

The Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific
6 - 9 October 2020
Bangkok, Thailand
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CRVS Insight

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**16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND
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Maintaining CRVS during COVID-19

Maintaining operational continuity of CRVS systems is always important. An individual's legal identity remains of crucial importance during public health emergencies. Individuals need to be able to prove who they are to access public services such as health care, humanitarian assistance, financial aid and other social services. Children who are not registered at birth due to disruptions, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, are particularly vulnerable. Because of the reliability and timeliness of vital statistics derived from a well-functioning civil registration systems policy makers can create informed and targeted responses to areas in need. As a result, the UN Legal Identity Agenda Task Force has worked with the Economic Commission for Africa, ESCAP and SPC to produce [guidelines for Maintaining Civil Registration and Vital Statistics during COVID-19](#).

The same group also distributed a very short survey to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning of civil registration worldwide, provide information regarding national solutions and provide a forum for exchange of experiences. In Asia and the Pacific, the questionnaire was sent to the national CRVS focal points.

A similar survey was launched with a focus on census, the results of which can be found [here](#).



New codes for COVID-19 in ICD-10

To assist countries in collecting timely and accurate data, the [World Health Organization's Classifications Team](#) recently updated the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) to include enhanced coding instructions for mortality and morbidity related to Covid-19. The updated classifications include technical instruction on classifying confirmed, suspected and probable cases.

The instructions can be found [here](#).



Continued progress on ending statelessness

North and Central Asian countries are continuing to move quickly in improving issues of [statelessness](#) within their borders. Notably, [Uzbekistan](#) has joined neighboring countries to address the crisis and [grant citizenship to 50,000 stateless peoples](#). As noted by UNHCR, "A provision in the Citizenship Law, signed by the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on Friday, will come into effect on 1 April, conferring citizenship to registered stateless people who were granted permanent residence in Uzbekistan before 1 January 1995." Ultimately, the new law is a welcome addition and will serve as inspiration in the ongoing fight against statelessness worldwide.



Legal review of CRVS in Pacific countries

The Pacific Island nations are preparing to review their CRVS laws and make recommendations for improving their national CRVS legal frameworks. With support from the [Brisbane Accord Group](#), and in particular [The Pacific Community](#), four countries in particular are undertaking this important work to gain support from their respective cabinets for improving and strengthening the frameworks currently governing their civil registration systems: Kiribati, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

As an example of these reviews in action, a white paper from the Solomon Islands can be found on www.getinthepicture.org while an overview of all legislation in the Pacific Islands can found [here](#).



Inequality assessments and recording mortality data

In the build up to the [Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS](#), the ESCAP CRVS team has published an information note on the role inequality assessments play in implementing the CRVS Regional Action Framework. The new information note contends that conducting inequality assessments "is an essential step to getting every one in the picture and ensuring universal registration, but very few countries have so far performed specific studies on who is left behind." The note also discusses the role of inequality assessments in a country's ability to measure the Sustainable Development Goals and the tools available for supporting country efforts. The full information note can be found on www.getinthepicture.org.

Additionally, a new ESCAP blog post discusses the importance of a well-functioning CRVS system during this COVID-19 crisis. Importantly, the post notes that "to make progress against the pandemic we need to understand it and for that we need reliable and timely data". The post further explains how easily healthcare systems can get overwhelmed saying, "even under normal circumstances, without the extraordinary additional pressures health systems are currently experiencing, proper recording of causes of death is difficult and far from being reliable and complete". The post, which can be accessed on www.unescap.org, goes on and acknowledges the progress being made in Asia-Pacific.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Due to the ongoing developments with COVID-19, all CRVS-related events organised by ESCAP are currently postponed until further notice. However, preparations for the [Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific](#) continues and the Conference is still expected to occur from 6 - 9 October 2020, in Bangkok, Thailand.

NEW RESOURCES

- The Data for Health (D4H) Initiative released the [Verbal Autopsy Interpretation, Performance and Evaluation Resource](#) (VIPER). The new resource helps users analyze and understand cause of death data generated from verbal autopsy, as well as create data visualizations.
- The University of Melbourne's Data for Health (D4H) team has produced a [training video to support physicians and data encoders](#) on accurately coding and certifying deaths caused by COVID-19.

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

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

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