Why linkages between Civil Registration and National Identity Systems matter

The First Government Forum on Electronic Identity in Africa
2-4 June 2015
Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

Why National ID?

- To provide <u>secure legal Identity</u> using correct biographic, strong biometrics, unique id number supported by reliable technology – guaranteeing 'right to identity'

- To provide citizenship to individuals in a country

- To help governments to provide efficient services

- To provide identity to individuals to legally and formally interact with state, companies and others individuals.

Can National ID alone guarantee secured identity?

No

- Civil Registration is the bedrock to National ID – it provides legal breeder documents

- CR and National ID need to be treated as sub-systems of one big system that provides **Legal Identity**

But it is not just enough to have a legal identity

For it to adequately meet it fundamental responsibilities, a legal identity must be:

1. **Secure**-Founded upon appropriate legislative framework, procedures and institutional arrangement, protected by strong policies of privacy and confidentiality of individual information..

2. **Trusted** –believed by both individuals and governments as true and correct sources of the facts of identity

3. **True**-Based upon true facts of identity of individuals

Hence a secure legal identity

CR + National ID

A conceptual framework

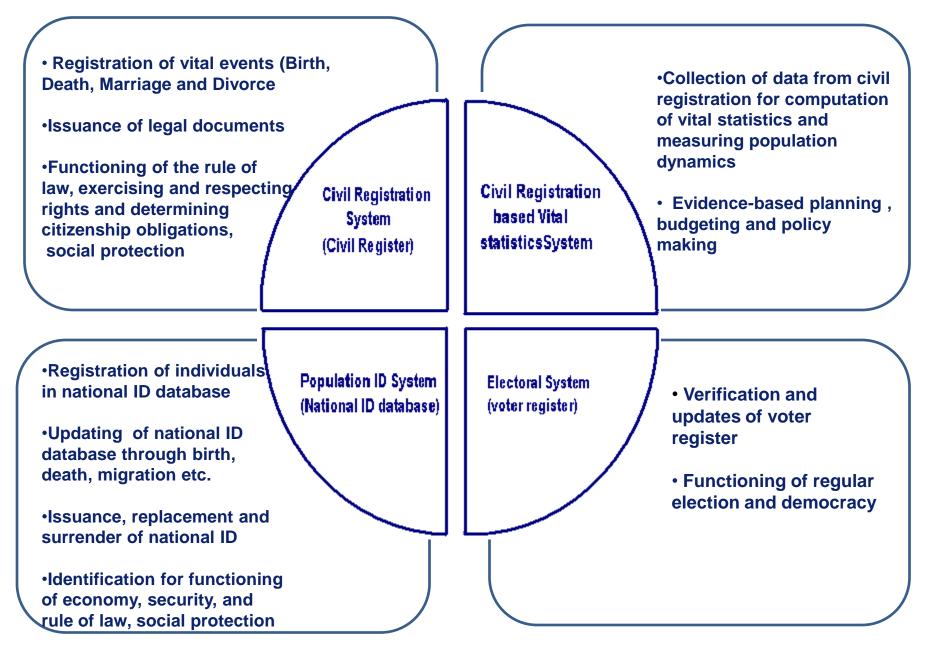| National ID |
| --- |
| Civil Registration |

Secure Legal Identity

➤ Legal Identity begins at birth with biographic information collected through Civil Registration System

➤ Identity strengthens with biometrics information collected through national id system

➤ Identity ends at death, but not its legal effects, so death information collected through Civil Registration must be linked with National ID

The identity ecosystem

• **Registration of vital events (Birth, Death, Marriage and Divorce**

•**Issuance of legal documents**

•**Functioning of the rule of law, exercising and respecting rights and determining citizenship obligations, social protection**

•**Collection of data from civil registration for computation of vital statistics and measuring population dynamics**

• **Evidence-based planning , budgeting and policy making**

Civil Registration System (Civil Register)

Civil Registration based Vital statisticsSystem

Population ID System (National ID database)

Electoral System (voter register)

•**Registration of individuals in national ID database**

•**Updating of national ID database through birth, death, migration etc.**

•**Issuance, replacement and surrender of national ID**

•**Identification for functioning of economy, security, and rule of law, social protection**

• **Verification and updates of voter register**

• **Functioning of regular election and democracy**

Benefits to Society and Government

- Social benefits

- Economic benefits

- Political benefits

Even beyond the boundaries of the countries

Policy, Law and Governance

•Need for one policy on CR + National ID with clear statement on purpose (include privacy!)

•Need for a law on National ID that provides for linkages between CR and National ID

•Need for Governance to coordinate exchange of information between the two systems

Processes, Technology and Services

- Need for simplification of process for improvement of access

- Need to make appropriate choice of technology to ensure interoperability

- Need for efficient ID Management for better services for citizen including e-services

Challenges in Africa in rolling out CR+ National ID

➢CR and National ID are at different levels of development

➢CR and National ID not linked or loosely linked

➢Institutional challenges

➢Non-existent or incomplete Civil Registration System

➢Often driven by private sector and donors - unsustaianable

Challenges in Africa in rolling out CR+ National ID

➢'Closed' technology –challenges of interoperability

➢Lack of policy and/or law linking these two systems

➢Capacity challenges

➢National ID has more political and donor support

➢No international guidance manual available

First International National Identity Management Conference : September 2014
Seoul Statement

Acknowledge the urgency of universal birth and death registration as a foundation for secure identity and identification systems that will strengthen vital statistics systems and underpin public sector policies and programs

Encourage Governments to strengthen and facilitate greater coordination between national identity and civil registration authorities and other key stakeholders in managing one's identity and to ensure effective registration of vital events

First International National Identity Management Conference : September 2014
Seoul Statement

Acknowledge the need for interoperability between civil registration, civil identification and other systems to enhance service delivery to individuals and to ensure timely, accurate and reliable data for decision making

Call upon development partners to continue to support efforts of governments in capacity building and resource mobilization and the harmonization of strategies to strengthen civil registration and identification systems.

Recognize the need for development of international principles and recommendations on linkages of civil registration and national identification systems.

APAI-CRVS and National ID

Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APAI-CRVS) is being currently implemented under the policy guidance of African Ministers responsible on CR

Need for a clear articulation on the importance of linkage between CR and National ID - *initiated*

Need for a clear strategy on advocacy on CR+ National ID – to reach beyond the CRVS constituency

Need to ensure the CR system is built on platform that is inter-operable - *initiated*

Declaration by Ministers responsible for civil registration in their third conference in Yamoussoukro
February 2015

Establish solid linkages between civil registration and national identity systems in efforts to manage one legal identity and to improve governance and service delivery

End-point

- Secured identity isn't only about technology or biometrics

- Identity management need a comprehensive approach

The "weakest link in the chain" can sometimes turn out to be most important

- Thank you