Establishing the death notification system in Bhutan

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Third meeting of the Regional Steering Group on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific
18-20 October 2017
Bhutan at a glance

- **Population age structure:**
  - Median Age years: 24
  - Under 5 years: 30.1%
  - 15-49: 62.9%
  - 65+: 7%

- **Population by areas:**
  - Urban: 30.9%
  - Rural: 69.1%

- **Population Density:**
  - 16 persons/sq km

- **Literacy rate:** (59.5%)

- **Administrative:**
  - 20 districts,
  - 205 gewogs (blocks)
Background

- Health Management Information system (HMIS): Maintains records of deaths occurring in the health facility along with cause of deaths;

- Civil registration system: maintains records of all deaths occurring both in health facility and outside;

- Department of immigration maintains record of deaths of foreigners;
Background: Civil Registration System

- Until 2002: Manual registration /Family Diary. Annual registration;

- 2003: Computerization of all records from the Family Diaries.

- 2004: Comprehensive database called Bhutan Civil Registration System (BCRS) was developed.

- 2010: SoPs to register birth and death within 30 days;

- 2011: web based online registration of births and deaths and establishment of registration points at block level;
Health management Information System (HMIS)

- Collects mortality reports with cause of death from all health facilities;

- 1984: Manual data collection and compilation;

- 2003: Microsoft access (electronic);

- 2014: DHIS 2: web based information system;
Death certification

Designated Health professionals issues death certificates or statement of death for deaths in the health facilities; (for both Nationals and foreigners)

Tshokpa (Village representative) issues statement of deaths for deaths occurring outside the health facility; (for both Nationals and foreigners)
Death registration system

Death reported to any of the Civil Registration Points within 30 days with all relevant documents;

Registration point submits the scanned document to DCRC HQ;

The approver verifies the submitted application and either approves or requests for re-submission;

Once approved the name of the person is marked as “Deceased” in the Bhutan Civil Registration System.
235 registration points (205 Gewogs, 4 Dungkhags, 4 Thromde offices, 20 Dzongkhags and department head office)
Death registration process for foreign nationals

- Application forms are submitted to the immigration office;

- Immigration office submits completed application online on IIMS (Immigration Information Monitoring System) to the head quarter.

- After verification approves or requests for re-submission;
## Death Registration Completeness Rate, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered</td>
<td>3,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimates*</td>
<td>5,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness Rate (%)</td>
<td>59.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Matrix of Deaths by Year of Occurrence and Year of Registration, Bhutan 2013-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occurrence (Death)</th>
<th>Registration (Death)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>1,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>3,195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enabling factors for deaths registration

• Insurance claims by the family members of the deceased (8 years and above);

• Increased accessibility to registration points;

• No cost incurred during registration;
Challenges

• Cause of death is available for deaths occurring in health facilities only;

• Only 29.88% of deaths occur in the health facility;(2015)

• Cause of deaths occurring in the health facility has only 4 digit ICD code;

• Civil registration system collects only the number of deaths;

• Deaths registration for those under the age of 8, neonates and infant are inadequate;

• Estimating annual number of deaths;
Way forward

• Immediate reporting of Maternal, Perinatal and Neonatal deaths instituted since July 2017;

• Electronic Patient information system (EPis) being piloted;

• Health workers and civil registration officers to be trained on verbal autopsies to improve the cause of deaths;

• Advocacy/ awareness to the public
THANK YOU