

Side event at the 7th Asian and Pacific Population Conference

Title: Getting everyone in the picture: investing in children

17 November 2023, 12:30-13:45, Meeting Room G at the UNCC and Microsoft Teams ([Please register here](#))

Based on the latest population estimates (2023), 60 percent of the total world population and 55 percent of the population under 18 years old live in Asia and the Pacific. The declining fertility and ageing are putting pressure on governments to think and act quickly to address and equip the new generations to manage the new challenges. The proportion of the population (65+) increases and the proportion of children (below 18) decreases. This shift in the demographic composition of the population will require children and young people to function at increased levels of efficiency during their working lives to support the growing ageing populations.

To fully understand current and future population dynamics, it is critical to ensure complete and timely civil registrations and vital statistics (CRVS). CRVS data is essential for evidence-based decision-making and is crucial to design, implement and monitor public health policies as well as detect emerging health crises, such as COVID-19.

The reduction in unregistered births in Asia and Pacific of children under five, from 135 million in 2012 to 64 million in 2019, serves as a remarkable testament to the progress achieved. To ensure investment in children and youth populations, adequate registrations are necessary to access services and social protection programs. For example, the Asia Pacific CVRS Decade Midterm Report¹ finds that 36 countries in the Asia-Pacific region require a child's birth certificate to attend school and 20 countries require a certificate to access free healthcare. Access to education and healthcare is essential to ensure a productive working population, in addition to achieving many of the goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

This side event will highlight that serious action and resources are needed to achieve universal and responsive civil registration as agreed to by governments in Asia and the Pacific. To enable the new generations to manage and cope with emerging challenges and ageing populations, governments need to allocate more resources to support the growth and development of children, particularly through child-related benefits. The starting point is to ensure everyone has a legal identity and is included in official statistics.

Organisers: UNICEF, ESCAP Statistics Division, and Vital Strategies

Speakers:

- 1) Andrea Rossi, Regional Adviser for Social and Economic Policy, UNICEF will discuss the demographic transition and challenges related to the changes in the age composition of the

¹ <https://getinthepicture.org/midterm-report>

population. Particular attention will be paid to the need to invest in children and the youth to increase productivity within the working population to support ageing populations.

- 2) Ms Fathimath Riyaza, Head of Demographic and Social Statistics Division at Maldives National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) will discuss their ongoing work to produce the first Maldives vital statistics report using civil registration records. The Maldives has also been working to improve the registration processes and user experience for citizens through mapping the registration processes and developing a digital platform for civil registrations.
- 3) Mr Romain Santon, Deputy Director Asia Pacific, Vital Strategies will reflect on the global movement to improve and streamline CRVS systems through Business Process Improvement approach and present the CRVS Systems Improvement Framework which follows a process-centric and scientific approach in the assessment, analysis and redesign of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system. Following this, a Technical Guidance for Strengthening the Vital Statistics Production Process following a similar approach will be introduced: the Vital Statistics Business Process Model which helps developing a roadmap to collect, produce and disseminate quality and timely vital statistics tabulations as per UN recommendations.

Moderator: Tanja Sejersen, Statistician, Statistics Division, ESCAP.