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CRVS for the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Census

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Introduction

What is CRVS?

Civil Registration

- Civil registration refers to the compulsory, continuous and permanent registration of vital events such as births, deaths (including cause of death), marriages, divorces, separation and adoption;
- The registration of such vital events is a legal requirement for each person in the country, therefore reinforcing the “compulsory” characteristic of the definition;
- Registration of vital events is ideally done as the event occurs. This means the information collected is done in a timely manner, making it relevant for planning and policy purposes.

Introduction Cont'd.. Vital Statistics

Vital Statistics

- Vital statistics are statistics obtained from the enumeration of vital events;
- The vital statistics can be collected in two ways.
 - I. Registration method
 - II. Census method
- The Registration method is an ongoing routine system of recording vital events;
- The Census method is done periodically at regular intervals, most commonly every ten years.

The CRVS System

- The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) is therefore a multi-sectoral system, with different players, on one hand covering civil registration and on the other, dealing with vital statistics;
- The system permit the government to register its entire citizens on a continuous basis that allows timely production of statistics on population dynamics, health, and inequities in service delivery, in addition to governance and security, for the country as a whole and for local administrative subdivisions.

CRVS Status in The Gambia

- The Gambia is still at the planning stage on the implementation of national CRVS system;
- Currently, the CRVS systems are not well organized enough and cannot provide accurate statistics that can be used for monitoring and evaluation of programs and decision-making on a regular and sustainable basis- each institution is doing its work in isolation and the datasets are not linked for availability of real-time statistics;
- In order to revamp the national CRVS, GBoS has set up a CRVS national coordination unit that will be responsible for managing and coordinating activities under the unit and will be headed by a CRVS national coordinator.

CRVS Status in The Gambia cont'd.....

- The position of the national coordinator has been advertised and recruitment process is on;
- Also, as required before any action is taken to implement the CRVS system, we have acquired support from the World Bank to hire the services of a consultant to support the assessment and formulate CRVS Strategic Plan;
- A consultant has been identified and arrangements are being made for his travel to The Gambia;
- Currently, the commitment from the Government and development partners is very high and we are ready to take advantage of this opportunity. Our main obstacle is the assessment report as it is expected to inform us better in terms of our resource needs (human, equipment and financial resources) and this will be a good input for our project document that is going to be shared with government and partners.

How do we intend to implement the CRVS system in The Gambia?

- First, we intend to establish a national population database (social registry) which will involve the registration of everyone living in the country. This database will capture mainly the following variables: names, sex, date of birth, names of parents, and place of residence as well as biometric data (fingerprint, iris, etc.);
- The data would then go through a checking and verification process, and subsequently synced into the national population database;
- We also intend to link this database with others such as the police, immigration and birth registration databases such as to allow for a continuous update and use by these institutions;
- This will allow for the proper issuance of national documents such as licences, passport, voters cards, social security number, national ID, etc. and would limit the unscrupulous acquisition of these documents;
- It will also allow for the establishment of a unique ID number for anyone resident in country.

Why CRVS?

- The aim of a well functioning CRVS system is to provide accurate, relevant data on a real-time basis;
- Improvement of CRVS would eliminate the data gaps that may occur in between censuses, since data collection is continuous;
- With an improved CRVS system, statistics on fertility, mortality and morbidity, including cause of death statistics are collected from the direct reporting of events;
- Census data does this using retrospective data and may not be relevant throughout the inter-censal period;
- Helps to estimate the population dynamics between the inter-censal period; This makes CRVS a relevant, more cost effective means of obtaining population data.

Improvement of CRVS for the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Census

- Based on the facts on the importance of CRVS system (on previous slides), The Gambia is keen to establish and strengthen the CRVS for 2020 round of population and housing census;
- We strongly believe that an effective system will help in producing quality population and housing census results due to the following:
 - Availability of accurate data on birth, death, cause of death, migration, marriage, divorce, separation, etc. will improve the estimation of fertility, crude death rates, mortality, morbidity, etc..
 - Will reduce or eliminate undercounting since all households in the country will be captured in the system;
 - Will reduce malpractices done during the censuses since the system will be a GIS based system. It will not allow cheating as the system will not allow entry of any data if the interviewer is not at the right place;
 - Comparing the census data with the CRVS data will help spot out those who intend to inflate or otherwise their household members and will allow for adjustment;

Anticipated roadblocks to improving CRVS for the 2020 round of Population and Housing Census in The Gambia

- Religion maybe an obstacle at the beginning as the Gambia is about 96% Muslim and most vital events occurred unregistered /unrecorded;
- Weak legal frameworks to support the improvement process;
- Inadequate sensitization of population on their human right to identity and the importance of civil registration;
- Low level of Information and Communications Infrastructure and coverage.

Conclusion

Based on our knowledge of the country and the CRVS system, below are our conclusions:

- Improvement of CRVS is crucial in maintaining the relevance of census data;
- Claiming national and institutional ownership of the system is key in improving CRVS;
- Creating strong legal frameworks to ensure compulsion, continuity and permanence of the system;
- Sensitization of high level political and institutional heads on the prioritization and importance of a robust CRVS system;
- Budget allocation towards CRVS activities to ensure country ownership of the system;
- Modern and Robust ICT infrastructure to support a comprehensive national CRVS management information system.

**THANK YOU ALL FOR
YOUR KIND ATTENTION!**