

Distr.: For participants only
24 March 2015

English only

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Statistics

Fourth session

Bangkok, 25-27 March 2015

Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*

Regional initiatives: civil registration and vital statistics

**Composition of the Regional Steering Group for Civil
Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific,
2015-2019**

Note by the secretariat**

Summary

The present document contains proposals by the secretariat related to the composition of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, for the period between 2015 and 2019.

The proposals are based on nominations received from members and associate members as well as indications of interest received from international development partners by 20 March 2015, and have been guided by the draft revised terms of reference of the Regional Steering Group, which are contained in document (E/ESCAP/CST(4)/5) for the Committee's consideration.

The Committee is invited to consider the secretariat's proposals and recommend their submission to the Commission for action at its seventy-first session.

I. Background

1. The Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, which took place in Bangkok from 24 to 28 November 2014, adopted the Ministerial Declaration to "Get every one in the picture" in Asia and the Pacific, endorsed the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, and declared the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade, 2015-2024.

* E/ESCAP/CST(4)/L.1.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

2. As part of the above-mentioned outcomes, the Conference decided that the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific should be reconstituted¹ and entrusted with the responsibility of providing regional oversight and guidance for the implementation of the Regional Action Framework, including acting as custodian for the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade. In line with this decision, the Conference also expressed support² for a draft revised terms of reference for the Regional Steering Group, which proposed that the results of the Regional Steering Group's work shall be reported to the Commission. The draft revised terms of the reference also proposed that the Commission, at its seventy-first session, would decide upon the membership of the Regional Steering Group for the period between 2015 and 2019, based on the recommendation by the Committee on Statistics at its fourth session.³

3. On 13 February 2015, the Executive Secretary sent a letter to all members and associate members on implementation of the outcomes of the Conference. The letter invited each government to nominate one senior official to the Regional Steering Group and an invitation to appoint a national civil registration and vital statistics focal point. The letter recommended that the nominee should be selected by a formal decision of the national civil registration and vital statistics coordination mechanism, if one exists, and could also be the national focal point. Governments were provided with a deadline of 13 March 2015 for the Regional Steering Group nomination.

4. The secretariat also consulted with international development partners that have previously participated in civil registration and vital statistics activities in the region, inviting them to indicate interest in becoming members of the Regional Steering Group. During these consultations, it was stressed that a mechanism separate to the Regional Steering Group will continue to exist for development partners to collaborate and share information as they support the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems in countries, in close collaboration with the Regional Steering Group.

II. Nominations and indications of interest received

5. As of 20 March 2015, the nominations received from members and associate members, are as follows:

¹ The Regional Steering Group was first established in 2013 and existed until the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific pursuant to Commission resolution 69/15. During this time, it was established the auspices of the Committee on Statistics but tasked with considering and proposing a more appropriate governance structure, given that civil registration and vital statistics is a broad development issue that goes beyond statistics development.

² See E/ESCAP/MCCRVS/4, para. 23, pg. 26.

³ The draft revised terms of reference are presented in a separate document (E/ESCAP/CST(4)/5) for the Committee's consideration with a view to recommending their submission to the Commission for possible adoption at its seventy-first session in May 2015.

Table 1
Overview of nominations received from members and associate members, by country grouping and sector

Country grouping	Sector				Total
	Civil registration	Statistics	Health	Planning	
South-East Asia	2	2	1	1	6
North and Central Asia	1	1	-	-	2
South and South-West Asia	3	2	1	1	7
East and North-East Asia	1	-	-	-	1
Pacific	4	3	1	-	8
Government development partners ⁴	2	2	1	-	5
Total	13	10	4	2	29

Table 2
List of nominations received from members and associate members

Name and title		Sector
<i>South-East Asia (6)</i>		
Indonesia	Ms. Suharti, Director, Population, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS)	Planning
Malaysia	Mr. Zakaria bin Awi, Deputy Director-General, National Registration Department, Ministry of Home Affairs	Civil registration
Philippines	Ms. Lisa Grace Bersales, National Statistician and Civil Registrar General, Philippine Statistics Authority	Statistics and civil registration
Thailand	Dr. Boonchai Kijsanayotin, Health Informatics Expert, Thai Health Information Standards Development Centre, Ministry of Public Health	Health
Timor-Leste	Mr. Elias dos Santos Ferreira, National Director of Methodology, General Directorate of Statistics, Ministry of Finance	Statistics
Viet Nam	Mr. Cong Khanh Nguyen, Director-General, Department of Civil Registration, Nationality and Attestation, Ministry of Justice	Civil registration
<i>North and Central Asia (2)</i>		
Armenia	Mr. Argam Stepanyan, Head, Civil Acts Registration Agency, Ministry of Justice	Civil registration
Kazakhstan	Ms. Gulmira Karaulova, Director, Social and Demographic Statistics Division, Ministry of National Economy	Civil registration

⁴ The 'Government development partners' country grouping comprises members and associate members that have been active in supporting the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics at the international level through multilateral activities.

	Name and title	Sector
<i>South and South-West Asia (7)</i>		
Afghanistan	Mr. Asadullah Niazi, Director, Vital Statistics Division, Ministry of Interior	Statistics
Bangladesh	Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Additional Director-General, Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	Health
Bhutan	Mr. Tashi Tobgye, Director, Department of Civil Registration and Census, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs	Civil registration
India	Mr. Deepak Rastogi, Additional Registrar-General, Office of the Registrar-General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs	Civil registration
Islamic Republic of Iran	Mr. Ali Akbar Mahzoon, Director-General, Bureau of Demographic and Migration Statistics, National Organization for Civil Registration, Ministry of Interior	Statistics
Nepal	Mr. Basant Raj Gautam, Director-General, Department of Civil Registration, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development	Civil registration
Pakistan	Mr. Naeem Uz Zafar, Member (Social Sector and Devolution), Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform	Planning
<i>East and North-East Asia (1)</i>		
Mongolia	Mr. Battsaij Tseden-Ochir, Head, Civil Registration Department, General Authority for State Registration, Ministry of Justice	Civil registration
<i>Pacific islands (8)</i>		
Cook Islands	Ms. Claudine Henry-Anguna, Registrar of the High Court, Ministry of Justice	Civil registration
Fiji	H.E. Mr. Jone Usamate, Minister of Health	Health
Kiribati	Ms. Aritita Tekaieti, Acting Republic Statistician, National Statistics Office	Statistics
Palau	Ms. Allison Sengebau, Clerk of Courts, Palau Supreme Court	Civil registration
Papua New Guinea	Mr. Roko Koloma Vanua, National Statistician, National Statistical Office	Statistics
Samoa	Mr. Kalepo Tuautu, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Samoa Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Public Enterprises	Civil registration
Solomon Islands	Mr. Musu Kevu, Registrar of Births and Deaths, Ministry of Home Affairs	Civil registration
Vanuatu	Mr. Simil Johnson, National Statistician, Vanuatu National Statistical Office	Statistics
<i>Government development partners (5)</i>		
Australia	Ms. AJ Lanyon, Program Manager, Health and Vital Statistics Unit, Australian Bureau of Statistics	Statistics

	Name and title	Sector
New Zealand	Mr. Jeff Montgomery, Registrar-General and General Manager, Births, Deaths, Marriages, Citizenship, Authentications and Translations, Department of Internal Affairs	Civil registration
Republic of Korea	Ms. Yearnok Yoon, Director, Vital Statistics Division, Statistics Korea	Statistics
Turkey	Mr. Ahmet Sarican, Director-General, General Directorate of Civil Registration and Nationality, Ministry of Interior	Civil registration
United States of America	Dr. Francis (Sam) Notzon, Director, International Statistics Program, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Health

6. In addition to the above, the following eight international development partners indicated interest in being members of the Regional Steering Group:

- (a) United Nations Children's Fund;
- (b) Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;
- (c) World Health Organization;
- (d) World Bank Group;
- (e) Brisbane Accord Group (represented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community);
- (f) Data2x;
- (g) Plan International; and
- (h) World Vision International.

III. Criteria for selecting members of the Regional Steering Group

7. The draft revised terms of reference for the Regional Steering Group state that the Regional Steering Group shall, "*...reflect the multifaceted nature and diverse development perspectives and beneficiaries of civil registration and vital statistics, with representation from civil registration, health, statistics and other relevant sectors,*" and propose the following guidelines for membership:

(a) A majority of members shall be representatives of national Governments, with the remainder being representatives of relevant development partners;

(b) There should be a geographically balanced membership of government representatives from the various sectors involved in civil registration and vital statistics, such as planning, civil registration, health and statistics; and

(c) The Regional Steering Group shall be composed of a maximum of 25 members.

8. The draft revised terms of reference also state that a representative of the Brisbane Accord Group, a consortium of development partners supporting

the civil registration and vital statistics activities in the Pacific islands, shall be invited to be a member of the Regional Steering Group.

9. Bearing in mind the guidelines above, chiefly the need for balanced representation, the secretariat reviewed nominations as slots by sector (civil registration, statistics and health) for each country grouping. Since the number of nominations and indications of interest received is higher than the number of possible members of the Regional Steering Group for the period between 2015 and 2019, the secretariat applied the following criteria in developing a proposal for which nominations to accept as members of the Regional Steering Group for each slot:

(a) If only one nomination was received for a particular sector in a country grouping, then that nomination should be accepted;

(b) Nominees who served in the previous Regional Steering Group (during 2013-2014) should be prioritized, in recognition of the need for continuity and institutional memory;

(c) If the above two criteria have not resolved the accepted membership for a particular slot, then the nomination received by the secretariat first should be accepted;

(d) Given that the planning sector has emerged as an important driver of improving civil registration and vital statistics, all nominations from the planning sector, should be accepted; and

(e) The nominations of all international and government development partners should be accepted, considering the experiences and technical expertise they offer will greatly benefit the implementation of the Regional Action Framework.

IV. Issues for consideration

10. The Committee is invited to consider and recommend the following three proposals for action by the Commission at its seventy-first session:

A. Proposal 1: Nominations accepted to be members of the Regional Steering Group, 2015-2019

11. Bearing in mind the criteria and rules listed in section III, the Committee may wish to recommend to the Commission the nominations contained in table 3 below to be accepted as members of the Regional Steering Group. The proposal includes three vacant slots where there are currently no nominations (Health, North and Central Asia; Health and Statistics, East and North-East Asia).

12. It is further proposed that, in order to capitalize on the strong interest expressed by countries in the work of the Regional Steering Group, nominees whose nominations are not accepted will be invited to participate in meetings of the Regional Steering Group as observers.

Table 3
Proposed membership of the Regional Steering Group, 2015-2019

	Sector	Country	Name
<i>South-East Asia</i>			
1	Civil registration	Malaysia	Mr. Zakaria bin Awi, Deputy Director-General, National Registration Department, Ministry of Home Affairs
2	Statistics	Philippines	Ms. Lisa Grace Bersales, National Statistician and Civil Registrar General, Philippine Statistics Authority
3	Health	Thailand	Dr. Boonchai Kijsanayotin, Health Informatics Expert, Thai Health Information Standards Development Centre, Ministry of Public Health
4	Planning	Indonesia	Ms. Suharti, Director, Population, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS)
<i>North and Central Asia</i>			
5	Civil registration	Armenia	Mr. Argam Stepanyan, Head, Civil Acts Registration Agency, Ministry of Justice
6	Statistics	Kazakhstan	Ms. Gulmira Karaulova, Director, Social and Demographic Statistics Division, Ministry of National Economy
7	Health	VACANT	
<i>South and South-West Asia</i>			
8	Civil registration	India	Mr. Deepak Rastogi, Additional Registrar-General, Office of the Registrar-General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs
9	Statistics	Islamic Republic of Iran	Mr. Ali Akbar Mahzoon, Director-General, Bureau of Demographic and Migration Statistics, National Organization for Civil Registration, Ministry of Interior
10	Health	Bangladesh	Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Additional Director-General, Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
11	Planning	Pakistan	Mr. Naeem Uz Zafar, Member (Social Sector and Devolution), Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform
<i>East and North-East Asia</i>			
12	Civil registration	Mongolia	Mr. Battsaij Tsenden-Ochir, Head, Civil Registration Department, General Authority for State Registration, Ministry of Justice
13	Statistics	VACANT	
14	Health	VACANT	
<i>Pacific islands</i>			
15	Civil registration	Cook Islands	Ms. Claudine Henry-Anguna, Registrar of the High Court, Ministry of Justice

	Sector	Country	Name
16	Statistics	Vanuatu	Mr. Simil Johnson, National Statistician, Vanuatu National Statistical Office
17	Health	Fiji	H.E. Mr. Jone Usamate, Minister of Health
<i>Government development partners</i>			
18	Statistics	Australia	Ms. AJ Lanyon, Program Manager, Health and Vital Statistics Unit, Australian Bureau of Statistics
19	Civil registration	New Zealand	Mr. Jeff Montgomery, Registrar-General and General Manager, Births, Deaths, Marriages, Citizenship, Authentications and Translations, Department of Internal Affairs
20	Statistics	Republic of Korea	Ms. Yearnok Yoon, Director, Vital Statistics Division, Statistics Korea
21	Civil registration	Turkey	Mr. Ahmet Sarican, Director-General, General Directorate of Civil Registration and Nationality, Ministry of Interior
22	Health	United States of America	Dr. Francis (Sam) Notzon, Director, International Statistics Program, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<i>International development partners</i>			
23	United Nations Children's Fund		
24	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees		
25	World Health Organization		
26	World Bank Group		
27	Brisbane Accord Group (represented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community)		
28	Data2x		
29	Plan International		
30	World Vision International		

B. Proposal 2: Expand the membership limit in the draft revised terms of reference from 25 to 30

13. A substantial response was received from international development partners to the call for indications of interest, representing a broad range of mandates and expertise, which should greatly benefit the Regional Steering Group's work. It is for this reason that the secretariat has proposed that all development partners should be accepted as members of the Regional Steering Group.

14. As seen in table 3 above, the secretariat proposes that nominations from 22 members and associate members be accepted, including three vacant slots. In order to accommodate all eight international development partners that indicated interest, the Committee may wish to recommend that the membership limit in the draft revised terms of reference be expanded from 25 to 30.

C. Proposal 3: Request the Regional Steering Group, once established, to finalize membership for the two vacant slots

15. Although the overall response to nominations was high, only two nominations were received for North and Central Asia and one for East and North-East Asia.

16. In order to ensure balanced representation, the Committee may wish to include its recommendation to the Commission that the Regional Steering Group, once established, be tasked with overseeing a process to finalize membership for those three vacant slots as soon as possible.
