

ESAW/CRVS/93/10



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Country Report on the Current Status of
Vital Statistics and Civil Registration
in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Prepared for the East and South Asian Workshop on Strategies
for Accelerating the Improvement of Civil Registration and
Vital Statistics , 29 November-3 December 1993
Beijing , China.

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE COMPASSIONATE AND THE MERCIFUL

Country Report on the Current Status of Vital
Statistics and Civil Registration System in the
Islamic Republic of Iran

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Summary

The area of the country is more than 1,640 thousand square Kilometers. The geographic conditions create problems for Civil Registration in the rural areas. The civil registration law dates to 1919 . It has been revised quite a few times . The registration of birth , death , marriage and divorces are compulsory for the public .

The civil registration and vital statistics system is a centralized system with office branches in different geographic divisions. Efforts has been exerted to provide more coverage for the registration of vital events. Mobile registrars and on -mission-registrars are new among these efforts. Registration coverage of birth is significantly more than other vital events. Usage of computers is in rapid progress. The overall situation of C.R. and V.S. system has improved during the last ten years.

I. General Background

Occupying an area of more than 1/640 thousands square kilometers the Islamic Republic of Iran is located in the Middle East , and is bounded on the north by Republic of Azarbayejan , Armenia , the Caspian sea , and Torkmenistan ; on the east by Afghanistan and Pakistan; on the south by Oman sea and the Persian Gulf and the west by Iraq and Turkey .

The major parts of the country consist of arid land, mountains and deserts . The climate is dry and sunny most of the year round . The minimum annual rainfall in the period 1984 - 91 has been 24 millimeters in yazd - a city in desert area - and the maximum has been 1700 millimeters in Rasht - a city close to the caspian coast .

The caspian area which accounts for 3.7 percent of the surface of the country has mediteranian climate . In some parts of the country the summers are extermely hot having a temperatur of 55° C , and in winter in some other parts Minus 30°C is recorded . In winter - 20°C is common in many places . Iran has nomerous ethnic groups of widely differing origins . Apart from its settled population the tribes which consist of 2.3 percent of the total population have a special behaviour in their daily life.

the Iranian tribes mainly live in the mountainous areas and are different from the nomads elsewhere.

Settlement tends to occur in small clusters close to water supplies or where there are specially favourable conditions , a good soil , easy communications ...

The official language is Farsi the alphabets of which are like arabic ones except for four additional letters. Numerous dialects exist in different regions.

More than 99 percent of the population are Muslims. Economic activity suffers from handicaps of Topography and climate.

The adverse nature of geographical conditions has greatly restricted the growth of communications in Iran.

The major mineral export of the country is petroleum.

Iran has the second largest natural gas deposits in the world . Also the recently discovered copper deposits at sarcheshmeh could be among the largest in the world.

Iranian craftsmen have a high reputation in carpet making and metal work.

Tehran the capital is the headquarters of more than 90 % of all industrial firms in Iran ; whilst a major industrial complex based on the steel mill is located in Esfahan.

Tehran is now a major manufacturing centre , with a considerable diversity of activities from the processing of food stuffs to the manufacture of consumer and construction goods and an increasing range for more complex items: electronics, motor manufacturing and high grade chemicals.

In september 1991 , from amongst 13.1 Million in population 10 years of age and over in the country 38.1 percent were economically active. The corresponding proportion was 65.5 percent for males and 8.7 percent for females.

In september 1986 , of 11.0 million employed population of the country 30.0 percent were engaged in agriculture , 26.1 percent in industry and 43.9 percent in services .

The share of Gross Domestic Product (from Current Price data) was 23.5 percent for agriculture , 28.0 percent for industry and 48.5 percent for services in 1990.

The constitution of the Islamic Republic was approved by a national referendum in Dec. 1979 .

The 83 member Assembly of Experts was established in 1982 . It is popularly elected every 8 years . Its mandate is to interpret the constitution and

select the spiritual leader . The president of the Islamic Republic of Iran is popularly elected for a 4-year Term and is head of the executive; he appoints Ministers , subject to approval by the Majlis(Parliament).

II. Demographic and Basic Information of the country

So far the country has conducted four decennial censuses of population starting 1956 and also conducted a combined census sampling in 1991.

The total population of the country was counted as 18.5 Millions in 1991. According to the 1966 , 1976 and 1986 censuses the total population of the country was 25.8 , 33.7 and 49.4 Millions respectively.

In 1991 the administrative divisions of the country consisted of 24 Oostans (Provinces) , 229 shahrestans(sub - province) , 604 Bakhsh (area smaller than shahrestan) , 514 cities, and Towns , 2103 Dehestans (rural subdivisions)as shown in table one.

According to the 1991 current population survey the number of households existing in Iran totalled 10,787,227 of which 99.4 percent were private and 0.6 % were collective households.

The total population of the country was 55 837 163 persons of which 57.6 percent lived in urban areas , 42.4 % lived in rural areas and 0.6 % were mobile.

The mean number of household members living in the private households was 5.16 persons . The corresponding mean for urban and rural areas were 4.86 and 5.61 persons respectively .

In 1991 there were four cities that their population exceeded one million. The population of these cities , were : Tehran 6.47 , Mashhad 1.76 , Esfahan 1.12 and Tabriz 1.18 Million persons.

Table 1
geographical divisions and population by sex , current population survey, 1991

Ostan (province)	number of Geographical Divisions				Population		
	Shahrestan	Bakhsh	Cities	Dehestan	bothsexes	Male	Female
Total country	229	604	514	2103	55837163	28768450	27068713
Tehran	9	23	24	67	9982309	5171385	4810924
Markazi	8	15	15	58	1182611	609888	572723
Gilan	11	25	31	94	2204047	1125454	1078593
Mazandaran	17	44	47	134	3793149	1936625	1856524
Azarbairjan, East	18	46	41	191	4420343	2282222	2138121
Azarbairjan, West	12	26	20	99	2284208	1169530	1114678
Kermanshah	9	20	16	77	938449	492970	445479
Khuzestan	15	35	28	111	3175852	1631285	1544567
Fars	15	49	36	171	3543828	1825592	1718236
Kerman	10	28	33	136	1862542	952684	909858
Khorasan	21	67	47	212	6013200	3076157	2937043
Esfahan	17	32	49	109	3682444	1912013	1770431
Sistanand Bluchestan	7	26	11	90	1455102	740793	714309
Kurdestan	6	19	10	76	1233480	636426	597054
Hamadan	6	16	12	69	1651320	858618	792702
Chaharmahal and Bakhliary	5	10	13	33	747297	387231	360066
Lorestan	6	20	10	78	1501778	774306	727472
Ilam	5	14	13	34	440693	226737	213956
Kohkiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad	3	10	5	33	496739	256302	240437
Bushehr	7	16	11	30	694252	359499	334753
Zanjan	5	20	15	73	1776133	914733	861400
Semnan	4	10	11	25	458125	235102	223023
Yazd	6	13	13	37	691119	362428	338691
Hormozgan	7	20	13	66	924433	476816	447617

In the same year , from the total population of 55.8 Million persons 28.7 percent were males and 27.7 percent were females.

Thus sex ratio of the total population in the stated year was 106.3 . This ratio was 106.7 in urban areas and 105.7 in rural areas. From the total population in the above - mentioned year 44.3 percent were in the age group under 15 years , 52.2 % were in the age group 15 to 64 years and 3.4 % were in the age group 65 years and over , table 2 illusterates the population by sex and age.

Table 2 - Total Population by sex and age , 1991

Age group	Total			urban	rural	mobile
	both sexes	Male	Female			
all ages	55837163	28768450	27068713	31836598	23636591	363974
0-4	8141285	4156291	3984994	4312120	3765802	63363
5-9	9035458	4612149	4423309	5037727	3934694	63037
10-14	7547131	3901458	3645673	4112463	3379129	55539
15-19	5908903	3057609	2851294	3155352	2711238	42313
20-24	4947260	2520312	2426948	2902788	2016151	28321
25-29	4005278	2012493	1992785	2561194	1425535	18549
30-34	3504220	1779932	1724288	2261847	1224912	17461
35-39	2866669	1462338	1404331	1846018	1005575	15076
40-44	2037477	1027459	1010018	1268676	756564	12237
45-49	1577983	798299	779684	957759	611451	8728
50-54	1570622	821599	749023	893314	667096	10212
55-59	1442929	793283	649646	790129	643962	8838
60-64	1303390	723318	580072	676239	617557	9594
65 and over	1890193	1065753	824440	1022442	857447	10304
unidentified	58365	36157	22208	38530	19478	357

According to censuses the annual growth rate of population was 3.1 % in the 1956 - 66 years . It decreased to 2.7 % in the 1966-76 years . The growth rate reached a point of 3.5 percent in 1976-86 and finally dropped to 2.5 percent between 1986 and 1991.

The latest estimates for vital rates of the country by indirect methods are illustrated in table 3.

Table 3 - Vital rates by urban - rural in 1986 and 1991, Total country

rates	Unit	1986			1991		
		Total	urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
crude Birth Rate CBR	%. .	39.2	37.1	41.8	30.5	27.8	34.0
General Fertility Rate GFR	%. .	184.0	164.8	210.3	140.0	121.7	166.8
Total Fertility Rate TFR	life Birth	6.4	5.8	7.3	4.9	4.2	5.8
Growth Reproduction Rate GRR	life Female Birth	3.1	2.8	3.6	2.4	2.1	2.8
Infant Mortality Rate IMR	%. .	79.8	60.4	103.9	60.3	45.3	72.4
Crude Death Rate CDR	%. .	10.4	8.3	12.9	8.3	6.7	9.9
expectation of life at Birth e. for Both Sexes	years	58.9	62.8	54.4	62.8	66.0	59.7
Male	"	58.5	62.1	54.1	62.4	65.5	59.4
Female	"	59.2	63.4	54.7	63.2	66.6	59.9

III . Civil Registration System

1. Legal Frame of the system.

The origin of the legal basis for activities pertaining to Civil Registration in Iran dates to 23 September 1918 when according to the approval No 11607 of the Councils of Ministers a bureau of civil registrations was founded in the Ministry of the Interior. To execute the regulations approved the Civil Registration Bureau started to register documents and issued the identity cards for the citizens of the capital . The bureau also registered the vital events (births , deaths, marriages , divorces).

In June 14th 1925 a law passed by the Iran National Assembly according to which the Bureau of civil Registration was to be founded in different geographical areas of the country and the citizens were invited to be registered and to be given the identity cards. The instruction for citizens how to choose a first name and a family name was included in the law.

In June 10th 1928 the former law was revised and by the revision a National Statistical Office was founded . Among its functions were to find out the number of the population in the country, households, believers of different religions , citizenships, births, deaths, marriages, divorces, reasons of increasing and decreasing of each event and also to find out the economic situation of the country

As it is seen above , the functions of the civil registration system and all statistical activities were merged into the functions of one bureau.

In June 2nd 1931 and in May 13th 1933 the Registration law was revised. According to the last revisions , the copies of the documents were obtainable, also penalties for citizens who do not have an identity card were changed. The revisions made in 1931 also indicates that the registration of marriages and divorces were to be undertaken by the Notaries public which are officialy

under Registration Organization of Deeds Intellectual and Industrial property . Once an event was registered a copy of the document should be sent to the Civil Registration Bureau . The Civil Registration law after revision contained 55 articles and also was accompanied by a Civil Registration Regulations which had 131 articles itself.

In 1934 the title of the Civil Registration Bureau was changed to Department of Statistics and Civil Registration. In spite of many functions of the above Department , this newly founded organization carried out only the registration of vital events (births, deaths , marriages , divorces) until 1939. In the same year the law of the census of population was passed by the National Assembly . To execute the law, the Department of statistics and Civil Registration conducted a population census in 35 Iranian towns in 1939.

In february 14th 1940 the Civil Registration Regulations concerning the duplicate copies of the identity cards was revised. In 1952 by foudation of the General Department of Public Statistics which conducted the 1956 census of population , other functions than civil registration and vital statistics of the Department of statistics and civil registration was delivered to the newly founded General Department and consequently the former title changed to " Civil Registration Department" .

The General Department of public statistics , by the 1965 law which changed its title to Statistical Centre of Iran continued its activities mainly in conducting censuses and surveys. On the other hand the civil registration law was revised in 1976 and the Civil Registration Department changed its title to " Civil Registration Organization " and continued its activities on civil registration and vital statistics.

The last revision of the Civil Registration law dates to January 8, 1984 according to which , after the Islamic Revolution a new identity card

should have been issued for every citizen and , this function is already fulfilled.

As it was described there are laws and regulations which are related to the civil registration in Iran. The regulations furnish provisions for the law. The definition of the vital events are neither included in the law nor in the regulations, but they are adapted to the definitions used by the Ministry of Health which are in conformance with international recommendations.

The registration of vital events is compulsory for entire population of the country. Birth of any child occurring in Iran , whether of Iranian or foreign Parents, also death of any individual , either an Iranian or foreigner, even still births shall be declared to a representative or functionary of the CRO. The grace period for declaration of birth is fifteen days starting from the date of birth of the child . The grace period is longer in the case of official holidays , air or sea journeys.

In the case of death the grace period is ten days starting from occurrence or discovery of the death . Like the Birth in exceptional cases like journeys the grace period is longer.

For the registration of marriage and divorce , Natary public offices are bound to entre in the married couple's identity cards, such events as marriage , divorce , and remarriage which they register in the relevant register books , sign and stamp them .

At maximum they should re-entre in special forms in fortnight the marriage divorce and remarriage , already registered in the register books , and submit the forms to the local Civil Registration Department against receipt. Any vital event occurring abroad shall be registered by respective Iranian Consulate Officials.

The designation of informations for birth according to the Civil Registration Law are persons respectively responsible for declaring birth and siging the

General Registers for life events:

1. Father or paternal grand father.
2. Mother in case the father is absent , and at her earliest when she is able to fulfil this duty
3. The administrator , Tutor or Trustee of the child.
4. Persons legally responsible for taking care of the child.
5. Head or representative of the institution where in the child has been entrusted.
6. The individual involved in the birth occurrence , who is 18 full years of age and over.

The law also provides facilities for the registration of a birth while the marriage of child's parents has not been officially registered . In any case if the declarant is the child's mother, the child shall be named after its mother maiden surname .

The registration procedure for birth starts with a certificate issued by a physician or official midwife or organization where in the child has been born , otherwise , it must be certified by two witnesses.

Article 13 of the Civil Registration law pertains to the type of information for the life event. After registration of birth if the child is Iranian, The identity card shall be issued and submitted ; and the declaration instrument shall be sent to the local Civil Registration Department where the parents' identity cards have been issued , to be entered in the Genral Register , in the special page for parents. In the case that the child is of foreign nationality , only the birth certificate shall be issued and submitted.

The informants having the responsibility for declaring death and signing the death instrument are as follows:

1. The most immediate relative of the deceased , who has been present at the time of death.
2. The supervisor or owner or his/ her representative of the place where in the death has occurred.
3. Any individual present at the time of death.
4. Disciplinary forces or village council.

While a death event is declared officials of cemeteries or undertakers are bound to inform the CRO of death occurrence .

The civil Registration Law also furnishes facilities for exceptional events of death . Article 23 of the said law pertains to items of information necessary for a death certificate .

Time allowances are 15 days for Birth , marriage and divorce registration, but for registration of death are 10 days . There are no penalties for the late registration.

The registration procedure and the government agencies responsible for Registration of marriages and divorces has already been mentioned.

2. Administrative arrangements of the system.

a. The primary registration unit which is located in rural areas is called Registration District which at least a registrar is stationed in a central or major village of the District . The geographical boundaries of the Registration district is not necessarily adaptable to the official Geographical Divisions of the country . To determine the limits of a district, factors such as climate , roads, type of settlements of population and similar criteria are taken into consideration. It happens that in khorasan province a Registration unit includes 300 villages while in Gilan province only 3 villages can be administrated by one Registration unit. A registrar is in charge of a Registration District.

An exceptional characteristic of the Iranian Registration Districts is that for mobile population, special mobile Registration units are available. A registrar of the mobile population is equipped with a car or motor-cycle and sometimes he is equipped with a camera to take photos for issuing Identity Cards. These registrars make frequent visits to tribal population of an area on a regular schedule. Formerly horses were provided for their mission. The mobile registrar is well informed of the displacement and itinerary of the tribes in his Registration District.

Another speciality of the current setting for Civil Registration of the rural areas of Iran is the trustee Agents or Liasons. The Liason that can serve in the tribal population or among the settled population of the rural areas is a person which is trusted both by the official civil Registrar of the area and also by the population of the village or tribe. Other qualifications are to be resident of the concerned rural area and to have a background of literacy of six years of primary school. Their service is voluntary and without payment.

The liasons report all vital events to the Civil Registrar on their scheduled visit. Their functions are in progression up to issuing the identity cards for the new borns or cancelling the identity cards of the deceased.

The Liasons are now in service in four Iranian provinces.

Besides the registrars stationed in the rural areas there are registrars that visit the villages on the Registration Districts on a schedule. To facilitate the death registration, in all cities where there are a centralized cemetery a registration unit is established.

b. The total number of registrars in the country is 5135 and number of Notary public offices is 2463 . Because the boundries of the Registration Units are not necessarily adaptable to the official geographic divisions and the number of population is provided by these divisions, the average population served per primary registration unit is not obtainable .

As the rural population settlements are scattered in small clusters all over the country the accessibility to them is not so simple.

c. The office hours for registration is from 8 AM to 3.30 PM but because of the workload the personnel usually work for over time.

d. The number of events registered annually per primary registration unit ranges from 500 to 6000 events.

e. Due to the highly important legal , Juridical and statistical , aspects of the Registered documents, a very strict system of surveillance is maintained in different levels of the registran activities .

These are a serial number and two other numbers or cods on an identity card which each one of them is a tool for surveillance .

In any registration office regardless of being a major Department or a small scale registration unit the number of incompleted identity cards in stock should be in accordance with the three code numbers stated and the number of identity cards issued. Surveillance is practised every two weeks. The registered events and their consistancy with the vital statistics reported is to be checked

Inspectors are asigned from capital city to the province centers and from provice centers to shahrestans to supervise and control all registration and vital statistics activities in different departments and offices.

The Civil Registration Administration of the country is a type of a national system with a central office to administer the system.

The head offices of the Civil Registration Organization is located in Tehran the capital. Its administrative dependancy is to the Ministry of the Interior.

3. Procedures for Registration

The procedures for registration are applied nationwide and they do not vary from one local registration office to another .

a. The method of recording a birth starts by investigation of the identity of the informant and his / her parents. Investigation to find whether the marriage of the parents is registered . If the birth is without medical certificate two witnesses are required and thus their identity is investigated. The birth is to be registered in a loose-leaf form of 33 cm by 21 cm which after signature will be binded and filed by date of registration. The last step is to issue an identity card for the new born.

The registration of a death event starts with checking the identity of the informant , registration of death in a loose-leaf form which will be binded and filed by date of registration. Other steps are: cancellation of the identity card , issuing the decleration form of death and death certificate . After signature of informant the identity card of the deceased is to be given to the informant.

b. For the place of registration of events there are no restrictions, but for birth usually it is the place of residence.

For marriage and divorce, copies of the certificate is to be send to the C.R.O of the shahrestan of birth of the bride and the bride-groom. The first copy of the marriage or divorce certificate which is in a loose-leaf form is binded and filed by the number of the notary public office and the registration number in the place of occurrence .

c. Time allowances for all events is 15 days except death event which is considered 10 days . No foetal deaths are registered . The time allowance

is adequate for the registration of events.

d. No registration fee for death , the fee for the registration of births is 2000 Rials , for marriage 2000 Rials and for divorce is 20000 Rials. The registration fee for the divorce may discourage the divorce itself among some people, but no official marriage or divorce can exist without registration.

e. For the registration of each event the identity cards of informants are required. Besides that , the requisit for registration of birth, death and marriage is a medical certificate.

f. There are no penalties or legal punishments for late registration of any event.

g. The procedure of the registration system even for the marriage and divorce with the involvement of the Notary public offices do not lead to a probable duplication of registration.

4. The local registrars.

The local civil registrars are appointed by the C.R.O . They are usually selected from the natives of the region . Their level of education is high school diploma. But the old registrars may have less degrees of education. They are paid for their full-time job.

In addition to the civil registrars, the registration may be done by other responsables like court clercks, Notaries as a scondary duty.

b. The type of appointing the local registrars is for a long-term job and it is not subject to changes.

c. The Liasons already described can be considered as part-time registrars.

d. Besides their educational attainments the registrars have short training courses also.

e. The registrars salary is not much different from the average government salary earners.

f. There are hanbooks of instructions for the civil registrars.

5. Information pertaining to the informants is presented in section 1 " The legal frame of the system".

6. Civil Registration archives

a. Safety measures to preserve vital records are practised. Major offices have space and better means of security . Bookshelves are available. Retrieval system is a type of manual searching of records assisted by items of information which varies depending to the event. For searching in the file of birth , only the serial number of the identity card is enough.

The system is moving towards a fully computerized method and the criteria for retrieval are more simple and accessibility to the files is faster. For safeguard and confidentiality, necessary measures are taken for each step. All filled documents are signed and sealed by the attorney general.

7. Assesment of the civil registration system

As it was elaborated in the historical evolution of the system , the law of the civil registration and its regulations were under many revisions to fullfil the requirements of the public. Though the administration of the system is an old one, but steps towards the modernization are taken Specially in the technical point of view. Generally the system can be ranked as good system but needs improvment. The actions undertaken by the government in the last ten years are mainly focused on a full computerization of the system . The appointing of liasons are somthing new in the system to improve the registration system in the rural areas.

The extent of the registration coverage in the country as a whole using a dual record system and also some analytical research is as follows: births 94 percent ,deaths 69 percent , marriages 93 percent and divorces 97 percent. The registration coverage in the urban areas is more than the rural areas. The registration coverage of deaths for men is more than women . Once a vital event is registered the chance to be reported is even more than 99 percent.

8. Uses of registration records

- a. The legalization of the identity of citizens is by the registration. The need of being registered starts years before school age when an Identity card seems to be needed. To take a job, to apply for a passport, for marriage and in many other cases the pre-requisite is to present an Identity certificate. To benefit from the heritage of a deceased the death should have been registered.
- b. The general use of the registration records by the society is to maintain an administrative order and to legalize the existence of the citizens. The vital statistics derived from the registration is one of the important data for the development plans.

IV. The National Vital Statistics System

1. The legal frame of the system

The production of vital statistics derived from the civil registration is done by the C.R.O and the production of the vital statistics derived from the population censuses and sample surveys is done by the Statistical Centre of Iran. Neither the civil registration law nor the law of the Statistical Centre of Iran emphasizes clearly on the vital statistics. The difference is in the continuous recording of vital events by the C.R.O. Due to the fact that the section I of the part III of the Questionnaire " Review and Assessment of the National Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System " focuses on the system that continuously records the civil registration, the information given will focus on the C.R.O.

The Division responsible for the vital statistics within the C.R.O is " Bureau of Statistics and Population Information " .

Preparation of the vital statistics starts from the smallest unit which is called Registration District. The vital statistics prepared by the Registration

Districts of a Bakhsh or a Shahrestan is to be sent to the Department of Civil Registration of ostan(province) . And these Departments in turn send V.S. of provinces to the main office located in Tehran.

3. Procedures for reporting and monitoring

a. The information provided for the V.S. forms are derived from the data transcribed from the registration records. The forms for this purpose are different from those for legal registration . The type of forms used for each event are both individual forms and also multi-event forms.

The definitions of vital events which constitute the vital statistics have conformance with the definitions and concepts of the principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system of the United Nations.

All forms used for the vital statistics reporting is standardized all over the country.

b. The procedures to set up , control , receive and classifying the reports are very simple . The reference elements are not subject to delay the data processing, and the periodicity of receiving is based on every two weeks.

In the case of missing information , which is very rare necessary means of communication or correspondence will be implemented.

4. Procedures of statistical processing

when the forms are received three types of manual editing is practised. The reported figures of statistical reports for every registration office is compared with the figures for a similar earlier period . In addition to that , statistical reports from each reporting area are sequentially numbered. In case a number is missing , queries are being sent to the reporting areas. Besides the above checkings , Transmission Forms are

processed by computers to control the receipt of reports and breakdowns made by reporting areas to uncover delinquent areas.

The system is not fully computerized yet , that is why both manual coding and manual editing is practiced parallel with computer editing and coding. Some parts of coding activities is to be done in the Department of Civil Registration in provinces and some other parts in the main C.R.O. Coding and editing instructions are presented in handbooks.

For recruitment and Training the staff , necessary measures are observed.

b. The tabulation plan has conformance to the recommended Tabulations in the Principals and Recommendations to ensure international comparability of the data . No software packages are used . The system runs with independent programming.

c. Sufficient training in connection with vital statistics is provided for coders , data entry personnel and local registrars.

5. Vital Statistics is published annually. The annual vital statistics which include data about births, deaths, marriages and divorces are published in one single publication. The year of the last issue is 1992 which contains the data corresponding to 1991 events.

6. Assessment of the vital statistics system

Discovering the coverage and the quality of Civil Registration and vital statistics are information that experts who work in Development plans and decision makers are much interested to know. Not many studies have been done in this respect . The fact is that , when an event is registered, Probabilities of not being reported to the compiling office is very low. To determine the rate of coverage of registered events, is much more difficult than tracing and checking of a vital event resulted from documents. On the basis of this fact , in Iran , the omission of registration of an

event is less than one percent..But it is quite probable , that in some underdeveloped rural areas-with limited means of communication-neither birth nor death of an infant who has lived for only few days, be registered at all. A similar case might exist for religious marriages. If this type of marriage is not officially registered and if follows by a religious divorce , practically none of the events will be registered . That is why the coverage of registration compared with the coverage of vital statistics is less. The rate of registration coverage estimate resulted from a recent dual-records system for birth , death , marriage and divorce is respectively 94,69,93 and 97 percent. Applying the birth and death rates obtained from the techniques for demographic estimation applied to poulation census data , show 92 percent of coverage for birth and for death coverage it is too far below 69 percent of the dual-records system . The relatively satisfactory registration coverage of birth compared to poor registration coverage of death is the pecuniary encouragements existing for births after the registration.

The programme to strengthen and improve the vital statistics system registration in last ten years is very satisfactory . The government has given much importance to strengthen the Civil Registration system.

Two main objectives that are partly achived are:1) to maintain the already mentioned Liasons in the rural areas of the country and 2) installation of 80 computer centres in main Civil Registration Offices. Those computers that are already instaled are active. One of the major objectives is to get Civil Registration information for anybody anywhere in the country that he/she applies for, entring information only about the place of birth and the place of residence.

7. Uses of Vital Statistics

The main users of vital statistics are the Ministry of Health, the Central

Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran , Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education , Ministry of Higher education, Bureau of conscription .

In addition to the above organization , there are many other organizations, research institutions and the like that use the vital statistics either to fulfill part of their functions or to do research works.

V. Coordination Among Government Institutions

According to the Civil Registration Law , there is a council, called the High Council of Civil Registration the Purpose of which is reviewing and proposing technical procedures, rendering comments of improvement or changing of statistical personal status forms , methods of collecting and distributing the forms , preparing instructions and technical procedures for Civil Registration. The Council is composed of the Director of C.R.O. or his deputy , a professor from the college of law , appointed by the chancellor of the Tehran University , a judge appointed by Minister of Justice , a senior employee of C.R.O . and a representative of the Statistical Centre of Iran. The High Council of Civil Registration should ensure co-operative and co-ordinative work among the agencies Participating in civil Registration and vital statistics systems.

The council has tried to coordinate the system with other demographic sources of data.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

In general , the civil Registration and vital statistics system in the Islamic Republic of Iran can be assumed a fairly good system , but it needs improvement.

During the last ten years , many efforts has been exerted to strenghten the system. As it was mentioned before , these efforts are the computerization of the system .

But as the case is , in many other countries , there are some problem-creating factors that must be taken into consideration. These factors can be grouped as follows:

Administrative Factors:

The geographical conditions of Iran sometimes create obstructive problems, that leads to some kind of difficulties in receiving accurate statistical reports.

The centralized computer system is not completely installed yet , and results to a semi-computerized civil Registration and vital statistics activities. To accelerate the system to provide adequate and proficient personnel for data processing at the compiling agencies are observed .

Technical Factors:

For the renewal of the system , more technical guidance seems to be necessary for local registrars regarding the collection of data on registered vital events to comply relevant statistics.

The vital statistics personnel also need to have more training . There is a lack of high ranking qualified personnel in Departmental offices as well as insufficient equipments.

The Public Factors:

In some rural areas obstructive traditions , poor level of education, unawareness on statutory requirements to register vital events, results late registration and omissions. Also failure to perceive the social usefulness and benefits of registration are among the public factors resulting to problems in the system .

Tribal population, dispersed settlements , inadequate communication and Transportation facilities in the rural areas are among the problems of registration.

To overcome the above problems and for the general improvement of the

system the following recommendations can be observed:

Making some revisions in the civil Registration law. The actual law of the civil Registration lacks any articles directly concerned with the vital statistics , its importance , and the obligations to collect the data.

The article concerning the high council of civil Registrations should highlight the channels ensuring co-operative and co-ordinative work among agencies Specially Participating in vital statistics activities.

To the actual composing members of the above council should be added a senior officer from the Registration Organization of deeds and intellectual Properties, section responsible for the notary public offices for making more obligations for the Notary Public offices to regularize the reporting of the marriages and divorce registered.

Including necessary obligatory articles for the registration of religious marriages and divorces. To strengthen financially and administratively the C.R.O. , for enabling it in achieving its objectives for the full computerization of the system. Also for appointing more registration Liasons in the rural areas of the country . Providing more Transportation facilities for the mobile registrars and registerars having scheduled missions.

For attracting public's attention to the social importance of the civil registration necessary steps should be taken for appropriate use of the mass media, focusing specially in rural areas.

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