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## Innovation in regional estimates of completeness of death registration

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The importance of registering deaths and recording causes of death has gained increased visibility because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Death registration is fundamental for measuring and mitigating critical health challenges, including for calculating excess mortality; a key metric in measuring the impact of a health emergency. More generally, a universal and well-maintained civil registration system is recognized as the best source of information on vital events. Statistics based on registration records, with accurate causes of death recorded and disaggregated by key demographic characteristics, are critical to design, implement and monitor public health policies. They are also necessary for monitoring the 2030 Agenda, which includes at least 67 indicators benefiting from data from civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems.

Thus, knowing completeness of death registration is essential for measuring progress in improving death registration and for being able to target interventions in countries where progress is lagging. Furthermore, to be able to evaluate regional progress, national estimates of completeness are required. However, not all countries make available data on death registration and its completeness. In particular, some large countries which would significantly impact upon a regional estimate do not report this information.

This paper seeks to fill this gap by providing an overview of available data on completeness and implementing innovative methods to estimate completeness where data are not available. A review of all available data was conducted to identify data for each country for which it might be accessible. For countries for which data was not available, a variety of innovative methods were applied in order to estimate a possible range of completeness which might be viable enabling a regional estimate to be available for the first time.