Implementing the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda in times of COVID-19

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Asia and the Pacific CRVS Systems’ Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis
Bangkok, Thailand, 22 June 2020
United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

- Member States should adopt and implement the holistic approach to:
  - universal civil registration of all vital events;
  - production of regular, reliable, accurate and small area vital statistics;
  - the establishment and maintenance of population registers and identity management apparatus from birth to death while ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of individual records

- There should be full interoperability between these functions simultaneously, in accordance with international standards and recommendations
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Assessing the impact of the pandemic

- UN LIA TF launched a survey April 2020 to all the national civil registration authorities, with following questions:
  - Is civil registration considered an essential service in your country? Namely, in a number of countries affected by COVID-19 pandemic only the employees of essential services are required to report for duty, while non-essential services' employees are requested to stay at home in order to minimize the spreading of the virus.
  - What are the impacts of COVID-19 on the registration of vital events and the functionality of the civil registration authority, in general?
  - What are the working arrangements being implemented or planned to be implemented during the current or possible upcoming COVID-19 containment period to ensure continuity?
  - How is your office addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the registration of vital events? What are the recommendations to the civil registration offices to ensure that all births, deaths, marriages and other vital events are registered during this time?
Assessing the impact of the pandemic

  - Major disruptions in most of the countries/areas responding
  - Reduced staff and working hours
  - Civil registration is declared an “essential service” in most countries/areas – however, in one-fifth of the countries it was not designated as such and on the ground situation dictates downsizing of the services due to social distance measures and working from home
  - Attempts to institute online solutions for reporting the occurrence of vital events – lacking systematic solution in most cases
  - Most countries/areas are expecting a significant backlog
  - Considerable impact is expected in terms of production of timely and reliable vital statistics
  - Replies are documenting that civil registration services in all surveyed countries/areas undertook immediate activities to ensure the delivery of registration services in line with government-implemented measures to curb the spread of the corona virus albeit with varying success
Assessing the impact of the pandemic

- The UN LIA Task Force issued a set of guidelines for maintaining civil registration during the COVID-19 pandemic available at: https://unstats.un.org/legal-identity-agenda/COVID-19/

- Developing a guidance note
- Modifying operational arrangements
  - Expand the list and eligibility of informers
  - Establish process/waivers for missing documents
  - Balancing access to the registration offices
  - Suspend fees
- Planning for handling the expected backlog
- Online provision of services, where applicable and tested
- Waiving late registration fees
- Public outreach
- Protection of staff
- Interaction with other government institutions – primarily Statistical Office
Assessing the impact of the pandemic

- The UN LIA Task Force together with the Global CRVS Group, chaired by SPC, developed a set of webinars focusing on the following themes
  - international standards for civil registration and vital statistics and their implementation in countries/areas
  - impact on the operations and maintenance of civil registration and production of vital statistics in the time of COVID-19 pandemic
  - short- and long-term consequences on registration of vital events due to the pandemic
  - beyond COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring universal civil registration of all vital events and production of comprehensive, reliable and regular vital statistics

- This CVRS Café – part of the series
International standards, principles and recommendations for civil registration, vital statistics and identity management


5. UN Strategy Paper on Legal Identity for All, 2019


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