Asia-Pacific CRVS Research Forum

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Quality and availability of demographic and healthcare data in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

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Abstract

Introduction

Reliable, accessible, and trusted data is essential for public health work, research, and primary healthcare provision. Disaggregated health data is particularly crucial in addressing inequalities in health outcomes and achieving SDG goals. While civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems are traditionally used to compile population statistics, the release of data and statistics from these sources often suffers from a substantial lag.

Objectives and methods

This report is based on the results of the Global Data Barometer (GDB), a project that evaluates the state of data for the public good in various countries, including demographic, healthcare, and Covid-19-related data. In an attempt to provide in-depth analysis of Eastern European and Central Asian countries in terms of the healthcare and Covid-19 modules of the GDB, this report offers detailed country sheets and overall overview of results, outlining significant tendencies, best practices, and primary needs in the region.

Results

Ukraine, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Georgia had the highest scores in the Eastern Europe and Central Asian region, while Turkmenistan and Tajikistan had the lowest scores. The analysis demonstrates a strong need for regulatory frameworks for open data access in the countries of the region. There is a general lack of capacity-building activities for all involved actors in open data management, including public servants, civil society, media, and the private sector. Additionally, there is significantly less evidence of collaboration between stakeholders for increasing the impact of open data initiatives on public welfare compared to other regions assessed by the GDB.

Conclusions

The report's insights focus on governments' responsibilities such as issuing, collecting, distributing, and publishing health and Covid-19 data. It is clear how important identifying essential information for monitoring and managing the pandemic is. There may be a need for introducing and establishing standards of data management and disclosure, as well as legislation to ensure that these standards are followed while protecting sensitive personal information. Additionally, legislation may be necessary to establish legal requirements for data collection and reporting, as well as to provide penalties for non-compliance. This can help to ensure that the data is accurate and reliable and that it is used appropriately to inform public health policy and decision-making.

Recommendations

Lastly, the report provides several generalized recommendations applicable to the region, in regards to issues such as the geographic granularity of data; Depersonalization and disclosure of vaccination data at the level of individual records; Completeness of birth data; Accessibility of data available on NSO websites. Standardization of systems for processing CRVS data, especially mortality data. Quality and timing of data disclosure; and other insights aimed at supporting the development of unified healthcare data systems and increasing the availability of real-time capacity data.