
MEETING REPORT

Pacific Regional Workshop on Legal Identity and Identity Security

8–10 July 2019, SPC headquarters, Noumea, New Caledonia



Organised by the Brisbane Accord Group:

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Pacific Civil Registrars Network
Pacific Community (SPC), Public Health and Statistics for Development Divisions
Pacific Health Information Network
United Nations Children’s Fund
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
Vital Strategies (Bloomberg Data for Health Initiative)
World Health Organization

SUPPORTED BY THE BRISBANE ACCORD GROUP (BAG)



Pacific Regional Workshop on Legal Identity and Identity Security

Meeting report prepared by the Pacific Community, 2019



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About the Brisbane Accord Group

[The Brisbane Accord Group \(BAG\)](#) is a consortium of agencies that was formed in 2010 with the principal aim of coordinating partner support and maximising investments in the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Pacific Island countries and territories. The activities of BAG are guided by the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan (PVSAP), which sits under the [Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy \(TYPSS\)](#). BAG members include the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Bloomberg Data for Health (Vital Strategies), Fiji National University (FNU), Global Health Advocacy Incubator, Pacific Civil Registrars Network (PCRN), Pacific Health Information Network (PHIN), Queensland University of Technology (QUT), University of Queensland (UQ), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) – Pacific Office, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) – Pacific Regional Office, and World Health Organization (WHO). SPC serves as the secretariat of the partnership.

Pacific Regional Workshop on Legal Identity and Identity Security

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Report of proceedings

Day 1: Understanding legal identity, country experiences and plans, international principles and recommendations

Opening

Participants

1. The 2019 Pacific Regional Workshop on Legal Identity and Identity Security was held at SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, 8–10 July 2019. It was co-chaired by Temaleti Manakovi Pahulu, Acting Chief Executive Officer for Justice, Tonga, and Jeff Montgomery, Registrar-General, New Zealand. The workshop was attended by representatives of the following:¹

SPC members: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna.

Development partners: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS); Asian Health Information Network; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia; Global Health Advocacy Incubator; Pacific Civil Registrars Network (PCRN); Pacific Community (SPC); Pacific Health information Network (PHIN); Pacific Island Health Officers' Association (PIHOA); United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); World Bank; and World Health Organization (WHO).

PCRN business partners: Ancestry.com, Canadian Bank Note Company, and Object Consulting Pty Ltd.

Objectives

2. The primary objectives of the workshop were to review progress and build momentum towards achieving:
 - (a) target 16.9 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which commits countries to attaining universal civil registration; and
 - (b) the commitments made by countries towards the Asia and Pacific Decade for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (2015–2024), and the Regional Action Framework.

Opening remarks

3. SPC Deputy Director-General, Cameron Diver, welcomed participants and stressed the importance of a legal identity to universal development, saying everyone has the right to be recognised as a person before the law. Civil registration systems are fundamental to this process.

¹ See Annex 1 for the List of participants and Annex 2 for the Meeting Outcomes.

4. Australia's Consul-General to New Caledonia, Paul Wilson, said the Government of Australia was pleased to support the workshop, which complemented its engagement under the Pacific step-up. He noted that civil registration is a challenge for many countries. Lack of a functioning system means individuals cannot establish a legal identity, which allows them to claim their rights or seek protection. The workshop would enable countries to share their experience and wins in meeting their commitments to the Asia and Pacific Decade for CRVS. Another aim of the workshop was to reflect on the contribution of health information systems to supporting CRVS.
5. The Director of SPC's Statistics for Development Division, Epeli Waqavonovono, said that while there have been many improvements, including the introduction of new technology, the quality of administrative data is a problem for Pacific National Statistics Offices (NSOs). Data access and sharing is also difficult. He noted the valuable assistance for CRVS provided by BAG partners (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Fiji National University, PCRN, PHIN, Queensland University of Technology, UNESCAP, SPC, UNFPA, UNICEF, University of Queensland, Vital Strategies and WHO).

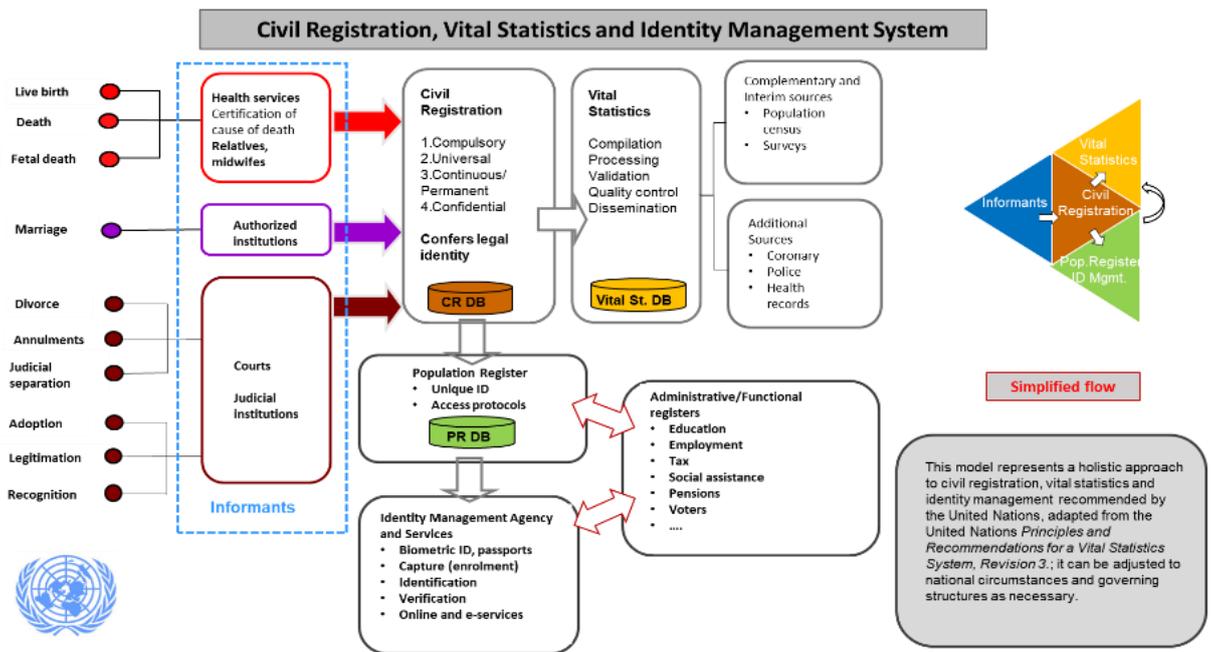
Presentations

This report provides a high-level overview of the key points raised during the presentations and the plenary discussions.

Presentations and papers mentioned in the report are available at <https://sdd.spc.int/en/news/latest-news/27-vital-statistics/221-pacific-regional-workshop-on-legal-identity-and-identity-security>

Presentation 1: The United Nations model for a holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management – Srdjan Mrkić (UN Statistics Division and UN Legal Identity Expert Group) (via Skype)

6. Everyone has the right to be recognised as a person before the law, as enshrined in Article 6 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and numerous international human rights instruments. To address this issue, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development established SDG Target 16.9 – Legal identity for all, including birth registration, by 2030. The need to have a legal identity is also addressed in Article 7 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which emphasises the right of every newborn to be registered, to have a name and to therefore enter into the legal identity framework of a country. Civil registration establishes a person's existence under law and is fundamental to granting legal identity. It is also the ultimate source for producing comprehensive and reliable vital statistics. In an effort to increase civil registration coverage worldwide, the 2030 Agenda established SDG Indicator 17.19.2 – Proportion of countries that have achieved 100% birth registration and 80% death registration.
7. Legal identity is the basic characteristics of an individual's identity, i.e. name, sex, place and date of birth, conferred through registration and the issuance of a certificate by an authorised civil registration authority following the occurrence of birth. In the absence of birth registration, legal identity may be conferred by a legally recognised identification authority; this system should be linked to the civil registration system to ensure a holistic approach to legal identity from birth to death. Legal identity is retired by the issuance of a death certificate by the civil registration authority upon registration of death.
8. The UN advocates a holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management, as shown in the model below.



9. The model, which is being implemented in several countries, can be adjusted to suit national circumstances and governing structures. Countries are encouraged to adopt the model, which emphasises interoperability and simultaneous development of civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems.
10. The UN Legal Identity Expert Group was established in 2018 by the Deputy Secretary of the United Nations with the goal of developing a harmonised, coordinated and implementable approach to legal identity for all. The presentation illustrated the assignments of the UN Legal Identity Expert Group, which include (among others): developing a United Nations system-wide approach to legal identity; coordinating global, regional and country-level strategies for closing the world’s legal identity gap; arriving at a common UN-World Bank operational definition of legal identity; undertaking joint research; and establishing a multi-partner trust fund.
11. A major accomplishment of the UN Legal Identity Expert Group has been to define the UN legal identity agenda and line up all UN members behind it. The United Nations Legal Identity Agenda consists of ‘calling on and supporting all Member States to ensure universal civil registration of all vital events, translated into regular, reliable and comprehensive vital statistics and resulting in legal identity for all’. The agenda emphasises the need to simultaneously develop all three components of this holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management without neglecting either as this would have detrimental effects on the sustainability of the solution as well as on ensuring the longitudinal and perpetual assignment of legal identity to all in a lifecycle approach from birth to death.
12. The presentation provided links to key resource materials on CRVS that can be accessed on the [United Nations Statistics Division](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Principles_and_Recommendations/CRVS/M19Rev3-E.pdf) website, namely: Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3;² Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

² https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Principles_and_Recommendations/CRVS/M19Rev3-E.pdf

Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance;³ Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management (Final draft),⁴ United Nations, 2019; Handbook on Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems: Communication for Development (Draft).⁵

Questions and comments

- How can naturalised citizens (e.g. immigrants) be incorporated in the civil registration system to ensure a full set of data?
Citizenship is a basic human right but is left to national frameworks to enact. There is no international guidance and how it is implemented is a country's responsibility.
- How is the UN animating donors to support countries in implementing civil registration systems? (For example, Papua New Guinea (PNG) has registered 1 million people in the past 3 to 4 years and has approximately 7 million to go). Where should funding be focused and what is the role of technology?
The UN is trying to mobilise funds to support countries but is still at the early stages of setting up funding.
The World Bank said funding for legal identity systems is often included in its programmes as part of a larger work programme. Additional support may be allocated through regular mechanisms.
- Does the UN model that was presented include registration of abortions?
In the model, abortion is treated as a vital event under 'Foetal death'. National approaches may take a different position.
Additional notes (not stated at the workshop): *Foetal death (also referred to as 'dead-born foetus' and 'stillbirth') refers to death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy; the death is indicated by the fact that after such separation the foetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord or definite movement of voluntary muscles. (Note that this definition broadly includes all terminations of pregnancy other than live births, including abortions, whether spontaneous or induced abortions.)*
- How do health information systems fit into the model?
The UN stresses a coherent approach to the three components (civil registration, vital statistics and identity management). The health sector provides critical input to registration of events of birth and death. Interoperability between health and civil registration systems is essential to achieving complete registration.

Presentation 2: Multisectoral perspectives on the importance of universal and secure legal identity and the role of civil registration - Brigitte Sonnois (UNICEF)

13. Articles 7 and 8 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child assert children's right to be registered at birth and their right to identity. Both are key to children's access to services, participation in society, and age-based protection against exploitation, early marriage, labour, etc.

³ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Handbooks/crvs/crvs-mgt-E.pdf>

⁴ https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Handbooks/crvs/CRVS_GOLF_Final_Draft-E.pdf

⁵ https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2019/newyork-egm-crvsims/docs/draft_handbook.pdf

14. Birth registration, including issuance of certificates and late registration, needs to be free, universal and compulsory. In the 14 PICTs covered by the UN office in Suva, registration is free but there may be a fee for the certificate or for late registration, so most PICTs do not meet the criteria. UNICEF has supported birth registration in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and more recently in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Tonga. SDG Indicator 16.9.1 targets improvements in birth registration of children aged under-5, but there are also campaigns to achieve higher coverage of under-18s. While newborn coverage is quite high for the Pacific region, the objective is systematic registration of all newborns. In this regard, it is important that countries work towards removing obstacles to registration. Legislation should be revised to ensure the process is free. Decentralising systems is also essential in improving access to registration by the public.
15. The civil registration process provides data for advocacy, planning for children's needs, and resource allocation. However, Ms Sonnois noted that there are discrepancies between administrative/civil registration data on the proportion of children under-5 whose births have been registered, and data from household surveys (Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys – MICS, and Demographic and Health Surveys – DHS) and national censuses.

Comments

- Participants noted issues in registering children delivered by traditional birth attendants or outside health facilities, e.g. in Vanuatu, these attendants are not allowed to sign a notification. In Kiribati, the registry's only source document is the birth notification that is filled out by parents but not verified. There are also abandoned children whose date of birth is unknown.
- In Solomon Islands, the health system notifies the civil registry of any child born outside the health facility.
- In Samoa, when a birth occurs in a health facility, the information is recorded in a 'birth book', which is provided to the Samoa Bureau of Statistics for civil registration. For births outside health facilities, two community representatives record the information and send it to the Bureau. These manual systems work well and must be taken into account when introducing digital processes.
- UNICEF said each country must have its own system for quality control of data, depending on its context. Supervision and monitoring are important, including of the accuracy of paper forms.

Presentation 3: Legal identity, gender equality and women's empowerment – Leituala Kuiniselani Toelupe Tago-Elisara (SPC)

16. This presentation described the gender dimensions of legal identity and its relationship to women's empowerment. Women make up the majority of the people worldwide who do not have a legal identity. Discrimination in citizenship and identity laws hinder women's participation in society and the economy. Without a legal identity, women cannot access services required for their well-being and empowerment, e.g. education and financial services.
17. Regional and national commitments have been made to gender equality, including the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights, and national gender strategies. Progress on issues (such as the high rate of gender-based violence; low political participation) is slow but in the right direction following legislation, policies and programme interventions. More research

on inequalities in establishing legal identity for women is needed to allow appropriate interventions to be designed.

Presentation 4: Principles of identification for sustainable development – Jonathan Marskell (World Bank)

18. Around 1 billion people in the world lack any foundational identity. Many others have an identity that is not secure or usable in the digital world, so they face barriers to accessing services, rights and opportunities. The World Bank launched ID4D (Identification for Development) because: (i) in a digital society, a secure legal identity is the basis for establishing relationships and transactions; and (ii) a digital (legal) ID can strengthen trust, inclusion and privacy in a digital economy.
19. The work of the World Bank's Digital ID section includes research on building digital ID systems, financing implementation in countries, and participating in open-source software initiatives (e.g. OpenCRVS). The World Bank is supporting the Commonwealth Digital ID initiative, which aims to provide a digitally enabled identity to every woman and girl in the Commonwealth by 2030.
20. In the Pacific, there is a strong rationale for digital ID systems based on strengthened civil registration, and value in regional cooperation and knowledge sharing, including on addressing cybersecurity risks.
21. Twenty-five international organisations have developed a framework for 'good' digital ID with 10 principles relating to inclusion, design and governance. For efficiency, civil registration should be part of the development of a digital ID, with a unique ID number created and assigned at birth (though the number should not be inserted on the birth certificate because of privacy issues). Principle 4 relates to interoperability and responsiveness (ID as a service) and Principle 5 to open standards, technology and vendor neutrality, which means that countries avoid vendor-lock-in.
22. There should be minimal data collection associated with a digital ID and limited access to the data. The World Bank (ID4D) has produced a draft *Practitioner's Guide*, which is open for consultation (<http://id4d.worldbank.org/guide>). It will be published later this year.

Comments

- Participants asked how countries can proceed to a digital legal ID system when their civil registration systems are not yet fully developed (e.g. PNG has a long civil registration backlog and needs to build capacity to develop systems as it is affected by vendor lock-in). They also asked about the impact of culture on ID systems, and cost of implementing a digital ID.
- The World Bank noted that digital ID systems have failed in many countries for many reasons including the lack of trust in the government by the public. Systems should be simple and implemented in an incremental process (e.g. 3–5 years plus pilot testing of processes). Biometric systems are not advised because of risks in securing them. The Practitioner’s Guide has advice on providing ID for people whose births were not registered. Existing assets (e.g. licence, passport) can be used to register a birth for an older person. There is a cost model on the ID4D website under Tools.
- Alan Bennett (DFAT) noted that Australia’s National Identity Proofing Guidelines (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/criminal-justice/files/national-identity-proofing-guidelines.pdf>) also provide advice, including on the use of passports.
- SPC underlined that development of digital ID platforms must consider access and affordability for women, who may be disadvantaged by cultural practices.

Presentation 5: Progress against global and regional commitments towards civil registration and universal legal identity – David Rausis (UNESCAP)

23. The SDGs, the region’s Healthy Islands vision, the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade (2015–2024) and UN conventions all include commitments to achieving Universal Legal Identity. Specifically, the Regional Action Framework for the CRVS Decade outlines three key goals: (i) Universal civil registration of births, deaths and other vital events; (ii) Provision to all individuals of documentation of civil registration of births, deaths and other vital events, as necessary, in order to claim identity, civil status and ensuring rights; and (iii) Production and dissemination of accurate, complete and timely vital statistics based on registration records.
24. Data from a variety of sources indicates that at the beginning of the CRVS Decade, birth registration completeness for PICTs ranged from 20% to 100%. With only 5 years to the end of the decade, most PICTs have made progress but more is needed to reach their 2024 targets. Half of PICTs have met the target for death registration. Several countries can improve their efforts to assign a medically certified cause of death to all health-sector recorded deaths. Many PICTs have published their first vital statistics report or are in the process of drafting one and most will be able to produce a report by the end of the decade in 2024. The mid-term questionnaire for the CRVS Decade should help to identify specific areas of focus to support progress across all PICTs. Clearly, more needs to be done to improve civil registration if it is to be the basis for legal ID.
25. The presentation concluded with recommendations for PICT civil registration officials to:
 - continue improving CRVS systems by ensuring at least 90% of births and deaths are registered within the legally stipulated time period, thus allowing for the use of civil registration as a basis for identity management systems and the production of vital statistics;

- strengthen collaboration with the health sector to underline the importance of recording medically certified causes of death;
- ensure no, or low, fees for the provision of legal documentation of civil registration so that all individuals can be provided with it;
- take advantage of recent progress in the completeness of civil registration data to promote its use for the production of vital statistics.
- Countries were encouraged to report their data to SPC and UNESCAP to ensure there is more regional data available. Guidance on the recommended reporting requirements is available in [paper 7 of the workshop – Vital statistics reporting](#).

Presentation 6: Perspectives on accelerating progress on universal legal identity and monitoring progress – Gloria Mathenge (SPC)

26. Achieving universal civil registration and secure legal documents requires meeting the challenges of (1) registering all events especially deaths; (2) achieving accuracy (reliability of records); and (3) ensuring timeliness of reporting. A key underlying problem is that the burden of registration is on the public, not on the government with parents or family tasked as key informants for registration. More commonly, the Ministry of Health (MOH) is the notifier and parents or family are key informants. However, in emerging best practice, the MOH is an informant. This has the advantages of efficiency and of improving data quality and the completeness of records. It also eases the burden on the public, i.e. the government places the burden of registration on the institution. Other approaches include: providing a civil registration service desk at the hospital(s); tagging birth registration to immunisation days; annual, quarterly, or monthly reconciliation of data between both ministries (Health and Justice) with follow-up with families; and positioning the registration office in the MOH.
27. The presentation concluded with recommendations for PICT civil registration officials to:
 - adopt a regional model in which there is an established data-sharing arrangement between health and civil registration departments, with the latter acting as an informant of vital events;
 - build integrated systems in which the health information system provides input to the civil registration system, and the civil registration system provides input to the national identification system.

Comments

- Participants were interested in the approach of the MOH being an informant for vital events, which is the case in CNMI, Palau, Australia and New Zealand. The Chair said that in New Zealand, information from the MOH (from the hospital to civil registration) initiates a record, which is then verified by parents. Verification can be done online. This two-part process provides strong information. He agreed that when the whole burden is on parents, systems work less well.
- The Northern Territory (Australia) uses a similar system to that of New Zealand and achieves 100% registration, including of remote communities. The civil registration office completes the statement from the health authority. Parents can amend the record easily at no charge. The office is supporting Tuvalu which follows the same practice.
- Tokelau noted that parents might not have a name available immediately after a birth which is an issue that may impede immediate registration in some countries.

Presentation 7: Country progress, strategies and plans

During this presentation, PICTs shared information on their civil registration processes and plans for developing their systems.

Vanuatu

28. Estimated birth registration completeness as at May 2019 is 53%, an improvement from 45% as estimated in May 2018. The MOH supports civil registration, but the system needs to be strengthened, especially for registration of births that occur in the community and outside health facilities. Vanuatu has an electronic system for civil registration. Through the system, civil registration records are shared with other government departments (in view mode only). The performance of the system is limited by lack of adequate network coverage in remote areas. All records are linked to birth registration.
29. Vanuatu is in its early stages of issuing national ID cards, with enrolment requiring provision of a birth certificate. Recent developments and plans for development of CRVS include: (i) sharing CRVS data to correct electoral rolls and verify voters; (ii) upgrading the CRVS system to issue national ID cards – a special unit under the department may be created to look after national IDs; (iii) reviewing CRVS legislation as a priority – to be debated in parliament by the November sitting; and (iv) revising the MOU between the civil registration department and the health and education ministries.

New Caledonia

30. New Caledonia's CRVS system is linked with France's system and is comprehensive. All services are free. There is a strong relationship with the MOH; 99% of births occur in health facilities and a wide range of people can declare a birth, including the father or someone present at the birth. However, the office needs to have the civil registration records of the person declaring a birth. If parents do not have ID, the declaration is used as evidence of birth. After the MOH declares a birth, civil registration officers work with the hospital to verify details. There are many checks/controls in declaring vital events. Similar to the process for births, death registration is triggered by notification of death by the health system.

Registration is important to access health services, education, etc. Everyone has a unique number and eventually the system catches up with those not declared.

31. The Institute of Statistics is responsible for sharing information between departments. Once civil status is identified, records pass through as few hands as possible to lessen the chance of ID fraud. Civil registration officers are public servants. New Caledonia has a common civil status system and a custom system, with both held by the same office. Conservation of IDs is regarded as highly important. In New Caledonia, in cases where members of the public do not want to register a vital event, the court takes over and facilitates the registration process.

Palau

32. In Palau, the collection of vital statistics information is a responsibility of MOH. The responsibilities of the ministry also include preparing and issuing forms for the collection of this information, and the compilation and analysis of vital statistical information for the residents of Palau. Births and deaths recorded are captured in an electronic database (the judiciary information system); registration is completed when verified by the MOH after the parents/family sign the certificate. Till then, the record is pending. Parents often come to register their child when it is time to start school as a birth certificate is needed in most schools for enrolment. There are fees for certificates. Palau uses an electronic system with manual back up. Civil registration records are considered public records and are therefore available for use by other government departments. Palau also has a national ID system with a national identity card which is issued by the Bureau of Public Safety. The national ID system is not currently linked to the civil registration system, but there have been discussions about doing this. Palau is currently working on scanning and uploading its records into an electronic database for safe back-up.

Comments

- The delegate from Papua New Guinea noted there is little incentive to register births in that country. He underlined the need to ensure that the complexity of the CRVS system matches the capability of a country. The delegate further highlighted the importance of ensuring the credibility of CRVS staff. He noted that in his country, anyone sacked or charged with a crime is not allowed to return to the public service.
- The chairperson suggested that incentives are not always the answer to improving civil registration. Removing barriers may be more effective, e.g. recognising the health sector as an informant and accepting the records provided by the MOH as the basis for registration may be a recommended approach vis-a-vis awaiting a report from the public.
- In relation to national ID cards, neither Palau nor Vanuatu includes biometric information. The Vanuatu card includes a photo, date of birth and residence, though the legislation is still being drafted. In Palau, the Bureau of Public Safety issues ID cards.

Presentation 8: International principles and guidelines on legal identity – UN Guidelines on a Legislative Framework for CRVS and Identity Management – Lynn Sferrazza (Data for Health Initiative, Bloomberg Philanthropies)

33. A strong legal framework helps achieve complete civil registration and national identity registration by defining stakeholders' responsibilities, eliminating barriers (by facilitating improved access and efficiency), and creating incentives for registration. CRVS-ID systems have multiple stakeholders and potentially multiple laws/regulations governing different functions. The legal framework recognises all stakeholders and plays a significant role in enabling different systems and players to work together.

34. The UN Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3 (2014) provides guidance on establishing a functioning system for collecting, processing and disseminating vital statistics, including improving civil registration as the source of vital statistics. There are also four companion handbooks⁶ available to guide countries in the development of their CRVS systems. These are accessible at the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) website.
35. UNSD recently commissioned work on the revision and updating of its 1998 handbook on preparation of a legal framework for civil registration. Specifically, the revisions are aimed at incorporating/reflecting the evolution of international law and human rights, technological advances, and recommendations for integration of CRVS systems with national ID registration/management systems and population registers. In this regard, UNSD recently released the draft *UN Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management*. The guidelines underline civil registration as the foundation for national ID systems. The UN further recommends integration of civil registration, vital statistics and national ID systems as the best way to achieve SDG Target 16.9.
36. The UN Working Group on Legal ID recommends that birth registration is the primary means for granting legal identity, with civil registration being the ‘gold standard’ for maintaining legal ID. Requiring birth registration for national ID issuance encourages birth registration, while linking the ID system with death registration ensures a legal ID is deactivated. Linking the two also helps in generating comprehensive vital statistics.
37. A companion to the guidelines – the CRVS-ID legal toolkit – is designed for legal professionals who are familiar with CRVS-ID systems. Participants were also asked to take note of the Pacific best practice guidelines on drafting legislation for civil registration (developed by BAG), which provide countries with sample text for drafting recommended components of civil registration legislation.

Comments

- Jonathan Marskell (World Bank) said privacy and data protection are important concerns for ID systems. If people feel that privacy is not safeguarded, they may withhold information, supply inaccurate information or avoid participating. He further noted that a birth certificate should not be required for a legal ID as this may result in marginalising vulnerable populations. Promoting inclusion requires minimising barriers to eligibility, including for unregistered people and non-citizens. Barriers may include culture, language, remoteness and cost. ID4D support for a country’s digital ID system typically begins with an evaluation of its identity ecosystem (i.e. civil registration, national ID, systems for voter registration, passports, etc.) based on the 10 principles described in paragraph 28 above. This evaluation is followed by an ID Enabling Environment Assessment (IDEAA), which focuses on the country’s legal and regulatory framework.

⁶ Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management. Management, Operation and Maintenance, Revision 1. Policies and Protocols for the Release and Archiving of Individual Records. Demand Creation.

- Participants asked about the legal aspects of sharing data between the MOH and civil registration system, and how ministries responsible for children and gender are brought into conversations about legal ID. Lynn Sferrazza said sharing of data should be covered under law, which would help to ensure that relevant frameworks and provisions (including on privacy) are in place to secure the arrangement.
- Samoa shared that they had found around 70 Acts relating to legal identity during their ID environment assessment process.

Presentation 9: Country progress, strategies and plans

During this presentation, PICTs shared information on their civil registration processes and plans for developing their systems.

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

38. FSM's estimated birth registration completeness is at 3% for 2018; a similarly low rate is expected for death registration. Under FSM law, the Department of Health Services (DOHS) is responsible for the prompt collection of vital statistical information concerning all births and deaths occurring in the Trust Territory and for filing copies of certificates of birth or death with the Clerk of Courts of the district in which they occurred. However, there are delays in receiving this information; the office is planning to include a time limit in the legislation.
39. Each of the four states of FSM have unique ways of capturing, storing, and archiving civil registrations. All have limited resources. A recent fire destroyed all Pohnpei civil registrations on file. Currently the office registers, scans, and saves all civil registration information received after the fire. However, the Family Search Program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints archived all existing records up to 2009 for Pohnpei. These files are all that remain of Pohnpei's civil registrations prior to the fire.
40. FSM is in the process of planning the implementation of a national ID system that will focus first on those born outside FSM with a parent or parents who are citizens of FSM. In other plans, a Civil Registration Office and database, separate from the Clerk of Courts Office, will be established. The Office is working with the DOHS on how to register all events as soon as the information is completed by the informant.

Samoa

41. In Samoa, the MOH is a major stakeholder in the CRVS system and is a member of the national CRVS Committee. The MOH records the births of all newborns.
42. For registration purposes, records are captured by the Office of Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM), which falls under the Samoa Bureau of Statistics. Birth and death records captured by BDM are shared with other governments departments, in particular the Office of the Electoral Commission, where they are used to identify persons who are eligible to vote.
43. There are plans for establishment of a national ID system in Samoa. The system is scheduled to be launched in July 2020 and will be based on birth certificate information collated by the BDM office. The BDM Act will be updated to align with the National ID Act.

Cook Islands

44. There are strong incentives to register births and deaths in Cook Islands, particularly in connection to customary inheritance of land and land succession. Further, there is a newborn allowance of NZD 1000 that is issued to persons born to parents or permanent

residents of Cook Islands and a monthly child benefit allowance of NZD 100 upon registration. Application for a passport also requires a birth certificate, which necessitates that one's birth is registered.

45. The MOH notifies the Ministry of Justice of births and deaths that are handled within the health system (most events occur in Rarotonga hospital) and there is therefore 100% registration of these events. The civil registration system is manual and uses an ACCESS database. The database is event-based and does not link a person's records. A unique identification code is issued for each record; however, this is only used for registration purposes and not by any other government department.
46. The civil registration system is integrated with other departments (Statistics, Tax, etc.), with information shared by email. Though there is no explicit data-sharing legislation, there are MOUs between ministries to facilitate data sharing. Challenges include the lack of a central database, which limits the ability to create genealogy trees – these are important in land succession. There have been disputes because registration is by name with no unique identifier assigned. There are no firm plans for implementation of a national ID system, though there are high-level government discussions. Cook Islands noted the World Bank's advocacy of data minimisation in setting up an ID system, given that people fear 'Big Brother'.

Wallis and Futuna

47. As a French overseas territory, Wallis and Futuna has an identical system to that of New Caledonia (described in paragraph 30 above). The comprehensive CRVS system is linked with France's system and all services are free.

Comments

- FSM shared that under an agreement established between them and the LDS church, they receive support for preservation of their civil registration records. There was discussion about the appropriateness of this arrangement, in particular around securing the privacy and confidentiality of individual records from potential access and use by unauthorised external parties. In relation to this theme, New Caledonia shared that it holds a rigorous attitude towards access to civil registration information. Notaries have to request information from the municipal authorities. The discussion underlined the need for countries to digitise their civil registration records as a primary measure to secure and preserve records. It was agreed that countries should consider off-island back-up of data as a measure to mitigate loss of records.
- Participants also discussed the application of unique identifiers within health systems. Tuvalu explained their plans to develop a unique health identifier with the aim of linking population health and clinical health. This number was found to be crucial as people within the country use different names while seeking health care, which makes it difficult to effectively build a unified patient record. Australia explained that it uses a health identifier but also highlighted the concerns around trust when it comes to linking data. Samoa explained their plans to implement a unique health identifier, which will be separate from the national ID number (also under development), in order to ensure that health information strictly remains with the health sector. Samoa has similar concerns as Tuvalu regarding the use of different names, which creates challenges in record management. It was underlined that PICTs need partners to invest in the training of civil registration and IT professionals. PNG noted the need for capacity building of young people.

Day 2 – Role of ICT in legal identity and identity security; country experiences in implementing civil registration IT systems; and recommended principles

Presentation 10: Role of ICT in legal ID and ID security

48. During this presentation, Doug Newdick (SPC) introduced a group discussion, which focused on sharing country experiences in using IT for CRVS systems. Participants were split into groups and given the following four questions to respond to:
- a. Does your IT system run well or not?
 - b. Does your current system support what you do today and help you comply with policy and legislation? If not, why not?
 - c. Will your current IT system help you achieve the regional goals and any future national goals? If not, why not?
 - d. How well does the IT system support your stakeholders (e.g. health)?

Summary of group feedback

- Data accuracy and completeness are common challenges for PICT civil registration systems. IT systems should help address these challenges.
- Record and data safety was also commonly mentioned, noting that both paper and electronic records can be destroyed. Back-up storage is needed.
- Integration/interoperability between government systems were also noted often and are important considerations.
- Legislation needs to be updated to allow use of IT systems for civil registration (i.e. not assuming paper) and facilitate sharing between agencies, including enabling input.
- Cultural practices around naming and name changes were mentioned frequently and systems must be able to accommodate these.
- The need for capacity building of PICT officials was underlined. They need skills to implement and support efficient IT systems.

Comments

- Participants asked if it was possible for SPC/BAG to produce a guidance document for countries transitioning to IT systems, e.g. how to evaluate systems, choose a vendor and software, fund ongoing system operation, etc.
- The Chair raised the question of regional support and standardisation of systems. Digital sharing of information and biometrics may mean that certificates and other paper documents are of less value in future.
- Gloria Mathenge (SPC) said the legal ID agenda is likely to be going in the direction of passport systems with a high level of standardisation required across the world.
- Jeffrey Quarrington (Canadian Bank Note) said countries are exploring the use of credentials other than paper, but implementation will not happen in the short term. Digital information is likely to augment physical documents. Digital credentials enable completion of transactions online. Biometrics are being used to strengthen ID but there are still challenges. Self-sovereign ID will provide convenience for citizens in interacting with the government.

Presentation 11: Principles for implementing CRVS systems – Doug Newdick (SPC)

49. The objective of this presentation was to come up with a list of principles to help countries implement CRVS systems and assist the development of ICT guidelines. Principles are high-level rules and guidelines that practitioners need to follow in implementing their CRVS systems. They should be enduring and useful in deciding between competing choices. The following points (a–l) were proposed and included during the discussions. It was agreed that SPC will move forward to complete the principles and share these with countries as a checklist to assist in the evaluation of systems.
- a. Privacy, security and transparency by design
 - b. Person-centric (i.e. systems are more robust if connected to a person, which also helps combat ID fraud)
 - c. Interoperability within the country and region, i.e. able to easily share data with other systems across the region, and able to easily share data with other systems within the country
 - d. Designed to account for the ICT capability available to the country and in the wider region – match the ability of the country to maintain the system; not vendor dependent
 - e. Should support regional goals and wider country objectives
 - f. Sustainability and maintaining the history of records (never delete)
 - g. Country ownership of data
 - h. Flexibility in design – so systems can be optimised and sustained
 - i. Consideration of data standards/metadata, with time allowed for evaluation of systems
 - j. Ad hoc querying capability
 - k. Scalability
 - l. Embed training/knowledge transfer/focus on user needs

Comments

- Participants discussed ‘person-centric’ systems. An example is the NSW system in which a person’s information and records are all linked, e.g. when someone dies, the record is linked to their birth record. These links were originally created manually due to lack of resources. Now some are made automatically. Over time, the result is a spiderweb of relationships. The person-centric concept can extend to all ID information – passports, national ID, etc. to provide consistent ID.
- Fiji has also done work in the person-centric space. Its system displays a person’s data in one table (modular design). This also shows where there are gaps in information.
- New Caledonia, PNG and Samoa all stressed the need for capacity building and provision of training to those who will use the systems, suggesting training, knowledge transfer, and a focus on user needs should be added to the list of principles. Consideration should be given to autonomy rather than vendor dependence and to maintaining continuity of IT support.
- Australia said scalability is important given the diverse size of PICTs. Data standards and metadata (ensuring fields are defined the same way) enable data sharing.
- Dr Audrey Aumua (SPC) noted countries stressed the need for investment in HR and building knowledge, not just providing software. She further highlighted the development of the region’s civil registration workforce in the past 10 to 15 years, the growing collaboration with the health sector, and the contribution of vital statistics to decision-making for sustainable development. With the support of partners, this work will continue to evolve.

Presentation 12: Overview of the current regional guidelines on IT for CRVS: Preliminary plans for revision, next steps and timelines – Gloria Mathenge (SPC)

50. This presentation provided an overview of the regional guidelines on IT for CRVS. The guidelines were developed by BAG in 2014 to provide countries with a set of minimum standards for implementing an IT system for CRVS. They are now being considered for revision, recognising the numerous developments in the IT domain over the last few years and the lessons from countries and partners (on procurement and implementation of IT systems for CRVS), all of which are important to factor into the existing guidelines. Based on the discussions of the meeting and consultations with selected countries, the guidelines will be restructured and updated and missing content will be added. There will be further consultations to collect feedback on the draft revised version before publication. Lauren Moran (ABS) said the guidelines could cover topics such as an ideal tender process; procurement; choice of system (off the shelf or not); questions to ask when purchasing systems; and building relationships with vendors.

Presentation 13: Input from PCRN partners/IT industry representatives – Graham Jones (Object Consulting Pty Ltd) and Jeffrey Quarrington (Canadian Bank Note)

51. The objective of this presentation was to provide countries with guidance on important considerations that they should take into account when procuring IT systems for CRVS. Graham Jones (Object Consulting Pty Ltd) outlined some of the stages involved in successfully procuring an IT system as follows.
 - a. He advised against 'starting too big' with a request for proposal (RFP). Calling first for expressions of interest (EOI) enables potential purchasers to find out what vendors are offering. Following the EOI, the purchaser can make decisions about which standards are not negotiable (privacy, source code rights, cloud based, etc.). This will inform the RFP and help develop the business case. The RFP should not be vague. Tighter criteria will get targeted responses that can be compared.
 - b. Local support is a common requirement. A vendor can partner with a local provider or be in the same time zone.
 - c. Vendor lock-in is real but can be managed. Purchasers should develop their own contract, i.e. the vendor agrees to the purchaser's terms. What happens if you stop paying the bill to the vendor? The system will be turned off but if you host the data yourself you retain control.
 - d. To avoid price gouging, include periodic reviews of performance in the contract. If the vendor or country wants out, there needs to be a 'transition out' clause/process.
 - e. In case a vendor goes out of business, have escrow arrangements in place, with a third party holding source codes, etc.
 - f. Training and support are needed, but this is a complex domain. Avoid wasted effort by developing the skills needed locally and using external services as required.
 - g. Who owns the data? This should be inserted in contracts. Ensure the vendor can only see your data with your permission.
 - h. A data vault provision (i.e. a third party holds the data) is also recommended in contracts.
52. Jeffrey Quarrington said purchasers should first understand what their requirements are (in relation to government, legislation, IT infrastructure, etc.). This allows them to understand which system is the right fit. He explained that an EOI is a good suggestion to find out what is available. Another way is to invite several vendors for discussions. Countries also need to decide the type of vendor required – one that simply delivers a system, or a vendor/partner to help with new technology, change management, etc. It is important to develop a tender evaluation methodology when developing the RFP. The Chair suggested that countries

should consider networking with colleagues and groups such as PHIN when conducting tendering processes as they could provide relevant guidance and advice.

Comments

- CNMI asked if the presenters could turn their advice into a checklist for PICTs. The Chair suggested it could be covered in the guidelines.
- PNG said countries must be able to check that vendors can do what they say and asked if SPC could have a helpdesk to support countries that 'get lost' in their system. He noted that payment schedules must be affordable for countries and planned according to the stages of implementing a system and in line with government requirements.
- Fiji said that before PICTs issue an RFP, they need to decide if they want to build the system in-house or through a vendor. If they decide on a vendor, the vendor needs a clear scope and documentation (a requirements list, a map of the workflow, etc.).
- Australia advised knowing what country/legal framework a contract is managed in, and the legal framework of the hosting country if data is stored in the cloud.
- Sometimes in the health sector, purchasers are forced to go to tender because of funding requirements, but open source systems do not respond to tenders even though their system may be suitable. Vendors will not solve business process problems ('never automate a bad manual process').
- Wallis and Futuna is finalising an agreement with SPC's Statistics for Development Division (SDD) on hosting data from agricultural surveys, etc. People wanting to access the data first have to ask permission from Wallis and Futuna. Other countries may want to consider this option.

Presentation 14: Country progress reports

During this presentation, PICTs shared information on their civil registration processes and plans for developing their systems.

Fiji

53. In Fiji, civil registration starts with notification of a birth by the MOH. Under Digital Fiji (the Fiji Government's digital transformation programme), parents can register a birth using a mobile app (a video presentation of the registration process was provided).
54. Civil registration records are maintained in an electronic database. The database generates a unique identification number that makes it possible to link the birth and death records of individuals. The format of the number generated by the database is 'B/D/M+YY+5 digits sequence number+2 random number+1 check-sum character'. YY is reset based on the calendar year; the 5 digit sequence number is used to keep track of the number of registrations that have been recorded in the year; and the last three digits and character are used to increase security. It is not easy to detect another person's identification number. For example, for a birth record, the unique identification number could be 'B190803264C'.
55. There are plans to implement a national ID system in Fiji with assistance/partnership from Singapore. This has required overhauling business processes and reviewing back-end processes. A steering committee of ministers is overseeing the project and providing direction. A key lesson learned is the need to find a strategic development partner to support this work, and the need to review business processes and revise them as required.
56. In terms of cybersecurity, Fiji has a data centre that houses government data. Fiji also has good internet connectivity infrastructure.

57. Digital Fiji has a services framework with a common authentication process. All government services can be paid for electronically. The system leverages off existing technology (e.g. mobile phones). One of the challenges faced is trying to automate high volume/low value transactions. Data sharing is of critical importance to the work being undertaken.

Australia *(There were presentations from New South Wales (NSW) and the Northern Territory)*

58. The NSW Department of Health supports civil registration and plays an important role in supporting the birth registration process. Legislation requires that all live births must be reported to the Registry within seven days. Reports can come from a hospital or midwife. A stillbirth has to be reported within 48 hours.
59. NSW has a person-centric civil registration system called Lifelink. Registers are closed and there is no open access to data, except for decades-old information. Information is shared with a long list of government agencies
60. The introduction of online birth registration resulted in significant improvements in registration coverage and completeness and improvements in data quality. At present, 96% of births are registered online (with a 53% increase in registration of Aboriginal births). There is a 50% reduction in error rates. Further, babies are now registered in 21 days on average compared to 89 days last year.
61. All midwives in the state are trained in using the online system. NSW learnt from New Zealand and Queensland before building its system. The process is designed to be user-friendly, e.g. there is an offer of help if a birth is not registered in 60 days. Registrar's offices are self-funded so there is a charge for certificates. Notification of death is manual – from the doctor, funeral director, or coroner.
62. In terms of ID security, practices employed by NSW, and Australia in general, include certificate paper that has overt/covert security features. The office does daily certificate paper-tracking audits for most of the country; monthly certificate paper audits of all secure areas (in NSW); and data linking deaths to births. There is closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance, an access policy, and identity proofing guidelines. Further, the office implements privileged-based access to secure areas/certificate printers; and regular building security audits. In NSW, criminal record checks are undertaken for every employee and confidentiality agreements are signed on the day an employee commences at the Registry, and yearly thereafter. NSW also has regular cybersecurity training and audits. The future of registries will be driven by technology changes, and changes in communities. People want to interact easily with government, but processes must be secure.
63. Beginning November 2017, the Northern Territory initiated a Remote and Regional Circuit Programme aimed at providing specific birth, death and marriage registration services free of charge to persons in remote and regional communities for a three-month period. This programme involves travelling to outlying communities to deliver civil registration services with technology that can be used remotely (including routers, printers, laptops, router antenna, power board, power leads, network cables, laminator, pre-printed forms). Through this programme, registration is conducted live and certificates are issued on the spot. Organisation of the programme involves expensive logistical planning including training staff. In developing the programme, community representatives were consulted on community needs. In some cases, whole families obtained birth certificates, enabling them to participate in services such as training and education. Key challenges faced in

implementation of the programme included absorbing costs without any additional funding, ensuring continued services at the main office with limited staff, coordinating trips around staff availability, and staff fatigue. Due to the success of the programme, the initiative has now been incorporated as an ongoing programme of BDM. The project is continuing but no longer has government funding. It therefore partners with a programme called DriveSafe NT Remote to share costs. The office has also been approached by the Federal Government's Passport Office to partner together in the future.

Kiribati

64. Kiribati has a CRVS committee that meets regularly. The MOH is a key stakeholder. Civil registration (which is under the Ministry of Justice) works closely with the MOH to reconcile the number of births and deaths and to ensure data is matched and consistent. The civil registration system is mainly paper-based with an e-database for birth notification. BDM systems are not linked but there are plans for this.
65. The civil registration office has placed two officers in the hospital to assist with the registration and issuance of certificates for all births before parents leave the hospital. The same system is now being used to capture hospital deaths. There is a 92% completion rate for birth registration and 88% for death registration.
66. In the outer islands, medical assistants and staff of clinics are responsible for filling out birth notifications and advising parents on registration. A household survey was carried out in North Tarawa to capture unreported births and deaths. Late birth registration was done on the spot. The survey could be extended to other islands.
67. Kiribati will implement a national ID card this year. The cards will be issued free, but there will be a charge for replacements. Challenges for civil registration include people using multiple names, data duplication, staff overload and inadequate IT capacity.

Tonga

68. Tonga is reviewing its civil registration legislation, with support from the World Bank as part of a larger project on establishing digital government. The strategy for the digital government project has 10 guiding principles, including security, connectivity, interoperability, customer focus and standardisation. Component 1 of the strategy includes support for amending civil registration and ID laws, and development of a general data protection law, plus related legislation on cybersecurity and electronic transactions. Component 3 includes support for strengthening civil registry and national ID software; linking birth, death and marriage records for the same person; assigning a unique identification number (UIN) at birth registration; and receiving notifications from the health sector. The new digital system will include a unique identifier for each citizen. Members of the public will be able to access their data from the established platform.
69. Tonga recently completed a civil registration systems process-mapping exercise (including mapping data flows from Health, Justice and Statistics) with support from SPC. A recently completed amnesty programme, funded by UNICEF, assisted the country in clearing an extensive backlog. The civil registration office is working on reviewing and updating registration certificates, e.g. removing the illegitimacy column from birth certificates and re-designing death certificates to include the name of the surviving spouse.

Comments

- While IT is a key enabler for universal legal identity, there may be unintended consequences of moving to a digital platform. Designing systems/services in collaboration with stakeholders is important, including providing support for those unable to use online services. It is important to note that the digital divide has the potential to increase the existing identity gap – discriminating against those who are not up to date with technological developments
- In NSW, there is a business continuity plan for loss of internet services, including a stock of printed forms. Some remote areas do not have internet access, so NSW also maintains a paper system. Secure offsite storage of registry data is also essential.
- Papua New Guinea noted that fraudulent identities are an issue for the country and that there is a need to educate the judiciary on how to effectively handle this matter.
- Tonga noted a recent case of bigamous marriage (Fiji male/Tongan woman) and said population mobility makes identity verification important.
- In the Northern Territory, there have been experiences of people from out of state obtaining two identity credentials by obtaining two driving licences. Procedures have now been tightened.
- It was suggested that a regional data-sharing arrangement could allow registrars to verify a person's identity status in cases where there have been cross-border movements. However, there are legislative barriers to sharing data between countries.
- Australia explained that it was necessary to get its courts to accept digital ID/electronic evidence for registration purposes, which is something that other countries may experience in their move towards more digital systems.

Presentation 15: SPC's new website for Pacific statistics – Phil Bright (SPC)

70. This presentation demonstrated the new website of SPC's Statistics for Development Division (SDD) (<https://sdd.spc.int/>) and the Pacific data hub (<https://pacificdata.org/>), both of which will provide better access to data and improve dissemination of statistics from the region. The SDD website structures information by topic and by PICT with links to SDG indicators, related resources, survey collections calendar, etc. There are dashboards and progress wheels for the SDGs. There are specific pages for CRVS on the website, accessible through a link on the website's home page. The Pacific Data Hub pulls together available data sets from numerous sources in the region (agencies, universities, etc.) The microdata library documents PICT censuses and surveys in the region. Data is made available with permission and is subject to anonymisation and confidentiality.

Comments

- Vanuatu said that in the event of natural disasters, it struggles to provide baseline data for response and asked if the website would provide this sort of data. SPC responded that the website will provide population data; however, the type and availability of data is subject to what is made available to SPC by member states. In this regard, it is recommended that countries share their releases with SPC so that these can be made available on the site.
- Fiji asked for an opportunity to review its data on the website.

Day 3 – Role of the health sector in civil registration and legal identity; identity security and risk mitigation measures; importance of unique identification codes and best practices in their implementation

Presentation 16: Global perspectives on integrating unique identification numbers in civil registration and in achieving universal health coverage – Dr Peter Drury (WHO consultant)

71. Civil registration of birth signifies that the state recognises the unique existence of every individual. Linking this with the national ID system is the foundation of a secure legal identity for every person. In the health sector, the unique identification of patients is crucial to ensure that every person in a country has access to health care. Unique identification for health purposes improves health outcomes by tracking an individual's interactions at every point within the health system. The goal of universal health coverage (UHC) cannot be achieved without unique identification.
72. For health care and coverage to be truly universal, health services must be designed to be people-centred rather than service-centred. This is made possible by use of unique health identifiers. Unique identifiers allow the provision of the right health service to the right patient in a short time and can enable integrated care, less waiting time, less treatment errors, no double payments and fast reimbursement of payments made for health services. The presentation provided guidance on how to frame an ID strategy for health and provided some useful resource materials for a country's design of its digital health strategy and implementation of unique health identifiers, e.g. the Unique Health Identifier Health Assessment Toolkit released by ADB in May 2018; ADB's report on identity for development in Asia and the Pacific (<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/211556/identity-development-asia-pacific.pdf>); and the draft WHO Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020–2024 (<https://extranet.who.int/dataform/upload/surveys/183439/files/Draft%20Global%20Strategy%20on%20Digital%20Health.pdf>).
73. The presentation recommended integration/linking of systems through unique identifiers as an important approach to improving efficiency in health care and service delivery. It was emphasised, however, that each country needs to be conscious of its context and to structure its systems based on an adequate assessment of what is fit for the particular context.

Presentation 17: Importance of unique identification codes for UHC – Carol Dayo Obure (World Bank)

74. Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is about achieving universal health coverage. Countries cannot implement effective and efficient UHC programmes without knowing how to accurately identify the poor to target them with essential and quality health services. Further, UHC progress cannot be adequately monitored without disaggregated data. Civil registration systems linked to ID systems facilitate implementation and monitoring of UHC. A unique health ID is an important part of achieving UHC and monitoring progress to UHC. The presentation provided examples of the application of unique identifiers in the health sector in Thailand, Korea and Estonia, specifically highlighting how these have facilitated the linking of records for research, improvement in services and sharing of data between the health system and the civil registration system.
75. It was noted that The World Bank Group has developed a guidance note on Use of Unique Health Identifiers in Universal Health Coverage Programmes or Health Insurance Schemes. Countries use various approaches to assigning ID. Some use one national ID number for all purposes; others assign separate national ID and health ID numbers; and others have only a health ID number.

(The presentation showed examples of these approaches in different countries.) Both online and offline options can be used to assign a health ID. In general, different models can be adopted depending on country context. While there are benefits, there are also risks to privacy from linking health systems to foundational identifiers, and risks of exclusion where an ID is mandatory for access to services.

Presentation 18: Civil registration and vital statistics data for health policy and planning –
Lauren Moran and James Eynstone-Hinkins (ABS, Health and Vital Statistics)

76. The Government of Australia is supporting a twinning programme between Australian and Pacific registrars, which provides mentorship focused on improvement of civil registration systems and thereby identity management and identity security. Feedback from PICT registrars has so far highlighted IT system issues, and the need to improve information flows, including cause of death data, with the health sector.
77. A legal identity is important in facilitating access to numerous services. An integrated civil registration system is the foundation for identity management, with birth registration being the entry point that facilitates social inclusion and provides basic protection and civil rights, and death registration providing the point of exit and also facilitating the disposal of remains and disbursement of estates, among other functions.
78. A strong relationship between civil registration and health departments is critical in the establishment of strong systems. Some specific ways in which civil registration can engage with health include: the design of forms – registries need to design forms with stakeholders; removing barriers to birth and death registration by using processes that suit country circumstances; and enacting strong legislation and policy frameworks. Systems and people must talk to each other.
79. Civil registration is a critical source of health information. Vital statistics provide measures of fertility, live births, stillbirths, perinatal mortality, maternal mortality, life expectancy, premature mortality and preventable death which is important in health policy and planning. Key data should come from the civil registration office. In the Pacific, death registration is often lower than birth registration and cause of death data is often not available. The result is lower quality information. It is important for registries to work closer with health to identify approaches for improving quality of death information and to advocate for better reporting of deaths.
80. The health benefits of a functional CRVS system include promotion of social inclusion and enhanced use of data in providing health services (e.g. immunisation, maternal services). Quality vital statistics enable stronger reporting on the SDGs and the Healthy Islands Monitoring Framework. Quality information on population health is critical for good health policy, planning and education.
81. A key goal must be universal registration of vital events with complete reporting of demographic and health characteristics (including complete and accessible information from MCCDs/other health related documents). To achieve this, strong relationships between civil registration offices and related government departments (Health, Home Affairs, Statistics, etc.) are essential. It is important for other stakeholders to clearly understand the benefits of civil registration including a strong understanding of how good data can improve population health.
82. **Action point** – Commit to improving a relationship with the health sector at home, e.g. share the messages of this CRVS meeting with health colleagues; discuss data sharing and form design.

Comments

- Participants were interested in strategies for working towards UHC. For example, in Kiribati, treatment is free but to achieve UHC it is important that the country achieves better quality datasets. Kiribati asked donors for support in strengthening the quality of its datasets and building strong coordination of systems.
- In response to Kiribati's statement, Peter Drury said there are different models for payment for health depending on a country's context. Kiribati must decide on the best system for health insurance/UHC. Birth registration and assigning of UID (one number or separate numbers) also depend on a country's context and preference.
- Australia does not have a national ID because of privacy and security concerns. The health sector needs a system for registration at point of birth but also for registration of non-residents.
- Vanuatu noted the difficulties of getting/recording cause of death data for remote populations (though medical staff are legally mandated to provide the information) and asked how other PICTs manage the situation.
- Dr Audrey Aumua (SPC) agreed on the importance of cause of death data for public health decisions. BAG is training PICT doctors on medical certification. PNG and Solomon Islands are using a 'verbal autopsy' tool (supported by the Bloomberg Data for Health Initiative), which involves conversation with the family to determine the likely cause of death. The tool can be administered by non-health people. While not 100% accurate, it helps to capture information. It was recommended that donors support a data dictionary for PICTs.

Presentation 19: Country progress reports

During this presentation, PICTs shared information on their civil registration processes and plans for developing their systems.

Solomon Islands

83. In Solomon Islands, civil registration relies heavily on the health sector for notification of births and deaths. Birth coverage is low, but there is progress (from 42% in 2017 to 56% in 2018). Registration requires a name but according to tradition, a child is named when two months old. Estimated death registration completeness has dropped.
1. Notification forms are completed for all births and deaths reported through the HIS monthly reporting system. The system is paper-based and manual – copies of forms are submitted from nurses to the provincial office to the national office. To improve birth registration, Solomon Islands advocates birth registration during antenatal care, including having a name ready. This works well. Birth notification may also be completed during immunisation or other health visit.
84. A medical certificate of cause of death is completed by doctors for deaths that occur in hospital. Nurses complete death notifications. There is donor support for improving death notification, which is needed before a verbal autopsy can be carried out. Nurses are being trained in the verbal autopsy process (more than 100 questions), which uses a mobile phone to record and upload data. Churches are also involved in notifying the MOH of deaths that are otherwise not recorded.
85. Civil registration uses an e-database to capture and store vital event data. Data is shared electronically with other government departments. There is an initiative (with the support of donors) to electronically link the HIS system to PROMADIS (the civil registration database), and currently there is background work on encryption to protect privacy. Key challenges for the civil registration system include incompleteness of notification forms and late submission of forms from remote health facilities.

86. There have been initial discussions on establishment of a national ID system. Biometric data is used for voter registration but is not linked to the civil registration system.

Tokelau

87. Tokelau is one of the smallest PICTs with a population of 14,000 living on three small atolls, each with a Deputy Registrar (Office of the Taupulega). There is one hospital.
88. Birth registration has improved from 25% recorded in 2016 to 90% recorded in 2018, and death registration from 30% to 100% for the same years. The improvement in registration completeness is specifically attributed to the participation of the Registrar in an SPC/BAG workshop held in 2017 after which the Registrar began working closely with MOH colleagues to bridge the registration gap. Health and education services are free so there is little incentive for parents to register births in Tokelau. Civil registration information is held centrally on an e-database. The back-up system consists of paper-based information being held on each atoll as well as centrally. There is no national ID system and there are currently no plans for implementation of one.
89. Currently, the MOH has no legal obligation to notify births and deaths. However, medical officers are required to certify all deaths and must provide a report to the Offices of the Taupulega (Deputy Registrar), to facilitate completion of the death registration process. Tokelau does not register off-island deaths and is currently exploring the feasibility of an MoU with New Zealand, which will facilitate data sharing between the two countries for off-island events.
90. Ongoing plans include a national CRVS workshop in October 2019, and a review of the Births and Deaths Registration Rules 1969.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

91. Civil registration is governed by the CNMI Vital Statistics Act of 2006, with civil registration functions undertaken by the CNMI Department of Public Health. The CNMI health system is a public corporation that manages healthcare, with all services under one entity. It is independent of central government, though government has an oversight function. Having one health system allows easy capture of birth and death information. CNMI implements a unique medical record number as required by US legislation for US-API.
92. Over the past five years, birth and death registration completeness has been over 95%. In addition to the normal registration functions, civil registration in CNMI also has to deal with 'birth tourism' and surrogacy aimed at obtaining US citizenship, as well as registration of vital events occurring among temporary residents. Occasionally, some private health service providers deliver babies at the main CNMI hospital. Under existing law, such persons can claim US citizenship (which is a diplomatically sensitive issue).
93. Currently there are ongoing initiatives to modernise existing IT systems, which are largely fragmented. These developments should enable CNMI to electronically transmit birth and death data to the HHS/CDC National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS); improve reporting timeliness and the quality of vital event information; increase security and fraud prevention; and enable CNMI to participate in the exchange of information through Electronic Verification of Vital Events with the CNMI Government and US government agencies (HHS, Department of State). The IT systems under consideration will be cloud-based. CNMI is also working on disaster preparedness – records are being scanned and IT systems are being evaluated.

Nauru

94. In Nauru, 88.8% of births and 83% of deaths are registered within the first year of occurrence. The MOH notifies civil registration of births (a child cannot be registered without notification) and deaths. The office gets a monthly report from the hospital to cross-check registration information, which is also published in the monthly gazette. Only immediate family can register births and deaths. No-one can access another's info. Challenges include people using more than one name. Information is shared with other government departments (Education, Police, Electoral Office, Lands Committee, bank agency, etc.).
95. The registration system is manual with information entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Birth and death records are not linked; each record is assigned a folio number that is used only by the registry office. There is an IT system in place (SOCIOUS); however, it does not meet all requirements for civil registration and so is currently not utilised. Registry information is saved in a server that is accessible by the IT section – the office would like to change this situation to ensure that a person's records are kept confidential as required.
96. Recent initiatives include the development of a series of regulations provided for under the 2017 Registration Act. Nauru has also been working with the civil registration office of Tuvalu to facilitate the registration of Tuvaluans born in Nauru who did not have any registration records. Nauru requested partner support for getting a proper civil registration database and also for establishing a national ID system.

Tuvalu

97. The MOH supports civil registration functions through sending weekly birth and death information (on events that occur at the hospital) to the civil registration office. Outer island clinics share information with the District Registrar, who reports to the central registry. The civil registration system is largely manual, which causes delays in the transfer of information and documents between different stakeholders. Civil registration information is shared with other government departments when needed – mainly with Health, Statistics, Immigration, Home Affairs and Citizenship. Tuvalu carries out quarterly reconciliations of records received from health and those recorded by the civil registration office. Mothers have 12 months to register a birth for free; after 12 months, there is a charge.
98. Tuvalu does not have a national ID system. The national provident fund and banking system face problems with people using different names and surnames and different dates of birth. Tuvalu's civil registration is receiving valuable support through an exchange programme with the Northern Territory, Australia. The aim of the programme is to strengthen the roles of the civil registry in capturing events that have occurred, register births and deaths in a timely manner, and help Tuvalu review its legislation on births, deaths and marriages. There are plans for Tuvalu staff to visit Darwin to observe how the Northern Territory system works and receive training to improve processes for registration of vital records and help with drafting policy. The exchange has improved Tuvalu's registration processes and Tuvalu thanked the Northern Territory and ABS, especially for support on recording cause of death.
99. Dr Aumua (SPC) said the presentations highlighted the challenges for building civil registration systems in PICTs and the value of donor support for this essential function.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)

100. Civil registration in PNG was established by the Civil Registration Act of 1963 which was amended in 2014. PNG has a population of 8 million and a growth rate of 3.5%. As of May 2019, PNG has registered 1,053,396 people. Currently the PNG National Identity Document (PNG NID) Project is being used to collect all CRVS information for the population.

101. The civil registration office maintains a register of births, deaths, marriages and divorces. Data cannot be shared because there is no provision to do so under the law. The Civil and Identity Registration Bill, which is undergoing its twelfth review, will allow data sharing.
102. The government considers CRVS is important for planning. However, only 16 of 22 provincial capitals have fixed civil registration offices, which complicates the task. (Two offices were burnt down in an effort to destroy data relating to land, but the data had already been uploaded to the cloud.) To increase registration, the central system is linked to provincial offices, but printing is only possible in Port Moresby. In the last 9 months, the rate of registration has been improved by streamlining the system.
103. There is a budgeted roll-out plan for national ID registration, though activities are fitted to the budget rather than vice-versa. Challenges include vendor lock-in with no administrative access or source codes under an agreement made in 2015 for technology for PNG's Civil ID Registration System.
104. In terms of its IT infrastructure, PNG is:
- trying to put remote uploading of registration data in place so whole communities can be registered at once;
 - building a young team to develop systems, including prototypes and testing – improving capacity is essential;
 - looking to develop infrastructure for using the national ID card (with government agencies, etc.);
 - developing a mobile registration kit;
 - using Facebook to advise people of the status of their registration (telecommunication costs are high);
 - improving utilities, e.g. lack of electricity is a barrier.
105. PNG faces a massive task in seeking to register 7 million people in 2 years (by Dec. 2021) and requested partner support for implementation of the national ID, which will benefit the whole country.
106. Health sector involvement:
- A CRVS Committee was formed with numerous health stakeholders. PNG has developed a health information system, but data cannot be shared with civil registration.
 - Doctors have had training in filling cause of death certificates, and mortality coders enter the data. 'Verbal autopsy' is active in some provinces. The National Burden of Disease Committee will use this data.
107. Dr Aumua (SPC) asked which countries have a CRVS roadmap or plan and suggested these are useful to identify areas for BAG support.

Presentation 20: Overview of digital development and the connections with health and identity – Peter Drury (WHO consultant)

108. Digital development is shifting to the cross-sector paradigm partly because all the SDGs are linked. SDG 9 (c) is to 'significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the internet in least developed countries by 2020'.
109. Governments are taking a whole-of-government approach to investing in digital infrastructure. There are examples of achieving infrastructure more cost effectively in a low-income country by

investing donor funds in a common platform rather than in separate platforms for various projects.

110. From a community perspective, the functionality of mobile phones can support civil registration, telehealth, economic development and market knowledge, though this requires people to have knowledge and information. From a health provider perspective, there is a need to improve the flow of information from the health sector to civil registration, while recognising the workload of health workers. Data quality can be improved by supporting information management in the health system. There are opportunities for PICTs to use technology to leapfrog from building on legacy systems, but there are also threats, which is why there must be a legal framework in place. Innovation must be managed. It includes engaging citizens.
111. Donor investment principles for digital health systems should include: collaborating; aligning investments with national digital health strategies; prioritising investments in national plans that incorporate 'digital global goods'; and avoiding bespoke systems. The national digital development strategy and digital health strategy must be related. Governance arrangements and engagement with stakeholders are critical (there are many toolkits available for strategy development).
112. Dr Drury thanked countries for providing information to the *Stocktaking mission on ID numbers and registries* and asked countries that have not yet responded to the request to do so.
113. In response to a question on readiness for implementing a digital strategy, he said capacity building should come first. When engaging with donors, PICTs should be:
 - looking at assembling a team in country who can get to the next step – that step will depend on country capacity;
 - ensuring the system (e.g. HIS) will be sustainable. This requires both an investment strategy and a digital strategy, and people with the capacity to ask the right questions and implement and maintain a system.
114. Vanuatu recommended development of an e-strategy to other PICTs.

Meeting outcome

115. Gloria Mathenge (SPC) presented the draft meeting outcome statement. The Chair suggested that participants be given one week to provide feedback on the draft.

Other business

116. Countries were asked to reflect on the UNESCAP Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Bangkok, October 2020. This is an excellent platform for countries to put forward high-level issues. The SPC booklet summarising the status of PICT CRVS will be useful for the Conference.
117. Vanuatu asked if SPC will take the CRVS meeting outcomes forward to the Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in August 2019. SPC confirmed that the Healthy Islands Monitoring Framework is on the PHMM agenda and some of the CRVS recommendations will be incorporated there.
2. Dr Aumua noted that CRVS has not been on the agenda of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) before. CRVS could be put on their agenda through the SPC Statistics Division mechanism.
118. The Chair suggested the outcomes document will be useful for the Regional Steering Committee ahead of the ministerial meeting. Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are all on the committee.

119. SPC is preparing a publication about PICT civil registration systems and requested countries to check the draft and update their details.

Closing

120. The Chair invited final comments from partners, who thanked PICTs for sharing their experiences and lessons. He acknowledged DFAT as the major supporter of the meeting.

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Liste des participants

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Programme of Work
Pacific Regional Workshop on Legal Identity and Identity Security
8–10 July 2019

Day1: 8 July 2019, Monday

Theme: Understanding legal identity, country experiences and plans, international principles and recommendations

Time	Theme	Presentation facilitator
08.00-08.30	Registration	
08.30-09.00	Opening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opening prayer – Opening Statement by Mr Cameron Diver, Deputy Director-General, SPC – Keynote statement by Mr Paul Wilson, Australia’s Consul-General to New Caledonia 	Gloria Mathenge, SPC
09.00-09.15	Remarks by Mr Epeli Waqavonovono, Director, Statistics for Development Division, SPC	
09.15-10:00	Introduction of participants. Meeting objectives, Adoption of the Agenda and programme of work Administrative announcements	
10.00-10.30	Group photo and coffee break	
10.30-11.00	Introduction to key terms and concepts of legal identity, and the role and interrelationship of Health Information, civil registration and National ID systems. Discussion	Gloria Mathenge, SPC Lauren Moran, ABS
11.00-12.00	Multisectoral perspectives on the importance of universal and secure legal identity and the role of the civil registration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance of birth registration and legal identity for child protection, child survival and development - Legal identity, gender equality and women empowerment - Legal identity for sustainable development and principles on identification for sustainable Development Discussion	Brigitte Sonnois, UNICEF Social Development Programme, SPC Jonathan Marskell, World Bank
12.00-13.00	Lunch Break	

13.00-13.30	Progress and plans against global and regional commitments towards civil registration and universal legal identity Discussion	David Rausis, UNESCAP Gloria Mathenge, SPC
13.30-14.30	Country progress and plans in civil registration and experiences in building of integrated legal identity management systems Discussion	Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Guam
14.30-15.00	International principles and guidelines on Legal Identity - <i>UN Guidelines on Legal Framework for CRVS and Identity Management</i> , ID Enabling Environment Assessment and broader enabling environment for legal and digital identity Discussion	Lynn Sferrazza, Data for Health Initiative, James Neumann, World Bank
15.00-15.30	Coffee Break	
15.30-16.30	Country progress, strategies and plans towards achieving universal civil registration Discussion.	FSM, Samoa, Cook Islands,
16.30-17.00	Summary of key recommendations, drawing from the presentations of the day.	Gloria Mathenge, SPC Lauren Moran, ABS
17.30-	<i>Welcome cocktail</i>	

Day 2: 9 July 2019

Theme: The role of ICT in legal identity and identity security; country experiences in implementation of CR IT systems; and recommended principles

Time	Presentation title	Presenter/Facilitator
08.00-08.30	Registration	
08.30-09.30	Group discussion (groups organised by systems): country experiences in the use of existing IT systems for CRVS; key challenges, opportunities and plans.	Doug Newdick, SPC Gloria Mathenge, SPC
09.30-10.30	Plenary presentation of conclusions from group discussions	
10.30-11.00	Coffee Break	
11.00-12.00	Key principles to follow in the selection/implementation of IT systems for civil registration and vital statistics Discussion.	Doug Newdick, SPC
12.00-13.00	Lunch Break	
13.00-13.30	Overview of the current regional guidelines on IT for CRVS, preliminary plans on revision, next steps and timelines	Gloria Mathenge, SPC
13.30-14.30	Country progress and plans in civil registration, experiences in the adoption of new civil registration IT software and improving identity security Discussion	Fiji, Australia
14.30-15.00	Country progress, strategies and plans towards achieving universal civil registration	Nauru, Kiribati, Tonga, Palau

15.00-15.30	Coffee break	
15:30-16.30	Country presentations continued	
16.30-16:40	Summary of key recommendations, drawing from the presentations of the day.	Gloria Mathenge, SPC Lauren Moran, ABS
17.00-17.30	PCRN Meeting.	PCRN
17.30-	<i>PCRN Cocktail at the Nouvata.</i>	

Day 3: 1 July 2019

Themes: Role of the health sector in CR and legal identity; Identity security and risk mitigation measures; Importance of unique identification codes and best practices in their implementation

Time	Presentation title	Presenter/Facilitator
08.00-08.30	Registration	All participants
08:30-09:00	Why civil registration matters for the health sector: systems and data strengthening perspectives Discussion	Lauren Moran, ABS James Eynstone, ABS
09.00-10.00	Global perspectives on integrating unique identification numbers in civil registration and in achieving universal health coverage. Discussion.	Carol Dayo Obure, World Bank, Peter Drury, WHO
10.00-10.30	Coffee Break	
10.30-12.00	Country progress and plans in civil registration and experiences in engaging the health sector to support universal civil registration Discussion.	Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tokelau
	Country progress, strategies and plans towards achieving universal civil registration Discussion.	Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu
12.00-13.00	Lunch Break	
13.00-14.00	Overview of digital development and the connections with health and identity. Discussion.	Peter Drury, WHO, PHIN & BAG,
14.00-15.00	Summary of key recommendations from workshop.	Chairperson
	Remarks by organising partners and BAG Secretariat	
15.00-15.30	Closing of workshop and next steps.	
15.30-	PHIN Board Meeting, other meetings of Partners, Coffee	