



APAI-CRVS
Everyone visible in Africa

Decade for Repositioning
of Civil Registration and
Vital Statistics in Africa
2017 to 2026

Volume 3
Quarter 1 April, 2026

Africa CRVS Pulse

Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

APAI CRVS Secretariat Stories

This issue highlights regional coordination, digital transformation, service delivery reforms, and country-level milestones advancing legal identity and stronger vital statistics across Africa.



The 2025 Annual Expert Group Meeting for Registrars General (EGMRG) in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Held from 25-27 June 2025 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Annual Expert Group Meeting for Registrars General brought together civil registration experts from more than 40 African countries, regional economic communities, and international partners. Organized by ECA and the African Union Commission, the meeting reviewed progress under the APAI-CRVS Strategic Plan 2023-2028 and reaffirmed CRVS as a core pathway toward universal legal identity and stronger vital statistics.

Participants focused on three transformative priorities: interoperability, decentralization, and digitalization. They called for faster progress in registering all vital events, improving cause-of-death data, and expanding the production and use of vital statistics. The meeting also encouraged countries to adopt sustainable domestic financing, strengthen local service delivery, and prepare for the 6th Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration (COM6). The next EGMRG is planned for June 2026 in Zimbabwe.

From the APAI-CRVS Secretariat

The first quarter of 2026 reflects strong momentum across the CRVS landscape in Africa. From continental work on digital standards and interoperability to country-led reforms that bring services closer to communities, the period shows a clear shift from planning to implementation. This newsletter brings together major developments from the APAI-CRVS Secretariat and selected country experiences that illustrate how legal identity systems are becoming more inclusive, more connected, and more responsive to people's needs.

In Brief

EGMRG 2025 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea reinforced the central role of interoperability, decentralization, and digitalization in accelerating CRVS reform.

The Africa eCRVS Shared Asset initiative continued to define shared standards and machine-readable requirements for digital CRVS solutions.

Three CRVS Accelerators are moving from concept to practical workstreams on interoperability, digitalization, and decentralization.

Countries are expanding community-level registration, modernizing digital platforms, and strengthening legal and institutional frameworks.

Several reforms place special emphasis on inclusion - from free birth registration and school-linked registration to migrant reintegration and biometric identity.

Advancing the Africa eCRVS Common Shared Asset (ACSA) initiative

A five-day in-person workshop held in Addis Ababa from 23-27 February 2026 advanced the Africa eCRVS Shared Asset initiative. ACSA is designed as a shared continental resource to help countries avoid fragmented digital CRVS systems, unclear standards, and vendor lock-in.

National technical experts from Ethiopia and Kenya worked alongside UNECA, UNICEF, and partners to refine design principles, data standards, and practical functional requirements for birth and death registration. The workshop also prepared material for the Expert Group Meeting of African Registrars General, with the broader aim of delivering a locally led, interoperable, and sustainable foundation for digital transformation.

APAI- CRVS Secretariat Workstreams Now Underway

Digitalization landscape analysis:

A continental landscape analysis of CRVS digitalization is underway. The questionnaire has already been shared with countries, and follow-up support is focusing on stronger response quality, reduced data risks, and more robust quality assurance.

The three CRVS Accelerators:

Since late 2025, the APAI-CRVS Secretariat and the CRVS Regional Core Group have been translating

the three CRVS Accelerators into organized workstreams. These streams are expected to produce practical guidance, technical papers, and a 2026 roadmap for country support.

Continental assessment and observatory groundwork:

A continent-wide assessment of CRVS progress for 2017-2026 remains at an early conceptual stage, but it is intended to lay the groundwork for periodic monitoring and the gradual establishment of an Africa CRVS-ID Observatory.

The accelerators in brief

- **Accelerator 1 - Interoperability:**
Focuses on legal, organizational, semantic, and technical interoperability, recognizing that legal and organizational foundations must come first. The health and education working groups have already agreed on concept notes and drafting directions.
- **Accelerator 2 - Digitalization:**
Is building a decision-ready foundation for digital CRVS transformation, including stock-taking of ongoing initiatives, identification of duplication and gaps, and preparation of an updated workplan aligned with Digital Public Infrastructure thinking.
- **Accelerator 3 - Decentralization:**
Aims to bring CRVS services closer to communities by aligning local delivery with frontline structures. The group has been constituted and is expected to formalize its scope, mandate, and near-term actions as delivery work intensifies in 2026.

Country Updates Across Africa

The following updates illustrate how countries are advancing CRVS through digital platforms, legal reform, service integration, local delivery, and partnerships that expand access to registration and identity services. Country reforms continue to place people and service access at the center of CRVS improvement.

Digital Transformation and Interoperability

- **Building Guinea’s Digital Civil Register**

With support from the OIF, Guinea’s National Civil Register has been developed in stages, beginning with a regional workshop in Conakry in October 2024 that brought together 80 participants from 18 African countries. The process then moved into national implementation under PN-RAVEC.

By late 2025 and early 2026, the work had progressed through capacity-building, presentation of first electronic functions, sectoral consultations, and validation of application texts for the new civil registration and identification laws. Together, these steps are helping Guinea shape a more reliable, interoperable, and digitally enabled civil registration system.

- **Rwanda launches an integrated CRVS system.**

Rwanda has introduced a new integrated CRVS platform linking civil registration, the population registry, and health information systems. The new model reduces duplication, improves data sharing across institutions, and supports decentralized service delivery. Training has already reached 1,100 data and health facility managers, while 2,148 cell executive secretaries are being prepared to register community births and deaths. Rwanda’s experience shows how interoperability and local registration can reinforce one another.

- **Senegal plans nationwide digital pre-declaration.**

Senegal’s National Civil Status Agency has announced plans to deploy official pre-declaration software in health facilities to improve the capture of births and deaths at source. The initiative is intended to reduce under-reporting, strengthen data security, and curb fraudulent practices linked to unofficial local software.

- **Republic of Congo validates an integrated civil registration system.**

The DRC has entered a new phase of digitalization through a centralized platform that connects health facilities, local registries, and central authorities. The system is expected to improve data reliability, reduce fraud, and support the issuance of more secure civil status documents.

- **Niger launches the AES biometric identity card.**

Niger has formally launched its new AES biometric national identity card, alongside work on biometric passports and secure national data infrastructure.

The initiative aims to strengthen security, improve public service efficiency, and build a more modern digital identity ecosystem.



Fig 3: General Abdourahamane Tiani enrolls for the AES biometric national identity card, Presidential Palace, Niger.

- **Côte d’Ivoire links identity verification with financial services.**

A strategic partnership between ONECI and BGFI Bank will enable biometric identity verification through the national population register. The move responds to growing demand for secure, real-time authentication and demonstrates how CRVS and identity systems can support trust in broader service sectors, including banking.

- **Madagascar advances biometric enrollment.**

Madagascar’s Civil Registration and Identity Reform continues to move forward through workshops that prepare local authorities for biometric enrollment, record digitization, development of a unique social register, and rollout of e-Fokontany digital community platforms.

Access, Inclusion, and Community-Level Service Delivery

- **Benin expands a one-stop birth registration model.**

Benin’s pilot single-window service for birth declaration and registration has shown striking early results. Within six months, registration rates in the ten pilot health facilities rose from 21.95% to 76.56%. The model reduces the burden on parents and illustrates the value of bringing registration closer to where births occur.

- **Madagascar launches the ‘Civil Registration and Education’ project.**

In Miarinarivo, a new project linking civil registration and education has been launched to address the barriers children face when they lack birth certificates. A pilot phase already exceeded its target, producing 4,800 certificates and mobilizing communities and mobile courts to support delayed registration.

- **Togo adopts a new practical guide for civil registration officers.**

Togo has validated an updated practical guide designed to strengthen the work of civil registration officers and agents. The guide is expected to improve service quality, standardize practice, and strengthen data protection in document issuance.

- **Côte d’Ivoire partners with Sant’Egidio on free birth registration.**

ONECI and the Community of Sant’Egidio have signed an agreement to support free birth registration under the BRAVO! initiative. The partnership places strong emphasis on vulnerable families and on ensuring that no child remains legally invisible.

Governance, Legal Reform, and System Strengthening

- **Rwanda CRVS Strategic Plan End-Term Evaluation**

The 2025 end-term evaluation of Rwanda’s 2017/18-2023/24 CRVS strategy reviewed achievements, implementation challenges, and lessons for the next planning cycle. Coordinated by NIDA with support from Vital Strategies through the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, the evaluation examined alignment with national transformation priorities, the SDGs, and the country’s single digital identity agenda.

Using mixed methods, the exercise combined business process mapping, the CRVS Systems Analysis and Redesign tool, document review, online questionnaires, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. It found strong implementation progress: nine vital events digitized and operationalized, registration services decentralized to all 620 health facilities and 2,148

cells, 3,220 civil registrars trained, and governance mechanisms functioning.

At the same time, outcome gaps remain. Birth registration completeness rose from 50% to 90%, while death registration improved from 30% to 46%. Cause-of-death information and community verbal autopsy coverage also improved, but mortality data quality still needs sustained attention. The evaluation offers clear evidence base for Rwanda’s next CRVS strategic plan.

- **Guinea disseminates new civil registration and identification laws.**

Guinea’s ONECI has launched regional awareness work around two major legal reforms governing identification and civil registration. The effort is designed to harmonize implementation, strengthen institutional coordination, and prepare for the rollout of the National Register of Physical Persons.

- **Mozambique validates its CRVS situational analysis.**

Mozambique has secured high-level endorsement of its national CRVS situational analysis through a landmark interministerial process. The next phase will include support to the Interministerial Group for Vital Statistics, mapping the electronic CRVS system, revitalization of community reporting through USSD, and stronger partner coordination.



Fig 4: PS's and the technical team during the situational analysis meeting, Mozambique.

- **Niger strengthens migrant return and reintegration coordination.**

Niger has launched a national platform to coordinate reception, orientation, reintegration, and follow-up for returning migrants. Although broader than civil registration alone, the initiative has important implications for identity management, social protection, and institutional coordination for vulnerable populations.



Fig 5: Launch of the "Civil Status and Education" project, March 4, 2026, Miarinarivo, Itasy region, Madagascar.

Benin Marks the International Identity Day

On 16 September 2025, in Cotonou, Benin celebrated the International Day of Identity under the leadership of the National Agency for the Identification of Persons. The event highlighted legal identity as both a fundamental right and a gateway to social and economic inclusion.

The celebration showcased progress on decentralization, digitalization, interoperability, the one-stop birth registration service, and the WURI fID certificate. It also renewed attention to fraud prevention, identity protection, and the need to continue free birth registration efforts for children at risk of being left behind.



Fig 2: Participants, the International Day of Identity, Cotonou, Benin.

Looking Ahead

- Preparations for COM6 remain an important priority, as member States and partners seek renewed high-level political commitment and domestic financing for CRVS.
- The next EGMRG is planned for June 2026 in Zimbabwe, where countries and partners are expected to take stock of progress and sharpen implementation priorities.
- The Africa eCRVS Shared Asset initiative will continue through technical working group engagement, including review and validation of shared functional and non-functional requirements for digital CRVS solutions.
- Across the region, the shift from frameworks to delivery is becoming increasingly visible. The strongest reforms are those that combine legal grounding, institutional coordination, digital readiness, and community-level access.

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