



Environmental Health Division Capability Statement

Vital Strategies (Vital) is an international non-governmental organization working in over 70 countries to address the world's most pressing public health challenges. For over two decades, the organization's broad suite of programs has strengthened public health systems through the design of and support for scalable solutions to leading causes of death, disease and injury. With an annual budget of \$152 million, Vital combines private and public funding with donors such as Bloomberg Philanthropies, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United States Agency for International Development, Australian Department of Foreign Aid and Affairs and ClimateWorks Foundation, among others.



23%
of all deaths are
linked to
environmental
causes.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Division has played a critical role in Vital's work, leveraging the tools of public health to promote healthy and sustainable outcomes for people living in an increasingly urbanized world. Environmental Health's diverse team of researchers, analysts, communication, and policy experts work closely with civil society, corporate, and government partners, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, to promote healthy outcomes in urban areas. We collaborate closely with policymakers and stakeholders to compile and analyze critical data, raise awareness of pressing environmental health threats, and advocate for innovative policy solutions that control air pollution, mitigate and adapt to climate change, reduce exposure to toxic chemicals, and expand clean energy and transportation options. Vital's unique role in the environmental health field offers donors and funders a proven team of experts to cost-effectively and systematically solve some of the planet's greatest challenges.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE:

- Quantification of environmental and health impacts of ambient and household air pollution
- Climate change health impacts and co-benefits of mitigation
- Environmental health tracking and surveillance
- Environmental health risk communication
- Risk assessment and mitigation
- Environmental health policy development and capacity building
- Program implementation and project management
- Program evaluation and redesign
- Public health and environmental governance, enforcement and fraud prevention
- Environmental emergency preparedness and response
- Urban environmental health management, including food safety, vector, animal and rodent control, housing quality assessment, and water quality protection
- Occupational health and safety program development

Program Highlights

Capacity Building for Clean Air Surveillance in South and Southeast Asia (2018–Present)

Designing an air quality management road map to accelerate progress on clean air action, including improving air quality monitoring and understanding true sources of pollution, in partnership with the Jakarta city government. Identifying opportunities and designing effective policy options to strengthen India's National Clean Air Program. Developing the Accelerating City Progress for Clean Air: Innovation and Action Guide to assist city governments in low- and middle-income countries rapidly improve local air quality.

Air Pollution Health and Economic Impact Assessments (2019–Present)

Mentoring and conducting health impact assessments to calculate the number and costs of deaths, hospitalizations, and cases of childhood pneumonia and stunting, among other social impacts, that can be caused or exacerbated by air pollution, toxins exposure and other risks. Comparing the potential benefits of competing and complementary policy options and evaluating their impacts over time for improvements in air quality.

Influencing Public Discourse About Air Pollution (2018–Present)

In India and Indonesia, conducting formative research to understand how people interpret information about health and air quality (see Hazy Perceptions and Through the Smokescreen reports) to inform more effective measures for addressing air pollution. Launching social and mass media campaigns to promote civic engagement to improve air quality. In partnership with governments, creating strategic communication campaigns to strengthen support and political will for clean air.

Mentoring via Policy Dialogues and Accelerated Policy Sprints (2018–Present)

Working with the World Health Organization and health ministries to develop evidence-informed policy proposals and advocacy plans, including mentoring to support the development of policy briefs, in-person workshops to learn and practice advocacy skills, and technical assistance throughout the policy adoption process. Offering accelerated policy development sprints to rapidly achieve improved health outcomes.

For more information on partnering with Vital Strategies' Environmental Health Program, please contact Sumi Mehta, Senior Epidemiologist, at smehta@vitalstrategies.org

National Strategies to Address Lead Poisoning Prevention in Peru (2018 – Present)

In partnership with the Peruvian Ministry of Health, designing and implementing a national surveillance program for lead poisoning, assessing policy gaps and raising awareness of lead poisoning via targeted strategic communications. In addition, developing clinical training and guidance on evaluating childhood exposure to lead and best practices for managing acute lead poisoning.

Improving Children's Health in Southeast and East Asia (2018–Present)

In partnership with UNICEF and central health agencies in Myanmar and China, filling the data and knowledge gap in children's environmental health by focusing on issues with substantial health burden, contributing to the current data available, and identifying interventions that will lead to measurable improvements in children's health and well-being. In Indonesia, developing a framework to catalyze cities' actions to improve early childhood education, health, parent-child bonding, and environmental influences over children's development.

Journalist Training (2019–Present)

Improving reporting on air pollution and health by educating journalists about leading sources of air pollution, resulting exposures and health effects, key sources of relevant data, and cost-effective policy and programmatic solutions. Trainings also focus on the role of health communication in improving public health and conveying accurate data through human-focused stories.

Health Sector Engagement on Air Pollution (2019–Present)

Through a global health coalition, Inspire: Health Advocates for Clean Air, and as a partner of World Resource Institutes' global Clean Air Catalyst coalition funded by USAID, empowering health professionals (doctors, nurses and health care workers) through training and advocacy to respond to the global air pollution crisis, educate patients, and serve as thought leaders and advocates for clean air policies in their cities and countries.

Clean Household Energy (2017–2018)

With Bloomberg Philanthropies, World Health Organization and U.S. Centers for Disease Control, visiting countries with high health burdens from solid fuel combustion pollutants and assessing their respective needs and public health roles in accelerating access to clean fuels, reducing pollution exposure and improving health. With Berkeley Air Monitoring Group, support World Bank to verify methodologies to quantify health, climate, and gender co-benefits of clean cooking in East Africa.