

Making everyone count:

Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through inclusive civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems

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Summary

This paper examines how inclusive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems can advance gender equality, the empowerment of women and sustainable development. Legal identity, secured through comprehensive CRVS and identity management systems, is fundamental to accessing rights, services and protections across the life course.

Yet, many CRVS systems remain incomplete and gender-biased, with persistent under-registration of key life events – especially among women, girls and marginalized populations. These gaps limit access to healthcare, education, social protection and justice.

Strengthening CRVS systems is not just a technical exercise, it is a human rights imperative. Making everyone count means ensuring everyone is counted and empowered with legal recognition and equitable access to services and opportunity.

This paper reviews global progress, assesses challenges and identifies opportunities for innovation and alignment across tools and systems. It calls for a gender-responsive, life-course approach; stronger coordination; financing; and better integration with censuses, administrative records and digital public infrastructure. It aims to stimulate structured discussion during and after the 4th Global CRVS and Gender Symposium, and suggests practical solutions for strengthening and improving gender-responsive CRVS systems.



1. Introduction

Legal identity, acknowledged via inclusive civil registration and identity management systems,¹ is important for two core reasons. First, legal identity affirms that everyone has the right to be recognized as a person before the law as per Article 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 16 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (United Nations, 1948; United Nations, 1976). Second, civil registration² is recognized as the preferred source for vital statistics, which describe key dimensions of population dynamics and the demography within a country (United Nations, 2014).

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems are essential for the effective functioning of a country, and the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16 and 17, by ensuring that every individual has a legal identity from birth and access to basic rights and services such as healthcare, education and social security. Gender equality and the empowerment of women are integral to achieving SDGs 3, 5 and 16 (Sen, 2019).

CRVS systems are a foundational source of demographic and population data, providing continuous, reliable insights into vital events across the life course. However, CRVS systems around the world face significant gender disparities, particularly affecting women, girls and marginalized populations (Abouzahr and others, 2019). Gender inequalities within CRVS systems often result in the under-registration of births, marriages, divorces, deaths and other life events, which disproportionately affects women's access to essential services and their ability to exercise civil and political rights (Silva and Snow, 2019). Ensuring legal identity for all, underpinned by registration of vital events across the life course, is a crucial layer of protection for women and children against social exclusion, gender-related health disparities and economic inequalities (Silva and others, 2025).

Data systems for population, health and sustainable development remain severely underfunded and financing for gender data is declining (PARIS 21, 2022). As a consequence of chronic financing shortfalls and critical setbacks resulting from the effects of political instability and the global COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 round of population and housing censuses covered only 70 per cent of the global population (United Nations, 2025). Core pillars of the international household survey programme – in the form of Demographic and Health Surveys, Malaria Indicator Surveys and Service Provision Assessments – have been terminated indefinitely, resulting in further data system gaps in low- and middle-income countries (Secretary of State, 2025). Calls abound for sustainable alternatives in the face of an increasingly challenging international data landscape (Khaki and others, 2025). While CRVS

¹ While there is no internationally agreed definition of identity management, the term refers to the issuance of a proof of legal identity to each individual by a government-authorized entity and the maintenance of systems for managing information and documents associated with such identity.

² Civil registration is defined as the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population, as provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirement in each country. Civil registration is carried out primarily for the purpose of establishing the documents provided for by the law (United Nations, 2014).

systems are not a substitute for population and housing censuses or international household survey programmes, they do constitute a core pillar of official statistics systems that are designed to be permanent, universal, continuous and compulsory (United Nations, 2014). CRVS systems make everybody count, by counting everybody. CRVS systems need to be supported and further developed to ensure the continuous availability of key data for development.

Further, CRVS systems are a crucial source of sex-disaggregated and gender-responsive statistics on reproductive health, maternal health and nuptiality (Mahapatra and others, 2007). In many countries, cultural norms, discriminatory laws and socioeconomic barriers prevent women and girls from registering vital events or obtaining legal identification (Reventa Becedas and others, 2022). A critical re-examination of CRVS systems from a gender perspective is needed to address these barriers, ensuring inclusivity and equality.

In an interview with Devex, Idele (as cited in Lynch, 2025) has recommended that the current situation be declared 'a global data emergency', noting that key data system pillars are weakening or being terminated at the very time a post-pandemic data surge is needed. In this context of defunding of data activities and deeper cuts to overseas development assistance (Cavalcanti and others, 2025), there is a need to strengthen administrative data systems, especially CRVS systems. They represent country-owned and country-led systems that document vital events across the life course and provide continuous insights into evolving population dynamics and the social and health status of a country's population. In that vein, this paper explores the current state of CRVS systems around the world, examines the critical role of CRVS data in monitoring progress towards the SDGs and associated commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, and suggests practical solutions to strengthen and improve CRVS systems.

2. A life-course and gender perspectives approach to legal identity system strengthening

Legal identity across the life course matters for gender equality and women's empowerment. One's civil status begins at birth and ends with death. Individuals may marry or divorce over the course of their lives. Civil registration provides documentary evidence of legal identity, family relationships, nationality and human rights (Powell, 1980). It facilitates access to essential services in health, education and social welfare, and contributes to gaining formal employment, exercising electoral and parental rights, transferring property, opening bank accounts and other activities. Civil registration also enables individuals to exercise their right to marry or divorce and secures legal protection for spouses and children.

Millions of people are born, marry and die without leaving a trace of their existence in legal records (United Nations Statistics Division, 2023; United Nations Children Fund, 2024; World Bank Group, 2025). Registration of births, deaths, marriages and divorce is a critical tool for women's empowerment, as it affirms their legal standing and that of their children, and their ability to claim basic rights. Universal legal identity is central to the aim of leaving no one behind, as it proves place and date of birth, and family ties, affirming a relationship to a community and the state, and guaranteeing the entitlements and obligations of citizenship.

For example, a birth certificate is critical to enable a girl to secure her rights to education and primary healthcare. Marriage registration provides women with protection under the Family Code, the collection of laws that govern legal relationships within a family, such as marriage, divorce, child custody and support, and can ensure legal rights to inheritance. Death registration data are a critical source of mortality statistics. The under-registration of female deaths relative to male deaths hinders accurate recording of causes of death and the development of evidence-based health programmes for women and girls.

Gender-responsive CRVS systems are systems that do not treat gender as a separate issue, rather they ensure that – through their design, implementation and ongoing upgrades – the needs, experiences and circumstances of all genders, particularly women and marginalized groups, are considered and not rendered as structural barriers to access and recognition. As such, gender-responsive CRVS systems are critical tools for rights, inclusion, opportunity and prosperity.

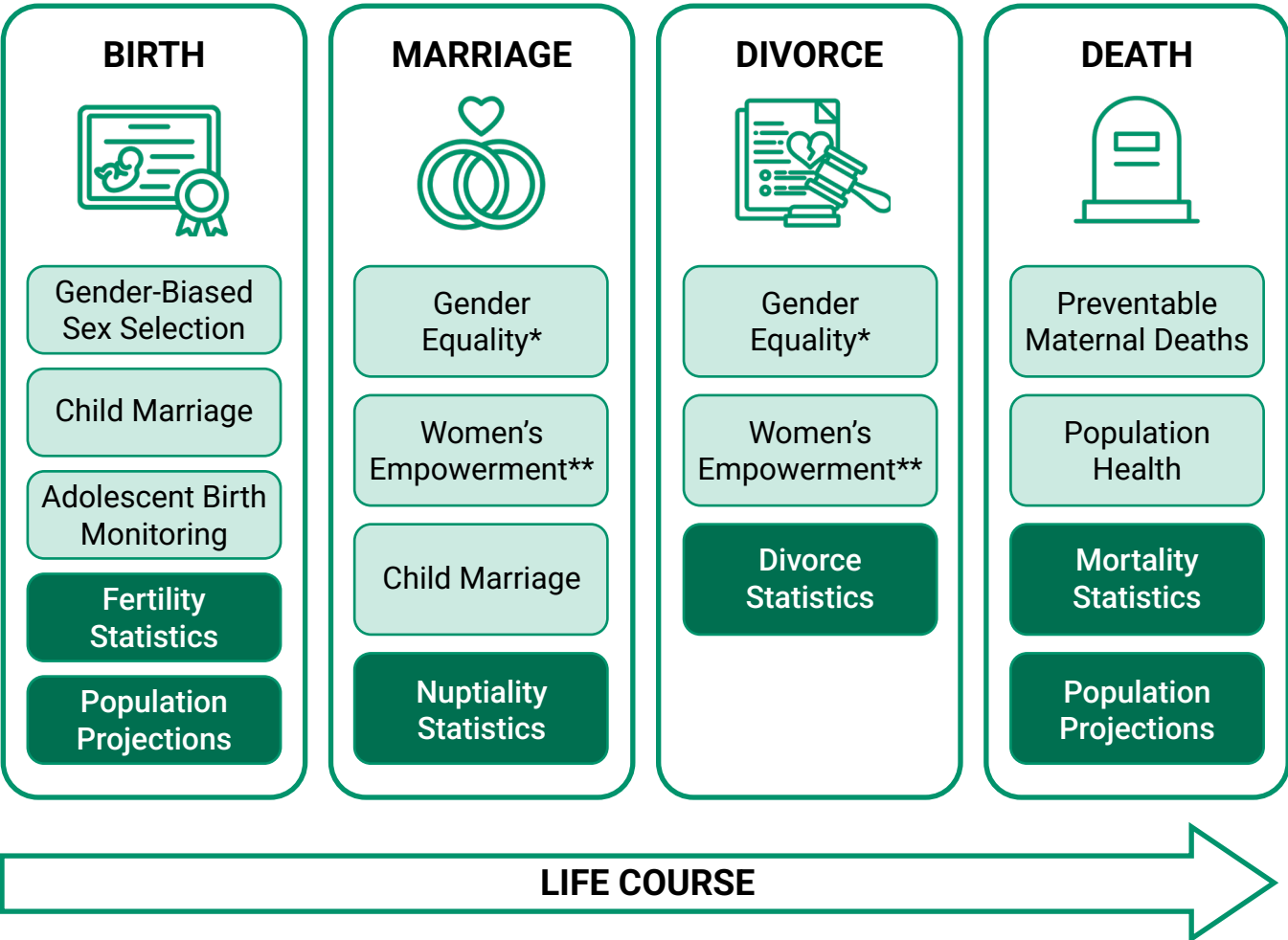
There has been a disproportionate focus on strengthening birth and death registration systems in many countries, leaving much progress to be made in enhancing systems for registering marriage and divorce. Yet, marriage and divorce represent key life transition moments that have notable implications for the rights and welfare of women and girls. Universal registration of marriage and divorce is often neglected, but facilitates access to rights irrespective of sex or gender orientation (Silva and others, 2023). A marriage certificate provides legal proof of marriage, which women can use to secure property and collect an inheritance when their spouse dies. Similarly, divorce registration allows both individuals to remarry, and provides a legal basis for the distribution of parental responsibilities at the end of a marriage.

Engaging a full life-course approach to CRVS makes sense for both the realization of human rights and the promotion of inclusive development strategies (Silva and Snow, 2019; Silva, 2022; Silva and others, 2025). It enhances the availability of official statistics and strengthens public accountability. Civil registration, vital statistics and legal identity are foundational for accessing basic rights such as healthcare, primary and secondary education, and social protection, as illustrated in Figure 1. However, the under-registration of women's vital events undermines gender equality and creates additional barriers to social and economic opportunities.

Key questions to consider when advancing a life-course approach to strengthening legal identity systems with a strong gender lens include:

- How can the strengthening of marriage and divorce registration systems be better integrated into broader efforts to strengthen legal identity systems?
- What are the interdependencies among birth, marriage, divorce and death registrations and how might under-registration of one type of event undermine universal legal identity and equality before the law?

Figure 1: A life-course approach to civil registration and vital statistics



* Non-discrimination on the basis of sex or gender identity, property and inheritance rights, child custody rights.

** Right to remarry, protection from unilateral divorce.

Thematic Engagement
 Data System & Statistics Strengthening



3. CRVS and legal identity assessment tools: Towards greater coherence and strategic alignment

Evaluating a CRVS system's functionality, legal framework, data quality and capacity to produce reliable vital statistics is critical to identifying its strengths and weaknesses, guiding improvements to strengthen the system and ensure accurate, timely and complete vital statistics. Global, regional and national programmes have developed tools and guidelines for measuring various components of CRVS systems and assessing these parameters. For example, WHO's SCORE assessments have identified notable deficiencies in multiple dimensions of CRVS systems: 19 per cent of countries do not have an updated CRVS legal

framework, 61 per cent do not have electronic exchange of CRVS data, and 72 per cent lack formal CRVS mechanisms for inter-agency collaboration across key institutions (World Health Organization, 2021).

Recently, there has been a proliferation of CRVS and legal identity assessment tools, as shown in Table 1. The focus and content of these tools varies considerably. Some, such as the CRVS Improvement Framework, concentrate exclusively on birth and death registration components of civil registration systems. Others, like CRVS Rapid and Comprehensive Rapid Assessment Tool used by the the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda (UNLIA) Task Force, focus on selected components – primarily birth and death registration – and their linkage to identity management systems. However, most tools overlook marriage and divorce registration, which are critical for capturing mid-life transitions. Additional assessment tools, such as WHO’s SCORE and the World Bank’s ID4D Diagnostic Tool, go beyond civil registration to also assess related systems, including health information and identity management systems. Notably, many existing assessment tools and frameworks do not adequately consider the gender dimensions of CRVS systems.

Table 1: Summary of selected CRVS assessment tools

Assessment Tool	Institutional Author	Thematic Focus	Analytic Focus	Examples of Implementation Countries
CRVS Rapid and Comprehensive Assessment Tool (2021)	WHO / University of Queensland	CRVS systems, with a focus on registration of births and deaths	Country assessment against United Nations legal identity agenda principles	Kenya, Zambia
CRVS Comprehensive Assessment Tool with Gender Lens (2024)	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Global Financing Facility	CRVS systems, with a gender lens	In-country context	South Sudan, Burundi
SCORE Assessment Tool (2020)	WHO	CRVS, health information systems and census alignment	Comparative country and temporal analysis	Tanzania, Cambodia

Assessment Tool	Institutional Author	Thematic Focus	Analytic Focus	Examples of Implementation Countries
ID4D Identity Management Diagnostic Tool (2018)	World Bank Identification for Development Initiative	Identity ecosystems, including national identity systems, CRVS systems and digital public infrastructure	Country assessment against identification for sustainable development principles	Botswana, Lebanon
CRVS Improvement Framework (2021)	Vital Strategies	CRVS systems, with a focus on registration of births and deaths	In-country context	Unknown

A major emerging challenge is the potential confusion among national authorities about which assessment tool to use and when, due to a general lack of alignment, coherence and synthesis across the many available tools and their results.

Key questions for discussions on CRVS tools, guidelines and frameworks include:

- Which CRVS and identity management tools have been used, for what purposes and with what outcomes?
- Which CRVS assessment tool is most appropriate for a given context, and how can national authorities be better guided in selecting the tool that best fits their needs?
- How can gender perspectives and dimensions be more strongly integrated into existing CRVS assessment tools?
- Is there scope for greater consolidation and alignment among the various CRVS assessment tools?

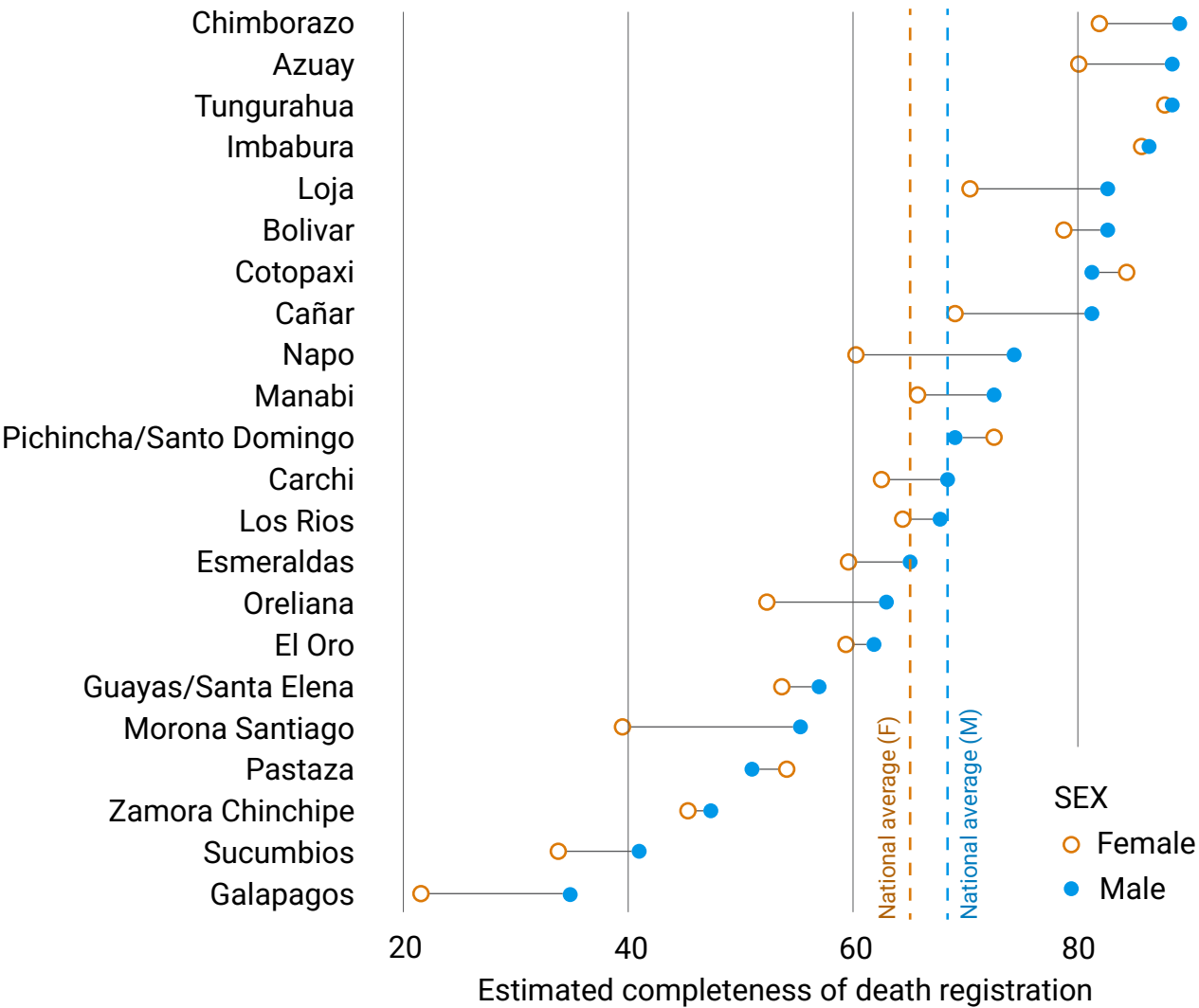
4. Making everyone visible: Addressing systemic inequities in vital registration and identity management systems

Identifying who is missing from a CRVS system is critical to ensuring that these systems are truly universal and inclusive, capturing all individuals residing in a country regardless of age, sex, location, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race or religion. This is fundamental to the global commitment to leave no one behind. Inequities in civil registration systems often mirror broader societal disparities. Moreover, CRVS systems themselves can unintentionally

reinforce exclusion and structural inequities, especially when their design or implementation perpetuates gender biases. Such biases can lead to further invisibility and marginalization, limiting individuals' access to rights, services and opportunities, across social, economic, health and political domains. These system-level inequities, in turn, can entrench and legitimize existing societal norms related to gender and socioeconomic status.

Figure 2 illustrates how death registration completeness varies substantially across regions and by sex in Ecuador. While some regions (e.g. Chimborazo, Azuay) have relatively high completeness, others (e.g. Sucumbios and Galapagos) record fewer than half of all deaths. Notably, both high- and low-performing regions show a consistent sex gap: male deaths are more likely to be registered than female deaths. Such granular, disaggregated analysis is essential to help national authorities identify underserved populations and geographic areas that are being left behind in the CRVS system.

Figure 2: Sex differentials in death registration across geographic regions of Ecuador



Source: Peralta et al. (2019). Ecuador National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC)

In recent years, United Nations regional economic commissions for Africa and for Asia and the Pacific have supported inequality assessments in multiple countries. In Asia and the Pacific, such assessments have been conducted in Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Philippines, Fiji, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Indonesia and Samoa (see <https://crvs.unescap.org/regional-picture/implementation-steps/inequality-assessment>). These assessments have revealed notable disparities in registration completeness across geographic regions among different socioeconomic and demographic groups. The findings provide critical insights into where legal identity systems need strengthening and which subpopulations are most at risk of remaining invisible in CRVS and legal identity systems.

Key questions for discussions regarding CRVS inequalities include:

- How can the current momentum around inequality assessments in birth and death registration be expanded to include other vital events such as marriage and divorce registration, as well as broader identity management systems?
- How can the findings from these assessments be more effectively disseminated across government ministries, and shared with civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector?
- How have countries utilized the findings from inequality assessments to inform policy, reform CRVS systems and implement targeted interventions in health, social welfare or education programmes?

5. Towards integration: Aligning population registers, CRVS and identity management systems, and censuses for inclusive data ecosystems

Universal, continuous and permanent registration of vital events is essential for maintaining inclusive and up-to-date population registers.³ Alongside other administrative data sources, such as migration records, address registers and taxation records, these registers serve multiple critical functions. They support population censuses, enable effective targeting of social benefit programmes and facilitate regular updating of electoral rolls.

Recent advances in population registers have been driven by the growing availability of digitized administrative records, more affordable computing power and improved statistical data integration methods, including the application of machine learning techniques. However, the inclusiveness and sustainability of any population register fundamentally depends on the complete and timely registration of vital events across the life course.

³ A population register, as defined by the United Nations, is a system that maintains up-to-date information on the characteristics of a country's resident population. It is essentially a continuously updated database, often linked to other administrative records like civil registration and immigration systems, providing vital information on individuals within a population.

Today, population registers are increasingly becoming a core component of digital public infrastructure – the systems through which individuals access entitlements (e.g. social protection), claim rights (e.g. free primary education and healthcare) and participate in economic opportunities (e.g. obtaining financial credit). Yet, digitalization alone does not guarantee inclusivity or equity. In fact, poorly designed digital systems may deepen exclusion, especially for marginalized populations, sometimes resulting in litigation and court rulings on the legality of such exclusion from identity management systems.

For instance, in Kenya in 2021, the High Court halted the roll-out of the national identity management system as a result of inadequate safeguards for privacy and data protection, particularly for vulnerable groups (Bueermann and Fanti, 2022). In Uganda, refugees and asylum seekers have faced challenges providing the documentation necessary to be included in identification systems, raising concerns about the systems' universality and the reliability of digital data verification processes (Martin and Taylor, 2020).

In short, civil registration systems and population registers are no longer just for official statistics, they are foundational to enabling people's access to rights, services and economic and social opportunities.

To ensure that the digitalization of civil registration systems and population registers advances societal inclusion (instead of exacerbating discrimination and exclusion), key questions that need to be asked include:

- How can future investments in legal identity systems and the 2030 round of population and housing censuses be leveraged to strengthen the integration and alignment of core population data systems, while ensuring the inclusiveness of population registers and digital public infrastructure?
- Given that population registers are increasingly used to mediate access to essential services, social protection and private sector services (e.g. digital payments and transfers or credit scoring), what safeguards and accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure these systems do not reinforce or deepen existing inequalities?

6. Strengthening institutional coordination for inclusive and effective CRVS and legal identity systems

Strengthened legal identity systems – anchored in civil registration, vital statistics and identity management – are essential to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. However, more work is needed to ensure that these systems are embedded within cohesive and integrated national data ecosystems and official statistical systems.

Currently, 17 United Nations agencies, three parts of the World Bank (the ID4D Initiative, Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents, and the Development Data Group), and numerous academic and civil society organizations are supporting efforts to strengthen legal identity systems. While this breadth of engagement can accelerate progress, it also presents risks, including duplication of effort, fragmentation and confusion, all of which stem from challenges in coordination across institutions.

The 2021 series of WHO SCORE assessments found that only 56 per cent of countries had an existing coordination mechanism between their ministry of health and external partners. Moreover, only 14 per cent of countries reported producing quarterly outputs to translate data and evidence into policy (World Health Organization, 2021). Weak coordination and limited governance for aligning data, evidence and policymaking were particularly evident in many countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the area of legal identity, CRVS and identity management systems, coordination has largely focused on updating outdated legal frameworks, re-engineering business processes and digitalizing registration procedures. However, national CRVS and identity coordination mechanisms have paid less attention to data governance, and have had limited engagement on how registration and identity data are disseminated, shared and used. As a result, there is significant untapped potential for harnessing CRVS and identity data to inform evidence-based policymaking and programming.

Additionally, funding and financing gaps persist. Many national, regional and global CRVS action plans remain underfunded. For instance, in Sierra Leone, 40 per cent of the country's 2019–2024 national CRVS strategic plan was unfunded. Open Data Watch has recently documented notable limitations in the data and evidence on CRVS financing and funding, and has highlighted the risk of fragmentation in current financing and funding for CRVS systems. It has also noted some important advances, such as the piloting of results-based CRVS system financing, and emerging opportunities to further align identity system and digital public infrastructure (DPI) investments with CRVS system financing and funding (Open Data Watch, 2025). There is a pressing need to improve alignment between domestic budgets, international financing, overseas development assistance and technical assistance to ensure sustainable investments in strengthening CRVS systems.

Key questions on institutional coordination include:

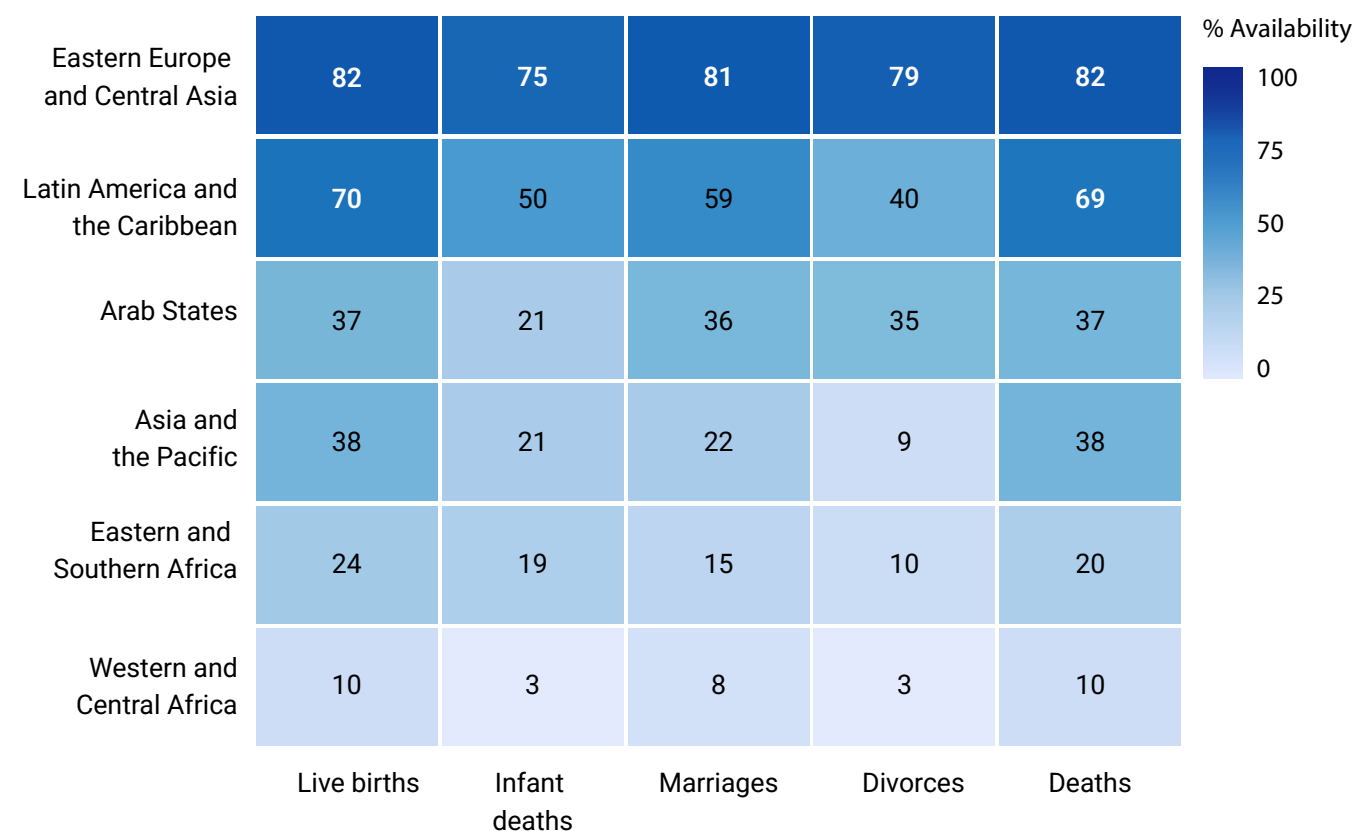
- How can inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination be enhanced, particularly in the areas of data governance and the dissemination and use of CRVS data?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen collaboration with the private sector and civil society organizations in supporting legal identity and CRVS systems?
- How can funding and financing for the strengthening of CRVS systems, identity management systems and DPI be better coordinated and more strategically aligned?

7. Vital statistics: Harnessing civil registration data for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment

Civil registration is widely recognized as the preferred means of generating routine vital statistics. Yet, many low- and middle-income countries face persistent challenges in producing comprehensive, high-quality and timely vital statistics, and in disseminating these data to support evidence-based decision-making, particularly in the service of gender equity and women's empowerment.

Figure 3 below presents the availability of vital events data across the life course for 2009–2018, as reported to the United Nations for inclusion in the Demographic Yearbook Series (United Nations, 2009–2018). It reveals substantial regional disparities in the availability of these data. In regions such as Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, between 50 and 82 per cent of most annual vital events data are submitted to the United Nations. By contrast, in West and Central Africa, the figure is 10 per cent or lower, highlighting critical gaps that must be addressed to make civil registration data a global public good.

Figure 3: Regional availability of vital events data contributed to the United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 2009–2018



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook Series, 2009–2018

Encouragingly, a growing number of countries have made strategic investments to improve the production, dissemination and use of civil registration data for vital statistics. Countries such as the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Benin, Cambodia, the Republic of the Congo and the Maldives have produced their first national vital statistics reports. Others, including Colombia, Vietnam and Kenya, have substantially improved routine dissemination by using interactive data platforms or generating localized vital statistics products to support local-level decision-making.

In particular, Uruguay has used digitalized birth registration data to tackle teenage pregnancy and guide localized interventions for young mothers and their children as part of its national poverty reduction strategy. This illustrates the transformational potential of civil registration data when used effectively to inform gender-responsive policies and programmes.

However, a key challenge remains: how to consolidate these important advances in vital statistics strengthening and scale them up systematically.

Among the key questions to consider to improve the use of civil registration data as a source of official statistics on gender equality and women's empowerment are:

- How can the production of routine vital statistics be scaled up, and how can the field advance a stronger culture of open data?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen capacity-building efforts – including through South-South and triangular cooperation – to support sustainable national vital statistics systems?
- How can vital statistics be more effectively integrated into the broader gender data ecosystem, and how can gender equality advocates and women's empowerment practitioners be better equipped to use these data to advance their goals?



8. What works, when, where and how? Strengthening CRVS through research and learning

Achieving universal legal identity within and across countries requires context-specific approaches that account for political, legal, geographic and social realities. A 'one-size-fits-all' model is not feasible. There has been a growing body of research and evidence showing the diverse correlates and determinates of the under-registration of births and deaths in different parts of the world (Agyekum and others, 2025; Fall and others; 2021; World Bank Group, 2016). To build and sustain CRVS systems that are inclusive and gender transformative, we must better understand what works, when, where and how. This is where operations research and implementation science become essential.

Operations research provides critical insights into the effectiveness and contextual considerations of different CRVS system interventions. Implementation science supports the evidence-based scaling of successful innovations, from pilot projects to full-scale, national systems that are truly universal and sustainable.

In recent decades, the CRVS and legal identity field has seen the proliferation of pilots and small-scale interventions. However, without a strong foundation in implementation science and operations research, it remains difficult to determine which interventions work, why they succeed or fail, and how scalable or transferable they are to different regions and contexts (Silva, 2022). This gap limits sustainable and systematic scale-up.

There is a strong opportunity for the CRVS field to learn from experiences of other sectors, particularly the scale-up and roll-out of programmes for HIV/AIDS, childhood immunization and reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (Durrheim, 2011; Kumar, 2019; Portella and others, 2018). These sectors have built robust cultures of research-driven programme implementation, leveraging operations research and implementation science frameworks and knowledge-sharing platforms to drive scalable, evidence-based solutions.

Key questions on strengthening the evidence base and scalability of CRVS systems include:

- What lessons can the CRVS and legal identity community draw from sectors that have embraced implementation science and operations research – such as HIV/AIDS, childhood immunization and maternal and child health – to build a similar culture of evidence-driven system strengthening?
- How can systematic evaluations, feasibility studies and scalability assessments be better integrated into national CRVS strategies and action plans?

9. Conclusions and priority actions

Civil registration is fundamental to personhood and securing legal identity from birth until death. Despite notable progress and many innovations, we must confront the persistent and vast inadequate coverage of CRVS systems globally. Nearly one-third of all births remain unregistered, and close to two-thirds of deaths go unrecorded. These figures are even more stark in remote, rural areas and among vulnerable populations in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

The future of sustainable development hinges on fulfilling the aspirations of everyone, especially women, girls and adolescents. Empowering the world's women, in full partnership with men and boys, alongside the world's 1.8 billion young people, through universal civil registration is key to realizing the transformative vision of the ICPD Programme of Action and of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

While the road ahead is challenging, there is a strong foundation to build upon. Countries are advancing meaningful legal and institutional reforms, adopting innovative digital solutions and increasingly using civil registration data to inform policy in a demographically diverse world.

To accelerate progress, renewed global and national strategies are essential – strategies that make a strong investment case, foster multisectoral collaboration, promote South-South learning and knowledge sharing, and explore complementary data sources. CRVS systems must become more inclusive, resilient, transparent and responsive to the needs of all individuals, especially the needs of those who are most often left behind. By strengthening CRVS systems, we can enhance our ability to monitor progress towards the SDGs, promote gender equality and address key development challenges effectively.

This background paper identifies seven key priorities for advancing inclusive CRVS and legal identity systems:

1. Adopt a holistic, life-course approach to legal identity that integrates gender perspectives by recognizing all key vital events from birth to death, including marriage and divorce registration.
2. Consolidate and strengthen the completeness and equity assessments of CRVS and legal identity systems, with particular attention to gender, demographic, social, geographic and economic disparities in registration.
3. Leverage CRVS systems assessments to understand and address social, gender and behavioural norms that exacerbate and perpetuate societal exclusion and systematic inequalities.
4. Capitalize on digitalization efforts across CRVS systems, identity management systems, DPI investment and population censuses to ensure population data systems are inclusive and responsive to people's rights, entitlements and aspirations, while ensuring strong data protection and privacy safeguards.

5. Reduce fragmentation of systems and enhance coordination and alignment in the strengthening and financing of CRVS systems at the global, regional, national and subnational levels.
6. Promote the production, dissemination and use of civil registration data and vital statistics as a strategic tool for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.
7. Harness the power of implementation science and operations research, particularly from related fields in public health and international development, to customize CRVS systems' strengthening to different contexts and scale improvements from successful pilot initiatives through to full-scale universal systems.

In an era marked by a growing 'global data emergency', we must not neglect the foundational pillars of the international data ecosystem – such as CRVS systems – which are indispensable for inclusive, rights-based and accountable development. Strengthening CRVS systems is not only a technical priority, but also a moral imperative to ensure that every person counts and is counted.



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