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## Technical support for improving the capacity of national CRVS stakeholders to produce vital statistics, including a vital statistics report based on civil registration data

*Maldives*

### Concept Note

#### Background

A universal and well-maintained civil registration system is recognized by the [United Nations Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System](#) as the best source of information on vital events. Using civil registration records is a cost-effective solution to produce vital statistics as it requires fewer resources than conducting surveys. Additionally, compared to the use of surveys or censuses for vital statistics, civil registration records can help improve the timeliness, accuracy, coverage, granularity and completeness of vital statistics.

Complete and timely vital statistics are necessary for evidence-based decision-making and are crucial to design, implement and monitor public health policies as well as detect emerging health crises, such as COVID-19. They are highly relevant for monitoring the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, with 67 indicators benefiting from civil registration and vital statistics data. They are also needed to report on indicators such as infant and child mortality and the adolescent birth rate, as well as for calculating the denominators for a wide range of population-based targets and indicators.

Given the importance of vital statistics, Goal 3 of the [Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific](#) focuses on the production and dissemination of accurate, complete and timely vital statistics on births, deaths and causes of death based on registration records. It underlines the benefits of linking civil registration to the production and quality assurance of vital statistics. The production of a vital statistics report is an important step to improving CRVS systems. It can include detailed analysis of vital statistics, providing the user with more information about the demographic trends and subnational completeness. Statistics on other vital events such as marriages and divorce are also important and should be produced by countries based on registration records where the registration completeness of these events is high.

Maldives has a robust civil registration and vital statistics system, with both birth and death registration estimated to be close to 100% complete. The Ministry of Health maintains the notification system for births and deaths, while the Department for National Registration (DNR) is responsible for birth and death registration. The recently developed digital birth and death registration platform 'GEMEN' has also helped streamline registration processes in the country. In addition to near universal civil registration, the Maldives Population and Housing Census and Economic Census was recently conducted by the Maldives Bureau of Statistics in 2022.



## Objectives

This project seeks to provide technical support and capacity strengthening to Maldives Bureau of Statistics and other relevant national CRVS stakeholders in the analysis of civil registration data and other relevant data sources for the production of vital statistics. Specifically, this project aims to address these three objectives:

- a. Support Maldives to complete a vital statistics report that illustrates current levels and trends of births and deaths over time, and that can be used for planning and policy review purposes (may also include vital statistics on marriage/divorce, according to country needs).
- b. Assist national stakeholders to build proficiency in key analytical, interpretation and presentation skills required to meet regional, national and international reporting requirements.
- c. Support Maldives Bureau of Statistics to establish the regular production and reporting of vital statistics using civil registration records

## Timeframe

May 2023 – August 2023

## Participation of Maldives

Maldives Bureau of Statistics has expressed interest to participate in the project.

The participation of Maldives in the project is conditioned by its ability to accommodate a local consultant in Maldives Bureau of Statistics, who will be able to guide and support the work at the national level by engaging and coordinating with all relevant stakeholders. The national consultant will be funded by ESCAP and supported by technical staff from the Statistics Division of UNESCAP to coordinate capacity building activities as required.

Additional requirements for the project include the availability of secondary data sources, including at the minimum, birth and death data from the civil registry and Ministry of Health.

## Project modality and activities

The project will build on existing capacity strengthening activities that ESCAP has conducted in Asia and the Pacific supporting the production of vital statistics. These activities are supported by using existing resources such as the [guidelines and template for the production of a vital statistics report](#).

The project will support Maldives in strengthening technical capacity for the production of a vital statistics report through the following steps:



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1. A local consultant will be embedded in Maldives Bureau of Statistics. The local consultant will be identified and engaged by ESCAP in close collaboration with Maldives Bureau of Statistics. The first step will be to conduct a mapping of available data sources (from the past 3-10 years) and to assess their relative quality. For example, at a minimum, anonymised civil registration data and data from the ministry of health (or other nationally representative source providing data on the total number of births and deaths) should be made available for use in the technical capacity building workshops. The local consultant will also support Maldives Bureau of Statistics in identifying all relevant stakeholders to be included in capacity building workshops.
2. A 2-day data cleaning workshop (as needed) to build national capacity in assessing and maintaining data quality and to ensure the data is fit for analysis. The workshop will be organized by Maldives Bureau of Statistics in consultation with the local consultant and ESCAP Statistics Division. The workshop will invite all relevant national stakeholders.
3. Two 5-day national capacity building workshops to strengthen data analysis, interpretation, presentation and report writing skills, organized by Maldives Bureau of Statistics in consultation with the local consultant and ESCAP Statistics Division.
  - a. One 5-day national capacity building workshop to build capacity in the production of vital statistics on births, including relevant fertility indicators. Additionally, depending on data availability and country needs, this may also include support to produce vital statistics on marriage and divorce
  - b. One 5-day national capacity building workshop to build capacity in the production of vital statistics on deaths, including cause of death and leading causes of death, in addition to other mortality indicators

### Project modality and activities

Although Maldives Bureau of Statistics will take the lead in implementation of the project at the national level with the national consultant responsible for coordination, extensive technical support will be provided by the ESCAP Statistics Division. Maldives Bureau of Statistics will receive a grant from ESCAP, through a Letter of Agreement for the organization of the technical capacity building workshops.

### Language

The support included in this project will be provided in English, although the local consultant is expected to be fluent in the national language.

## Suggested Programme

This indicative programme aims to provide an idea of the different activities to be undertaken as part of the project and their approximate timing. Exact dates will be determined in consultation with ESCAP.

<b>Work plan 2023</b>	
<b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Consultancies</b>	
<i>Local consultant (20 days approx.) to be hosted by Maldives Bureau of Statistics to support the set-up of the project, coordinate with stakeholders and guide organization of the technical workshops</i>	<i>May 2023 – August 2023</i>
<b>Workshops</b>	
<i>1 x 2-day data cleaning workshop to build national capacity in assessing and maintaining data quality and to ensure the data is fit for analysis</i>	<i>June 2023</i>
<i>1 x 5-day national capacity building workshop to build capacity in the production of vital statistics on births, including relevant fertility indicators (with additional consideration for the inclusion of vital statistics on marriage/divorce).</i>	<i>July 2023</i>
<i>1 x 5-day national capacity building workshop to build capacity in the production of vital statistics on deaths, including cause of death and leading causes of death, in addition to other mortality indicators</i>	<i>August 2023</i>
<b>Outputs</b>	
<i>First draft of a national vital statistics report</i>	<i>September 2023</i>