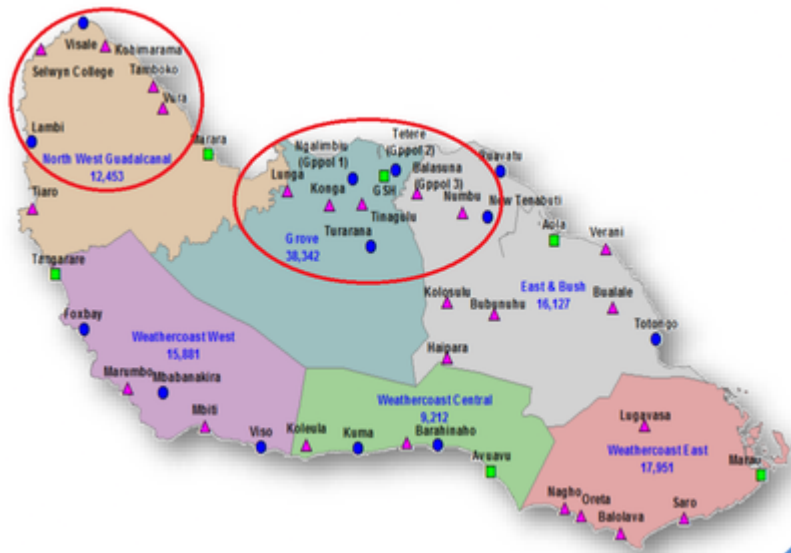




CRVS Insight

February 2021



Piloting verbal autopsy data collection in the Solomon Islands

The [Solomon Islands](#) is an archipelago of approximately 1000 islands. With an estimated population of only 700,000, much of the country is remote and sparsely populated, with travel occurring largely by boat and air. Out of an estimated 3500-4000 annual deaths, nearly 75% occur in the community and therefore do not receive a medical certification of cause of death (MCCOD). In order to explore the causes of these deaths, automated verbal autopsies (VAs) were introduced to the Solomon Islands through the University of Melbourne [Data for Health](#) (UoM D4H) initiative in 2016.

D4H has been working with [Solomon Islands Ministry of Health and Medical Services](#) to implement an automated SmartVA system. This system involves the use of tablet-based digital forms for data collection at hospitals, for deaths on arrival, and Area Health Centres (AHCs) for community deaths. Additionally, SmartVA was implemented at some Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) in the Malaita and Choiseul provinces. This system involves the use of tablet-based digital forms for data collection at hospitals, for deaths on arrival, and Area Health Centres (AHCs) for community deaths.

As of early November 2020, 19 paper-based VAs have been completed and analysed, with 18 having been assigned a specific cause of death. Once a larger number of paper-based forms have been completed, VAs will be added to the electronic database and analysed using SmartVA-Analyse software. To continue reading more about this story and to learn about the initial results of the pilot program, please visit the D4H's [CRVS Gateway website](#).

REGISTER NOW

Join our virtual training sessions in **communication for development** to learn how to enhance the demand for civil registration services

- 11th February 2021: 13:00-15:00 Eastern Africa time**
Social and behaviour change for effective CRVS
- 17th February 2021: 13:00-15:00 Eastern Africa time**
Factoring in social norms for results in CRVS programming
- 10 March 2021: 13:00-15:00 Eastern Africa time**
Communication for CRVS in conflict, emergencies and fragile settings



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
for CRVS Systems



United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Statistics

Webinars on strengthening demand for civil registration

The [Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems](#) supported UNSD in revising the [Handbook on civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems: Communication for development](#). As a follow up, the CoE is inviting interested parties to a series of webinars around strengthening demand creation for civil registration, vital statistics, and identity management systems. The webinars will look at using evidence to increase demand, as well as different shifts, techniques and other examples from other fields (protection, public health), from which civil registrars could contribute.

Interested participants need to [register here](#), and additional details for the webinars can be found below.

11th February 2021 (13:00-15:00 Eastern Africa time) *Social and behavior change for effective Civil Registration and Vital Statistics*

To join as PARTICIPANT: <https://live.kudoway.com/ad/220114133234>

To join as VIEWER (BROADCAST MEETING): <https://live.kudoway.com/br/110115923796>

17th February 2021 (13:00-15:00 Eastern Africa time) *Factoring in social norms for results in Civil Registration and Vital Statistic programming*

To join as PARTICIPANT: <https://live.kudoway.com/ad/220111183729>

To join as VIEWER (BROADCAST MEETING): <https://live.kudoway.com/br/110119174848>

10th March 2021 (13:00-15:00 Eastern Africa time) *Communication for CRVS in conflict, emergencies, and fragile settings*

Kudo link not available yet.





ID4D Annual Report for 2020

Across the globe, 2020 was a year of disruption, uncertainty, and tragedy. The COVID-19 pandemic reversed critical progress in reducing poverty and exacerbated inequalities. Many countries have also struggled to deliver assistance to the most affected people and maintain continuity in critical services because of distancing and lockdowns. This situation has acutely highlighted the importance of inclusive and trusted digital ID systems and the broader digital infrastructure they enable.

Addressing these issues and more, the World Bank [Identification for Development Initiative](#) (ID4D) released its [2020 Annual Report](#). Among other things, the report shows the significant impact ID4D achieved in 2020 through their technical and financial support to client countries. It also shows the depth and breadth of knowledge generated and global action catalyzed towards closing the identification coverage gap and enhancing the quality and governance of digital ID and civil registration systems around the world.

Recently, the World Bank has also published two blogs: [Good digital ID needs great data protection](#) and [Realizing the “transformational trilogy” of social protection delivery in the Philippines](#).



CRVS Champion: Mr. Sam Notzon

Each month, our community newsletter puts a spotlight on one person from Asia-Pacific that has gone above and beyond in their efforts to support CRVS programmes, raise awareness of CRVS issues or lead CRVS improvement efforts in their home country. This month we are happy to highlight Mr. Sam Notzon from USA. Sam has recently retired following a long and impressive career dedicated to improving mortality reporting and supporting countries to accelerate sustainable CRVS development. As part of this, he has represented the United States of America on the Regional Steering Group for CRVS in Asia and the Pacific for many years and his contributions have been recognised at the national, regional and global level. We asked Sam to share some particularly memorable experiences from his long career. He gave many interesting examples from Jamaica, US-Mexican border, Morocco, and Russia available in the [full interview](#). Part of the interview follows here:

Can you please share with us a particular experience which highlighted the importance of CRVS to you?

One of the most memorable – and instructive – CRVS experiences I witnessed took place about 10 years ago, when I visited a local registration office a few kilometers outside of Nairobi, Kenya. When my colleague and I arrived, the office courtyard was filled with at least 100 men – and they didn't look happy. The Local Registrar explained that the crowd was only 1/5 of the total applicants, as he had assigned one day of the week to each section of the district – “To reduce the crowd to a manageable number” he said. He explained that the Ministry of Education was having a problem with students hiring replacements to take their final high school exams. To deal with this, the Ministry began requiring each student to produce their birth certificate before they were allowed to sit for their final exams. The men in the courtyard were the fathers of students in their last year of high school, which meant the parents had put off birth registration by 17 or 18 years. But here they were, waiting to obtain a birth certificate for their child because they understood the value of a good education and wanted the best for their child. To me, this experience had two important CRVS lessons:

First, people will be sure to register vital events if they see the value in doing so. They could have registered the birth at the time of birth – the registration office was not far away – but at that time they didn't understand the importance of registration. The Ministry of Education gave them the incentive to register.

Second, if birth or death certificates are going to be required for certain government services, the CRVS system should provide the best service possible. In this case the local registrar did his best to keep the situation under control (by assigning applicants to a single day of the week). He used all of his secretarial staff to produce certificates (typewritten) as quickly as possible, and put all the remaining staff to work processing the applicants as quickly as possible, and for those who had lost their child's birth certificate, searching the archives to document prior birth registration;

Can you pinpoint a particular activity you have been involved in with impacts in Asia and the Pacific?

Beginning in 2010, we established the CDC Global CRVS Improvement Program to assist low- and medium-income countries in improving their CRVS systems. In 2015, country projects already developed were incorporated into the Bloomberg Data for Health Initiative, a program designed to assist low-resource countries with improving their health data systems (CRVS, telephone surveys) and utilization of health data;

I served as co-chair of the WHO Mortality Topic Advisory Group on the development of ICD11 in the early 2010s.

How would you like to see CRVS in Asia and the Pacific develop by the end of the CRVS Decade (2024)?

My hope is for all of the countries in the region to improve their systems from their status at the beginning of the CRVS decade. Depending on the country, the improvement might be an increase in registration completeness or the establishment of periodic vital statistics reports. The improvements should include contributions to the national SDG data system.

What advice would you give to others trying to improve CRVS systems?

Begin with improving civil registration – because there cannot be VS without CR. Remember that registration will improve when individuals are given valid reasons for birth or death registration, while good certificate services will ensure public support for the system. Develop vital statistics from the events registered and make the data available to government decision-makers. Demonstrating to government the value of vital statistics will earn political support and

government funding. Ensure a focus on sustainability in all improvement projects undertaken.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Starting in February 2021, the [Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion](#) will begin an online [Global Seminar on Citizenship Stripping](#). The inaugural lecture on the *Banishment and the Prehistory of Denaturalization* will occur on **15 February at 15:00** (London) / 10:00 (New York), and will be followed by monthly lectures on 15 March, 12 April, and 17 May.

The Asia-Pacific Stats Café series will continue with another webinar on **15 February at 11:00** (Bangkok time) and will cover [Weighing, estimation, and imputation in mixed mode data collections](#). Interested parties can [register here](#).

As part of the [52nd United Nations Statistical Commission](#), the [Collaborative on Administrative Data](#) led by UNSD and GPSDD will hold a side-event on **15 February from 9:00 - 10:30** (New York time) to introduce the work of the collaborative to the UN Statistical Commission, as well as present an opportunity to invite other National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and producers of administrative data to join the collaborative. Interested participants can read the side-event's concept note and register by visiting the [UN Statistical Commission website](#).

As part of the [52nd United Nations Statistical Commission](#), UNSD is also organizing a side event on **26 February from 9:00 - 10:45** (New York time) for national statistical offices, international organizations and delegates of Permanent Missions to acquire a more detailed overview of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the functioning of CRVS worldwide, and more specifically through the lens of the [UN Legal Identity Agenda](#). Interested participants can read the side-event's concept note and register by visiting the [UN Statistical Commission website](#).

ESCAP's third webinar focusing on inequality assessments will occur on **8 March**. The webinar will take place from 12:00 - 13:30 (Bangkok time). More information can be found at www.getinthepicture.org.

NEW RESOURCES

The World Bank's ID4D recently released a Practitioner's Note on [Identification and COVID-19: Overview of Country Examples in Safety Protocols and Practices](#).

As part of a collaborative project, UNHCR and the [ASEAN Commission on the Rights of Women and Children](#) recently released [Legal Identity of all Women and Children in ASEAN: A Regional Synthesis](#) to highlight the significant progress being made by ASEAN countries in their efforts at ensuring women and children are included in the national picture.

The most recent videos from ESCAP's ongoing Stats Café webinar series can be found by visiting the [Asia-Pacific Stats Café Series website](#). Each webinar is organized in collaboration with relevant development partners and countries and covers a variety of statistics-related topics..

As we are always looking to improve content, we'd love to hear your feedback and input for articles. CRVS Insight is written for you and your feedback matters to us!

If you have a new resource, upcoming event or article you would like highlighted, please send submissions along with an accompanying photo to escap-crvs@un.org.

Please note by submitting photos you are granting ESCAP Statistics Division permission to publish the photo in the current article and any future articles it deems appropriate.

This e-mail has been sent to @ because you have expressed interest in CRVS activities in Asia and the Pacific.

If you would like to stop receiving future communications, please [click here to unsubscribe](#).