

**Reforming and Improving
Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in Africa**

**Proposed
Regional Medium-Term Plan: 2010-2012**

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Preface

In the past five to six decades, African Member States have been engaged in searching for a continuous and sustainable demographic and health statistics system, although the intensity and magnitude of efforts and achievements vary from country to country. As per United Nations (UN) recommendations, the conventional data source for the generation of continuous and complete vital statistics on a permanent basis is the civil registration system. Vital statistics generated from civil registration systems provide population dynamics information and basic health indicators, including causes of death classifications for a country as a whole and its sub-divisions. These data generated by the countries in turn serve as primary data source for sub-regional, regional and international statistical data and information consumption. In fact, the purpose and services of civil registration go beyond statistics boundaries, where the records of births, deaths, marriages, divorces and the complementary notations are the official sources of evidence on the occurrence of events and characteristics of the persons concerned. Hence, various individual and public services, justice and public administrations, including education and health sectors, decentralisation and democratisation processes, depend on the availability of these official records.

In the majority of African countries, past initiatives and efforts aimed at improving civil registration and vital statistics systems were largely dominated by isolated project-based and institutionally bound *ad-hoc* exercises with no link to national development frameworks or policy issues. Moreover, in most instances there have not been properly developed national plans, either medium or long term that set targets or established systematic measurements and management tools for evaluating successes and failures. Likewise, past interventions from regional and international development partners have not been guided by systematically developed regional plans, thus contributing to uncoordinated and fragmented resource use and limited impact on the overall outcomes of the interventions. These and other compounding problems emphasise the need to develop a regional framework that guides systematic reforms and makes improvements towards sustainable progress.

This regional medium-term plan is designed to address areas that need critical reform measures to ensure improved results across all Member States. The plan to reform and improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa is an outcome of the recommendations from the regional workshop on civil registration and vital statistics that was convened in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in June 2009. The plan is expected to serve as a guiding tool for countries, regional and international organisations, in managing interventions and monitoring achievements in civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa from 2010-2012. The plan was prepared by Genevieve Bizuneh, a consultant for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), under the supervision of Dr. Dimitri Sanga, Officer in Charge of African Centre for Statistics (ACS).

Table of Contents

Preface

1. Introduction
2. Role of Civil Registration in Africa
 - 2.1 Civil Registration: The foundation in building modern and accountable public administration system in Africa
 - 2.2 Civil Registration: The conventional source of vital statistics
3. Role of Vital Statistics in National Statistical Systems
 - 3.1 Provision of demographic and health statistics
 - 3.2 Measurement and monitoring of Millennium Development Goals
 - 3.3 Advancing decentralisation programmes
 - 3.4 Establishment of population databases
 - 3.5 Updating, verifying and validating population census enumerations
 - 3.6 Promoting study and research
4. Findings of the Field Assessment Visit to Five African Countries - Realities on the Ground
 - 4.1 Civil registration
 - 4.2 Vital statistics
5. Problems, Challenges, Proposed Interventions and Opportunities
 - 5.1 Problems and challenges
 - 5.2 Proposed interventions
 - 5.3 Opportunities and facilitating factors
6. The Medium-Term Plan: 2010-2012
 - 6.1 Goal
 - 6.2 Objectives
 - 6.3 Strategy
 - 6.4 Institutional framework
7. Planned Activities: 2010-2012
8. Monitoring and Evaluation
9. Resource Requirements for 2010-2012

Annexes

- Planning and Implementation Matrix
- Resource Requirements 2010 - 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past years, there have been various efforts made to improve the completeness and coverage of civil registration¹ and vital statistics² systems in Africa. However, the achievements and progress recorded are sub-standard, as the completeness and coverage of registration of vital events,³ that is, births, deaths, marriages and divorces in the majority of African Member States, is still below 40 per cent. In order for civil registration to provide the required legal, administrative and statistical services, the level of coverage and completeness is required to reach at least 90 per cent. The reasons for such unsatisfactory results are numerous; however there is one common shortcoming that was observed in all the past initiatives: lack of comprehensive regional and national plans. Most past initiatives were designed on a project scale and on country case studies, without considering the macro and regional context of the purposes and functions or problems and challenges of civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region.

Furthermore, lack of proactive engagement of regional organisations and uncoordinated international support with project-oriented, quick-fix approaches have contributed to the sluggish progress. Lack of coordinated efforts from the two major actors, the National Civil Registration Authorities (NCROs) and the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) have also contributed to the bulk of the problems existing in the countries. Unlike many other information generation interventions, civil registration needs interventions with long-term vision and well planned, integrated and targeted results that would last for generations to come. These and the many other shortcomings⁴ of past interventions have contributed to the low response from national governments in owning and leading the process and weakened national capacities in managing and operating the systems.

The recommendations from the regional workshop on civil registration and vital statistics systems that was conducted in June 2009 addressed some of these fundamental bottlenecks for the improvement of the systems in the region. Accordingly, the African Centre for Statistics at ECA, as per the mandate given by the workshop, initiated the preparation of this medium-term plan in close collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB). The preparation of the medium-term plan was supported by field level data that were collected from field assessment missions in five countries. The medium-term plan was also prepared in line with the *ECA Business Plan 2010-2012*

¹ Civil registration is the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population as provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirements of each country (UN).

² A vital statistics system as per the UN is defined as the total process of (a) collecting information by civil registration or enumeration on the frequency of occurrence of specified and defined vital events, as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the person or persons concerned, and (b) compiling, processing, analyzing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form.

³ According to the UN, the whole list of vital events includes live births, adoptions, legitimations, recognitions; deaths and foetal deaths; and marriages, divorces, separations and annulments of marriage.

⁴ Review and Evaluation of UNFPA Supported Projects on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, March 1993, NY.

and the recommendations of the Second Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCOM-Africa) that was convened in January 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

2. ROLE OF CIVIL REGISTRATION IN AFRICA

Civil registration is an integrated information system that generates primarily legal, administrative and statistical information that benefits individuals, households, communities, government institutions and non-governmental, regional and international organisations engaged in various socio-economic and other human development endeavours. Every nation, whether developed or developing, has built such a system or is striving to have one as an integral part of their efforts to improve the social, economic and human development package. Developed countries in general have managed to have complete and comprehensive civil registration systems for years. Developing countries, on the other hand, have not succeeded in the development of such a comprehensive and complete civil registration system. In Africa, some countries have histories of civil registration dating back over 100 years, but in the early years, in the majority of cases the system was intended to serve the interests of the colonisers and therefore lacked the basic elements that drives it to the required coverage and completeness levels. In some instances, civil registration served as an instrument aimed at controlling the movement of people and a source of information for managing the people under colonial rule.

In contemporary Africa, civil registration systems initiatives should be re-designed and overhauled to serve the people as well as play a fundamental role in modernising the African public administration. This would greatly improve the efficiency and accountability of social and economic services and monitoring of progress or lack of in reaching national, regional and international development.

2.1 Civil registration: The foundation for building modern and accountable public administration systems in Africa

Civil registration is the foundation for building a modern public administration system in a country. It is an information system that generates flow of individual and aggregate information on a continuous and permanent basis on many aspects of the population of a country. The primary beneficiaries of such system are citizens and the government machinery, namely the justice system, human rights organs, public administration services, including health and education services, and the National Statistical System (NSS). Birth, death, foetal death, marriage and divorce records are the sources of legal evidentiary documents for individuals in testifying the facts of their occurrence, exact dates and places and related circumstances that are critical in legal and public administration services of governments. In the absence of such evidence, people's rights and privileges enshrined

in constitutions and international instruments would be eroded and creating loopholes for abuse and exploitation, specifically for disadvantaged population groups, such as children and women.

The same records registered once in a person's lifetime will serve the government administration in laying-down universal identity and identification systems that would facilitate transactions among and between individuals and service rendering institutions, including establishing unique identification numbers, processing citizenship, issuing passports, maintaining electoral rolls and managing polling processes and in keeping national security and feeding the intelligence branch with basic data. Civil registration records facilitate labour transactions in the informal sector in developing economies by reducing and avoiding extra efforts in the identification of individuals while engaging in service contracts that enable building mutual trust among bargainers that would contribute to boosting the role of the hidden economy. Likewise, the formal financial sectors, banks and insurance companies would benefit from unique identification systems that are built on conventional vital registration records.

The same birth and death records properly registered in a person's lifetime are sources of information for the health and education sectors in addressing implementation bottlenecks; systematising monitoring efforts; and maintaining accountability at the household and community levels. Implementation of public health programmes in the post-natal care of mothers and children in the majority of African countries that have dominantly rural settings and underdeveloped infrastructures is highly dependent on the availability of registration data of births and deaths and also foetal deaths. Individual birth and death registration records produced on a current and continuous basis will serve as signals to the local health worker in tracing the events and taking life-saving actions that are critical to reducing and avoiding maternal and child deaths. In general, at the local administration level, birth and death registration records are the eyes and ears of local health workers in the provision of reproductive health services, including family planning services. Birth certificates are also the primary evidentiary documents required by the education administration to ensure the right to access to education and maintain universal primary education programmes in a particular community. Therefore, birth and death registration records are the basis and the building blocks for the health and education sectors in properly implementing and monitoring health and education programmes and services at the grassroots level.

Registration records of marriages, divorces and other complementary acts and events, including legal separations, adoptions, recognitions and annulments are the primary and official evidence and data sources used in judicial proceedings, various administrative transactions and in the provision of continuous statistical information. For individuals, marriage and divorce records produced by the civil registration system help to establish and testify the legal requirements and evidence of the existence and identity of the parties. Marriage and divorce certificates are the primary products of

the registration system that would be used by the parties to exercise their rights and protect and safeguard their interests and social and economic benefits. The same records are used by the statistics organs to compile and analyse various socio-economic and cultural characteristics of marriage, divorce and other complementary variables that would be disseminated on a continuous and permanent basis for the nation as well as the different administrative organs.

2.2 Civil Registration: The conventional source for vital statistics

In the majority of African countries and the rest of the developing world, birth and death statistics are inadequate due to the incomplete nature of civil registration systems. In order to fill the gap, these countries have reverted to using censuses and sample surveys in the past four decades, on a provisional basis, to generate fertility and mortality estimates through indirect and retrospective methods from defective and inaccurate data. Health service records are also used as primary data sources for generating time series institution-based data on fertility and mortality estimates, with all their limitations in coverage and completeness in the African context.

According to the UN,⁵ the *“recommended method of collection for the development and maintenance of a vital statistics system is to establish a reliable civil registration system capable of yielding comprehensive data for the production of vital statistics to meet appropriate needs for such data on a continuous basis”*. Furthermore, the UN clearly articulated how and in which situations the various vital statistics data sources should be used as follows: *“the use of sample survey or a complete enumeration of vital events through a population census may serve as a supplementary means of data collection in countries where a good civil registration system exists or as interim measure of collecting the needed vital data in countries where civil registration is lacking, deficient or in the process of development”*. With the exception of a handful of countries that claim to have a relatively complete birth and death registration system in place, the majority of African countries are far from the internationally recommended completeness level of 90 per cent. It is against this background that the Second Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa⁶ recommended the promotion and strengthening of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Member States to the level that meets the demands of contemporary Africa.

3. ROLE OF VITAL STATISTICS IN NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEMS

The conventional source for compiling vital statistics is the records of vital events generated through civil registration systems. However, in situations where civil registration is either inadequate or deficient, countries recourse to data sources other than civil registration, such as

⁵ UN (2001), Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Rev 2.

⁶ Resolution of the 2nd Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa

censuses, sample surveys or facility-based records. Nevertheless, these provisional data sources only produce estimates on an *ad hoc* basis and would not provide disaggregated and smaller area estimates that are required for planning and measurement of national and sub-national development programmes. Specifically, none of these provisional methods provide direct measurements of adult mortality or the analysis of causes of death. In general, due to the absence of complete civil registration, most countries in Africa are unable to provide up-to-date population dynamics data or time series information that would enable the measurement and monitoring of most of the MDG indicators. A brief description of major areas affected by the absence or inadequacy of vital statistics systems is presented in the following section.

3.1 Provision of demographic and health statistics

Vital statistics generated from civil registration systems and complemented with denominators from censuses are the conventional data sources in the measurement of fertility and mortality estimates on a continuous and permanent basis. A well-established and complete civil registration system would enable the production of annual and down to monthly fertility and mortality estimates for all administrative units in a country. Provision of current population estimates and projections also depends on the availability of comprehensive and complete civil registration systems as they are based on reliable and continuous information on, inter alia, births, deaths and migrations. However, unlike the developed nations, nearly all African countries are inadequately benefiting from the services of civil registration systems because they are incomplete.

Birth and death records are the conventional data sources for the generation of major health indicators, including infant, child, adult and maternal mortality rates, life expectancy and causes of death statistics. In the absence of an adequate civil registration system, health programmes and interventions will revert to provisional and *ad hoc* data sources such as censuses and sample surveys in the measurement and monitoring of the effectiveness of the health system.

3.2 Measuring and monitoring MDGs

Civil registration is the conventional data source for measuring and monitoring the majority of the MDG indicators. With complete vital statistics, data required as inputs for measuring the indicators for achieving universal primary education, reduction in child mortality, improvements in maternal health and reductions in prevalence of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases would be made more accessible for a continuous and over varying period of time. Unfortunately, most African countries are far from compiling such comprehensive data, therefore putting them at a disadvantage limiting their ability to track progress or lack of in the achievement of the MDG targets at national as well as sub-national levels.

3.3 Advancing decentralisation programmes

Civil registration is the only data source that enables provision of basic population dynamic statistical information on continuous basis at lower administrative hierarchies of national governments and administrations. One of the key outcomes of decentralisation programmes is devolving power, management and basic public services to local administrations. Local level statistics, specifically updated and annualised population size and distribution, and basic demographic and health indicators are the primary requirements for the local administration to prepare its fiscal public plans and programmes. As can be demonstrated from the situation currently prevailing in most NSOs, these data are either non-existent or obsolete. Population census-enumerations normally provide stock of population data and other characteristics for the census year however; results are usually disseminated 2 to 3 years after the enumeration date. These census figures could only be beneficial to the local administration if they are calibrated with the population dynamics information generated through civil registration systems. Hence, countries in the process of implementing decentralisation programmes are being challenged by the inadequacy of NSSs in the provision of basic demographic and health statistics that would have value for local planning and administrations.

3.4 Establishment of population databases

Vital statistics is one of the data source required in building population databases. Flow of current statistics on births, deaths, marriages and divorces are required to update and maintain the dynamism of population databases. The majority of African countries do not have properly functioning population databases as they do not have adequately established civil registration and vital statistics systems.

3.5 Updating, verifying and validating population census enumerations

In recent years, population censuses of African countries are being challenged for their timeliness, accuracy at the lower level and their coverage and comparability to previous census enumerations, estimates and projections. The lack of dependable vital statistics data in demonstrating time series comparisons of census figures, coverage and completeness of census enumerations still challenge most of African NSOs.

3.6 Promoting study and research

Vital statistics are the major data source for health and demographic study and research undertakings. Universities and training institutions are the major vital statistics data users for a variety of academic and operational research projects that benefit government and non-government policy and programme implementing institutions. However, due to the absence of complete and useable civil registration and vital statistics data in Africa, these academic and training institutions are primarily using modelling and extrapolation techniques that are highly dependent on assumptions and complex mathematical methods.

4. FINDINGS OF FIELD ASSESSMENT VISITS TO FIVE AFRICAN COUNTRIES - REALITIES ON THE GROUND

The preparation of this medium-term plan was supported with information collected from field assessment missions in five African countries at different levels of development of civil registration, ranging from a country with no functional civil registration to a country with complete civil registration and vital statistics systems. The countries covered in the mission were: Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, and South Africa. Mauritius represented a complete civil registration system for all vital events that are live births, deaths, marriages and divorces. South Africa represented operations of civil registration in a wider and more complex population composition, geographic size and a situation with recent comprehensive structural changes. It also represented progressive improvement in civil registration coverage and production of vital statistics in recent years. On the other hand, Sierra Leone represented post-conflict situations with highly inadequate civil registration operations. Cameroon represented a stable but inadequate civil registration system. Ethiopia represented countries with no functional civil registration or vital statistics systems but with ongoing initiatives to establish the systems following conventional methods and approaches.

In each of the countries, the field assessment covered desk review, site visit to civil registration offices, NSOs and other relevant government offices and visits to rural and urban vital registration sites. In some of the countries, attempts were made to visit United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) country offices as well as training institutions such as in the case of Cameroon. A summary of the findings of the field assessment missions to the five countries is presented below in two broad sub-sections: civil registration and vital statistics.

4.1 Civil Registration

For the purpose of this medium-term plan, major components of civil registration operation and management activities were selected to present the findings of the field assessment missions. A brief summary of the findings under each of the selected component activities are presented below.

a) Legal framework and legislation

With the exception of Ethiopia, the remaining four countries have operational civil registration laws in their countries. However, among the latter, only Mauritius has a compulsory civil registration law that is functioning as per the provisions of the law. In the remaining three countries, though the degree varies, proper implementation of the registration operation as per the provisions of the respective laws of the countries is not evident. Mauritius has births, deaths and marriages registration in a single comprehensive civil status registration law. In the remaining countries, births and deaths are listed in separate laws from marriage and divorce. In all four countries, divorce registration is considered as complementary information, without specific legal provisions requiring registration of divorce as a separate event. On the other hand, Ethiopia is in the process of preparing civil registration law encompassing all the four events in a single legal text as presented in the draft law submitted to the law enacting bodies. The other interesting characteristic of the Ethiopian draft law is that it is supported by and based on comprehensive legislative research.

b) Vital events covered and registration operations

In all five countries, the primary vital events, births, deaths, marriages and divorces, are well acknowledged. In some cases, there are attempts to include still births in the registration system with varying definitions and concepts. As indicated above, divorce is considered a complementary notation (except in the Ethiopian draft law) and only refers to those concluded in courts. In Mauritius, registration of vital events is fully passive, where individuals and households are required to come to the registration office to register the events as prescribed in the registration law. Current registration in Mauritius, as reported by the Civil Status Division, is over 99 per cent, though not evaluated recently to confirm this figure. South Africa uses both a passive and active registration approach with a primary target to clear the huge backlog and meet some urgent administrative needs. The procedures being followed for registration of vital events in South Africa do not seem to properly and consistently address the legal, statistical and administrative purposes of civil registration as recommended in the UN guidelines. Sierra Leone and Cameroon are far from the standard and conventional procedures of registration of vital events.

c) Organisational and administrative infrastructure

Taking advantage of the small size of the country, cumulated tradition and well managed administration of civil registration, Mauritius has an advanced organisational and administrative civil registration infrastructures. Civil registration is structured under the Prime Minister's Office and well aligned and linked structurally with other departments and services. Local civil registration offices are available at the lower administrative hierarchy with plans for improving the service further to the people and communities.

In South Africa, the civil registration service is situated under the Department of Home Affairs, along with identification, passport and other public services. South Africa is working hard to improve and devolve civil registration services to households and communities but it looks like much remains to be done to advance the current service arrangement limited to major urban centres and capital towns. Birth, death and marriage registration in Cameroon is under the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization. Unlike South Africa, in Cameroon, identification and passport service administration is in another ministry. In Cameroon, efforts were made in the recent past to devolve civil registration services to the lowest administrative level, however integrating these structures in the government administration does not seem to be functioning well. Nevertheless, the Ministry responsible for civil registration is making efforts to improve the situation.

In Sierra Leone, birth and death registration is structured under the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. The national birth and death registration does not seem in good shape due, inter alia, to inappropriate organisational arrangement. Sierra Leone lost its civil registration structures during the civil war and is struggling to re-institute the local registration offices with all the organisational and administrative problems facing the head office.

d) Contents of records and certificates

The United Nations has developed different hierarchies of recommended variables to be included in live birth, death, foetal death, marriage and divorce records.⁷ The first category of variables is designated as 'highest priority', followed by the second category priority level. Such categories were designed to accommodate varied development levels and country situations. In general, these UN principles and recommendations are expected to guide the implementation of civil registration and vital statistics in Africa, however, the situation in the four countries (except Ethiopia) shows that these guidelines have not been properly advocated and followed. Nevertheless, contents of birth, death and marriage registration records in Mauritius and South Africa are generally in line

⁷ UN (2001): Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, rev 2

with the UN recommendations, though there are problems in their implementation. For instance, the section of the birth and death records of South Africa that was designed to address health and demographic statistics purposes has not been used in the past years.

In the case of Sierra Leone and Cameroon, the contents of birth and death registers appears to lack some basic principles and were not designed in consultation with the UN principles and recommendations. Although Ethiopia does not have a functional civil registration system, the birth, death, marriage and divorce records prepared for the establishment of the system are in line with the UN recommendations. As far as divorce records are concerned, no separate record is developed or implemented in all four countries. Divorce is considered as a complementary notation in the marriage register.

e) Causes of death recording and compilation

Among the four countries with functional civil registration systems, only Mauritius has a properly organised recording and compilation systems for causes of death. There are efforts in South Africa for recording and compiling causes of death, which however needs improvements as compared to Mauritius or reviewed against the recommended procedures of WHO standards. Causes of death recording and compilation in the remaining countries are far from following the standards, procedures and administrations.

f) Availability of operational guidelines and capacity building initiatives

None of the four countries with operational civil registration systems has comprehensive operational guidelines or manuals that could be used by the registrars and supervisors in their daily work. Mauritius has an operational manual for causes of death recording that could be adopted as a model for other African countries. It also has an information booklet that serves to inform the public on requirements and conditions for registering an event. In the case of Ethiopia, a comprehensive civil registration and vital statistics operation manual was developed to guide registrars and managers of civil registration and vital statistics operations.

g) Record capturing, computerisation and databases

Sierra Leone and Cameroon civil registration offices are in bad condition in terms of data capturing, computerisation and database management. Birth and death registration head offices in the two countries do not have functioning computers for data capturing and compilation. Mauritius is much more advanced in record capturing, where over two thirds of the local civil registration offices are

linked online to the head office. Data capturing and transfer is computerised and efforts are underway for the establishment of a comprehensive population database.

In South Africa, there are advances in computerising civil status registration and online transfer and sharing of data. Efforts are also underway and structural arrangements are in place for institutionalising comprehensive population register and database systems. Ethiopia has managed to develop a data capturing computer program but has not yet implemented it.

h) Documentation and security of vital records

In the area of documentation and data security, Mauritius could be taken as a model country for Africa. The Civil Status Division of Mauritius has an excellent tradition and a well managed civil registration documentation and data security system. South Africa's civil registration office is making efforts to modernise and systematise its civil registration documentation but much remains to be done to align it with the standard requirements.

Sierra Leone and Cameroon are far from maintaining standards and well-organised civil registration documentation and data security systems.

i) Civil registration services and incentives

The conventional procedure for registration of vital events assumes civil registration service to be provided at the lowest administrative unit with optimal accessibility and quality of service to individuals, households and communities. It is also required to avoid factors that deter reporting and registration of events. Mauritius and South Africa are applying varied incentive mechanisms that promote reporting and registration of vital events. For instance, in the case of Mauritius, the civil registration office promotes birth registration by granting a small amount of money to the household for opening a bank account in the name of the child. South Africa has also included different grant and social security benefits that are being used as incentives for the reporting and registration of different vital events. In addition, mobile registration units in suburbs and remote areas are being used to promote civil registration operations.

On the other hand, in Sierra Leone and Cameroon, informants are required to pay, in some cases exaggerated fees, and other requirements, for registering vital events.

j) Special registration provision for disadvantaged population groups

In Mauritius, the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare has the responsibility to monitor the registration of births of orphans, abandoned children and children living under difficult circumstances. Similarly, South Africa, using mobile registration facilities, grant and social security schemes are trying to cover most disadvantaged population groups though the registration procedure requires adjustments in promoting current registration. In Sierra Leone and Cameroon, due to the low level of development of the civil registration system, there are no such clearly articulated programmes that promote registration of disadvantaged population groups.

k) Data use and institutional linkages to public services

Civil registration records are valuable legal documents and information sources for varied legal and administrative purposes for use by individuals, public offices and other organisations. Some of the basic incentives for the promotion of civil registration are its benefits, availability and use by a wide range of parties. In this respect, Mauritius is taking the lead in exploiting the advantage of the value and importance of civil registration records in keeping the completeness and quality of the registration data. For instance, the national identification system was structurally shifted to the Civil Status Division, which is contributing to boosting the value of civil registration records. In Mauritius, major sectors have access to the civil registration database, including the National Statistics Office, Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare and passport and immigration services.

South Africa has built an integrated and networked civil registration structure under the Department of Home Affairs which is linked to major public services, such as national identification, passport and immigration services and Independent Electoral Commission. Statistics South Africa is also linked and shares the available statistical information from the population database. In Sierra Leone and Cameroon, data use and sharing of information is limited due to the high inadequacy of the civil registration system.

l) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

In all the countries covered in the field assessment mission, it was found that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and methods used for civil registration and vital statistics are weak and not in line with UN recommended techniques. Hence, verification of reported completeness and coverage level of civil registration and quality of vital statistics data is difficult. In some situations, the level of awareness of the methods and techniques of evaluation of civil registration and vital statistics is either absent or very low.

m) Availability of medium or long-term plans

With the exception of the usual annual plans required for budget requests from the government treasury, none of the four countries covered in the mission had medium or long-term plans for the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems. On the other hand, though civil registration is not yet operational in Ethiopia, as part of the preparatory activity the country prepared a comprehensive action plan that includes both civil registration and vital statistics systems.

n) Support from regional and international development partners

In general, support and intervention of regional and international organisations is weak and un-coordinated in the countries covered in the field assessment missions. It was observed that in Mauritius, WHO provided valuable technical support to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life in preparing guidance for the recording of causes of death and classification of diseases. Ethiopia also benefited from UNICEF country office support in conducting pilot studies and in advocacy activities. In the remaining countries, specifically Sierra Leone and Cameroon, despite huge technical and financial challenges, the visibility of UN-specialised agencies or other regional and international organisations is minimal or non-existent.

o) Civil registration backlogs and clearing strategies

With the exception of Mauritius, the three countries with operational civil registration have a huge birth, death, marriage and divorce registration backlog problem. None of the countries has a well designed civil registration backlog programme that indicates exit strategies and techniques. On the other hand, Ethiopia, with the support of UNICEF country office, conducted a nationwide pilot study during the mission based on a designed national civil registration backlog pilot programme.

4.2 Vital Statistics

For the purpose of this medium-term plan, major components of register-based vital statistics operation and management activities were selected to present the findings of the field assessment missions. A brief summary of the findings under each of the selected component activities of the vital statistics system are presented below.

a) Legal framework

Vital statistics compiled from civil registration are a major source of population statistics that provide population dynamics and health information for the NSS. National statistics acts or proclamations are expected to indicate or specify institutional linkages, responsibilities and how and when vital statistics would be collected, compiled or disseminated. In all the countries covered in the field assessment missions, except for general indications of civil registration as a source of statistics, no specific mention was made about the institutional linkages with the civil registration authorities or offices and other peculiar situations of collection, compilation and dissemination of vital statistics.

b) Organisational and administrative arrangement

Except Sierra Leone, the remaining four countries have structured vital statistics under the NSO. In Sierra Leone, compilation and reporting of vital statistics is mandated to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. In Mauritius, compilation and reporting of causes of death is the duty of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. Cameroon has a separate office for population censuses and studies under a different ministry, whereas vital statistics is under the National Institute of Statistics. South Africa has a department dedicated to health and vital statistics and Ethiopia used to have a separate department for vital statistics but there seems to be no such unit in the new organisational arrangement. Mauritius also has a unit dealing with demographic and vital statistics. In Cameroon, the organisational arrangement for vital statistics is not clear, though there are focal persons assigned for activities related to the subject.

c) Manuals and guidelines

Like censuses and sample surveys, vital statistics require a comprehensive operational manual or set of guidelines that would direct implementation and procedures of reporting and compilation of vital statistics at country level or in a specific geographic area. During the field assessment it was found that the four countries with operational civil registration and vital statistics systems in place did not have such operational manuals or guidelines. Ethiopia has a draft operational manual designed for civil registrars which includes all the procedures of registration of vital events for legal, administrative and statistical purposes. The Central Statistics Agency plans to prepare a separate manual on the compilation, reporting and dissemination of vital statistics.

d) Record transfer and documentation

Mauritius' Central Statistics Office and Statistics South Africa access vital statistics data from their respective civil registration offices through the linked online databases. However, as indicated above, the civil registration record of South Africa does not cover the health and statistics variables, thus making it difficult for Statistics South Africa to access most of these critical additional data from the database. In Cameroon, the National Statistics Institute has the capacity to collect vital statistics reports only from less than 100 registration offices from among the over six thousand local civil registration offices claimed to be available in the country. In Sierra Leone, no records are transferred from regional offices and lower administrations to a central repository.

e) Report preparation and dissemination

Mauritius prepares vital statistics reports on a monthly and annual basis and disseminates these widely as a component activity of the NSS. South Africa also prepares vital statistics reports annually. In the remaining three countries, there are no reports of vital statistics from civil registration systems.

f) Cooperation and interface between the statistics and civil registration organs

With the exception of South Africa, the remaining four countries covered by the field assessment missions have no formal agreements or mechanisms in place that bind the cooperation and interface between civil registration and vital statistics organs. Although South Africa managed to have a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the two institutions, the implementation and results achieved do not seem satisfactory, perhaps due to weakness in the implementation modalities and lack of follow-up.

g) Use of civil registration as a source for vital statistics

With the exception of Mauritius, the remaining four countries are not using the vital statistics compiled from the civil registration system for the measurement of fertility and mortality indices nor for estimating population sizes and updating population projections. Likewise, only Mauritius compiles cause of death reports and prepares cause of death classifications that are being used as a primary source of information. Mauritius does not use provisional methods through censuses or sample surveys for generating vital statistics in the demographic or health statistics fields.

h) Monitoring and evaluation

Similar to censuses and surveys, two types of errors are expected in register-based vital statistics: coverage and content errors. There are standard and conventional monitoring and evaluation

methods recommended for measuring the comprehensiveness and quality of vital statistics data. In this respect, none of the five countries has installed these conventional methods as part of the vital statistics operation and management procedures. Mauritius and South Africa use different simple data verification mechanisms for validating the reported vital statistics.

i) Population databases

Development of a population database primarily requires two data inputs: civil registration and migration data. In this regard, those countries with highly inadequate civil registration systems are not expected to have a functional and dynamic population database. Hence, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Ethiopia are not expected to have such a database. Mauritius has a complete civil registration system but has not yet transitioned to owning a population database. South Africa has a section that deals with population database in its organisational structure, however the database is affected due to limitations in the civil registration system.

5. PROBLEMS, CHALLENGES, PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

African civil registration and vital statistics operation and management systems are one of the least developed and mismanaged, and hence has the largest number of unregistered births and deaths in the world. The problems and challenges facing Africa in the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems are multifaceted and deeply rooted in the diverse socio-economic development challenges of the region. There are some reports that documented the types and varieties of the problems and challenges, but with limitations in presenting their extent and depth. In preparing this medium-term plan, efforts were made to review various documentations and conduct field assessment visits that helped to further refine and present the problems and challenges in a systematic manner. In addition, potential opportunities and facilitating factors were also investigated.

Accordingly, in the following section, problems, challenges, proposed interventions and potential opportunities are presented at different geographic levels.

5.1 Problems and Challenges

Problems and challenges facing African civil registration and vital statistics systems are presented in two broad categories: core and non-core. The core and non-core or derived problems and challenges were further identified through geographic divisions so that the types of interventions and appropriate actors could easily be identified.

5.1.1 Country Level

Most of the problems and challenges facing civil registration and vital statistics systems emerge from the countries themselves. However, there are problems and challenges originating from regional and international levels that contribute in exacerbating the national situations.

a) Core problems and challenges

Lack of or limited political commitment – In the past years, the issue of civil registration and vital statistics has not been brought to the attention of political leaders and policy makers. They used to be dealt with at technical and institutional levels in an uncoordinated manner, with limited efforts in presenting these issues in a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach. Hence, policy makers were largely unaware of the value and importance of civil registration records and the role that they play in the development of the systems. Furthermore, the problems and challenges facing the systems have not been presented on a macro level to be considered as one area of government responsibility in seeking directives and solutions.

Outdated laws and registration procedures – Most African countries have not taken innovative or dynamic measures to improve civil registration laws inherited from colonial times. The rationales and objectives of civil registration are not crafted to reflect current realities and value systems of contemporary Africa. Registration procedures currently prevailing in the majority of the countries are derivatives of these old laws and regulations.

Organisational and infrastructural problem – In the majority of African countries, civil registration structures are inherited from the colonial heritage. The purposes of the registration records were narrowly defined following the traditions of the colonial practice that were used to determine the level of responsibility, inter-governmental linkages and therefore to whom it should be accountable and level of independence. Past efforts and initiatives in revitalising civil registration in Africa did not bring much improvement in the structural and organisational aspects of civil registration as most interventions were thinly designed to address problems related to few components of the systems. Registration offices were instituted in cities and major urban centres and were inaccessible to the majority of the rural community.

Limited expertise and multidisciplinary character of civil registration – The development of vital statistics has a long history in the statistics and public health fields. Civil registration laws and operations were also in existence for centuries in the development endeavours of nations. Although the systems have a rich history and tradition, even in the African context, knowledge and practice of civil registration and vital statistics have not been acquired through courses or formal education

programmes in schools and out of schools. In Africa, there are no curriculums or knowledge transfer and career development schemes that produce required experts in civil registration and vital statistics systems. Hence, civil servants engaged in the operation and management of civil registration in Africa have no basic or formal education in civil registration and vital statistics systems except through their exposure to the civil registration laws and regulations. Furthermore, the multidisciplinary nature of civil registration aggravates the complexity of the registration operations and information compilation undertakings that become a challenge for the experts trained in unitary and specialised education programmes.

Underdeveloped public administration infrastructure – One of the basic characteristics of most African countries' public administration is their urban-biased development, where basic public services are mainly provided in towns and major urban centres, far from the bulk of the population residing in the rural areas. Availability of public institutions and services at the local administration level is the first requirement for sustainable development and cost-effectiveness of civil registration system in a country. Nevertheless, recent decentralisation programmes progressing in the majority of African countries are believed to address the long overdue development challenges of civil registration.

Lack of properly articulated national standards, operational manuals and guidelines – The majority of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa do not have operational and management guidelines that provide systematic procedures and directives to the registrars and practitioners of civil registration. Apart from the written civil registration laws, in some cases accompanied regulations, it is difficult to find properly articulated national standards, operational manuals and guidelines for the conduct of civil registration and vital statistics operation and management.

Lack of monitoring and evaluation standards and procedures – Most African countries, including those with well developed civil registration systems, do not have systematically developed monitoring and evaluation standards for measuring coverage and completeness of the registration system or content and quality of the statistics produced.

Inadequate efforts in mainstreaming civil registration and vital statistics in NSSs – In the recent past, most African countries prepared and started implementing National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), which in most instances, did not reflect civil registration and vital statistics in a comprehensive way or as an integral part of the NSS.

Huge civil registration backlog – Globally, the highest number of unregistered births and deaths is found in Africa. Even those registered records of birth, death, marriage and divorce could be

questionable, as in most cases registration operations may not follow the conventional registration procedures, thus making it difficult for the records to be accepted as *prima facie* evidence in official transactions and court rulings. Designing backlog civil registration procedures and clearing the backlog could be a challenge for most African countries.

Lack of comprehensive national action plan – In most African countries, civil registration is treated as a traditionally run business with no formal planning and strategy development requirements. Opening registration offices and appointing registrars were taken as the norms of civil registration operation and management without bothering much for setting targets and long-term plans.

NSOs overwhelmed with provisional demographic methods and techniques – After the introduction of indirect methods in the 1960s, data collection and analysis on fertility and mortality statistics in most NSOs had moved to censuses and surveys. This trend created ignorance and marginalisation of initiatives and projects in the field of civil registration and vital statistics.

Lack of long-term vision and commitment – Civil registration, once properly installed, would last for generations without a need to put much resource. However, putting the system on the right track may initially require a huge effort, which pays back as soon as the system starts functioning properly. Creating such vision and commitment is the current challenge that most national institutions engaged in civil registration and vital statistics are facing in Africa.

b) Non-core or derived problems and challenges

The problems and challenges listed below, which are usually found in the literature are simple derivatives of the above core problems. For instance, shortage or lack of budget, human and logistics resources – are largely a product of lack of political commitment and inappropriate structural and organisational arrangement of civil registration. In the past, efforts were made to improve human and budget constraints by assigning additional budget and human resources that failed to bring sustainable improvement due to shortcomings in addressing the root cause at macro level. Similarly, the following problems and challenges need to be considered as products of the above core problems and challenges and should be addressed in reference to these core issues.

- *Shortage or lack of budget, human and logistics resources;*
- *Lack of motivation or cultural barrier to register events from the public side;*
- *Lack or limited incentives for registration personnel's;*
- *Limited awareness and use of registration records by the public and government offices;*
- *Limited use of statistics at lower administration levels;*

- *Problems of data completeness, quality and timeliness ;*
- *Lack or inadequate interface between civil registration and vital statistics organs;*
- *Presence of disincentive factors for registering vital events;*
- *Inadequate efforts in mainstreaming civil registration and vital statistics in monitoring and evaluation of national development programmes and MDGs; and*
- *Lack of or limited awareness among health professionals.*

5.1.2 Regional Level

a) Core problems and challenges

No regional policy framework/platform – Civil registration and vital statistics are integrated information systems that affect legal, administrative and statistical aspects of every nation. Specifically, Africa as a region is highly affected by the inadequacy of such systems. In the past, regional organisations such as ECA, AfDB and African Union Commission (AUC) did not take adequate policy measures that would have facilitated progress in improving the systems and addressing the problems and challenges in accordance with the regional perspective, thus making it difficult to bring forth the issue as a regional policy agenda.

No regional standards, guidelines and comprehensive plan – All African countries are striving to attain complete civil registration that would enable them to produce valuable vital statistics and other individual and aggregate information. There are global standards and guidelines recommended by the UN in all aspects of civil registration and vital statistics operation and management, however, no attempts were made to have regional standards and guidelines that reflect the African realities and context and that would guide and urge Member States towards certain regional targets and accomplishments.

No regular resource or budget line – In the past, regional organisations such as ECA, AUC and AfDB did not have the tradition of allocating regular budgets for civil registration and vital statistics systems as they do for other regional programmes and initiatives.

Limited expertise – As compared to the huge technical support requirements, African regional organisations are understaffed or do not have the required expertise in civil registration and vital statistics systems.

No clear directives or recommendations on the situation or extent of application of provisional demographic methods and techniques – The UN technical documents recommend that indirect demographic techniques and approaches not be considered or used as substitutes or permanent

methods in the provision of fertility and mortality statistics. Based on these global principles, regional organisations should have been able to develop an exit strategy for countries to transit to the conventional methods of generating fertility and mortality statistics, including causes of death from civil registration systems.

b. Non-core or derived problems and challenges

As presented above for the national level, the problems and challenges listed below are derivatives of the core problems and challenges that are reviewed above for the regional level.

- *Uncoordinated intervention;*
- *Limited effort and resource for technical innovation and creation of regional knowledge base;*
- *Lack of monitoring and evaluation standards and procedures;*
- *Lack of clear mandate and accountability;*
- *No regional action plans;*
- *Absence of permanent focal person or unit; and*
- *Regional statistical training institutions not proactively engaged in training, studies or research in the area of civil registration and vital statistics.*

5.1.3 International Level

a) Core problems and challenges

No international policy framework/platform – Although there are comprehensive UN principles, recommendations and guidelines on civil registration and vital statistics systems that represent global standards, flows of international support to countries are largely uncoordinated and in most cases deviate or have no clear reference to the UN general principles, calling for the need for the development of global policy frameworks.

Lack of clear mandate and accountability – In addition to the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the specialised UN agencies, there are a number of international organisations and academic institutions currently engaged in civil registration and vital statistics projects and intervention programmes. These varied initiatives and interventions, run by different actors unless supported by harmonised working modalities and coordination mechanisms at international as well as regional levels, might result in a situation that would make it difficult to measure progress and ensure accountability in either the progress or failure.

b) Non-core or derived problems and challenges

As presented above, at national and regional levels, the problems and challenges listed below are derivatives of the core problems and challenges described for the international level:

- *Lack of adoption of UN international standards;*
- *Unclear resource flow mechanisms;*
- *Uncoordinated intervention;*
- *Inappropriate methodologies and approaches; and*
- *Academic and training institutions overwhelmed by provisional demographic methods and techniques.*

5.2 Proposed interventions

In the following matrix, proposed interventions to the core problems and challenges identified above are presented.

Problems and challenges	Brief proposed interventions
<i>Country level</i>	
<i>Lack of or limited political commitment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve political leaders and policy makers and ensure ownership by national governments - Upgrade the issue to a national agenda - A good example is the forthcoming high-level Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration, targeted at engaging national policy makers and regional organs at macro level
<i>Organisational and infrastructural problems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve accessibility of registration offices through integration of civil registration services with public administration infrastructure - Use as vehicle and advocate and benefit from public service reform programmes and decentralisation and democratisation processes
<i>Outdated laws and registration procedures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use research-based legislative drafting techniques that would result in implementable law
<i>Limited expertise and multidisciplinary character of civil registration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainstreaming civil registration into Statistical Training Centers (STCs) curricula - Participate in the training programmes - Ensure that developed curriculums address the multi-disciplinary nature of civil registration and vital statistics systems
<i>Underdeveloped public administration infrastructure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate the benefits and practical implications of civil registration records and the compiled vital statistics in supporting development endeavours, specifically at local administration levels
<i>Lack of properly articulated national standards, operational manuals and guidelines</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request and direct regional organisations to prepare regional standards, model operational manuals and guidelines - Prepare and use national standards, operational manuals and guidelines
<i>Lack of monitoring and evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply UN monitoring and evaluation methods and

Problems and challenges	Brief proposed interventions
<i>standards and procedures</i>	<p>procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement national monitoring and evaluation standards - If there is a lack of capacity, request technical support from regional or international organisations
<i>Inadequate efforts in mainstreaming civil registration and vital statistics in national statistical systems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-visit NSDS to include civil registration and vital statistics - Allocate resources and include on the annual statistics activity plan
<i>Huge civil registration backlog</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare a method for registration of vital events in the backlog and their interface with the conventional registration operation - Design or devise a national strategy and plan of action for clearing the backlog
<i>Lack of comprehensive national action plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare and endorse a national civil registration and vital statistics action plan - Ensure the involvement and shared responsibility of key stakeholders in the action plan and in the implementation
<i>NSOs overwhelmed with provisional demographic methods and techniques</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct an in-house review and technical brainstorming sessions on the merits and demerits and on the implications of the different methodologies on the NSS - Devise an exit strategy and share the plan with major academic and training institutions in and outside the country
<i>Lack of long-term vision and commitment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heads of civil registration authorities and NSOs should believe that civil registration – once properly installed in the country – will be a permanent solution to the current statistical, legal and administrative information gap
Regional level	
<i>No regional policy framework/platform</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECA, AfDB and other regional organisations to prepare regional policy framework with the involvement of Member States - StatCom-Africa to endorse recommendations that facilitate the preparation of the policy framework
<i>No regional standards, guidelines or comprehensive plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECA, AfDB and regional training institutions to develop and endorse regional guidelines and plans

Problems and challenges	Brief proposed interventions
<i>No regular resources or budget line</i>	- ECA, AfDB and RECs should allocate coordinated and sustainable resources for improving civil registration and vital statistics in the region
<i>Limited expertise</i>	- For immediate action – ECA and AfDB to initiate cascaded training workshops - For the long-term, regional training institutions and universities should be held to initiate regular courses into their academic programmes
<i>No clear directives or recommendations on the situation or extent of application of provisional demographic methods and techniques</i>	- ECA and AfDB to support methodological research undertakings on the issue - Regional training organisations and universities to initiate research projects - ECA and AfDB to prepare regional exit strategy
International level	
<i>No international policy framework/platform</i>	- UNSD appreciates the challenge and takes the initiative in mobilising international actors towards a common platform - International organisations working on civil registration and vital statistics and related fields should collaborate with UNSD and UN Regional Communities (UN RCs) - A consensus should be reached and some form of international instrument that brings international actors to a common platform should be prepared
<i>Lack of clear mandate and accountability</i>	- UNSD, in consultation with regional UN RCs and UN specialised agencies, prepare proposal on clarification of mandate and accountability of international actors engaged in civil registration and vital statistics systems in developing countries

5.3 Opportunities and Facilitating Factors

The technical note prepared for the 2009 African Statistics Day celebrations identified and proposed four potential pillars of opportunity for countries and development partners to explore in improving the completeness and quality of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa. They are presented as:

- Decentralisation and democratisation processes currently progressing in Africa;
- Booming situations in the application of information technology solutions in Africa;

- Improving regional and international support and commitment; and
- Using national and regional training institutions to improve the knowledge base for civil registration and vital statistics systems.

The technical note included extensive discussions on each of the above suggested opportunities.⁸ In addition, the field assessment mission revealed more routes for opportunities that can be shared with Member States. The following proposed opportunities have direct and/or indirect positive implications on the operation and management of civil registration and vital statistics systems at national and sub-national levels. National civil registration authorities and NSOs may need to investigate the relevance and availability of these opportunities and facilitating factors based on their particular national context.

5.3.1 National level

- Increased national government's interest in improving public service administration;
- More countries adopting decentralisation programmes;
- Wider availability of information and communication technology (ICT) solutions, specifically at local administration level;
- Increased interest from regional training institutions to engage in knowledge building activities;
- Wider availability of media and communication channels;
- Improved application and promotion of statistics in measuring and tracking development results;
- More countries adopting NSDS; and
- Improved human rights concepts and democratisation processes in Africa.

5.3.2 Regional level

- Strengthened statistics division at ECA;
- Increased commitment of regional organisations, specifically AfDB and AUC in supporting of statistics of the continent;
- Acknowledgment and support by StatCom-Africa;
- Increased commitment for improving regional statistical capacity;
- Increased commitment for the measurement and monitoring of regional development initiatives and MDGs;
- Production of the African Statistical Yearbook;
- Availability of regional partnership forums; and

⁸ 2009 African Statistics Day: Technical Note – Strengthening Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in Support of National Development and MDGs in Africa

- Wider availability of ICT solutions.

5.3.3 International level

- Increased international support and partnership;
- Increased efforts in awareness creation and support mobilisation;
- Availability of UN standards, principles and recommendations; and
- Wider availability of ICT solutions.

6. THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN: 2010 - 2012

6.1 Goal

The ultimate goal of the medium-term plan is to support African governments to build modern and accountable public administrations and measure and monitor their respective development efforts.

6.2 Objectives

The overall objective of the medium-term plan is two-fold:

- Improve the capacity of national government administrations in managing the recording and service provision of vital events; and
- Capacitate national vital statistics compiling offices in the production and dissemination of flow of demographic and health statistics for national, sub-national, regional and international consumption.

The specific objectives and targets of the plan are to:

- Improve coverage and completeness of civil registration in Member States:-
 - 2/3 of Member States with current coverage level below 40% reach over 50% by the end of the plan period.
 - 2/3 of the Member States with current coverage level between 40-60% reach over 60% by the end of the plan period.
 - 2/3 of the Member States with current coverage level between 60-80% reach over 80% by the end of the plan period.
- Improve timeliness and completeness of vital statistics in Member States:-
 - 2/3 of the Member States with current coverage level below 40 % reach over 50% by the end of the plan period.

- 2/3 of the Member States with current coverage level between 40-60 % reach over 60% by the end of the plan period.
 - 2/3 of the Member States with current coverage level between 60-80% reach over 80% by the end of the plan period.
- Improve timeliness, quality and use of vital statistics in Member States:-
- Lag of release of annual vital statistics reports reduced to below six months in those Member States currently producing such reports by the end of the plan period.
 - Number of Member States producing vital statistics reports increased by 50 per cent by the end of the plan period.
 - Number of Member States using vital statistics from civil registration in population size estimation and projection increased by 50 per cent by the end of the plan period.
 - Number of Member States using death records for compiling causes of death statistics increased by 50 per cent by the end of the plan period.
- Establish integrated population registers/databases
- At least half of the Member States initiate creation of population register/database by the end of the plan period.

6.3 Strategies

The medium-term plan will be based on the following strategies to address challenges, achieve objectives and attain goals.

a. Conducting comprehensive assessment of the status of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Member States

In Africa there has been no comprehensive and scientific evaluation studies conducted to assess the status of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Member States. Civil registration coverage and completeness figures quoted in some publications of regional and international organisations are estimates derived from general observations and situational assessments. In order to measure progress made towards defined targets, comprehensive assessments are required to identify benchmarks and continuously monitor progress.

b. Ensuring country ownership and leadership

Managing and operating civil registration is the duty of national governments. Support from development partners should be considered as complementary engagement. Hence, in order to ensure the sustainability of initiatives and proper integration of resources in the national infrastructure of civil registration systems, development partners need to ensure country ownership

and leadership as well as align their interventions to the national government's plans and programmes.

c. Updating and improving methodologies, operational and monitoring mechanisms and tools

Civil registration and vital statistics initiatives in Africa have been stagnating in the past four to five decades. There is a need to update and renovate methodologies and operational procedures as well as to develop monitoring tools that would fit the current realities of African nations. Projects and programmes need to be initiated with the involvement of regional and national academic and training institutions that would promote innovation and sharing knowledge and resources among Member States.

d. Strengthening collaboration and integration of civil registration and vital statistics organs

One of the major deterring factors for the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa as presented in the Dar-es-Salaam workshop was the lack of coordination and interface between civil registration authorities and NSOs. Strengthening the collaboration and integration of civil registration and vital statistics organs at institutional and legal basis should be taken as a key strategy in the medium-term in addressing the long overdue challenge of most African countries. Clear responsibilities of the institutions managing civil registration and vital statistics systems (it could be one or more than one institution) need to be articulated and areas of integration and interface also need to be commonly agreed and endorsed and accountability mechanisms should be put in place.

e. Harmonising initiatives and approaches

Another challenge facing African civil registration and vital statistics systems is that different institutions are moving around with initiatives with no alignment with international standards set by the UN. These interventions are sometimes a source of confusion in countries that have not yet established national programmes and standards in the management and operation of civil registration and vital statistics systems. Hence, harmonising initiatives and approaches at regional and national level is one of the strategies that should be followed in addressing confusion and setting regional and national standards for operating civil registration and vital statistics systems.

f. Promoting data use and quality assurance mechanisms

Vital statistics data are expected to be produced from civil registration systems even if the systems have limitations in terms of coverage or completeness. Unless such data is produced from the registration system it becomes difficult to monitor the status and level of progress made in improving the civil registration system. It is also not enough to have the statistics produced, efforts have to be made for the data to be utilised by stakeholders and to get feedback on the quality and its

usefulness. Hence, promoting data use and installing quality assurance mechanisms in the system will be one of the strategies in the medium-term.

g. Building sub-regional, regional and international partnership fora

ECA, AUC and AfDB, in collaboration with key development partners, work and advocate for forming sub-regional, regional and international partnership fora s that would promote integrity, harmonisation and knowledge and resource sharing in the region. The partnership fora, beyond serving as formal communication platforms should also be used to foster friendly engagements that would praise champions in the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems as well as encourage those that are lagging. Hence, building sub-regional, regional and international partnership forums will be taken as a key strategy measure in the medium-term for promoting good values and assets among countries and organisations.

6.4 Institutional Framework

ECA, AUC and AfDB will manage the medium-term plan in close consultation and partnership with other development partners. The plan will provide an opportunity for the international organisations to engage in and support the implementation of the component thematic areas and activities included in the plan. National governments, civil registration authorities and NSOs will play a central role in the implementation of the plan. Efforts will be made to involve regional economic communities and sub-regional organizations, which will play a proactive role between regional and national organizations. Regional statistical training organisations and academic institutions are expected to play a critical role in improving the knowledge base and filling the expert gap in the medium-term.

7. PLANNED ACTIVITIES: 2010-2012

In the past two years, ECA, AUC and AfDB and other key development partners have been engaged in revitalisation efforts towards attaining comprehensive civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region. The recommendations endorsed in the Dar-es-Salaam regional workshop clearly articulated the major intervention areas that African countries should focus on when revitalising civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region. These areas of intervention are also common ground for development partners to channel financial, technical and material resources in support of countries committed to reform and improving their civil registration and vital statistics systems.

In the past four decades, Africa as a region has neglected civil registration and vital statistics systems. As a result, a huge backlog of unregistered events was left as well as stagnation in the

development of improved methods and approaches of production and dissemination of vital statistics in most countries. Specifically, the statistics sector practically abandoned the civil registration systems due to its focus on interim measures such as censuses and sample surveys that use indirect techniques for generating vital statistics. Therefore, current initiatives and programmes of intervention in Member States should consider mechanisms that would help in clearing the backlog created in all aspects of the civil registration and vital statistics management and operation, in addition to the activities that need to be accomplished in prospect.

Accordingly, in the medium-term, the following thematic areas will be the focus areas of intervention in addressing challenges of African countries and achieving the targets set for the plan period. The six thematic areas identified are:

- Capacity building;
- Innovation and harmonisation of techniques and approaches;
- Promoting knowledge and sharing good practices;
- Strengthening regional and national vital statistics production;
- Promoting study and research; and
- Building partnership, peer-support groups and promoting country ownership.

The first thematic area is the very basic intervention area that countries desperately are looking forward from regional and international organizations in bridging the knowledge gap and compensating the lost decades so that countries would accelerate the progress in the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems. Under this thematic area, various cost-effective and participatory capacity building activities, including development of regional guidelines, conducting training, curriculum development and resource mobilization and support activities are reflected.

The second thematic area refers to creating the dynamism and the driving force for development in the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in a country. The activities under this thematic area focus on using indigenous knowledge and resources, including the infrastructure in overcoming and breaking the vicious cycle that most countries are locked in. Furthermore, interventions that would provide a common platform and harmonisation mechanism for the different actors engaged in support of civil registration and vital statistics in the region would be tabled.

The third thematic area advocates for interventions that would promote knowledge and encourage learning and sharing good practices through various channels, including using IT solutions. Strengthening regional and national vital statistics production is the other thematic area that ensures the achievement of results of country initiatives and serves as an instrument in monitoring progress towards comprehensive civil registration and complete vital statistics systems. Study and research is

the other major thematic area that uses and benefits from the products of civil registration systems, specifically in the health and demographic sectors. Individual vital events records play a huge role in promoting epidemiological research and various retrospective and prospective population studies and research activities.

The last thematic area refers to building partnership and peer-support groups and promoting country ownership that harness horizontal and vertical as well as inter- and intra-country engagements in accelerating progress in the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region. This thematic area will focus on activities that promote and empower countries in owning, managing and leading initiatives; taking responsibility and being held accountable for failures; and taking remedial action.

The identification of activities under each thematic group was initiated considering the role and responsibilities of regional organisations and their positions in the region as well as the demands expressed by the national civil registration and vital statistics institutions as indicated in the Dar-es-Salaam workshop recommendations. Therefore, ECA, AfDB and AUC will play the lead role in mobilising and coordinating interventions that will have a regional impact and assist Member States in taking leadership and ownership of national scale interventions. The regional organisations work directly with national institutions and governments in promoting experience sharing; facilitating peer-support mechanisms; and encouraging creativity and indigenous knowledge in Member States.

In the three-year plan, building the technical capacity of national civil registration and vital statistics institutions would take a central place in addressing the long-overdue challenges that African countries are facing in improving civil registration and vital statistics systems. ECA, AfDB and AUC will also work towards harmonising international and regional interventions channeled to Africa by engaging with key development partners that would help avoid duplication, technical confusion and wastage of time and resources. The specific activities to be undertaken within each of the thematic areas are detailed in the planning and implementation matrix as presented in Annex 1. An extract or summary of the activities under each thematic area is also presented.

A. Capacity building

This thematic area will comprise activities that would address major technical capacity gaps that remain a challenge for the majority of African countries. Accordingly, emphasis will be put on the development of regional operational guidelines and instruments in the form of handbooks, manuals, booklets, etc., on both civil registration and vital statistics components and functions. Primarily, the following topics will be covered by the different operational guidelines: legal framework; institutional infrastructure; causes of death recording and classification; computerization;

information, education and communication (IEC) and advocacy; confidentiality and protocol for release of registration data; use of individual and aggregate registration data; interface between civil registration and vital statistics; establishment of population register/database; interface between census, survey and vital statistics; monitoring and evaluation etc. The operational guidelines and instruments are to be based on realities on the ground and will reflect the African context guided by the UN principles and recommendations.

Regional training programme packages will be developed that will benefit both national civil registration and vital statistics institutions and orient key data user institutions in the government ministries and departments. Cascaded training workshops and online training modules will be developed and various cost-effective IT-supported trainings, including video conferencing, will be employed as deemed applicable to specific country situations. Training curricula will be developed in collaboration with regional statistical training institutions that would serve as teaching material in colleges and universities.

B. Innovation and harmonisation of techniques and approaches

In the past years, there have been various initiatives undertaken in the form of pilot or model exercises or projects in the area of civil registration and vital statistics systems in various parts of the developing world. The majority were donor driven initiatives that ceased immediately after the end of the project or the model programme. There are also initiatives currently undergoing in some African countries targeting specific circumstances, such as the issue of child rights without systematic coordination and lack of coherence to the international civil registration and vital statistics standards. Therefore, in the medium-term plan, activities that would promote harmonisation and standardisation of the various initiatives being advanced by different international and regional organisations, including UN agencies, will be implemented. In this respect, the Dar-es-Salaam workshop endorsed a comprehensive recommendation, stating that: *“The African Centre for Statistics and the UN Statistics Division need to strengthen institutional linkages in facilitating integration, harmonization and coordination of efforts currently going on by various organizations at country and regional levels in order to promote cost-effective mechanisms and avoid duplication of efforts”*. In addition, research activities that involve regional training institutions and national universities in innovating current methodologies and operational procedures of civil registration and vital statistics will also be conducted.

C. Promoting knowledge and sharing good practices

The regional workshop, in its recommendations, called countries to proactively interact with each other to share knowledge, experience and resources using various mechanisms, such as study tours,

workshops, technical support and related activities. Hence, the medium-term plan will incorporate activities that promote visibility of ECA, AUC and AfDB in supporting Member States through field visits and developing appropriate forums for peer-group meetings and exchange of experiences and sharing good practices.

D. Strengthening regional and national vital statistics production

Vital statistics is one of the components of population statistics that need to be reported in statistical abstracts. NSOs need to be supported and capacitated in reporting and publishing vital statistics consistently on an annual basis so that ECA, AUC, AfDB and other development partners would access to compile and disseminate them at regional and international levels. For instance, the African Statistical Yearbook (ASYB) has not produced vital statistics in the past years due to the absence of such data from countries and other sources. Therefore, the medium-term plan will include activities that will address capacity gaps in generating and disseminating national and regional vital statistics on a yearly basis in national statistics abstracts, ASYB and in international statistical publications. Current and updated data for the measurement and tracking of the Millennium Development Goals will also be addressed.

E. Promoting studies and research

Civil registration individual records and aggregate vital statistics are major data sources in studies and research undertakings in various population and health sector development programmes. Studies in population dynamics and in prospective and retrospective longitudinal studies to determine the effects of dietary, environmental and various socio-economic conditions or genetic issues in different population groups could only be addressed through the availability of such individual longitudinal data. Death registration is the conventional individual and aggregate data source for conducting in-depth analysis on the incidence and prevalence of different morbidity and mortality conditions in a particular society. Study and research on the prevalence and characteristics of marriage and divorce in a community and hence their socio-cultural and economic implications can be conducted using flow of data from the registration system. Therefore, the medium-term plan will incorporate activities that would promote studies and research at national, regional and international levels.

F. Building partnership, peer-support groups and promoting country ownership

Civil registration operations need to be implemented at the grassroots level by the local administration, with the participation and involvement of communities and households. Civil registration should not be considered a onetime project operation or periodic activity; rather it

should be designed and conducted on a continuous and permanent basis for generations. Every effort should be made to promote ownership by national governments and the local administration through conducting continuous and permanent advocacy, education and communication programmes. National governments also need to partner with regional and international organisations to benefit from resources allocated for capacity building and other infrastructural support programmes. Countries also need to form and actively participate in peer-support group engagements that would enable them to learn and share experiences and good practices. In such initiatives, regional organisations such as ECA, AUC and AfDB and international organisations, including UN, will play an important role in promoting partnership and forming peer-support groups among countries. Hence, the medium-term plan will include activities that will promote partnership and country ownership in Member States.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The performance and management of the medium-term plan will be assessed on an annual basis and supported with continuous monitoring mechanisms in place. The African Statistical Coordinating Committee is the custodian of the plan, supported by a technical and advisory committee comprising representatives from ECA, AfDB and AUC who will review the performance reports. The reports will be prepared in line with the objectives, targets and activities of the plan and will be supported by a monitoring and evaluation plan that will be prepared in the future.

9. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR 2010 - 2012

The total financial resource requirements for the three-year plan (2010-2012) amounts to \$2.706 million (refer to budget summary table below). Resources allocated for capacity building activities took the biggest share (38.3 per cent) followed by activities for building partnership, peer support groups and promoting country ownership (25.5 per cent). The first and second years will take a relatively higher share of resources compared to the third year. In the first year, the organisation of the High-level Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration will take the highest share, over 61 per cent of the total budget of the year. A detailed budget breakdown by thematic area and activities is presented in Annex 2.

Summary Resource Requirements by Thematic Area and Year 2010-2012 (US\$ Thousands)

Thematic area	Year			Total	Percentage
	2010	2011	2012		
Capacity building	266.0	510.0	260.0	1036.0	38.3
Innovation and harmonisation of techniques and approaches	0.0	55.0	0	55.0	2.0
Promoting knowledge and sharing good practices	0.0	195.0	175.0	370.0	13.7
Strengthening regional and national vital statistics production	0.0	80.0	80.0	160.0	5.9
Promoting studies and research	0.0	35.0	40.0	75.0	2.8
Building partnership, peer support groups and promoting country ownership	610.0	40.0	40.0	690.0	25.5
Strengthening ECA-African Centre for Statistics (ACS)	80.0	120.0	120.0	320.0	11.8
Total	956.0	1035.0	715.0	2,706.0	100.0
Percentage	35.3	38.1	26.4	100.0	

Annex - 1: Planning and Implementation Matrix

Thematic Area	Specific objectives	Strategies	Activities	Outputs	Risks and assumptions
<p>Goal: To support African governments to build modern and accountable public administrations and measure and monitor their respective development efforts.</p> <p>Outcome: Improved coverage, completeness and quality of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems in African Member States</p> <p>Overall Objective: - To improve capacities of African governments in managing the recording and service provision of vital events and capacitate national vital statistics compiling offices in the production and dissemination of flow of demographic and health statistics for national, regional and international consumption</p>					<p>Risks: - countries in conflict and political unrest - recovery from global financial crises further delays - CRVS not institutionalized permanently in ECA and AfDB structure or program - some UN specialised agencies may take time to align to the new approach - donors continue uncoordinated interventions</p>
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To improve capacities of national civil registration authorities and NSOs in implementing and managing civil registration and vital statistics operations; - To support regional and sub-regional organisations in systematically measuring and monitoring interventions and development results; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting comprehensive assessment of the status of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Member States - Ensuring country ownership and leadership - Updating and improving methodologies, operational and monitoring mechanisms and tools - Strengthening collaboration and integration between civil registration and vital statistics organs - coordinating initiatives and harmonising approaches 	<p>Activity 0: Conduct assessment study</p>	Assessment report produced	<p>Assumptions: - donors will continue and sustain their support - national governments take CRVS as national priority agenda</p>
			<p>Activity 1: Develop a regional medium-term civil registration and vital statistics plan</p>	Regional and national CRVS plan and programme documents	
			<p>Activity 2: Prepare regional guidelines for the development of national plans and programmes for civil registration and vital statistics systems</p>	Regional guidelines document for the development of national plans and programmes	
			<p>Activity 3: Support countries in the development of national civil registration and vital statistics plans and programmes</p>	Countries with improved national CRVS plan and programme	
			<p>Activity 4: Prepare a civil registration operation and management manual</p>	CR operation and management manual	
			<p>Activity 5: Prepare a vital statistics operation and management manual</p>	VS operation and management manual	
			<p>Activity 6: Prepare regional guidelines on updating and harmonization of civil registration laws</p>	Regional guidelines on CR laws	

Thematic Area	Specific objectives	Strategies	Activities	Outputs	Risks and assumptions
			Activity 7: Prepare regional guidelines on causes of death recording, reporting and classification	Regional manual on causes of death	
			Activity 8: Prepare regional advocacy and information, education and communication (IEC) operational guidelines	Regional manual on IEC	
			Activity 9: Prepare regional computerization and database management guideline	Regional guidelines on computerization and database	
			Activity 10: Develop strategic regional guidelines for management of civil registration backlogs	Regional guidelines on CR backlogs	
			Activity 11: Support countries in the development of a package of national civil registration and vital statistics operation manuals and guidelines	Countries with improved CRVS operational manuals and guidelines	
			Activity 12: Conduct cascaded training for civil registration and vital statistics country focal persons	Country focal persons trained in CRVS	
			Activity 13: Conduct training for heads of civil registration authorities and NSOs	Heads of civil registration authorities and NSOs trained in CRVS	
			Activity 14: Conduct orientation workshop for national civil registration public relations officers	National public relations officers oriented in CRVS	
			Activity 15: Develop training materials for short courses and regular programmes	Training materials for short courses and regular	

Thematic Area	Specific objectives	Strategies	Activities	Outputs	Risks and assumptions
				programmes	
			Activity 16: Develop course programmes at graduate and undergraduate levels	Course programs for graduate and undergraduate	
			Activity 17: Conduct short courses and regular training programmes	Short courses and regular trainings conducted	
			Activity 18: Develop concept note, project document and other necessary preparatory activities for establishing the Fund	Concept note, project document prepared	
			Activity 19: Organise consultation meeting with development partners	Consultation meeting conducted	
			Activity 20: Organise launching meeting and conduct formal agreements	Formal agreement signed	
			Activity 21: Implement and monitor the Fund	Fund operational	
Innovation and harmonization of techniques and approaches	To improve methodological soundness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updating and improving methodologies, operational and monitoring mechanisms and tools - Strengthening collaboration and integration of civil registration and vital statistics organs - Harmonising initiatives and approaches - Promoting data use and quality assurance mechanisms - Building sub-regional, regional and international 	Activity 22: Develop research agenda on operational and methodological aspects of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa	Research agenda developed	
			Activity 23: Conduct studies on harmonisation of techniques and approaches in civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa	Study reports on harmonization of techniques and approaches	
			Activity 24: Conduct research on innovative methods of improving civil registration and vital statistics operations, management and evaluation	Study reports on operation, management and evaluation methods produced	
			Activity 25: Conduct methodological research on improving reporting and compilation of causes of death information	Methodological study report on causes of death	

Thematic Area	Specific objectives	Strategies	Activities	Outputs	Risks and assumptions
		partnership forums			
Promoting knowledge and sharing good practices	To improve technical, operational and management capacity of national institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring country ownership and leadership - Harmonising initiatives and approaches - Promoting data use and quality assurance mechanisms - Building sub-regional, regional and international partnership forums 	Activity 26: Conduct advocacy and experience sharing workshops at regional and sub-regional levels on improving civil registration and vital statistics systems	Advocacy and experience sharing workshops conducted	
			Activity 27: Facilitate study tours between countries at regional and sub-regional levels	Study tours arranged and conducted	
			Activity 28: Strengthen the African Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Network - AfCRVSNNet	AfCRVSNNet functional	
			Activity 29: Conduct field assessment visits	Field assessment visits conducted	
			Activity 30: Provide technical backstopping to countries	Countries provided with technical support	
Strengthening regional and national vital statistics production	To provide an enabling environment for the production of national vital statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonising initiatives and approaches - Promoting data use and quality assurance mechanisms - Building sub-regional, regional and international partnership forums 	Activity 31: Initiate the production of vital statistics in the African Statistical Yearbook (ASYB)	Vital statistics reports produced in ASYB	
			Activity 32: Support countries in reporting and publication of national vital statistics	Countries supported in reporting and publication	
Promoting study and research	To strengthen study and research capacity of national and regional organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting and building analytical capabilities of African countries in the area of vital statistics - Building sub-regional, regional and international partnership forums 	Activity 33: Prepare study and research agenda on the use and application of civil registration and vital statistics information in different areas, primarily in population studies and health disciplines	Research agenda developed	
			Activity 34: Sponsor study and research topics	Studies sponsored and reports produced	

Thematic Area	Specific objectives	Strategies	Activities	Outputs	Risks and assumptions
Building partnership, peer-support groups and promoting country ownership	To improve and sustain political commitment and take sound policy measures at national and regional levels	- Ensuring country ownership and leadership - Building sub-regional, regional and international partnership forums	Activity 35: Organise High-Level Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration	African Ministerial Conference on civil registration conducted	
			Activity 36: Prepare concept note on the involvement and responsibilities of sub-regional organisations and economic communities	Concept note prepared	
			Activity 37: Organise workshop(s) on the modalities and mechanisms of the implementation of the resolutions of the Conference of Ministers	Workshop organized	
			Activity 38: Implement the resolution and recommendations of the Conference of African Ministers	Conference resolution implementation on progress	

Annex - 2: Resource Requirements 2010 - 2012 (US\$ Thousands)

Thematic Areas and Activities	2010	2011	2012	Total
Thematic Area -1:- Capacity Building				
Conduct assessment study	50.0	50.0		100.0
Develop regional medium-term civil registration and vital statistics plan	10.0			10.0
Prepare regional guideline for the development of national plans and programmes for civil registration and vital statistics systems	10.0			10.0
Support countries in the development of national civil registration and vital statistics plans and programmes	30.0	50.0	50.0	130.0
Prepare regional civil registration operation and management manual	5.5	5.0		10.5
Prepare regional vital statistics operation and management manual	5.5	5.0		10.5
Prepare regional guideline for updating and harmonisation of civil registration laws	10.0	5.0		15.0
Prepare regional guideline for causes of death recording, reporting and classification	10.0	10.0		20.0
Prepare regional advocacy and IEC operational guideline	10.0	5.0		15.0
Prepare regional computerization and database management guideline	10.0	5.0		15.0
Develop strategic regional guideline for management of civil registration backlogs	10.0	10.0		20.0
Support countries in the development of a package of national civil registration and vital statistics operation manuals and guidelines		100.0	100.0	200.0
Conducting training workshops at regional and sub-regional levels	60.0	60.0	40.0	160.0
Conduct cascaded trainings for civil registration and vital statistics country focal persons				0.0
Conduct trainings for heads of civil registration authorities and NSOs		80.0		80.0
Conduct orientation workshop to national civil registration public relations	40.0	40.0		80.0

Thematic Areas and Activities	2010	2011	2012	Total
officers				
Develop training materials for short courses and regular programmes	5.0	20.0	20.0	45.0
Develop course programmes at graduate and undergraduate levels		10.0	10.0	20.0
Conduct short courses and regular training programmes		10.0	10.0	20.0
Develop concept note, project document and other necessary preparatory activities for establishing the Fund		10.0	10.0	20.0
Organise consultation meeting with development partners		20.0	20.0	40.0
Organise launch meeting and conduct formal agreements		15.0		15.0
Implement and monitor the Fund				0.0
Sub-Total	266.0	510.0	260.0	1036.0
Thematic Area 2: Innovation and harmonisation of techniques and approaches				
Develop research agenda on operational and methodological aspects of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa		15.0		15
Conduct studies on harmonisation of techniques and approaches in civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa		20.0		20
Conduct research on innovative methods of improving civil registration and vital statistics operation, management and evaluation		10.0		10
Conduct methodological research in improving reporting and compilation of causes of death information		10.0		10
Sub-Total		55.0	0.0	55.0
Thematic Area 3: Promoting knowledge and sharing good practices				
Conduct advocacy and experience sharing workshops at regional and sub-regional levels on improving civil registration and vital statistics systems		80.0		80
Facilitate study tours between countries at regional and sub-regional levels		50.0	50.0	100
Conduct field assessment visits		25.0	50.0	75

Thematic Areas and Activities	2010	2011	2012	Total
Provide technical backstopping to countries		40.0	75.0	115
Strengthen the African Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Network (AfCRVSNNet)				0
Sub-Total		195.0	175.0	370.0
Thematic Area 4: Strengthening regional and national vital statistics production				
Initiate the production of vital statistics in the African Statistical Yearbook (ASYB)		60.0	60.0	120
Support countries in reporting and publication of national vital statistics		20.0	20.0	40
Sub-Total		80.0	80.0	160
Thematic Area 5: Promoting study and research				
Prepare study and research agenda on the use and application of civil registration and vital statistics information in different areas, primarily in population studies and health disciplines		15.0	10.0	25
Sponsor study and research topics		20.0	30.0	50
Sub-Total		35.0	40.0	75
Thematic Area 6: Building partnership, peer-support groups and promoting country ownership				
Organize High-Level Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration	580.0			580.0
Prepare concept note on the involvement and responsibilities of sub-regional organizations and economic communities		10.0		10.0
Operationalise and monitor the implementation of the regional partnership platform				0.0
Organise workshop(s) on the modalities and mechanisms of the implementation of the resolutions of the High-Level Conference of Ministers				0.0

Thematic Areas and Activities	2010	2011	2012	Total
Implement the resolution and recommendation of the High-Level Conference of African Ministers	30.0	30.0	40.0	100.0
Sub-Total	610.0	40.0	40.0	690.0
Strengthening ECA-ACS				
Strengthening ECA-ACS	80	120	120	320
Sub-Total	80	120	120	320
Grand Total	956.0	1035.0	715.0	2706.0