



Project to Strengthen National Capacities in Producing and Disseminating Vital Statistics from Civil Registration Records in Asia and the Pacific (Phase II)

Workshop 1 7 – 11 January 2019 Bangkok, Thailand

Introduction

The first workshop, from 7 – 11 January 2019, in Bangkok, Thailand, was the beginning activity for Phase Two of the “Project to Strengthen National Capacities in Producing and Disseminating Vital Statistics from Civil Registration Records in Asia and the Pacific”, 2018 - 2019.

In support of the larger Regional Action Framework on CRVS, specifically Goal 3 on vital statistics production, the workshop brought together country participants from Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Thailand to begin analysing national civil registration data, as well as start drafting vital statistics reports.¹ The 7 – 11 January workshop was the first of two workshops replicating the success ESCAP and D4H saw from Phase I of the same Project.²

Workshop Design

The workshop was structured to be centrally driven by each country’s data analysis activities and consisted of facilitator presentations, working “lab” sessions and a few feedback sessions. The presentations allowed facilitators to provide information on data quality measures and demographic calculations such as crude birth rates, crude death rates, methods for assessing birth and death registration completeness, age-specific fertility rates, and age-specific death rates. The working sessions apportioned time for country teams to work through the calculations using ‘test’ data, as well as then apply the calculations to their national civil registry data, when available. The feedback sessions also allowed country teams to present the materials they developed during the working sessions, while facilitators and other participants provided comments and suggestions for improvement.

Outputs

The country teams represented at the workshop comprised participants from a wide-variety of agencies and ministries, including, for example, civil registration authorities, national statistical offices, health ministries and interior ministries. Together, the country teams worked through 15 separate ‘lab’ sessions and produced a total of 15 different outputs using either the test data, their national civil registry data, or both.

Output 1 – Data quality: checking for plausible values, incomplete values, typos, blank values, duplicates, etc.

Output 2 – Practical exercise in tabulations

¹ For a complete list of participants, as well as the programme of activities and presentations please visit <https://bit.ly/2WpI4Bj>.

² For more information on Workshops 1, 2 and 3 from Phase I of the Project, please visit <https://bit.ly/2Lp2R2F>, <https://bit.ly/2QzY1pa> and <https://bit.ly/2QtZ22j>, respectively.



- Output 3 – Assessing completeness of birth registration exercise
- Output 4 - Adjusting births data based on completeness to include age of mother
- Output 5 – Crude birth rate and birth tabulations
- Output 6 – Age-specific fertility rates
- Output 7 – Graphing data
- Output 8 – Total fertility rates
- Output 9 – Data quality and comparison of fertility indicators
- Output 10 – Assessing completeness of death registration
- Output 11 – Adjusting deaths by age and sex based on completeness
- Output 12 – Crude death rate and death tabulations
- Output 13 – Calculating and graphing age-specific mortality
- Output 14 – Child mortality measures
- Output 15 – Data quality and comparison of mortality indicators

Each output began with a facilitator presentation providing context for the issue at hand; i.e., the importance of the issue for public health, the methods of measurement (when applicable), a demonstration of the method for calculating the output, as well as the output’s connection with both the Regional Action Framework’s goals and targets and the 2030 Agenda’s targets and indicators.

Following the facilitator’s presentation, the country teams worked among themselves with the test data and calculated the output. After the country teams completed the exercise, the facilitator would then work through the test data with everyone to ensure the correct answers were reached. The country teams would then use their national civil registry data to work through the same calculations and begin creating tables for their vital statistics reports. During these ‘lab’ sessions, multiple facilitators were available to address complications and answer questions. Finally, at the end of the ‘lab’ session, the lead facilitator would select one or more country teams to present an interesting trend or finding from their data, or a unique issue or problem uncovered by the country teams.

Way Forward

Reliable, responsive and complete vital statistics provide essential information on populations and are critical for sustainable and inclusive development in areas ranging from health and education to governance and justice. Recognizing this, countries in Asia and the Pacific agreed on the 2014 Ministerial Declaration to “Get Every One in the Picture” (E/ESCAP/71/14), which committed to improving regional production of vital statistics.

To help expand the use of data in guiding policy and program decisions, ESCAP will continue working with Bloomberg Philanthropies to host a second workshop, tentatively scheduled for 18 – 22 March 2019 in Islamabad, Pakistan. The second workshop will bring together the same participants from the six countries and will focus largely on analysing death and cause of death data. In the interim, ESCAP is continuing to support the countries in the production of their draft, national vital statistics reports. By the conclusion of the second workshop, ESCAP anticipates that the countries will have a vital statistics report that has gone through multiple iterations and is ready for publication.