

Mitigating the Impacts of COVID-19 on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in Africa



Thursday, 10th December 2020 3:30-5pm East Africa time
(7:30-9am Eastern Standard time)

The use of the Civil Registration and Identity Management System during the administration of Covid-19 Emergency Income Grant in Namibia

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Introduction

- Namibia's population: 2,4 million
- **14 March 2020:** First 2 positive Covid19 cases recorded
- **17 March 2020 - 17 September 2020:** State of Emergency ("SOE") + Regulations
- **28 March 2020:** First Lockdown announced (Erongo + Khomas Regions)
- **14 April 2020:** initial lockdown extended to whole country
- **26 June 2020:** Last lockdown ended
- Effect of lockdown:
 - Temporary and permanent closure of businesses = job losses, salary cuts, economic downturn



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Government's Response to Covid19

- SOE Regulations passed (NB: Secrecy provision in Identification Act pertaining to data sharing from the Population Register suspended)
- **Economic Stimulus Package announced (NB: included Emergency Income Grant)**
- EIG application period: 14 April 2020 - 8 May 2020
- EIG requirements (relevant to CR&IdM):
 - **Namibian citizenship**
 - **Age range: 18 – 59**
 - **ID card**
 - Not receiving other grants (i.e. pension, student funding...)



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Impacts of Covid19 on CR&IdM System

- CR services interrupted temporarily but shortly after regarded as essential services and restored
 - Birth, marriage and death registration continued
- CR regarded an essential service
- Heightened demand for IDs in order to apply for EIG >>> Identity for all [SDG16.9]
- Use of CR&IdM system in identity verification became indispensable
 - (This was the first time the Namibian Government used electronic identity data to facilitate social protection programming and grants distribution!)
- NB: Verification did not put any strain on the NPRS



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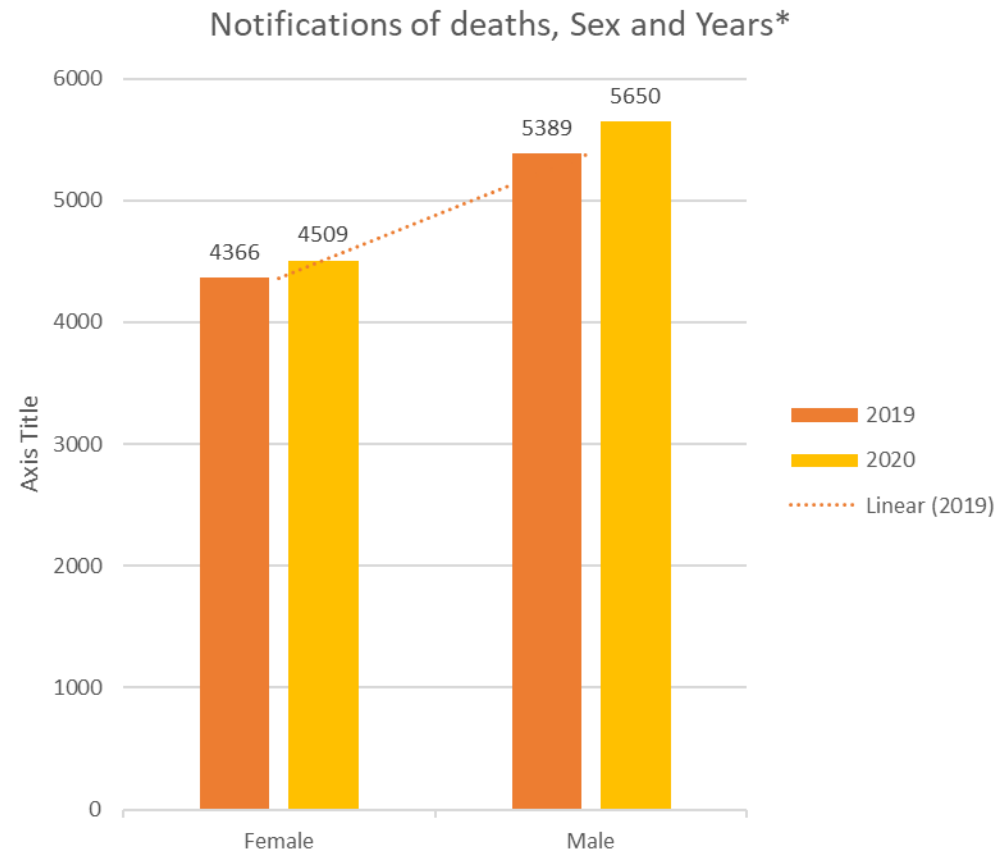
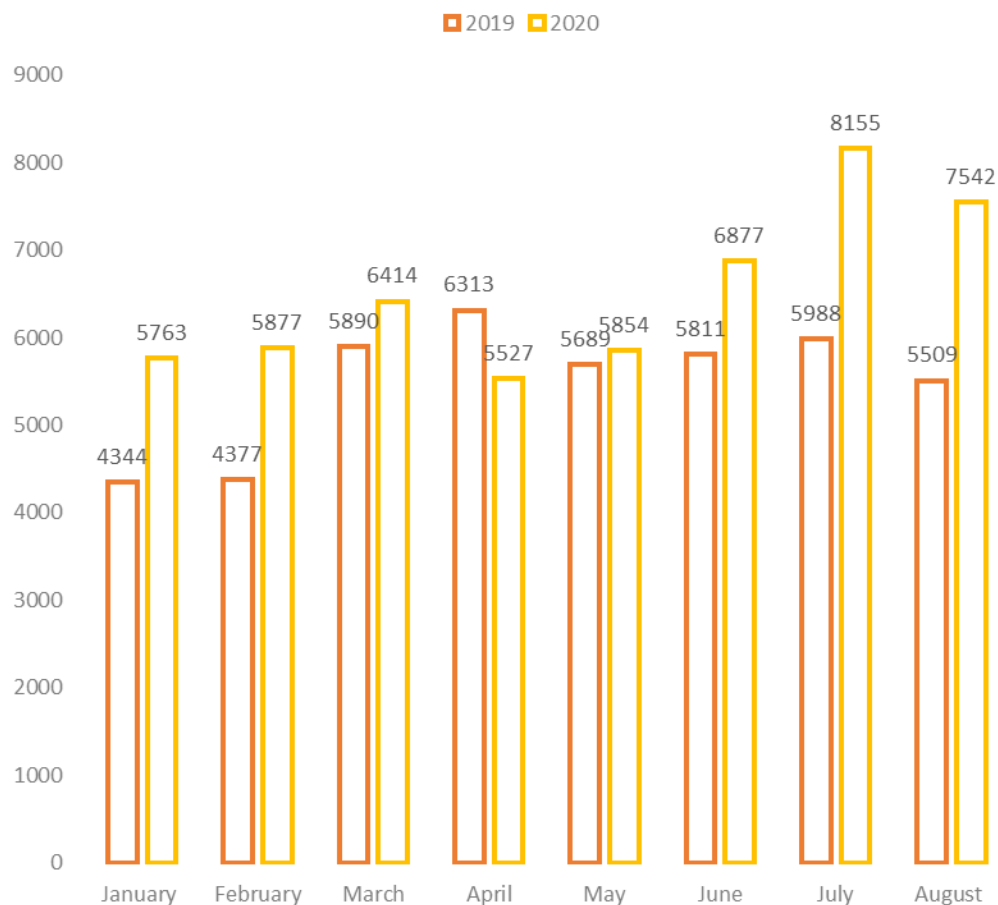


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E-Notifications of births and deaths continued



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Use of CR&IdM System in EIG roll-out

- NPRS was the best source of verification for the following EIG requirements:
 - Is the applicant Dead or Alive? [Death Register component of NPRS]
 - Is the applicant a Namibian citizen? [Birth Register & Identity Register component of NPRS]
 - Is the applicant between ages 18 and 59? [Birth & ID Registers]
 - Does the applicant have a valid ID? [ID Register]
- EIG application process:
 - Self nomination by applicant – **MobiPay (private company) verifies with NPRS** – *Additional verifications done against other databases for other requirements* – if all is in order, payment is done to a wallet at the bank of applicant's choice.
- MTC >> MobiPay >> Office of the Prime Minister (NPRS) >> Mobipay



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Results of the verification process

- 970,720 applications received (higher than 749,000 forecast)
 - 2,286,947 entries verified against NPR (same identity information submitted multiple times or by the repeated entry of the same applications)
- Figures by July 2020
 - 767,450 applicants verified to be eligible for the EIG
 - 4,190 rejected because ID # belonged to deceased persons
 - 3,464 rejected because applicants were below 18 or over 59 years old
 - 144,637 applications were rejected because information provided did not match the information in the NPRS



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Lessons Learnt & Opportunities

- It is important to have a unique and trusted legal identity (Identity for all from birth).
- A well-functioning, robust, digitized, interoperable CR&IdM System is key to mobilise a swift emergency response.
- The CR&IdM and social protection systems are mutually beneficial.
- Mobile technology reaches rural populations, and reduces the costs of travelling to urban areas to apply and collect benefits.
- Mobile technology also reduces public gathering at public offices, and thereby preventing spread of the virus.
- Built-in automated validations prevent fraud.
- National document is a powerful tool.



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THANK YOU

Some resourceful links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_Namibia

https://crvssystems.ca/sites/default/files/assets/files/SocialProtection_3_Namibia_e_WEB.pdf

<http://www.apai-crvs.org/sites/default/files/public/Technical%20brief%20no.2.pdf>



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