



APAI-CRVS
Everyone visible in Africa



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

Media advisory

Africa Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day

10 August 2024

Strengthening the linkage of civil registration and vital statistics to legal identity systems through digitalization for enhanced inclusion

Africa Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day, which is celebrated annually, marks a pivotal moment for reflection, collaboration and action towards strengthening civil registration and vital statistics systems across Africa, especially as the continent strives to accelerate progress in meeting the commitments made under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to achieving universal legal identity.

The theme chosen for this year's celebration, "Strengthening the linkage of civil registration and vital statistics to legal identity systems through digitalization for enhanced inclusion", serves as a rallying call that emphasizes the pivotal role of digital integration in harmonizing civil registration and vital statistics systems with legal identity structures. Such harmonization is essential for promoting effective governance and societal development, protecting individual rights, ensuring efficient service delivery, reducing fraud and facilitating cross-border recognition. It forms the backbone of a transparent, accountable and inclusive governance framework that benefits individuals, communities and societies.

More specifically, the benefits of creating such linkage include:

1. **Accurate population data:** The linkage of civil registration and vital statistics to legal identity systems ensures the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of population data and of records of such vital events as births, deaths and marriages, while legal identity systems establish official recognition of individuals. By linking these systems, countries can maintain up-to-date and reliable demographic information, which is essential for planning, policymaking and service delivery.
2. **Effective service delivery:** Linking civil registration and vital statistics and legal identity systems and harnessing the role of the health sector facilitate more efficient and targeted service delivery across various sectors such as education, social welfare and electoral processes. Governments can accurately identify individuals, verify their identities and provide tailored services based on verified data, which will lead to improved outcomes and reduced duplication of effort.



3. **Protection of rights:** Legal identity is a fundamental human right and is crucial to gain access to other rights and services. Linking civil registration and vital statistics and legal identity systems ensures that individuals have official recognition and documentation of their identities, which will enable them to exercise their rights, gain access to social services, participate in economic activities and assert legal claims.
4. **Reduced fraud and impersonation:** Integrated systems that have strong verification mechanisms help to reduce identity fraud, impersonation and other forms of identity-related crime. By linking civil registration and vital statistics data with legal identity records, authorities can authenticate identities more effectively, thereby safeguarding against fraudulent activity in financial transactions, public services and voting processes, among other areas.
5. **Cross-border recognition:** The linkage of civil registration and vital statistics to legal identity systems facilitates cross-border recognition and documentation of identity. This is particularly beneficial for migrants, refugees and individuals moving between countries, as it enables them to gain access to services, establish legal status and participate more fully in their host societies.
6. **Data for development:** Linked systems provide valuable data for evidence-based policymaking, development planning and monitoring progress towards national and international development goals. Governments, development partners and researchers can use linked data to analyse trends, identify disparities and target interventions more effectively, which will lead to more sustainable development outcomes.

With a vision to address challenges and unlock opportunities, it is hoped that this seventh celebration of Africa Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day will ignite conversations on the vital importance of harmonizing civil registration and vital statistics with legal identity systems. As the celebration unfolds, national stakeholders are invited to:

- Reflect on the status of national civil registration and vital statistics and legal identity systems in relation to the theme of the celebration, and, where needed, begin to foster dialogue on how such linkage can be established in a systematic and sustainable manner.
- Share success stories, innovative solutions and collaborative initiatives that are driving advancements in civil registration and vital statistics.
- Cultivate partnerships and synergies among stakeholders to accelerate progress in civil registration and vital statistics and legal identity initiatives.

Celebration of Africa Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day at the regional level

The secretariat of the Africa Programme on the Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, in collaboration with partners in the regional civil registration and vital statistics core group, will host a week-long webinar series that will be aimed at addressing major topics that fall under the theme of the celebration. The webinar series will provide a platform for experts, policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders to share insights, experiences and innovative solutions related to civil registration and vital statistics

and legal identity systems in Africa. The secretariat encourages all stakeholders in government, civil society, academia and the private sector to actively participate in the webinar series and to join in the celebration of Africa Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day. Together, we can drive positive change, promote inclusion and contribute to the African development agenda through strengthened civil registration and vital statistics systems and legal identity frameworks.

We extend a warm invitation to media representatives to join us in capturing the essence of this momentous occasion. For media inquiries, please reach out to the Chief of the Demography and Social Statistics Section, Mr. William Muhwava, by email at muhawava@un.org.