

SAMOA COUNTRY STATEMENT

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT FOR THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON CRVS BANGKOK 24 – 28

NOVEMBER 2014. Hon. Lautafi Fio Selafi Purcell
Minister for Public Enterprises, and The Samoa
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Civil Registration in Samoa has undertaken some major reforms in the last decade, from the time of our independence in 1962 where it was administered by the Ministry of Justice until 2003 when major government reforms saw it transferred to become a division of the Samoa Bureau of Statistics. Since 2003 Civil Registration division has experienced substantial allocation of resources in an effort to improve the civil registration system in Samoa. In addition, under the Samoa Bureau of Statics, program of developing its National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, one of the priority administrative data sources for vital statistics identified was the civil registration system. To date, there has been significant improvement in the registration of vital events in Samoa as a result. In a recent assessment, the registration of births has increased from 30 percent to 90 percent; registration of deaths has increased from 50 percent to 80 percent. A recent development has seen the formation of a CRVS Working group comprising key government stakeholders namely Ministry of Health, National Health Services, the Ministry of Woman Community and Social Development, and the Samoa Bureau of Statistics, who Chairs the group. The group is tasked with ensuring that all stakeholders are involved in a constructive, cooperative, and coordinated manner in the civil registration process, inclusive of the grass roots level. The group is also tasked with advocating in their own individual ministries, the importance of informing and educating the public on the need to collect vital statistics to inform policy development for the future of the nation. A positive development since the formation of this group is the vast improvement in the two Health Sectors organisations in Samoa especially in regards to the registration of births at the district health levels. As well as that, there has been a vast increase in the correct certification of the causes of death.

There are however areas of improvement that have been identified since the reform and efforts will be focused towards addressing those. Some of our legislation have become less effective in the current environment, and will need to be amended to reflect current developments. There is also a need to streamline some of the administration of some legislation so as not to replicate and complicate the civil registration process, the same will apply to some long standing policies which will be reviewed to ensure they still apply

and are still effective. These challenges will be addressed by the Samoa Bureau of Statistics in its continuous efforts to improving its core functions.

Samoa remains committed to the implementation for the Draft Regional Action Framework on civil registration in Asia and Pacific. Target areas have already been identified for developmental work in line with the three main goals of the Framework. Of importance is the need to improve our registration of vital statistics for Births to 100% by 2024, Deaths from 70% to 100% and Marriage from 50% to 100% by 2014. Also identified is the work required to improve the recording and collection of data on Divorces and Adoption nationwide. There will also be research work into the possibility and the viability of the idea of National Identification System for the different age groups as a streamline method of positive identification for areas such as education, employment, Voting and pensions eligibility. As stated earlier, a review of our applicable legislations will be undertaken to ensure they are still effective and to streamline processes so that the collection of vital statistics are effective, legal and in line with international statistical obligations. We will continue to look at ways to improve our multi sectoral approach and to ensure all stakeholders develop a sense of ownership of the national statistical effort.

Ladies and Gentleman we have a lot of work to do in the next decade, but the work is worth it and crucial in our efforts to move forward as a developing country.

“Samoa is committed to get everyone in the picture and leave no data behind”

Soifua