



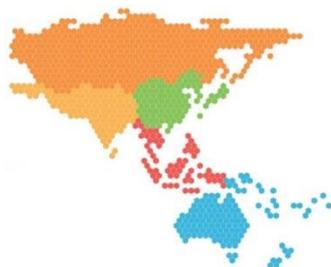
Information note

National multi-sectoral CRVS coordination mechanisms

Why should national multi-sectoral CRVS coordination mechanisms be established?

As a multi-sectoral operation, well-functioning national CRVS systems involve a wide variety of government ministries and agencies at the national level, provincial, and local levels and use a whole of government approach. A national CRVS coordination mechanism that comprises all relevant stakeholders, such as the civil registration authorities, the national identification agency, the health and education ministries, the statistics offices, provincial and local governments, civil society and possibly development partners is essential to facilitating coordination, coherence and harmonization and avoid duplication of activities. In addition, the coordination mechanism or committee gives development partners and other stakeholders a single national focal point to engage through.

How many countries in Asia and the Pacific have established national CRVS coordination mechanisms?



At least 38 countries in Asia and the Pacific have established national CRVS coordination mechanisms, with more countries planning to do so over the coming year. Countries that have not established coordination mechanisms generally fall into two categories: either the system is well established and it is perceived that an additional formal coordination mechanism is not needed, or the work on improving the CRVS system has just started recently. In some countries, coordination mechanisms are currently being established, often with support from development partners including the Pacific Community (SPC), UNICEF, Data for Health, Plan International, WHO and ESCAP.

What have countries committed to as part of the Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific?

A key principle in the Regional Action Framework is that countries should take the lead in improving national CRVS systems. To do so, countries need to set clear priorities and division of responsibilities among national stakeholders. The national CRVS coordination mechanisms ensure that these priorities and responsibilities are coordinated among all relevant stakeholders and that activities within ministries or departments contribute to a cohesive national strategy. This is why the first implementation step of the Regional Action framework is to 'establish an effective and sustainable national CRVS coordination mechanism comprising all relevant stakeholders'.

Who should be involved in a national multi-sectoral CRVS coordination mechanisms?

When establishing the coordination mechanism, whether this is a committee, task force or other structure - it is important to conduct a stakeholder analysis to identify the roles, responsibilities of all key stakeholders. The mechanism should include all agencies with primary responsibility for the key steps in the CRVS processes – from notification, data transmission, registration and statistical analysis and reporting, along with other stakeholders that contribute to aspects of CRVS, such as identity management, IT, the Attorney Generals office, ministries of justice, foreign affairs, planning or finance, that support these activities depending on country structures. The mechanism should also have a clear reporting structure to government - either through cabinet or a "lead" ministry.



Membership of the mechanism should be considered at regular intervals as improvements to the CRVS system will result in additional stakeholder of the system such as agencies using CRVS systems for service delivery. Because of the significant level of coordination needed to ensure that the national CRVS system includes all events, and the sheer number of stakeholders this may involve, coordination committees need commitment and participation from policy makers at the highest levels to

succeed. In order to ensure the resources needed for implementing the decisions of the group, commitment from the highest level is needed. For example, coordination mechanisms in larger countries in the region often report to the prime minister's office and are chaired by cabinet ministers. Others split the work between a lead political mechanism with more technical working groups underneath. In addition to relevant senior officials, committees should include subject matter specialists who can provide advice on quality assurance and ensure compliance to international standards.

In a country like Bangladesh, the coordination mechanism is established under the Cabinet Secretary and has high level political support and participants from a very broad spectrum of government departments. In other countries, the coordination mechanism is led by specific government departments such as the Statistics Authority (Iran), Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Government (Nepal), Ministry of Planning (Pakistan) or the Civil Registrars' Office (India and Philippines). Some countries have chosen to have a higher level coordination mechanism which meets once or twice a year, with a set of active working groups working on specific technical issues or day-to-day management coordination.



What is the role of the national multi-sectoral CRVS coordination mechanisms?

Common tasks performed by the coordination mechanisms include: conducting comprehensive assessments of national CRVS systems; developing and monitoring implementation of the comprehensive multi-sectoral national CRVS strategies; and supporting the production of relevant reports such as national vital statistics report. In effect – the committee does not replace the functions of key stakeholders, but helps ensure that efforts across departments / ministries contribute to a shared goal or vision for the CRVS system. The committee should also ensure CRVS improvement efforts are linked with relevant national development plans and activities and the committee should coordinate support from international stakeholders to CRVS activities in the country.

The mechanism should clarify roles and responsibilities to avoid overlaps and gaps. The mechanism needs to facilitate knowledge sharing and open discussions that improve communications and enhance understanding of each stakeholder's needs and challenges. Key assignments of the coordination mechanism include: improving harmonization of how vital events are captured and counted; and identification of support and funding for initiatives on improving national CRVS system.

To facilitate the effective organization of the committee, it is important to establish a clear meeting schedule and reporting structure.

Check List for Establishing National Coordination Mechanisms for CRVS:

- Secure high-level political commitment (e.g. overseen or reporting to Prime Minister)
- Conduct Stakeholder analysis
- Clearly define membership and include all relevant stakeholders
- Clearly define Terms of References including concrete objectives and well-defined governance structure
- Formalize the mechanism to ensure sustainability
- Establish a clear meeting schedule and reporting structure
- Develop a national CRVS improvement strategy through consultation with all stakeholders
- Develop a monitoring framework for the national CRVS improvement strategy
- Develop a detailed workplan for the committee with specific activities, responsibilities and timelines
- Ensure that the strategy and the workplan are linked and aligned with national development plans and SDG implementation
- Ensure a shared understanding of risk and a clear plan for risk management
- Ensure appropriate resources for activities including liaising with potential donor
- Request support from relevant development partners and/or subject matter experts

