Building Capacity for Civil Registration

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Civil registration: the missing pillar

Data collection efforts have often focused on surveys and censuses
- Produce an immediate “pay off” of new, detailed data sets
- Better fit donors’ project-oriented funding

Administrative records
- Data produced by existing accounting or management information systems
- Many weaknesses in these systems, but principal stakeholders are clear

Civil registration systems
- Often lack a sponsor or key stakeholder
- Citizens lack incentives to participate
- High initial costs, but long-term benefits
Role and importance of civil/vital registration

Statistical:
- Dynamics of population growth, including births, deaths, and migration
- Size and distribution of population
- Sampling frames for surveys and validation of census results

Administrative purposes:
- Proof of identity and citizenship
- School registration, voting, and eligibility for social protection programs
- Planning for basic social services and infrastructure development
- Registration of deaths and cause of death provides important health information

But to be useful, coverage of vital events must be accurate and substantially complete
Strengths and weaknesses of a vital registration system

Strengths:
• Cheaper than conducting a survey (or a census)
• Data are based on a record of events, not recall
• Can be made available to users quickly and at low cost

Weaknesses:
• Incomplete reporting – 36 percent of Bank borrowing countries (and only 23 percent of IDA countries) have complete coverage of vital events
• Recording errors and omissions occur when data not based on timely, accessible, and well designed reporting systems
• Not all administrative levels have capacity to maintain the registers
“Making everybody count” in the agenda of MAPS

Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) has helped to encourage countries to produce National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS) and better data through:

- Support for 2010 round of population census
- Improved international coordination (International Household Survey Network) of household surveys
- Better data documentation and access (Accelerated Data Program) for household surveys
- Increasing resources (STATCAP, TFSCB, Statistics for Results)

But not all NSDSs include specific plans for improving or implementing civil registration
National strategy for statistics developed in 2004/05
Plan for civil registration prepared in 2004 with TA from GDDS project
Investment program with support from UK (DFID), EU, and World Bank (STATCAP)
Focus
  • Strengthen relevant departments
  • Process and analyze existing data
  • Improve data coverage and quality
  • Integrate registration data with census planned for 2009
Burkina Faso

Coverage of births in 2006

- At provincial level: Varies from 19 to 92%
- At national level: 59%
- Constraints facing vital registration (VR)
- Lack of willingness of administration towards registration
- Cultural reasons and discriminations against women
- Illiteracy and ignorance
- Inaccessibility to VR centers
- Lack of equipment and personnel for VR
- Cost of the certificates (additional “taxes” from the officers)
STATCAP supports the government program to improve the Vital Registration System

- Conducting VR campaigns in 6 provinces
- Collecting data to produce yearly reports on vital statistics
- Improving data collection forms
- Staff training
- Training workshops on vital statistics
- Equipping VR centers with new typewriters (359 beneficiaries in 2008)
VR Campaigns

- Organized in provincial capitals and villages
- Concern only registration of births
- Gather and involve local authorities
- Free registration of about 100 to 150 children at each location
- Distribution of campaign material (T-shirts etc..)
- Speeches by authorities on the meaning and use of birth certificates in relation to citizens’ rights and responsibilities
UN ENFANT = ACTE DE NAISSANCE