

# Vital Statistics from Civil Registration: Perspectives from the Philippines<sup>1</sup>

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# Outline of presentation

- Background: Civil Registration in the Philippines
- Current CRVS in the Philippines
- Organization, Coordination and administrative arrangements
- Advantages of this organizational set-up
- Challenges
- Opportunities
- Way forward

# Background: Civil Registration in the Philippines

- Philippine Statistics Authority : the repository of the civil registration database.
- The National Statistician , is ex officio also the Civil Registrar General.
- The legal framework:
  - Civil Registry Law ( Act No. 3753 ) which took effect in 1931 - civil registration was made compulsory with the Director of the National Library serving as the Civil Registrar General.
  - Commonwealth Act 591 signed in 1940-the Bureau of Census and Statistics was created and its Director designated as ex officio Civil Registrar General.
  - Republic Act No. 10625 in 2013- The Philippine Statistics Authority(PSA) head, the National Statistician, is ex officio the Civil Registrar General.

# Current CRVS in the Philippines

- Legal frameworks including those for special groups
- IT infrastructure for computerized civil registration through public private partnership
- Coordination mechanisms with stakeholders including CSOs and international organizations

# Organization, Coordination and administrative arrangements

- PSA has a Civil Registration Division, in charge of CRVS
- Local civil registrar administratively under the office of the mayor is under technical supervision of PSA
- Civil registration is done with the local government unit( municipality and city) and documents submitted to the PSA which maintains the civil registration database
- Special activities: February is declared Civil Registration Month; Mobile registration; late registration
- Coordination with stakeholders done through interagency committees, workshops, special projects
- Other stakeholders: Department of Health ( provides guidance to health practitioners that sign civil registration documents; solemnizing officials(e.g., priests);civil society ( e.g., PLAN); international organizations(e.g., WHO, UNHCR, UNFPA, ADB, WB); commissions for special groups ( Indigenous Peoples, Muslim Filipinos)

# Advantages of this organizational set-up

- streamlined processes in the construction and maintenance of civil registration database
- standardized and better-quality CRVS data
- faster introduction of innovations (including use of IT)
- timely generation of vital statistics
- closer coordination among stakeholders
- cost efficiency

# Challenges

- Civil registration for special groups( indigenous peoples, Muslim Filipinos, the stateless)
- Civil registration for the marginalized( poor and uneducated, those in inaccessible rural areas)
- Death certificates ( problems in filling up cause of death)
- IT infrastructure and staff in the subnational level ( insufficient)
- Communication and feedback mechanisms with local civil registrars( need enhancement)
- Generation and dissemination of vital statistics( needs more timely releases)

# Opportunities

- More budgetary support from government
- Renewal of PPP engagement for CRVS>>better IT infrastructure/better business processes
- More demand from users for use of CRVS
- Ministerial level declaration to “get everyone in the picture” as organized by the UN ESCAP
- Post 2015 and Sustainable Development Goals
- Big Data / Data Revolution



# Way Forward

- Adoption of seven action areas of the draft regional action framework on civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific
- Adoption of Investment Plan for CRVS in the Philippines
- Review of the Philippine Statistical Development Program which includes programs for CRVS

# Way forward:

## Some specific innovations

- Online Modules on CRVS for capacity building
- Include CVRS in curriculum of medical schools and law schools
- Professional Regulatory Commission to require updating sessions on CRVS when health professionals and lawyers renew license
- Continue public private partnership in developing and maintaining the CRVS database
- Develop mechanisms for CRVS in disaster situations

Thank You!