

# International standards, methodological framework for civil registration and vital statistics and the UN Legal Identity Agenda

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Global CRVS Group

UN Legal Identity Agenda Task Force

Pacific Community

# Introduction

“Everyone has the right to be recognized as a person before the law”-

*-Article 6 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and several international human rights instruments*

“Provide a legal identity for all including through birth registration”

*- Target 16.9 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development agenda*

Legal identity is widely acknowledged to be catalytic for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including the broader objective to “leave no one behind”.

Civil registration provides an official record of the existence of the person and the recognition of that individual before the law, and is the fundamental means of granting legal identity.

# Civil registration

**The Civil registration method:** The procedure employed in gathering the basic information on the incidence and characteristics of vital events that occur in the population of a country (or area) within a specified time period, upon which the preparation of vital records with legal value and the production of vital statistics are based.

**The fundamental role of civil registration:**

*“The essential purpose of civil registration is to furnish legal instruments of direct interest to individuals. ”i.e.* to provide individuals with special probatory instruments which allow them to prove, with ironclad certainty, the facts relating their existence, identity, and personal and family situation.

# Role of civil registration

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1. Legal and protective advantages to individuals
  - Civil registration plays a critical role in proving, establishing, implementing and realizing many of the human rights embodied in international declarations and conventions
2. Administrative uses
  - Individual civil registration records helps identify subset of the population requiring intervention or services on an individual basis, such as infants in need of immunization or health care
  - Civil registration records helps maintenance of important government databases such as population registers, personal identification registers, electoral rolls, pension funds registers, etc.
3. Statistical uses:
  - Civil registration records provide the most reliable source of vital statistics

# Essential features and key principles of civil registration

1. Compulsory
2. Universal
3. Continuous and permanent
4. Confidential
5. Full coverage



## Production of Vital Statistics

# Vital statistics and their uses

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**Vital statistics:** the collection of statistics on vital events in a lifetime of a person as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the person and persons concerned. Vital statistics provide crucial and critical information on the population in a country.

**Vital events:** *live births, deaths, foetal death, marriage, divorce, Annulment, separation, Adoption, Legitimation, Recognition*

## Uses of Vital Statistics



Use in estimating the size and growth of a population



Use in implementing and evaluating public health and maternal and child health programmes, as well as other government programmes .



Use in understanding the economic and social dimensions of a population



Uses in producing development indicators, example the 2030 sustainable development agenda

# Comparison of different sources of vital statistics: civil registration versus other sources

	Level of estimate	Civil registration system	Demographic surveillance sites	Sample registration systems	Population censuses	Household sample surveys
<b>Births</b>	National	Yes	No	Yes	Maybe*	Yes
	Differentials	Yes	Limited	Limited	Maybe*	Limited
<b>Child mortality</b>	National	Yes	No	Yes	Yes <sup>¶</sup>	Yes
	Differentials	Yes	Limited	Limited	Yes <sup>¶</sup>	Limited
<b>Adult mortality</b>	National	Yes	No	Yes	Maybe* <sup>±</sup>	Weak¶
	Differentials	Yes	Limited	Limited	Perhaps* <sup>±</sup>	No
<b>Cause of death</b>	All	Yes	Yes <sup>§</sup>	Yes <sup>§</sup>	Maybe <sup>§</sup>	Yes <sup>§**</sup>

\* With assessment and possible adjustment; methods do not always work.

¶ For a recent period by indirect methods.

± For an intercensal period.

¶ Methods measuring parental survival or sibling history.

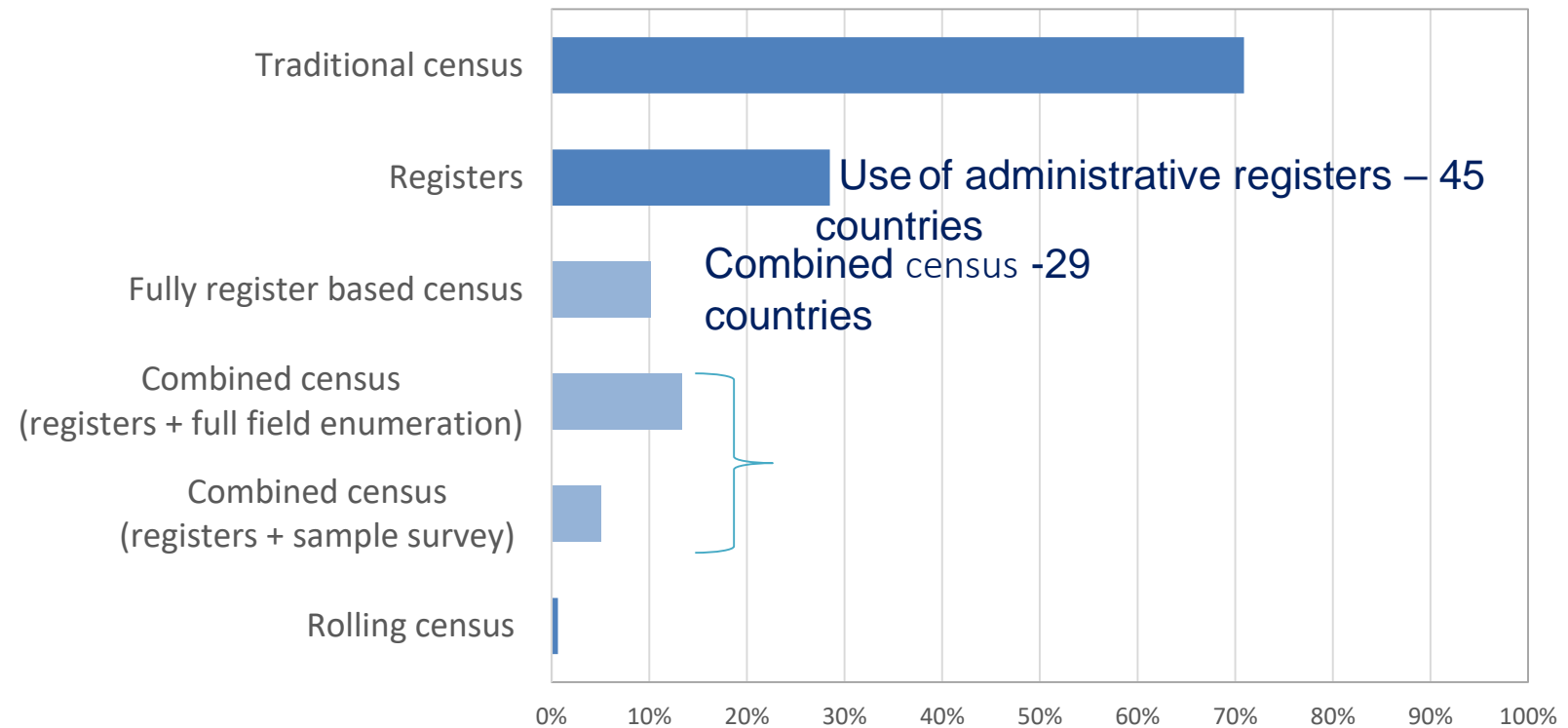
§ With verbal autopsy.

\*\* For child deaths identified by a full birth history.



# Main census methodology, percentage for the 2020 round of population and Housing censuses

The number of countries relying on registers (registers only or complemented by a full field enumeration or survey) is increasing



Source: UNSD survey on 2020 round PHCs  
Response: 158 countries

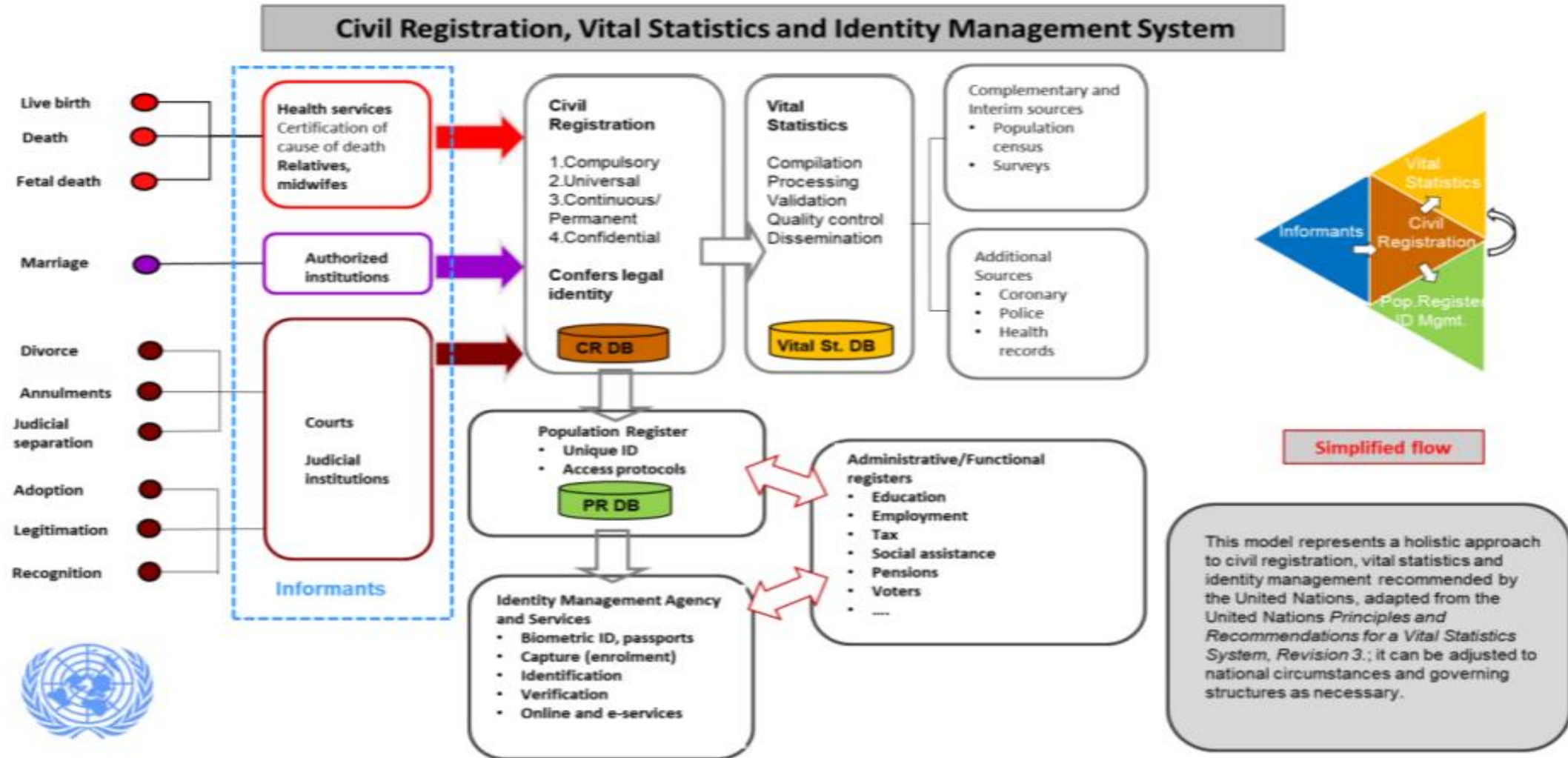
**UN LIA model integrating civil  
registration, vital statistics and  
identity management**

# Definition of legal identity

## Legal identity

The basic characteristics of an individual's identity, e.g. name, sex, place and date of birth conferred through registration and the issuance of a certificate by an authorized civil registration authority following the occurrence of birth. In the absence of birth registration, legal identity may be conferred by a legally-recognized identification authority; this system should be linked to the civil registration system to ensure a holistic approach to legal identity from birth to death. Legal identity is retired by the issuance of a death certificate by the civil registration authority upon registration of death.

# The recommended holistic approach



# The Recommended holistic approach

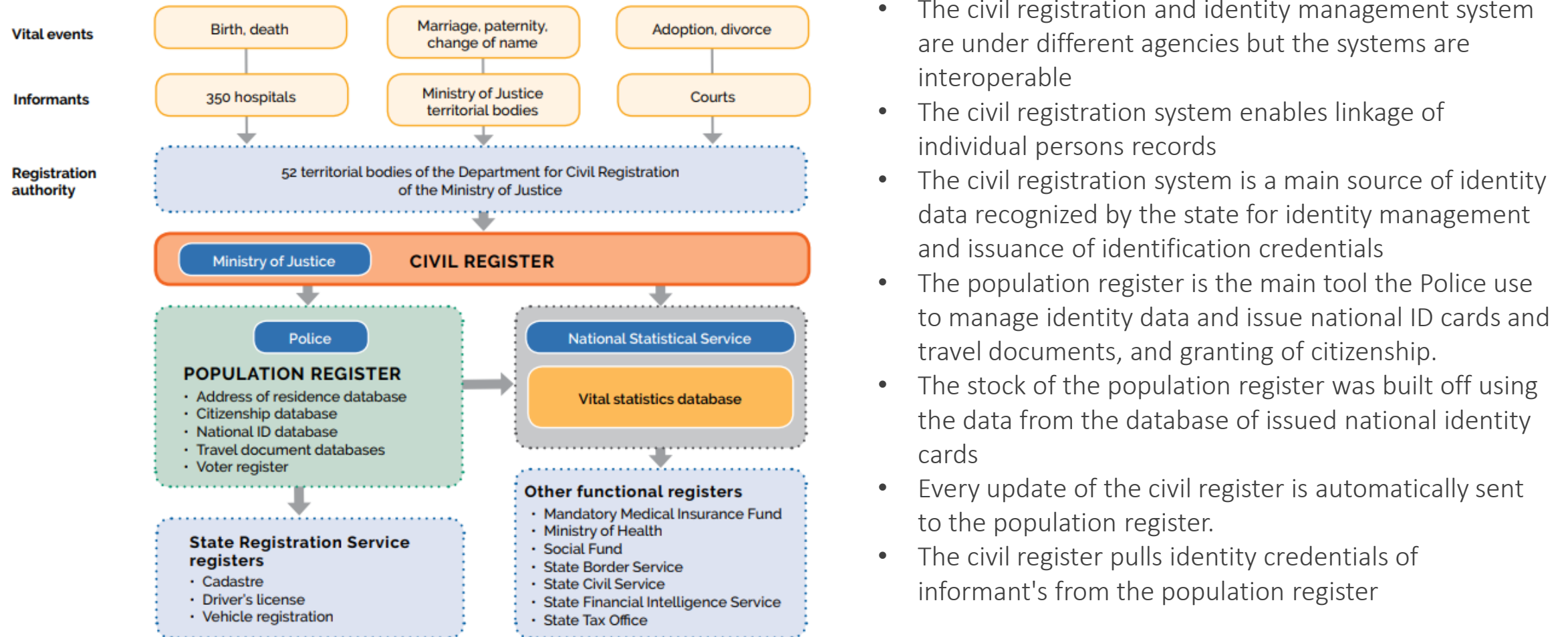
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The United Nations Legal Identity Agenda refers to the **holistic approach** to civil registration of all vital events, production of vital statistics, the establishment and maintenance of population registers and identity management apparatus from birth to death, and there should be full interoperability between these functions in a simultaneous manner, according to international standards and recommendations and in compliance with human rights of all people concerned, including the right to privacy. All Member States should adopt and implement this agenda as a systematic and perpetual legal identity for all.

# Country examples 1: Armenia

Source: Compendium of Good Practices in Linking Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) and Identity Management Systems

[http://www.data4sdgs.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/CRVS Compendium e WEB o.pdf](http://www.data4sdgs.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/CRVS%20Compendium%20e%20WEB%20o.pdf)

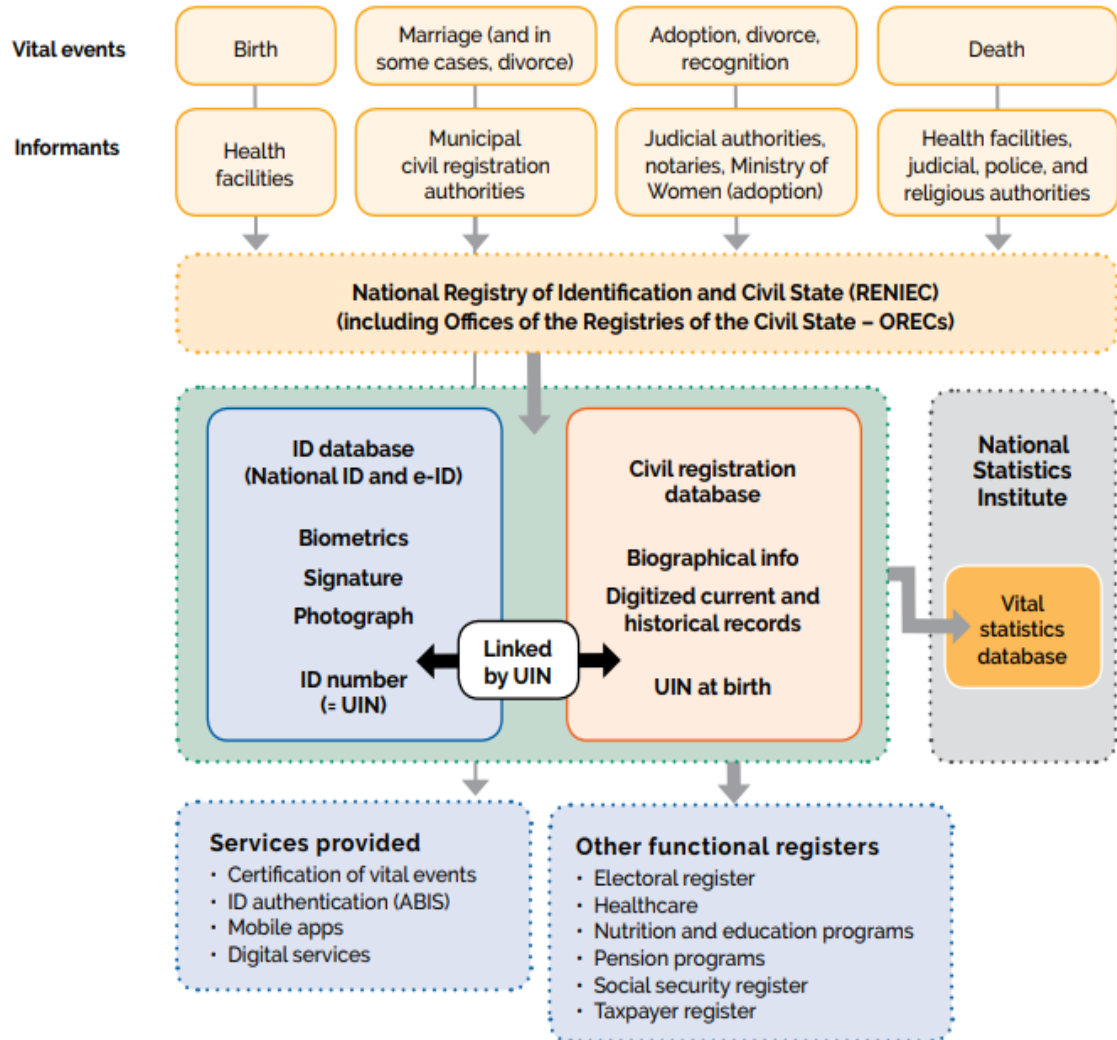


- The civil registration and identity management system are under different agencies but the systems are interoperable
- The civil registration system enables linkage of individual persons records
- The civil registration system is a main source of identity data recognized by the state for identity management and issuance of identification credentials
- The population register is the main tool the Police use to manage identity data and issue national ID cards and travel documents, and granting of citizenship.
- The stock of the population register was built off using the data from the database of issued national identity cards
- Every update of the civil register is automatically sent to the population register.
- The civil register pulls identity credentials of informant's from the population register

Figure 1.1: Armenia's identity system.

Source: Author

# Country example 2: Peru



- Single agency in charge of civil registration and national identification system
- Civil registration is maintained as the backbone of ID management,
- A unique identification number (UIN) is assigned with every birth registration
- The national ID card is the only identification credential legally valid for all civil, commercial, administrative, and judicial interactions. All Peruvian nationals must legally have a national ID card at birth
- Civil registration and identification registers are linked through the use of the UIN (assigned at birth), which helps ensure that changes in civil registration are reflected in a citizen's identity.
- All citizens are legally required to inform the civil registration office of any change in their personal information and request rectification. Failure to do so carries a financial penalty equal to \$2.60

Figure 6.1: CRVS and identity management systems in Peru.

# Key messages

1. A strong civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system that registers all vital events from birth until death for the whole population is an essential precondition for the implementation of a holistic identity system.
2. Other components of an identity ecosystem, including the issuance of identification credentials and functional government systems, rely on civil registration records as the only source of up-to-date identity data
3. The digitization of CRVS and identity management systems, together with other government functional systems, enables more efficient ways for processing identity information.
4. The benefits of a holistic approach span several aspects of governance, including ensuring people's rights, improving service delivery, reducing corruption, and leaving no one behind
5. Four key elements essential to a conducive enabling environment for pursuing a holistic identity system are: political commitment, a robust legal framework, data privacy and protection framework, technology ownership.



# UNLIA Ongoing work

- The UN legal identity task force is supporting countries in the implementation of the recommended holistic approach to civil registration vital statistics and identity management. Initial focus of this support is in Africa. 13 African countries are identified for piloting the legal identity agenda led by UN implementing agencies. The Initiative is anticipated to be expanded to other regions of the world.

# Key resources: International standards, principles and recommendations for civil registration, vital statistics and identity management

Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management

Second Draft (incorporating EGM comments)



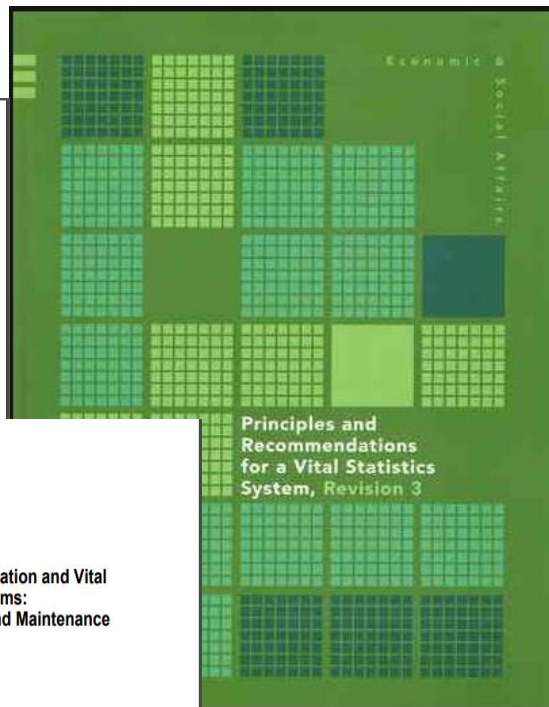
United Nations New York, January 2019

Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance

Revision 1



United Nations • New York, 2018



1. Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, United Nations 2014
2. Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance, Revision 1, United Nations 2018
3. Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management, United Nations 2019
4. Handbook on civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems: Communication for development, United Nations 2019
5. UN Strategy Paper on Legal Identity for All, 2019
6. United Nations Country Team LIA Guidelines, 2020

# References

1. Compendium of Good Practices in Linking Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) and Identity Management Systems [http://www.data4sdgs.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/CRVS Compendium e WEB 0.pdf](http://www.data4sdgs.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/CRVS%20Compendium%20e%20WEB%200.pdf)
2. United Nations Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/M19Rev3en.pdf>
3. United Nations Strategy for Legal Identity for All . <https://unstats.un.org/legal-identity-agenda/documents/UN-Strategy-for-LIA.pdf>



Questions?

