

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINISTRY OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL INITIATIVES

I am pleased to be here in the 2nd Ministerial Conference on CRVS with the Title of “Building a more resilient feature with Inclusive Civil registration and Vital Statistics. No doubt, it is a fundamental principle of human rights that every life counts and every individual matters. According to Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18, only 42% births of children under 5 years of age are registered. Similarly, less than 5% of deaths are registered in the country. Knowing global importance of CRVS for country’s effective economic, social and health policies, Pakistan aims to enhance capacity of national and local civil registries to deliver services in all segments of the country. Also, Pakistan is fully aware that to track the progress on the SDGs, there is an urgent need for a reliable, continuous and comparable vital statistics.

Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (M/O PD&SI) has been striving for the strengthening of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in the country. Since then a number of steps have been taken towards this end, including rapid and comprehensive national assessments, formulation of high powered national and provincial CRVS Steering committees, in-depth assessment of multiple CRVS Thematic Areas (including legal framework, Registration practices and coverage, birth and death registrations, migration, use of ICT for CRVS) etc.

During mid-2017, a Technical Support Unit (TSU) was created to play a catalytic and leadership role in CRVS promotion. Provincial Governments are also in the process of developing such units for accelerating the CRVS process. Baluchistan province being the pioneer in developing such coordination and institutional mechanism. Initially the TSU was operating completely through donor support. In 2020 a long term program was approved for strengthening CRVS in Pakistan and transforming Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) into CRVS model district. Currently, the pilot has been started. Provinces are also in the process of developing their respective long term programs.

In Oct 2020, “Framework for Vital Events Registration Reforms” was developed and was endorsed by high powered National Steering Committee for CRVS. Prior to this approval an extensive consensus building process was pursued where a large number of national, provincial and international stakeholders were consulted to get their valuable inputs. The Strategic Plan for National CRVS and the development of investment case is also under the process of development that will soon be in its final form

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Mainstreaming of the health sector in the CRVS system of Pakistan is a major policy action agenda. The initiative has been taken for the first time under Bloomberg Data for Health (D4H) Initiative to strengthen the health sector in terms of standardized processes, formats and Rules/SOPs or guidelines.

However, due to fragmented and sketchy laws available, there is dire need for a comprehensive law. In this context, a process has been initiated to draft a comprehensive 'CRVS Reforms Act'.

Pakistan is receiving donor support from UN Agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNESCAP) World Bank and Vital Strategies in the form of technical assistance, capacity building, application of information and communication technology and exchange of knowledge. However, further support will help for the replication of activities across the country and exchange of knowledge and best practices in the region as it has a key role to realize the shared vision of acceleration and enhancement of CRVS in Pakistan.

In conformity with the Regional Action Framework, Pakistan through its national focal point has been sharing its progress on development for CRVS promotion. However, regardless of all the efforts the results of CRVS decade in baseline and midterm have not been promising with the targets in most of the countries of ESCAP region. Therefore, it is suggestive that the CRVS decade should be extended to 2030.

ESCAP countries are fortunate enough to have partners who are willing to support the cause of CRVS. However, to make the utilization of funds more effective, there should be a multi-donor trust fund where every partner should pool their funds and such funds made available according to the strategic plan formulated by the member countries.

The Government of Pakistan is fully alive to the significance of CRVS and relationship to planning and decision making process. CRVS improvement is also well reflected under Pakistan's CRVS Vision 2030 and national five year plans. We will pull all efforts to promote registration of vital events and generation of meaningful statistics serving as evidence to monitor development progress against global benchmarks such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Thank You