



Cambodia

Population: 15,827,000 (2016 Estimate)

Size: 181,035 km²

Cambodia's targets under the Regional Action Framework

Goal 1 – Universal CR of birth, death and other vital events



Birth registration

- 90% of births registered within a year of the event
Baseline: 74.4% in 2016
- 90% of children under 5 registered
Baseline: 78.0% in 2016
- 90% of people in the country have had their birth registered
Baseline: 89.7% in 2016



Death registration

- 30% of deaths are registered within a year and 30% of deaths recorded by the health sector have a medically assigned cause of death
Baseline: 46.9% of deaths are registered, but medically assigned causes of death are uncommon, the international form of the medical certificate is not used and certificates are not ICD-10 coded

Goal 2 – All individuals are provided with legal documentation of CR of births, deaths and other vital events, as necessary, in order to claim identity, civil status and ensuing rights



Legal documents

- A birth certificate or death certificate is issued for 90% of birth and death events
Baseline: Birth/death certificates are generally issued within 3 days of registration and contain the individual's name, sex, date of birth, date of death (for deaths) and name of parents (for births)

Goal 3 – Accurate, complete and timely vital statistics (including on cause of death), based on registration records, are produced and disseminated



Vital statistics

By 2024:

- Nationally representative statistics on births (disaggregated by age of mother, sex and location) are produced from registration records
- Nationally representative statistics on deaths (disaggregated by age, sex, location and cause) are produced
- At least 30% of deaths occurring in health facilities will have a medically certified cause of death assigned according to international standards
- The proportion of deaths due to ill-defined causes will be reduced to 30%
- At least 10% of deaths not occurring in health facilities have a cause of death determined through verbal autopsy
- Summary tabulations of births, deaths and causes of death – based on registration data – are published electronically to the public within 1 calendar year (for births and deaths) and 2 calendar years for cause of death
- Vital statistics reports are published based on registration records within 2 years of the reporting period

Regional Action Framework Implementation Steps

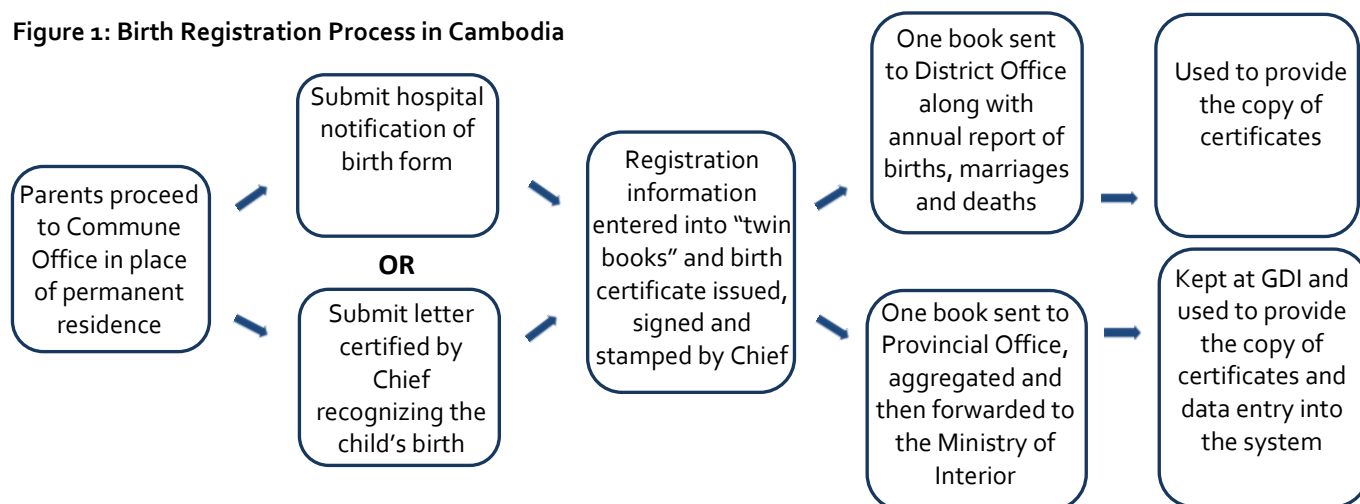
■ Complete
 ■ In Progress
 ■ Not Started

■	National Coordination Mechanism			Inequality Assessment	■
■	Comprehensive Assessment			National Strategy	■
■	National Targets			National Focal Point	■
■	Monitoring & Reporting Plan			Reporting to ESCAP	■

Overview of the national CRVS system:

Civil registration in Cambodia is the responsibility of the General Department of Identification (GDI) within the Ministry of Interior. Under a new guideline issued in 2017 all civil registration is free. Sub-decree no. 103 mandates that birth registrations must be performed within 30 days, and death and marriage registrations within 15 days. Birth, marriage and death certificates are generally issued within 3 days of registration. Cambodia's 1646 commune (sangkat) offices act as registration points, with Commune Chiefs serving as local registrars. The birth registration system in Cambodia is paper-based and summarized in the figure below. At present the data can be disaggregated by sex but not age, and vital statistics reports are not produced. The country has made remarkable strides in birth registration completeness since its records were completely destroyed from 1975 to 1979. According to the Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey, only 22% of children under 5 were registered in 2000, while by 2016 that number had grown to 78%.

Figure 1: Birth Registration Process in Cambodia



The death registration process works essentially the same as for births, although hospitals issue death notification forms with less frequency than birth notification forms. As with births, deaths must be registered in the commune of the deceased's permanent residence. However death certificates do not include information on the place the death actually occurred. Deaths occurring in health facilities are sometimes issued a medical cause of death certificate, but this certificate does not meet international medical certificate standards and is not linked to the GDI's CRVS system. Instead doctors will enter cause of death information into their facility's ward register book. This information is then coded (not according to the ICD-10 system), used to prepare a monthly report, and entered into the online Health Management Information System (used by more than 1000 public health facilities). Health facilities are not obligated to report vital events to the GDI and few private facilities report data to either the GDI or Ministry of Health. Verbal Autopsy is not yet in place. Instead non-medically trained local registrars fill out this information based on the reports of relatives (almost two-thirds of causes were ill-defined such as "disease" or "old age"). Death registrations are less common despite legislation technically requiring a death certificate before burials.

Figure 2: Administrative Divisions of Cambodia



In addition to the regular CRVS process, a few other mechanisms also collect similar information. The commune police maintain a family book, which records the names of each member of a particular family, the number of people below 18, the number of new births and the number of migrants. The police send this information to the Commune Council and up to the District level each month. Communes also have lodging books which record the births, deaths and names of everyone living in a particular household (regardless of whether or not they are related). In June 2005, the GDI estimated that family books covered 88% of the population while lodging books covered 91%. The decennial census also asks questions related to registration, including if births and deaths have been registered, if a death has occurred in the last 12-24 months, and if so what was its cause. Finally, an investigative committee comprised of the police and doctors will perform an autopsy and record cause of death information in the event of suspicious deaths. The various information collection systems operate relatively independently.

National commitments to CRVS:

Cambodia has been party to the following regional and international commitments that prioritise the importance of CRVS and CRVS system improvement.

- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)
- The Ministerial Declaration to “Get Every One in the Picture” in Asia and the Pacific including the associated Regional Action Framework and the Asian and Pacific CRVS Decade (2015-2024)
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and associated Sustainable Development Goals (2016)
- The recommendations of the Commission of Information and Accountability for Women’s and Children’s Health (COIA), which includes a commitment to improve national CRVS systems

CRVS is mentioned directly in Cambodia’s National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018. In the section on health system strengthening within the Key Priority Policies and Actions chapter, the report mentions the need to “Support strengthening of civil registration and vital statistics system that record vital events such as births, deaths and causes of death.” CRVS is also explicitly mentioned in Cambodia’s National Population Policy 2016-2030, where the role of the Ministry of Interior is “To improve the Civil Registration System and to build relationships with other line ministries such as Ministry of Health and Ministry of Planning.”

Key Legislation

CRVS in Cambodia is governed under the following legislation:

- Sub-decree No. 103 on Civil Registration (2000)
- Law on Nationality (1996)
- Law on Marriage and Family (1989)
- Civil Code (8 December, 2007)

Cambodia is represented on the Regional Steering Group for CRVS in Asia and the Pacific by the Director General of the National Institute of Statistics within the Ministry of Planning. Cambodia’s national focal point for the Regional Action Framework is the Deputy Director of the Civil Registration department of the GDI (within the Ministry of Interior).

National CRVS Coordination Mechanism:

The National Steering Committee for CRVS and Identification was set up in February 2017 and is chaired by the Minister of Interior. Its primary responsibility is to facilitate the Implementation of the National Strategic Plan for Identification 2017-2026 (below). The committee meets every 6 months and brings together 8 different line ministries including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Justice and the GDI. At the sangkat/commune level there is also the Commune Committee for Women and Children. This committee, which consists of various local stakeholders active in CRVS, announces new births and reports on other issues at monthly commune meetings with local leaders.

Comprehensive Multisectoral National CRVS Strategy:

Cambodia has recently completed its National Strategic Plan for Identification 2017-2026. Developed in conjunction with national line ministries, civil society, the private sector, development partners and the community at large, its goal is to “guide acceleration of government efforts to increase the birth registration rate and identification in Cambodia.” The Plan is composed of 5 overarching strategic goals, each with their own interim targets: 1) Develop the legal environment for personal identification; 2) Establish a universal and responsive CRVS system; 3) Establish an Integrated Population Identification System; 4) Launch a unified data distribution system; and 5) Introduce E-services.

Key achievements 2016-2017:

Cambodia's national plan, the [National Strategic Plan for Identification 2017-2026 \(NSPI\)](#), was officially unveiled in June, 2016. A national coordination mechanism to oversee the plan's implementation has also been put in place. In November 2016 Cambodia conducted [a survey](#) to establish registration completeness. This will be used as a benchmark to monitor progress towards achieving the targets set in line with the new NSPI and the Regional Action Framework. The country also recently introduced a cloud-based [CRVS Database](#). This system will help to prevent duplication, ensure real-time access, improve client search, enable certificate printing, and facilitate data retrieval, compilation and reporting. Finally, in July 2016 the Government of Cambodia established a National Civil Registrar by sub-decree No 134 to strengthen civil registration implementation.

Key Priorities for Improvement:

- Draft a unified Civil Registration, Identification and Vital Statistics Law that meets international standards and lays the groundwork for a modern and integrated CRVS and ID system
- Begin producing vital statistics based on CR data
- Roll-out ICD-10 and train coders in implementation

- Adopt and train doctors on the international form of the medical certificate for death registration
- Roll-out ICD-10 and train coders in implementation
- Introduce Verbal Autopsy by training community health workers in this procedure
- Improve training of commune chiefs in civil registration and establish a "weekly registration day" where the chief is guaranteed to be available
- Transition to a fully integrated online system
- Strengthen coordination with the Commune Committee for Women and Children, teachers, monks, midwives and health centre staff, and get them more involved in promoting registration
- Generate public awareness and incentives to encourage death registration
- Forge links between the registration information contained in the CR system, family and lodging books
- Create a monitoring and evaluation procedure to verify data received from the local level
- Use registration data collected in the census as a verification mechanism for CRVS information
- Make birth certificates a pre-requisite for school enrollment and ID cards, and continue to integrate the CRVS and ID systems in line with the NSPI

Specific priorities to address hard-to-reach and marginalized populations:

Registration levels are lower for rural populations, indigenous and ethnic minorities, children born outside of their parents' place of permanent residence, migrant children, children born into low education families, children delivered by traditional birth attendants¹, people living in remote areas and hilly terrain, and poor families. Mobile registration campaigns targeting these marginalized groups can help bridge registration gaps in the short-term. A highly successful mobile registration campaign launched with the support of UNICEF and Plan International raised birth registration rates from less than 5% in 2004 to 90% in 2006. The challenge now is to improve the regular CRVS system to reduce the need for such campaigns long-term.

Vital Statistics Reporting:

Cambodia produces selected data on vital statistics based on registration data. The information on the number of registrations of births, deaths, marriages and foreigners disaggregated by province, district and commune levels are available here: <http://www.crvs-cambodia.org/en/report>. The GDI also maintains a CRVS website (<http://www.crvs-cambodia.org/en/home>). The website contains information on CRVS such as relevant laws, CRVS system assessments, announcements, registration guidelines and an instructional video on how to register. Some registration information can also be found in the census (<https://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/15-gpc/14-population-census-2008-final-result>) and in the Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (<https://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/17-cdhs/55-cambodia-demographic-and-health-survey>).

Active Partners:

ADB, World Bank, UNICEF, Plan International, UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO, D4H

Partner supported activities (2016 – 2018):

Nationally focused activities

- Building on a legal review by UNICEF, D4H will provide support to draft a new legislative framework in line with international best practices
- ADB provided technical support in the establishment of a comprehensive Implementation Plan for the National Strategic Plan for Identification in 2016
- Plan is working to reduce barriers and generate demand for birth registration of the most marginalized children
- UNICEF is supporting the GDI to pilot an app to monitor civil registration supplies at the commune level
- WHO is supporting the introduction of ICD-10 and hopes to have medical death certificates used in 50% of referral hospitals by 2018

¹According to the National Baseline on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Cambodia, the birth registration rate of children delivered at public health facilities, private clinics or by skilled midwives is 86.3%, while children delivered by traditional birth attendants have only a 53.8% registration rate.