Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system of Bhutan

Date: 07/06/2023
Overview

Civil registration is not a new phenomenon in Bhutan. The systematic registration of annual births and deaths started in the late 1980s.

Bhutan has a decentralized CRVS system with offices located in different parts of the country.

There are many agencies carrying the mantle of CRVS system. (DCRC, MoH and NSB)

Spearheaded by the MoHA serving as a central regulating and coordinating agency, the MoH shoulders the responsibility of notifying the occurrences of births and deaths and determining the cause-of-death, and the NSB for analyzing and publication of VSR.

Bhutan focuses on two vital events: Birth and Death registration along with Cause of Death (Due to the absence of comprehensive data)
Progress

**PAST**
- Paper-based register known as Family Diary (1980-2002)
- Birth and Death registration was an annual event carried out from November to January in 20 District Civil Registration offices
- No Vital Statistics Report generated

**PRESENT**
- 2003, a stand-alone system known as Bhutan Civil Registration System was developed
- 2012: Upgradation of Bhutan Civil Registration System into web-based online system
- Birth and Death Registration was made available at any time of the year. Community Service Centers were established at block level to bring the registration points nearer to the people.
- 100% geographic coverage for both birth and death registration.
Progress

✓ Rapid and Comprehensive assessment of National Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems conducted.
✓ Multi-Sectoral National Strategic Action Plan developed to address gaps identified through the assessments.
✓ Coordination and collaboration among the stakeholders strengthened:
  • MoU is signed between the MoHA and NSB regarding utilization of vital registration data from the registration database for timely publication of VSR.
✓ SOP and guidelines developed to register all births and deaths, specifying timeline, mode of record compilation and transmission of records.
✓ VSR published annually.
Challenges and opportunities

✓ Low completeness rate for death registration. Under-reporting of child mortality (stillbirth, neonatal and infant deaths).

✓ Quality of cause of death data is questionable especially for deaths occurring outside health facilities.

✓ Being a rugged terrain, network connectivity is often poor and timely registration is being affected.

✓ Limited expertise and Poor implementation of ICD coding.

✓ Lack of information on the importance of Birth Registration and Death Registration.
Challenges and opportunities

✓ Need for in-person visits to the Registration Points to register Birth and Death.
✓ Administrative burden to the service users.
✓ The inter-agency dependency often affects the turnaround time of delivering the services.
✓ Data inconsistency/duplicates/missing values caused by human error during data input.
Way forward

✓ Governance Structure to strengthen coordination and collaboration among the stakeholders for Bhutan CRVS.
✓ Advocacy on the significance of timely Birth and Death Registration.
✓ Implementation of MNSAP activities.
✓ BCRS data cleaning to improve the quality and reliability of CRVS data.
✓ Roll out ICD-11.
Way forward

✓ Leverage on ICT for system integration and interoperability:

Implementation of Integrated Citizen Services system:

• Citizens can register birth and death conveniently using their smartphones or computers.
• Simplified process of birth registration and less administrative burden.
• Automated registration through system integration with relevant agencies.
• Strengthen the CRVS system of Bhutan.
THANK YOU