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# **Importance of a Civil Registration & Vital Statistics (CRVS) system and its connection with Disaster-Related Statistics**

# CRVS system's crucial role in disaster-related statistics

## 1. Accurate Population Data:

- CRVS systems track births, deaths, marriages, and other vital events. **In a disaster context**, knowing the pre-disaster population size and demographic structure (age, gender, etc.) is essential for assessing the scale of impact and helping in identifying the most vulnerable groups (e.g., children, elderly, pregnant women) for targeted help.

## 2. Recording Mortality and Causes of Death:

- **During and after a disaster**, CRVS systems help document deaths, including cause and time of death. Accurate mortality data are also critical for evaluating the effectiveness of disaster response efforts.

## 3. Monitoring Migration and Displacement:

- CRVS systems help track internal displacement and migration **caused by disasters**. This is important to plan all kinds of assistance for displaced populations.

# CRVS system's crucial role in disaster-related statistics (continuation)

## **4. Supporting Disaster Preparedness:**

- Analysis of historical data on births, deaths, and causes of death allows for more informed disaster preparedness planning. CRVS data help forecast potential health and population challenges during future disasters.

## **5. Legal Identity and Access to Services:**

- Because of disasters people often lose identification documents. CRVS systems play a big role in re-establishing legal identities, which is necessary for accessing aid and insurance claims.

## **6. Data for International Reporting and Aid:**

- International organizations rely on CRVS systems' accurate and reliable statistics to assess the scale of a disaster and determine the level of humanitarian assistance required.

# CRVS connection with SDGs

- The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 and are connected with the CRVS systems, as the generated data are widely used to assess SDGs.
- An example of interconnectedness of the SDGs and CRVS is: **16** SDG targets and **24** indicators require data that are **generated from a CRVS system**:
  - **Target 16.9**: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration
  - **Indicator 11.5.1**: Number of deaths, missing persons and persons affected by **disaster** per 100,000 people
- **102** SDG indicators depend on people having access to birth, death and marriage certificates- a critical service that only CRVS systems can provide.

# Armenia's CRVS system features

- There is no separate CRVS national development strategy.
- The 6-year-development program which is called "Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia", includes development strategy for the CRVS sector.
- Also, there is no separate sectoral budget for the implementation of the CRVS strategy.
- Instead, the annual state budget includes a budget section determined for the Ministry of Justice, and this section includes also the necessary funds for the Civil Status Acts Registration Agency, which operates within the Ministry.

# Armenia's CRVS system achievements

- *Armenia has achieved all **three** CRVS goals outlined in the Regional Action framework for Asia and the Pacific:*
- **Goal 1:** Universal civil registration of births, deaths and other vital events;
- **Goal 2:** All individuals are provided with legal documentation of civil registration of births, deaths and other vital events, as necessary, to claim identity, civil status and ensuing rights;
- **Goal 3:** Accurate, complete and timely vital statistics (including on causes of death) are produced based on registration records and are disseminated.

# The crucial role of civil registration in Armenia during COVID-19 Pandemic

- During the Covid-19 Pandemic most government agencies in Armenia closed down, only some kept functioning in emergency mode, including the Agency, which was registering only births and deaths (only the central office of the Ministry of Justice in Yerevan was functioning). This period (March, 2020) coincided with the government's pilot program to launch front offices in 3 hospitals to start registering births and deaths. The pilot program was successful and later all hospitals across Armenia introduced front office functions.
- Amendments were made in the legislation and on **May 16, 2021** the new Law “On the Civil Status Acts Registration” entered into force, introducing new possibilities. As a result, **front and back** offices were created. Front offices are all service centers carrying out registration of all civil status acts, and **also the hospitals** which carry out only the state registration of births and deaths.
- Based on the medical certificates of birth or death issued by the hospital, a birth or death registration application is made on the spot, they are imported into “ARMED” medical electronic system, then the data are transmitted to the Agency's **back office**, ensuring accurate database for Statistical Committee. Then, using the electronic system, the document is certified with the signature of the Head of the Agency and the seal of the Agency and sent to the applicant's email address.

# The crucial role of civil registration in Armenia during COVID-19 Pandemic (continuation)

- ❑ This helped maintain the registration of Covid-19 Pandemic related deaths resulting in producing accurate statistics for dissemination by the Statistical Committee and involving hospitals as front offices proved to be of great help in case of emergency situations.
- ❑ During the **Covid-19 Pandemic**, the Civil Status Acts Registration Agency (Agency) of Armenia also started to provide electronic copies of certificates for all 7 vital events.
- ❑ ***In case of disasters and emergency situations*** the Law on “Civil Status Acts Registration” provides for a possibility, that if it is technically impossible to carry out civil status records and prepare documents using the electronic management system, the requested functions are performed in paper form, and registration data are entered into the electronic management system no later than within one working day after the relevant registration.



# CSAR offices network accessibility across Armenia

- In addition to electronic registration possibilities, to ensure accessibility for hard-to-reach populations and people in vulnerable situations, there are more than 50 CSAR offices across the country which practically makes the access to registrations possible for everyone.
- Moreover, applications for obtaining copies of certificates can be submitted in “**HayPost**” offices, which is the **national postal operator** of Armenia.
- Also, the Ministry of Justice cooperates with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures to provide some CSAR services (CSAR related consultations, providing copies of certificates and statements and other related documents) through municipalities, which also largely contributes to make the access easy for people throughout the country.

# Interconnectedness of Armenian government agencies in relation to CRVS data usage

- We have the state interoperability system "**EKENG**" which is the Armenian abbreviation of the e-Governance infrastructure implementation agency, through which the state agencies are connected with each other and the data are being transferred. The servers of EKENG are secure and under the Government's control.
- The Agency registers vital events through its closed local network, called "**e-civil**", which is connected to the **Statistical Committee** through "EKENG" system, therefore the registered data become available for the Statistical Committee right away.
- "E-civil" network is available for a list of government agencies who somehow deal with CRVS data within the scope of their activity, for example- The State Register of Home Population, National Security Service, Corruption Prevention Commission, courts, prosecutor's and notary offices, etc.
- There is a working group in Armenia, created in December 24, 2015 in regards to CRVS, which serves as a national CRVS coordination mechanism.

# Armenia's CRVS system development steps

- The review of the international best practice has shown that introducing different electronic services is important in terms of improving the quality of those services, the effectiveness and also people's content regarding the state services received.
- That is why Armenia introduced “**e-civil**” electronic system **in 2014** and all paper applications were imported into it, but back then the certificates were still granted in paper form with wet ink seals and stamps.
- **Since the new law in 2021** came into force, the certificates for **all 7 vital events** have also become fully electronic- with electronic signature, electronic seal and QR code, which are the requisites to verify the authenticity of the certificates.

# Armenia's CRVS system development strategies

- As of this moment, only 2 vital events out of 7- **birth and death**, are available to register entirely in electronic form (having the relevant medical statements on hands):
  - ***Since January 15, 2024*** electronic applications for the state registration of the birth of a child whose parents are Armenian citizens and the state registration of the death of an Armenian citizen who died in Armenia, are accepted through the (**[www.e-services.moj.am](http://www.e-services.moj.am)**) platform of digital services of the Ministry of Justice.
- The Republic of Armenia has adopted the policy for gradually introducing full electronic services for the registration of the remaining vital events, therefore we are committed to the continuous improvement of the CRVS sector in our country.
- We plan to establish an electronic application procedure for other functions as well, especially state registration of marriage and divorce, registration of births that occurred with the help of reproductive technologies.

# 1988 December 7 devastating earthquake in Armenia

- In 1988 a devastating earthquake happened in the northern region of the Armenian SSR, causing the death of tens of thousands of people.
- Taking into account the scale of the disaster, death registrations were made not only on the basis of medical statements, but also on references issued by polyclinics and hospitals.
- As the earthquake affected a few regions, death register books were created for each region and are kept separately to this day.
- Upon request, the registration acts from those register books are being digitalized and electronic certificates are issued to the applicants.

# Emergency situation in Armenia on May 24-26, 2024

- At the end of May of this year, floods due to heavy rains caused an emergency situation in Lori and Tavush regions of Armenia, resulting in a lot of damage not only to the state, but also to the individuals.
- A few Government decrees were drawn up deriving from this disaster, including the decree on damage compensations.
- This procedure regulates relations regarding the compensation for damage caused to apartment buildings or individual residential buildings in the disaster zone, so people who suffered from this natural disaster, can apply to the competent authorities to claim compensations.
- The Agency has its role in this procedure.

# Emergency situation in Armenia on May 24-26, 2024 (continuation)

- The data presented by the applicants are compared with the data of the following government agencies:
  - ✓ *Republican Commission for assessing damage caused as a result of an emergency,*
  - ✓ *State Population Register,*
  - ✓ *Civil Status Acts Registration offices (**provides death acts registration data**),*
  - ✓ *Ministry of Internal Affairs,*
  - ✓ *Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures,*
  - ✓ *Cadastral Committee,*
  - ✓ *Committee of Urban Development of the Republic of Armenia.*

# Emergency situation in Armenia on May 24-26, 2024 (continuation)

- Based on the results of the data comparison, the application is rejected or approved.
  
- The application is *rejected if*:
  - 1) the data are unreliable (the data presented do not correspond to the data available in the State Population Register);
  - 2) data on the state registration of death **are already contained in the data received from the civil registration authorities**;
  - 3) the applicant is not a beneficiary in the sense of the procedure;
  - 4) there is an approved application for the beneficiary.



## Advantages of a well-functioning CRVS system

- ❑ In conclusion, we can confidently state, that well-functioning CRVS systems are essential for **public administration** in national and regional levels for a country.
- ❑ Overall, CRVS systems are foundational for **disaster management**, as they provide the critical data needed for both quick response and long-term recovery.
- ❑ Civil registration is the best source of vital statistics.