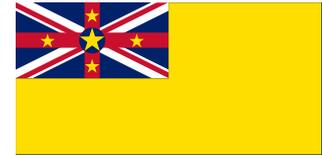




Assessment, Analysis, and Redesign of Birth and Death Registration Business Processes



Niue (2021)

CRVS Business Process Improvement (BPI) Brief

A multi-sectoral team of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) stakeholders in Niue (from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Services and Niue Statistics Office) were engaged to examine current birth and death registration processes, using Stage 1 of the **CRVS Systems Improvement Framework** as the methodological guide, to identify gaps and determine areas for improvement. An additional aspect of this project, involved mapping the linkages between the civil registration and social protection system to streamline the delivery of these services. The findings from the assessment aimed to enhance the efficiency of social service delivery mechanisms and to strengthen the institutional capacity of the overarching social protection architecture in Niue.

As part of its ongoing collaboration with the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative and in support of the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has been providing support to countries to assess, analyse and redesign selected CRVS processes.

Niue's CRVS system

In Niue, the Health Department is responsible for the notification of births and deaths occurring both in health facilities and in the community. The Civil

Registration Office (CRO) is responsible for the civil registration of these births and deaths and the issuance of legal identity documentation in the form of birth and death certificates. The recording and registration of births and deaths in Niue is governed by the Births and Deaths Registration regulations of 1984, which requires compulsory registration of all births and deaths occurring on the Island and provides for non-compulsory registration of off-island events. As New Zealand citizens, indigenous Niueans have access to specialised healthcare in New Zealand,¹ which means many births and deaths occur overseas. The CRVS system is overseen and supported by a national CRVS Committee comprised of the Department of Health, the Civil Registration Office of the Department of Justice, Land Surveying and Community Services, and the Niue Statistics Office of the Department of Finance and Planning.

Methodology

Using the methodology and tools defined by the **CRVS Systems Improvement Framework**, the Core Team of national CRVS Stakeholders (supported by a country coordinator and senior advisor) compiled detailed descriptions of birth and death registration processes and their linkages to social protection through a series of individual in-person consultations and two online group consultations with all stakeholders. The next stage of the project involved identifying performance



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¹ [Pacific Community and United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\). 2021. Civil registration and vital statistics in Niue. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.](#)

issues and developing redesigned processes and improvement policies, with particular consideration for improving the linkages between civil registration and social protection services. The **CRVS Systems Improvement Framework** introduces systems thinking tools such as process mapping, to engage stakeholders and improve understanding of the functioning of the CRVS system.

Key processes identified for improvement

Through the development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the Core Team of Stakeholders identified the following key performance issues:

Birth registration

- The traditional paper-based registration process results in lengthy delays in communicating registration data, including the delivery of birth notifications from the Department of Health to the Civil Registration Office.
- Risk of human error when data is extracted from the paper-based Register of Births and Deaths to the electronic birth certificate template.
- Limited population awareness regarding the legally stipulated timeline for birth registration and the accompanying penalty incurred for late registration.

Death registration

- There is currently no systematic process for registering deaths of Niue residents who died and were buried in New Zealand.
- Delivery of paper-based death notifications is often delayed, especially for deaths occurring over the weekend.

Priority Recommendations

Birth and death registration (occurring at home or in a health facility):

- **Develop an independent digital civil registration platform** for the processing and storing of registration data, to replace the current paper-based system. Digital processing can facilitate performance improvements and ensure integrity of information

collected, as well as reduce the time taken to register both hospital and community births.

- **Prioritize registration data entry at the hospital.** The documentation and information already collected by the hospital should suffice to complete the registration. This information could then be sent directly to the Civil Registry Office, removing the requirement for family members to submit a formal application for registration.
- **Enable interoperability between health facility software (Medtech) and the proposed digital civil registration platform.** The data collected by the hospital is stored in Medtech and relevant data can be automatically transferred to the proposed digital civil registration platform.

Birth and death registration (occurring overseas):

- Consultations should be initiated with the New Zealand civil registration authority to **finalize a data sharing agreement, facilitating the sharing of information on all vital events of Niue citizens occurring in New Zealand.**
- **Detailed criteria should be developed** to determine whether deaths occurring overseas of Niuean residents should be recorded in the death register.
- Once a data sharing agreement has been established with New Zealand, the proposed **digital civil registration platform should be designed to process information periodically submitted by the New Zealand civil registration authority.**

Sharing birth and death data with social services:

- To support more efficient distribution of social services (child allowance, newborn grant, and pension benefit), the introduction of a digital civil registration platform should enable a digitally generated report on all new births and deaths (both in Niue and overseas) which can be shared with social services.
- A digital platform for registering and processing potential beneficiaries of social allowances should be developed, which includes a function to allow for digital verification of birth certificates.