**Concept note: “Get Every One in the Picture”**

**Third Meeting of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics**

**Background**

The Regional Steering Group was constituted as part of the governance structure for the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, which was endorsed by the Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific in November 2014. As such, the Regional Steering Group is responsible for providing regional oversight and strategic guidance for the implementation of the Regional Action Framework and the promotion of the Asian and Pacific CRVS Decade 2015 – 2024.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The first meeting of the Regional Steering Group in 2015 decided on approaches and modalities for providing regional support to the implementation the Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific; reviewed draft guidelines for the implementation of the Regional Action Framework and discussed the development of further tools and research to support the improvement of the CRVS systems; and developed the programme of work for the Regional Steering Group for the period 2015-2019, including the establishment of three subgroups.[[2]](#footnote-2) The workplan as well as the thematic focus and modalities of the subgroups can be revised at the 2017 meeting if deemed necessary.

At the second meeting of the Regional Steering Group in 2016, the group made six major recommendations for the acceleration of the implementation of the Regional Action

Framework, focusing on ensuring the ongoing momentum to improve CRVS, addressing under registration, leveraging the SDGs to support implementation of the Regional Action Framework, ensuring improved resource availability for CRVS improvements, continuation of modernization of CRVS systems, and improved documentation of best practices etc. [[3]](#footnote-3),

In fulfilment of its role and function, the Regional Steering Group will convene its third meeting from 18-20 October 2017, in Bangkok Thailand. The meeting will provide the Regional Steering Group with an opportunity to review regional progress in particular through in-depth discussions on registration completeness,[[4]](#footnote-4) aligned with the first goal of the Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific.

The Regional Steering Group meeting will feature discussions on identifying priority areas by countries and partners, including deciding on the focus and modalities of the regional mid-term review of the CRVS Decade to be conducted in 2019. Considering the high level of attention Identity Management systems are receiving in countries, it has been suggested to use the midterm review of the CRVS Decade to highlight the necessity of linking CRVS and ID Management systems and ensure ongoing political commitment for improving CRVS.

In addition, the meeting will provide an opportunity for the Regional Steering Group to adjust the programme of work for 2018-2019 and ensure the setup with sub groups etc. is fit-for purpose.

**How will the meeting support implementation of the Regional Action Framework**

The work on CRVS is mandated through ESCAP resolution 71/14 on the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade, 2015-2024. The resolution requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to:

1. support the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific in performing its oversight and strategic guidance functions for the Regional Action Framework and custodianship of the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade;
2. report to the Commission on progress in implementation of the present resolution at its seventy-second, seventy-sixth and eighty-first sessions, in accordance with the reviews timetabled in the Regional Action Framework.

The meeting of the Regional Steering is organized by the Secretariat to support the group in performing its functions as per point 1 above and provide the Secretariat guidance on how to report progress to the Commissions at its seventy-sixth session as per point 2.

**Objectives:**

More specifically, the objectives of the meeting are to:

1. Review regional progress in implementing the Regional Action Framework and identify priority areas for action by countries and partners
2. Consider and initiate a plan for guiding midterm reporting by countries (2019) and conducting regional review (2020) of the Regional Action Framework, including providing the secretariat guidance on how to improve the reporting process
3. Adjust the programme of work for the Regional Steering Group and possible the subgroups for the period 2018-2019
4. Agree on the focus of the progress report to the Commissions at its seventy-sixth session

In order to review priority areas and adjust the programme of work, a number of parallel sessions will be held on the first days of the meeting with a smaller number of participants (2-3 parallel session of around 2 hours at a time are planned). These parallel sessions will also provide the Regional Steering Group an opportunity to share knowledge on key issues related to CRVS improvements to identify areas in need of further attention by countries and partners. The Regional Steering group was consulted in June- July 2017 on desired topics for the parallel sessions and will be able to choose which sessions to attend based on their expertise and interest.

The parallel sessions will include trigger presentations by countries and partners followed by discussions, allowing for more focused discussions than in a plenary setting. It would be possible for partners to take the lead on certain topics. The discussions would allow the RSG members to identify innovative practices, bottleneck issues as well as gaps in partnership support and country practices. A 1-2 page output document should be created for each session in order to ensure the knowledge generated is disseminated to the region at large and feed into the further deliberations at the Regional Steering Group meeting. The output document should include an overview of the key issues, which actions countries should consider and ideas for how progress can be supported by regional activities. Following the parallel sessions, a discussion on institutionalizing knowledge sharing will be held, including identification of specific steps needed to

1. Institutionalize knowledge sharing in the region and beyond. This may include new initiatives such as mentorships, peer-to-peer reviews or assistance or others
2. Improve and sustain development partner and country support in areas of concern to members
3. How the RSG workplan, including sub group workplans, can be adjusted to support this

**Format**

The meeting will be hosted by ESCAP at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, from 18 to 20 October 2017. It will feature presentations from regional steering group members, ESCAP and other development partners engaged in conducting CRVS improvement activities. The meeting activities will also be designed to stimulate a high level of interaction, knowledge and information exchange and networking among participants.

Adjacent to the meeting, there will be a CRVS marketplace where interested countries and partners can showcase their new initiatives and ideas. The marketplace, available during breaks, will be adjacent to the main meeting room and will facilitate dialogue informally between countries and partners, as well as encourage countries to investigate available tools for strengthening their CRVS systems. Further information is provided in a separate concept note.

A consultation amongst the CRVS partnership which supports implementation of the Regional Action Framework will be held on 17 October at the UNCC, Bangkok.

**Participants**

Participants will be Regional Steering Group members or their chosen alternates. In addition, Members and Associate members of ESCAP and development partners and donors can participate as observers.

**Language**

The working language of the meeting will be English.

1. The terms of reference of the Regional Steering Group is available from http://getinthepicture.org/system/files/event/documents/terms-of-reference-of-rsg\_e71\_inf9e.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Report of the first meeting is available from http://getinthepicture.org/system/files/event/documents/Report%20of%20the%201st\_meeting\_RSC-CRVS\_28-30July2015\_0.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Report of the second meeting is available from http://getinthepicture.org/system/files/event/documents/E.ESCAP\_.CST%285%29.4.Report%20of%20the%20Regional%20Steering%20Group%20on%20its%20second%20meeting.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Countries reported on birth and death registration completeness as part of the baseline report for the CRVS Decade. The responses are synthesized in [E/ESCAP/72/22 Report of the Regional Steering Group for CRVS in Asia and the Pacific](http://getinthepicture.org/resource/report-regional-steering-group-civil-registration-and-vital-statistics-asia-and-pacific) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)