



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.

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Leading with Data: Communicating for Public Health Action

TRAINING OVERVIEW

Ministry of Health leaders are routinely called upon to explain complex health data to policymakers, colleagues, the media, and the public—often in high-pressure environments where clarity, credibility, and trust are paramount. Conveying Health Information to Media & Colleagues is a two-day, executive-level workshop designed to strengthen senior leaders' capacity to communicate health data clearly, confidently, and strategically in support of policy decisions and public accountability.

The training focuses on the real communication challenges faced by Ministries of Health: responding to media inquiries, briefing political leadership, aligning messages across departments, and ensuring that data are used effectively to inform action. Through facilitated discussion, applied exercises, and practical tools, participants learn how to identify the message in the data and deliver it in ways that are accurate, accessible, and aligned with national priorities.

WHO IS THIS TRAINING FOR?

This concise training is designed specifically for **senior Ministry of Health leadership**, including:

- Heads of departments, divisions, and national public health institutes
- Senior technical advisors and program directors
- Designated or de facto Ministry spokespersons

Participants typically have technical expertise but limited time and need communication approaches that are efficient, strategic, and fit for decision-making environments.

WHAT ARE THE TRAINING OBJECTIVES?

By the end of the workshop, Ministry of Health leaders will be able to:

- Apply a **practical communication framework** to plan and assess communications in their purview
- Distill complex data into **clear, policy-relevant messages**
- Identify and prioritize audiences such as political leadership, media, partners, and the public

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- **Define and articulate a Single Overriding Communication Objective (SOCO) for key messages**
- Acquire skills to communicate in ways that support **decision-making, accountability, and public trust**
- Select appropriate **communication channels**, including media briefings, reports, social media, and internal communications
- Strengthen **internal and inter-agency alignment** around data and messaging
- Develop a **practical communication plan** for priority health issues and **guide the team** that implements the plan

HOW IS THE TRAINING DELIVERED?

- **Format:** In-person, facilitated workshop
- **Duration:** Two days
- **Approach:** Executive-focused, highly participatory

The training is grounded in adult learning principles and recognizes participants as experienced leaders. Sessions emphasize peer exchange, real-world examples, and immediate application to participants' own national and institutional contexts.

KEY TOPICS COVERED

Day 1: Strategic Foundations – Finding the message in health data – Why data matter for policy and public communication – A simple communication model for Ministry leadership – Understanding and prioritizing audiences – Communicating with technical vs. non-technical audiences – Defining a Single Overriding Communication Objective (SOCO)

Day 2: Leadership in Action – Choosing the right communication channels – Engaging effectively with media and the public – Using social media and understanding emerging AI tools – Improving internal and inter-ministerial communication – Developing a realistic communication plan – Sharing negative information and managing press scrutiny

WHY THIS TRAINING MATTERS FOR MINISTRIES OF HEALTH

- **Supports evidence-informed policy:** Helps leaders ensure data are understood and used in decision-making
- **Strengthens public trust:** Promotes transparency and clarity in public communication
- **Improves crisis readiness:** Builds confidence in managing media and difficult messages
- **Enhances institutional coherence:** Aligns messaging across departments and partners
- **Reinforces communications management:** Provides skills for management related to communication and dissemination

HOW CAN I ACCESS THE TRAINING? / HOW IS THE TRAINING OFFERED

This training is offered through the Data Impact Program as part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, in partnership with Ministries of Health and other institutions.

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