

**Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) related Steering Committee**

Chairperson: M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Cabinet Secretary

Date and time: 27 August 2015, 05:00 pm

Place: Cabinet Room, Building No. 01, Cabinet Division,  
Bangladesh Secretariat.

Participants: Annexure-01.

The Chairperson opened the meeting by welcoming the members of and special invitees at the Steering Committee (SC) set up for coordinating and guiding the initiatives of different agencies of the Government toward implementation of such a robust CRVS system in Bangladesh. In the context of inclusion of some new members in the SC, the Chair asked the Policy Advisor, Access to Information (a2i) Programme, Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to provide a run-down of the achievements since last meeting along with the development with regard to CRVS elsewhere.

02. In his comprehensive presentation (the full presentation is attached as the Annexure-02), the Policy Advisor, a2i delineated about CRVS, explained the progress made on the decisions of the 1<sup>st</sup> SC meeting, and presented issues that need decisions from the SC. It was mentioned in the presentation that CRVS, as far as the global discourse and understanding is concerned, is a combination of two sets of functions of the Government i.e. Civil Registration (CR) and Vital Statistics (VS). For Bangladesh, linking CRVS to the service delivery system is a third important consideration to complete the triangular link. Globally, CRVS has the goal 'Get Everyone in the Picture' and is now recognized as a matter of human dignity. It stipulates that no one should be without a legal identity; remain invisible to policymakers; and fall between the cracks of incomplete official data. It was also appreciated that the Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project of the Election Commission Secretariat (ECS) has started using the new 10-digit identification number for citizens as was proposed by the CRVS Secretariat.

03. Joining the discussion, the members and invitees highly appreciated the presentation, particularly thanking the presenter, for rich information and noted with thanks the marked progresses made in a very short period. The Chair also thanked and appreciated the CRVS team for making the progresses despite the challenges of funds, human resources and lack of a formal structure of the CRVS secretariat. The Secretary, PMO proposed to co-opt the Secretary, Post and Telecommunications Division (PTD) on the SC, considering the critical role of telecommunications and internet in CRVS system. The Secretary, ECS assured all concerned of sharing resources from National ID (NID) database highlighting its high reliability and authenticity. The possibility of using community health and family planning

workers for collection of data about birth also came up in the discussion. The concept was noted by the members present. It was observed that this system could establish a link between the Union Parishad (UP)s and the NID Wing (NIDW) of the ECS and help ensure birth registration within 45 days of birth as stipulated in the relevant Act. Additional Director General (P&D) of Health Services posited that a common ID number, like NID, would also be required for collecting data for Shared Health Record (SHR), the programme which would start on September 2015. However, he also mentioned that at present the NID is available only for the citizen of 18 years and above. Therefore, he proposed a unique health ID, for the time being, and sought recognition of the Health ID (HID) until the NID is made available for all citizens. With the permission of the Chair, the Additional Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Division drew attention of the SC on three issues in the process of implementing CRVS: (a) taking stock of the existing hardware and software while designing and implementing the CRVS project; (b) the citizens' perspective and also their convenience in use should be taken into consideration; and (c) some more piloting to the level of citizens. The Chair took note of the suggestions.


04. Regarding the designing of the full-fledged CRVS systems and thereafter formulating the project proposal, it was discussed that the CRVS Secretariat should go for further piloting to make final decisions on the design, especially on the use of biometrics. It was also discussed that since CRVS is a home-grown model and is very crucial for realizing Bangladesh's goal of becoming a high income country by 2041, funding of the intended CRVS project should not be hinged on the development partners' commitment. It was also observed that ensuring significant funding from the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) would give us much more control and required flexibility in implementing the project in a need-based, customized way. At the same time, it was agreed that the CRVS Secretariat should continue to explore other sources of funds for the project. It was also discussed that the core activities and components could be funded by GoB while the peripheral components like training, expert support etc. could be funded by the development partners, so as to shield the Government's objectives from the policy tinkering by any development partner.

05. After elaborate discussions, the **following decisions were made** unanimously:

- a) For better implementation of the CRVS system in Bangladesh, Secretaries of the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ministry of Home Affairs, Law and Justice Division, Post and Telecommunications Division; Head of the CRVS Secretariat; Director of the NID Wing and the Project Director Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services Project, Election Commission Secretariat; and the Project Director of the Access to Information Programme will be co-opted in the Steering Committee. A revised notification of the Steering Committee will be circulated immediately;
- b) The Directorate of Primary Education and all other Education Boards will be instructed through concerned Ministries to complete technology integration between primary and secondary education databases;
- c) The Directorate General of Health Services will be instructed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to notify the Birth and Death Registration Project about the cases of birth and death. The Birth and Death Registration Project, in turn, should

- notify the Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services Project to update the National ID database for seamless integration across these three large citizens' databases. Necessary agreements/MoUs amongst Directorate General of Health Services, Birth and Death Registration Project and the Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services Project may be signed in this regard;
- d) The CRVS Secretariat will implement further piloting and test on several biometric options for selection of the most appropriate biometric, and full understanding of the future CRVS system. The pilot will incorporate madrassas including Qawmi Madrassas;
  - e) Agencies will continue data collection even in case of non-availability of the expected ID (e.g. National ID or Birth Registration Number) ascribing temporary ID till the expected Unique ID is assigned, in consultation with the Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services Project;
  - f) The Directorate General of Health Services will enhance capacity and capability for recording cause(s) of death in line with the CRVS;
  - g) The CRVS Secretariat will prepare a concept note or project proposal, as the case may be, through consultation and cooperation with the ministries and departments along with relevant stakeholders;
  - h) The CRVS Secretariat will be entrusted to work with Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education; all Education Boards, Ministry of Education; Directorate General of Health Services and Directorate General of Family Planning, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Birth and Death Registration Project, Local Government Division; Law and Justice Division; Directorate of Immigration and Passport, Ministry of Home Affairs; Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services Project, Election Commission Secretariat; and Access to Information Programme, Prime Minister's Office for realizing the objectives of the project;
  - i) The CRVS Secretariat will issue data interoperability standards to ensure information sharing amongst the above-mentioned government agencies in coherence with the National Enterprise Architecture of the Bangladesh Computer Council, Information Communication Technology Division;
  - j) The Election Commission Secretariat will waive fees for National ID verification and data sharing during the CRVS piloting period; and
  - k) The CRVS Secretariat will explore an organogram for the Secretariat including a permanent office space while working for registering a separate domain for instance crvs.gov.bd and develop a website.

06. The Chairperson concluded the meeting by thanking all for their valuable contribution.

  
03/9/2015

M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan  
Cabinet Secretary

And

Convener, CRVS related Steering Committee