



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

IMPROVING DEATH REGISTRATION COMPLETENESS EXPERIENCES FROM THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

KAREN CARTER, THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)





ELEMENTS OF IMPROVING COMPLETENESS OF DEATH REGISTRATION

- Advocating the importance of death registration
- Understanding coverage and completeness
- Setting targets & a vision for the CRVS system
- Identifying gaps, bottlenecks, dead-ends and duplication
- Establishing clarity around roles
- Supporting structural changes that facilitate improved registration
- The legal framework
- Establishing routine reporting – including completeness
- Endorsement of national plan



ADVOCACY

- Improving death registration is a function of understanding why death registration is important
- Committee advocacy
 - Regional meetings, direct engagement in committee meetings
- Political & government advocacy
 - White papers, CRVS info notes and country profiles
 - Presentations to ministers
- Stakeholder advocacy
 - I.e. National nurses training, annual meeting of provincial governments
 - Engagement across sectors - ie sectors that need to update records when a death is registered (social welfare, electoral roll, passports, ID etc.)
 - Educating doctors and health information staff within the collection system
- Community advocacy
 - Radio and community education programs
 - Work through social structures such as church organisations

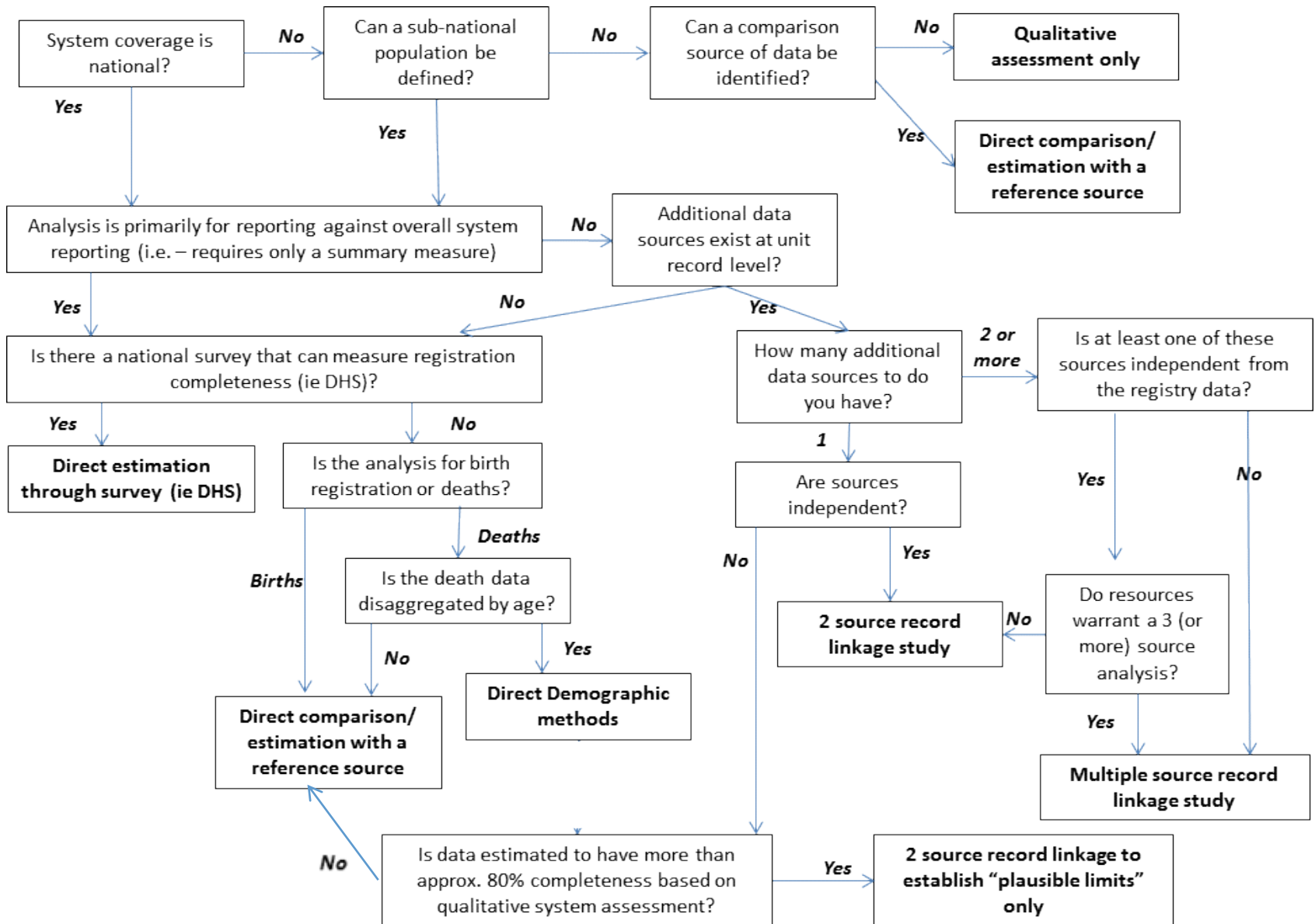


UNDERSTANDING COVERAGE AND COMPLETENESS

- Countries need to know where they stand in order to improve registration completeness
- This should include both recording or notification of death and completed registration of deaths
- National coordination committee should map processes for registering a death

- Coverage is a measure of the population that the registry system serves.
 - This is primarily, although not exclusively, an issue of access to the reporting system- and may be influenced by geography or other considerations such as the legal intent of the system, social or cultural influences.
- If coverage describes the population for which registration is actually possible, completeness is a measure of how well we actually capture all of the events in that population.
 - Measuring completeness at a national level (as indicated in the SDG targets, and plans such as the Pacific Regional Action Framework) implicitly assumes national coverage as we cannot register events where there is no access to registration.

APPROACHES FOR SELECTING A METHOD FOR MEASURING COMPLETENESS AT NATIONAL LEVEL IN THE PACIFIC





SETTING TARGETS – A VISION FOR CRVS

- Countries should agree on what they want to achieve
 - A “vision” for the system as a whole
 - Targets under the Regional Action Framework

Goal 1: Universal civil registration of births and deaths

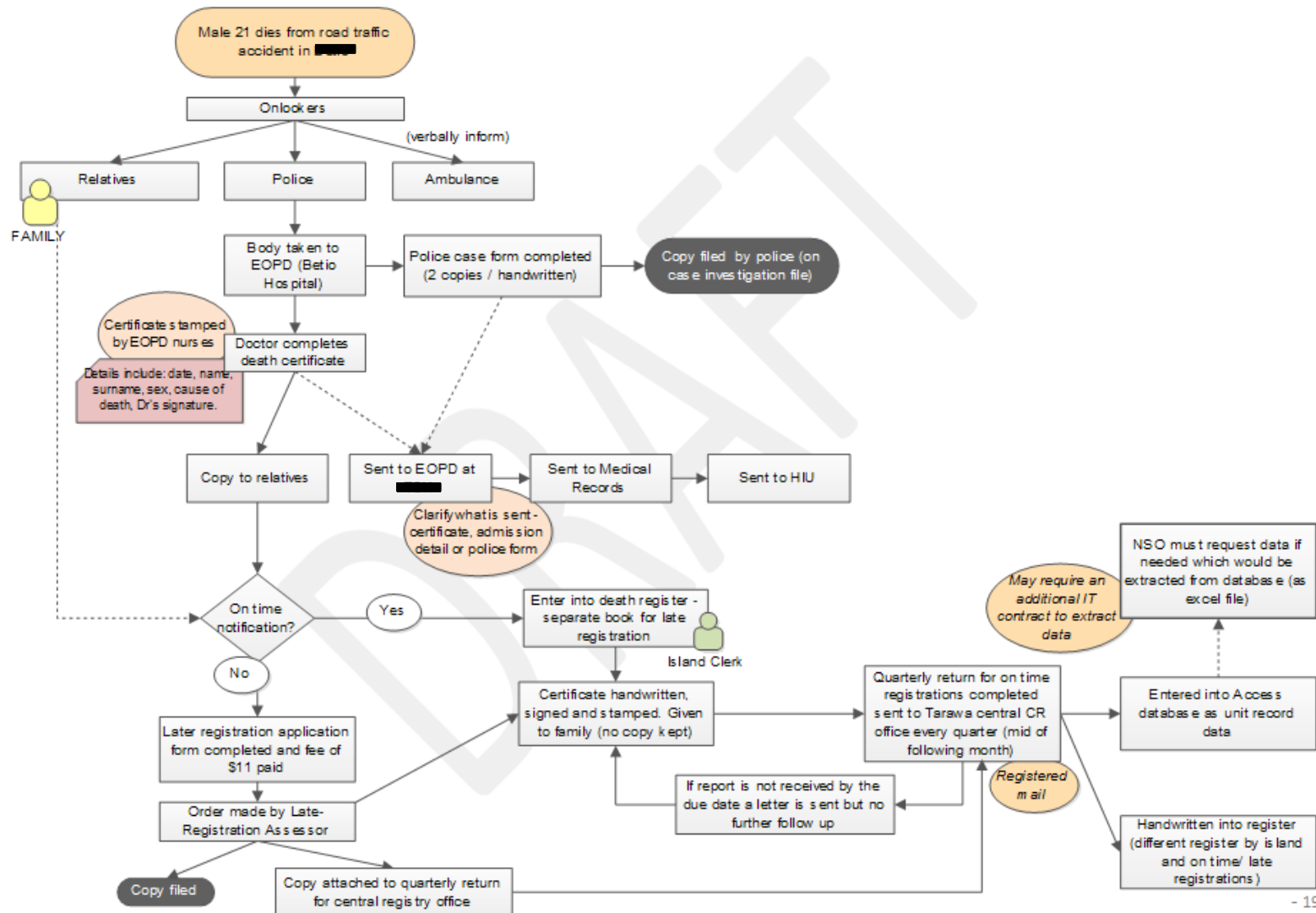
By 2024, at least X % of all deaths in the given year are registered.

By 2024, X% of all deaths in the given year are registered and have a medically certified cause of death



SYSTEM MAPPING

IDENTIFYING GAPS, BOTTLENECKS, DEAD-ENDS AND DUPLICATION





ESTABLISHING CLARITY AROUND ROLES

- Increasing death registration requires the process to be clear and accessible
- Is the health sector notifying deaths known to the health service to the registry
- Do ministers and funeral directors have a role in notification or provision of evidence
- Is the death certificate the legally recognised document or are there alternatives
- What evidence is required, and where can this be obtained.
- What is the role of the police, the coroner, the court and how do these linkages work
- What other stakeholders need to know when a death is registered (to “close” a record – ie electoral roll) and how is the data shared.



STRUCTURAL CHANGES

- Death registration must be accessible.
- Geographically – Improving coverage
 - Utilisation of the health services
 - Potential delegation to other agencies
 - Decentralising the registration offices/ access points
- Utilisation – improving completeness where registration is geographically accessible
 - Removing costs (or simplifying payments)
 - Advocacy for community and key system stakeholders
 - Ease of process – what evidence is “sufficient”
 - Removal of “alternative” documentation for formal purposes



THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Is the registration of deaths required (in all circumstances)?
 - Are the timeframes defined?
 - Whose role is it to notify?
 - Is there a legal expectation for health to notify the registrar?
 - Is the legal framework clear for stillbirth vs neonatal deaths
-
- **Best Practice Guidelines for CRVS in the Pacific Islands**
www.pacific-crvs.org/docs



ESTABLISHING ROUTINE REPORTING

- Data on registered deaths should be published regularly, with appropriate caveats – regardless of the completeness.
 - Separate by notified deaths and formally registered deaths
- National reporting should note where estimates are used due to a lack of registered data
- Importance of accountability to drive change



NATIONAL PLANS AND COORDINATION

- National plans need to prioritise death registration and cause of death collection.
- This needs to be a priority across sectors – not just for the health sector.
- Activities targeting improved registration of births can often be extended to include a focus on death registration with few extra resources or time