

# Advancing a Life-Course Approach to CRVS System Strengthening



**Organization:** International organization

**Data Type:** Civil registration and vital statistics

**Region:** Global

**Timeline:** Timeline: The four commitments outlined above will be rolled out over the course of 2025 and 2026.

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## **Sponsoring Organization:**

United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA

## **Supporting Organization(s):**

## **Objective:**

The commitment by UNFPA aims to advance a holistic life course approach to CRVS system strengthening, including marriage and divorce registration, operationalizing gender sensitive CRVS systems assessment tools, and supporting gender sensitive vital statistics production, dissemination and usage by national authorities.

## **Description:**

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems are essential for the efficient functioning of a country, the realization of SDG 16 and SDG 17 through ensuring that every individual has a legal identity from birth and access to basic rights and services such as healthcare, education, and social security. However, CRVS systems globally are plagued by significant gender disparities, particularly affecting women, girls, and marginalized populations. Gender inequalities within CRVS systems often result in the under-registration of births, marriages, deaths, and other life events, which disproportionately affects women's access to essential services and their ability to exercise civil and political rights. Ensuring legal identity for all, underpinned by access to registration of vital events across the life course, is a crucial layer of protection for women and children against social exclusion, gender-related health disparities and economic inequalities.

Civil registration system strengthening initiatives often focus on birth and death registration, and ignore or under-emphasize the importance of a holistic life course approach that includes key life transitions such as marriage and divorce. For women, marriage and divorce records are critical for accessing legal rights and social services, including property ownership, inheritance, and social protection benefits.

Further, civil registration systems are a crucial data source for sex-disaggregated vital statistics and gender-responsive vital statistics on reproductive health, maternal health, and nuptiality. In many countries, cultural norms, discriminatory laws, and socioeconomic barriers prevent women and girls from registering vital events or obtaining legal identification. A critical re-examination of CRVS systems from a gender perspective is needed to address these barriers, ensuring inclusivity and equality.

This commitment will involve UNFPA:

- ? hosting policy, technical and programmatic convenings on CRVS and gender (including the 4th CRVS and Gender Symposium in 2025, through the UNFPA Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems and in partnership with the IDRC, Global Financing Facility, UNICEF and UNECA);
- ? supporting the revision, piloting and rollout of a suite of gender assessment tools for CRVS system strengthening around the world;
- ? supporting national authorities in Africa, Asia, Arab States, and Latin America in strengthening marriage and divorce registration as part of national and regional CRVS system strengthening initiatives; and
- ? launching a new series of CRVS and gender knowledge products to support practitioners, policy-makers, and researchers (including a second set of CRVS and Gender Knowledge Briefs through the UNFPA Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems).

Through these efforts, UNFPA will contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society, ensuring that no aspect of gender equality is overlooked.

These four commitments are aligned with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, UNFPA corporate strategic plan and work plan of the UNFPA Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems. These commitments will be monitored and evaluated by UNFPA's management and board, as well as the advisory committee of the UNFPA Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems.



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