

A Lifecycle Approach to Legal Identity: South Asia Regional Consultation

09.00-12.00, 23 June 2025, UN Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand

Concept Note

1. Background

The First Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in Asia and the Pacific, held in 2014, launched the [Asian and Pacific CRVS Decade](#) (2015-2024) through the adoption of the [Ministerial Declaration to Get Every One in the Picture](#). This was accompanied by the [Regional Action Framework](#) (RAF), which outlined six key principles, targets and recommended implementation steps at the national level to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems. The Asia Pacific Regional Steering Group (RSG) was tasked with overseeing the implementation of the CRVS Decade and providing oversight and guidance.

In 2015, ESCAP members and associate members endorsed the Declaration through resolution 71/14, calling for regional reviews of the RAF in 2020 and 2025. Significant progress has been made, with 42 out of 58 countries submitting national targets in 2015 and 47 countries providing a midterm review by 2019. The midterm review highlighted notable achievements but also identified gaps requiring additional efforts to meet the CRVS targets by 2024. At the Second Ministerial Conference in 2021, ESCAP resolution 78/4 reaffirmed the commitment to building inclusive and resilient CRVS systems. It also called for the convening of a Third Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific in 2025 to drive the progress. In this view, the Third Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific will be held in the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, from 24 to 26 June 2025 and will be co-organized by ESCAP and other development partners. Details about the conference is available in the following background note: [3MCCRVS Background note 9 October 2024.docx](#).

1.1. South Asia context

South Asia has made significant progress towards universal CRVS, but key gaps remain. Nearly 40 million children under the age of five are still not registered, and death registration coverage is significantly lower than birth registration. The lifecycle approach to CRVS, which focuses on registering individuals from birth to death, emphasizes registering all vital events at each stage of life, aims to ensure that everyone has a legal identity and access to essential services throughout their entire life cycle. This approach is also critical in addressing inequalities, including reaching the hardest-to-reach populations – the last mile.

The South Asia Civil Registration Professionals Network (CR8) is a regional network comprising civil registration professionals from eight countries in the region. The platform is established to share information, lessons learned, and good practices to strengthening civil registration and vital statistics. The network was formed in 2018 with an [inception meeting](#), and subsequent meetings [held in 2019 in the Maldives](#), and in [2023 in Bangladesh](#). The initiative aligns with [the Asia – Pacific Ministerial Declaration to Get Everyone in the Picture](#).

UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, in collaboration with CR8 partners, plans to organize a sub-regional consultation on the first day of the 2025 Ministerial conference (i.e 23rd June 2025). The consultation aims to strengthen a life-cycle approach to legal identity with focus on two key accelerators: leveraging inter-operability between CRVS and health systems, and digitization of CRVS systems.

2. Objectives

The regional consultation aims to facilitate dialogue among governments and partners on accelerating CRVS progress in South Asia through a lifecycle approach from birth to death. The meeting will focus on leveraging opportunities from the health sector for improved programming on birth and death registration laying a foundation for health-CR-national ID pathway. The emphasis will also be on promoting safe, innovative, and cost-effective digitalization principles and processes as an enabler to promote expeditious and user-friendly services. Engagements with other sectors, especially education and social protection will also be explored for reaching out to marginalized and vulnerable populations as the last-mile strategies.

Specific objectives include:

- Strengthening interoperability between health and CRVS systems to scale up access to CRVS services including birth registration.
- Sharing good practices, including learnings on CRVS digitalization efforts and mechanisms to improve accessibility, affordability, and efficiency.
- Addressing inequalities by identifying opportunities, including through education and social protection interventions to reach marginalized populations, and hardest to reach areas.
- Showcasing successful initiatives from countries across the region.

3. Session format

Time	Topic	Speaker	Moderator
9:00 – 9:20 (20 minutes)	Welcome and session introduction	Chair / co-chair of the CR8 - tbc UNICEF – tbc	UNICEF
Progress on CRVS in South Asia			
9:20-10:00 (40 minutes)	Regional Overview of the Progress on CRVS in South Asia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life-cycle approach to legal identity - Health-CRVS System Interoperability - Digitalization in CRVS - Addressing Inequality in CRVS by leveraging education and social interventions - CRVS Resilience in Disasters / humanitarian situations 	CR8 – tbc UNICEF ROSA – tbc Other speakers - tbc	
Country experiences			
10:00 – 10:30 (30 minutes)	Digitization in CRVS -	Two countries to be confirmed.	
Health break – 15 minutes			

Time	Topic	Speaker	Moderator
10:45 – 11:15 (30 minutes)	Health-CRVS System Interoperability -	Two countries to be confirmed.	
Panel discussion			
11:15 – 11:45 (30 minutes)	Panel discussion - Addressing inequalities - Building resilient CRVS systems - Looking forward to 2030 - key priorities for the region - Partners' support	Panelists to be identified	
Wrap up and closing			
11:45 – 12:00	Wrap up Formal closing	CR8 co-chair UNICEF	