

## ACOM Seminar

# Bringing the Golden Opportunity for Filling PM2.5 Data Gaps into Focus

**Christa Hasenkopf**  
University of Chicago

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**Link: <https://operations.ucar.edu/live-acom>**

## ABSTRACT

Fine particulate pollution (PM2.5) is one of the largest health threats on the planet, but the burden of PM2.5 is not spread evenly globally – and neither are the technical and policy resources to address the problem. While Asia and Africa bear 93 percent of the health burden of PM2.5 pollution, currently only 6.8 percent of countries in Asia and 3.7 percent in Africa make their government data fully available. Yet, across countries, the sustained production and sharing of timely air quality data has been a consistent fundamental building block to tackling air pollution.

Meanwhile, the philanthropic funding landscape for air pollution is pales in comparison to the size of the global health PM2.5 problem. Less than 64 million USD in philanthropic foundation funding was devoted to air pollution issues globally in 2021, and only approximately 1.7 million USD total goes to countries annually in Asia and Africa, outside of India and China.

This preliminary analysis outlines golden opportunities for various science and/or policy-oriented entities to identify the “lowest hanging fruit” in terms of supporting sustained PM2.5 data generation in countries with little-to-no government-sponsored PM2.5 monitoring, high PM2.5 annual average concentrations, high populations, little-to-no philanthropic funding for the issue, and few or no national level PM2.5 policies. These are locations where one well-supported and sustained PM2.5 monitoring effort by local actors has the legitimate potential for a positive national-level impact. The analysis also describes our current understanding of the landscape of local actors who are well-poised to fill these data gaps, their current activities, and self-identified barriers and opportunities. Lastly, the analysis concludes with a call to action, asking the audience to help us better understand the landscape of local actors capable of filling these gaps.