



Pacific Civil Registrars Network: 2025 Meeting Report

Nadi, Fiji, 26–28 March 2025

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This report was written by Nicola Richards (consultant on behalf of SPC) with the assistance of Jeff Montgomery (SPC) and inputs from organisers and participants at the workshop.

Pacific Civil Registrars Network

The Pacific Civil Registrars Network (PCRN) was created in 2014 with a vision that civil registrars across the Pacific will work together in ways that are flexible to local needs, with a shared approach to legislative change, enabling technology, and data exchange. PCRN provides an opportunity to share information, lessons learned, and good practice – fostering coordination and integration of civil registrars' input and ideas into implementation of the Action Plan for Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APPCRVS)¹ and the Regional Action Framework for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in Asia and the Pacific.²

The core membership of PCRN is composed of all civil registrars with State or Country level responsibility for civil registration or vital statistics, or their respective nominees. Members are from 22 countries and 14 territories across the Pacific. Associate membership has also been extended to 21 relevant partner agencies and businesses, including key United Nations organisations. PCRN gives all nations in the Pacific (including Australia and New Zealand) an opportunity to meet and discuss the goals set by the countries as part of the CRVS Decade. Although the countries and territories in the region exercise different coordination mechanisms and methods to conduct civil registration tasks, there remains a fundamental commitment to achieve complete civil registration.

A wide network of partners in Asia and the Pacific are engaged in improving CRVS systems across the region. These development partners work together to support countries in their implementation of the Regional Action Framework and meet regularly to facilitate coordination and alignment of activities. In addition to the regional partnership of organisations working on CRVS, several subregional initiatives also support CRVS improvement activities in different subsets of countries in Asia and the Pacific. In the Pacific, implementation of the Regional Action Framework and CRVS improvement more generally are supported by the [Pacific CRVS Partners Collaboration](#).

PCRN ultimately promotes peer-to-peer cooperation through disseminating knowledge of innovative methods for improving CRVS systems, developing data sharing approaches, and sharing good practices for improving systems to ensure no one is left behind. Stemming from shared visions to improve subregional systems, platforms for sharing information have generated collective approaches to CRVS data storage and retrieval, while allowing national stakeholders to regularly communicate with one another.

[2025 PCRN meeting](#)

With the support of SPC, Bloomberg Philanthropies and partners, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the PCRN meeting was held in Nadi, Fiji, from March 26–28, 2025. The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. share progress and challenges in CRVS improvement efforts and identify common challenges, and
2. facilitate knowledge exchange and potential collaboration on issues of concern of civil registrars in the region.

Attended by 66 civil registration professionals and development partners, the meeting was designed to provide a professional forum for civil registrars to discuss priority areas that are of common concern across the region. During the meeting, civil registrars from each country or territory were invited to provide an update on the following broad topics:

¹ Action plan for Pacific civil registration & vital statistics (APPCRVS): 2023-2026. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community (SPC); 2023 Available at: https://sdd.spc.int/digital_library/action-plan-pacific-civil-registration-vital-statistics-appcrvs-2023-2026

² *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP). 2014. Regional Action Framework for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok: UN ESCAP. Available at: <https://getinthepicture.org/resource/regional-action-framework-civil-registration-and-vital-statistics-asia-and-pacific>*

- Country or territory overview, including birth and death registration completeness and vital statistics production.
- Electronic processes for civil registration and system digitalisation.
- Current challenges and requests for assistance.

The meeting was opened by the acting Registrar General of Fiji, Makereta Sotutu, with a prayer and motivating address. This was followed by introductions from all participants and an icebreaker.

[Presentations](#) were given by 20 countries and territories, facilitated by Carla White (SPC). Participants were given a template in advance of the meeting, which meant that similar issues were covered in all presentations. Along with these status updates, two special sessions were held on building inclusivity and resilience in CRVS systems and strengthening linkages between civil registration and migration systems. Dedicated sessions, including panel discussions, were held on effective approaches to system digitalisation and the regional approach to building capacity in cause of death reporting.

All presentations are available at: <https://sdd.spc.int/events/2025/03/pacific-civil-registrars-network-meeting>.

Status updates from participating countries

[Registration completeness](#)

An overview of registration completeness for births and deaths, as reported by countries during the meeting, is provided in **Table 1**. Please note that data and information provided by participants have not been validated and may contain errors or inconsistencies with other published sources.

One of the key challenges faced by many countries and territories in the Pacific is ensuring universal registration of births and deaths, i.e., that all births and deaths are registered. Nations with high registration completeness have generally implemented proactive systems to encourage registration, as evidenced in the Cook Islands, where families receive a ‘baby bonus’ upon birth registration and funeral directors directly assist in transmitting the required forms for death registration. In Guam, home births are linked to the hospital and civil registration system via their ambulance service, while in Palau, all deaths are processed in the hospital, ensuring the registration of deaths that take place away from health facilities.

Table 1: Registration completeness according to goals from the Regional Action Framework³

Country or territory (reporting year)	1.A. Births registered within one year of the event (%)	1.C. People living in the country who have their birth registered (%)	1.D. Deaths registered within one year of the event (%)	1.E. Deaths that have a medically certified cause of death (%)
American Samoa (2024)	100.0		100.0	100.0
Australia, Tasmania (2024)	97.0		99.0	83.0
Cook Islands (2024)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
CNMI* (2023)	Census: 73.7 Birth cohort: 99.5	Census: 73.7 Birth cohort: 100.0	100.0	100.0
Pohnpei, FSM (2024)	42.0	60.0	25.0	99.0
Fiji (2023)	73.0		66.0	100.0
Guam (2024)	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0

³ Additional information on goals and progress is available at: <https://getinthepicture.org/regional-picture/goals/goal-1-civil-registration>

Kiribati (2023)	85.0	85.0	85.0	46.3
Nauru (2024)	100.0		100.0	100.0
New Zealand (2024)	98.5		100.0	95.0
Niue (2024)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Palau (2024)	92.0		86.0	100.0
Papua New Guinea (2023)	7.0	30.0	0.007	
RMI (2023–2024)		85.0		
Samoa (2022)	60.0	60.0	75.0	70.0
Solomon Islands (2024)	70.0	30.0	53.5	45.0
Tokelau (2020–2023)	80.0		100.0	
Tonga (2022)	60.0	60.0	75.0	70.0
Tuvalu (2024)	50.0	80.0	20.0	95.0
Vanuatu** (2023)	76.7*		1.5	39.0
CNMI = Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; FSM = Federated States of Micronesia; RMI = Republic of the Marshall Islands				
*CNMI: Population projections based on the most recent census (2020) are likely to overestimate the number of births per year, given the substantial population decline in the country. As such, estimates for registration completeness are provided using both census and birth cohort data for the denominator.				
**Vanuatu: births registered among children 5-years old (sourced from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, MICS).				

Digitisation

While most countries and territories in the region continue to use a mixture of paper-based and electronic civil registration records, full digitalisation of CRVS processes is becoming more common, with advanced systems now operating in several countries (see **Table 2**). Most of the American territories have electronic systems in place, however, due to local governance arrangements over civil registration, they are primarily designed for case management as part of the judicial system, limiting their usefulness in CRVS processes more broadly.

Several countries and territories are only just beginning to digitise their historical records, with many records only available in paper-based registry books; meaning that, in the event of a disaster, such records could be permanently destroyed. This was the experience of the Federated States of Micronesia, who lost all their civil registration records from 2009 to 2019 after a fire in the courthouse. While most countries are interested in digitising their civil registration records, the cost and complexity of this process is a major challenge.

Table 2: Summary of CRVS system digitisation

Country or territory	ICT system in use	Linkages with other systems	Archiving of historical records	Plans to upgrade or change
American Samoa	System Interlinking American Samoa (SILAS)	Connected to CDC database; not to national systems	Paper and electronic	Yes

Australia, Tasmania	Vitalware	Yes	Electronic, work is underway to scan historical records	Updates made on an ongoing basis
CNMI	Vital Information Tracking Application (VITA)	No	1945 – 2019: paper and images in a database 2020 – present: paper and electronic	Yes, data integration and migration
Cook Islands	Database	No, manual only	Paper and electronic (scanned)	Yes, implementing OpenCRVS
FSM, Pohnpei	Case tracking system (CTS)	No	Paper and electronic (scanned)	Yes, enhancing storage capacity and security
Fiji	Electronic Birth, Death, and Marriage Registry (eBDM)	Yes Linked as part of the Government's Data Exchange Platform		
Guam	Births: STEVE Deaths: manual	No	Births: paper Deaths: digitisation in progress	Yes, implementing a new Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS), with plans for a similar system for births
Kiribati	Online registration system	Partial, linked with the National ID system only	Paper and electronic (scanned)	Yes, to meet international standards and integrate with other ministries
Nauru	Database (Excel, Word)	No, manual only	Paper	Yes
New Zealand	LifeData, OTS and CBB Workbench	Yes, under approved data sharing agreements	Electronic (searchable) Paper records transferred to NZ Archives for preservation	Yes, but not likely to occur soon
Niue	OpenCRVS	Partial, linked with health and statistics	Paper, digitisation project moving into OpenCRVS	Rolling upgrades continuing as part of implementation
Palau	Judiciary Information System (JIS)	No	Paper and electronic	No
Papua New Guinea	Birth and national identity registry system	Partial, linked with the National ID system only		Yes, replace and upgrade hardware and software
RMI	Paper	No	Paper and electronic	Yes, as part of the Digital RMI Project (which includes a digital ID component)
Samoa	LifeData			UNDP proof of concept
Solomon Islands	Promadis DBMS	Partial, linked with the Ministry of Health system (DHIS2)	Paper and electronic (scanned)	No, new features were added in 2024
Tokelau	Database (Excel)	No	Paper and electronic	Yes, project began in 2025 to migrate records to new system
Tonga	Ministry of Justice Registration System (MOJRS)	No	Paper and electronic	Yes, migrating to OpenCRVS and MOSIP
Tuvalu	Database	No	Paper and electronic	Yes, as part of broader digital ID project
Vanuatu	RegisterVIZ – Version 4 (RV4)	Yes	Paper and electronic (scanned)	Yes, updates going live in July 2025 (RV5)
CNMI = Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; FSM = Federated States of Micronesia; RMI = Republic of the Marshall Islands				

Challenges

A significant challenge identified by participants was the need for legislative review and reform, with seven countries and territories identifying this as a critical challenge (see **Table 3**). Outdated legislation was identified as a key barrier in the implementation of digital technologies and services in the Cook Islands and Niue. Fiji, Samoa and the Solomon Islands all raised the need for legislative review to help streamline and simplify registration services and create an enabling environment for CRVS systems to operate effectively.

Data sharing was the next most common challenge, with seven countries and territories mentioning this in their presentations. Common issues included the timely transfer of information between regional/outer island registration offices and the central office, as well as improved links between different government agencies. The use of paper-based forms and manual processes to transfer information between agencies was mentioned as an issue in American Samoa, Pohnpei (Federated States of Micronesia), and Tuvalu. The Cook Islands raised the issue of manual data sharing for the compilation of reports, while Nauru mentioned the issue of discrepancies in official records between agencies due to manual systems that do not share data. This issue of ‘data silos’ was also raised by Papua New Guinea.

Other common challenges included those related to data quality and civil registration processes.

Table 3 Summary of CRVS system challenges

Country or territory	Topic/area	Additional details
American Samoa	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much of the data sharing is manual and relies on individuals to bring the documentation to the various offices
Australia, Tasmania	Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged members of the community (young, single mothers, those in complex family situations, etc.) still have lower rates of registration than others
	Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with private doctors to improve the quality and timeliness of death registration details (which are paper based)
Cook Islands	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports manually created on request
	Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplicate records
	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation is outdated and needs to be reformed to allow for the use of electronic systems/processes
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues with the reliability of census data/projections, which make it difficult to produce accurate vital statistics
Federated States of Micronesia, Pohnpei	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtaining copies of damaged birth and death certificates from the Department of Health is difficult
	Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details on birth and death certificates are being changed at the hospital level, despite not having a court order to do so
Fiji	Completeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth registration completeness has declined significantly with the end of the Parenthood Assistance Payment Program
	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision needed to simplify and streamline the registration process
Guam	Completeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The country charges a fee for the birth certificate, which may be affecting registration completeness
	Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The accuracy of birth and death certificates for legal, public health, historical and social reasons
Kiribati	Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to registration is one of the key challenges facing the country, particularly for people living on remote islands
Nauru	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many government agencies have “registered names” that are different to the official names as registered with Births, Deaths and Marriages By law, all births and deaths that occur overseas must also be registered in Nauru. This remains challenging
New Zealand	Digitalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current civil registration system is relatively stable but comprises multiple ageing systems, and it does not support modern ways of information sharing
Niue	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to update the legislation to reflect changes to core business processes that have occurred as part of implementing OpenCRVS

Palau	Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many records have incomplete or inaccurate data (especially around names) Data quality issues are leading to duplicate records, as new records are created when existing ones can't be located in the system
Papua New Guinea	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collecting agencies are legislated to operate in silos and this has created a territorial mindset over systems, processes and data
	Digitalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing systems need to be enhanced, upgraded, and migrated to cloud solutions
	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Civil Identity and Registration Act was passed in November 2024, however amendments to regulations and policies are still required
Republic of the Marshall Islands	Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to registration remains the biggest challenges, especially for people on the outer islands
	Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judges from the Capitol are required to accompany teams to legalize delayed birth registrations if there are no community court judges, which causes significant barriers to registration While legislation authorises the Ministry of Cultural and Internal Affairs as the authority to record and certify vital events, in practice, birth records from the Ministry of Health and Human Services are generally used
Samoa	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BDM Act of 2022 needs updating to simplify procedures and clarify responsibilities
Solomon Islands	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current outdated Act fails to create an enabling environment that would allow the civil registration office to deliver services and produce accurate vital statistics Insufficient resources and funding for day-to-day operations of the system
Tokelau	Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inaccurate data recorded on many of the records and certificates
	Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As there has been no/limited digitisation of records, older records have degraded over time, while others were destroyed during disasters
Tonga	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulties in linking records across vital events (births, deaths, marriages)
Tuvalu	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National archives hold the records of all births, deaths and marriages before independence, which is difficult to access Notifications are brought by the general public to the general registry office, as there is no coherent system for sharing data
Vanuatu	Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant challenge with duplicate records
	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently a fee for changing names
	Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to review roles between civil registration and citizenship office, to avoid duplicate registrations/identities

Special sessions

Ensuring inclusive and resilient CRVS systems

Chole Harvey (ESCAP) began her session with an update on progress towards targets in the CRVS Decade, which show improvement in several key areas, including birth and death registration within one year, the issuance of death certificates, and the production of vital statistics reports (see **Figure 1**). Areas with limited improvement include the issuance of birth certificates, recording of causes of death, and reduction in ill-defined causes of death.

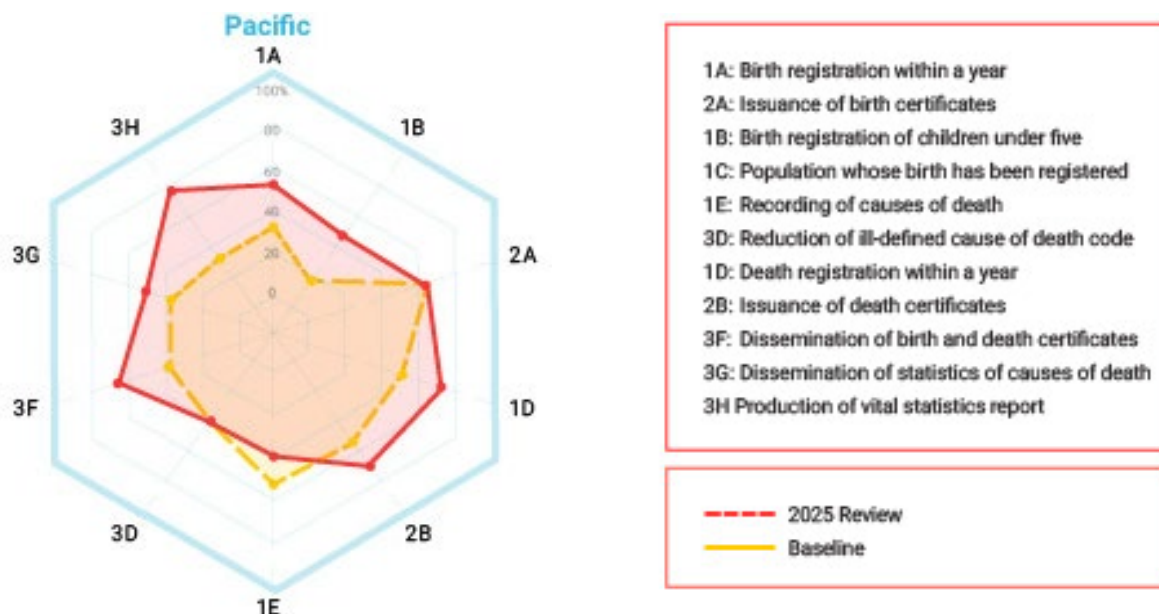


Figure 1: Preliminary results from the 2025 CRVS Decade Review, Pacific Island Countries and Territories

As part of preparations for the upcoming Third Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Steering Group recommended introducing the themes of [resilience and inclusivity](#) during their tenth planning meeting, held in May 2024. These themes are intended to help ensure the realization of all goals and targets under the Regional Action Framework for a proposed extension to the CRVS Decade to 2030. Two official papers are being drafted for the Third Ministerial Conference on inclusivity and resilience in CRVS, to conceptualise these themes and provide guiding principles on their integration into CRVS improvement efforts across Asia and the Pacific. As explained during the session, a resilient CRVS system should:

- Continuously maintain registration services.
- Be able to recover from external factors back to its full capacity.
- Adapt and respond to the evolving needs of the populations it serves.
- Take anticipatory action and address ongoing threats or potential risks.

The second part of the session, inclusivity in the context of CRVS, emphasised that universal registration means ensuring every individual's vital events are recorded, granting them legal identity and inclusion in vital statistics, regardless of their background, characteristics, or circumstances, ensuring their records are included in vital statistics, and realizing their legal identity. One of the tools for assessing inclusivity – an inequality assessment – was introduced, along with experiences from Fiji and Samoa. Key findings from Fiji's assessment included the significant difference in birth registration completeness by ethnicity, while in Samoa, birth registration completeness was shown to be affected by geographical area and mother's age.

[CRVS and migration](#)

The [second special session](#) was facilitated by Imogen Nicholls and Sera Raisulu (IOM). With a mission to “serve migrants, our member states, and our work force through a people-focussed, data-driven, strategic approach that allows us to deliver on the promise of migration, while supporting the world's most vulnerable people”, 2025 was the first year that IOM participated in a PCRN meeting, in recognition of the important role migration plays in the region. The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility was introduced, a key regional tool designed to support coordinated, rights-based, and comprehensive responses to climate mobilities, while prioritising the right to stay in place.

The Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) was also introduced. Developed by IOM as a comprehensive border management information system, MIDAS collects, processes, stores and analyses

traveller information collected at borders, which is shared in real-time across the border crossing network. Implemented in Fiji, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu, MIDAS facilitates effective and efficient border management, supports evidence-based policy making on migration, and fosters cross-border e-governance. The possibility of linkages between CRVS systems and MIDAS was discussed, with several potential benefits raised, including the ability to share information on off-island vital events and more accurate population data for the production of vital statistics.

Regional approaches to capacity building

System digitisation and digitalisation

Over the last two decades, the digitisation and digitalisation of civil registration and identity management systems has paved the way for a more enabling environment to collect and store identity data using a coherent electronic database architecture. These advancements have also been accompanied by an increasing ability to share data. The digitisation of identity systems has resulted in significant changes to the design of registration business processes, including how registered vital events can be defined, configured, created, stored, shared, and processed.

Digital processing of identity data has further enabled the creation of systems with an improved efficiency for data processing and sharing between different components of a system, including with other government systems. Digitisation, in addition to the development of new tools, offers an improved means to integrate different systems into one seamless system that reinforces a holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics, and identity management, including the possibility to share information with functional registers.⁴ In recent years, many countries in the Pacific have invested significant resources to digitise their civil registration and legal identity systems, and more efforts are currently in process or underway.

Following an introductory session on [core principles and concepts](#) by Nicola Richards (SPC), Annina Wersun (OpenCRVS) spoke about the [key objectives of digitisation for civil registration](#), why projects often fail, and how to design effective digital civil registration services. Darren Tohovaka from the Births, Deaths and Marriages Office in Niue spoke about their experiences in implementing OpenCRVS. The country followed a phased approach to implementation, with initial modules for births and deaths launched in 2023, and marriages and adoptions to come later. The system is allowing for real-time data sharing between registration officers and the statistics agency, making services faster and easier for clients. Lessons learned include the need for local champions to drive changes in the country, along with ensuring the system was adapted to the context of the country and its needs – primarily, being simple and cost-effective.

Wajira Wanigasekera (VS One World) provided an update on [Tonga's digital identity solution](#), which is planning to go live in May 2025. Plans are underway to develop a digital registration platform, which aims to incorporate advanced features for efficient and secure data exchange. A notable aspect of the proposed system is the use of standards to streamline data communication within the system and with external entities. The platform may include a feature for generating and assigning unique identifier numbers to individuals, which will be crucial in developing accurate and distinct profiles for all Tongan citizens and foreign residents, and linking an individual's civil registration documents, such as birth, death, and marriage records.

A joint presentation on the [status of integration](#) between the health (DHIS2) and civil registration (Promadis) systems in the Solomon Islands was given by Rebecca Manelase and Rodrick Kidoe. As of March

⁴ Functional registers are established to ensure efficient service delivery as part of government responsibilities under a specific function. Examples include electoral roles and health insurance registers. Foundational registers, such as CRVS, are created to serve as authoritative sources of legal identity information for the whole population, for a variety of public and private sector uses.

2025, integration activities are in their final stages, with comprehensive system tests for data exchange successfully completed. Standard operating procedures are being developed to provide clear and detailed instructions on key operational procedures, with the new CRVS legislation establishing clear guidelines for data entry processes. Moving forward, birth registration data will be entered directly into the Promadis system by civil registration officers, while death registration data will be entered into the DHIS2 system by health staff.

Two final presentations were given by UNDP on the digital solutions being implemented in [Vanuatu](#) and Samoa. The Vanuatu Electoral Environmental Project (VEEP), a joint initiative between the Vanuatu Electoral Office and Civil Registration and Identity management Office, with the support of UNDP, began in 2019 with the aim of improving the integrity of the voter registry by linking it with the civil register and establishing a system of legal identify for every citizen of Vanuatu. The current system (RV5) is based on digital civil registration for births, deaths, marriages, adoptions and identity, including web-based and mobile access for users, along with public interfaces for secure data exchange. In Samoa, UNDP is working to create an open-source CRVS system, which will establish a single source of truth where all data is stored and managed at a central repository. The system will be linked between key agencies, including health, education, justice and social services, with the potential for real-time data transfer between CRVS stakeholders.

The session concluded with a panel discussion with Chris Fincham (Axiell), Wajira Wanigasekara (VS One World), Emily Porrello (Beyond Essential Solutions) and Lai Teik Kin (Nova Hub) chaired by Jeff Montgomery (SPC). The panel began with a discussion on common challenges when implementing digital health solutions. These were varied and included the fact that opportunities for digitisation might not exist, especially when other systems within the wider CRVS ecosystem may need enhancement for digital solutions to work. Other challenges include difficulties in securing the required technical expertise, along with ensuring adequate resourcing for the whole project (in terms of time, and financial and human resources, among others). In looking to the future, panellists mentioned several developing areas, including electronic medical records and opportunities for linking with civil registration; moving on-premises databases to cloud-based ones; links with digital identity and sharing data across jurisdictions; and challenges and opportunities for integrating new systems with historical or legacy databases.

[Cause of death reporting](#)

During this session, Kelesita Mataitoga (SPC) and Lauren Moran (ABS) presented on the regional approach to building capacity in [cause of death reporting](#). The reliability of mortality data generated from CRVS systems remains a fundamental challenge for most countries in the Pacific, despite considerable effort and investment from development partners over many years, including:

- training workshops in coding, data analysis, and statistics reporting
- delivery of relevant resources including reference materials and operational manuals
- email exchanges and online consultations
- data quality assessments, and
- feasibility assessment and implementation of automated coding tools, including in Fiji.

The idea of implementing a different, more sustainable approach to strengthening cause of death reporting has been discussed for over 10 years, and during the November 2023 meeting of Pacific Heads of Planning and Statistics, it was agreed to promote the concept of regional coding support. The concept was piloted during 2024, between Fiji (as the regional coder), Tonga and Tuvalu, using the following structure:

- **Regional Support Team.** Technical experts from SPC and ABS.
- **Medical Records Officers (MROs).** Staff from Tonga and Tuvalu that are responsible for the preparation of records for coding.

- **Regional Coding Officers (RCOs).** Staff from Fiji who receive records from Tonga and Tuvalu and use the Iris automated coding tool to code them.
- **IT Support.** Staff from Tonga, Tuvalu and Fiji who assist the MROs and RCOs.
- **Focal Points.** Country and SPC staff who act as liaison points, when necessary, under the terms of the letter of agreement.

Initial feedback was positive, with noticeable improvements in the quality of coded data for the participating countries (**Table 4**). Moving forward, if the concept is to be sustained and adopted more broadly, additional support will be required for the regional coding team, including upgrading the technology or systems used, ensuring sufficient resources, assistance with the maintenance of the Iris software, and the option of sharing this responsibility among different countries.

Table 4 Death records received and coded as part of the pilot

Metric	Tonga (%)	Tuvalu (%)
Causes of death coded by Iris	141 (39.0)	18 (25.0)
Causes of death not coded by Iris (rejected)	219 (60.5)	54 (75.0)
Not processed in Iris	2 (0.5)	0 (0.0)
Total number of death records submitted	362 (100.0)	72 (100.0)

Looking to the future

Priorities and requests for support

On the last day of the meeting, two short prioritisation exercises were carried out. The first raised four different areas for support, and asked each country to select the priority between improvements in:

- Registration coverage or completeness.
- Medical certification or mortality coding.
- Improving registration forms or legal identity documents (such as birth certificates).
- Focussing on policies and legislation or cross-agency interoperability.

Overall, 15 countries prioritised registration completeness; 13 countries priorities medical certification over mortality coding; 12 registration forms; while 12 countries said interoperability was a priority. **Table 5** provides the responses by country, for those that provided identifiable responses.

Table 5 Country prioritisation exercise one

Country or territory	Coverage or completeness	Medical certification or mortality coding	Registration forms or legal identity documents	Policies and legislation or cross-agency interoperability
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Completeness	Medical certification	Legal identity documents	Neither
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia				Policies and legislation
Fiji	Completeness	Mortality coding	Registration forms	Cross-agency interoperability
French Polynesia	Coverage	Medical certification	Legal identity documents	Interoperability
Guam	Completeness	Medical certification	Legal identity documents	Interoperability
Kiribati	Coverage	Mortality coding	Registration forms	Cross-agency interoperability

New Zealand	Completeness	Mortality coding	Registration forms	Cross-agency interoperability
Palau	Neither	Medical certification	Registration forms	Policies and legislation
Papua New Guinea	Coverage	Mortality coding	Registration forms	Cross-agency interoperability
Republic of the Marshall Islands	Coverage	Mortality coding	Registration forms	Policies and legislation
Solomon Islands	Coverage	Mortality coding		Cross-agency interoperability
Tuvalu	Completeness	Medical certification		Policies and legislation
Vanuatu	Completeness	Medical certification	Legal identity documents	Policies and legislation

The second prioritisation exercise asked country teams to select one or two critical priority areas for immediate action and support. As shown in **Table 6**, digitisation and digitalisation came through as clear priorities, with seven countries requesting support with implementing OpenCRVS specifically, four countries requesting support with policy and legislative reviews to support digitisation, two countries requesting support for the digitisation of historical archives, and one country requesting support with implementing their new CRVS system.

Table 6 Country prioritisation exercise two

Country or territory	Priority 1	Priority 2
American Samoa	Standardised forms	
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Digitisation of archives	
Australia, Tasmania	Reaching the hardest-to-reach	
Cook Islands	Policy and legislation for digitisation	
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia	CRVS coordination committee	
Fiji	Digitisation of archives	Notification system from health
Guam	New CRVS system	
Kiribati	OpenCRVS	South-South collaboration
Nauru	OpenCRVS	
New Zealand	OpenCRVS	
Niue	Policy and legislation for digitisation	Human resources
Palau	Policy and legislation for digitisation	Digitisation of archives
Papua New Guinea	Policy and legislation for digitisation	
Republic of the Marshall Islands	OpenCRVS	Policy and legislation for digitisation
Samoa	OpenCRVS	
Solomon Islands	Policy and legislation	
Tokelau	Registration processes	
Tonga	OpenCRVS	
Tuvalu	OpenCRVS	Policy and legislation for digitisation
Vanuatu	Data cleaning and de-duplication	

The future of PCRN

As part of the final sessions, Jeff Montgomery (SPC) presented on the [Action Plan for Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics](#), highlighting the four key areas of SPC support in the coming years:

1. Strengthening civil registration processes, including supporting process mapping, action planning, business case development, and legislation reviews.

2. Digitising birth and death records, with a focus on both historical records and new records (moving forward).
3. Improving data quality, with a particular focus on mortality data and causes of death, including supporting training for doctors on medical certification of cause of death and regional approaches to mortality coding.
4. Ensuring coordination between partners, including supporting regional approaches.

Chloe Harvey (ESCAP) provided an overview of tools available to support civil registrars, which include several guidance documents on how to conduct business process improvements, inequality assessments and legal reviews; materials on how to produce vital statistics reports and budget advocacy documents; training resources on medical certification and data quality assessments; along with the CRVS Applied Research and Training Initiative, to support implementation research. Following this, Chloe also presented on the upcoming CRVS Ministerial Conference being held in June 2025, in Bangkok.

The meeting concluded with strong support from all country participants that PCRN should continue, with participants reflecting on the important role of the network in sharing information about what is happening at the regional level, fostering relationships with donors, providing support to new civil registrars, and building trust among participating countries and partners. Based on the success of hosting joint events for civil registrars and health counterparts, the idea of hosting joint events with national statistical offices was also put forward as a potential for future meetings.

The meeting was closed by the acting Registrar General of Fiji, Makereta Sotutu with participants from Fiji joining her in a farewell song.