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Mapping the Way Forward: Launching the New CRVS Systems Improvement Framework

4 December 2025
13:00-14:30 pm (UTC+7)

Asia-Pacific Stats Café

Business process improvement (BPI) can play a critical role in supporting the transition from paper-heavy systems to people-centered civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems. This Stats Café will explore how the CRVS Systems Improvement Framework has been used in Ghana and India to streamline processes, enhance service delivery and strengthen data quality.

The framework has recently undergone a major revision, with a stronger emphasis on equity, inclusiveness and linkages with national ID systems. During the session, we will present these updates and highlight the new tools and features designed to support countries in analysing, redesigning and modernising their CRVS business processes.

Register here:
https://forms.office.com/e/g0MybKjvhi

Join the meeting:
https://rebrand.ly/dyotfwa

Speakers:



Nicola Richads
Research Lead, CRVS Team, ESCAP



Emmanuel Nortey Botchway
Principal Assistant Registrar/Head, Projects
Births and Deaths Registry - Ghana



Prawin Kumar
Deputy Chief Registrar, Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), Government of Bihar, India

Moderator:



Chloe Harvey
Associate Statistician, Statistics Division, ESCAP

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Agenda for the session

- Introduction of the session by the Moderator:
  - **Chloe Harvey** (ESCAP)
- Speakers:
  - **Nicola Richards** (ESCAP)
  - **Prawin Kumar** (India)
  - **Emmanuel Nortey Botchway** (Ghana)
- Q&A

CRVS Systems Improvement Framework

Launching the new CRVS Systems Improvement Framework
Asia-Pacific Stats Café, 4 December 2025



Nicola Richards, Research Lead, ESCAP

Development of the Framework

- Consolidation of experiences from around the world with the Comprehensive & Rapid Assessments (2010), and Strategic Planning Guide (2013)
- Assembly of a group of experts and partners (ECA/APAI-CRVS, ESCAP, SPC, CRVS Centre of Excellence, Vital Strategies) to develop a framework based on action-oriented and practical improvements using a collaborative approach
- ECA Expert Group Meeting (2019) to validate the draft Framework with country experts
- Launch of the Framework (2021)



A process-centric approach to system improvement

- Guidance on how to continually improve the performance of the CRVS system
- Adopts a process-centric and results-driven approach
- Multi-sectoral, participatory, and country-led
- Customizable to country needs
- Implemented in several countries with support from various partners including ESCAP, ECA, UNICEF, WHO, Vital Strategies, OIF and SPC
- Impact:
  - Streamlined the implementation of digital systems
  - Informed development or redesign of national CRVS policies/legislation



Version 1.0 – The impetus for change

- Series of consultative meetings:
  - December 2020: Early learnings from implementation of the CRVS Systems Improvement Framework (Online)
  - October 2022: CRVS Systems Improvement Framework Implementation: experience sharing, and lessons learned in the Asia-Pacific (Online)
  - December 2022: Global meeting on the CRVS Systems Improvement Framework Implementation: experience sharing, and lessons learned in Africa (Online)
  - June 2024: Global Expert Workshop on Operationalizing Holistic Approaches to CRVS System Strengthening (Kigali, Rwanda)
- Recognition of the changing global landscape for CRVS:
  - Stronger integration with ID systems
  - Increased focus on results through strategic outcomes
  - Enhanced efforts on equity, including gender responsiveness
- Need for the resources to be more user-friendly and practical

Version 2.0 – Review methodology

- Document review:
  - Meeting minutes, PPT presentations, and reports
  - Addendums and additional tools developed since 2020 (ID, gender, budget/finance)
  - Existing key informant interview notes
- Outreach to a broad range of additional partners including UNFPA, UNDP, OIF, WHO, World Bank
- Second round of key informant interviews (late 2024):
  - Swiss TPH, Johns Hopkins University, Global Health Advocacy Incubator, ESCAP, UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, WHO, Vital Strategies
- Two rounds of external review (shared with 55 partners from 18 organizations):
  - February 2025 (comments received from 11 partners from 8 organizations)
  - September 2025 (comments received from 16 partners from 9 organizations)

What has stayed the same?

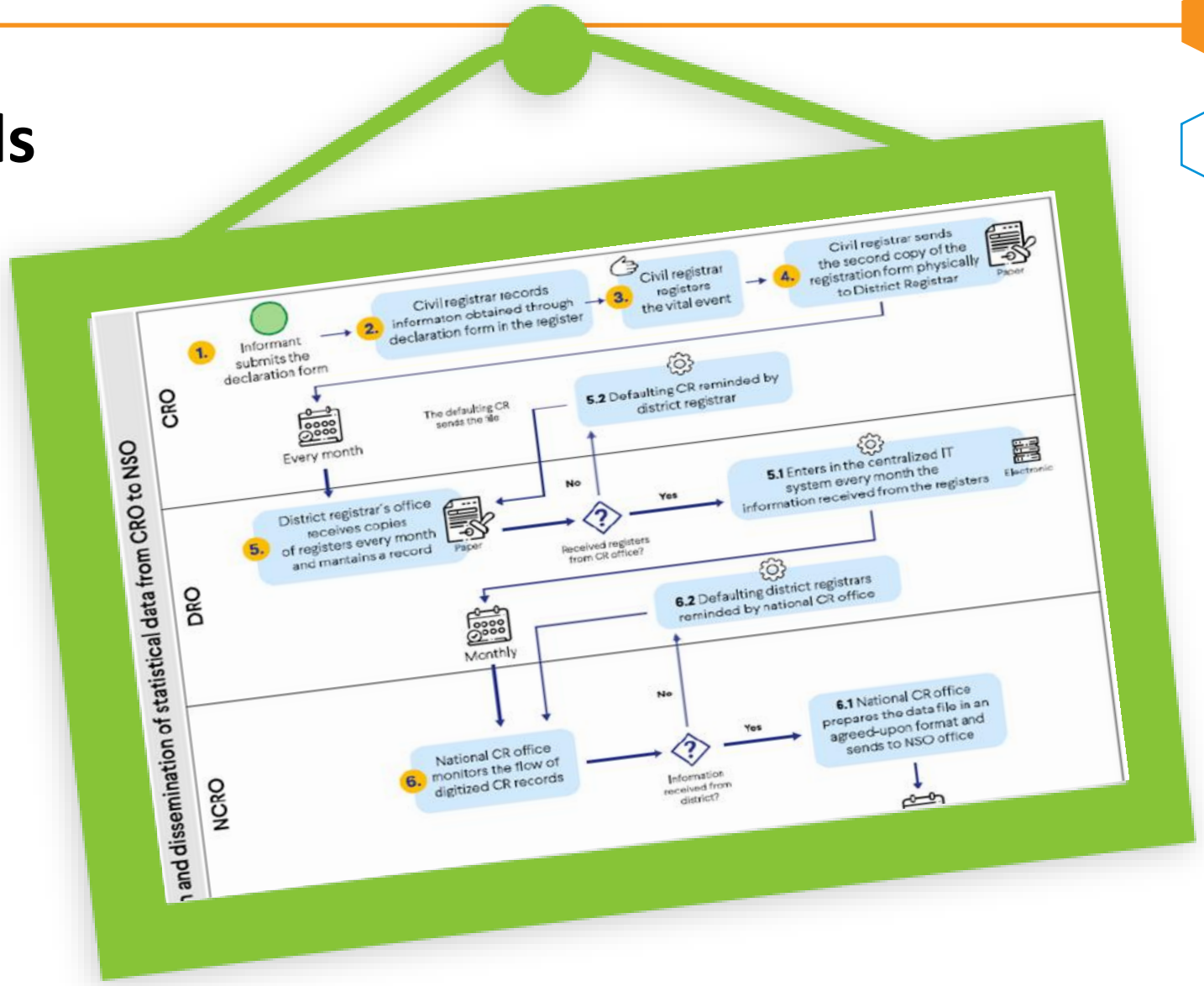
Core implementation tools

Business process descriptions and mapping (BPM)

- Provide a visual documentation of the business process, including bottlenecks and 'pain points'

CRVS System Analysis and Redesign (CRVS-SAR) tool)

- Guides the user through the assessment, analysis and redesign using KPIs
- **Now in an Excel sheet for better usability**



What has changed?

The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems Improvement Framework

Concepts and definitions

Understanding the Framework

Stage 0. Planning for CRVS systems improvement

Stage 1. Assessment, analysis, and redesign

Stage 2. Development of the costed Strategic and Action Plan

Stage 3. Implementation, and monitoring and evaluation

Country use cases and examples

References

Resources

Annexes

Glossary

Acknowledgements

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CRVS Systems Improvement Framework

Guidance for Country Implementation

NOVEMBER 2025 (VERSION 2.0)

The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems Improvement Framework

Copy

Please send any comments or questions on the Framework to escap-crvs@un.org

Introduction

Partners

Introduction

Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems are complex. Encompassing two main components – the civil registration of vital events and the production of vital statistics – these components require the involvement of several government agencies, primarily Registrar General's Offices, National Statistics Offices, and Ministries of Health. Due to the number of agencies involved, it is often challenging for any one stakeholder or actor to have a comprehensive, end-to-end understanding of CRVS business processes. CRVS systems are also affected by the wider political, social, cultural, legal, and economic landscapes of a country, making it challenging to improve business processe urther, in an increasing number of countrie ystem and must be

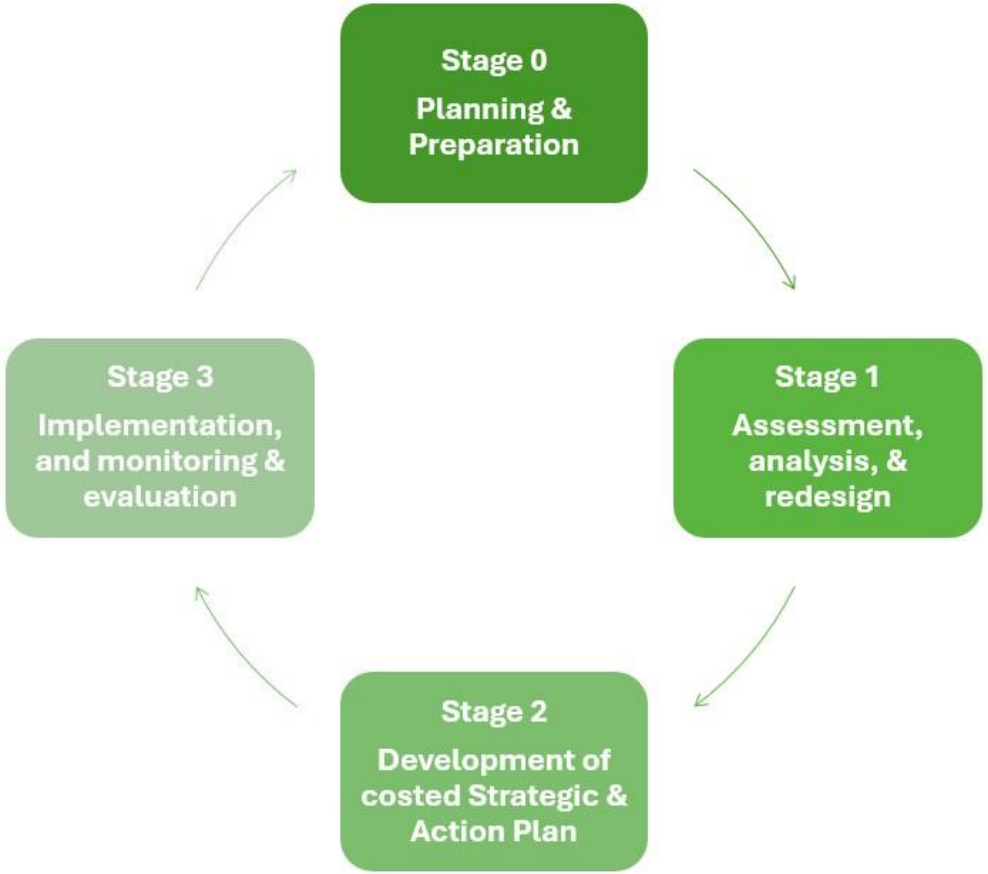
CRVS Improvement Fra...
Updated 18 hours ago

Conceptual framework

1. **Country leadership and ownership**. The process is led and owned by the country, according to national priorities, which includes the government's commitment of domestic co-financing to implement the Framework .
2. **Well-coordinated and consultative**. The implementation process involves all key stakeholders at multiple points.
3. **Internationally aligned**. Improvement activities are grounded in global standards, promoting dissemination of emerging best practices and principles.
4. **Proactive**. The Framework supports the transition away from passive approaches towards proactive CRVS systems.
5. **Inclusive**. The Framework promotes inclusive and universal civil registration systems that ensure every individual's right to legal identity and recognition is upheld.
6. **Interoperable.** The Framework encourages interoperability with key data management systems, including population registers, and health information and identification systems.

Stages

Stage 1
Assessment, Analysis and Redesign (AAR)
Stage 2
Strategic and Action Plan
Stage 3
Implementation and M&E


Stage 0
Planning & Preparation
Stage 1
Assessment, analysis, & redesign
Stage 2
Development of costed Strategic & Action Plan
Stage 3
Implementation, and monitoring & evaluation

Results-oriented

- Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to evaluate the system's status, identify bottlenecks and generate redesign ideas.
- Strategic outcomes are identified at the onset of improvement efforts to define the results that the improvement aims to achieve.



Integration with ID systems

Identity management

This section has been adapted from Guidelines on the legislative framework for civil regi
statistics and identity management systems (3).

The civil registration system is the foundation for the identity management system. An ir
identity is established through birth registration, which provides evidence of their identi
a birth certificate. The United Nations Legal Identity Expert Group, established in 2015
working definition of legal identity as follows:

> "legal identity" is defined as the basic characteristics of an individual's identity
> name, sex, place and date of birth conferred through registration and the issu
> certificate by an authorized civil registration authority following the occurren
> absence of birth registration, legal identity may be conferred by a legally rec
> identification authority; this system should be linked to the civil registration
> holistic approach to legal identity from birth to death. Legal identity is retir
> a death certificate by the civil registration authority upon registration of d

A birth certificate is used as the foundation document for all other identificat
subsequently issued by a national identity management authority. A "creden
or data structure that vouches for the identity of a person through some me
authentication (4).

While there is a lack of an internationally agreed definition of "identity mc
commonly refers to the registration of all individuals' resident in a partic
body of the public sector, and the issuance of legally valid proof of ident
maintaining systems for managing information and documents associated with
which may include biometrics.

Civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems

This section has been adapted from Guidelines on the legislative framework for civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems (3).

To effectively fulfil its legal, statistical and identity management functions, civil registration must be compulsory, universal, continuous and permanent. In addition, because people provide a wide variety of information to the civil registration system, including information that may be highly sensitive, the information collected and stored in the civil registration system must be kept secure and confidential. Sharing of this information, while expected, should be only by consent or in accordance with law.

The principles of continuity, permanence and universality should also apply to national identity registration. The principle of compulsoriness, however, need not always apply, as identity registration for purposes of a national identity card (or other credential) or entry into a population register are not compulsory in many countries. As with the civil registration system, the identity management system stores personal information that must be kept secure and confidential.

While the civil registration system provides for legal registration and certification of vital events, many systems are not designed to securely link identity information in a register with a specific person. For example, when adults present a birth certificate it is difficult to know with a high level of assurance whether the document is truly theirs without the benefit of additional information. The addition of some form of biometric information, such as a facial image, fingerprints, or other information unique to the identity holder, when linked with civil registration information, is one way to increase the level of assurance. That identity information can be recorded on a secure medium that can then be used for identification purposes; to verify that the person claiming a certain identity is indeed that person. An increasing number of countries that update the population register in real-time with birth registrations are appending the national identity number from the population register to the birth registration record. This securely links the identity information in the birth register to the newborn.

Most civil registration, vital statistics and identification systems have numerous stakeholders, with information collected in, stored across, and transferred between multiple registries maintained by different agencies. The efficient functioning of each system depends on the effective cooperation of

Focus on equity and gender responsiveness

Ensuring gender responsiveness

Gender focal points, ministries of gender or women's affairs, and other gender equality stakeholders should be included to ensure that gender equity is embedded across system design, data use, and implementation. Depending on the country context, stakeholders may include representatives from the country's first nations/indigenous populations. In some situations, it may be appropriate to include development partners and humanitarian organizations working with refugees, asylum seekers, and persons who are internally displaced, stateless, or of undetermined nationality.

Additional resources:

Equal access for LGBTI individuals (in CRVS/ID systems) ↗

Linking national ID and CRVS system: An imperative for inclusive development ↗

Bali Process Toolkit for Inclusive Civil Registration ↗

Various techniques exist for conducting a stakeholder analysis: stakeholder analysis matrices, Venn diagrams of relationships, spider diagrams, mind maps, and so on (see **Figure 5**). Whichever technique is used, certain standard steps should be included in the analysis:

Ensuring inclusivity

Frame advocacy messages around gender equity, and human rights, and the principle of "leaving no one behind", emphasizing how improved CRVS systems benefit women, girls, and gender-diverse populations, and other population groups at risk of being left behind – particularly in accessing legal identity, inheritance, social protection, education, and health services, among others.

Country use cases and examples

Fiji

Fiji

Summary	Application of the Framework generated significant insights into the current performance of the CRVS system, providing a clear vision of what is needed to enhance vital events registration. Analysis of real-world CRVS workflows allowed Fiji to pinpoint existing bottlenecks and shortcomings in the registration of vital events. A major accomplishment was the collaborative development of detailed process maps and system analysis tools to document the registration procedures. This exercise enabled stakeholders to gain a granular understanding of every step involved in registering vital events across various agencies. The stakeholders leveraged this knowledge to devise optimized process flows and formulate policies to improve the efficiency, timeliness, and accuracy of CRVS processes.
Year of review	2023 (Framework Version 1.0)
As-is CRVS system overview	Fiji's Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1975 establishes the legal framework for mandatory registration of births, deaths, and marriages. Births require registration within 2 months, deaths within 7 days, and marriages upon ceremony completion. The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry leads operations of civil registration with local support from divisional and district offices. In Fiji, the recording and notification of births and deaths are managed by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services

Burkina Faso

Cambodia

Cook Islands

Eritrea

Fiji

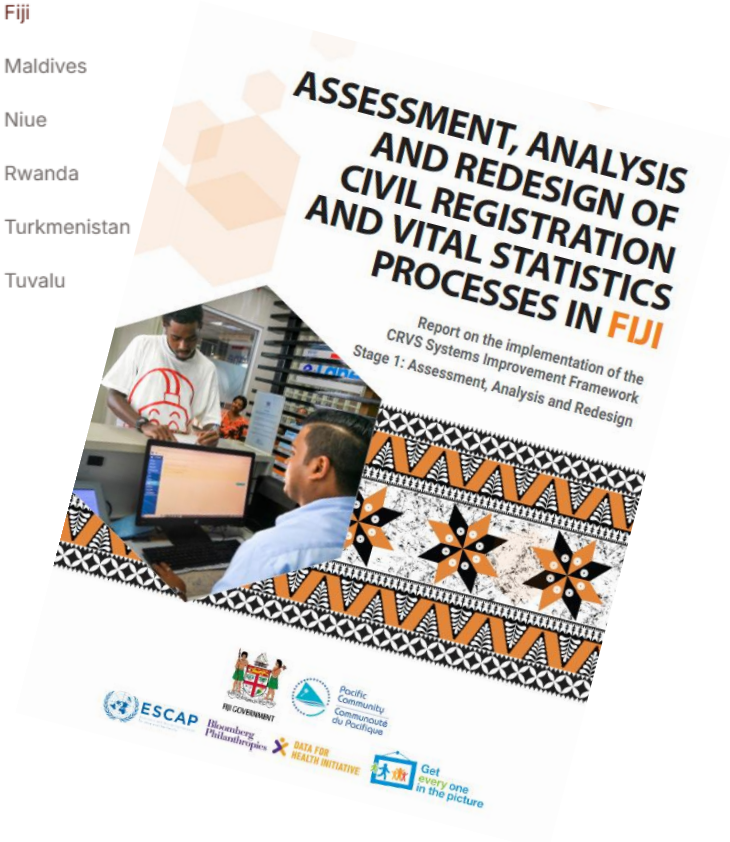
Maldives

Niue

Rwanda

Turkmenistan

Tuvalu



What's next?

Version 2.0

- Additional country examples to be added as they become available
- Further refinements and links to tools as they emerge and as useful for countries

Version 3.0

- Potentially more on integration with ID
- Stage 2 and 3 expansion using lessons from implementation in countries



Feedback welcomed:

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Accelerating CRVS System Improvement in Bihar: A Strategic and Systematic Approach

Prawin Kumar
Deputy Director cum Deputy Chief Registrar – Births and Deaths
Directorate of Economics and Statistics
Department of Planning and Development
Government of Bihar

Setting the Stage for Systemic CRVS Reform

- The Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969 mandates compulsory registration across India, with States responsible for its implementation. In Bihar, this responsibility lies with the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES).

- Recognizing that progress alone was not enough, the Government of Bihar acknowledged that achieving complete, timely (within 21 days), and accurate registration would require deeper institutional reforms and greater operational efficiency.

- To address this, a structured and time-bound assessment of the CRVS system was launched using the CRVS Systems Improvement Framework, a process-centric, people-focused, and results-oriented methodology. This strategic effort was aimed at identifying system gaps and designing targeted, sustainable improvements.

- The approach received high-level endorsement from the Principal Secretary, Planning and Development, reinforcing strong political commitment.

Rethinking CRVS in Bihar: Beyond Digital Tools

Digital tools have improved access and efficiency in birth and death registration.
ORGI introduced an online system in 2015, followed by a major upgrade in 2024, which is now used for day-to-day registration in Bihar.

However, the Government recognized that technology alone is not enough.
Achieving complete, timely, and accurate registration requires rethinking how the core CRVS processes function; ensuring they are simple, efficient, inclusive, and truly focused on the people they are meant to serve.

This shift toward a more integrated and systemic approach has been reinforced by the 2023 amendment to the RBD Act.
The amendment calls for the establishment of a national database of births and deaths, and for updating and maintaining other government databases to support improved service delivery.

These developments, among others, led the DES to launch the CRVS improvement project in late 2024, using the CRVS Systems Improvement Framework to bring in a more process-centric approach to modernizing Bihar's CRVS system.

Participatory Assessment and Redesign in Bihar's CRVS Improvement Project

- Led by DES, Bihar with technical support from UNESCAP and UNICEF
- Follows the Improvement Framework – focus on long-term, system-wide reform

Assessment, Analysis, and Redesign conducted through a participatory approach

- Included two major workshops:
  - "As-Is" – understanding current processes
  - "As-Desired" – envisioning improved processes
- Field visits conducted to gather on-ground insights
- Participants: Mostly field level functionaries from across the state

Key Features & Principles

✓ Participants encouraged to view the system from the client's perspective
✓ Grounded in practical realities and frontline experience
✓ Guided by three core principles:
• Move information, not people• One-step registration and certification• Register all events within 21 days

Next Steps

➢ AAR report was reviewed by DES Core Team and finalised
➢ Contains 23 actionable recommendations to inform the next stage of system improvement

Addressing Key Bottlenecks: Recommended Strategies

Key Bottlenecks	Recommended Strategies
Births and deaths at home in rural areas are registered by the Block Statistical Officer, requiring families to make multiple visits for registration and certificates.	Reinstate Secretaries of Panchayats (local self-government body) as Registrars and involve Anganwadi Workers (Community-based child-care and nutrition worker) to support timely event reporting and improve local access. **Govt. already reinstated Panchayat Secretaries as Registrars in the rural areas.**
Local authorities often follow non-standard procedures, such as demanding unnecessary documents or using unofficial practices that delay registration, create inconsistencies, and burden families.	Develop and institutionalize clear, uniform Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) aligned with redesigned business processes, ensuring consistency and accountability across all registration centres.

Addressing Key Bottlenecks: Recommended Strategies

Key Bottlenecks	Recommended Strategies
The absence of data-driven decision-making and real-time analysis limits the system's ability to detect inefficiencies, monitor service quality, and respond to issues in a timely manner.	Establish a robust performance monitoring system using real-time CRVS data to track service delivery, identify bottlenecks, and support informed, timely decision-making.
The lack of cause-specific mortality statistics hampers evidence-based health planning and prioritization of public health interventions.	Assess the current use of MCCD data to identify gaps in coverage and quality. Develop a roadmap and action plan in collaboration with the Health Ministry to improve statewide implementation and enable regular reporting of cause-of-death statistics.

Several proposed strategies address multiple bottlenecks simultaneously, underscoring the integrated and systemic nature of the improvements being pursued

GHANA CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 – 2030

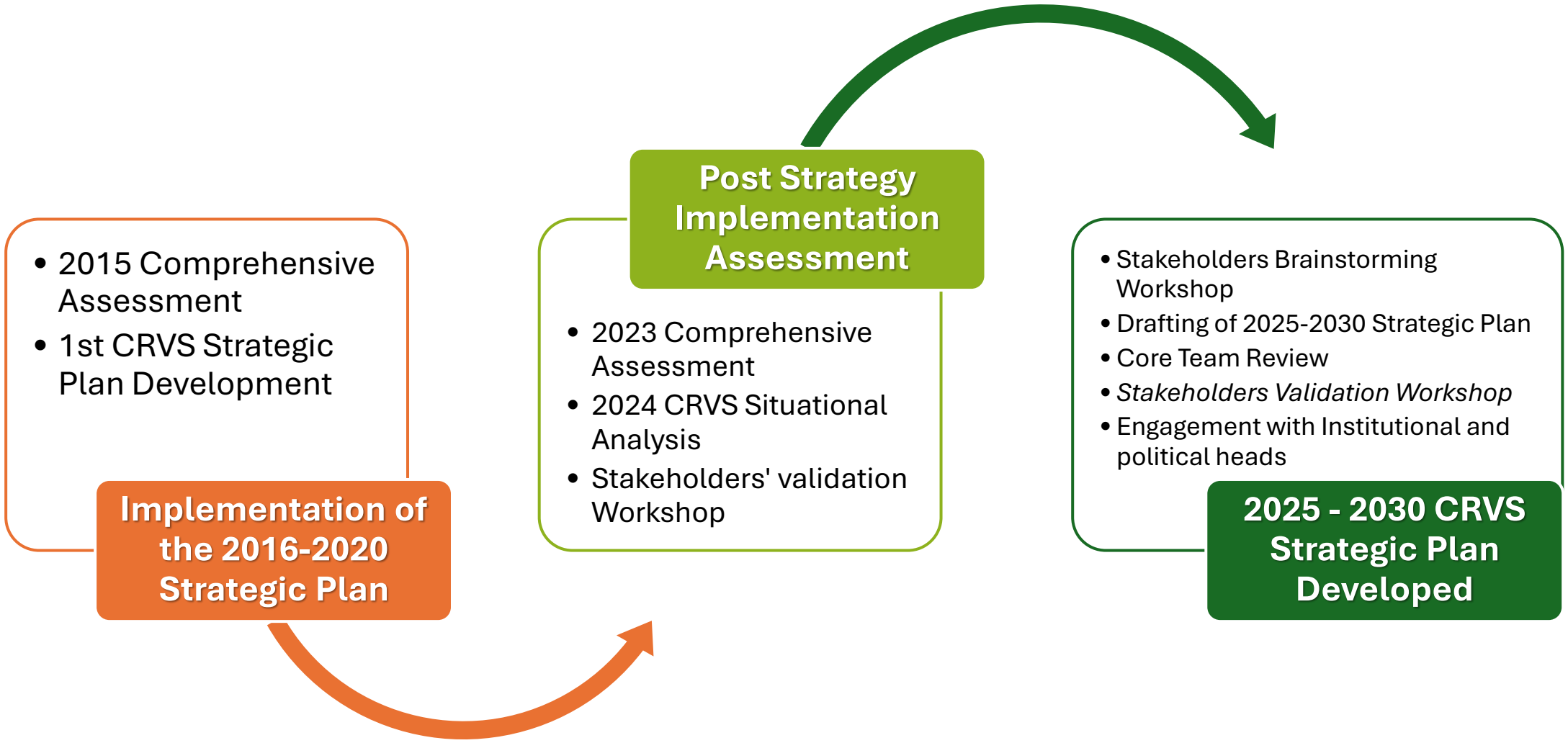
"Civil Registration, Citizens' Rights; Vital Statistics, Sustainable Development and Economic Transformation"

Mapping the Way Forward: Launching the New CRVS Systems Improvement Framework

Emmanuel Nortey Botchway: Ghana

December 2025

Processes Applied



CRVS Strategic Planning Process
Phase I: Assessment & Consultation



1. COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INITIATION

NATIONWIDE ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY SWOT



2. IDENTIFICATION & GATHERING OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

CONVENE ALL KEY INSTITUTIONS FOR COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION.



3. ENGAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

MAP AND INVOLVE PARTNERS SUPPORTING CRVS.



4. ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT

RECRUIT TECHNICAL CONSULTANT TO LEAD ASSESSMENT



5. FIELD DATA COLLECTION

COLLECT DATA AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND DISTRICT LEVELS.

CRVS Strategic Planning Process
Phase II: Validation & Finalization



6. VALIDATION OF ASSESSMENT REPORT

ORGANIZE STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS TO VALIDATE ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



7. BRAINSTORMING & STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

FACILITATE TECHNICAL SESSIONS TO DRAFT THE CRVS STRATEGIC PLAN.



8. REVIEW OF DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

CIRCULATE DRAFT PLAN TO STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS FOR COMMENTS.



9. VALIDATION OF FINAL STRATEGIC PLAN

HOST NATIONAL VALIDATION WORKSHOP TO FINALIZE DOCUMENT.



10. LAUNCH OF THE NEW CRVS STRATEGIC PLAN (2025–2030)

OFFICIALLY LAUNCH AND DISSEMINATE THE GHANA CRVS STRATEGIC PLAN.

Post 2016-2020 Strategy Implementation

Comprehensive assessment of CRVS system (2023)

- Identify root causes of underperformance by applying a business process mapping methodology.
- Propose recommendations and solutions that will help to address the identified root causes of underperformance.

Situational Analysis of Ghana's CRVS (2024)

- Complement the Comprehensive Assessment with further analysis, including SWOT analysis
- Form the basis for the development of the subsequent CRVS Strategic Plan

Stakeholder validation of the Comprehensive Assessment and Situational Analysis

Stakeholder brainstorming workshop for the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan development

Drafting and initial review of the Strategic Plan

Context Analysis

- Global context
- National context
  - Births
  - Deaths
  - Marriages
  - Divorces
- SWOT Analysis
- Recommendations of the Comprehensive Assessment
- Lessons and outstanding issues from the 2016-2020 SP

National Commitments Requiring CRVS Data

NDPC Vision 2057

International commitments

- UN SDGs
- AU Agenda 2063 The Africa We Want

Sector Medium Term Expenditure Framework

- Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs
- The Interior
- Health
- Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice

Thematic Areas and Strategic Objectives

Enabling Policy and Legal Environment

- Engage stakeholders and develop CRVS Policy for Cabinet approval to secure the authority of the executive arm of government for effective implementation of CRVS activities
- Use CRVS Policy to review existing laws comprehensively and draft amendment bills for the consideration of Cabinet and approval by Parliament for enactment
- Develop policy papers for dissemination of CRVS policy and engage stakeholders for enhancing support and utilisation of CRVS services
- Develop IEC materials on the CRVS Policy and use traditional and social media to sensitise and educate the public to enhance the visibility of CRVS policy and laws

Awareness, Support and Utilisation of CRVS

- Develop and disseminate IEC materials for each event to target various stakeholders to raise public awareness and support for CRVS activities and utilisation of services
- Publish statistics timeously and use key information for public education on the use of statistics
- Build staff capacity to use different platforms to disseminate information for public education
- Engage academia and research institutions to publish research and journals on the Ghana CRVS system
- Engage public and private sector players and chambers of commerce on using statistics for optimal impact and corporate value maximisation

Sustainable Funding

- Train staff on donor scoping, proposal writing and project management
- Increase DP engagement by involving focal persons in CRVS activities
- Engage industry and chambers of commerce on the use of statistics for corporate value maximisation
- Produce customised statistical reports on requests for fees
- Engage appropriate government authorities to review levies on special requests for CR legal documents

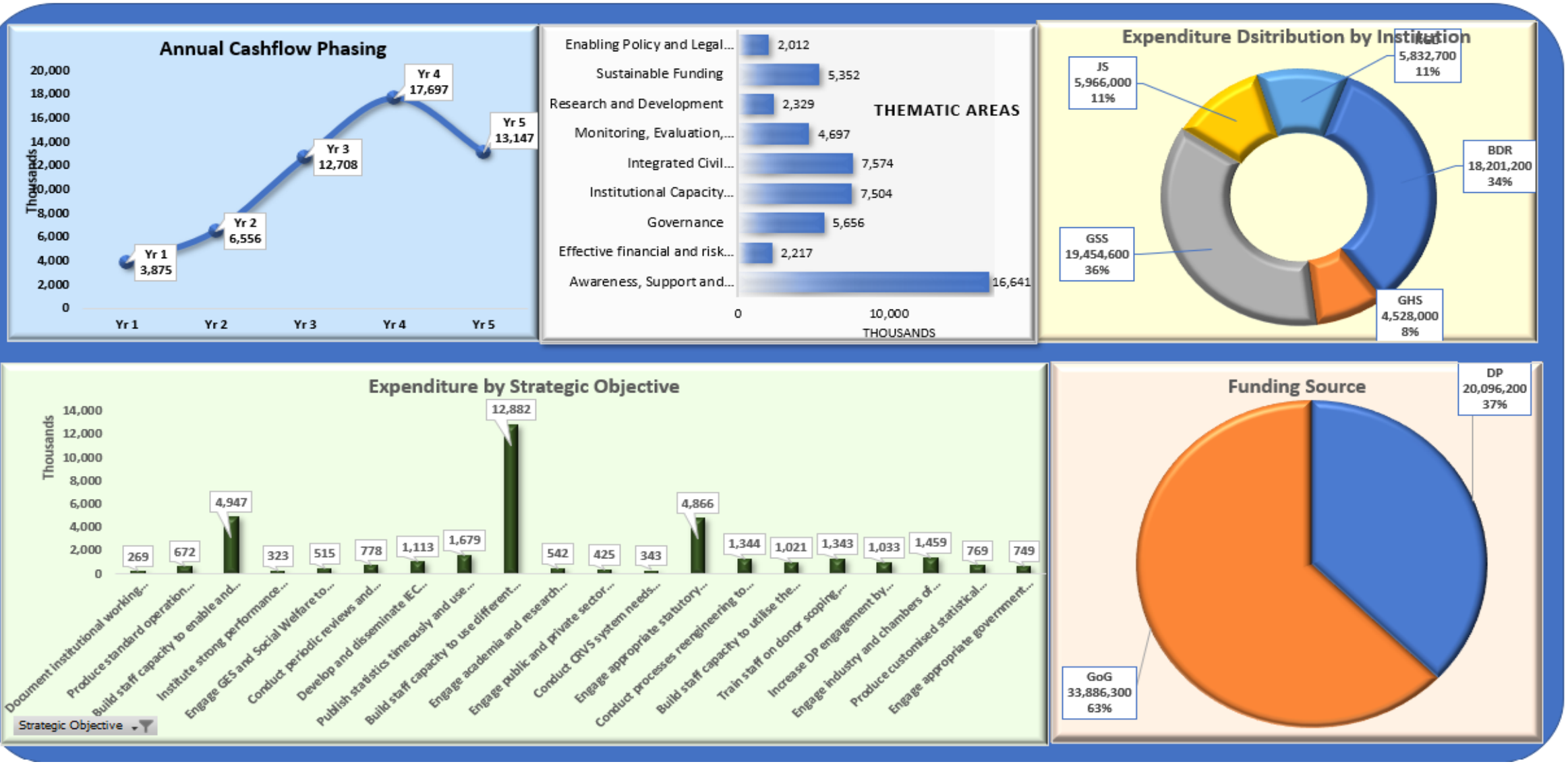
Enabling Factors

Governance (External and Internal)	Build a strong governance system to provide leadership and direction for the implementation of CRVS strategic activities
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	Implement a robust and effective monitoring and evaluation system to promote learning, accountability, and innovation
Research and Development	Promote continuous research and development for sustainability, adaptability and responsiveness of the CRVS system to global standards and developments
Financial and Risk Management	Implement effective financial and risk management

Analysis of Strategic Response

Thematic Areas	Objective	Actions	Outcome
Enabling Policy and Legal Environment	4	22	19
Institutional Capacity Strengthening	6	36	27
Awareness, Support and Utilisation of CRVS	5	34	24
Integrated Civil Registration Processes and Systems	4	20	18
Sustainable Funding	5	24	18
Governance	1	7	7
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	1	6	6
Research and Development	1	4	3
Effective financial and risk management	1	7	6
Grand Total	**28**	**160**	**128**

Financial Projection Dashboard



FOOTAGE FROM VALIDATION WORKSHOP



Thanks for your attention


Q & A


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