

## **Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System in Egypt<sup>1</sup>**

### Legal framework for the civil registration system

1. A number of laws have been passed regarding the civil registration in Egypt – Law No. 260 in 1960 was the original one and Act No. 11 (1965) and Act No. 158 (1980) made subsequent amendments. Overall, the law included items on the notification of the occurrence of vital events, time allowed for reporting of the events, data entry rules, data provisions to Central Civil Registration Office through field and local offices. It was also specified in the law that the Central Department of Statistics is responsible for the production of vital statistics. It was the rules of the executive list decision No. 120 (1965) included notification forms used for the purpose of collecting vital statistics.

### Organisation of the civil registration system

2. The civil registration system in Egypt is centralized. In Egypt there are 27 governorates, among which 4 are urban and 23 are rural. These governorates are further divided into centers/towns and villages. There are 4417 local health units in the country registering births, deaths and foetal deaths. Registration of marriages and divorces is the responsibility of Family Affairs Courts (a total of 231) and Real Estate Publicity Department (2 of them, located in Cairo and Alexandria). All the information collected at the local registration office is eventually sent to Department of Civil Status (under the Ministry of Interior) through the provincial level civil registration offices and centers (27 in total).

### Technical aspects of the civil registration system

#### *Informants*

3. Birth is reported by an informant (ID required) and an additional witness is also needed. Death occurred is usually reported by an informant (ID required), accompanied by a medical certificate issued by a health inspector. For foetal deaths, parents (ID required) are required to report the incidence, accompanied by a medical certificate. The marriage registration requires ID cards for both parties, witness(es) and a payment of fees. For the registration of divorce, a marriage certificate needs to be provided in addition to a payment of fees once divorce is granted by the court.

#### *Time allowed for registration*

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Technical Report on the Status of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in ESCWA Region, United Nations, ESA/STAT/2009/9

4. Births are required to be registered within 15 days; deaths and foetal deaths are to be registered within 24 hours after the event occurs; marriages and divorces are to be registered within 15 days after the marriage contract or the divorce notification is issued.

#### *Coverage of the civil registration system*

5. While compiling vital statistics obtained from civil registration, The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) evaluates the data and provides feedback to the Civil Registration Office if revision is necessary. The completeness of births and deaths statistics for Egypt is around 98%.

#### Coordination

6. In Egypt, there is a uniform law on civil registration that applies to every person in the country and throughout all agencies. In addition, any improvement of the system has to be done under the collaboration of all involved agencies. There are also bi-lateral cooperation between agencies for issues both parties are concerned.

#### Source of vital statistics

7. The vital statistics system in Egypt is a centralized system, where the collection, compilation and dissemination of vital statistics are done at the national level by CAPMAS, under the Ministry of Planning. Births and deaths are registered at the local level by the Health offices and units (under the Ministry of Health) and those registration forms are sent to the Civil Registration Office to be reviewed. Afterwards CAPMAS receives information on the registered vital events from the Civil Registration Office (under the Ministry of Interior) and then compiles and disseminates the statistics. The statistical forms of births and deaths registration are designed and produced by CAPMAS. CAPMAS also administers population censuses and sample surveys to obtain vital rates.

8. Data on marriages and divorces registered are available on the official website of CAPMAS<sup>2</sup> and unfortunately data on births, deaths and foetal deaths are not available. However, according to what CAPMAS has submitted to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection, most of tables that UNSD requires are available for Egypt.

9. The most recent population census in Egypt was conducted in 2006. There are two questionnaires used in the census – one in Arabic and one in English. Fertility and mortality topics were not covered in the census.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.msrintranet.capmas.gov.eg/pls/census/marry\\_all?LANG=0&lname=FREE](http://www.msrintranet.capmas.gov.eg/pls/census/marry_all?LANG=0&lname=FREE)

10. The latest survey conducted that was used to assess the fertility and mortality situation in Egypt is the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2005. During the survey, each woman was asked a series of questions on the number of her sons and daughters living with her, the number living elsewhere, and the number who may have died. Next, a complete history of all of the woman's births was obtained, including the name, sex, month and year of birth, age, and survival status for each of the births. For living children, a question was asked about whether the child was living in the household or away. For dead children, the age at death was recorded. Finally, information was collected on whether currently married women were pregnant at the time of the survey.

11. The final report of the DHS 2005 was published in 2006.<sup>3</sup>

12. There is no information whether information from various data sources is consistent.

#### Availability of vital statistics

13. Egypt provided data to 34 tables out of 41 vital statistics tables requested by the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* and relevant to the region, for the 10-year period of 1997-2006 (Refer to Annex 2 for the complete list of the tables). Most of the data provided are rather up-to-date.

14. The 2000 round of population census in Egypt was conducted in 1997 but fertility and mortality topics were not covered.

#### Difficulties and future plans

15. There are several areas in the civil registration system that need further improvement. First of all, there is a lack of awareness of the importance of the civil registration system by the citizens as well as by the staff working at the local health offices. Second, information collected from the vital events statistical forms is sometimes incomplete. Third, the infrastructure for the civil registration system is old and cannot sustain the normal operation of the system. Fourth, there is also a lack of regular training of the local health office staff. Lastly, there is not enough monitoring and evaluation of the system.

16. Egypt plans to develop an electronic information network involving the Ministry of Health, the Data Information Network, Ministry of Interior (Civil Registration Office) and CAPMAS (statistics). The network is going to connect regional and local offices nationwide and will facilitate electronic information sharing among all relevant agencies. The civil registration office is also going to develop a simplified registration method for the registration of births and deaths.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pub\\_details.cfm?ID=586&ctry\\_id=10&SrchTp=ctry&flag=sur](http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pub_details.cfm?ID=586&ctry_id=10&SrchTp=ctry&flag=sur)

Under the new method, all information will be recorded electronically at the registration point and will be accessible at the Central Registration Office directly. Another undergoing plan is to integrate and link various existing databases so more detailed information on births and deaths can be obtained. (e.g., linking births and deaths data)

17. Training is also planned for health professionals and those who register marriages and divorces at local level on completing the statistical form of vital events registration.