



**Fourth Conference of African Ministers
responsible for Civil Registration
Experts meeting
Nouakchott
4-8 December 2017**

**Financing mechanisms and health sector engagement for
strengthening civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa:
lessons learned from countries supported by the Global Financing
Facility in support of Every Woman, Every Child**



APAI-CRVS
Everyone visible in Africa

**Decade for Repositioning
of Civil Registration and
Vital Statistics in Africa
2017-2026**



World Health
Organization



Bloomberg
Philanthropies



Background

The importance of a well-functioning civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system in providing real-time data at the national and subnational levels for measuring and monitoring health and other social programmes is well recognized in Africa. Indicators such as the maternal mortality ratio, infant and under-five mortality rates and the adolescent birth rate can be reliably determined on a regular basis at subnational levels from a well-functioning CRVS system. In addition, these health-related indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals require reliable and regular information to monitor progress.

The role of the health sector in CRVS was one of the six thematic areas identified as priorities in Africa during the third Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, held in 2015. At the end of the Conference, the ministers declared the need to establish strong working arrangements with health and other relevant sectors to improve registration service delivery at the most appropriate administrative level.

Progress has been made in some African countries to strengthen CRVS through collaboration with the health sector in order to increase the number of births and deaths registered, including causes of death, and thereby protect the rights of women, children and adolescents, and provide vital statistics for informed decision-making in health and other social services.

Financing for civil registration and vital statistics

To take the CRVS agenda forward, many African countries have undertaken in-depth assessments of the state of national civil registration systems and developed strategic and action plans for improving CRVS. Given the state of CRVS systems, however, the costed strategic plans that were prepared underscored the substantial financial, technical and human resource gaps faced by many African countries in order to have functional CRVS systems. Accordingly, there are considerable challenges in implementing priority areas identified owing to limited funding.

CRVS is one of the development areas that has not been adequately funded, and it has been argued that the low level of investment needed to improve CRVS is the single most critical development in the coming years.¹ The World Health Organization has called for² increased investment in CRVS systems through aligning partner actions with country and regional leadership. Efforts are under way at the national, regional and global levels to support the strengthening of CRVS in developing countries.

At the global level, the Global Financing Facility in support of Every Woman, Every Child has prioritized CRVS as one of the areas that has not been funded adequately in the past. CRVS has been prioritized as a component of a country's health information system, through which progress made in ending preventable maternal, newborn, child and adolescent deaths can be monitored.

¹ See P.W. Setel and others, "A scandal of invisibility: making everyone count by counting everyone", *The Lancet*, vol. 370, No. 9598 (November 2007).

² See World Health Organization, "Progress in partnerships: 2017 progress report on the Every Woman, Every Child Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health" (Geneva, 2017).

Objectives of the session on civil registration and population movement

The purpose of this session is to share information on progress made in several African countries in Africa in strengthening CRVS through collaborative work undertaken between the ministries of health and ministries responsible for civil registration, under the auspices of the Global Financing Facility and the International Development Association (IDA). The session will show how CRVS is prioritized within the health sector, provide information on projects financed by IDA/Global Financing Facility trust fund to strengthen CRVS in Africa and showcase financed country-specific CRVS activities.

Proceedings

To achieve these objectives, a brief presentation will be made to outline how the Global Financing Facility supports the strengthening of CRVS in Africa and how countries can leverage support from the Facility. This will be followed by highlights from three ministers from Facility-supported countries representing Southern, Eastern and West Africa to discuss their experiences in securing financing for CRVS activities aligned with investment in health through the Facility trust fund and/or lending from IDA, and highlight the role of the health sector in CRVS. It is envisaged that the information shared will provide opportunities for countries to explore alternative sources of financing. In addition, the session will allow the sharing of knowledge on collaborating with ministries of health to strengthen CRVS systems.