



# Asia-Pacific CRVS Research Forum

3–4 April 2023 | Bangkok, Thailand

## CRVS Legal Reviews – Advancing universal civil registration in Asia and the Pacific

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### **Introduction**

Robust legal frameworks aligned with international best practices and human rights principles are the foundation for well-functioning civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems. Reviewing these frameworks is an essential step toward achieving a universal, permanent, and continuous civil registration system capable of providing accurate vital statistics information for better public health data production and use as set out in the CRVS Regional Action Framework for Asia and the Pacific. By helping government stakeholders assess the legal and regulatory environment surrounding their CRVS systems, legal reviews inform legal and policy reforms, public health decisions, and CRVS system improvement initiatives.

### **Methods**

A CRVS legal review is a carefully guided, customizable process that involves expert evaluation of the legal and regulatory frameworks that underpin a country's civil registration and vital statistics systems, culminating in the drafting of a recommendations report that provides stakeholders with a detailed, action-oriented, and substantive blueprint for aligning their CRVS legal frameworks with international best practices.

CRVS legal reviews are conducted using a Legal and Regulatory Review Toolkit developed by the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA) under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health (D4H) Initiative. The toolkit provides a guide for analysing all laws that support and pertain to a country's CRVS systems. By setting out international best practices for building a continuous, permanent, and universal civil registration system, the toolkit helps government stakeholders identify gaps or obstacles in existing CRVS legal frameworks and highlight opportunities for improvement.



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## Results

Since 2017, twelve countries in the Asia-Pacific Region – Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam – have completed or are conducting a CRVS legal review. The outcomes of these reviews led to the adoption of new CRVS laws in Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Thailand and have informed legal drafting in Cambodia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands, and Vietnam.

## Conclusion

Without strong and integrated CRVS systems, countries cannot capture the most basic and essential data about their populations, and individuals will not realize their fundamental human rights. Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have already benefited from legal review, while others still need to implement this activity as part of their CRVS system improvement efforts. A CRVS legal review is recommended for countries aiming to build universal, permanent, and continuous civil and identity registration systems that are ideal sources of vital statistics and in compliance with international best practices.