

Vital Strategies' role in global initiative coordination – example of Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety

For over 10 years, Bloomberg Philanthropies has supported a global initiative to reduce mortality from road crashes, which represent leading cause of death globally, concentrated in low- and middle-income countries. The initiative has a specific focus on implementing road safety policies and practices in urban contexts and leveraging city implementations as models for national efforts and city leaders as advocates for national policy change. Since 2015, Vital Strategies has led the Initiative's engagement with cities – first with 10 large cities globally and more recently expanding to over 20 cities.

The Initiative's program model is one of technical assistance to government partners, provided by a set of global technical organizations, including Vital Strategies; WHO, World Bank - Global Road Safety Facility; National Association of City Transportation Officials - Global Designing Cities Initiative; Global Road Safety Partnership hosted by International Federation of the Red Cross -; World Resources Institute; International Association of Chiefs of Police; and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. The Initiative focuses on supporting evidence-based road safety policies, as articulated in the WHO's Save LIVES technical package (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/save-lives-a-road-safety-technical-package>). These include promoting safe road user behaviors (speed reduction; motorcycle helmet-wearing; drink driving prevention; seat-belt wearing) via law enforcement and mass media messaging; implementing road engineering practices to reduce speed and protect pedestrians; and supporting safer modes of transportation as alternatives to cars and motorcycles, such as bus rapid transit.

Vital Strategies plays 3 roles in the Initiative: 1) Overall implementation coordination; managing government relationships and co-managing with local teams funded through the Initiative; 2) Technical assistance on strategic communications and design of mass media campaigns; 3) Technical assistance on strengthening road safety data collection and use for decision-making.

The coordination and government relations function comprises multiple activities in each city:

- Managing initial outreach to Mayors and city stakeholders to introduce the Initiative, establish the participation of the city, and connect global partners to relevant technical counterparts in city government
- Maintaining ongoing collaborative and supportive relationships with Mayors' offices and other city agencies, including facilitating global partners' technical assistance provision.
- Supporting improved coordination by creating inter-agency committees and task forces on road safety, often for the first time, convening transportation, health, urban planning, and police departments. Such committees serve as platforms for joint planning, including development of comprehensive road safety plans.
- Providing human resources to the participating cities, using an "embedded staffing" model, in which staff are co-recruited and co-managed between city government agencies and Vital Strategies. Typically, a city will engage up to 5 embedded staff based in city agencies, focused on transportation policy, law enforcement, media, data, and overall coordination.
- Engaging – with city partners – in national-level advocacy and technical assistance.
- Providing and overseeing grants to cities for program implementation, and serving as fiscal agent for partners as needed
- Convening and chairing planning meetings with global Initiative partners and the donor
- Generating summary reports of city-wide activities and accomplishments for the donor and serving as focal point for the donor on Initiative activities in each city
- Developing sustainability plans for road safety activities

Example: Road Safety in Sao Paolo, Brazil

Vital Strategies and other global partners have been working with the municipal government in Sao Paolo since 2014, under the model of work described above. Major milestones include:

1. Fatalities from road crashes have declined to 6.4 deaths per 100,000 population in 2019 from 10.5 in 2014 when the Initiative started.
2. VIDA SEGURA, the multi-annual Road Safety Plan with goals, setting obligations for city agencies by executive decree. Info [here](#) and [here](#).
3. [Street design manual](#) launched December 2020.
4. First time that traffic agents (CET) and the State Military Police collaborate to enforce speed in urban corridors and targeting motorcycles. Unprecedented integrated enforcement.
5. \$1M government investment for drink and driving campaign in April 2019. [Full info here](#).
6. All crashes recorded in a visual platform for analysis and public access: news report [here](#)

