CONCEPT NOTE

I. BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Reliable vital statistics are essential for producing timely and accurate population estimates and demographic and health statistics, that are basic requirements for effective policy-making and evaluation and efficient resource allocation. Social and economic sectors, including health, education, labour and employment, urban planning, finance and economic development, industry and trade, social insurance, environment, population, business, and commerce require solid and up-to-date statistics on population size and distribution, and on levels and trends in fertility and mortality. The education, employment and other social sectors responsible for the provision of public services require accurate vital statistics at the levels of national, local administration and community service provision. The health sector depends on trustworthy data on levels, trends and causes of mortality to identify emerging health threats and high risk groups and provide the evidence base for selecting priority interventions and allocating resources. Accurate information on cause of death is essential to understanding disease burden and influencing policy. Yet, despite the importance of vital statistics, there is universal acknowledgement of the urgent need to improve their availability, timeliness and quality.

In the Asia-Pacific region, in 2012, the “Make Every Life Count” regional initiative to improve CRVS in Asia and the Pacific was launched and a Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics was endorsed by ESCAP member States. The World Health Organization and Health Metrics Network convened the first ever Global Summit on CRVS in Bangkok. The Summit was attended by over 220 participants from 47 countries 34 international organizations and academic institutions. In 2014, ESCAP organized the first meeting of the “Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific” in Bangkok that made five strategic recommendations for the future activities in the region1. With the view of contributing to the global and regional initiatives, SIAP and ESCAP Statistics Division implemented tow training workshops in 2012 and 2013 that aim to increase knowledge and skills of government statisticians in (i) production and use of vital statistics from different sources particularly civil registration, and (ii) turning vital data into statistical tables according to the internationally agreed principles and standards. The workshop in 2013 also aimed to improve training capacity of countries by developing and testing training materials.

The third regional workshop is organised by SIAP in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and Statistics Korea to assist national statistical systems in the establishment of a functioning vital statistics system for the production and use of regular, reliable and accurate vital statistics through the adoption of the latest international principles and recommendations on production and use of quality vital statistics as provided in Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System (Revision 3)\(^2\).

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop aims to (a) increase the knowledge of the government statisticians and civil registration officials about the revised international principles and recommendations for compiling, processing and disseminating vital statistics; (b) enhance their understanding on some strategies in improving civil registration and vital statistics system; and (c) improve their capability in identifying gaps and challenges in applying international standards to improve their vital statistics system. The workshop also aims to provide a platform for participants to share their national experiences and learn from good practices.

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOP

At the end of the Workshop, participants are expected to be able to:

(a) Demonstrate understanding of the recent changes in the international principles and recommendations for vital statistics systems and identify main differences between their national practices and international standards;
(b) Assess the countries’ current CRVS through the lens of the latest international principles and recommendations for civil registration and vital statistics in their countries; and
(c) Apply the latest international recommendations and propose practical steps towards establishment/management/improvement of civil registration and vital statistics system in their countries.

IV. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

The training workshop is designed for statisticians of national statistics offices and civil registration officials who are engaged in the data collection, processing, compiling and assessing of vital statistics. The course will be beneficial to participants who need to update

their knowledge on international standards and good practices and adopt new recommendations into their system.

The sharing of experiences and practices on applying new methods and standards in vital statistical systems is a key approach to the training modality; thus, participants who have been engaged in compiling and assessing the quality of vital statistics can obtain feedback from co-participants and trainers.

V. WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

WORKSHOP DESIGN:

In order to achieve the expected outcomes, the training activities are divided into pre-course assignment and face-to-face 5-day workshop. In the pre-course assignment participants are required to prepare and submit a document that compares their national practices to the 3rd revision of the UN principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system. The 5-day workshop will consist of a mix of experts’ presentations, sharing of and discussion of lessons learned from country practices, and facilitated group discussions.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

Topics to be covered in the workshop and their contents in some detail are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic/activity</th>
<th>Content outline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Lecture & group discussions: What’s new in the international principles and recommendations? | - Introduce brief historical background on the different revisions (what are the changes made)  
- Introduction to new updates in the 3rd revision  
- Impact on the CRVS  
- Good practices on implementation of the new recommendations |
| 2. Presentations: Country practices                  | Presentations: comparing CRVS with the latest principles and recommendations (definitions, sources of data, organization, topics and classifications, quality assurance, etc) |
| 3. Workshop: How to bring about the change?          | - How the new recommendations change VSSs?  
- What are the challenges/obstacles?  
- What needs to be done?  
- What coordination mechanism for the |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic/activity</th>
<th>Content outline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
- Recommended strategies and good practices  
- Applying methods to assess the quality of CRVS is present countries  
- Identify priority actions                                                                 |
| 5. Workshop: Roadmap towards improving CRVS | - Identifying gaps and challenges in implementation of new recommendations  
- Develop action plan, based on assessment results, for improvement of CRVS (including targets, milestones and practical steps) |

improvement of CRVS