

AGENDA ITEM 6: Policy priorities for improving CRVS in Asia and the Pacific.

POLICY STATEMENT

Country: Maldives

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Honorable chair, distinguished dignitaries from the Asia Pacific countries ladies and gentlemen, assalaam alaikum and a very good morning/afternoon.

It gives me immense pleasure and pride to represent and speak on behalf of my government and country, the Republic of Maldives in this landmark event held for the very noble humanitarian cause of getting everyone in the picture.

My sincere appreciation and thanks goes to the organizing agencies and the regional steering group for their dedicated work and effort to bring together all of us gathered here today for the national, regional, and international commitment at the highest level to ensure that no one is left behind or left out of the picture by the year 2024, thank you.

Over the past decades, Maldives has strived to maintain successful achievements in a number of developmental areas including civil registration and vital statistics. More than 90% of all births, deaths, marriages and divorces are registered and provided with legal documentation. It is mandatory that all Maldivians posses a national identification card with an identity number for each individual person. The latest development in this regard is the digitalization of registration of all vital statistics, a step forward on the way to getting everyone included. Through this process, all children born alive and registered is provided with a national identification number in their birth certificates. The current policies in

place states that all live births should be registered within 7 days of birth and all deaths should be certified and provided with a death certificate before burial of the deceased. Similarly, all marriages have to be solemnized by authorized and registered persons and all marriages should be registered with the family court or the magistrate courts and provided with legal documentations, a marriage certificate one for the husband and one for the wife. Likewise, all divorces should be registered with the family court or the magistrate courts and provided with legal documentation of the divorce, a divorce certificate one for the husband and one for the wife.

Success does not come without challenges. As such, Maldives too faces numerous challenges in raising the percentile of legal registration of vital life events. Some of the marriages conducted out of country still go unregistered within the country and similarly deaths occurring out of country at times go unregistered within the country. A proportion of babies born out of wedlock and born to unregistered marriages also end up without their births legally registered and not having legal documentations. Another area requiring additional improvement and overcoming difficulties is in the area of coding of the cause of death.

At this juncture, when we are all gathered here to finalize ways and means to support inclusion of all in the picture, and while, Maldives as an individual nation work on strengthening its policies, I call upon my neighboring countries and international communities to partnership with each other to materialize a mechanism by which regional collaboration and reporting can also take place in order to NOT LEAVE anyone behind.

The government of Maldives is committed to include and address civil registration and vital statistics in all related policy commitments and is in full acceptance of and support to the regional action framework on civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

Thank you ones again and may we be blessed in our noble endeavor for a better future of the people in this region and the world at large.