
CRVS Insight

May 2023



The Regional Steering Group Reaches Consensus on Extending the CRVS Decade beyond 2024

The [ninth meeting of the Regional Steering Group](#) (RSG) for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in Asia and the Pacific was organized in-person from 10 to 12 May 2023 in Bangkok. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss progress to-date, prepare for the final review of the Asia Pacific CRVS Decade (2015-2024) and possible extension, and decide on future focus areas for the work of the RSG. During the meeting, participants reached a consensus on the need for extending the CRVS Decade beyond 2024. The meeting was organized in a hybrid modality with most participants attending in-person and online participants joining via Microsoft Teams platform. The modality of the meeting was a combination of presentations, interactive discussions and feedback sessions. The meeting included 42 participants, including 26 country participants and 16 development partner participants. The presentation material will be made available on <https://getinthepicture.org/>

More information on the RSG can be found [here](#).



Regional Workshop for Assessing Inequalities in Registration in Asia-Pacific

The [regional workshop for the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics \(CRVS\) Inequality Assessment project](https://getinthepicture.org/) in Asia and the Pacific was organized on 8-9 May 2023 in Bangkok. The workshop provided an opportunity for countries which undertook an inequality assessment to share experiences and lessons learned, and to document best practices for other countries which may be interested in undertaking an inequality assessment in the future. The workshop included 21 participants from 12 country participants (Lao PDR, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Fiji and Bangladesh) and 10 development partner participants (UNHCR, WHO, Bali Process, Vital Strategies and ESCAP). The presentation material will be made available on <https://getinthepicture.org/>

More information on the inequality assessment project can be found [here](#).



Adoption of New Human Rights Council Resolution on Birth Registration

The Human Rights Council adopted at its 52nd session a [Resolution on birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition](#) everywhere as a person before the law. The resolution calls upon States to identify and reform laws and policies to enable immediate birth registration for all and to prevent all forms of discrimination against women and children in accessing birth registration. It also requests the High Commissioner to prepare a study on the use of digital technologies to achieve universal birth registration. This renewed focus highlights the importance of birth registration as a right and as a key action towards universally protecting the rights of all children to identity. The resolution is the result of a process of consultations with States and NGOs led by the Permanent Missions of Mexico and Türkiye.

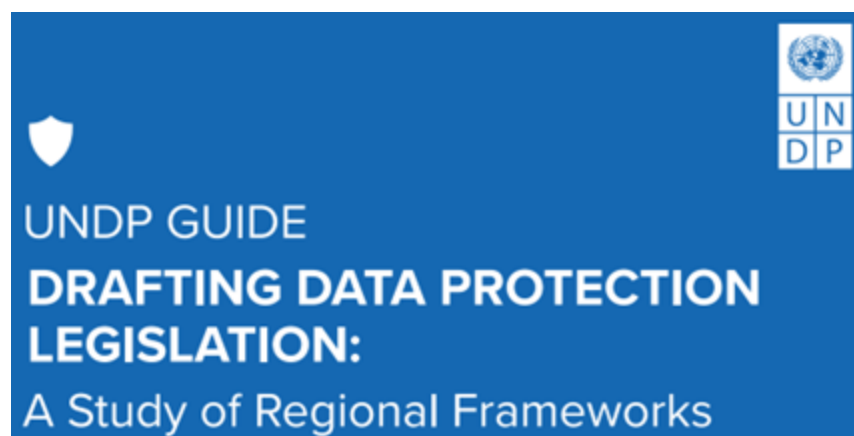


First Webinar of the UN Legal Identity Agenda on the Importance of Linking Civil Registration System and National ID System

The [UN Legal Identity Agenda](#) (UNLIA) Task Force started a series of webinars focusing on achieving legal identity for all. The first webinar was held on 19 April 2023 on the theme “What is UNLIA? – How to integrate CRVS and ID management?”. The webinar included presentations on the UN Legal Identity Agenda, coordination mechanisms in the UN, and on civil registration and national ID systems. It also included lessons learned from Mozambique, Azerbaijan and Honduras. The objectives of the webinar were to:

- Ensure that the UNCTs are aware of the global framework on legal identity and build capacity to align its activities with the UNLIA;
- Promote understanding among UNCTs on the importance of linking civil registration and identity management systems and enhance their capacity to advise to Member States;
- Guide the UNCTs on how to ensure coordination among different UN departments and agencies by introducing good examples.

More information of the UNLIA Task Force and future webinars can be found [here](#).



UNDP Releases Comprehensive Guide to Global Standards on Data Protection

UNDP published a [comprehensive guide to global standards on data protection](#). The report provides a framework to assist relevant stakeholders in the development of data protection and privacy legislation. It analyses key themes and principles in data protection law and practice, by analysing how all the major themes in data protection and privacy law and institutional frameworks are addressed in the major regional data protection and privacy frameworks. These include the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Privacy Framework, the Association of South-East Asian (ASEAN) Framework, the African Union Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection, among others. The report was published as part of the Annual Work Plan of the [UN Legal Identity Agenda Task Force](#) and authored by the Centre for Communications Governance in the National Law University in Delhi.



WHO Experts Introduce ICD-11 and Implementation Plan to Pacific Island Countries

The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Brisbane Accord Group, organized a [webinar series held on 18 April 2023](#). It introduced ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision) and related resources available to Pacific Island countries and areas (PICs). The first webinar was delivered by ICD experts from WHO headquarters and the Western Pacific Regional Office who provided an overview of ICD-11, its implementation steps and discussed the implications of transitioning to ICD-11 based on

PICs' current ICD implementation. Dr Erwyn Ooi Chin Wei from the Ministry of Health, Malaysia shared experiences and lessons learned from implementing ICD-11 in Malaysia.



Just Released: New Publication on CRVS Digital Platforms

UNICEF published a key report titled “[CRVS Platforms: Key Findings for Practitioners](#)”. The findings highlight a selection of CRVS platforms, which were selected after an extensive market survey of existing CRVS offerings. Conducted by UNICEF, the review assesses the functional and non-functional aspects, as well as maturity of CRVS products. This publication targets international development practitioners, both in programme and Information Communication Technology divisions, who wish to understand and implement digitalized CRVS programmes. It is intended to guide planning, budgeting, technology selection, and implementation strategies. It is also intended to support planning and programme operations design that are fit for purpose and uphold value, feasibility, and sustainability principles. The report can be accessed [here](#).



Effective Partnerships Strengthen Births Registration, and Civil Registration & Vital Statistics System in Samoa

The [Samoa Bureau of Statistics](#) (SBS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed a new report titled “[Strengthening the Birth Registration System in Samoa](#)”. It highlights birth registration as a fundamental right, representing a critical first step for the protection and development of children in Samoa. The report is the result of effective partnerships between SBS, through its Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Division, UNDP through its [Accelerator Lab](#) (AccLab), and relevant stakeholders such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, and actors involved in the birth registration process at the community level. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of the current situation, identifies gaps and opportunities, and proposes innovative and concrete recommendations such as using collective intelligence, and leveraging technology and whole-of-government collaboration across sectors to improve birth registration in Samoa.



Birth Certificates Replaced with QR Codes in Uzbekistan

A [new procedure for registering births is being introduced in Uzbekistan](#) this year. Children's parents will be issued a QR code certificate instead of the traditional stamped certificate. The new procedure has been effective since 1 January 2023 in Tashkent and will be extended to all regions of the republic from 1 June. This new development is regulated by a governmental decree on “Measures to further improve the procedures for recording civil status acts”. According to the document, birth registration in the registry office will be carried out by medical institutions. The medical institution will issue a certificate of birth registration with a QR code. The Ministry of Justice also stressed that the QR code certificate is equal to the stamped birth certificate and that refusal to accept it by state bodies and organizations is prohibited.



Towards a World Where Everyone Counts: A Virtual Roundtable

On April 27, Vital Strategies organized a [virtual roundtable titled “Towards a World Where Everyone Counts”](#). The webinar started with an introduction of the Data for Health Initiative and the importance of addressing data gaps in the health sector. Leading Civil Registration and Vital Statistics experts engaged in the webinar and shared their views and experiences. The recording of the event is available at this [link](#).



Tool for Tracking All-cause Mortality and Estimating Excess Mortality

The [WHO Western Pacific Regional Office](#), in cooperation with the [Department of Statistics at UCLA](#), developed an [online calculator for excess deaths in countries](#). This tool aims to help countries estimate their expected all-cause mortality counts for each week or month starting 1 January 2020. Since excess deaths have been observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence is needed to support timely and dynamic decision-making and policy development. This tool is for use by member countries and does not require the data to be seen by the WHO. Additionally, the WHO developed a paper on “Tool for tracking all-cause mortality and estimating excess mortality to support the COVID-19 pandemic response”. It discusses the relevance of developing this tool and lessons learned. The paper can be accessed at this [link](#).



USD 250 Million to Support Civil Registration in Indonesia

The World Bank recently [approved a US\\$250 million loan](#) to strengthen population and civil registration and enhance the use of digital identification in Indonesia. The loan will contribute to the implementation of the [ID for Inclusive Service Delivery and Digital Transformation Project](#) and also support the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration to improve the country's existing population and civil registration systems. In particular, it is intended to increase coverage in twelve priority provinces and among vulnerable populations nationwide. It will support the development of key digital public infrastructure, including an identity verification and electronic know your customer (e-KYC) platform, a digital identification app, and a data exchange platform to facilitate seamless and secure sharing of information across government.



CRVS Champion – Mr. Neel Singh

What is your current title and role?

I am currently the Registrar-General at the Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Office. The BDM office is under the Ministry of Justice of Fiji. I have been in the position since January 2020 in the acting role and got substantively appointed in June 2020. Prior to my appointment as the Registrar-General I was the Acting Official Receiver from 2017-2021.

The BDM office is directly involved in the registration of births, deaths and marriages, headed by the Registrar-General. We have 21 offices across Fiji to ensure that access to justice and registration is available to every individual regardless of their geographical locations.

I am honored and privileged to also mention that I have been elected as the Convener of the Pacific Civil Registrar's Network (PCRN).

Can you please share with us a particular experience which highlighted the importance of CRVS to you?

As the Registrar-General, it gives me much pleasure and passion to have CRVS at heart and to ensure that improvements are made to the CRVS system in Fiji.

It is always great to work with people from different backgrounds and with different experience, to share ideas and opportunities.

I experienced the importance of CRVS during the COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Fiji. Given that Fiji does not have a National Identification, the Birth Registration Number (BRN) was used as one of the unique identifiers to identify people who received the vaccine or who were left behind. Here, the importance of having a birth certificate made a difference.

How are you currently involved in CRVS improvements?

Fiji, as a developing country, is doing its best to achieve universal civil registration. Fiji is one of the first countries to have conducted an in-depth quantitative inequality assessment of civil registration. The work was led by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics in coordination with other key stakeholders including BDM, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (and other key stakeholders), with support from ESCAP.

The information obtained from this assessment will be used to inform future research and policy interventions, to bridge gaps in registration between different populations in Fiji.

We are also about to submit a proposal on a project on the Assessment, Analysis and redesign of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in Fiji. This project aims to support the government in strengthening its CRVS system by analyzing and possibly redesigning its CRVS processes.

Which advice would you give to others trying to improve CRVS systems?

The world is moving towards digital technologies, which provides an opportunity for governments to significantly improve registration rates and also enhance customer experience. We need countries to move towards online registration of births and issuing birth certificates online as well.

One must start from somewhere when it comes to digitization. I urge every country to carry out a proper business process reengineering, and to digitize records as these hold critical data which dates back to 1800's. Every country should aim for complete civil registration so that 'no one is left behind'.

RESOURCES

- Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems. Available [here](#).
- Drafting Data Protection Legislation: A Study of Regional Frameworks. UNDP. Available [here](#).

- CRVS Platforms: Key Findings for Practitioners. UNICEF. Available [here](#).
 - Strengthening the Birth Registration System in Samoa. UNDP and SBS. Available [here](#).
-

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **12-15 June 2023:** [Training Workshop on the Transition to Register-based Approaches for Population and Housing Censuses](#).
-

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Vital Strategies, Technical Advisor Improvement Program. Job opening based in Singapore. More details [here](#).
 - UNICEF, Migrants Access to and Use of Civil Registration in Latin America and the Caribbean. Job opening based in Panama City. More details [here](#).
 - Vital Strategies, Technical Advisor, CRVS Improvement Program. Job opening based in Singapore. Find more details [here](#).
 - ESCAP, Senior Research Assistant (Social Affairs) - Statistics Division. Job opening based in Bangkok. More details [here](#).
 - ESCAP, Internship (Civil Registration and Vital Statistics) - Statistics Division. Job opening based in Bangkok, Thailand. Find more details [here](#).
-



As we are always looking to improve content, we'd love to hear your feedback and input for articles. CRVS Insight is written for you and your feedback matters to us!

If you have a new resource, upcoming event or article you would like highlighted, please send submissions along with an accompanying photo to escap-crvs@un.org.

Please note by submitting photos you are granting ESCAP Statistics Division permission to publish the photo in the current article and any future articles it deems appropriate.

This e-mail has been sent to xx because you have expressed interest in CRVS activities in Asia and the Pacific. If you would like to stop receiving future communications, please [click here to unsubscribe](#).