



# CRVS AND SDGs

## A well-functioning civil registration and vital statistics system is critical in monitoring country progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

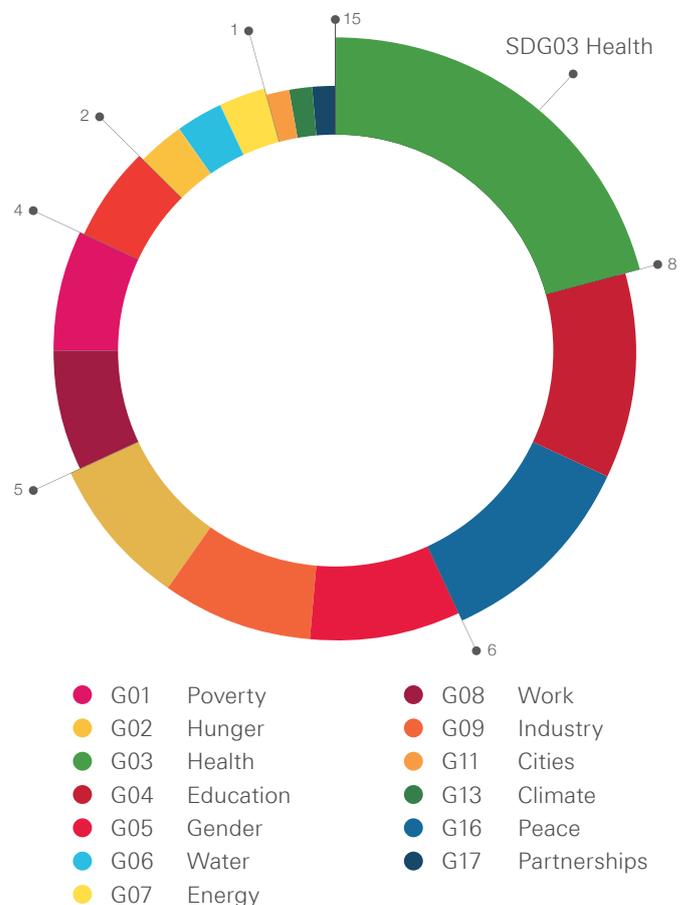
A functional civil registration and vital statistics system is the best source of continuous data on how many babies are born, how many people die, and what people are dying from. These data provide important information about vital events in the whole population, which is a key Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) concept linked to the vision of ‘leaving no-one behind’.

As of July 2016, 120 indicators have been finalised and entered into the Global SDG Indicator Database (<http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>). **More than one-third (45) of these indicators will require data from a CRVS system**, primarily in the form of population data as denominators for population-based targets (Figure 1). Targets 16.9 and 17.19 are also specifically focused on CRVS.

SDG 3, for example, seeks to ensure health and well-being at every stage of life. A number of indicators for this goal will require data from a CRVS system, including maternal and infant mortality rates, mortality rates due to specific diseases, and the adolescent birth rate. Indicator 3.4.1, the mortality rate from cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease, has significant measurement implications for countries. As does indicator 3.6.1, mortality from road traffic accidents. A functioning CRVS system, with medical certification and verbal autopsy (where required), is the **only source of the cause-specific mortality data** required for monitoring such indicators.

Very few low-income countries currently have such systems in place. As such, continued investment in CRVS systems is necessary to enable countries to measure progress in confronting the burden of premature mortality, and to design effective policies to address emerging threats such as the pandemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Figure 1: SDG indicators that have source data from a CRVS system<sup>1</sup>



## What is CRVS?

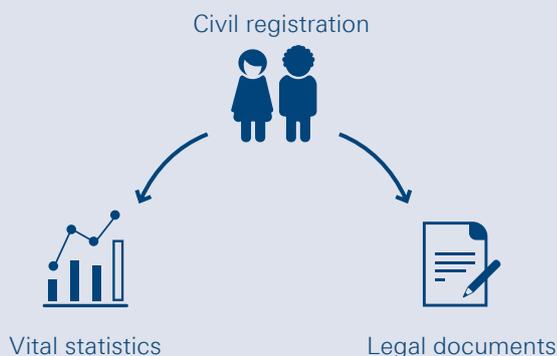
Civil registration is the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events of the population in accordance with the law.

The United Nations recognises 10 types of vital events, including births and deaths. Information on these events, as well as cause of death, is important for public health, population planning, and development policies. This information is best sourced from a civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system.

**Documents** provide evidence of people's names, family relationships and place of birth. This is important for social protection, enabling participation in economic and political life, and for accessing services like healthcare and education. Registration of death allows surviving family members to make claims for insurance, pensions and inheritance.

**Civil registration** records also generate a continuous and complete stream of information that allows the production of accurate, complete and timely vital statistics on births and deaths in a population, at national and lower administrative levels.

## CIVIL REGISTRATION IS IMPORTANT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY<sup>2</sup>



## What are the SDGs?

**'...tracking progress on the SDGs requires the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of an unprecedented amount of data and statistics at subnational, national, regional and global levels, including those derived from official statistical systems...'**

In September 2015, Heads of State and Government met at the United Nations in New York to agree on the agenda for sustainable development, with 17 SDGs and 169 targets to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to guide global development over the 15 years to 2030.

The SDG agenda emphasizes the close links between health and sustainable development.

The SDGs are intended to be integrated, global and universally applicable. They seek to be relevant to all countries and are unprecedented in scope and significance. While the MDGs were about a limited set of human development targets, the SDGs cover the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainable development with a strong focus on equity. Good CRVS systems are critical in monitoring country progress towards the SDGs.



### References:

- 1 United Nations. 2016. The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2016. New York, United Nations.
- 2 Civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific. ESCAP, 2014 ([www.getinthepicture.org](http://www.getinthepicture.org))

For more information, contact:

**E: [CRVS-info@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:CRVS-info@unimelb.edu.au)**

**W: [mspgh.unimelb.edu.au/dataforhealth](http://mspgh.unimelb.edu.au/dataforhealth)**

CRICOS Provider Code: 00116K

Version: 1116-01