

A statement on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS)
Presented at Ministerial Conference on CRVS
Bangkok
26 November 2014

Excellences, distinguish delegates, Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon!

It's my privilege to participate and share views on behalf of World Vision International at the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics. World Vision is a Christian, relief and development organization working in almost 100 countries. In Asia, we work in 23 countries, working directly with an estimated 1.5 million children.

CRVS covers a wide range of indicators which are critical to measures progress of the countries on various pivotal aspects of child development. I congratulate all the governments participating in the Ministerial Conference, showing political will and commitment to strengthen CRVS system in Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. Chair, World Vision believes outcome of this conference will become a milestone in achieving wellbeing of children in the Asia and Pacific.

Mr. Chair, in recent years, there has been a notable momentum for and convergence of birth registration approaches under the umbrella of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, which officially and legally registers civil events – including births, deaths, causes of death, adoptions, marriages and divorces. Unfortunately, many countries do not have well-functioning CRVS systems. The Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific is going to provide opportunity to reach out to those who do not have access to birth registration and are not recognized by any state. The framework is well designed with clear targets and indicators.

Notably, the positive impact of birth registration can be seen across all levels of a society, from poor rural patients able to receive life-saving healthcare to the central government agencies able to make evidence-based decisions for improved service delivery. Strong political will, successful partnerships, quality judiciary and child protection systems infrastructure and sustainable funding are all essential prerequisites to birth registration and CRVS implementation for positive social impact.

Recognizing the unique barriers to implementing successful birth registration programmes, World Vision develops relevant and culturally appropriate solutions to ensure children are educated, have access to health and are protected.

World Vision affirms that birth registration is a fundamental human right that should be documented immediately or as soon as possible after birth. To achieve this, birth registration should be free and accessible to all, with fees for late registration being waived and with access in remote communities where babies are delivered at home.

Mr. Chair, World Vision believes that children whose births have not been registered and who are without official documentation should be allowed to access basic services, such as health and education, while waiting to be properly registered.

World Vision continues to actively advocate for the inclusion of universal and free birth registration, as a target in the Post-2015 development framework.

Role of the civil society:

Mr. Chair. I would like to emphasize that the role of INGOs and NGOs is pivotal especially in creating awareness among citizens about the importance of CRVS to enable them to establish their legal identity. By scaling up best practices and key learning from successful birth registration programs, implemented by INGO/NGOs and other community based organizations, can significantly contribute to address the challenges faced by governments in reaching 100% target of ensuring birth registration coverage and other targets mentioned in the Regional Action Framework.

World Vision welcomes this great opportunity to work with Plan International, UNESCAP and all development partners participating and supporting Ministerial Conference.

On behalf of World Vision I thank all the governments for providing this opportunity to contribute in this great conference and share views. World Vision looks forward to work closely with government partners, UN agencies and NGOs to strengthen implementation of Regional Action Framework in the Asia and Pacific.