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for CRVS Systems

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# SNAPSHOT

OF CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEMS OF

# GUINEA



ECA

## Program Information

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Housed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems is a global knowledge and resource hub that actively supports national efforts to develop, strengthen, and scale CRVS systems. It collaborates with organizations and experts to broker access to information and expertise, including global standards, tools, research evidence, and relevant good practice.

The Centre of Excellence was established with funding from Global Affairs Canada and IDRC and contributes directly to the work of the Global Financing Facility, a key financing platform of the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and adolescents' health.

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Part of Canada's foreign affairs and development efforts, the IDRC invests in knowledge, innovation and solutions to improve the lives of people in the developing world. IDRC works with many stakeholders including civil society organizations, think tanks, regional organizations and government departments in the developing world to promote growth, reduce poverty, and drive large-scale positive change.

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## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief introduction to the civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems in Guinea. The information was collected through a questionnaire completed by the National Directorate for Civil Registration in February 2019 and supplemented by a desk review of available documents. The report presents country background, selected indicators relevant for CRVS improvement processes, stakeholders' activities as well as resources available and needed to strengthen CRVS systems, coordination, among others.

### The seven administrative regions of Guinea



*Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.*

## Brief country profile

Guinea is a country in West Africa with a total surface area of 245,836<sup>1</sup> square kilometres. It is bordered by Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Atlantic Ocean.

- Capital city: Conakry
- Official working languages: French
- Ministry responsible for civil registration: Ministère de l'Administration du Territoire et de la Décentralisation
- Civil registration agency: National Directorate for Civil Registration (Direction Nationale d'État Civil)
- National statistical office: Institut National de la Statistique

With a population growth of 2.8 percent per year, the Guinean population is estimated at about 13.1 million inhabitants in 2018.<sup>2</sup>

Guinea is subdivided into seven administrative regions: Boké, Faranah, Kankan, Kindia, Labé, Mamou and N'Zérékoré. The capital city, Conakry, is a special zone – Governorate of Conakry. The regions are administratively decentralized. Each administrative region is sub-divided into a second administrative level called prefectures. The prefectures are again sub-divided into sub-prefectures or communes. Currently, there are 33 prefectures; 38 urban communes, including 5 in Conakry, and 302 rural communes.

## CRVS dimensions

### Births

Completeness of birth registration <sup>3</sup>	Not available
Children under 5 years of age whose births were reported as registered	74.6% (2016) <sup>4</sup>
Births attended by skilled health personnel	62.7% (2016) <sup>4</sup>
Women aged 15-49 who received antenatal care from a skilled provider	84.3% (2016) <sup>4</sup>
DPT1 immunization coverage among 1-year-olds <sup>5</sup>	65% (2016) <sup>6</sup>
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	36 (2016) <sup>6</sup>
Total fertility rate (live births per woman)	4.9 (2016) <sup>6</sup>
Adolescent fertility rate (per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 years)	137.4 (2016) <sup>7</sup>
Population under age 15	42.3% (2017) <sup>8</sup>

### Deaths

Completeness of death registration	Not available
Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)	9 (2016) <sup>6</sup>
Infant mortality rate (probability of dying by age 1 per 1,000 live births)	56 (2017) <sup>9</sup>
Under five mortality rate (probability of dying by age 5 per 1,000 live births)	86 (2017) <sup>9</sup>
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	679 (2015) <sup>10</sup>

### Marriages and divorces

Marriage registration rate	Not available
Women aged 20-24 first married or in union before age 15	21% (2017) <sup>6</sup>
Women aged 20-24 first married or in union before age 18	52% (2017) <sup>6</sup>
Divorce registration rate	Not available

### Vital statistics including causes of death data

Compilation and dissemination of civil registration-based statistics	Not available
Medically certified causes of death data	Not available

## Civil registration system

### Legislative framework

In Guinea, the civil registration system is based on several legal instruments that govern its organization and functioning. These include the Civil Code of 1998,<sup>11</sup> the Children's Code of 2008<sup>12</sup> and the Communities Code. The Civil Code elaborates the procedures for the registration of births, deaths, marriages, divorces and the nullity of the marriages. It also provides the conditions and procedures for the correction of civil status records. The Code of Local Government in the Republic of Guinea defines the powers of local authorities and recognizes the civil status of citizens as an entitlement of the community. It also specifies the conditions for exercising the function of registrar of civil status, the delegation of power, etc. The Children's Code recognizes the importance of birth registration as a fundamental right of the child and makes it mandatory.

### Management, organization and operations

#### *National CRVS systems coordination mechanisms*

In 2017, a high-level coordination platform called the Intersectoral Coordination for the Reform and Modernization of Civil Status (CIRMEC) was set up under the Prime Minister's Office through order number 2017/1335/PRIMATURE/CAB/2017. Its aim was to set up a unified framework for consultation, guidance, coordination and decision-making in this area. The mission of CIRMEC was to define the strategic and operational orientations within the framework of the program of reform and modernization of the civil registration system in Guinea.

CIRMEC generally ensures the coordination of all the activities planned in the field of civil registration. Its responsibilities include to: coordinate the preparation and validation of the strategy plan, national reform and modernization of civil registration; ensure the coherence and the good implementation of the program of reform and modernization of civil registration; validate action plans, budgeted annual work, reports, monitoring and evaluation; contribute to necessary arbitrations and possible adjustments; and promote intersectoral interoperability.

This coordination is implemented through the Intersectoral Coordination for the Reform and Modernization of Civil Status: Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Educations, Ministry of Justice, Minister of Foreign Affairs, financial technical partners, and non-governmental organizations.

#### *Administration level registration centres*

In Guinea, the organization of the civil registration system follows the country's decentralized administrative structure. The civil registration centres are run by the communes (municipalities). There are 348 civil registration centres including 6 secondary centres created by order of the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization on the proposal of the mayors of the beneficiary communes. The mayor is the official authority in charge of registering all vital events, however, he or she could delegate the responsibility to one or more of the deputies, members of the local council, or agents. On civil registration matters, the mayor reports to the National Directorate for Civil Registration.

### *Accessibility of civil registration services*

One of the problems facing the population, especially in rural areas, is the accessibility of vital registration centres which are located in the administrative offices of the communes. To circumvent this difficulty, a village notebook is kept at the level of the Chief of Sector of the locality. The notebook allows the recording of the vital events that occurred in the locality and it is then forwarded to the head of the rural Commune, who serves as an official registrar. It is estimated that some reporting centres are more than 5 kilometres from the population settlement areas.

### *Registration of vital events*

The registration of births is free in Guinea. However, a fee is levied on the registration of deaths, marriages and divorces. Most of the births and deaths that occur in health centres are reported and registered in the communes. Vital events occurring at home are reported in the village notebook.

**Table 1: Timely and delayed registration of vital events**

Vital events	Time for registering an event	Delayed registrations
Birth	Within 6 months; to the civil registrar of the place of birth. For births occurring outside the municipality perimeter or in a foreign country, this period shall be extended to 8 months (Article 157: Children's Code, 2008). <sup>12</sup>	Where a birth has not been declared within the statutory period, the civil registrar may only report it in the registers by virtue of a judgment rendered by the competent court of the prefecture where the child was born, and a summary mention will be made in the margin on the date of birth (Article 158: Children's Code, 2008).
Death	3 days	After this date, the civil registrar cannot transcribe on the registers the declaration of death without judgment of the competent court of the place where the death occurred. If this place is unknown or if it is impossible to appeal to the court of the place of death, the competent court will be that of the plaintiff's residence. (Article 224: Civil Code 1998). <sup>11</sup>
Marriage	Immediately; 3 months for citizens married abroad	
Divorce		Not mentioned in the Civil Code, 1998.

**Table 2: Direct costs associated with issuance of vital events registration and certificates**

Vital event	Fee for registration		Cost of registration	Remarks
	Yes	No		
Birth		X		
Marriage	X			The celebration of marriages before a civil registrar is compulsory for all citizens of the Republic (Article 201: Civil Code 1998). <sup>11</sup> Registration and certification are done together.
Divorce	X			No information on cost of registration
Death	X			No information on cost of registration
	Fee for certificates			
	Yes	No		
Birth		X		
Marriage	X		Not available	Communes fix the fee for marriage certificate by deliberation of the local council.
Divorce	X		Not available	Competent authorities fix the price.
Death	X		Not available	Communes fix the fee for death certificate by deliberation of the local council.

***Backlog of unregistered births***

Like most African countries, a backlog of unregistered births exists in Guinea. It is estimated that the backlog of unregistered persons could be more than 25 percent.<sup>4</sup> There have been some efforts by UNICEF, working with government,

to reduce the number of unregistered children under 5 years of age. In this context, in 2017, 85,580 children aged 0 to 6 months benefitted from current birth registration, while 28,733 children who were older than six months benefited from delayed birth registration.<sup>13</sup>



## Interface with other sectors and operations

Several government institutions currently participate in the functioning of the civil registration system. These are:

- **Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization:** The ministry ensures the supervision of the communes. In this capacity, the ministry oversees, among other things, material management, recruitment and the training of the personnel of the civil registration offices, and the creation of secondary civil registration centres.
- **Ministry of Justice:** The courts confer authenticity to the civil registration records and ensure the strict application of the texts in force in the civil registration act; courts must open and close the registers; courts play role in the late registration of vital events through the issuing of judgments, among others. One register is kept at the Tribunal, also.
- **Ministry of Health:** Health facilities are an essential link in the birth and death registration process. They provide declaration for the occurrence of birth or death occurring in health facilities. They also provide certificate of the occurrence of death for deaths that happened in the communities. Currently, the level of collaboration with civil registration offices is very weak.
- **National Institute of Statistics:** The Institute is responsible for the compilation and dissemination of vital statistics. There is some linkage between the Institute and the civil registration office, but it is at a low level.
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** The ministry is responsible for the registration of vital events of Guineans residing abroad through its diplomatic missions or consular offices.

## Vital statistics system

### Vital statistics

In Guinea, some civil registration-based vital statistics are being produced but are not widely disseminated. These vital statistics, at this stage, are limited to administrative purposes.

In the absence of widely usable vital statistics from the civil registration system, data is generated using indirect methods obtained from population censuses and demographic surveys. The third population and housing census of Guinea, conducted in 2014, included a question on birth registration and certificate retention and published the results in the monograph on children and the youth.<sup>14</sup>

### Causes of death

Information on causes of death is not collected through the vital registration system. There is no plan to do so at this stage.

## Digitization

### Computerization

Civil registration and vital statistics systems in the Republic of Guinea are currently paper-based. The government is in the process of modernizing its systems with the support of the European Union and UNICEF. In 2017, a pilot phase on the modernization of civil registration system was implemented in the N'zerekore region.

Currently, computers are used in the registration process of vital events in some of the civil status centres of the communes. The computers are standalone machines and hence records stored locally are not linked to a central database at the National Directorate of Civil Registration. There are about forty additional civil registration centres in the process of acquiring computers for registration activities. There is a plan to provide these centres with local servers for the backup of recorded data and with external media (hard drive, USB sticks) in the near future. This approach would facilitate the transfer of data to National Directorate of Civil Registration.

The Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCAH) Investment case for Guinea includes support for the District Health Information System and the civil registration and vital statistics systems improvement strategy for the period 2018 to 2024.<sup>15</sup>

### Mobile technology application

In 2017, an Open Source platform called RapidPro was implemented in more than 400 health centres in Guinea, with the support of UNICEF, to provide data on maternal and child mortality as they happen and had beneficial results for the registration of events.<sup>13</sup> The use of RapidPro is not at the desired level at this stage because of technical and resource problems.

### *Sample registration forms*

Sample registration forms were not available on line.



## Improvement initiatives and external support

### Improvement plans and budget

#### *Strategic plan*

A Civil Registration Reform and Modernization Strategy: 2018–2022 was developed. It is awaiting validation and approval by the competent government authorities. According to the National Directorate for Civil Registration, the estimated budget for the 5-year period was US Dollars 25,519,300.

#### *Budgetary allocations and requirements*

Information was not available.

#### *Activities identified in the current national plan as high priorities*

Information was not available as a strategic plan for the improvement of CRVS systems is not validated.

### Support from development partners

Organizations	Kind of support
European Union	Computerization; training; sensitization
Italian Development Cooperation	Training, computerization
UNICEF	Financial technical support, equipment and materials
World Bank / Global Financing Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link DHIS2 with the CRVS system;</li> <li>• Support integration of cause of death into the CRVS system;</li> <li>• Redesign of quality and security forms and registers;</li> <li>• Training and capacity building;</li> <li>• Identify other investments from the current CRVS assessment</li> </ul>
Plan International	Technical and material support

## Proposals to improve coordination

Coordination is a key element in the national CRVS systems landscape. The following suggestions aim to improve national stakeholders and development partners working arrangements.

### *National CRVS stakeholders*

No proposal was provided by the government agency responsible for civil registration on the coordination of national CRVS stakeholders.

### *National institutes and development partners*

- a. Existing coordination mechanisms are not functional. They need to be reactivated.
- b. The 5-year CRVS improvement strategic plan needs additional funding to the support it is getting from development partners.
- c. There is a need for better coordination of national actors and development partners to implement the 5-year CRVS improvement strategic plan.

## Resources

### Websites

- National Institute of Statistics – Institut Nationale de la Statistique: <http://www.stat-guinee.org/>
- UNICEF – Guinea: <https://data.unicef.org/country/gin/>

## Additional materials

- Government of Guinea. 2018. État-Civil – La Guinée Se Dote D'une Stratégie Nationale De Reforme Et De Modernisation. 28 March 2018. <http://www.gouvernement.gov.gn/index.php/actualites-du-pm/2784-etat-civil-la-guinee-se-dote-d-une-strategie-nationale-de-reforme-et-de-modernisation>
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## Conclusion

The fact that Guinea is determined to modernize its CRVS systems is demonstrated by the leadership provided by the President of the country.<sup>16</sup> Political leadership and will is key to the success of a CRVS improvement journey. The government of Guinea has approved the Civil Registration Reform and Modernization Strategy: 2018-2022. The support and commitment of development partners, although more is needed, is still impressive.

Civil registration and vital statistics systems require a collaborative environment, but above all, a strong national structure for the management and coordination of the civil registration system. Thus, it will be necessary to strengthen the structure that manages civil registration and the structures at the local level; create a cadre of trained registrars dedicated to the job; and reinvigorate the inter-sectoral coordination of reform and modernization of civil status; among others.



## Endnotes

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- 2 United Nations. 2017. *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Volume I: Comprehensive Tables*. Population Division. [https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2017\\_Volume-I-Comprehensive-Tables.pdf](https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2017_Volume-I-Comprehensive-Tables.pdf)
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