

South Sudan CRVS Country Report

Chairperson,  
National Bureau of Statistics,  
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## 1.0 Introduction

A number of efforts have been operating in the area of civil registration and vital statistics. In 2010, the then Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation (SSCCSE), now National Bureau of Statistics submitted a proposal to Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. UNICEF also got this proposal and together with Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare used it to do some vital registration. Management of National Bureau of Statistics also shared this proposal with Ministry of Health in 2011.

In 2011, UNICEF commissioned a mission to identify opportunities for accelerating the registration of birth. However, the main reason for their intent is to use it for Child Benefit Cash Transfer Program.

The Republic of South Sudan has a decentralised system of governance with the national government in Juba. The states have the same government institutions as at national level although with some variation. The national institutions coordinate the state institutions as well as the lower level local government institutions.

In 2012, the Government of South Sudan in collaboration with UNICEF formed the Civil Registration Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. The Steering Committee is composed of Under Secretaries of the institutions listed below. The Technical Working Group is composed of the technical persons from those institutions and UN agencies and partners.

The institutions are:

- National Bureau of Statistics
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
- Ministry of General Education and Instruction
- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Local Government Board

## 2.0 Status of civil registration

There are currently no laws governing civil registration. However, Ministry of Justice has drafted the bill which is to be taken to the Council of Ministers before being taken to Parliament. The law will give Ministry of Interior the authority to undertake civil registration. There will be a Directorate of Civil Registry under the General Directorate of Nationality, Passport and Immigration.

The objectives of Civil Registry are:

- To guarantee the individual rights with respect to nationality, ownership, enjoyment of political rights, employment rights, election and nomination and any other rights that may be prescribed by this Bill, in conformity with the Constitution and any other applicable law.
- To establish the Central base for information and its linkage with the State Offices, competent National and State Institutions, provided that the information envisaged in the data is related to the human performance, movement, and activity and in other fields.
- To provide the competent national institutions with statistical information to benefit therefrom in the formulation of the national, state and local developmental plans in the fields of economic, political, social, military and others.
- To provide the competent bodies with information related to the society movement, internal migration and external immigration and other relevant information thereof.

### 3.0 Operational aspects of civil registration

At the moment, South Sudan does not have a strategic plan for civil registration. Also, there is no effective mechanism in place to coordinate the office doing civil registration and the National Bureau of Statistics.

Currently, South Sudan is running a decentralized system with separate registration offices in each state. Marriages which are celebrated in religious institutions are registered by the institutions and the records stop there. They are not even reported to the head quarters of the churches.

But there are government organs responsible for coordinating registration of vital events at major divisions. The table below gives the institutions responsible for coordinating registration of vital events.

Vital events	Institutions
Live births	Ministry of Health
Foetal deaths	Ministry of Health
Deaths	Ministry of Health
Marriages	Ministry of Justice Traditional Courts
Divorces	Ministry of Justice Traditional Courts

The vital registration in the following institutions

Vital events	Institutions
Live births	Hospitals Clinics Primary Health Care Centres Primary Health Care Units
Foetal deaths	Hospitals Clinics Primary Health Care Centres Primary Health Care Units
Deaths	Hospitals Clinics Primary Health Care Centres Primary Health Care Units
Marriages	Ministry of Justice Religious institutions Traditional Courts
Divorces	Ministry of Justice Traditional Courts

One of the problems is that the government does not allocate recurrent budget for civil registration as it does for other sector. Individuals are expected to pay some fees for the registration of these events.

Before the event is registered, there is need to present documentary evidence that the event actually occurred. The table below gives the types of evidence that must be presented before the events are registered.

Vital events	Evidence required
Live births	Birth record
Deaths	Medical certificate Burial permit
Marriages	Witnesses Bride's parents' consent letter Notice of intended marriage
Divorces	Judicial divorce decision

The table below gives the persons who perform the functions of civil registrar at local level.

Vital events	Institutions
Live births	Health workers
Foetal deaths	Health workers
Deaths	Health workers
Marriages	Court Clerks Religious leaders Traditional Courts
Divorces	Court Clerks Traditional Courts

#### 4.0 Coverage and completeness of civil registration system

The registration of vital events does not currently cover all segments of the population. Some residents of rural areas do not register these events. Only the registration of births and deaths cover all geographic areas of the country. Marriages and divorce also cover some urban areas.

There is a backlog of unregistered events. The main reasons for these are:

- Lack of awareness of the need for civil registration
- Law is yet to be passed
- Low capacity of staff

#### 5.0 Status of vital statistics from civil registration system

At the moment, there is no legislation defining responsibilities for the collection, processing of vital statistics. As I mentioned earlier, the legal framework is still a bill of law. The Statistics Act, 2012 is also yet to be enacted. Currently no government legislation covers the responsibility.

But in the development of national strategy for the development of statistics (NSDS), the issue of collection, processing and dissemination of vital statistics from civil registration system is fully addressed. However, there is no guideline for collection, processing and dissemination of vital statistics data. Official vital rates are at the moment not collected from vital registration. The data sources used to generate birth and death rates are population censuses and sample surveys. There are no reports published on causes of deaths from civil registration system.

#### 6.0 Completeness of vital statistics

Vital events which are registered are not currently transmitted to the National Bureau of Statistics for compilation of vital statistics. Only Ministry of Health uses information they collect on the causes of death to measure prevalence of the diseases and their fatality. The National Bureau of Statistics is working with government institutions registering vital events so as to start producing vital statistics.

#### 7.0 Uses of civil registration records, certificates and vital statistics data

The main purpose of the vital event certificates is to use them as legal documents. The birth certificates are used for job recruitment while death certificates are used for acquisition of estates of the deceased. Marriage and divorce certificates are used for legal purposes.

#### 8.0 Conclusions

The coverage of vital registration is still very low and the data are not being used in compiling vital statistics. But the frame is in place to facilitate the smooth process of vital registration. The arrangement will allow the registration of all the vital events in South Sudan. Ministry of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development drafted a bill "Civil Registry Bill, 2012". This Act when enacted will give Ministry of Interior the mandate to register all the vital events