

Terms of reference for a consultancy
Strategic Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in the Arab countries

1. Background

Civil registration defined as the compulsory, permanent, continuous and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population is carried out primarily for the purpose of establishing the legal documents provided for by the law to secure recognition of legal identity. These records are also a main source of vital statistics. Complete coverage, accuracy and timeliness of civil registration are essential for quality vital statistics (namely live births, deaths, marriages, divorces). However, registration of vital events is often incomplete in many low and middle-income countries, preventing vital statistics production.

All countries in the region have well established civil registration systems, but some are unable to produce vital statistics from their systems in line with the international standards and recommendations. This is largely due to incomplete or deficient registration, limited capacity in some countries, as well as, recent and ongoing conflicts and other emergencies in others. In 2014, the WHO/EMRO, in coordination with international organizations, developed a regional strategy for the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems for the period (2014-2019). The regional strategy (2014-2019) focused on supporting the national authorities in member states to improve the civil registration system. The means of implementations included advocacy work, and a division of labor among international organizations: WHO-EMRO for improving causes of deaths, ESCWA in enhancing completeness of death registration and vital statistics, UNICEF for birth registrations.ⁱ

Since 2014, various international organizations have organized several training sessions, advisory missions, workshops and expert group meetings on CRVS at both regional and country levelsⁱⁱ.

However, assistance is still needed for Arab member states in at least three areas:

- 1) Assessment of completeness and quality of registers.
- 2) Compilation and dissemination of vital statistics according to international standards and recommendations, and
- 3) Compilation, storage and access to civil registration data in fragile states and countries in conflict.

A coordinated effort to improve Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in the region is sorely needed, and Member States of the region asked the international and regional organizations to resume technical support and improve intra-agency coordination at the country levels in the field of CRVS.

In that context, the ESCWA Statistics, Information Society and Technology Cluster (Cluster 4), in coordination and collaboration with the national governments – civil registration directorates, NSOs, Regional agencies in CRVS - (Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems/IDRC, WHO/EMRO, UNFPA/ASRO, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNOHCHR, UNRWA, Norwegian Refugee Council and others) and national partners, aims to develop a Strategy for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems for the period 2021-2026 in the Arab countries taking into considerations the

previous regional strategy (2014-2019) contents and outputs. A consultant is needed to carry out this work.

2. The Strategy should contribute to:

- Improve and advance CRVS in Arab countries, with special attention to fragile and conflict states
- Increase the quality and completeness of Civil Registration to produce Vital Statistics
- Assist countries with functional civil registration systems to produce statistics consistent with the international standards
- Enhance registration for all population including migrants and refugees in Arab countries (Leave No One Behind)
- Ensure coordination at regional and country responses to gaps in CRVS

Responsibilities and duties of the consultant

To support the elaboration of the Strategy, the Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems, in close collaboration with UNESCWA Statistics, Information Society and Technology Cluster (Cluster 4),, seeks a mid-level/senior consultant for a duration of 40 days, over 5 months period.

Under the direct supervision the Senior Program Specialist, CRVS, at the Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems, the Chief of Demographic and Social Statistics in ESCWA Statistics, Information Society and Technology Cluster (Cluster 4), and the Project Leader on “Advancing undertaking population census & Vital Statistics Via Civil Registrations in the Arab Region”, we are seeking a consultant to:

- 1) Conduct desk review the documentation on CRVS in UNESCWA region;
- 2) Assess the previous regional strategy (desk review; interviews, analysis of statistics from civil registration where available); The applicant will develop the methodology in close consultation with Centre of Excellence and ESCWA
- 3) Develop and discuss the draft strategy with the Regional Coordination Group in CRVS, and later in a regional workshop Regional Meeting in 2021 (date and venue TBD). This workshop will include experts and statisticians from national statistical offices of member countries, and international partners;
- 4) Co-design the virtual high-level launch of the strategy.

Language

The language of the strategy will be in Arabic or English. Bilingual proficiency would be preferred.

Duration of the work

The duration of the assigned work as per this TOR is from 15st of October to 31st March 2021, for a maximum of 40 days.

Budget

The consultant will be paid a daily fee of maximum 500 CAD /day, according to the schedule of deliverables.

Profile:

- Master's degree (or equivalent experience), demography, statistics, public administration, development, or other field relevant to the development of UNESCWA strategy in program countries.
- 8-10 years in progressively responsible professional work related to civil registration, vital statistics, demography or public administration, with a minimum of 3 years in developing countries in the field of civil registration and vital statistics, demography or closely related field (eg; elections). Experience in the Middle East and Arab States would constitute a significant asset. Experience in humanitarian field would be an asset, in particular in conflict and emergencies in the Middle East region.
- Demonstrated knowledge of qualitative and quantitative data analysis, as well as familiarity with assessments;
- Experience of working in a multicultural setting.
- Facilitation skills.
- Well developed report writing skills.
- Knowledge of computer management and applications.
- Good inter-personal skills, tact and diplomatic approach.
- Fluency in English and/or Arabic. Bilingual will be highly preferred.

How to apply:

Please send your CV and motivation letter to crvs@idrc.ca, by Friday, October 9th (11:59 PM EST)

ⁱ Regional strategy for the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems link:

https://applications.emro.who.int/dsaf/EMROPUB_2014_EN_1754.pdf?ua=1

Seeⁱⁱ <http://www.emro.who.int/entity/civil-registration-statistics/index.html>

see <https://www.unescwa.org/our-work/94752/events>