed mass media campaigns in China, Ethiopia and Vietnam emphasizing the dangers of eating too much salt, and prepared toolkits for governments about policies for low-salt food procurement in school cafeterias and canteens in government buildings. Resolve also runs LINKS, an online networking and resource platform and catalytic grant maker with more than 1,000 members from more than 90 countries working to improve cardiovascular health around the world.



Data for Health

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

45% of deaths around the world are not registered.

Focus Countries

Bangladesh
Cambodia
Shanghai, China
Colombia
Ethiopia
Indonesia
Rwanda
Sri Lanka
Tanzania
Thailand
Vietnam

Our Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Program, supported primarily by the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, collaborates with governments to ensure that all people are counted, through registering births, deaths and causes of death in 24 countries since 2015. Improved registration benefits individuals, enabling access to education, health care and inheritance rights, and gives governments a clearer picture of population trends and causes of death and disease, enabling them to know where and how to direct resources. Major successes in 2019 included: adding 5,602 medical professionals to the 24,000 already trained on how to properly medically certify causes of death, and conducting 25,647 verbal autopsies across nine countries to better understand deaths that occurred outside of health facilities. In addition Tanzania, Rwanda, and Colombia's medical colleges or undergraduate medical programs adopted modules on cause of death certification. The program earned a four-year renewal in 2019, and is expanding to new countries.

Cancer Registries

Focus Countries

Myanmar
Tanzania

Cancer is the second-leading cause of death globally. Monitoring the incidence of new cancer diagnoses, the stage at diagnosis, and survival rates provides critical information on priorities for attention and on the performance of the health care system. The Cancer Registry Program works with ministries of health to establish, strengthen, and expand population-based cancer registries and use the data for policymaking.



Data Impact

Focus Countries

Bangladesh
Brazil
Cambodia
China
Colombia
Ecuador
Ghana
India
Morocco
Myanmar
Papua New Guinea
Peru
Philippines
Senegal
Solomon Islands
Sri Lanka

The Data Impact Program, part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, partners with governments in using data to improve public health. The program earned a four-year renewal in 2019, enabling expansion to new countries. In 2019, a burden of disease analysis in Peru informed strategies to improve access to mental health medications, addressing Peru's leading cause of disease burden. In Ghana, Morocco and Sri Lanka, the initiative developed digital tools to guide budgeting and support internal program monitoring. In Shanghai, a new online portal has increased public access to health data. The **Data to Policy Program**—now implemented in 12 countries—continues to strengthen capacity of ministries of health to use data to develop policy. And workshops on data journalism are improving the communication of data to the public and creating demand for public health data.

Global Grants Program

Focus Countries

Brazil
Ecuador
Ghana
Kenya
Pakistan
Paraguay
Peru

The Global Grants Program, which awarded its first grants in March, provides funds and technical assistance to countries to enhance their systems of data collection and use, focusing on CRVS, noncommunicable disease surveys and data-to-policy translation.

The program was designed to follow the lead of the countries where the Data for Health Initiative works, expanding on lessons learned from previous Data for Health work and promoting regional collaboration, including the sharing of best practices and technical expertise, among countries addressing similar issues. Projects are led locally, resulting in sensible and tangible deliverables that fit local needs.



Lead Poisoning Prevention

Only 35% of countries have limits on lead in paint that are legally binding, and despite clear evidence of harm, many countries do not conduct active monitoring of lead poisoning.

Focus Countries

Peru

Vital Strategies is partnering with the Peruvian Ministry of Health to enhance the nation's surveillance of childhood heavy metals exposure and its understanding of risks for lead poisoning. In 2019, we delivered equipment that is speeding the nation's assessment of the lead content of toys and child-oriented products to enable more rapid removal of illegal imported products. Peru is now assembling a data warehouse and portal to enable geographic characterization of mining operations, water contamination, lead exposure and socioeconomic risk factors. And, a sentinel surveillance system has been planned that will, for the first time, characterize population-level exposures to lead among urban children.

Obesity Prevention

Worldwide, 11 million deaths are associated with poor diet.

Focus Countries

Barbados
Brazil
Colombia
Jamaica
South Africa

Our Obesity Prevention Program works with partners in Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica and South Africa to create and implement mass media campaigns that educate the public and policymakers about the harmful effects of junk food and sugary drinks. Campaigns promote effective policy solutions to address the obesity crisis, such as taxes on sugary beverages and junk foods, effective front-of-package warning labels, bans on the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages, especially to children, and the promotion of healthy food policies for the public sector, especially schools. As a combined effort with our partners, in 2019 a sugary drink tax went into effect in South Africa, and Jamaica implemented an incremental ban of sugary drinks in schools.



Overdose Prevention

Focus Countries

United States

Vital Strategies is a leading partner in an initiative funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies to tackle the overdose epidemic in the United States. The Overdose Prevention Program, Vital Strategies' first initiative in the United States, is applying a harm reduction approach to reduce overdose deaths in two states, Pennsylvania and Michigan, where fatalities are among the highest in the country, and is beginning efforts in New Jersey and in New Haven, Connecticut.

Vital Strategies is working to establish effective policy and program models that can be adapted and implemented across the country, along with partners Pew Charitable Trusts, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and CDC Foundation. In just over a year, more than 20 new projects have been launched in the two states across multiple sectors including health care, law enforcement and community services. Key 2019 accomplishments include: the governor of Pennsylvania prioritizing syringe service program authorizations on his legislative agenda, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections scaling access to opioid agonist treatment in all 25 state prisons and Michigan's state government committing funding and support to establish at least seven new syringe access programs per year over the next three years.

Overdose and drug use touch multiple systems and sectors, from public health to criminal justice, social services, health care and others. We are partnering with leadership across all levels of government in both states, and with communities, providers, institutions, advocates, and people who use drugs and their family and friends. We are centering racial equity across this work.

In the U.S., 190 people, on average, die every day from a drug overdose.

Partnership for Healthy Cities

70 cities working to prevent noncommunicable diseases and injuries.

The Partnership for Healthy Cities grew from 54 to 70 cities in 2019 and continued to foster remarkable urban public health successes around the globe by leveraging the critical role that cities can play in implementing evidence-based interventions to prevent noncommunicable diseases and injuries. In 2019, Cape Town, South Africa created new city procurement and vending policies restricting sugary drinks; Kigali, Rwanda worked to reduce smoking in public places; the city of Quito, Ecuador expanded its efforts to replace junk food with healthy options for 13,000 schoolchildren; a redesign of a busy highway intersection in Accra, Ghana led to a reduction in serious injuries; and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic adopted a first-ever citywide Bicycle Action Plan to expand safe bike routes. In 2019, mayors continued to take the lead in the Partnership. Launched in 2017, the network of cities is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies in partnership with WHO and Vital Strategies.

Focus Cities

<i>Abidjan</i>	<i>Buenos Aires</i>	<i>Hong Kong SAR</i>	<i>Lusaka</i>	<i>Francisco</i>
<i>Accra</i>	<i>Cali</i>	<i>Istanbul</i>	<i>Medellín</i>	<i>Santiago</i>
<i>Addis Ababa</i>	<i>Cape Town</i>	<i>Jakarta</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Santo Domingo</i>
<i>Ahmedabad</i>	<i>Casablanca</i>	<i>Kampala</i>	<i>Mexico City</i>	<i>São Paulo</i>
<i>Almaty</i>	<i>Chicago</i>	<i>Kathmandu</i>	<i>Montevideo</i>	<i>Seoul</i>
<i>Amman</i>	<i>Colombo</i>	<i>Kigali</i>	<i>Mumbai</i>	<i>Shenzhen</i>
<i>Athens</i>	<i>Dakar</i>	<i>Kingston</i>	<i>Muscat</i>	<i>Tianjin</i>
<i>Bandung</i>	<i>Dhaka</i>	<i>Kuala Lumpur</i>	<i>Ouagadougou</i>	<i>Tokyo</i>
<i>Bangkok</i>	<i>Fortaleza</i>	<i>Kumasi</i>	<i>Paris</i>	<i>Toronto</i>
<i>Barcelona</i>	<i>Freetown</i>	<i>Kyiv</i>	<i>Philadelphia</i>	<i>Tunis</i>
<i>Bengaluru</i>	<i>Guadalajara</i>	<i>León</i>	<i>Phnom Penh</i>	<i>Ulaanbaatar</i>
<i>Birmingham</i>	<i>Hanoi</i>	<i>Lima</i>	<i>Quezon City</i>	<i>Vancouver</i>
<i>Bogotá</i>	<i>Harare</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>Quito</i>	<i>Yangon</i>
<i>Boston</i>	<i>Helsinki</i>		<i>Rio de Janeiro</i>	
	<i>Ho Chi Minh City</i>		<i>San</i>	



Prevent Epidemics

Focus Countries

D.R. Congo
Ethiopia
Nigeria
The Gambia
Uganda

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prevent Epidemics team at Resolve to Save Lives was working to make the world safer from epidemics in 2019, supporting preparedness efforts in more than 30 countries, both directly and through partners. In 2019, we leveraged \$687 million from the World Bank for strengthening country-level systems to find, stop and prevent infectious disease outbreaks. We worked intensively in Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Gambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo: Nigeria increased its overall preparedness score from 39% to 46% with our support, we established dedicated epidemic preparedness teams in Ethiopia, Uganda and Nigeria to build capacity and accelerate response to outbreaks, and established rapid revolving funds in Uganda and Nigeria to facilitate early response and control. On the global stage, we elevated epidemic preparedness through the relaunch of www.preventepidemics.org in English and French—the site registered 99,497 visits in 2019. We also built the literature base for preparedness with several academic article publications, and communicated the economic case for investing in preparedness. Resolve also launched a program to train expert ministry staff in program management, a critical skill necessary to protecting the public from deadly and costly epidemics.

Both directly and through partners, Resolve to Save Lives supported epidemic preparedness in more than 30 countries.



Research

With more than 1,000 participants, STREAM is the world's largest recruited clinical trial for multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB).

Focus Countries

Ethiopia
Georgia
India
Moldova
Mongolia
Philippines
South Africa
Uganda

Vital Strategies' Research Division works to generate high-quality evidence to guide significant public health decisions. The STREAM clinical trial, targeted operational research training, and technical assistance to national tuberculosis programs, are all part of the USAID-funded TREAT TB project.

STREAM is the first large-scale, multi-country clinical trial to examine shortened regimens for MDR-TB. In 2019, Stage 1 of STREAM, initiated by The Union and implemented jointly with Vital Strategies and partners, generated important results that played a significant role in WHO's endorsement of a shorter standardized 9- to 11-month regimen for MDR-TB, which reduces treatment time and cuts the overall pill burden by about 60%. The final results were published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in early 2019. STREAM Stage 2 is evaluating the efficacy, safety and cost of an all-oral treatment regimen that contains one of the newest anti-TB drugs, bedaquiline. Recruitment for Stage 2 was completed in January 2020, with 588 participants recruited, making STREAM the largest recruited trial for MDR-TB.

Community engagement is a vital part of STREAM at all 13 trial sites, encompassing a broad range of activities designed to bridge the needs of affected communities and researchers.

The Division's work is fueling sustainable change in the countries where it works, in particular by building local capacity to diagnose, treat, and conduct research on MDR-TB and for communities to participate in the research cycle. The Division has also trained hundreds of health care professionals in Asia, Africa, and Latin America to conduct operational research independently, ensuring that program data are used to improve implementation of national TB programs.



Road Safety

1.35 million people die each year because of road traffic crashes.

Focus Cities

Accra, Ghana
Addis Abba, Ethiopia
Bandung, Indonesia
Bangkok, Thailand
Bogotá, Colombia
Fortaleza, Brazil
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Mumbai, India
São Paulo, Brazil
Shanghai, China

Reducing traffic crashes is a complex task, requiring multisectoral efforts and cohesive plans. Vital Strategies collaborated with governments in 10 cities and international partners through the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety to coordinate efforts to save lives. Such efforts have produced results including a nearly 50% reduction in traffic-related fatalities in Fortaleza, Brazil between 2014–2019, and a close to 50% reduction in speeding in Bogotá, Colombia. In 2019, Vital Strategies was instrumental in coordinating among local and international partners to reduce speeding, including speed limit reductions on five of Bogotá's most dangerous roads, the procurement of speed detection devices for enforcement in Accra, Ghana, and the launch of a new mass media campaign to deter speeding drivers in Fortaleza. Vital Strategies fostered the creation of long-term plans to prevent traffic crashes, including Accra's first-ever interagency speed management plan. Cities refined data collection and analysis methods, with seven producing annual road safety reports that are being used to inform interventions to tackle the leading causes of traffic crashes and to track progress. As the second phase of the initiative came to a close in 2019, cities showing a reduction in traffic deaths included: Fortaleza, Brazil; Bogotá, Colombia; Mumbai, India; and Bandung, Indonesia. The initiative is moving into a third phase in 2020 and expanding to 30 cities and 15 countries worldwide, with an important focus on reducing speed.



Tobacco Control

Vital Strategies has helped launch 39 evidence-based media campaigns reaching more than 89 million people, and generated significant media coverage.

Focus Countries

Brazil
China
India
Philippines
Bangladesh
Indonesia
Myanmar
South Africa
Vietnam
Mexico
United States
Pakistan
Turkey
Ukraine

Vital Strategies' local tobacco control teams focus on building support for key policy issues in countries that suffer the greatest harm from tobacco use. We use media campaigns to support increasing taxes, enacting and enforcing smoke-free laws, implementing large graphic warnings on tobacco packs, regulating e-cigarettes, promoting cessation, and banning tobacco advertising, particularly at point of sale.

In 2019, our work contributed to groundbreaking successes, including tobacco tax increases in Turkey, and in the Philippines, where the additional revenue will help improve access to health care. In China, Qinhuangdao became the latest city to pass stronger smoke-free laws, bringing to around 130 million the number of Chinese citizens covered by this protection. India banned the sale, import and manufacture of e-cigarettes due to concerns around health impacts and youth uptake. Indonesia increased the size of warnings on cigarette packaging and passed a ban on tobacco advertising and promotions on the internet.

We contributed to these efforts by reaching hundreds of millions of people with more than 80 strategic communication campaigns and media coverage. We encouraged sustainable financing for these campaigns, with governments contributing USD \$61 million in 2019 alone.



Tobacco Industry Watchdog

The tobacco industry's tactics remain the biggest barrier to reducing tobacco use among the estimated 1.3 billion people who use tobacco globally.

STOP (Stopping Tobacco Organizations and Products) is a global tobacco industry watchdog with a mission to expose tobacco industry activities that undermine public health. The watchdog's partnership includes the University of Bath, the Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control, The Union and Vital Strategies, with funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies.

STOP launched in 2019 with a website and a database revealing close to 100 organizations in 27 countries that promote the tobacco industry's agenda without revealing their relationships with the industry. STOP also launched REACT (Rapid Engaged Action Team), which provides technical assistance to advocates and governments to counter policy challenges. At the United Nations General Assembly in September, STOP partners mobilized delegates to reject invitations from and partnerships with tobacco companies trying to build influence and improve their reputations. In 2019, we also launched two major reports: "Crooked Nine," which exposes the tactics that the tobacco industry uses to undermine health policy, and the "Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index," which ranks governments on their success in keeping the industry from meddling in policy. We also partnered with The Guardian, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and others on investigative reporting projects, and Vital Strategies leads Quit Big Tobacco, a campaign that has encouraged 275 creative agencies and health organizations to pledge not to work with the tobacco industry.



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Financials

Statement of Financial Position

Dec. 31, 2019 (with comparative amounts at Dec. 31, 2018)

	2019	2018
Assets		
Cash	\$42,916,221	\$42,890,522
Cash held for others	266,982	231,982
Grants receivable, net	93,219,163	20,739,083
Other receivables	72,765	351,503
Grant advances	239,652	84,082
Prepaid expenses	464,747	390,640
Due from The Union, net	5,418,879	2,761,728
Short-term investments	50,223,672	19,777,419
Property and equipment, net	1,749,275	1,749,175
Total Assets	\$194,571,356	\$88,976,134
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$2,714,573	\$1,518,395
Cash held for others	266,982	231,982
Grants payable	3,799,233	2,728,969
Deferred rent	1,046,694	657,818
Total Liabilities	\$7,827,482	\$5,137,164
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions	3,598,435	1,155,931
With donor restrictions	183,145,439	82,683,039
Total Net Assets	\$186,743,874	\$83,838,970
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$194,571,356	\$88,976,134

Statement of Activities

December 31, 2019 (with summarized totals for the year ended December 31, 2018)

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	2019 Total	2018 Total
Revenue and Support				
Grants	\$ -	\$207,545,896	\$207,545,896	\$62,497,501
Federal grants	-	10,928,169	10,928,169	11,676,093
Contributions	3,166,029	-	3,166,029	6,422,518
Interest income	82,295	695,388	777,683	286,026
Investment income	323,910	-	323,910	-
Other income	41,947	-	41,947	28,518
Net assets released from restrictions	115,968,053	(115,968,053)	-	-
Total Revenue and Support	\$119,582,234	\$103,201,400	\$222,783,634	\$80,910,656
Operating Expenses				
Program services				
Research assistance	21,004,441	-	21,004,441	18,008,741
Public health	81,207,740	-	81,207,740	91,407,786
Total Program Services	\$102,212,181	\$0	\$102,212,181	\$109,416,527
Management and General	13,882,304	-	13,882,304	9,599,307
Fundraising	1,134,609	-	1,134,609	415,730
Total Operating Expenses	\$117,229,094	-	\$117,229,094	\$119,431,564
Adjustment to grants received	-	(2,739,000)	(2,739,000)	-
Excess (Deficit) of Revenue and Support over Operating Expenses	2,353,140	100,462,400	102,815,540	(38,520,908)
Non-Operating Activities				
Gains on foreign currency translation	89,364	-	89,364	-
Change in Net Assets	2,442,504	100,462,400	102,904,904	(38,520,908)
Net Assets				
Beginning of Year	1,155,931	82,683,039	83,838,970	122,359,878
End of Year	\$3,598,435	\$183,145,439	\$186,743,874	\$83,838,970

Independent Auditors' Report

Board of Trustees of Vital Strategies, Inc.

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Vital Strategies, Inc., which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2019, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Vital Strategies, Inc. as of December 31, 2019, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Report on Summarized Comparative Information

We have previously audited Vital Strategies, Inc.'s December 31, 2018 financial statements, and we expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those audited financial statements in our report dated June 27, 2019. In our opinion, the summarized comparative information presented herein as of and for the year ended December 31, 2018 is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which it has been derived.

PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP

June 25, 2020



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