

Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Group
Terms of Reference

Background

In recently years, with growing recognition of the value of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) to human rights, good governance, and development planning, monitoring and evaluation, there has been renewed interest in strengthening national CRVS systems. The Global CRVS Group was formed on 3 March 2014 in New York at a UN Statistical Commission side-event to enhance coordination among key stakeholders in the area of CRVS. Subsequently, the World Bank Group (WBG), together with World Health Organization (WHO) and several agencies and countries, published the *Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Scaling Up Investment Plan 2015–2024* in May 2014.¹ It outlined a three-pronged approach for improving CRVS systems in low- and middle-income countries: (i) strengthening national institutions, (ii) establishing and updating international standards and tools, and (iii) building the evidence base with implementation research.

Further, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlighted the importance of well-functioning national CRVS systems in monitoring achievements of the SDGs from 2016 to 2030.

At the regional and global levels, many efforts continue to be made to advocate and support the improvement of CRVS systems. Inter-governmental regional organizations, development banks, nongovernmental organizations, and stakeholders have been active in raising awareness and securing Governments' commitment to the issue through the adoption of declarations or resolutions. However, these efforts if uncoordinated would pose challenges for improving CRVS systems in a holistic and integrated manner. While some progress has been made in the last couple of years since the Global CRVS Group was formed, challenges still remain. Successive two-year work programs will be developed and implemented through 2030. The tasks and activities of the Group will focus on combining efforts and work toward global improvements in CRVS.

Objectives

The overall objective of the Group is to:

To strengthen national CRVS and related systems through coordination and collaboration on global and regional initiatives and exchange of information.

The specific objectives are to:

- (a) Take stock of progress made on the improvement of the CRVS systems in the context of SDGs
- (b) Contribute to the implementation of the Global CRVS Investment Plan
- (c) Explore and leverage opportunities to accelerate the improvement of CRVS systems
- (d) Promote the importance of CRVS in the global development agenda
- (e) Support coordinated country-level engagement by our respective institutions that is consistent with the global CRVS agenda

¹ Global CRVS Scaling Up Investment Plan 2015–2024.
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/health/publication/global-civil-registration-vital-statistics-scaling-up-investment>.

Membership

Members are international and regional inter-governmental organizations (including UN agencies and Multilateral Development Banks), which have a clear mandate to support CRVS systems at the global or regional levels, represented by senior staff. Each agency/organization will nominate two persons: a principal representative and an alternate. Additional organizations could be co-opted as members if they have a clear mandate to support CRVS systems at the global or regional levels. The participation of relevant international nongovernmental organizations and other stakeholders may be invited to meetings and activities of the group.

Roles and responsibilities

Secretariat: the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) serves as the Secretariat of the Group and will maintain the website, where the information on the group's activities can be shared and updated

Chair: The chair will be elected for 1 year, and rotates among member organizations. The chair works closely with UNSD in planning and implementing activities.

The criteria for choosing the new chair are as follows:

- 1) an official from an inter-governmental global or regional organization
- 2) an official from an organization that has an established CRVS related programme
- 3) an official who regularly attended the global CRVS group meetings the previous year (for the sake of continuity of activities to be carried out by the group)

Members: expected to be active in the deliberations and contribute to the implementation of the activities of the group.

Meetings

The group will work through regular meetings, teleconferences, and electronic exchanges of mails. There will be a face-to-face meeting or teleconference each quarter: an annual meeting will take place in New York, close to the dates of the United Nations Statistical Commission (usually early March); and in the subsequent quarters, meetings will be scheduled to take advantage of major global/regional meetings on CRVS or will be by teleconference on the first Wednesday in the respective quarter.

Documents for deliberations will be circulated as least one week in advance of meeting.

Meeting minutes shall be documented and disseminated to all members within two weeks.