
CRVS Insight

November 2023

Getting Everyone in the Picture: Investing in Children

17 November 2023, 12:30-13:45 (Bangkok GMT+7)
Meeting Room G, UNCC & Microsoft Teams.
Please [register here](#).

Shifting demographic compositions are putting pressure on governments to think and act quickly to address and equip the new generations to manage the new challenges and support ageing populations.

Ensuring universal and responsive civil registration is vital to invest in children through access to education, healthcare, and social protection programs, aligning with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Join UNICEF, ESCAP Statistics Division, and Vital Strategies at this side event, featuring speakers discussing investments in child and youth populations, vital statistics reporting, and addressing inequalities in civil registration.



Andrea Rossi
UNICEF Regional Adviser
for Social and Economic
Policy



Fathimath Riyaza
Head of Demographic and
Social Statistics Division at
Maldives National Bureau of
Statistics



Romain Santon
Regional Deputy Director,
Asia and Pacific at Vital
Strategies.



**Moderator:
Tanja Sejersen**
Statistician, Statistics
Division, ESCAP



Getting everyone in the picture: investing in children

Join us on the 17th of November! Supported by [the Bloomberg Philanthropy Data for Health initiative](#), [ESCAP](#), [UNICEF](#) and [Vital Strategies](#), are hosting a side event for the [Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference](#). This side event will highlight that serious action and resources are needed to achieve universal and responsive civil registration as agreed to by governments in Asia and the Pacific. To enable the new generations to manage and cope with emerging challenges and ageing populations, governments need to allocate more resources to support the growth and development of children, particularly through child-related benefits. The starting point being to ensure every one has a legal identity and is included in official statistics.

Register to the event and find more information on [this link](#).



Global Seminar on Quality Assurance of Administrative and Other Data Sources

On November 14, the [UN Expert Group on National Quality Assurance Frameworks](#) (EG-NQAF) and its Subgroup on administrative and other data sources are hosting a global seminar. The focus is on assuring the quality when administrative and other data sources, such as civil registration, are used to produce official statistics. The seminar will present insights on how the use of such data sources poses challenges and how quality aspects of the source data and the source itself impact the final statistical output. Expert speakers from four countries will share their experiences, exploring the promise and complexities of utilizing administrative and other data sources to produce official statistics.

Date & Time: Tuesday, 14 November at 8:00 – 9:15 AM EDT

Register for the event [here](#).

On the 15th of November, [the Pacific Civil Registrars Network](#) (PCRN) will be organizing the third webinar in the Webinar series (Journey Towards ICD-11 in the Pacific) on ICD applications, introduction to WHO-FIC and in-depth ICD-11 transition discussion.

[Click here](#) to register to the event.



Bangladesh passes new national identity registration bill

Moving forward, National ID cards in Bangladesh will now be administered by the Department of Home Affairs instead of the Election Commission. Under this new system, a distinctive national identification number will be assigned to every citizen, including children, serving as their lifelong, unchanging identifier. This approach is designed to eliminate confusion whereby citizens acquire diverse ID numbers from various organizations and varying purposes.

Original article can be found [here](#).



Pacific workshop on CRVS system interoperability and data sharing

In October, eight national Registrars or Registrars-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages from various Polynesian regions, along with experts from the [Pacific Community](#) (SPC), New Zealand, [the US Affiliated Pacific Islands Health Officers Association](#) (PIHOA), and the [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) met in Auckland to discuss data sharing. The workshop, primarily funded by the USA Embassy in New Zealand with support from the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, aimed to establish relationships between Civil Registrars in New Zealand, Niue, the Cook Islands, Tokelau, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, and American Samoa through the exploration of technology and innovation to enhance identity security across the region. The workshop delved into the civil registration systems in each country or territory and discussed how birth and death data could be shared across borders to prevent identity fraud.

More information and material from the workshop can be found on [this link](#).



Cook Islands CRVS process mapping workshop

Last month, the [Pacific Civil Registrar Network](#) (PCRN), supported by [Vital Strategies](#), hosted a workshop to map the current birth, death, and marriage registration processes, including paper flows with Health and Statistics, with representatives from the national CRVS committee and the wider public service. Participants identified improvement opportunities and barriers to moving to an e-CRVS system, such as processes, IT infrastructure, legislation, and institutional arrangements, and developed new "to-be" process maps. It also documented interoperability opportunities and requirements for new e-CRVS systems with a particular focus on health, statistics, immigration, passport, and the regional data systems.

More information on the workshop available [here](#).



Launch of NiueCRVS

Niue introduced a new digital CRVS on November 9, 2023, becoming the first country globally to implement the [OpenCRVS software](#). The system simplifies birth and death registrations for Niueans and streamlines operations for various governmental departments.

The initiative began in 2020, with [ESCAP](#) collaborated with Niuean officials to analyze existing processes and identify areas for enhancement. By late 2022, Niue's Cabinet approved the implementation of OpenCRVS. Throughout 2023, the system was tailored to suit Niue's specific requirements with support from various organizations, including [Plan International Australia](#), [Vital Strategies](#), and [the Pacific Community SPC](#).

The shift to a digital system will simplify processes for parents and those dealing with loss, enhance office efficiency, eliminate delays in obtaining birth or death certificates, and facilitate electronic information exchange among health, justice, community services, and statistics departments. Additionally, it ensures record safety during natural disasters.

Congratulations to Niue for this groundbreaking achievement.

You can find more information on [SPC's website](#).



CRVS Champion: Dr. Amani Siyam

Our community newsletter puts a spotlight on people who have gone above and beyond in their efforts to support CRVS programmes in Asia and the Pacific, raise awareness of CRVS issues or lead CRVS improvement efforts in their home country or in the region. This month, we would like to dedicate this issue of Insight to Dr. Amani Siyam

What is your current title and role?

I serve as the regional advisor for health information systems in the [WHO Office for South-East Asia](#) which supports eleven WHO member states home to over a quarter of the global population: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

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

I am particularly focused on ensuring populations are covered by basic health services and protection from a vicious cycle of financial hardship to access health care. These tenants of universal health coverage will be nowhere near met if every birth is not counted as a basic human right that unlocks the rights of access to descent services from health to education to civilian rights and if that opportunity is not equally availed to all segments of the population it becomes a chronic cause of all sorts of inequalities in accessing health and social care. In many countries of Asia and the Pacific, CRVS systems are short for substantial investments to improve their performance, and more drastic is how that suboptimal coverage impacts the lives and livelihoods of women and girls, coined as “the missing women phenomenon”, by Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.

How are you currently involved in CRVS improvements?

I have had the privilege to work in my own country's bureau of national statistics where I gained exposure to the complexity of reporting mechanisms between where the vital events occur and how those are reported from the facility or community level to the local government and above. More complex to deal with is the linkage to the national identification system which remains somewhat ad hoc and opportunistic specially in low- and middle-income settings. I am currently involved with countries where the foundations of CRVS systems appear in place in terms of government regulations, legal frameworks and business processes mostly using paper-based systems that were established during colonial times. Faced with changing population dynamics, in terms of size, diversity and distribution, countries are left with clear gaps in attaining the mandatory coverage and completeness of vital registration and thus unable to make a strong investment case for public sector spending. Importantly, countries decision-makers are growingly becoming more aware of these implications, and we are witnessing different types of technical, financial and advocacy support being requested from WHO and CRVS-concerned global partners. Working with our partners, we aim to provide that support internal and external around a well-defined CRVS strategic action plan as the accountability framework of countries policy actions and investments.

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

I believe partnerships for CRVS is the best stroke to make a real and sustainable difference. Undoubtedly in every setting, the hierarchy of CRVS stakeholders is diverse in terms of needs, benefits, and interests (be it civil registrar officers, statisticians, demographers, researchers, law makers, local authorities, health facilities, health workers, communities, and the key beneficiaries the individuals themselves). Partnerships for CRVS must ensure that their contributions to countries CRVS system development are governed by a well-to-do CRVS strategic action plan or similar that is inclusive of all stakeholders, that clearly maps their functions, roles, responsibilities, and collective benefits, and that outlines strategic milestones to be achieved in terms of coverage, quality development and system maturity. Finally, countries experience with the COVID pandemic drastically exposed fundamental shortfalls in the recording and reporting of deaths and causes of death data. Partnerships for CRVS must give that aspect careful thinking and decide on how best to capitalize on the unequivocal digital health transformation unlocked by the pandemic response and beyond. Partnerships for CRVS can readily start by supporting countries to effectively implement ICD-11 suite of tools, in skilling up CRVS stakeholders in trusted data exchange and consequently in generating quality vital statistics that will can be readily available to all sorts of uses and users at the local, national and international levels.

NEW RESOURCES

- [\(Online Course\) Leveraging the Health Sector to Strengthen the Civil Registration of Births and Deaths](#)
- [Joint Submission to the Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review: 46th Session Fourth Cycle – Cambodia](#)
- [WHO ICD-11 Youtube Channel](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **14 November 2023:** [Global Seminar on Quality Assurance of Administrative and Other Data Sources](#)
- **15 November:** [Journey Towards ICD-11 in the Pacific Webinar Series \(Webinar #3\)](#)
- **15 – 17 November 2023:** [Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference](#)

- **17 November 2023:** [Side event at the 7th Asia Pacific Population Conference on Getting everyone in the picture: investing in children](#)
 - **20 – 22 November 2023:** [The Seventh North-East Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
 - **21 – 22 November 2023:** [The Seventh Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development](#)
 - **24 November 2023:** [CRVS Closing Workshop for Assessing Inequalities in Registration in Samoa](#)
 - **27 – 30 November 2023:** [National Capacity Building and Consultation Workshop for the Assessment, Analysis and Redesign of CRVS Business Processes in Fiji](#)
 - **20 – 23 February 2024:** [Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development](#)
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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.

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