

## **Third Meeting of the Global CRVS Group**

Bangkok, Thailand

25 November 2014

**Attendance:** ADB, ESCAP, OSCE, PARIS21, SPC, UNFPA Regional Office, UNHCR Regional Office, UNICEF, UNSD, WHO, the World Bank.

- Agenda:**
1. Update on the Groups' activities
  2. Review of the on-going debates on the post-2015 development agenda
  3. Proposal for the establishment of Task Forces
  4. Briefing on planned activities by member organizations
  5. Other business

### **Summary of the Meeting:**

The third Meeting of the Global CRVS Group was held in Bangkok, Thailand, at ESCAP Conference Hall, on 25 November, in conjunction with the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific that ESCAP organized in the same week. Fourteen participants from eleven international and regional entities attended the meeting, of which two (OSCE, UNSD) joined it through the phone. The ECA representative, despite his plan, could not participate in the meeting due to technical difficulties. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Haishan Fu of the World Bank.

Ms. Keiko Osaki-Tomita, UNSD, informed the Group of the work undertaken by the Secretariat since the last meeting in September. She told that the webpage of the Group was re-vamped with more recent information on events, the logo of member organizations, and by adding "news" section. She also updated on the stock-taking exercise regarding the existing norms/standards on CRVS and technical materials produced by member organizations. The work is still underway. In this connection, she urged the members which have not yet done so, to provide the Secretariat with the requested information at soonest, so that the work can be expedited. She reminded that UNSD has drafted a report on CRVS for the submission to the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the Statistical Commission scheduled in March 2015, and thanked in advance for the review of the draft by member organizations. She accepted the request by several members to extend the deadline for submitting comments by the end of November. Lastly, responding to her question if the website of the Group should be password protected, the Group agreed to keep it open to public.

The Group reviewed and discussed the relevance of CRVS to the on-going debates on the post-2015 Development Agenda. Ms. Anneke Schmider, WHO, underscored the growing importance given to CRVS in key policy documents such as the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) submitted to the UN General Assembly. A set of SDGs proposed in the document comprises a target of "by 2030 provide legal identity for all including birth registration". The

proposed SDGs also contain several health related targets which would conceivably rely on measurement using CRVS systems. Hence, vital statistics are essential to produce development indicators and monitor the progress of society towards the set targets.

Mr. Johannes Jutting, Paris 21, briefed on the report by the Independent Expert and Advisor Group (IEAG) on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, which was presented to the SG in early November. The report sets out the main opportunities and risks presented by the data revolution for sustainable development. In order to mobilize the data revolution, a comprehensive programme of action is needed in four areas: principles and standards; technology, innovation and analysis; capacity and resources; and leadership and governance. The report contains a box which addresses the importance of CRVS in policy making and monitoring of population dynamics and health indicators on a continuous basis.

The discussion which followed the two presentations reaffirmed the fact that CRVS is of multi-faceted nature. The on-going discussion on new development agenda gives due recognition that the system can provide people with the legal identity to safeguards their human rights, serve for good governance and administration, and generate vital statistics essential for development planning and monitoring.

During the discussion, a question was raised whether or not the Group would like to take any collective action to contribute to the debates on the post-2015 development agenda. Some participants, however, cautioned that many organizations, including NGOs, have already initiated the work to aid the debates, hence there is a possible overlaps of actions. ESCAP suggested then that it will create a small team to propose future activities of the Group in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

The creation of another task-team to review the existing information on the coverage of vital registration and the methods of verifying its accuracy was proposed by UNSD. Still, much remains unclear how the estimates of the coverage have been conducted undertaken at a country level, and the degree of accuracy. WHO and UNPD have already showed their interest in jointly undertaking this exercise. UNSD will prepare in coming weeks a concept note on this task force and circulate among members.

The participating members reported briefly, in tour-de-table, on their planned activities in coming months.

With the announcement that the next meeting of the Group will be organized in New York in conjunction with the Statistical Commission, the meeting adjourned.