

WHAT IS CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS (CRVS)?

Civil registration

Civil registration (CR) is the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events in the population.

As such, CR is the process of legally documenting both the occurrence and the details related to births, deaths, and other key life events such as marriage, divorce, and adoption. Legal documentation includes recording the event in a national (or state) register and providing a certificate to the family with key details of the event. The information to be included in the registration is established in the United Nation (UN) Principles and Recommendations.

Vital statistics constitute the collection of statistics on vital events in a lifetime of a person as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the person and persons concerned. Vital statistics provide crucial and critical information on the population in a country.

Source: UN Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System (UN, 2014)

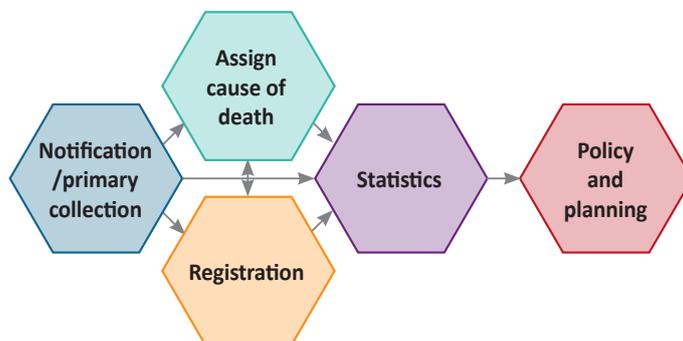
Vital statistics

Therefore, **vital statistics** include both basic counts of events such as births and deaths, and the indicators calculated from this basic data such as fertility and mortality rates. Data on cause of death is also an important component of the vital statistics for Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), and provides critical information on why people die at various ages, which is then used for policy and planning. Further information on core vital statistics measures and calculations is available on the website (www.pacific-crvs.org).

Well-functioning CR systems are the most efficient and effective source of reliable and timely vital statistics

CRVS systems

The systems that record and legally register vital events rely on the input and cooperation of multiple government sectors. At the very least this involves national registry offices (often under ministries of justice or internal affairs), national ministries, or departments of health (especially for countries where most births are attended by health professionals or events happen in hospital), and national statistics offices. Other stakeholders may also be essential depending on how the CRVS data is used and linked to other services and government functions.



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These stakeholders could include national departments of finance, planning, immigration, electoral office, education, and community and faith-based groups such as churches.

Thereby, the two essential functions of a CRVS system are to create a legal record of the vital event and to provide data for policy and planning. CRVS systems are supported by several cross-cutting elements including the following:

Political support
Community engagement
Legislation
System support, architecture and inter-departmental collaboration
IT and technology/innovative solutions
Standards and metadata

Multi-sectoral engagement is therefore essential to support effective and timely registration.

The governments of PICTs have made important commitments to improving CRVS systems and data through the Pacific Ministers of Health meetings, the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee (PSSC) and the regional conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics (HOPS), and the ministerial commitments to the Regional Action Framework (RAF) on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific region, and the Asia-Pacific CRVS Decade (2015–2024).



Get every one in the picture

The decade for CRVS is a commitment of governments of the Asia-Pacific region to achieve a shared vision that by 2024 all people in the region will benefit from universal and responsive CRVS systems that facilitate the realisation of their rights and support good governance, health and development.

Key uses of CRVS data in PICTs



HEALTH PLANNING

- Identifying priorities – non-communicable diseases (NCDs), maternal and child health care
- Targeting health Programs – populations at risk
- Service Delivery – distribution of health infrastructure, e.g. drugs, service providers and other resources
- Monitoring and evaluation – funding and international agreements



GOVERNMENT SERVICES

- Education – allocation of resources including schools and teachers
- Social security – i.e. age of retirement and pension administration
- Infrastructure planning – determining needs such as housing and roads
- Population statistics – planning across a broad range of sectors



IDENTITY AND SECURITY

- Passports and identity documents
- Electoral rolls
- Disaster planning and response (identification of populations at risk and follow up for support)



LAND RIGHTS AND INHERITENCE



Where can I get more information?

Check out the other fact sheets at: www.pacific-crvs.org and www.getinthepicture.org or contact the **Statistics for Development Division** at SPC at crvs@spc.int.