



Data Impact Program

Vital Strategies' Data Impact Program partners with governments to expand the use of data to enhance public health planning and policy development.

Informing policy.
Improving health.

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Effective Use of Data in Public Health Media

TRAINING OVERVIEW

Media professionals play a critical role in shaping how health data are understood by the public and policymakers. *Effective Use of Data in Public Health Media* is a practical, skills-based curriculum designed to strengthen media professionals' ability to accurately interpret, question, and report on health and mortality data in ways that are clear, contextualized, compelling, and responsible.

The curriculum focuses on the real challenges media professionals face when covering public health: understanding data sources, identifying what is newsworthy, avoiding misinterpretation, communicating uncertainty and handling mis- and disinformation. Through hands-on exercises and real-world examples, participants build confidence in working with health data, engaging effectively with technical experts and developing meaningful and impactful stories.

WHO IS THIS TRAINING FOR?

This curriculum is designed for **journalists and media professionals**, including:

- Those working in print, broadcast, and digital spaces
- Health and science reporters

The training is suitable for participants with varying levels of experience and can be adapted to local media contexts and priority health issues.

WHAT ARE THE TRAINING OBJECTIVES?

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Understand common sources of health and mortality data and their limitations
- Interpret basic health statistics and trends accurately
- Ask informed questions of health experts and officials
- Identify the key message and news angles within health data
- Avoid common pitfalls and misrepresentation of statistics
- Communicate risk, uncertainty, and limitations responsibly
- Report on sensitive or negative health information ethically
- Produce clear, accurate health stories that inform public understanding

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TRAINING OUTCOMES

After completing the curriculum, participants will be able to:

- Produce **accurate, engaging health stories** grounded in credible data
- Confidently **interpret and explain health and mortality statistics** to the public
- Ask **sharper, more informed questions** of health officials and technical experts
- Identify and communicate the **most newsworthy message** in complex datasets
- Report responsibly on **risk, uncertainty, and negative findings**
- Apply ethical principles when covering **sensitive health issues and crises**
- Counter **mis- and disinformation**

WHY THIS CURRICULUM MATTERS

- **Improves accuracy:** Reduces misinterpretation of health statistics
- **Strengthens public trust:** Promotes responsible, transparent reporting
- **Builds media capacity:** Supports informed public dialogue on health issues
- **Enhances accountability:** Enables journalists to question and contextualize official data

HOW IS THE TRAINING OFFERED

This curriculum is delivered through the **Data Impact Program**, part of the **Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative**, in partnership with media organizations and training institutions.

- **Format:** In-person, facilitator-led training
- **Duration:** Multi-day curriculum (typically 2–3 days)
- **Approach:** Highly interactive, practice-oriented

The curriculum includes facilitator guidance, participant-focused exercises, group discussion, and applied reporting activities using real and simulated country data. Sessions emphasize peer learning and practical professional application.

The Curriculum is also available in Spanish and French/ El plan de estudios también está disponible en español y francés/ Le programme est aussi disponible en espagnol et en français.

OTHER MEDIA TRAINING OFFERED

- **Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS):** How to use CRVS data to tell compelling stories and spur national action
- **Data Journalism:** How to tell a visually rich and compelling public health data story
- **Self study:** E-Learning courses are available on [Using CRVS Data in Public Health Journalism](#).
- **Self study:** E-Learning courses are available on [writing](#) and [disseminating](#) public health reports.

For more information about the training, please email: data4health@vitalstrategies.org
Access all of our online training materials at <https://learning.vitalstrategies.org/catalog/>