

Annual Expert Group Meeting for Registrar Generals (EGMRG) on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

ZIMBABWE CRVS-HEALTH Integration

Plenary Session 2: Interoperability — The Foundation of the New Decade

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Introduction

Health facilities are the most critical entry points for civil registration - for both births and deaths. By integrating CRVS with health systems, countries can achieve universal birth registration and improve cause-of-death reporting. Unlike a traditional success story, this presentation acknowledges that Zimbabwe is still in the implementation phase, sharing both progress achieved and challenges remaining. The core message is that interoperability is not a destination but a journey and Zimbabwe is committed to walk that path with regional partners.

Integration

- The act of building a bridge between isolated systems so they can share information and operate together as part of a broader IT infrastructure.
- Is the alignment of health service delivery with the legal registration of vital events (births, deaths, and causes of death).

Interoperability

- It is the seamless, real-time ability of separate systems to automatically communicate, exchange, and *understand* data without needing custom translators, using shared universal standards.
- The seamless exchange and use of data between different systems – is the backbone of a modern, effective Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system. It moves beyond isolated registries to create an integrated ecosystem that delivers legal identity, vital statistics, and enables essential services
- Integration/interoperability in CRVS-HEALTH requires infrastructure, APIs, standards, protocols and data formats. (HL7 FHIR for medical records or TCP/IP for networking).

CRVS-HEALTH INTEGRATION

- **Ministry of Health and Child Care** – The source of birth/death notifications from health facilities (record events).
- **Civil Registry Department** – Mandated authority receiving notifications and do registrations.
(issues certificate of registration).
- **Breaks down silos**, enabling registration at the point of service (e.g., birth notification at health facilities, death notification by doctors/funeral directors), universal coverage – **(SDG 16.9)**:
- **Foundation for Legal Identity**: Provides the verified birth event data essential for issuing foundational ID (e.g., integrated with National ID systems). Enables lifelong identity management and linkages.
- **Enhancing Efficiency & Reducing Costs**: Automates data flows, eliminates duplicate data entry, reduces administrative burdens, and minimizes errors across agencies.
- **Improving Service Delivery**: Enables "tell-us-once" principle. Birth registration data can automatically trigger child immunization reminders, social benefit enrollment, or school registration. Death registration can trigger pension cessation, estate processing, and inheritance.
- **Strengthening Data Security & Privacy**: Well-designed interoperability with strong governance provides *more* control over data flows, access rights, and audit trails than fragmented systems, enhancing privacy protection.



Why Interoperability Was Needed?

Challenges

- The Civil Registration and Health sectors operated as separate systems, resulting in fragmented service delivery.
- Birth and death notifications were processed manually, leading to delays and prone to errors.
- Limited real-time data exchange affected the quality of national statistics and decision-making.
- CRVS-Health databases use incompatible software without shared technical standards, protocols and at times duplicating data
- Capacity and Training Gaps: Health workers and registration officers lacked the formal training required for electronic medical certification of causes of death or standard ICD coding.
- Privacy and Data Security: Integrating sensitive health records with permanent, legally binding civil identity registries requires robust data protection and confidentiality standards that many regions struggle to implement.
- Ensuring accuracy and completeness of entries remains a continuous challenge.



Our Approach to CRVS-Health Integration

- A comprehensive CRVS Country Assessment was conducted and report produced.
- Established strong governance and collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Civil Registry.
- Implementing a secure interoperability platform to exchange birth and death notifications.
- Integrated Health Information Systems with the CRVS ecosystem using standardized interfaces.
- Introduced automated validation and synchronization with the National Population Register.





WHAT WE WILL BE ACHIEVED

- Reduction on the time required to register births and deaths.
- Improved data accuracy, completeness, and consistency across government systems.
- Minimized duplicate records through automated validation.
- Enhanced service delivery and strengthened evidence-based planning and policy development.



Road Map – Action Plan

Activity	Timelines
Complete Business Intelligence Module	Q3 2026
Finalize API/Middleware design for CRVS-Health Integration	Q4 2026
Train Health workers & registrars on integrated system	2026 - 2027
Pilot interoperability in 3 Provinces	Q1– Q2 2027



LESSONS LEARNED

- Successful digital transformation requires executive leadership and clear governance.
- Common interoperability standards are essential for sustainable integration.
- Continuous data quality monitoring improves trust in national records.
- Capacity building and stakeholder engagement are key to long-term success.



Our Vision for the Future

- Expand CRVS–Health integration to all health facilities nationwide.
- Strengthen the National Interoperability Platform and Digital Identity ecosystem.
- Leverage analytics and cyber-security to support trusted digital government.
- Promote citizen-centric services aligned with the CRVS Decade 2026–2036 vision. Demand interoperability in CRVS tools you use.
- Adopt standards (ICD-10, HL7 FHIR, etc.).

Key Message to COM6:

"We must recognize that civil registration and health systems are not separate mandates, but two sides of the same coin. Millions of births and deaths go unrecorded each year, leaving vulnerable populations invisible and without access to fundamental rights and public services."



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of Civil Registration and
Vital Statistics in Africa
2017 to **2026**

Thank you

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