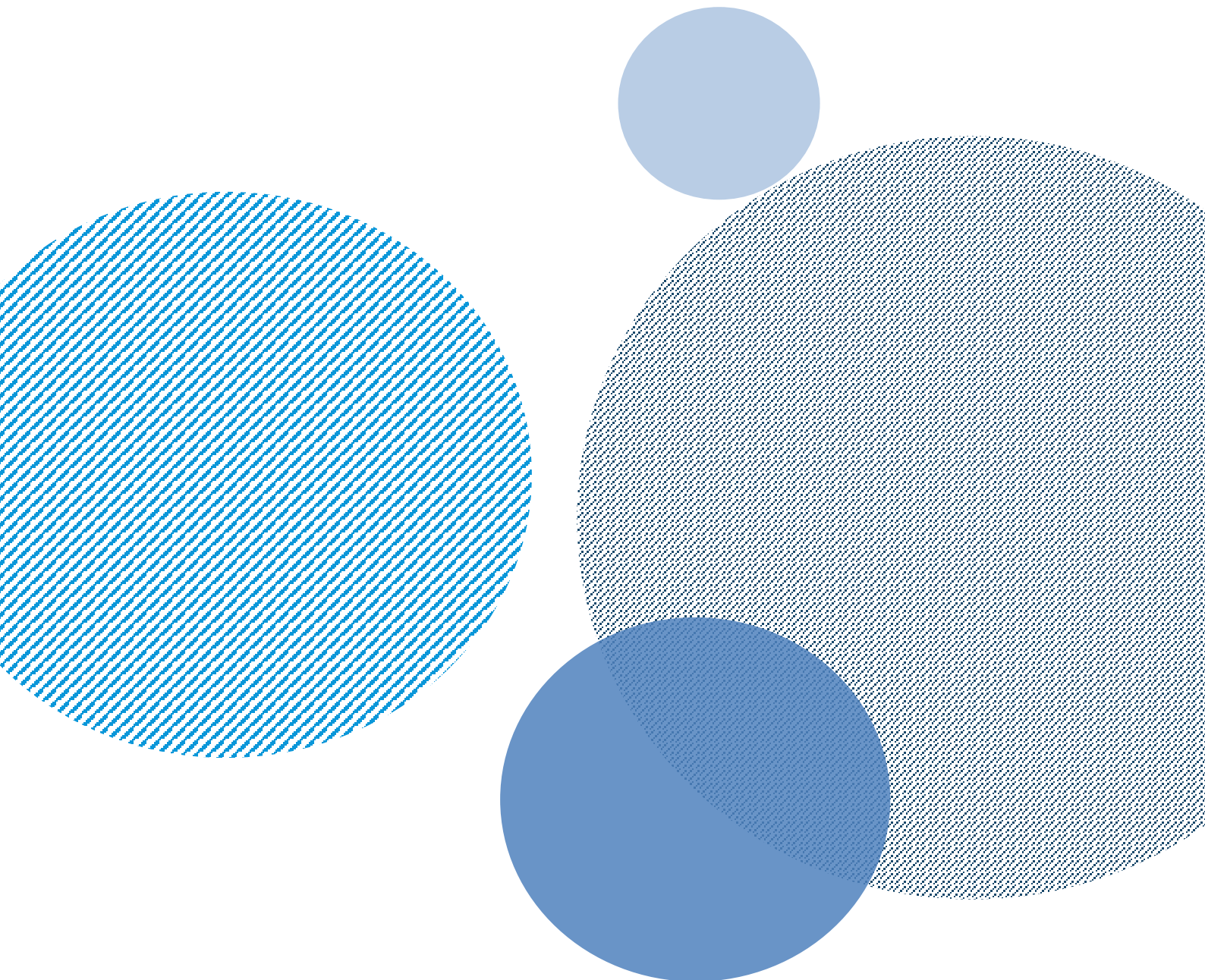




Evaluation of the project on “Supporting Improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in Asia and the Pacific”



Evaluation report | August 2023





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Commissioned by
ESCAP

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The consultant takes full responsibility for all views and opinions expressed in this report. It is important to note that these views and opinions should not be attributed to the institutions with which the consultant is affiliated or to ESCAP.

List of acronyms

BPI	Business Process Improvement
BPM	Business Process Mapping
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease (2019) an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
IA	Inequality Assessment (s)
OIOS	United Nations' Office of Internal Oversight Services
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPMD	ESCAP's Strategy and Programme Management Division
TOC	Theory of Change
UNEG	The United Nations Evaluation Group
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Executive summary

Introduction: This evaluation assessed the performance of the "Supporting Improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III)" project implemented between 2019 and 2023. The project aimed to improve CRVS systems in the region and accelerate their improvement. The evaluation objectives included assessing the project's performance in terms of effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and gender and human rights mainstreaming. The evaluation applied a systems-thinking approach and utilized a theory of change to guide its implementation. The project targeted seven countries and was implemented by ESCAP's Statistics Division, with several development partners (UNICEF, UNDP, SPC, UNFPA, Vital Strategies, ABS, UNHCR, WHO, CRC Asia) and Vital Strategies as the funding donor.

The evaluation employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analysis, and relied on desk review and remote data collection methods due to COVID-19 restrictions. Data collection involved a thorough desk review of project documents and interviews with project staff, government officials, development partners, and other stakeholders. Purposeful sampling was used, and a total of 26 respondents were included in the survey. Data analysis considered the OECD evaluation criteria and incorporated gender and human rights perspectives. Throughout the evaluation, human rights and gender equality principles were examined, and their application in stakeholder selection was assessed.

Key findings: The project on Supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III) has made significant strides in enhancing CRVS systems in the region. Through its comprehensive and collaborative approach, the project has successfully achieved its objectives and generated positive outcomes at the local, regional, and national levels. The integration of gender and human rights considerations throughout the project's design and implementation has resulted in notable advancements in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems. Furthermore, the project's adaptability in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, through adjustments in implementation modalities and the utilization of virtual platforms, has demonstrated its resilience and commitment to achieving its goals despite challenges.

Looking ahead, sustaining the project's achievements requires addressing the financial sustainability challenge, ensuring the ongoing transfer of knowledge and capacity building, and promoting effective dissemination of findings. By securing adequate budgetary provisions, exploring new funding mechanisms, and actively advocating for continued commitment from governments, civil society, and the international community, the project can ensure the long-term viability of CRVS systems. Additionally, prioritizing ongoing knowledge-sharing and capacity-building efforts will contribute to maintaining the momentum and continuous improvement of CRVS systems in the region. Through these actions, the project can leave a lasting results on CRVS systems, promoting inclusive and equitable development and supporting the realization of regional commitments and goals.

Effectiveness: The project has effectively achieved its objectives, leading to notable advancements in CRVS systems, inter-agency coordination, and the assessment of inequalities related to civil registration records. The project's activities, such as capacity building, knowledge sharing, and collaborative initiatives, have contributed to significant improvements in data quality, reliability, and the integration of CRVS goals into national development plans.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges to the project's implementation, particularly in terms of conducting in-person activities and face-to-face interactions. However, the project team

demonstrated resilience and adaptability by leveraging virtual platforms, remote working arrangements, and alternative approaches to ensure the continuity of project activities and maximize effectiveness. The adjustments made during the pandemic period allowed for the continuation of capacity building, coordination, and knowledge sharing, although some delays were experienced.

Relevance: The project demonstrated a high level of relevance by effectively addressing the needs and demands of the target beneficiaries. The alignment of project activities with the CRVS strategic visions and priorities of countries like Lao PDR, Maldives, and Vanuatu further strengthened its relevance and impact. The recognition by national statistics bureaus in Fiji and Pakistan of the project's role in advancing their CRVS improvement plans highlights the project's value in supporting national agendas and contributing to regional commitments.

Efficiency: The project successfully leveraged the strengths and expertise of different stakeholders to enhance efficiency and achieve desired outcomes. By engaging national governments, civil society organizations, and international partners, the project created synergies that maximized the impact of CRVS initiatives. The project's collaborative approach fostered information sharing, coordination, and the pooling of resources, resulting in a more comprehensive and integrated response to CRVS challenges. The involvement of local consultants further enhanced efficiency by providing prompt technical support and bridging language barriers, facilitating effective communication and knowledge transfer.

Sustainability: The project has demonstrated the potential for sustainability by effectively transferring knowledge, skills, and best practices to local stakeholders. The project's focus on capacity building and knowledge-sharing has empowered national institutions to continue and sustain the improvements made in CRVS systems. The commitment and ownership demonstrated by government agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders further contribute to the sustainability of the project's outcomes. However, there is a need for proactive measures to address the financial sustainability challenge and ensure the continued availability of resources for CRVS system operations, maintenance, and future development.

Gender Equality and Human Rights: The project has successfully integrated gender equality and human rights considerations into its design and implementation, as informed by comprehensive human rights and gender analysis. This integration has resulted in outcome-level changes that promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems. By incorporating gender-responsive strategies, capacity-building initiatives, stakeholder engagement, and inclusive approaches, the project has fostered an environment that is more inclusive, equitable, and respectful of human rights.

Recommendations:

- 1. Enhance dissemination of project findings:** ESCAP should develop comprehensive and concise reports, summaries, and briefs that effectively communicate the project's key findings and recommendations. This should include development of a comprehensive communication strategy to effectively disseminate project findings and reports. This strategy should target a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, to increase awareness and understanding of the project's relevance and achievements
- 2. Adopt a more pragmatic approach for technical expertise:** Address challenges in recruiting experts by adopting virtual assistance, building local capacity, promoting peer collaboration, and employing adaptive implementation. Leverage local knowledge, virtual platforms, and adaptive strategies for practical and sustainable solutions.

- 3. Strengthen alignment with regional commitments:** ESCAP should build upon the project's achievements and ensure further alignment with regional commitments made at the ministerial conference in 2014. This can be done by actively engaging with member states and stakeholders to identify priority areas and develop strategies that directly contribute to the fulfilment of these commitments.
- 4. Foster knowledge-sharing and capacity building:** ESCAP should consider establishing mechanisms for continued knowledge-sharing and capacity building among stakeholders to sustain the advancements made by the project. This can be achieved through the establishment of networks, communities of practice, or online platforms that facilitate ongoing learning, knowledge exchange, and collaboration.
- 5. Strengthen gender-responsive data collection and analysis:** ESCAP should find ways to enhance the focus of future regional projects on gender equality and human rights by improving data collection and analysis methodologies that capture gender-disaggregated data and the experiences of marginalized groups.
- 6. Enhance partnerships and collaboration with gender and human rights organizations:** ESCAP should continue to strengthen partnerships with gender and human rights organizations to ensure a more robust integration of gender equality and human rights considerations into project activities. This can be achieved through collaborating with such organizations to leverage their expertise and networks, facilitate knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives, and ensure the participation and inclusion of marginalized groups in decision-making processes.

1. Introduction

A well-functioning civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system plays an essential role in ensuring that every individual possesses a legal identity, thereby facilitating access to the benefits and protections offered by the State. Additionally, a robust CRVS system serves as a reliable data source for various demographic statistics, with numerous indicators directly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those pertaining to mortality and fertility. Moreover, population data derived from CRVS systems is essential for identifying and addressing disparities, as it enables us to understand which population groups are being left behind. Unfortunately however, many countries continue to face challenges in achieving complete civil registration rates, particularly among marginalized and hard-to-reach populations or specific geographic areas. Despite the unfavourable impact of these inequalities, marginalized populations often go unnoticed, rendering the affected groups largely invisible unless specifically investigated.

Recognizing the need to address disparities in civil registration completeness and coverage among different population subgroups, the Ministerial declaration "Get Every One in The Picture" in Asia and the Pacific emphasized the importance of universal and inclusive progress in registration. In line with this, the Regional Action Framework (RAF) on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific calls upon countries to assess any CRVS-related inequalities experienced by population subgroups as an essential step towards achieving inclusivity. This step holds significance not only for data and social protection under the 2030 Agenda but also from a gender perspective.

On the other hand, it is important to understand the reasons behind sex-based differences in civil registration and identify any gender-related barriers to registration, particularly among different subgroups. Furthermore, vital statistics that capture gender-relevant indicators, such as maternal mortality, adolescent fertility, age at first birth, and births outside of marriage, can be improved to strengthen the evidence base for policies and programs addressing gender-specific issues.

Therefore recognizing the importance of this endeavor and responding to countries' demand for support, ESCAP initiated the "Inequalities in CRVS: Let's really get every one in the picture!" initiative in early 2021. Through this initiative, experts from national governments, academia, and development partners collaborated to develop guidelines and provide technical assistance to countries for assessing inequalities through the evaluation and utilization of secondary data sources and indirect demographic methods for estimating vital events.

The implementation of the RAF for CRVS in Asia and the Pacific 2015-2024 serves as a means to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with other development commitments. As the framework reached its midpoint in 2019, countries continued their pursuit of universal civil registration to generate vital statistics for planning and reporting purposes.

The project "Supporting Improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III)" was then developed with the aim to strengthen and enhance CRVS systems in the region. Operating from 2019 to 2023, this project aimed to augment the capacity of national CRVS systems to generate and disseminate vital statistics using registration data. The initiative was executed by the ESCAP's Statistics Division across selected countries within the region, with the overarching objective of enhancing the completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of civil registration. The ESCAP's Statistics Division provided technical assistance to these countries, recognizing the intricate nature of CRVS systems, which involve diverse subsystems and processes.. Given the dynamic socio-political context, collaboration among stakeholders and the application of systems-science and systems-thinking disciplines were imperative to achieve desired results.

The purpose of this evaluation was twofold: firstly, to promote accountability for results and secondly, to facilitate learning, as well as to generate information on the achievements and lessons learned to inform future program design and implementation of relevant capacity development work by ESCAP. Main users of the evaluation results are the ESCAP, particularly the Statistics Division and the funding donor, Vital Strategies. Other users include the project participating countries and implementing partners.

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

1. Assess the project performance against the evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, gender and human rights mainstreaming, and any other cross-cutting issues, as deemed relevant.
2. Formulate lessons learned and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project design and implementation

2. Description of the Project

2.1 Background

The project *“Supporting improvements to CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III)”* was implemented between 2019-2023 and aimed at achieving two main outcomes namely;

- Outcome 1: Target countries are able to improve their CRVS systems through the review and analysis of their civil registration processes and increase the use of civil registration records for the production of vital statistics
- Outcome 2: Governments, civil society and the international community commit to accelerating the improvement of CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific.

Built on the success of previous projects and focused on using the midterm assessment process as a basis in its implementation strategy, the project prioritized:

1. Supporting the assessment of national CRVS systems by reviewing and analysing selected civil registration processes;
2. Improving capacity of national CRVS systems to produce vital statistic, including publication of vital statistics reports based on civil registration records;
3. Providing a regional overview of CRVS improvements during the first half of the CRVS Decade and identifying persisting gaps in countries
4. Organizing a civil society forum on CRVS to ensure no voices are left behind in the regional review of the first half of the CRVS Decade; and
5. Implementing a regional advocacy and communications strategy promoting CRVS as a critical development issue, and highlighting the strong link to national, regional and global development initiatives.

Significant to the timeframe and delivery approach of the project is the impact of COVID-19 pandemic which resulted to delays in implementation of the main regional event and lowered the expenditure burn rate by end of 2020 prompting a no cost extension to March 2021. however, the project received two extensions in March and September of 2021 with additional costs on the latter to successfully deliver on the project by March 2022.

In addition, in early March 2022, the project was granted another extension with additional funds for providing technical support and capacity strengthening on conducting CRVS inequality assessment using secondary data sources to four countries, namely, Bangladesh, Fiji, Lao PDR, and Pakistan as well as organizing a workshop on data analysis and report writing for civil registration based vital statistics for five countries in the Pacific, that are, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

2.2 Project theory of change

In conducting the evaluation, a theory of change approach was employed to comprehensively understand the results attained and the process of attaining those results. This approach involved developing a theory of change that aligned with the project's results framework, as well as considering the actual implementation strategy and the delivery of outputs. The theory of change, presented as **Annex 2** of this evaluation report, was proposed and submitted to the ERG for their review and

approval, and it provided a visual representation of how the project's activities and outputs were expected to contribute to the intended outcomes and impact. Furthermore, the theory of change identified the assumptions and contextual factors that influenced the project's theory of change.

The development of the theory of change involved a systematic process of mapping the logical connections between project activities, outputs, and outcomes. It required a thorough analysis of the project's theory of change document, results framework, and other relevant project documents to ensure alignment and coherence. Additionally, consultations with key stakeholders, including project staff, beneficiaries, and implementing partners, were conducted to gather insights and perspectives on the project's theory of change.

On the other hand, the theory of change made some practical assumptions that were assumed to be upheld for ensuring a smooth delivery of project activities, and included such assumptions as:

1. That, funding received for project activities was timely and sufficient;
2. That, ESCAP coordination was fully enabled with clear roles, responsibilities, and resources to deliver project activities;
3. That, there was sufficient national ownership and buy-in of regional CRVS resolutions from the Governments of selected states; and
4. That, governments of selected ESCAP member states and other stakeholders have the capacity to undertake country activities

By utilizing the theory of change approach, this evaluation sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of the project's logic and the extent to which the actual implementation aligns with the proposed theory of change. The theory of change also considered any deviations or adaptations made during the project's lifespan and examined the reasons behind those changes, thereby enabling a deeper understanding of the project's effectiveness and helped identify lessons learned and recommendations for future CRVS initiatives.

2.3 Project strategies

During the implementation of the project, some deviations from the original results framework may have occurred based on the actual context and challenges faced. These deviations included adjustments in timelines and modifications to the sequence of activities. However, there were no significant changes in the expected outcomes.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the project implementation and required adaptations to the project logic. The following changes were made:

Remote Technical Support: In response to travel restrictions and social distancing measures, the project shifted from in-person training and capacity-building activities to remote technical support. Virtual platforms were utilized for training sessions, consultations, and knowledge sharing.

Data Collection and Analysis: The pandemic disrupted data collection activities, leading to delays in the review and analysis of civil registration processes. Alternative methods, such as remote interviews and online surveys, were employed to collect necessary data.

Extended Timeline: The project timeline was extended in part to accommodate the delays caused by the pandemic and ensure sufficient time for completing the planned activities.

The reasons for these changes were to ensure the safety of project stakeholders, adhere to public health guidelines, and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on project implementation. Flexibility and adaptability were necessary to address the unforeseen challenges posed by the global health crisis while maintaining the project's objectives.

Despite the deviations and changes, the project aimed to achieve the desired outcomes by adjusting implementation strategies and leveraging available resources. This endline evaluation thus provides a comprehensive assessment of the project's effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, and impact, taking into account both the original results framework and the adaptations made during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.4 Innovative elements

In the supporting the improvements to CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific, the project applied specific methodologies and theory in addressing the challenges and gaps in CRVS systems – one of which was the use of a systems-thinking approach. This approach recognized that CRVS systems are complex, consisting of multiple interconnected subsystems and processes. By adopting a systems-thinking perspective, the project aimed to understand the interdependencies and dynamics within CRVS systems, identifying leverage points for improvement and addressing systemic bottlenecks.

The systems-thinking approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the CRVS systems, taking into account the interactions between various stakeholders, processes, and data management systems. It facilitated a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the CRVS systems, enabling the identification of innovative solutions and strategies for improvement.

Additionally, the project applied a theory of change approach to guide its implementation. The theory of change provided a framework to articulate the desired outcomes, the underlying assumptions, and the strategies to achieve the intended impacts. It helped in clarifying the logic of how the project activities and outputs would lead to the expected outcomes and impacts.

The project also emphasized the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing among different stakeholders. The project fostered partnerships between national governments, civil society organizations, academia, and development partners to promote a coordinated and integrated approach to CRVS system strengthening. By leveraging the expertise and resources of multiple stakeholders, the project aimed to maximize its impact and ensure the sustainability of the interventions beyond the project period.

In addition, the project also explored the use of new technologies and innovative troubleshooting approaches to identifying bottlenecks, inefficiencies, and inaccuracy of CRVS processes. This included the utilization of process mapping and digital platforms for streamlining data collection, vital registration, and production of vital statistics.

2.5 Beneficiaries, target countries and key partners

The project involved key partners, including implementing entities, collaborating UN entities/agencies, non-UN organizations, and national/local governments. The roles of these partners were essential in the successful implementation of the project.

Implementing Entities: The ESCAP's Statistics Division: As the lead implementing entity, ESCAP provided overall coordination, technical support, and guidance throughout the project. ESCAP's

Statistics Division played a central role in providing expertise in CRVS systems, facilitating capacity building, and supporting the review and analysis of civil registration processes.

Collaborating UN Entities/Agencies: ESCAP collaborated with several UN development partners in each project country (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, WHO). Relevant development partners working on CRVS were engaged in country-level activities to provide technical expertise, resources and support in areas such as data collection and capacity building, as well as support for activities which informed the Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific.

Non-UN Organizations: Vital Strategies: Vital Strategies, a non-profit organization, served as the funding donor for the project. Through the Data for Health Initiative, Vital Strategies provided financial resources and support to enable the implementation of activities and achieve the project's objectives. The role of Vital Strategies was instrumental in ensuring the completion and generation of the desired outcomes of the project. The Pacific Community (SPC), Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia) were also engaged in regional-level project activities.

National and/or Local Governments: The governments of Bangladesh, Fiji, Maldives, Pakistan, Lao PDR, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Palau, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu participated as key partners in the project. They played an important role in providing access to data, facilitating the review and analysis of civil registration processes, and implementing interventions to improve their respective CRVS systems. The national and local governments also collaborated closely with the project team to ensure the effective implementation of capacity building activities, the utilization of civil registration records for vital statistics, and in the attendance to the 2nd Ministerial Conference on CRVS in which Ministers actively participated in sharing their visions, and in continued commitments to getting everyone in the picture.

2.6 Resources

The project had an estimated budget of US\$ 500,480 provided by the contributing donor, Vital Strategies. The original implementation period was set for a minimum of 24 months starting from the approval date in December 2019. However, due to the impact of COVID-19, the project was granted a no-cost extension until the end of March 2023.

By March 2022, a sum of US\$ 359,491.10, was spent across several categories. Staff and other personnel cost USD 239,036.88, Contractual Services USD 33,634.22, Vehicles, Equipment and Furniture USD 562.62, Transfers and Grants USD 35,000, General Operating and Other Direct Costs USD 9,900 making a total direct expenditures of USD 318, 133.72 and Indirect Support Costs of USD 41,357.38. However, the travel category was later revised to no funding due to travel restrictions imposed during the pandemic to ensure the successful implementation of the project and support its objectives in improving CRVS systems in the region.

3. Evaluation objectives, scope and methodology

3.1 Purpose and objectives

The main purpose of this evaluation was to support accountability for results and to enable learning. The evaluation has generated information on the results achieved and lessons learned for use in informing future programme design and implementation of relevant ESCAP capacity development work. The evaluation has therefore assessed the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the project and support future project design through lessons learned from the implementation of the project and the potential for replication and/or modification of the project approach as well as for refinement of resources and tools to support other countries in the future.

Specifically, the evaluation had the following objectives:

- 1) To assess the project performance against the evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, gender and human rights mainstreaming, and any other cross-cutting issues, as deemed relevant.
- 2) To formulate lessons learned and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project design and implementation.

The evaluation analyzed the level of achievement of project results, making use of the project's results framework, implementation processes and contextual factors, establishing as much as possible causal linkages guided by the evaluation criteria and questions. The evaluation was conducted in line with ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines¹ and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards for evaluation.

3.2 Evaluation scope

The evaluation included the design, strategy and implementation of the project over the entire period of its implementation. The evaluation also covered the implementation and results of the project in all participating countries, also covering all modes of implementation of the project, including national and regional workshops, training and additional activities as were agreed upon based on consultations with project countries. The project commenced in December 2019 and originally was to continue for 16 months. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and requests from participating countries for the continuation of support, the project was extended until March 2023.

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1. Evaluation Approach

In assessing the results achieved, the evaluation used a theory of change approach (**Annex 2: Project's Theory of Change**) to understand the actual results achieved and the process of achieving the results. The theory of change was developed with guidance from the results framework of the project as well as the actual implementation strategy and delivery of outputs. The theory of change was also used as the basis for deducing project logic and assessing the relevance and effectiveness of such logic.

¹ ESCAP, ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines, 2017, available on the ESCAP webpage at <http://www.unescap.org/partners/monitoring-and-evaluation/evaluation>.

On the other hand, the evaluation applied a mixed-method approach (**Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix**) through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to inform findings. Due to the ongoing travel restrictions and health concerns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation methodology relied primarily on desk review and remote data collection methods. The evaluation applied multiple methods, and cross-checked information and data from different sources to ensure confidence in the findings.

3.3.2. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation used the following evaluation criteria and questions (Table 2) in assessing the performance of the project.

3.3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

a) Desk Review

All significant project documents were reviewed, including the project document, monthly, progress and terminal reports, activity reports, relevant official correspondence with stakeholders, and strategic documents linked to the project as shown in **Annex 6**.

b) Primary Research

The evaluation collected primary evaluation data using surveys through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) by engaging project stakeholders who included ESCAP’s project management staff members, government officials and stakeholders, development partners, and selected stakeholders.

Table 1: Evaluation questions for use in assessing project performance

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the most significant results² at the local, regional or national levels achieved or contributed by the project? Describe the project activities/outputs that lead to the results and present evidence of project’s contribution to the results. • How did adjustments made to the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic affect the achievement of the project’s results?
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent was the project designed based on demand from the target beneficiaries? Probe too about how regional commitments made at the ministerial conference in 2014 and how the project contributed to achieving those. • What adjustments, if any, were made to the project activities and modality, as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, or in response to the new priorities of member States?

² In the context of this evaluation, results are assessed at the outcome level. Outcome level results are the likely or achieved effects of an intervention’s outputs. They reflect the changes in the behaviour or practices of the target group(s)/countries that ESCAP intends to influence, including through actions taken collectively with its development partners. They also reflect that benefits and actions taken by the target groups/countries through the project interventions (source: ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines). Examples of outcome level results include: (1) Five pilot countries adopted and implemented national strategies and programmes with assistance from the project; (2) Several countries put in place a new system or procedures with support from the project; (3) Countries organised national workshops as a follow-up to the project training activities.

Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the project achieve efficiency in implementation through the combination of project stakeholders involved, making use of comparative advantages and the creation of synergy? • To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhanced reaching of results?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement?
Gender and human rights mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent were gender and human rights integrated into the design and implementation of the project, informed by relevant and tailored human rights and gender analysis?

Table 3 summarizes the groups of stakeholders interviewed during primary data collection. Names and/or titles appear in **Annex 5: List of Stakeholders Interviewed**.

Table 2: Groups of respondents interviewed for the evaluation

Type of stakeholders interviewed	Interview method
Government Officials and Implementing Partners	Video/Audio Call
ESCAP Project Management	Video/Audio Call
Donor/Vital Strategies	Video/Audio Call
Other stakeholders (including other UN organizations)	Electronic Survey

Selection criteria for interviewees was based on their involvement in the formulation and/or implementation of the project and on the criteria set forth during initial consultations with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) at the inception stage of the project. Interviews included both male and female stakeholders identified during stakeholder analysis (for balancing gender participation). Interviews were conducted using question guides/questionnaires (**Annex 4**). All interview guides/questionnaires were approved by the ERG.

c) Data Analysis

The evaluation used qualitative and quantitative data from project documents and from the virtual interviews. Data collected during virtual interviews were transcribed using AI (Artificial Intelligence) transcription tool Otter AI and were then entered into MS Word format for standardization and preparation of data analysis. Data from the sources were individually aggregated and analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data gathered during the assignment were analyzed according to key objectives of the assignment and in line with the OECD evaluation criteria of Effectiveness, Relevance, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Gender and Human Rights mainstreaming which were the core themes for qualitative data analysis. Further, data were disaggregated by sex and other relevant social categories including human rights mainstreaming as essential components of data analysis in all ESCAP evaluations.

3.3.4. Survey

To meet the demands of this evaluation, the evaluation employed a purposeful sampling for primary data collection. The evaluation administered a simplified qualitative survey to examine at high level the effectiveness of project activities, achievements and drawbacks amongst the various stakeholders of the project. This first element of data collection was used to source information from all stakeholders, with a total sample of 26 respondents, who were drawn from the following groups:

- Project management team at ESCAP (3 project staff) and donor (4 representatives).
- Implementing partners in selected Member States (7 government officials).
- Other stakeholders, from other UN agencies and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (12).

3.4 Human rights and gender mainstreaming

Human rights and gender equality principles were also examined as required by the ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines. The evaluation assessed how these were used in the selection of key stakeholders during the project design and implementation process.

4. Evaluation findings

4.1 Effectiveness

EQ 1: What were the most significant results at the local, regional or national levels achieved or contributed by the project? Describe the project activities/outputs that lead to the results and present evidence of project's contribution to the results.

The project effectively achieved its objectives, resulting in notable advancements in various areas. Firstly, there is increased capacity to assess and enhance national CRVS systems across several countries. This signifies notable strides in strengthening these systems. Secondly, the project played a pivotal role in enhancing inter-agency coordination and collaborations within the CRVS sector. By bringing together different stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, the project fostered a collaborative environment for knowledge sharing, joint problem-solving, and exchange of best practices. And thirdly, increased assessment of inequalities related to civil registration records. Through gender and human rights analyses, the project identified barriers, biases, and discrimination within CRVS systems and developed strategies to address them. Furthermore, the project made significant contributions to capacity building for government officials involved in CRVS systems. Through comprehensive training programs, officials were equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively manage and improve CRVS systems.

EQ 2: How did adjustments made to the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic affect the achievement of the project's results?

Overall, the adjustments made to the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic had some significant delay on project implementation, but not on the quality of the of project's results. Despite the necessary adjustments made in response to the pandemic, inability to conduct face-to-face training sessions, onsite assessments, and data collection as originally planned, affected the pace of progress and the timely achievement of project results. Nevertheless, the project team actively managed the situation and made necessary adaptations to minimize disruptions and maximize effectiveness. Adjustments made included utilizing virtual platforms for remote training sessions, consultations, and knowledge sharing; remote interviews and online surveys for data collection; and collaboration with stakeholders and strategic adjustments to implementation plans.

Overall score: Highly satisfactory

Evaluation findings revealed a notable positive impact on improving CRVS systems and increasing the utilization of civil registration records for the production of vital statistics. Approximately 83% of respondents reported observing a change in their organizations or countries as a direct result of the project. Of the respondents who observed a positive change: 1) approximately 70% reported observing an increase in assessing their countries' CRVS systems by various stakeholders. 2) around 60% noted an increase in conducting qualitative and quantitative assessments of inequalities related to civil registration records, and 3) an overwhelming 80% highlighted an increased awareness regarding the need for continued commitment across various sectors. This includes governments, civil society, and the international community, aligning with the objective of accelerating improvements in CRVS systems in the Asia-Pacific region. The high percentage of affirmative responses indicates a strong correlation between the project's implementation and observed improvements in CRVS systems. This outcome aligns with the project's objectives of enhancing the capacity of national CRVS systems and promoting the utilization of civil registration records for the production of accurate and

comprehensive vital statistics. In Maldives, Vanuatu, Niue and Samoa, the project successfully facilitated the completion of a Business Process Improvement (BPI) process and several assessments as part of CRVS systems improvement. In Maldives, the BPI activities were implemented to enhance the newly established online birth and death platform called GEMEN (digital population register), which is an online software application built on the Government Network of Maldives platform . This initiative significantly contributed to the improvement of the CRVS system in Maldives. **(See Box 1: Implementation in Maldives)**

Overall, approximately 83% of the respondents from the online survey reported observing changes related to the improvement of CVRS systems and the utilization of civil registration records as a direct outcome of the project.

The project successfully raised awareness and fostered continued commitment from all sectors, including governments, civil society, and the international community, towards accelerating the improvement of CRVS systems in the Asia-Pacific region. The evaluation identified that the project's efforts in highlighting the importance of CRVS systems contributed to the integration of CRVS goals and targets into national development plans and frameworks. Through knowledge exchange, coordination, and joint advocacy, the project promoted regional collaboration and commitment to CRVS system improvement.

BOX 1: Key project achievements in Maldives

In Maldives, the Business Process Improvement (BPI) project was implemented from 2020 to 2021, with Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS) serving as the coordinating agency. MBS took the lead in engaging with the government and coordinating the Technical Coordination Committee, ensuring the involvement and commitment of Committee Members.

- Project activities in Maldives focused on improving the newly established online birth and death platform called GEMEN, which is a software application built on the Government Network of Maldives. Implementation of project activities, particularly those related to the Business Process Improvement (BPI), contributed to the enhancement of the CRVS system in Maldives. The project team worked collaboratively with the core team responsible for GEMEN to identify effective operational procedures and document the entire process, including the registration of births and management of deaths, as well as the involvement of relevant agencies at different stages.
- One of the key achievements of the project was fostering collaboration among agencies involved in the CRVS system. Through joint meetings and platforms, all agencies had the opportunity to discuss the challenges they were facing and collaborate on finding solutions. This collaborative approach significantly improved the overall efficiency of the system.
- ESCAP's coordination and training efforts played a vital role in facilitating inter-agency knowledge sharing. The project created a platform for agencies to work together and provide mutual assistance, particularly by leveraging the expertise of external consultants to address any negative impacts resulting from variations in technical knowledge among key staff members.

Evaluation results indicate that approximately 80% of interviewed respondents reported an increase in awareness for continued commitment and collaborations as a result of the project's initiatives. Evaluation respondents also emphasized the need to utilize project results and findings for advocacy and awareness raising in their respective countries. However, dissemination of findings was limited

due to country teams' inability to complete reports on time, incomplete data sets, and the absence of simplified briefs to share the findings with various stakeholders.

Additionally, the project successfully contributed to activities which supported the organization of the Second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The conference was attended by 70% of ESCAP members and associate members, with 40 ministers actively participating and sharing their visions to further the commitment of getting everyone in the picture. The conference provided a platform for civil society organizations interested in CRVS work and the youth to share their insights and contribute to the ongoing process. This conference contributed to the strengthening of the CRVS systems in the region by:

- Identifying bottlenecks and gaps in the CRVS systems and enhancing the system's efficiency and user-friendliness for the public.
- Identifying gaps and the development of plans for improving data completeness..
- Sustaining engagements and capacity building of the CRVS stakeholders' network. This continuity was deemed essential to maintain workflow momentum, particularly for individuals joining relevant ministries or departments.

On the other hand, evaluation results indicate that implementation of planned activities was significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially those activities that relied on in-person interactions such as training workshops and field visits. While 50% of the survey respondents stated that they did not face any challenges when implementing the project as an organization, approximately 33% reported encountering difficulties specifically related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the project implementation. For instance, in Fiji, delays in conducting the first workshop for the CRVS inequality assessment project due to the pandemic, meant a delay in subsequent workshops and the publication of the final Inequality Assessment report (project was completed in early 2023). Among other things, inability to conduct comprehensive on-site assessments and engaging directly with local stakeholders restricted the project's capacity to implement practical and feasible improvements.

Absence of physical presence and face-to-face interactions hindered the accurate identification of system requirements and the development of appropriate solutions tailored to the specific needs of each country. This was particularly in the cases of civil records assessments where sub-national stakeholders/staff needed a more hands on support. The issues of data completeness, language barriers for local staff (when local consultants were not recruited) and lack of regular engagement with policy makers on findings were amplified due to COVID-19 restrictions. As an example, teams in Fiji and Lao reported having successfully conducted inequality assessments, finding them valuable for enhancing their CRVS system. However, delays experienced in some project countries necessitated improvisation in obtaining information and ensuring timely completion of project reports, with some remaining in draft form or awaiting government approval

Also, in the case of Maldives, the National Statistics Office (NSO) had to temporarily fulfill the role of the national consultant for approximately one month until the position was filled. In addition, due to limitations on field missions, ESCAP provided flexible support and guidance through communication platforms such as Viber and WhatsApp. However, it is important to note that physical presence and face-to-face interactions would have facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of the local context, enabled effective collaboration with stakeholders, and ensured that proposed recommendations and changes were realistic and feasible. On the other hand, in Vanuatu for example, not adequately balancing the project's ideals with the practical realities of the existing system was highlighted as a potential risk. The absence of physical presence for technical experts in Vanuatu (who were responsible for recommending changes or new designs) may have resulted in recommendations

that were not feasible or unrealistic – emphasizing the presence and involvement of the country team in the design of any new system, to ensure practicality and alignment with local circumstances.

Despite these challenges, country project teams strived to find alternative solutions and adapt their approach to overcome the obstacles posed by the pandemic. Adjustments made included utilizing virtual platforms for remote training sessions, consultations, and knowledge sharing; remote interviews and online surveys for data collection; and collaboration with stakeholders and strategic adjustments to implementation plans.

4.2 Relevance

EQ 3: To what extent was the project designed based on demand from the target beneficiaries? How has the project contributed to achieving regional commitments made at the ministerial conference in 2014 ?

The project was carefully designed and implemented to address the needs and demands of the target beneficiaries. Approximately 75% of interviewed respondents strongly agreed that the project was relevant to their organizations, indicating a high level of alignment with their goals and objectives. Further, close to 65% of the respondents expressed confidence that the project had identified the right partners for its implementation, demonstrating the effectiveness of the partnership selection process. In specific countries such as Lao PDR, Maldives, and Vanuatu, the project successfully aligned its improvement efforts with the respective country's CRVS strategic vision and priorities. This strategic alignment ensured that the project's activities were in line with the national agendas, maximizing their relevance. Similarly, in Fiji and Pakistan, the national statistical offices acknowledged that the design of the project by ESCAP on improving capacity to conduct civil registration inequality assessments, would serve as a significant stepping stone towards their CRVS improvement plans. This recognition highlights the value and potential impact of the project's initiatives in these countries.

EQ 4: What adjustments, if any, were made to the project activities and modality, as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, or in response to the new priorities of member States?

The evaluation has observed that there were no significant changes to the overall project activities. However, several adjustments were made in the implementation modalities to accommodate the new priorities of member states in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This evaluation has found that over 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that the project demonstrated adaptability to changes. The COVID-19 pandemic posed unforeseen challenges that required the project to resequence its activities in accordance with the specific COVID-19 response priorities of each country. This particularly impacted capacity building, workshops, and regional meetings, which had to be adjusted to comply with the necessary health and safety measures. These modifications in the implementation modalities ensured that the project remained responsive to the evolving needs and circumstances of member states during the pandemic. By adapting to the changing situation, the project demonstrated flexibility and agility in its approach, allowing it to continue delivering its objectives despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.

Overall score: Highly satisfactory

Evaluation findings indicate that government agencies responsible for CRVS were already utilizing or planning to utilize the findings of their project assessment reports in their work. For instance, in Lao PDR, the statistics department expressed the intention to incorporate the project's capacity-building efforts and lessons learned in updating a previous rapid assessment on birth registration conducted between 2012-2013. The aim is to ensure that the forthcoming birth registration assessment process incorporates best practices and findings from the project. This integration will contribute to Lao PDR's vital statistics reporting and publication, aligning with the implementation of the Regional Action

Framework that requires each country to develop its own vital statistics report. **See Box 2 for implementation in Lao PDR.**

The evaluation highlighted that the project's findings and reports were highly relevant due to their complementarity with other aspects of CRVS improvement and the longstanding relationship between ESCAP and the implementing countries. Key interviewees emphasized the usefulness of the project in strengthening communication among relevant government agencies, particularly in terms of data utilization by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The project's alignment with the rollout of the GEMEN module generated significant interest and anticipation among stakeholders. Going forward, there is a strong desire to ensure that the assessment results are considered by policymakers and high-ranking officials at the leadership level. These testimonies underscore the value of the project's findings and emphasize their potential influence on policy and decision-making processes.

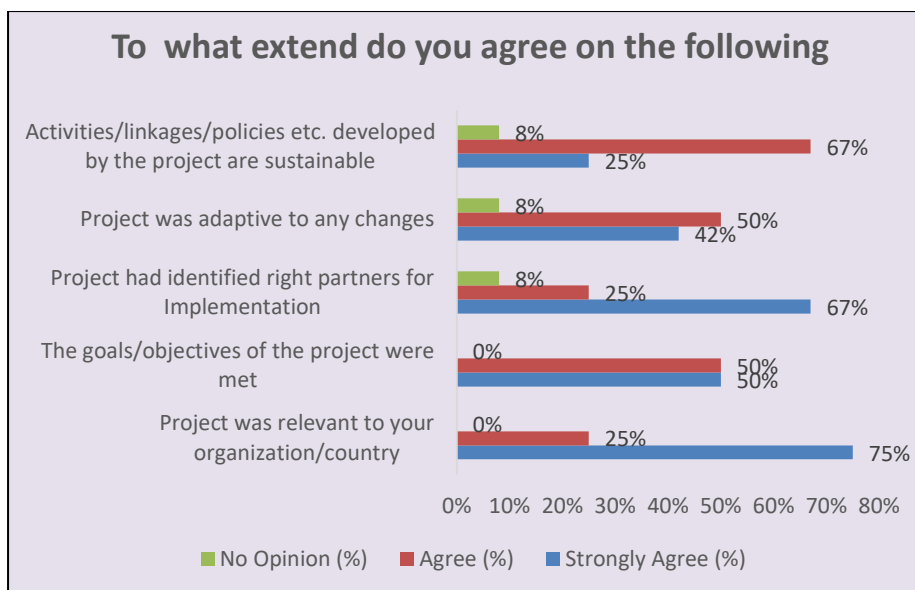
Box 2: Project implementation in Lao PDR

In Lao PDR, the project was implemented in 2022, building upon a longstanding partnership between the country and ESCAP. The collaboration between the two parties has included support for trainings on production of vital statistics through workshops and participation in regional meetings. Additionally, ESCAP provided financing and technical assistance for the 2015 census, with discussions already underway for the upcoming 2025 census update. However, implementation of the new system was limited to three provinces, resulting in restricted access to the database. To overcome this limitation, the project relied on household surveys to gather data for analysis in the inequality assessment.

Notably, the project played a significant role in supporting Lao PDR in conducting a rapid assessment on birth registration, which had not been carried out since 2012 or 2013. It facilitated discussions between ESCAP and UNFPA to seek external expertise in determining the questionnaire for the upcoming 2025 census. The project also facilitated discussions on socio-economic statistics, demography, and system reforms, for the Statistical Commission meeting in New York.

The country's core team has planned to incorporate the report on the civil registration inequality assessment into the country's vital statistics reporting. This deliberate consideration emphasizes the importance of utilizing assessment results among policymakers and high-ranking officials. Furthermore, the project aligns with the reporting requirements of the 2014 regional commitments on vital statistics. Consequently, certain sections of the vital statistics report will incorporate the findings from the civil registration inequality assessment, ensuring that the project's outcomes contribute to comprehensive and robust reporting on vital statistics in Lao PDR.

Figure 1 below shows that while the majority of stakeholders encountered delays in key project activities, such as trainings, engagements, and limited travel for international consultants, there were no new additional activities specifically designed to address the changes in country priorities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.



About 75% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the project was relevant to their organizations/ Work.

Fig 1: Survey results on relevance

However, the project adapted its work plans and strategies to ensure the achievement of the intended project results. This adaptation involved the utilization of national consultants, virtual workshops, and the seeking of extensions from funders. Furthermore, respondents highlighted the increased demand for capacity building on complete death registration for vital statistics reports in the Pacific region, driven by the need to track deaths caused by COVID-19. To address this demand, ESCAP and regional institutions provided technical support to countries in improving data collection accuracy and completeness. Moreover, the cost savings resulting from reduced travel and the utilization of online platforms for workshops created opportunities to extend services to additional countries and undertake new activities. These efficiencies allowed for the optimization of project resources and the expansion of its scope, contributing to a broader impact in the region.

4.3 Efficiency

EQ 5: To what extent did the project achieve efficiency in implementation through the combination of project stakeholders involved, making use of comparative advantages and the creation of synergy?

The project achieved success in engaging a variety of stakeholders and fostering synergies among them. The evaluation revealed that the project efficiently utilized local expertise to meet diverse demands, enhanced complementarity between different stakeholders and partners' activities, and facilitated cross-country multi-stakeholder consultations on CRVS.

EQ 6: To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhanced reaching of results?

Findings revealed that the project collaborated with various organizations, leveraging their unique strengths and expertise to enhance efficiency and achieve desired outcomes. This collaborative approach involved engaging national governments, civil society organizations, and international partners, each making valuable contributions to the project. By leveraging the strengths and expertise of different stakeholders, the project was able to harness a wide range of perspectives, resources, and support. This collaborative approach not only maximized the efficiency and outcomes of the project but also promoted a sense of shared responsibility and ownership among all stakeholders involved.

Overall score: Highly satisfactory

To leverage local expertise, the project engaged national consultants and national agencies as leads. These national consultants played a role in overcoming challenges posed by COVID-19 restrictions and provided prompt technical support tailored to the specific needs of each country. Furthermore, they helped bridge the language barrier during capacity building activities, ensuring effective communication and knowledge transfer. By incorporating local expertise, the project was able to tap into the knowledge and insights of individuals and organizations familiar with the context and intricacies of each country. This approach not only facilitated smoother implementation but also fostered a sense of ownership and sustainability within the local stakeholders.

Additionally, the project successfully promoted complementarity among different stakeholders and partners. By aligning activities and leveraging the strengths of each stakeholder, the project created synergies that enhanced the overall impact and effectiveness of CRVS initiatives. This collaborative approach encouraged information sharing, coordination, and the pooling of resources, resulting in a more comprehensive and integrated response to CRVS challenges. Furthermore, the project facilitated cross-country multi-stakeholder consultations, providing a platform for knowledge exchange, learning, and collaboration. These consultations allowed countries to share experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in the field of CRVS. By bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, the project fostered a holistic and inclusive approach to CRVS system improvement.

National governments played a critical role in providing the necessary policy and regulatory frameworks to support the improvement of CRVS systems. Their involvement ensured the alignment of project activities with national priorities and facilitated the implementation of policy changes and reforms. Civil society organizations, with their grassroots knowledge and community engagement, brought valuable insights and perspectives to the project. Their involvement helped ensure that the needs and concerns of local communities were taken into account, leading to more inclusive and effective interventions.

International partners, with their technical expertise and financial support, played a crucial role in supporting the project's activities. Their contributions helped enhance the project's capacity to deliver on its objectives and provided resources for implementing key initiatives. For example, in the case of Lao PDR, the project successfully established a collaborative and complementary relationship with other United Nations (UN) agencies. Through coordination with UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) discussions were held on the best ways to strengthen the CRVS system in the country. These collaborations allowed for the sharing of knowledge, resources, and experiences, ultimately enhancing the project's impact and effectiveness.

For donors, the project maximized efficiency as it enhanced cost and time saving through streamline work plans. For instance, when making decisions around interaction with country teams, coordination with ESCAP plans minimized duplication of demands to these countries. Particularly due to the limited capacity within countries and prevalence of environmental disasters in the pacific regions (which would see government officials overstretched or reassigned) the project partners were able to manage implementation accordingly. This was in form of streamlining the delivery of workshop s, reporting and or meetings at a given time period.

Similarly, the project facilitated coordination of cross-country learning spaces and information sharing platforms, such as the "research pilot." In this initiative, countries took turns submitting abstracts and sharing their research on CRVS. The platform provided an opportunity for countries to exchange experiences on systems improvement, share good practices, and discuss challenges encountered during project implementation.

Overall, the project's successful engagement with a combination of stakeholders, leveraging local expertise, promoting complementarity, and facilitating cross-country consultations contributed to its effectiveness and impact in the field of CRVS. And, by leveraging the strengths and expertise of different stakeholders, the project was able to harness a wide range of perspectives, resources, and support. This collaborative approach not only maximized the efficiency and outcomes of the project but also promoted a sense of shared responsibility and ownership among all stakeholders involved.

In support of the results, some key messages from evaluation respondents include:

- ESCAP, as a regional organization, played an important role in coordinating and convening stakeholders at the regional level, raising awareness about civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) issues.
- ESCAP's leadership and coordination made it easier for all stakeholders to collaborate effectively and participate in project activities.
- The involvement of a local consultant in the project was highly beneficial. The consultant actively participated in meetings, providing updates and reporting on key discussion points and next steps.
- The project hired a Thai-speaking consultant, which facilitated smooth communication and collaboration with local stakeholders who could speak Thai. This language proficiency contributed to effective teamwork and streamlined project implementation.

4.4 Sustainability

EQ:7 To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement?

Overall, project beneficiaries have expressed their ability and intention to sustain project activities within their countries. This demonstrates their commitment to retaining the best practices from the project, continuing inter-agency collaborations and meetings, and continuously improving the CRVS system. The evaluation has also found that the project effectively facilitated the transfer of knowledge, skills, and best practices to local stakeholders. The project successfully created platforms for sharing knowledge to ensure the continuous transfer of expertise and knowledge within countries as well as across countries – all being key elements of sustaining the project activities in individual countries.

Overall score: Moderately satisfactory

The project has effectively utilized funds to support the sustainable improvement of CRVS systems, acting as a catalyst for action at the regional level. ESCAP has strengthened the capacity of national institutions, including government agencies and civil society organizations, to independently continue and sustain the advancements made in CRVS systems. This includes enhancing their skills in data collection and analysis, mobilizing resources from relevant government institutions, and establishing mechanisms to maintain and further develop the achieved improvements.

There is a notable high level of ownership and commitment demonstrated by government agencies, civil society, and other stakeholders in sustaining the project's outcomes. This is evident through their ongoing prioritization of CRVS system improvements, plans to allocate their own resources, and integration of CRVS into national development plans and agendas. For example, 50% of the respondents in the online survey expressed agreement with the need for governments, civil society, and the international community to commit to accelerating the improvement of CRVS systems in the Asia-Pacific region. In Lao PDR in particular, strengthening of the country's CRVS system is guided by lessons learned from the inequality assessment project, and there is a strong belief that they have the capacity to conduct the next CRVS inequality assessment. However, there is a concern about the

financial sustainability of the project, particularly in terms of securing sufficient budgetary provisions and funding mechanisms for the ongoing operations, maintenance, and future enhancements of CRVS systems.

Evaluation findings indicate that only a small number of respondents reported having plans in place for advocacy efforts to secure budget allocations from their respective ministries and explore new donor funding as alternative sources of financing. This highlights the importance of taking proactive measures to address the challenge of financial sustainability and ensure the long-term viability of CRVS systems. . In Maldives for example, there is an ongoing additional project supported by the Global Health Advocacy Incubator, aimed at enhancing national registration, building upon the results of the project's BPI activities. The strong partnership between ESCAP and the Statistics Bureau is also recognized for driving continued communication and technical understanding in the country.

4.5 Gender Equality and Human Rights

EQ 8: To what extent were gender and human rights integrated into the design and implementation of the project, informed by relevant and tailored human rights and gender analysis?

The project demonstrated a successful integration of gender and human rights considerations into its design and implementation. This integration was informed by thorough human rights and gender analysis, which guided the project in achieving outcome-level changes that promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems.

Overall score: Highly satisfactory

The project effectively integrated gender and human rights considerations in different phases of its implementation, incorporating the following activities:

Design Phase:

The project design considered the different attitudes towards the registration of death of women or men that sometimes exist and thus undertook the project activities to contribute to improve on this.

- 1) Human Rights and Gender Analysis: The project conducted a comprehensive human rights and gender analysis during the design phase. The analysis identified key human rights issues and gender disparities within CRVS systems in the project context.
- 2) Gender and Human Rights Objectives: The project design included clear and specific objectives related to promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights. These objectives were aligned with international human rights standards and gender equality principles.

Implementation Phase:

- 1) Gender-Responsive Strategies and Activities: The project implemented gender-responsive strategies and activities to address the specific needs and priorities of women and girls. These strategies and activities aimed to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems.
- 2) Capacity Building: The project incorporated a gender and human rights perspective into capacity-building activities. Training and capacity-building initiatives targeted both women and men, addressing gender disparities and promoting equal access to resources and opportunities. The project focused on building the capacity of relevant stakeholders, including

government officials and service providers, to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities.

- 3) Stakeholder Engagement: Gender and human rights considerations were integrated into stakeholder engagement processes. The project actively involved diverse groups, including women, marginalized communities, and human rights organizations, in decision-making and participation in project activities. Persons with disabilities and disability organizations were also actively engaged in project activities and decision-making processes.
- 4) Inclusive Strategies and Activities: The project implemented inclusive strategies and activities to ensure the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. This included designing accessible materials, providing reasonable accommodations during workshops and training sessions, and incorporating Universal Design principles into CRVS systems.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, the project on Supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III) has made significant strides in enhancing CRVS systems in the region. Through its comprehensive and collaborative approach, the project has successfully achieved its objectives and generated positive outcomes at the local, regional, and national levels. The integration of gender and human rights considerations throughout the project's design and implementation has resulted in notable advancements in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems. Furthermore, the project's adaptability in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, through adjustments in implementation modalities and the utilization of virtual platforms, has demonstrated its resilience and commitment to achieving its goals despite challenges.

Looking ahead, sustaining the project's achievements requires addressing the financial sustainability challenge, ensuring the ongoing transfer of knowledge and capacity building, and promoting effective dissemination of findings. By securing adequate budgetary provisions, exploring new funding mechanisms, and actively advocating for continued commitment from governments, civil society, and the international community, the project can ensure the long-term viability of CRVS systems. Additionally, prioritizing ongoing knowledge-sharing and capacity-building efforts will contribute to maintaining the momentum and continuous improvement of CRVS systems in the region. Through these actions, the project can leave a lasting impact on CRVS systems, promoting inclusive and equitable development and supporting the realization of regional commitments and goals. Below, are conclusions summarized for each of the evaluation criteria assessed.

Effectiveness: The project has effectively achieved its objectives, leading to notable advancements in CRVS systems, inter-agency coordination, and the assessment of inequalities related to civil registration records. The project's activities, such as capacity building, knowledge sharing, and collaborative initiatives, have contributed to significant improvements in data quality, reliability, and the integration of CRVS goals into national development plans.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges to the project's implementation, particularly in terms of conducting in-person activities and face-to-face interactions. However, the project team demonstrated resilience and adaptability by leveraging virtual platforms, remote working arrangements, and alternative approaches to ensure the continuity of project activities and maximize effectiveness. The adjustments made during the pandemic period allowed for the continuation of capacity building, coordination, and knowledge sharing, although some delays were experienced.

Relevance: The project demonstrated a high level of relevance by effectively addressing the needs and demands of the target beneficiaries. The alignment of project activities with the CRVS strategic visions and priorities of countries like Lao PDR, Maldives, and Vanuatu further strengthened its relevance. The recognition by national statistics bureaus in Fiji and Pakistan of the project's role in advancing their CRVS improvement plans highlights the project's value in supporting national agendas and contributing to regional commitments.

Efficiency: The project successfully leveraged the strengths and expertise of different stakeholders to enhance efficiency and achieve desired outcomes. By engaging national governments, civil society organizations, and international partners, the project created synergies that maximized the impact of CRVS initiatives. The project's collaborative approach fostered information sharing, coordination, and the pooling of resources, resulting in a more comprehensive and integrated response to CRVS challenges. The involvement of local consultants further enhanced efficiency by providing prompt

technical support and bridging language barriers, facilitating effective communication and knowledge transfer.

The project's partnership with various organizations enabled the reaching of results and enhanced the overall effectiveness of the project. The contributions of national governments, civil society organizations, and international partners played critical roles in supporting the project's activities and strengthening the CRVS systems. The involvement of different stakeholders brought diverse perspectives, resources, and expertise, enriching the project's outcomes. The successful coordination of cross-country learning spaces and information sharing platforms further promoted collaboration, knowledge exchange, and learning among countries. These partnerships and collaborations were essential in achieving efficiency in project implementation and maximizing CRVS outcomes.

Sustainability: The project has demonstrated the potential for sustainability by effectively transferring knowledge, skills, and best practices to local stakeholders. The project's focus on capacity building and knowledge-sharing has empowered national institutions to continue and sustain the improvements made in CRVS systems. The commitment and ownership demonstrated by government agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders further contribute to the sustainability of the project's outcomes. However, there is a need for proactive measures to address the financial sustainability challenge and ensure the continued availability of resources for CRVS system operations, maintenance, and future development.

The project's efforts have effectively integrated CRVS into national development plans and agendas, promoting the recognition of its importance in achieving sustainable development goals. This integration, coupled with the strong partnerships forged between ESCAP and national institutions, has created a conducive environment for sustained communication, collaboration, and technical understanding. The ongoing project in Maldives supported by the Bloomberg Initiative and the partnership between ESCAP and the Statistics Bureau are examples of initiatives that contribute to the sustainability of CRVS systems. By strengthening financial sustainability efforts and fostering knowledge-sharing and capacity building, the project can further enhance the sustainability of CRVS systems and ensure their long-term viability.

Gender Equality and Human Rights: The project has successfully integrated gender equality and human rights considerations into its design and implementation, as informed by comprehensive human rights and gender analysis. This integration has resulted in outcome-level changes that promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems. By incorporating gender-responsive strategies, capacity-building initiatives, stakeholder engagement, and inclusive approaches, the project has fostered an environment that is more inclusive, equitable, and respectful of human rights.

The project's focus on gender equality and human rights has facilitated the active participation and inclusion of marginalized groups, including women, girls, and persons with disabilities, in decision-making processes and project activities. By addressing gender disparities, promoting equal access to resources and opportunities, and incorporating Universal Design principles, the project has contributed to creating more inclusive CRVS systems. However, there is a need to strengthen gender-responsive data collection and analysis and enhance partnerships with gender and human rights organizations to further advance gender equality and human rights within CRVS systems.

6. Lessons Learned/Good Practices

Based on the evaluation of the project "Supporting Improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III)," the following are some key lessons learned and good practices that can inform future initiatives in the field of CRVS:

- 1) **Importance of stakeholder engagement:** Active involvement and engagement of governments, civil society organizations, development partners, and other relevant stakeholders are critical for the success of CRVS system improvements. It is essential to establish collaborative platforms, promote participatory decision-making, and foster a sense of ownership among stakeholders.
- 2) **Tailored capacity building:** Tailor capacity building initiatives to address the specific needs and contexts of target countries. Offer comprehensive training programs that combine theoretical knowledge with practical skills development, promoting sustainability and knowledge transfer beyond the project duration.
- 3) **Integration of gender and human rights:** Ensure the integration of gender and human rights perspectives in the design and implementation of CRVS interventions. Conduct gender and human rights analyses to identify barriers, biases, and discrimination within CRVS systems and develop strategies to address them.
- 4) **Knowledge sharing and collaboration:** Foster platforms for knowledge sharing, peer learning, and collaboration among countries and regions. Facilitate the exchange of experiences, good practices, and lessons learned through workshops, conferences, and online communities of practice.
- 5) **Advocacy and communication:** Implement comprehensive advocacy and communication strategies to raise awareness about the importance of CRVS systems and mobilize support from governments, civil society, and development partners. Highlight the linkages between CRVS and broader development goals, emphasizing the role of vital statistics in evidence-based policymaking.

7. Recommendations

Considering the valuable insights gained from the evaluation of the project "Supporting Improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III)," the following recommendations hold significant importance for guiding future projects on CRVS in the region:

Based on findings regarding the project's effectiveness in enhancing CRVS systems, which encompasses the transfer of knowledge and skills to local stakeholders, it is recommended that ESCAP should:

- 1. Enhance dissemination of project findings:** ESCAP should develop comprehensive and concise reports, summaries, and briefs that effectively communicate the project's key findings and recommendations. These should be targeted towards different stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, to ensure wider awareness and utilization of project outcomes for advocacy, policy development, and decision-making. ESCAP should develop a comprehensive communication strategy to effectively disseminate project findings and reports (those prepared under recommendation 1 above). This strategy should target a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, to increase awareness and understanding of the project's relevance and achievements. Utilize various communication channels, such as workshops, conferences, publications, and online platforms, to share project outcomes, best practices, and lessons learned.
- 2. Adopt a more pragmatic approach for technical expertise.** Given the challenges in recruiting technical experts in smaller Pacific islands like Vanuatu, it is important to balance the project's ideals with the practical realities of the existing system. To address this issue, ESCAP could potentially apply the following options for future projects:
 - **Virtual Technical Assistance:** Considering the limitations in physically deploying technical experts to remote locations, future projects could leverage virtual platforms for technical assistance. Regular virtual meetings, workshops, and consultations with local teams can facilitate the exchange of ideas, recommendations, and solutions. This approach would enable experts to provide guidance while taking into account the local context and constraints.
 - **Local Capacity Building:** Instead of relying solely on external technical experts, future projects could invest in building the capacity of local teams. This involves identifying and training individuals within the country who can understand the project's ideals and objectives and effectively translate them into practical solutions within the local context. This approach not only ensures practicality and alignment but also empowers the country team to take ownership of the project's implementation.
 - **Peer Collaboration:** Collaborative efforts among Pacific island nations (or any other countries) facing similar challenges can be valuable. Establishing a platform for peer-to-peer exchange of experiences, lessons learned, and best practices can provide valuable insights. This network could facilitate the sharing of practical solutions and recommendations that are contextually relevant and feasible.
 - **Adaptive Implementation:** Recognizing the dynamic nature of smaller Pacific islands, future projects should adopt an adaptive implementation approach. This involves regularly reviewing and adjusting project strategies based on local feedback and evolving circumstances. Flexibility in adapting to local realities will ensure that project recommendations remain practical and effective.

Based on the relevance findings highlighting the strong alignment between the project's outcomes and regional commitments, and the commitment demonstrated by stakeholders to sustain CRVS system improvements, it is recommended that ESCAP should:

3. **Strengthen alignment with regional commitments:** ESCAP should build upon the project's achievements and ensure further alignment with regional commitments made at the ministerial conference in 2014. Further alignment can include conducting a comprehensive analysis of the regional commitments made in 2014 and assessing to what extent the project's current objectives and activities align with these commitments and ultimately identifying gaps and areas for improvement. In addition, ESCAP can also engage member states and stakeholders by initiating regular consultations and dialogues to understand their specific needs and priorities regarding CRVS system improvement. Further, based on the analysis and feedback from member states and stakeholders, ESCAP can also develop targeted strategies and action plans that align with the regional commitments.

In light of the findings indicating efficient fund utilization and successful capacity building activities (efficiency findings) and acknowledging the high level of ownership and commitment demonstrated by stakeholders, while recognizing the financial sustainability challenge (sustainability findings), it is recommended that ESCAP should:

4. **Foster knowledge-sharing and capacity building:** ESCAP should consider establishing mechanisms for continued knowledge-sharing and capacity building among stakeholders to sustain the advancements made by the project. This can be achieved through the establishment of networks, communities of practice, or online platforms that facilitate ongoing learning, knowledge exchange, and collaboration. Based on the findings, countries reported to have concerns with staff retention and their need for continued partnership with ESCAP to improve CRVS systems. In addition, ESCAP can also emphasize the importance of continuous training and professional development for government officials and other stakeholders involved in CRVS systems. This will help ensure the retention of knowledge and skills necessary for the effective operation and improvement of CRVS systems in the long term. Based on the findings, ESCAP should consider establishing learning spaces that reflect the implementation progress of each country. This will help address knowledge gaps and ensure that new implementers can easily grasp the project's objectives and activities. Furthermore, these learning spaces will allow all participants to recognize the value they bring to the project, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement among stakeholders.

With the successful integration of gender and human rights considerations throughout the project's design and implementation, it is recommended that ESCAP should:

5. **Strengthen gender-responsive data collection and analysis:** ESCAP should find ways to enhance the focus of future regional projects on gender equality and human rights by improving data collection and analysis methodologies that capture gender-disaggregated data and the experiences of marginalized groups. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the specific challenges and barriers faced by women, girls, and other marginalized populations in accessing and benefiting from CRVS systems. ESCAP can also encourage member states in the region to utilize this data to inform targeted interventions and policy recommendations that promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights within CRVS systems.
6. **Enhance partnerships and collaboration with gender and human rights organizations:** ESCAP should continue to strengthen partnerships with gender and human rights organizations to ensure a more robust integration of gender equality and human rights considerations into project activities. This can be achieved through collaborating with such organizations to leverage their expertise and networks, facilitate knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives, and ensure the participation and inclusion of marginalized groups in decision-making processes.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation TORs

1. INTRODUCTION

The project on *Supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase III)* was developed and implemented to support countries in the region to strengthen and improve CRVS systems through a wide variety of activities. Beginning in December 2019 and marking the midpoint of the Asian and Pacific CRVS Decade (2015-2024), the project built on the success of previous projects and focused on using the midterm assessment process as a basis in its implementation strategy. It aimed to harness the commitment from governments, civil society, and the international community to accelerate the improvement to CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific.

The project was undertaken through the following implementation strategy:

- 1) Supporting the assessment of national CRVS systems by reviewing and analysing selected civil registration processes;
- 2) Improving capacity of national CRVS systems to produce vital statistic, including publication of vital statistics reports based on civil registration records;
- 3) Providing a regional overview of CRVS improvements during the first half of the CRVS Decade and identifying persisting gaps in countries
- 4) Organizing a civil society forum on CRVS to ensure no voices are left behind in the regional review of the first half of the CRVS Decade; and
- 5) Implementing a regional advocacy and communications strategy promoting CRVS as a critical development issue, and highlighting the strong link to national, regional and global development initiatives.

In March 2022, the project was granted an extension with additional funds. The additional activities included providing technical support and capacity strengthening on conducting CRVS inequality assessment using secondary data sources to four countries, namely, Bangladesh, Fiji, Lao PDR, and Pakistan as well as organizing a workshop on data analysis and report writing for civil registration based vital statistics for five countries in the Pacific, that are, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The evaluation will assess relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the project and support future project design through lessons learned from the implementation of the project and the potential for replication and/or modification of the project approach as well as for refinement of resources and tools to support other countries in the future. The evaluation will begin in March 2023 and is expected to continue for three months.

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

2.1 Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to support accountability for results and to enable learning. It will generate information on the results achieved and lessons learned to inform future programme design and implementation of relevant ESCAP capacity development work. The main users of the evaluation results will be ESCAP, particularly the implementing division(s) and the Donor, Vital Strategies. Other expected users include the project participating countries and implementing partners.

2.2 Evaluation objectives

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- 1) Assess the project performance against the evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, gender and human rights mainstreaming, and any other cross-cutting issues, as deemed relevant.
- 2) Formulate lessons learned and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project design and implementation.

The evaluation analyses the level of achievement of project results, making use of the project's results framework, implementation processes and contextual factors, establishing as much as possible causal linkages guided by the evaluation criteria and questions. The evaluation will be conducted in line with ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines³ and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards for evaluation.

2.3 Evaluation Scope

The evaluation includes the design, strategy and implementation of the project over the entire period of its implementation. The evaluation covers the implementation and results of the project in all participating countries. The assessment covers all modes of implementation of the project, including national and regional workshops, training and additional activities as agreed upon based on consultations with project countries. The project commenced in December 2019 and originally was to continue for 16 months. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and requests from participating countries for the continuation of support, the project was extended until March 2023.

2.4 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The following evaluation criteria and questions to assess the project performance will be considered and further refined following consultations with project management and other stakeholders during the evaluation inception period.

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were the most significant results⁴ at the local, regional or national levels achieved or contributed by the project? Describe the project activities/outputs that lead to the results and present evidence of project's contribution to the results.• How did adjustments made to the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic affect the achievement of the project's results?
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent was the project designed based on demand from the target beneficiaries?• What adjustments, if any, were made to the project activities and modality, as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, or in response to the new priorities of States?

³ ESCAP, ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines, 2017, available on the ESCAP webpage at <http://www.unescap.org/partners/monitoring-and-evaluation/evaluation>.

⁴ In the context of this evaluation, results are assessed at the outcome level. Outcome level results are the likely or achieved effects of an intervention's outputs. They reflect the changes in the behaviour or practices of the target group(s)/countries that ESCAP intends to influence, including through actions taken collectively with its development partners. They also reflect that benefits and actions taken by the target groups/countries through the project interventions (source: ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines). Examples of outcome level results include: (1) Five pilot countries adopted and implemented national strategies and programmes with assistance from the project; (2) Several countries put in place a new system or procedures with support from the project; (3) Countries organised national workshops as a follow-up to the project training activities.

Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the project achieve efficiency in implementation through the combination of project stakeholders involved, making use of comparative advantages and the creation of synergy? • To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhanced reaching of results?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement?
Gender & human rights mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent were gender and human rights integrated into the design and implementation of the project, informed by relevant and tailored human rights and gender analysis?

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project includes two outcomes as follows:

- Outcome 1: Target countries are able to improve their CRVS systems through the review and analysis of their civil registration processes and increase the use of civil registration records for the production of vital statistics;
- Outcome 2: Governments, civil society and the international community commit to accelerating the improvement of CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific.

Under Outcome 1, the activities have been implemented to achieve two outputs.

- Output 1.1: Improved capacity of national CRVS stakeholders to assess and improve their CRVS systems by reviewing and analysing their civil registration processes; and

- Output 1.2: Improved capacity of national CRVS stakeholders to produce vital statistics, including publication of vital statistics reports based on civil registration data.

The focus for Output 1.1 were two main areas from which the project countries and relevant stakeholders have essentially benefited through a wide variety of activities.

1. CRVS Business Process Improvement – in the Maldives, Niue, Samoa and Vanuatu, the project has provided coordination and delivered technical assistance in building the capacity of relevant national entities to assess their CRVS systems by mapping selected civil registration processes, identify performance issues and their root causes, and develop re-design ideas to improve the process.

2. The implementation of inequality assessments (IA) and strengthening Demographic Analysis Capacity – the project involves the development of practical guidance to conduct qualitative and quantitative assessment of inequalities related to civil registration for which activities were built upon Expert Group Meetings organized by ESCAP in January, February and March 2021. Bangladesh, Fiji, Lao PDR, and Pakistan expressed interest to pilot the conduct of inequality assessments in their countries, which was delivered through hiring national consultants to work individually with the countries, and senior advisors to provide technical advice to the national consultants and to lead the regional workshops and training to build capacity for demographic analysis that lays the foundation for the implementation of inequality assessments.

Output 1.2, centering around the improved capacity of national CRVS stakeholders to produce and disseminate high quality vital statistics, was delivered through the training provided to four countries in the Pacific, i.e., Palau, Vanuatu, Samoa, and Marshall Islands. After the training, a follow-up with participating countries was conducted and found that more support is needed to ensure the development of draft vital statistics reports. Therefore, with the approval of the additional funds and the project extension, this activity will be continued through a training to be organized from 30 January to 3 February 2023 for five counties, namely, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The activities under Outcome 2 mainly focused on outreach and communication to increase awareness and to ensure the continued commitment from all sectors ranging from governments, civil society to the international community to accelerate the improvement of CRVS systems in the Asia-Pacific region.

The main activity for this outcome was highlighted by the organization of the Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific from 16-19 November 2021 where the Ministerial Declaration on Building a More Resilient Future with Inclusive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics was endorsed by 43 member States.⁵ Moreover, in partnership with civil society organizations, a consultation of children and youth in selected countries in Asia and the Pacific and a civil society forum on CRVS were conducted to promote civil society participation in the CRVS Decade, review regional CRVS improvements from the perspective of civil society and ensure specific proposals from civil society for the Ministerial Conference and its outcome. A detailed communication strategy was developed and implemented to raise awareness of the key issues discussed at the Ministerial Conference.

Other activities were also completed to support the acceleration of the improvement of CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific, including the compilation of country experiences in the region on the use of administrative sources for censuses (including register-based and hybrid censuses) was developed and published to share valuable information on the topic in the region through peer-to-peer learning.

Lastly, as part of the work on increasing awareness and knowledge, information briefs, evidence-based paper, blogs and other knowledge resources on CRVS have been published on ESCAP and *getinthepicture* websites. To supplement the work in this component, several sessions on different aspects of CRVS have also been organized through the Asia-Pacific Stats Café, a webinar series organized by the Statistics Division to share experiences on a broad range of topics related to official statistics throughout the project.

4. OVERALL EVALUATION APPROACH

In assessing the results achieved, the evaluation will make use of a theory of change approach to understand the actual results achieved and the process of achieving results. The development of the theory of change should be guided by the results framework of the project and the actual implementation strategy and delivery of outputs.

The evaluation will apply a mixed-method approach through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to inform findings. Due to the ongoing travel restrictions and health concerns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which are likely to persist for 2023 the evaluation methodology will rely primarily on desk review and remote data collection methods. The evaluation will apply multiple methods, and cross-check information and data from different sources to ensure confidence in the findings.

⁵ The Ministerial Declaration was later adopted as ESCAP Resolution 78/4
<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=ESCAP%2FRES%2F78%2F4&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

The evaluation process will involve several phases as outlined below:

Phases
<p>1. Inception and scoping phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary review of documentations • Interviews with members of the reference group and other project stakeholders to understand their expectations and requirements • Prepare an updated TOR, including a workplan, project theory of change and evaluation matrix. • Preparation of questionnaires and interview guides (to be finalized after desk review)
<p>2. A desk review of project documents. The following documentations will be provided to the consultant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the project team members and their respective roles • List of stakeholders to be interviewed • Project publications, research papers, training materials • Press releases • Project meeting information (e.g. attendance lists, minutes/reports, agenda, handouts, questionnaire results) • Mission reports • Project document, including the work and monitoring plan, logical framework and budget • Relevant agreements (e.g. with the project partners) • Project revisions (if applicable) • Progress reports, including documents referred to in the report • Project terminal report, including documents referred to in the report
<p>3. Surveys of project stakeholders (electronic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An electronic survey will be administered targeting government officials and implementing partners • Development and administration of the survey by the consultant • Data analyses
<p>4. In-depth individual interviews (video/audio call)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governmental stakeholders • Development partners • Project management
<p>5. Observation (virtual meeting, as required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultant will be given an opportunity to observe the proceedings of the final project meeting during the period of the evaluation.
<p>6. Preparation of the evaluation report and presentation of findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a brief note containing the preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation • Meeting with the reference group to present (using PowerPoint) and discuss the preliminary evaluation results • Preparation of a draft evaluation report and review of the draft report by the evaluation reference group • Finalization of the evaluation report following a standard format to be provided by ESCAP

Data will be disaggregated by sex and other relevant social categories. The evaluation will undertake a transparent and participatory evaluation process that will involve male and female stakeholders identified in the stakeholder analysis, including: the reference group, development partners and target beneficiaries in all key evaluation tasks.

In analyzing the data, the evaluation will use qualitative and quantitative approaches, and provide charts and direct quotations. Use the data to assess evaluation against the selected criteria. Gender and human rights mainstreaming are essential components of data analysis in all ESCAP evaluations and take place on three levels: 1) project design; 2) project implementations; 3) project outcomes. Data analysis will enable useful, evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation methodology will also take into consideration the ethical principles in evaluation as detailed in the UNEG ethical guidelines for evaluation.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Evaluation reference group

To support the independence of the evaluation, the Evaluation Unit, SPMD will manage and oversee the entire evaluation process. An evaluation reference group will be established to support the evaluation and will comprise the following members, the Director/Section Chief of the implementing division/office (Chair), Section Chief of the implementing division/office, project officer, evaluation officer from the Evaluation Unit, SPMD and additional members, including staff from partner ESCAP division/office (internal) or organization (external).

The reference group provides technical and methodological guidance to the evaluation process; reviews and approves the selection of the consultant, terms of reference and inception report; provides quality control of the evaluation report and validation of recommendations; and ensures adherence to ESCAP Evaluation Policy and Guidelines and the use of evaluation outputs, including the formulation of the evaluation management response and follow-up action plan.

5.2 Evaluator

The evaluator will assume overall responsibility for carrying out the evaluation. This includes, among other activities, managing the work, ensuring the quality of interviews and data collection, preparing the draft report, presenting the draft report and producing the final report after comments have been received in line with standard templates provided by ESCAP. The evaluator must have:

- Knowledge of the United Nations System; principles, values, goals and approaches, including human rights, gender equality, cultural values, the Sustainable Development Goals and results-based management.
- Professional and technical experience in evaluation (application of evaluation norms, standards and ethical guidelines and the relevant organizational evaluation policy and promotion of evaluation and evidence-based learning).⁶
- They should also have good technical knowledge in the Asia-Pacific region, including major development trends and issues, particularly in the areas of civil registration and vital statistics.

⁶ See Standard 3.1. Competencies, UNEG. 2016. Norms and standards for evaluation.

6. OUTPUTS

The following outputs will be delivered to the project manager at ESCAP:

- 1) Inception report detailing the approach of the evaluator, workplan and evaluation logical framework
- 2) Results of data collection exercise
- 3) First draft of evaluation report
- 4) Presentation (ppt) on findings, conclusions and recommendations
- 5) Final evaluation report
- 6) An ESCAP evaluation brief

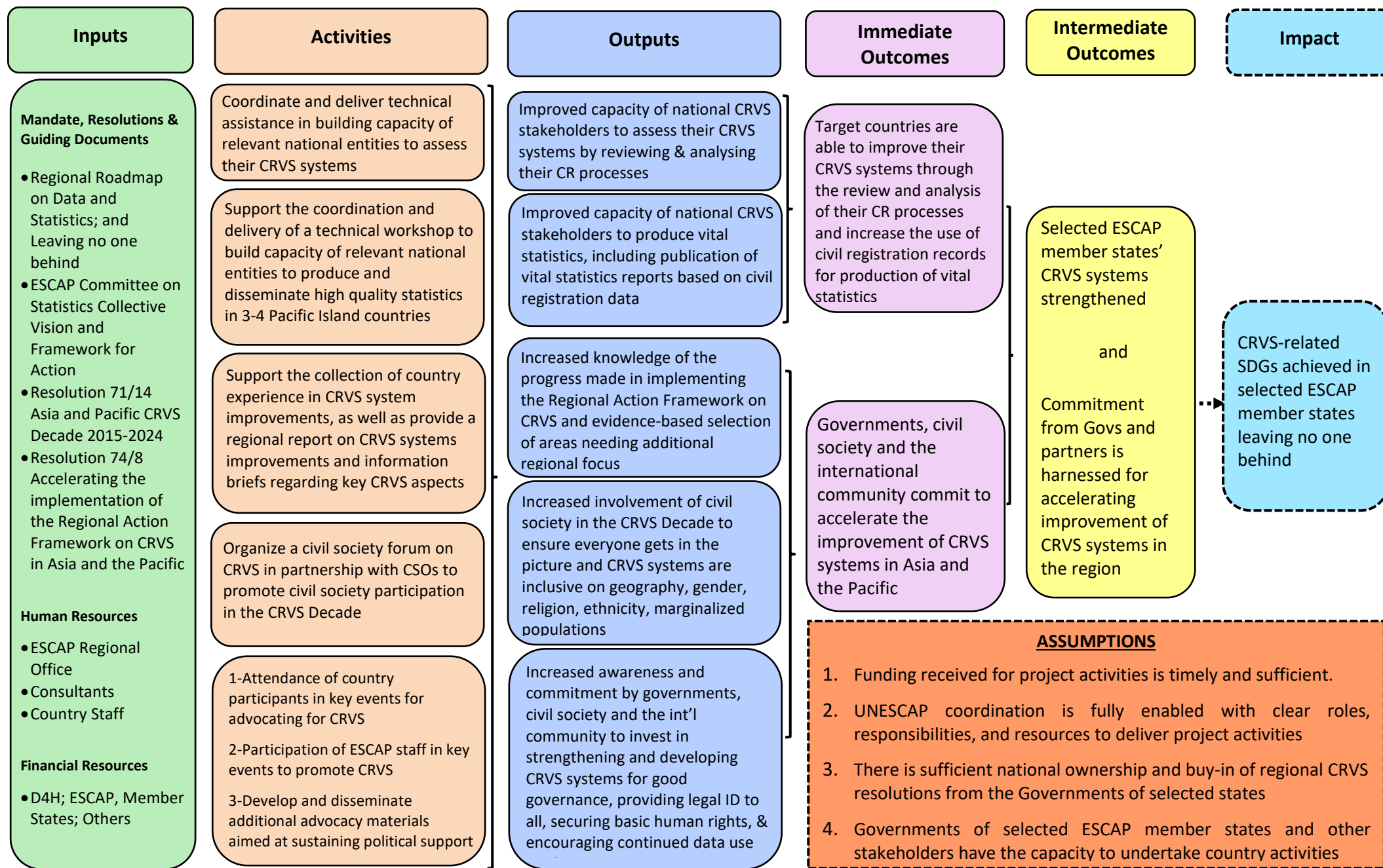
The draft evaluation report will be shared with key stakeholders prior to finalization. The final evaluation report will be posted on ESCAP's public website. ESCAP adheres to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct in evaluation and all staff and consultants engaged in evaluation are required to uphold these standards. To this end, ESCAP has developed a Consultants Agreement form that evaluators are required to comply upon signing the consultancy contract.

7. WORKPLAN

The evaluation will be undertaken from *March-May 2023*.

Phase	Timelines
1. Inception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review of documentations • Interviews with members of the reference group • Preparation of an updated TOR, including workplan, theory of change and evaluation matrix • Presentation of evaluation methodology and tools to the reference group 	March 2023
2. Data collection and analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review of documentations • Preparation of surveys and interview guides • Administration of stakeholder survey (supported by ESCAP) • Interviews with stakeholders • Attendance at the Regional Closing Workshop on Inequality Assessment Project (optional) • Data compilation and analysis 	April-May 2023
3. Report preparation and conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a first draft evaluation report • Meet with the reference group to discuss the preliminary findings and recommendations • Prepare a revised draft evaluation report • Final evaluation report 	May 2023

Annex 2: Project's theory of change



Annex 3: Evaluation matrix

Criteria	Evaluation questions	Measure/Indicators	Data collection methods	Data source
Effectiveness	1. What were the most significant (outcome level) results at the local, regional or national levels achieved or contributed by the project? Describe the project activities/outputs that lead to the results and present evidence of project's contribution to the results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline conducted and report prepared Digital tool developed and piloted Institutional capacity building done Local policies listed, action and investment strategies developed, policy dialogue done Regional experience dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulation of data derived from document review, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project documents ✓ Stakeholder feedback in KII ✓ Online survey questionnaire
	2. How did adjustments made to the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic affect the achievement of the project's results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the project plan to identify tasks delayed/affected due Assess changes in the project timeline, budget, staffing, or scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data triangulation from document reviews, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project documents ✓ Stakeholder feedback in KII ✓ Online questionnaire
Relevance	1. To what extent was the project designed based on demand from the target beneficiaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline research Ongoing stakeholder dialogue Stakeholders buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data triangulation from document reviews, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project documents ✓ KII stakeholder feedback ✓ Online survey questionnaire
	2. What adjustments, if any, were made to the project activities and modality, as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, or in response to new priorities of member States?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective remote engagement Frequent stakeholder communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data triangulation from document reviews, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project documents ✓ KII stakeholder feedback ✓ Online survey questionnaire
Efficiency	1. To what extent did the project achieve efficiency in implementation through the combination of project stakeholders involved, making use of comparative advantages and synergy creation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of relevant stakeholders Partnerships with various stakeholders including public, private, and international development sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data triangulation from document reviews, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project documents ✓ KII stakeholder feedback ✓ Online survey questionnaire
	2. To what extent has partnering with other organizations enabled or enhanced reaching of results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with local organizations Partnerships with regional organizations Partnerships with international organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data triangulation from document reviews, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project documents ✓ KII stakeholder feedback ✓ Online survey questionnaire
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial and socioeconomic sustainability Institutional sustainability Technological sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis of KII transcripts and online questionnaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KII stakeholder feedback • Online questionnaire
Gender and human rights mainstreaming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent were gender and human rights integrated into the design and implementation of the project, informed by relevant and tailored human rights and gender analysis? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstreaming women's concerns in baseline, implementation, and policy options, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data triangulation from document reviews, interviews, and online survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents, stakeholders' feedback from interviews

Annex 4: Data collection instruments

Key Informant Interview Project Management

Evaluation of project for supporting improvements to CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific

Date of KII	
Starting Time of KII	
Finishing Time of KII	

A. PROJECT DESIGN

1. How are the management and staffing structures of different activities organized under the project for supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in ESCAP?

B. BACKGROUND

2. Please provide an overview of the design process, e.g., timeframe of development, process, and stakeholders involved in the design etc.
3. What was the process of project design? E.g., academia consultations, baseline studies, meetings, etc.
4. Were any of the key staff currently working on the project involved in the project design? E.g., Project Manager, Project Coordinator, etc. If yes, who and what was the role of these members?
5. Was a Human Rights and Gender analysis undertaken to feed into project design?
6. What challenges were faced during the design phase? E.g., limited baseline information, lack of stakeholder consensus, etc.
7. Based on your experience of implementing this project, what have been the major positive elements of the project design? E.g., flexibility, partnership, and inclusion of particular activities that are easy to implement and/or highly welcomed by beneficiaries, SMART log frame, etc. Please elaborate.
8. And what have been the major elements of design that are resulting in implementation problems? E.g., large number of activities, ambitious targets, etc. Please elaborate.
9. Have any measures been taken to resolve some of these issues? If yes, please explain what measures have been taken and what are the outcomes of these?
10. Have there been any changes to project activities or logical framework since the project started? If yes, what are these changes, why, when, and how were these made? And how have these now affected project delivery?

C. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

11. What is the role played by the Project Management in implementing the project?
12. What are the major challenges faced by the Project Management in delivering project activities?
13. How were some of these challenges mitigated? Please provide details.

D. STAFFING

14. How many staff are working for this project? And what are the roles and responsibilities of these staff members?
15. Has this staff been sufficient for managing the project? If no, why not? And what measures are taken to bolster staffing capacity? E.g., hiring of short-term experts

E. EFFECTIVENESS

16. Which project targets have been achieved and overachieved so far?
17. What were the supporting factors responsible for meeting or exceeding these targets?
18. Which project outputs/activities were/are delayed? And what were/are the reasons for delays?
19. How did these delays affect progress of other project outputs and what is the effect on overall project?
20. What mitigation measures have been undertaken to bring these activities back on track?

F. MONITORING & EVALUATION

21. How is the project's Logical Framework and Theory of Change used to monitor progress?
22. What challenges are faced when using the framework? E.g., ambitious, or non-SMART indicators, long list of activities to be monitored, etc.?
23. What special efforts were made to collect gender-segregated data?
24. Has the project made any major changes in implementation based on the results of the monitoring activities? If yes, please provide examples

G. TIMELINESS

25. Were all project activities delivered on time and according to the planned timeline in the Project Document and the activity work plans (AWPs)? If no, what were the factors responsible for these delays and how did these affect the project? Please elaborate.
26. How have these delays affected overall project implementation?

H. COVID -19 IMPLICATIONS

27. Have any project activities continued as usual despite the COVID-19 pandemic? If yes, please provide a list of activities
28. Did the project take up any additional activities in response to COVID-19? If yes, please provide details, including list of activities, associated budgets, etc.
29. How has COVID-19 affected project performance and timeliness? How were these issues mitigated?

I. FINANCE

Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative

30. Has the project faced any administrative problems with financing? E.g., late approvals, difficult reporting processes, unrealistic budgeting at design or AWP stage, etc.?
31. How have these issues affected the program's performance? And what measures have been taken thus far to resolve some of these issues?

J. PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

32. Who are the major project partners and stakeholders?
33. How are activities of partners monitored? E.g., through signed agreements, field monitoring, reporting, etc.
34. Which of the stakeholders played a key role in ensuring that the project objectives are met? How? Please elaborate.
35. How do implementing partners and stakeholders collaborate/coordinate? And how often? E.g., quarterly planning meetings, stakeholder workshops, etc.
36. What have been major challenges faced by the project in collaborating with its partners and stakeholders? E.g., lack of buy in, limited capacity, etc.
37. What measures have been taken to overcome some of these challenges? E.g., training of partner staff, consultative planning, etc.

K. ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION

38. Are there any other international development agencies/projects which have delivered the same or similar activities as that of the project? If yes, how has the project collaborated with these for synergistic implementation?
39. Which of these have significantly helped to contribute to the project outcomes? How?
40. What problems has the project faced in collaborating with these other initiatives?

L. COORDINATION WITH DONORS

41. What has been the major role played by the donor in project design and implementation?

42. Did the project team face any challenges when collaborating with the donor? E.g., delayed decision making, etc. How were these resolved?

M. IMPACT

43. Does the project make a periodic assessment of the impact? E.g., tracer studies, impact assessment, etc.

44. In your opinion, which project activities have had the highest potential for impact? Why?

45. Also, which project activities do you think have had the lowest potential for impact? Why?

N. SUSTAINABILITY AND RISKS

46. Based on your experience, which of the project activities implemented thus far, are the most sustainable? Why? Similarly, which project activities are the least sustainable? Why?

47. Has the project devised an exit strategy with regard to the interventions under the two outputs? If yes, what are the main features of this strategy? And is this strategy documented?

O. GENDER and HUMAN RIGHTS

48. What measurement have been taken to ensure inclusion/mainstreaming of women and human rights in the project activities?

49. What have been the major challenges and opportunities regarding gender and human rights integration into project activities?

P. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND DISSEMINATION

50. What mechanisms and tools does the project have in place to organize and store knowledge gathered and generated during the course of project implementation? E.g., knowledge management strategy, development of newsletter, etc.

51. What methods of dissemination is the project using to share this information with beneficiaries and various stakeholders?

52. How have knowledge management and dissemination activities undertaken by the project been effective? Please provide examples.

53. How can the knowledge management and dissemination activities of the project be improved?

Q. LESSONS LEARNT

54. Based on your experience, what are the major lessons learned from the project design and implementation?

R. RECOMMENDATIONS

55. What are your overall recommendations for the improvement of project design and implementation going forward?

Key Informant Interview
Implementing Partners (Member States)

Evaluation of project for supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in Asia and the Pacific

No.	Item	
1	Name of the Respondent	
2	Gender	
3	Designation	
4	Contact Details	
5	Date of the Interview	
6	Starting Time	
7	Finishing Time	

Please NOTE that, the main activities under this project were:

1. CRVS Business Process Improvement for assessing countries' CRVS systems by mapping selected civil registration processes, identify performance issues and their root causes, and develop re-design ideas to improve the process.
2. Implementation of inequality assessments (IA) and strengthening Demographic Analysis Capacity – for conducting qualitative and quantitative assessment of inequalities related to civil registration (through regional workshops and training to build capacity for demographic analysis that lays the foundation for the implementation of inequality assessments).
3. Improving the capacity of national CRVS stakeholders to produce and disseminate high quality vital statistics.
4. Outreach and communication to increase awareness and to ensure continued commitment from all sectors ranging from governments, civil society to the international community to accelerate the improvement of CRVS systems in the Asia-Pacific region (through Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific

A. BACKGROUND

1. Since when has your organization been engaged with the project?
2. What is the primary role of your organization/agency in implementing project activities?
3. What major projects similar to this have been implemented by your organization in the past?
4. What is the geographical presence of your organization?

B. DESIGN

5. This project was responsible for delivering two main outcomes:
 - 1) Improving countries CRVS systems through the review and analysis of their civil registration processes and increasing the use of civil registration records for the production of vital statistics; and
 - 2) Calling for governments, civil society and the international community to commit to accelerating the improvement of CRVS systems in the Asia and the Pacific region.

How have project activities (see first page above) been incorporated into the mandate of your organization?

C. IMPLEMENTATION

6. What is the management structure of your organization to manage the project? E.g., number of staff, role in project management and implementation, etc.
7. What have been the major challenges faced by your organization when implementing the project activities? E.g., accessibility, engaging local communities, activity timelines, etc. How have these challenges been overcome? Please elaborate.

D. COLLABORATION WITH ESCAP

8. What activities has your project implemented in collaboration with the ESCAP CRVS project team? Please provide details, e.g., nature of activity, time frame, your involvement in the design, geographic presence, etc.
9. What support have you received from UN ESCAP for implementation of the project activities? How does this support help in effective project implementation?
10. Have you faced any challenges in your relationship with the UN ESCAP? E.g., delayed fund transfers, limited technical support, difficult monitoring, and reporting processes, etc.
11. Does your organization partner with any other organizations similar to this project? If yes, what have been the comparative challenges and opportunities of partnering with ESCAP?

E. PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

12. In your opinion, what are the most significant achievements/lessons learned of the project thus far?

13. Also, what are the major weaknesses of the project design and operations if any, which prevented it from achieving the desired results?

14. What are your recommendations for improving the project effectiveness?

F. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

15. Have your organization undertaken any activities to involve women and marginalized communities?

16. What challenges have you faced in engaging these segments of the population? And have any measures been taken to overcome these? If yes, please provide details.

17. How can the engagement of these groups be further improved in the project's activities?

G. SUSTAINABILITY

18. How will project activities continue after the project is concluded? Please elaborate.

19. In your opinion, what are the most sustainable activities of the project? Please elaborate.

20. Also, in your opinion, what the least sustainable activities of the project? Please elaborate.

21. What measures can be taken to improve their sustainability?

H. COVID-19

22. What challenges has your organization faced due to COVID-19 with regard to implementation the project activities? E.g., suspension of operations, delays, limited outreach to communities, etc.

23. How have some of these challenges been mitigated? E.g., modification of implementation modalities?

24. Also, under the project for supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in Asia and the Pacific, has your organization undertaken additional activities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic? If yes, please elaborate.

I. LESSONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

25. What are the major lessons learned from the implementation of this project?

26. How can the implementation of similar projects in the future be improved? E.g., nature of activities, geographical coverage, financial mechanisms, etc

In-depth Interview (IDI) Sheet
Donor/Vital Strategies

Evaluation of project for supporting improvements to CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific

No.	Item	
1	Name of the Respondent	
2	Gender	
3	Designation	
4	Contact Details	
5	Date of the Interview	

1. Since when has your organization been involved with the project for supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in Asia and the Pacific?
2. How are the project objectives incorporated into the mandate of your organization?
3. What is the primary role of your organization in the project for supporting improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in Asia and the Pacific? What activities did you have to undertake to deliver on this role?
4. Did your organization face any challenges in observing the project? If yes, how were these mitigated?
5. Did your organization contribute to the project design, implementation etc.? If yes, how was your organization involved? E.g., providing technical support, stakeholder consultation etc.
6. What are your views on the relevance of the project's design and activities?
7. Based on your observation, what have been the major achievement of the project so far?
8. Also, how has the project integrated women and human rights in the project implementation?
9. Based on your observations of the project activities, what are the key lessons learned?
10. What would be your recommendation for a similar project in the future?

Electronic Survey Tool
Other Stakeholders

Evaluation of project for supporting improvements to CRVS systems in Asia and the Pacific

A. GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What best describes your organization?
 - a. Government agency
 - b. Private Sector business / firm
 - c. International / intergovernmental agency
 - d. CSO / NGO / Research organization / Academia
 - e. Other (Please specify)

2. What is your role / position within the organization?

3. What country are you based in? <drop menu of list of countries>

4. What activities did you participate in? Select from the list below.

5. Was your organization involved in the design of the project?
 - a. a. Yes
 - b. b. No

6. What was the role of your organization in the implementation of the project activities? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Coordination/Administrative
 - b. Technical Support
 - c. Policy support
 - d. Data collection
 - e. Others (Please specify)

7. To what extent do you agree with the following?

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Project was relevant to your organization/country					
2	The goals/objectives of the project were met					
3	Project had identified right partners for implementation					
4	Project was adaptive to any changes					
5	Activities/linkages/policies etc. developed by the project are sustainable					

8. How did the project benefit your organization/country? (Please select all that apply)
- I and/or my organization have developed a better understanding of the need for improving CRVS systems and increasing the use of civil registration records for the production of vital statistics
 - I and/or my organization have developed a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities that are relevant to my work/organization
 - Project beneficiaries are more aware of the project's activities and its impact
 - There has been an urge for governments, civil society and the international community to commit to accelerating the improvement of CRVS systems in the Asia and the Pacific region
 - Others (Please specify)
9. Overall, how satisfied are you with the project activities you participated in?
- Extremely satisfied
 - Somewhat satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat dissatisfied
 - Extremely dissatisfied
10. What, if any, have been the **major challenges** faced by your organization when implementing the project activities?
- No Challenges
 - Delayed or insufficient funding
 - Lengthy approval process
 - Lack of communication with project team
 - Complicated nature of the activities
 - Impractical timeline
 - COVID-19
 - Others (Please specify)

B. OUTCOME OF PROJECT

11. Have you observed any change related to improving CRVS systems and increasing the use of civil registration records for the production of vital statistics in your organization/country as a result of the project?
- Yes
 - No
12. If yes, what changes have you observed?
- Increase in assessing countries' CRVS systems by country stakeholders
 - Increase in conducting qualitative and quantitative assessment of inequalities related to civil registration records
 - Improved the capacity of national CRVS stakeholders to produce and disseminate high quality vital statistics
 - Increased awareness for the need to continued commitment from all sectors ranging from governments, civil society to the international community in line to accelerating improving CRVS systems in the Asia-Pacific region
 - Others (Please specify)
13. If no, what are the reasons that inhibits these changes?
- Lack of knowledge/capacity

- b. Lack of interest
- c. Lack of country's political will to commit to the course
- d. Inadequate resources
- e. Others (Please specify)

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

14. What are your recommendations for improving the implementation of similar projects in the future? (Select all that apply)
- a. Changes in the nature of activities
 - b. Geographical coverage
 - c. Involving more relevant stakeholders
 - d. Improved financial mechanism
 - e. Providing technical support
 - f. Development of uncomplicated tools
 - g. Improvement in communication strategy
 - h. None of the above
 - i. Others (Please specify)

Annex 5: List of individuals interviewed

No	Name of Respondent	Role/ Position	Country/ Organization	Stakeholder Type	Interview Date
1	Ms. Fathimath Riyaza	Deputy Statistician	National Bureau of Statistics- Maldives	Implementing partners	11/05/2023
2	Raj Mitra	Consultant	Vital Strategies- Delhi	Donor/D4H	16/05/2023
3	James Eystone-Hinkins	Director, Health and Vital Statistics Section	ABS- Australia	Implementing partners	18/05/2023
4	Farzana Yasmin	Child Protection Specialist	UNICEF Country Office- Pakistan	Other stakeholder	19/05/2023
5	Romain Santon	Deputy Director	Vital Strategies- Singapore	Donor/D4H	23/05/2023
6	Mitchell Hsieh	Chief	Communications and Knowledge Management Section-ESCAP	Project Management	22/05/2023
7	Indah Luz Abayan	Program Officer	Child Rights Coalition Asia	Implementing partners	23/05/2023
8	Carah Figueroa	CRVS Consultant	SPC/Vital Strategies- Australia	Other stakeholder	16/05/2023
9	Gloria Mathenge	SPC Nairobi	Economic Affairs Officer (ECA)	Other stakeholder	25/05/2023
10	Meli Nadakuca	Senior Statistician	Fiji Bureau of Statistics-Fiji	Implementing partners	17/05/2023
11	Jeff Montgomery	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Adviser	Pacific Community	Other stakeholder	19/05/2023
12	Carlie Congdon	Technical Advisor, CRVS, Global Grants Program	Vital Strategies, GGP- New York	Donor/D4H	25/05/2023
13	Jasmine Wai Mun Hong	Regional Adviser - Micronesia	ESCAP	Project Management	11/05/2023
14	Lauren Moran	Director, Mortality Data Centre	ABS- Australia	Implementing partners	19/05/2023
15	Martine Bratschi	Deputy Director	Vital Strategies- Singapore	Donor/D4H	18/05/2023
16	Chris Ryan	Statistician	ESCAP SRO-Pacific	Project Management	17/05/2023
17	Om Prakash Bera	Lead Consultant	GHAI-India	Other stakeholder	19/05/2023
18	Anne-Sofie Gerhard	Technical Advisor and Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project Manager	UNDP- Country office Vanuatu	Other stakeholder	19/05/2023
19	David Rauss	Project Manager	ESCAP Statistics Division	Project Management	06/06/2023
20	Ms. Thirakha Chanthalanouvong	Director General, Social Statistics	LSB- Lao	Implementing partners	16/05/2023
21	Nobuko Kajiura		ESCAP	Other stakeholder	19/05/2023
22	Irum Abid	Project Director	TSU- CRVS- Pakistan	Implementing partners	06/06/2023
23	Dr Chloe Mercedes Harvey	Project Manager	ESCAP Statistics Division	Project Management	20/06/2023

Summary of Interviews Completed by Stakeholder Type, as of 20th June 2023

No.	Type	Count
1	Project Management Team	3
2	Implementing Partners	7
3	Donor/D4H	4
4	Online Survel Tool	12
TOTAL Respondents		26





Annex 6: List of documents reviewed

Following is the list of documents reviewed during the desk review phase:

- 1) Project publications (Research papers, training materials)
- 2) Blogs and newsletters
- 3) Project meeting information (e.g. attendance lists, minutes/reports, agenda, handouts, questionnaire results)
- 4) Mission reports
- 5) Project document, including the work and monitoring plan, logical framework and total budget
- 6) Relevant agreements (e.g. with the project partners)
- 7) Project revisions
- 8) Monthly and quarterly progress reports, including documents referred to in the report

Annex 7: Management response

EVALUATION MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND FOLLOW-UP PLAN

Title of Evaluation: Evaluation of the project on Supporting Improvements to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in Asia and the Pacific (Phase 3)		
Date of completion: August 2023		
	Signature	Date
Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana Executive Secretary		1 December 2023
Ms. Lin Yang Deputy Executive Secretary		1 December 2023
Mr. Adnan H. Aliani Director, Strategy and Programme Management Division		16 November 2023
Ms. Rachael Beaven Director, Statistics Division		17 November 2023
General Remarks by Management		
<p>Management welcomes the positive findings of the evaluation, confirming the significant contributions this project made towards enhancing civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region.</p> <p>The evaluation highlights the comprehensive and collaborative approach through which project activities were implemented, engaging with key national stakeholders and development partners to achieve the objectives at local, national and regional levels. Management also acknowledges the evaluation's finding that the integration of gender and human rights considerations throughout the project's design and implementation has resulted in notable advancements in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights through strengthened civil registration and vital statistics systems.</p> <p>Management supports the recommendations for enhancing dissemination of project findings, adopting a more pragmatic approach for technical expertise and strengthening gender-responsive data collection and analysis. Management recognises the need for leveraging local knowledge and expertise wherever</p>		

possible and developing adaptive strategies for practical and sustainable solutions. These recommendations are already being integrated in the current implementation of Data for Health Phase 4 (2023) activities and will be further integrated into planned activities for Phase 5 (2024-25).

Recommendations	Management Response	Follow-up Actions	Who will take action	Expected completion date	Indicator of completion of follow-up action
<p>1. Enhance dissemination of project findings: Develop comprehensive and concise reports, summaries, and briefs that effectively communicate the project's key findings and recommendations. This should include the development of a comprehensive communication strategy to effectively disseminate project findings and reports.</p>	<p>Management accepts this recommendation noting that the regional CRVS initiative already has a robust communication strategy. However, further steps can be taken to ensure findings are presented in a more accessible and concise format.</p> <p>The Regional CRVS Initiative currently maintains a dedicated website where all publications, resources and events are shared, as well as a monthly newsletter that disseminates recent updates and CRVS news to over 1600 CRVS stakeholders throughout the Asia-Pacific region.</p> <p>Communication is an integral part of the initiative and builds on the communication strategy developed in preparations for the Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific, held in 2021.</p>	<p>Additional efforts will be made to document and disseminate information about activities. This includes accessible briefs such as the CRVS Business Process Improvement (BPI) briefs</p> <p>Under Phase 4 and Phase 5, targeted efforts, such as monthly newsletters and policy briefs, will be made to disseminate project findings to key stakeholders and ensure their use in policies and programmes</p>	SD	March 2025 (Integrated into Phase 4 and Phase 5)	<p>Additional publications (reports, summaries and briefs) on www.getinthepicture.org,</p> <p>Monthly CRVS Insight newsletter</p> <p>Stats Cafes to launch and disseminate project findings.</p> <p>Policy briefs disseminated following E2A workshops</p>
<p>2. Adopt a more pragmatic approach for technical expertise: Given the challenges in recruiting technical experts in smaller</p>	<p>Management accepts this recommendation and recognizes it can be very difficult to find suitable staff in certain locations (especially in SIDS). During Phase 3, this was</p>	<p>This issue will be addressed through a country-specific approach, in close collaboration with partners on the ground and in consideration of the local setting.</p>	SD	March 2025 (Integrated into Phase	Involvement of UN country team members in

<p>Pacific islands like Vanuatu, it is important to balance the project's ideals with the practical realities of the existing system. Address challenges in recruiting experts by adopting virtual assistance, building local capacity, promoting peer collaboration, and employing adaptive implementation.</p>	<p>mainly overcome by having remote assistance.</p> <p>Alternative measures have been implemented in Phase 4. In one country where it was challenging to recruit expert staff, close collaboration with UNFPA has meant a longer term appointment of a national staff to help with multiple projects in lieu of ad hoc national consultant to support the implementation of activities.</p>	<p>Closer collaboration with the UN country teams and other UN agencies on the group is part of this strategy and has already proven very useful in Lao PDR, Nauru and Turkmenistan.</p> <p>Increased efforts to upskill local consultants and stakeholders to build national capacities and expertise.</p>		<p>4 and Phase 5)</p>	<p>country level activities</p> <p>Capacity building activities to build technical expertise</p>
<p>3. Strengthen alignment with regional commitments: Build upon the project's achievements and ensure further alignment with regional commitments made at the ministerial conference in 2014. This can be done by actively engaging with member States and stakeholders to identify priority areas and develop strategies that directly contribute to the fulfilment of these commitments.</p>	<p>Management partially accepts this recommendation noting that activities are a direct response to regional commitments made by member States as part of the Asia-Pacific CRVS Decade (2015-2024).</p> <p>Member States will also be actively engaged in the upcoming review of the Decade and planning for next steps beyond this period.</p>	<p>The programme team will continue to maintain close engagement with member States and stakeholders bilaterally, through the Regional Steering Group for CRVS in Asia and the Pacific and the Asia Pacific CRVS Partnership.</p>	<p>SD</p>	<p>No additional action needed</p>	<p>No additional action needed</p>
<p>4. Foster knowledge-sharing and capacity building: Consider establishing mechanisms for continued knowledge-sharing and capacity building among stakeholders to sustain the</p>	<p>Management fully accepts this recommendation and will continue to facilitate knowledge-sharing platforms, such as the sub-regional civil registrar networks and the Community of Practice on</p>	<p>In Phase 4 and 5, enhance knowledge sharing and capacity building by establishing and supporting a community of practice, sub-regional civil registrars' networks and convening regional steering group meetings.</p>	<p>SD</p>	<p>March 2025 (Integrated into Phase 4 and Phase 5)</p>	<p>Establishment of additional civil registrars' networks, communities</p>

<p>advancements made by the project. This can be achieved through the establishment of networks, communities of practice, or online platforms that facilitate ongoing learning, knowledge exchange, and collaboration.</p>	<p>Measuring Adult Mortality which are already established.</p> <p>Building on the successful first CRVS Research Forum held in April 2023, the CRVS Programme Team plans to integrate further capacity strengthening in production of CRVS research through a joint applied research initiative in collaboration with UNECA (Phase 4).</p>				<p>of practice or other relevant networks.</p>
<p>5. Strengthen Gender-Responsive Data Collection and Analysis: Enhance focus on gender equality and human rights in regional projects. Improve data collection and analysis methodologies to capture gender-disaggregated data and experiences of marginalized groups for targeted interventions and policy recommendations.</p>	<p>Management accepts this recommendation and will strive to further strengthen gender-response data collection and analysis through the Evidence to Action Initiative (E2A) which is being implemented in Phase 4.</p> <p>Through Phase 3 and 4 activities under the CRVS inequality assessment initiative, there is an increased focus on data disaggregated by gender and by socioeconomic status, to identify population groups being furthest left behind.</p> <p>The Evidence to Action (E2A) work which is currently being implemented through Phase 4, builds on the inequality assessment activities supported in project countries. This initiative aims to ensure data are used adequately and efficiently for policy purposes, thereby increasing demand for high</p>	<p>To strengthen the capacity of project countries to analyse secondary data and address inequalities in civil registration, highlight the importance of gender-disaggregated data in targeted inequality assessment reports. Conduct workshop focused on supporting countries to disaggregate birth and death completeness by sex.</p>	<p>SD</p>	<p>March 2025 (Integrated into Phase 4 and Phase 5)</p>	<p>Published inequality assessment reports or other materials that highlight gender-disaggregated data</p>

	<p>quality data and leading to improvements in data production, analysis and dissemination, creating a positive feedback mechanism. In particular, it focuses on strengthening the production and dissemination of gender-disaggregated analysis.</p>				
<p>6. Enhance Partnerships with Gender and Human Rights Organizations: Collaborate with gender and human rights organizations to integrate their expertise, facilitate capacity-building initiatives, and ensure inclusive participation in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Management accepts this recommendation and plans to continue to strengthen collaboration with human rights organizations and civil society organizations, to ensure inclusive participation in decision-making processes, especially given the multi-sectoral nature of CRVS.</p> <p>In preparation for the Third Ministerial Conference on CRVS in 2025, the CRVS Programme Team plans to strengthen engagement with civil society organizations, for a fully inclusive approach.</p>	<p>Further collaboration with CRC Asia and World Vision to facilitate consultations with youth and civil society in line with what was done in preparation for the Second Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific. ¹</p> <p>Involvement of NGOs in national level work wherever possible.</p> <p>Collaboration with Nationality for All (NFA is the only regional organization working to end statelessness and promote right to nationality in the Asia Pacific)</p> <p>A side event on statistics for health and wellbeing, including CRVS, and citizen generated data was held in September 2023 together with the Danish Institute for Human Rights. The outcomes will be explored further to see how citizen generated data can be included in the work.</p>	SD	March 2025 (Integrated into Phase 4 and Phase 5)	Participation of NGOs in national level work such as workshops.

¹ [Annual Report Template \(wvi.org\)](https://www.wvi.org)