

**Towards sustainable vital  
events registration  
and vital statistics  
systems of  
Ethiopia:**

***Strategy and Action Plan***

**July 2013 – June 2018**

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## FOREWARD

Vital events (or civil) registration has important uses for individuals, societies and the Government. For individuals, copies of registration records can be used as legal documents for evidentiary purposes. Information compiled from registration records are needed for administrative applications such as public health programmes and the electoral roll. It also serves as the starting point for a number of operational programmes, particularly in family planning, medical research, maternal and child care programmes, historical demography, genetic studies and so forth. The establishment of the vital events registration system is in-line with the Growth and Transformation Plan.

Many developing countries which have some form of vital events registrations system are currently struggling with maintaining or improving it. One of the main reasons for this challenge is outdated or inadequate civil registration law inherited from colonial periods. Ethiopia is starting to build civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems by anchoring it in an enabling, comprehensive and compulsory legislation published in August 2012.

His Excellency Mr. Birhan Hailu, the Minister of Justice, championed the initiative related to the establishment of CRVS systems in Ethiopia, with a close collaboration of Ms. Samia Zakaria, Director-General of the Central Statistical Agency (CSA). Mr. Birhan Hailu oversaw the drafting and subsequent approval of the national law on vital events registration. The main activities undertaken during the pre-preparation for implementation of CRVS phase was the formation of a multi-sectoral task force, a technical committee and a temporary secretariat housed in the Ministry of Justice, to start the ball rolling until the national and regional vital events registration organs are formed and formally begin operations.

The work done so far has benefitted from current continental and international CRVS initiatives. It is interesting to note that as Ethiopia is taking concrete measures to establish CRVS systems, there is a general awakening in Africa and other regions of the World to

the importance of such well functioning systems as source of legal documents to individuals and the vital statistics derived from it to the public and decision-makers. The most important initiative in this direction is the establishment of the standing Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration in August 2011. The Ministers meet every two years to deliberate on improvement of CRVS systems in the continent. Ethiopia, as the first host of the Conference, has played a major role in this initiative coordinated and led by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank and the African Union. Mr. Birhan Hailu was the first Chairman of the Conference, and served in this capacity until the second Conference held in September, 2012.

Finally, we are very grateful to many of the development partners who have started supporting and those who have expressed willingness to provide support to this important initiative. We would like to express our appreciation to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for providing the service of an international consultant to prepare this document.

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Minister, Ministry of Justice  
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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ACS</b>	African Centre for Statistics
<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>APAI-CRVS</b>	Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
<b>ASSD</b>	Africa Symposium on Statistical Development
<b>AUC</b>	African Union Commission
<b>CRVS</b>	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
<b>FDRE</b>	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MoJ</b>	Ministry of Justice
<b>MoUDC</b>	Ministry of Urban Development and Construction
<b>NICA</b>	National Identity Card Agency
<b>NSDS</b>	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
<b>RVERA</b>	Regional Vital Events Registration Agency
<b>SNNP</b>	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples
<b>TVET</b>	Teachers Vocational Education Training, Ministry of Education
<b>UNECA</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNSD</b>	United Nations Statistics Division
<b>VERA</b>	Vital Events Registration Agency (federal)
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Geography and population of Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a large country with a total surface area of almost 1.1 million square kilometers. Its topographic features range from 110 metres below sea level in the Afar Depression to the highest peak, the Ras Dashen, at 4,550 meters above sea level (CSA, 2009). The ecological zones of Ethiopia are broadly divided into five zones based on elevation, each with its own rainfall pattern and agricultural production system: highland zones, locally identified as *Wurch*, *Dega* and *Wiena Dega*; and the lowlands zones also known as *Kolla* and *Bereha*, i.e semi-arid and arid areas, respectively (CSA and IFPRI, 2011).

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa, next to Nigeria, with its population estimated at about 82 million in 2011 (MoJ and CSA, 2012). The population growth rate was 3.1 percent per annum in 1984, when the first population and housing census was conducted. Since then it had declined slightly to 2.9 percent in 1994 and 2.6 percent in 2007, according to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> censuses, respectively (CSA and ORC Macro, 2012). At the current growth rate, the population is expected to double up in about 27 years.

About 85 percent of the Ethiopian population lives in rural areas, making it one of the least urbanized countries in the world (CSA, 2010). The main occupation of most of the rural sedentary population is farming. The population in the semi-arid and arid lowlands zones is predominantly pastoralist.

## 1.2 Civil registration<sup>1</sup> and vital statistics in Ethiopia

Provisions for the registration of vital events were included in the Ethiopian Civil Code enacted in 1960 (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 1960). The 1960 Civil Code made it compulsory to register births, deaths and marriages. However, Article 3361 of the same 1960 Civil Code prohibited those articles pertaining to civil registrations coming into force until an official order was issued. The order to activate these articles never came. Thus, for several decades, municipalities of big cities and towns had been issuing certificates of births, deaths, marriages and divorces without proper registration anchored in a national law. In 2000, the Revised Family Law (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2000) was enacted. It had incorporated provisions for the registration of marriages and births. It also requested the Federal Government to issue registration law that would establish the Office of Civil Status.

In August 2012, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) issued the *Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card Proclamation No. 760/2012*, referred hereafter as the 2012 law, which is a comprehensive and compulsory law on registrations of vital events in Ethiopia (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2012a). This law repealed Articles 47 to 153 of the 1960 Civil Code, which were provisions on civil registration that had been suspended indefinitely and therefore never put to any use. The full English text of the 2012 law is given in Annex 1 for ease of reference.

A vital events registration system, which is comprehensive, continuous, and compulsory, is the main source vital statistics. As mentioned above, this system did not exist in Ethiopia because the 1960 Civil Code on vital events registration was not functional. Other administrative records in the country are not well developed to be of use for statistical purpose. In the absence of an active law which made registration mandatory, the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) resorted to collecting data on vital events through population and housing censuses and household surveys. Although in an integrated programme of data collection, these three sources should complement each other, in Ethiopia, population and housing censuses and household surveys remained to be the primary source of data on

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<sup>1</sup> The terms “civil registration” and “vital events registration” are used interchangeably in this document.

demographic, social and economic matters, and on human settlements for more than five decades.

CSA had conducted sample vital events registrations for statistical purposes from 1970s to early 1990s. A serious attempt to undertake a conventional civil registration based on international recommendations and guidelines were also attempted starting in the early 1990s. Several United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) sponsored model projects were undertaken during this period in selected lowest administrative areas of Tigray, Amhara and the State of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) regions of the country. The main weakness of this undertaking was the lack of a comprehensive legal framework which could have made registration compulsory. However, the experience and insight obtained from the model projects were useful, particularly the design and testing of registers and forms, various handbooks and guidelines. These tools and documents would need minimal revisions and updating during the preparation for the establishment of the comprehensive vital events registration system.

### **1.3 Rationale of the Strategy and Action Plan**

Vital events registration and vital statistics systems are fundamental in providing proof of identity to individuals or in generating current information about the population for policy-makers, programme managers, health service planners or demographers. Vital events registrations are primarily designed to meet legal requirements of individuals, such as documentary evidence of identity; legal status and resultant rights; proof of age and allowing access to rights based on age; establishing family relationships; enabling the legal transmission of property, inheritance, social insurance and other benefits. The administrative data generated from the vital events registration can be compiled to produce continuous vital statistics. Therefore vital events registration and vital statistics systems are important for registering of vital events; providing certificates of the occurrences of vital events to individuals; and compiling, analysing and disseminating vital statistics resulting from the registration process. The information generated from the registration records are

by-products of the established legal registration system, and hence it is a cost-effective and comprehensive means of producing vital statistics at all administrative levels.

Developing a national plan for implementing vital events registration and vital statistics systems required identifying feasible strategic areas for actions in consultations with stakeholders. The strategic areas have to be implemented within a reasonable horizon of time, in this case five years from July 2013 to June 2018 (Hamle 2005 to Sene 2010, in the Ethiopian calendar). The use of resources based on the priority actions targeted at the establishment and development of a viable vital events registration and vital statistics systems would guarantee stakeholders the benefits to be derived from such systems.

## **1.4 Concepts and definitions of terms used in the document**

This section provides international concepts and definitions of important terms used in the document in relation to vital events registration and the collection, production and dissemination of vital statistics.

### **1.4.1 Vital events**

The United Nations recommends that countries should register and collect information on the following vital events for civil registration and vital statistics purposes: birth; death; foetal death; marriage; divorce; annulment; judicial separation; adoption; legitimation (acknowledgement); and recognition (judicial declarations of paternity) (UN, 2001; p.51). The top priority vital events to be recorded are births, marriages, divorces and deaths. Not every country records all vital events recommended by the UN, although it remains to be the eventual goal. Therefore, to facilitate the establishment of the vital events registration system, priority is assigned to the list of vital events. The 2012 law assigns an order of registration priority by selecting most of the internationally recommended vital events and by dropping some which were considered less important for the time being.

The international recommended definitions for these vital events as given by the United Nations (UN, 2001; pp 10-11), along with the definitions of these events in the Ethiopian

context, if available, are given below. It should be noted that although the United Nations definitions were given for statistical purpose, civil registration offices around the world have adopted it for their purposes.

**Live Birth** is the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy, which after such separation, breathes or shows any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached; each product of such a birth is considered live born (all live-born infants should be registered and counted as such, irrespective of gestational age or whether alive or dead at the time of registration, and if they die at any time following birth they should also be registered and counted as deaths).

In the Ethiopian context, Article 4(1) of the 1960 Civil Code states that

- (1) A child shall be deemed to be viable where he lives for forty-eight hours after his birth, notwithstanding any proof to the contrary.*
- (2) A child shall be deemed to be not viable where he dies less than forty-eight hours after his birth.*
- (3) The presumption laid down in sub-art. (2) may be rebutted by proving the death of the child is due to a cause other than a deficiency in his constitution.*

There is obviously a great divergence between the national and international definition of live birth, which needs to be addressed.

**Death** is the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life at any time after live birth has taken place (postnatal cessation of vital functions without capability of resuscitation). This definition excludes foetal death.

**Marriage** is the act, ceremony or process by which the legal relationship of husband and wife is constituted. The legality of the union may be established by civil, religious or other means as recognized by the laws of each country.

**Divorce** is a final legal dissolution of a marriage, that is, that separation of husband and wife which confers on the parties the right to remarriage under, religious and/or other provisions, according to the laws of each country.

**Adoption** is the legal and voluntary taking and treating of the child of other parents as one's own, in so far as provided by the laws of each country.

**Judicial Declaration of Paternity (Recognition)** is the legal acknowledgement, either voluntarily or compulsorily, of the paternity of a child born out of wedlock.

**Acknowledgment (Legitimation)** is the formal investing of a person with the status and rights of a person born in wedlock, according to the laws of each country.

Although there are no inconsistencies between the international definitions of marriages and divorces and the ones given in the 2000 Revised Family Law of Ethiopia, this document adheres to the international concepts and definitions of vital events. Definition of death was not included in the 1960 Civil Code or in the Revised Family Law of 2000. Definition of death was not included in the 1960 Civil Code and the 2000 Revised Family Law.

Subsequent discussion of vital vents would be on birth, death, marriage and divorces, as the 2012 law treats adoption, acknowledgement, and judicial declaration of paternity as supplement events that could be included in the vital events registration system.

#### **1.4.2 Vital events registration**

The United Nations defines vital events or civil registration as “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 in each country” (UN, 2001; p 50).

#### **1.4.3 Vital events registration method**

The vital events registration method is the procedure followed in recording the basic information on the occurrence of vital events and their characteristics happening to the population of a country, or area, within a specified time period, upon which vital records with legal value are prepared and vital statistics are based (UN, 2001).

#### **1.4.4 Vital events registration system**

A vital events registration system refers to the administrative, legal, institutional framework, technical settings required to perform the registration functions throughout the country, taking into account cultural and social circumstances particular to the country. The vital events registration system, therefore, includes both the registration method and all institutional, technical and legal settings associated with it required to perform vital events registration functions in a technical sound, coordinated and standardized manner throughout the country (UN, 2001; UN, 1998a).

#### **1.4.5 Vital statistics system**

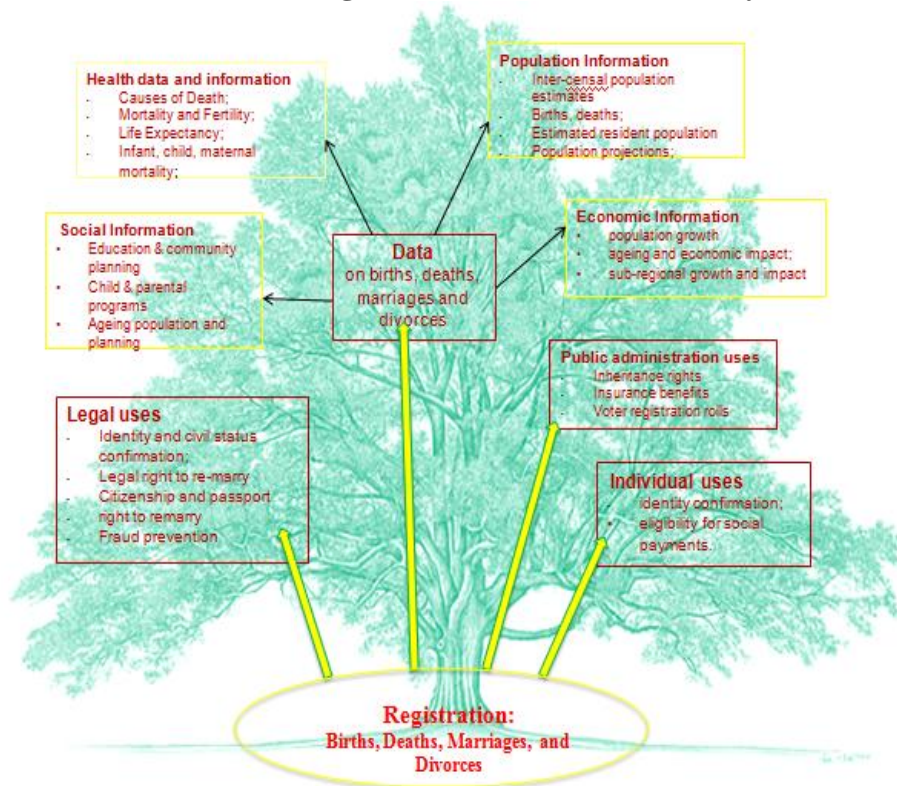
A vital statistics system is defined as the “total process of (a) collecting information by civil registration or enumeration on the frequency of occurrence of specified and defined vital events, as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the person or persons concerned, and (b) compiling, processing, analysing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form” (UN, 2001, p. 3).

## 1.5 Uses of vital events registration records and vital statistics

Comprehensive, permanent and continuous vital events registration and vital statistics systems provide a great number of significant benefits to the individual; to the nation; and to the international community. For individuals copies of registration records provide legal documents for identity, origin, date of birth, marriage or death. Registration records also provide information on the vital events, which serve important administrative and statistical purposes.

In general a well maintained vital events registration and vital statistics systems is like a healthy tree which is always green and bearing fruit continuously as depicted in Figure 1. Brief descriptions of the benefits of vital events registration records and vital statistics generated from them is given below. Detailed description of uses of the CRVS systems is given in Annex 2.

**Figure 1: Graphical representation of the benefits of well nurtured vital events registration and vital statistics systems**



*Presentation adapted from HISHUB/UQ, Working Paper No. 23.*



### **1.5.1 Legal uses**

Individuals use copies of registration records to provide legal proof of identity, origin, marriage or death. For instance, civil registration records of birth provide legal proof of identity and civil status, including name, date and place of birth, parentage, citizenship, nationality and legitimacy status. These in turn affect a wide variety of rights to which an individual may be entitled, especially those depending on age, citizenship or ancestry for inheritance, social and other purposes. Birth records can also help determine rights to insurance benefits, child custody and tax deductions. Similarly, death records provide legal evidence relevant to claims to inheritance, property, insurance benefits and the legal right of a spouse to remarry. Marriage and divorce records are essential records for family rights protection, establishing entitlements for inheritance rights, alimony and the right to remarry.

### **1.5.2 Administrative uses**

Vital events records of individuals serve many administrative and governmental purposes. Such information is valuable to the electoral system, by providing accurate up-to-date lists of persons qualified to vote at various electoral levels, such as at the regional level, *wereda* and *kebele* levels. It contributes to the accuracy of the electoral rolls, and to the efficient organization and monitoring of elections. For instance, lists of deaths can be used to purge voter registration rolls. Marriage records can be used for establishing tax deductions, proving the right to alimony in the event of divorce and establishing claim to property in the event of a partner's death. Many countries use civil registration information as the basis for a national identification system of the citizens.

### **1.5.3 Statistical uses**

Civil registration, and the vital statistics derived from this system, provides a broad and comprehensive information base for the population of a country. Programmes that involve population dynamics, the health status of the population, the protection of family rights and well-being of children benefit from a vital events registration system.

For the nation, effective registration and vital statistics systems provide essential data, rates and other quantitative measures for the accurate planning of programmes designed to promote the well-being of the citizens. The data collected from vital events registration are essential to planning for social development, including the design and implementation of public health measures, maternal and child care, family planning, social security, education, housing and economic development. At the local level, accurate information is essential for proper planning for the needs of the community, particularly for health and education facilities, as well as for housing and the labour market. Accurate and comprehensive vital statistics generated from civil registration provide for comparison and evaluation of differences among regions, between zones and *weredas* within a region, and at the international level between countries.

#### **1.5.4 Health statistics**

Death records are of particular importance in public health, for identifying the magnitude and distribution of major disease problems. Data from these records can be used for epidemiological studies. Cause of death information is essential for medical research into such major causes of death as cancer and heart disease.

### **1.6 The strategy and action plan document preparation process**

This document was developed with the objective of producing a prioritized strategy and action plan that would serve as the basis for the implementation of the 2012 law. The process of preparation of this document started with the terms of reference provided by UNFPA, the funding agency. The main activities undertaken were:

#### **1.6.1 Literature review**

Prior to the preparation of the strategy, the following activities were undertaken:

- (a) Reviewing past activities related to civil registration undertaken in the country;
- (b) Study of the legislative, institutional and policies frameworks, pertaining to vital events registration in Ethiopia;

- (c) Reviewing current initiatives on the development of civil registration and vital statistics in the African region; and reviewing international principles and recommendations relevant to the Ethiopian situation.

### **1.6.2 Consultation processes with stakeholders**

The Minister of Justice, with a close collaboration of the Director-General of the Central Statistical Agency, has initiated several activities which would facilitate the preparation activities for the implementation of the vital events part of the 2012 law. In this connection, some of the major activities undertaken by the Minister were to form a task force and a technical committee to start the ball rolling until the national and regional vital events registration organs were established and formally begin operations. These are:

- (i) The Task Force for the National Vital Events Registration System, hereafter referred to as Task Force, formed in September 2012. The Task Force members are representatives of the following key stakeholders in the civil registration process: Ministry of Justice (MoJ); Central Statistical Agency (CSA); Ministry of Health (MoH); Ministry of Education (MoE); Ministry of Urban Development and Construction (MoUDC); National Identity Card Agency (NICA); Ministry of Women, Youth and Children Affairs (MoW); Documents Registration and Authentication Agency. The Minister of Justice and the Director-General of CSA are the Chair and co-Chair of the Task Force, respectively. Members of the Task Force had formed a sub-task force of professionals in their respective home ministries and agencies to ensure the interests of the stake holders are taken care of.
  
- (ii) A Technical Committee was also formed at the same time to implement tasks assigned to it by the Chair and the co-Chair of the Task Force. The Committee follows up on technical issues discussed in the Task Force, among others. The Committee has three members, one each from MoJ, CSA, and National Identity Card Agency (NICA).

(iii) A secretariat for the coordination of activities for the establishment of a national vital events registration system was also formed to follow-up on the day-to-day activities relating to the establishment of a national vital events registration system. The secretariat is run by a senior staff of MoJ.

Several sessions were held with the Minister of Justice and the Director General of CSA during the preparation of the report. At the beginning of the drafting of this document, consultations were held with the Task Force on the development of strategic plan. The structure of the document was also presented to the Task Force. The Task Force was then divided into sub-groups and each group was requested (i) to review the legal framework; (ii) to discuss the proposed organizational, administrative and management structure for the federal and regional organs to be established; (iii) to review proposed vital events registration operational processes; and (iv) to review ways of strengthening the collection, processing and dissemination of information on vital events and background attributes from the registered vital events. Further discussions were conducted with the Task Force on these points.

Two field visits were conducted in the northern and southern part of the country. Sixteen urban and rural *kebele* and *wereda* offices were visited and discussion held with elected officers and salaried managers of these offices. List of visited *kebles* and *weredas* visited is given in Annex 3. The field visits were very useful in shaping the strategic areas and crafting the action plan.

The first draft of the report was presented to the Task Force chaired by the Minister of Justice on February 28, 2013. The meeting felt that more time was needed to discuss the strategic areas and objectives and ensure national ownership of the document. It was decided that the Technical Committee should spend more time on this with the consultant. Consequently, a 3-day workshop was held in Adama town from 14 to 16 March 2013, where the Technical Committee was directly involved in the refinement and elaboration of the action plan.

### **1.6.3 Consultations with development partners**

Useful and constructive discussions were also carried out with experts from the UNFPA and UNICEF country offices in Addis Ababa, and the African Centre for Statistics of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ACS/UNECA). The document has benefited from these interactions.

## **1.7 Continental and international initiatives**

The international community had given little attention to the development and improvement of civil registration system in developing countries for a very long time. This has its own historical reasons which are beyond the scope of this document. What is important is that there is an awakening, in particular in the African region, to the importance of well functioning civil registration and vital statistics systems as a source of legal documents to individuals and the vital statistics derived as a by-product of vital events registration system to the public and policy-makers.

The three pan-African organizations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Union (AU) have joined hand to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in the African region. In this regard, UNECA has developed the Medium Term Plan: 2011-2015, in close collaboration with the and AfDB, to support improvement of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa and at the same time to serve as guide to countries and development partners in managing interventions and monitoring the progress of their reform programmes (UNECA, 2011).

One of the important developments regarding CRVS is the establishment of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration in August 2010. The Conference is institutionalized as a permanent platform that would meet once every two years to monitor and advice on the progress of the regional initiative on CRVS. The other important country-led initiative is the African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD). South Africa has been funding and organizing ASSD since 2005 to support and

encourage African countries in their population and housing censuses. Upon request from the African ministers, ASSD has started bringing civil registration authorities and national statistical offices together since 2012. Of particular importance is the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APAI-CRVS), which was endorsed by the second conference of the ministers which met in Durban, South Africa, from 6 to 7 September 2012 (UNECA, 2012a).

The above initiatives and others not mentioned here, in particular development partners such as UNFPA, UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO) are playing important supportive role in the implementation of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Ethiopia.

## **CHAPTER 2. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Making vital events registration subject to law and establishing the appropriate institutional frameworks is essential for the efficient management, operation and maintenance of vital events registration system. Legislation, which makes registration mandatory, is important to ensure completeness of registration and to improve the contents of vital events records. A vital events registration law should require confidentiality of personal information of individuals be upheld, set penalty for its misuse and build public trust in the process. Along with the law, institutional frameworks enable the realization of a viable vital events registration system.

### **2.2 Legal Framework**

A legal framework for vital events registration plays an important role in delivering the basic human rights set out in the Constitution of the FDRE (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 1995), the Revised Family Law (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2000), international human rights instruments ratified by Ethiopia, and in several UN declarations, covenants and resolutions. These include, for instance, the right of all individuals to be registered, the right to be given an identity from birth, the right of children to know the names of their parents, the right to non-discrimination by reason of birth, and the right of a child to a nationality (UN, 1998b). In particular the resolution entitled “Birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law” adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2012, underlines the fundamental connection between human rights and the registration of vital events of individuals to ensure their legal identity (UN General Assembly, 2012).

## **2.3 Assessment of the vital events law**

An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the 2012 law was conducted using the World Health Organization and University of Queensland (WHO/UQ) assessment framework modified for the Ethiopian situation (WHO/UQ, 2010). From the analysis, Ethiopia has, by and large, an enabling legislation for establishing a vital events registration system and collecting and processing vital statistics from the records. Few points that require clarity or further elaborations in the 2012 law through regulations and directives are given below.

### **(a) Definition of vital events**

The 2012 law does not provide clear and unambiguous definitions of the vital events (see Section 1.4.1). It repealed most of the articles in the 1960 Civil Code relating to civil registration except Article 4 which classifies birth as viable or not viable based on the number of hours the child lives after birth.

### **(b) Late and delayed registration of vital events**

Most countries have a grace period within which “late registrations” are accepted before penalties apply. A late registration is a registration of vital events that happens after the deadline specified in a law or regulation and within the grace period, which is usually considered to be one year following the occurrence of the vital events. A delayed registration is the registration of vital events after the grace period has expired. There is no provision in the 2012 law to differentiate late and delayed registrations. Specific provision for the handling of late and delayed registration of vital events should be made, as it is important to avoid delayed registration as much as possible.

### **(c) Populations to be registered**

The law makes provisions for the registration of the vital events of only citizens living in the country and abroad (Articles 6 to 9 of the 2012 law). It does not have provision for foreign nationals (including refugees and asylum seekers living in the country). It is



generally in the interest of both the country and individuals for all resident populations to be registered. It may be helpful to identify these groups separately for statistical purpose.

**(d) Backlog of vital events registration**

The 2012 law specifies that the vital events registration should be operational within a period not exceeding two years from the date of publication of the proclamation (Articles 67/1 and 70). The proclamation was issued on 22 August 2012, therefore vital events registration operations should start by July 2014 (Hamle 15,2006 Ethiopian calendar). The 2012 law does not have provision on the treatment of backlogs of vital events registration.

Two types of backlogs of vital events registrations are envisaged:

- (i) Events that occurred before the date when the *kebele* offices in Phase I start registration of vital events and were not registered in any vital events registers on the basis of the then existing laws or customary practices. For instance, for births it would be all those born before 22 July 2014 (Hamle 15, 2006 in the Ethiopian calendar), when Phase I is expected to start;
- (ii) Additional backlog of events that would occur because of the late starting dates of kebeles in the second and third phases of operations. Proposed starting dates of the different phases are given in Section 4.3.2.

It is important to clear birth backlogs from the point of view of human rights issue. The main purpose of recording vital events is to meet legal requirements of individuals, such as documentary evidence of identity; proof of age and allowing access to rights based on age. Taking into account that the 2012 law has provision for the issuance of national identity cards to any Ethiopian who has attained majority (Articles 2/10 and 56/1), the vital events registration organs and the National Identity Card Agency could put a mechanism in place to clear birth backlogs for this age group. Important lessons can be drawn from the experience of a UNICEF and Ministry of Women's Affairs joint project implemented on clearing birth registration backlogs conducted from April 2009 to December 2010 in the Amhara, Tigray and SNNP regions, and in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city administrations (UNICEF, n.d.).

As to backlog of deaths, much demand to register it would not be expected. If registration of past deaths and issuance of certificate is required, it would most likely be processed through courts. Clearing death backlogs would not serve any statistical purpose. This would also apply to marriages and divorces.

#### **(e) Cause of death**

Cause of death information is important for health policy and planning. It has many uses such as identifying emerging diseases; tracking changes in the burden of diseases in different groups; explaining levels, trends and differentials in mortality; and for setting priorities for intervention programme. The 2012 law (Article 41/3) mentions that cause of death and other information should be recorded for deaths occurring in a health institution or if a corpse is brought to it for examination and a certificate be issued to the person having the responsibility of declaring the death for registration. There is no provision in the 2012 law for deaths occurring at home.

To be of use for health policy and planning, all deaths should be medically certified. However, this could be a difficult task as national coverage of hospitals is not yet wide enough in the country. On the other hand, the health extension workers of MoH are ubiquitous in rural Ethiopia, and this resource should be tapped on by training them on verbal autopsy procedures. Experimental verbal autopsy has been going on in Ethiopia for some time (Mesgenaw Fantahun and Alemayehu Worku, 2006). MoH and medical schools, in collaboration with WHO, could refine and simplify the verbal autopsy procedures, and coordinate with the federal and regional vital events registration agencies and CSA to collect current and reliable cause of death information, possibly as a supplement to the registration of vital events.

## 2.4 Institutional structure and organizational framework

Ethiopia is a federated state with nine autonomous regional states and two city administrations<sup>2</sup>. It follows a decentralized administrative system where the regional states have legislative, executive and judicial powers. The organizational arrangement for vital events registration follows the decentralized administrative structure.

The structure is the organic skeleton of an institution, while the organization is the way in which its human resources and physical elements are systematically arranged (UN, 1998b). The enactment of the 2012 law has given the basic structure to the various vital events registration organs at different administrative levels. The organizations are yet to be worked out.

With respect to the vital statistics, the existing national office - the CSA, has been the main agency for collection and compilation of official statistics, including vital statistics from population and housing census and household surveys. It is also charged by law to coordinate the country's statistical activities to ensure use of uniform statistical concepts, definitions and classifications nation-wide (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2005). The information gathered by the vital events registration organs would be compiled for statistical purposes by CSA. Hence, CSA has also to review and strengthen its administrative organization to create a comprehensive vital statistics system.

### 2.4.1 Federal level vital events registration organ

*Regulation No. 278/2012 to Provide for the Establishment of the Vital Events Registration Agency*, hereafter referred to as Regulation No. 278/2012, established the following national bodies in December 2012: (a) Vital Events Council; (b) Board of Management; and (c) The Vital Events Registration Agency (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2012b). This governance structure of the vital events registration bodies has been formulated but it was

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<sup>2</sup> Ethiopia has nine regions: Affar; Amhara; Benishangul-Gumuz; Gambela; Harari; Oromia; Somali; Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNP); and Tigray; and two city administrations: Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa.

not operational at the time of the preparation of this document. The full text of Regulation No. 278/2012 is given as Annex 4 for ease of reference.

***(a) Vital Events Council***

The federal Vital Events Council, hereafter referred to as the Council, was established by Regulation No. 278/2012 (Article 8 and 9) as the highest body on civil registration matters. The Chairperson of the Council is the Minister of Justice, and members are to be designated by the government drawn from the relevant government offices and regions.

It is expected that senior officials of the following key stakeholders would be members of the Council: Ministry of Justice (MoJ); Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED); Ministry of Health (MoH); Ministry of Education (MoE); Ministry of Urban Development and Construction (MoUDC); Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Defense; National Intelligence and Security Service; Ministry of Women, Children and Youth; Ministry of Federal Affairs; Government Communications Affairs; and City Administration of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. The Director General of the federal Vital Events Registration Agency is the secretary of the Council. The establishment of the Council at the most senior government levels would indicate the Government's commitment to ensure the success of the implementation of the vital events registration system by providing the very highest level of political and administrative support.

***(b) The Federal Vital Events Board of Management***

Article 8 and 9 of Regulation No. 278/2012 establishes the Board of Management to oversee the activities of the federal vital events registration agency, among others. The members and the chairperson will be designated by the Government. It is expected that the membership of the Board will mirror that of the Council. The following ministries and agencies are directly linked to the work of the federal vital events registration agency: MoJ; CSA; MoH; MoE; MoUDC; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Defense; National Intelligence and Security Service; Ministry of Women, Children and Youth; Ministry of Federal Affairs; and Government Communications Affairs Office. It would

facilitate the federal Vital Events Registration Agency's work if the members of the Board could be drawn from the above ministries and agencies.

***(c) The Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Vital Events Registration Agency***

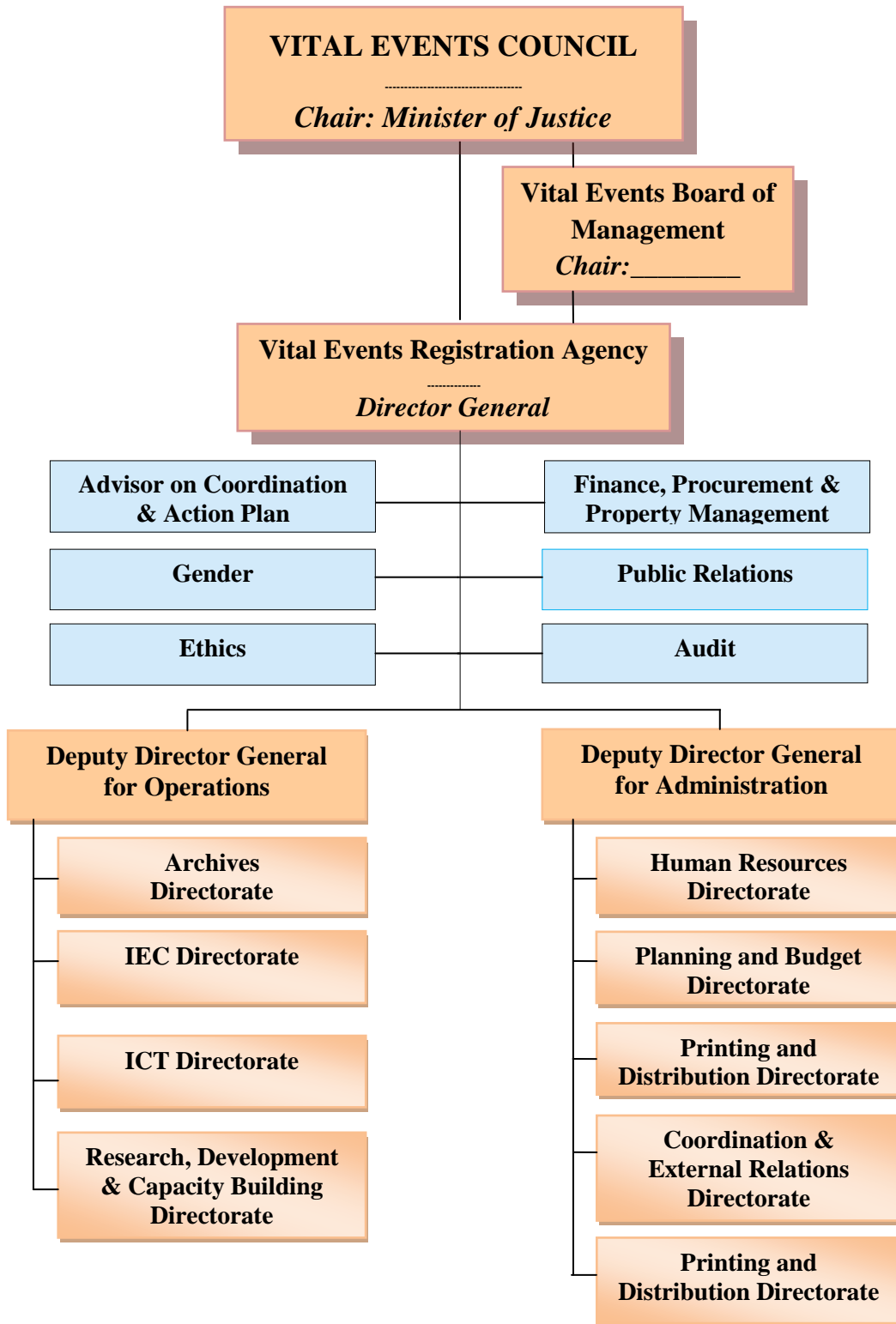
Articles 3 and 5 of Regulation No. 278/2012 establishes the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Vital Events Registration Agency (VERA) as the federal public administration autonomous organ to direct, coordinate and support the registration of vital events at national level, and to centrally organize and keep records of vital events. The Regulation also provides the federal agency with its management structure. The hierarchical arrangement of the functions of VERA is yet to be worked out.

**2.4.2 Proposal for the structure and organization of VERA**

In order to ensure effective implementation, an appropriate institutional architecture has been suggested (see Figure 2). The first draft of the structure was discussed with the Technical Committee mentioned in Section 1.6.2(ii), and refined to reflect the current situation in the country.

It is proposed that the Director-General of VERA should be supported by two deputies. One of the deputies will be responsible for core activities, while the other will cover administrative responsibilities. Attempt has been made to align the structure of VERA in line with the guidelines of the Government's civil service. It should be noted that the Technical Committee has taken this proposed approach a step further by working details of staffing and their roles and responsibilities.

**Figure 2: Proposed Structure for the federal Vital Events Registration Agency**

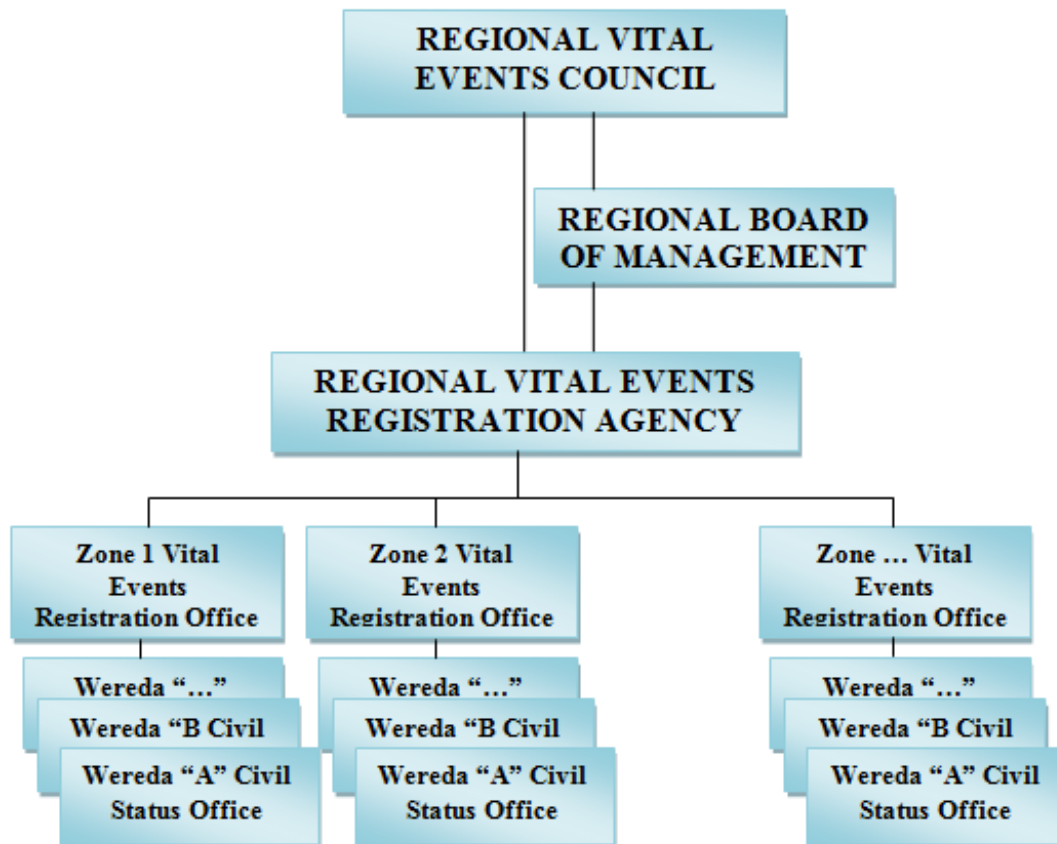


### 2.4.3 Proposals for the structure and organization of the regional and lower levels vital events registration organs

#### *(a) Proposal for the structure and organization of the regional vital events registration organ*

Article 5 of the 2012 law stipulates that “an appropriate regional organ shall be established or designated by each region to direct, coordinate and support the registration of vital events at regional level and to transfer records of vital events to the appropriate federal organ” (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2012a, p. 6499). It is expected that regions and city administrations would enact similar regulations and probably establish similar structures and organizations.

**Figure 3: Proposed Structure for the Vital Events Registration at Regional Level and links with Zone and *Wereda* Civil Status Offices**



The establishment of Regional Vital Events Registration Agencies (RVERAs), if the naming is to follow the federal nomenclature, is fundamental for a viable conventional vital events registration system in Ethiopia. Figure 3 above shows the vital events registration structure proposed for the regions and city administrations.

**(b) Local level vital events registration organs**

As mentioned in Section 2.4.1, Ethiopia is administratively structured into nine regions and two city administrations. In 2007, the regions and two city administrations were further subdivided into 73 zones; 741 *weredas* (districts); and 16,475 *kebeles*, which are the country's lowest administrative areas. Of the total *kebeles* 14,857 are classified as rural and 1,618 are urban. *Kebeles* consist of roughly 700 to 1,200 households (CSA, 2011). Although the figures are from 2007, it is not expected to show much change and it would serve the purpose of this report. Distribution of zones, *weredas*, and *kebeles* by regions is given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Number of Zones, Weredas and Urban/Rural Kebeles by Region**

Region	Zones	Weredas	Kebeles		
			Urban	Rural	Total
Tigray	6	47	92	600	692
Affar	5	30	49	331	380
Amhara	12	139	340	3,039	3,379
Oromiya	20	278	540	6,349	6,889
Somali	9	53	154	277	431
Benishangul-Gumuz	5	20	30	410	440
SNNP	22	145	264	3,587	3,851
Gambella	4	13	17	207	224
Harari	1	1	19	17	36
Addis Ababa	10	10	99	0	99
Dire Dawa	1	1	10	32	42
Special Areas <sup>3</sup>		4	4	8	12
Country Total	95 <sup>4</sup>	741	1,618	14,857	16,475

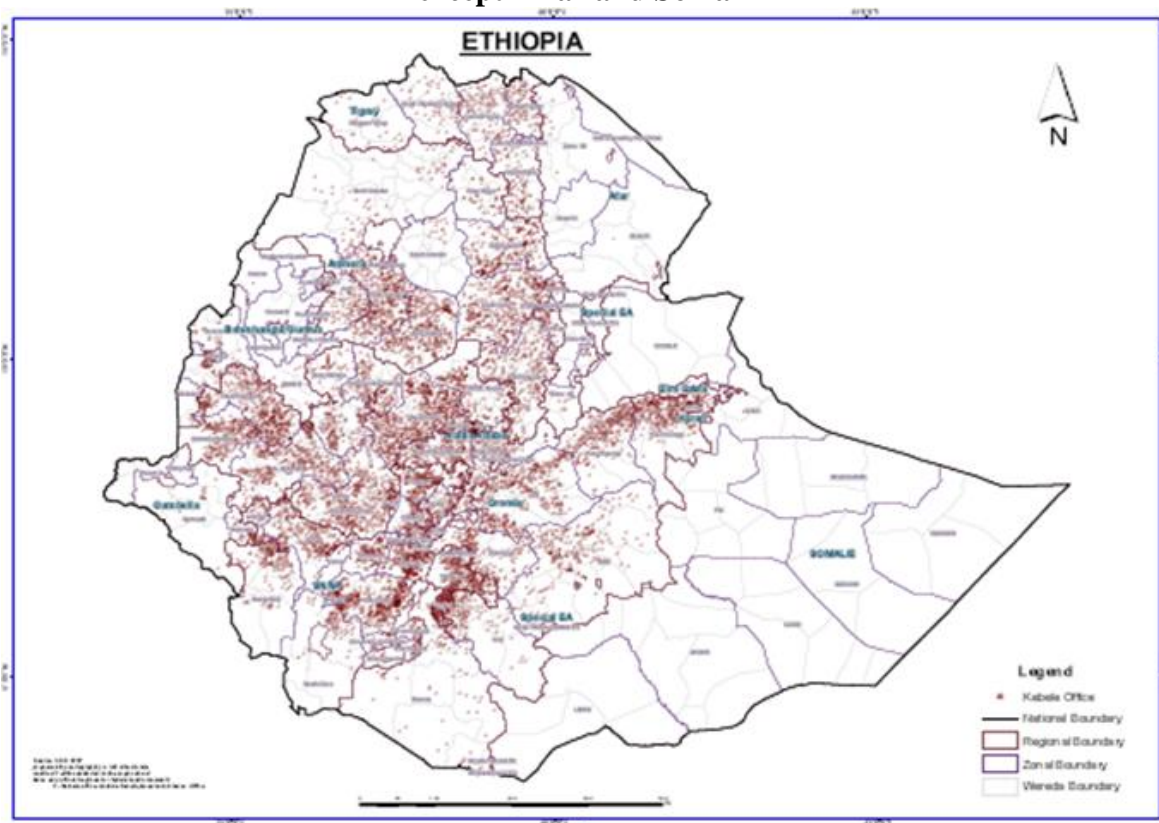
<sup>3</sup> Special Areas are *kebeles* not assigned to any particular region. It is recommended that they should be part of one or other region for administrative purpose. These *kebeles* should start operation in Phase III (see Section 4.3.2; Table 3), after the issue of with which *wereda* and region they should work with for vital events recording is resolved.

<sup>4</sup> The total reflects the 10 Sub-cities in Addis Ababa, and 85 zones in other regions and in Dire Dawa city.



Figure 4 presents the distribution of *weredas* administrative boundaries and location of *kebele* offices by region. Each dot in the map of Ethiopia depicts the location of a *kebele* civil status office. It can be observed that the dots almost cover the total area of the country. The dots are not much concentrated in sparsely populated areas. *Kebeles* in the Affar and Somali regions are not fully represented here because the two regions were covered by satellite imaging which did not collect the geographical coordinates for each *kebele* office.

**Figure 4: Distribution of *kebele* offices in all regions and city administrations except Affar and Somali**

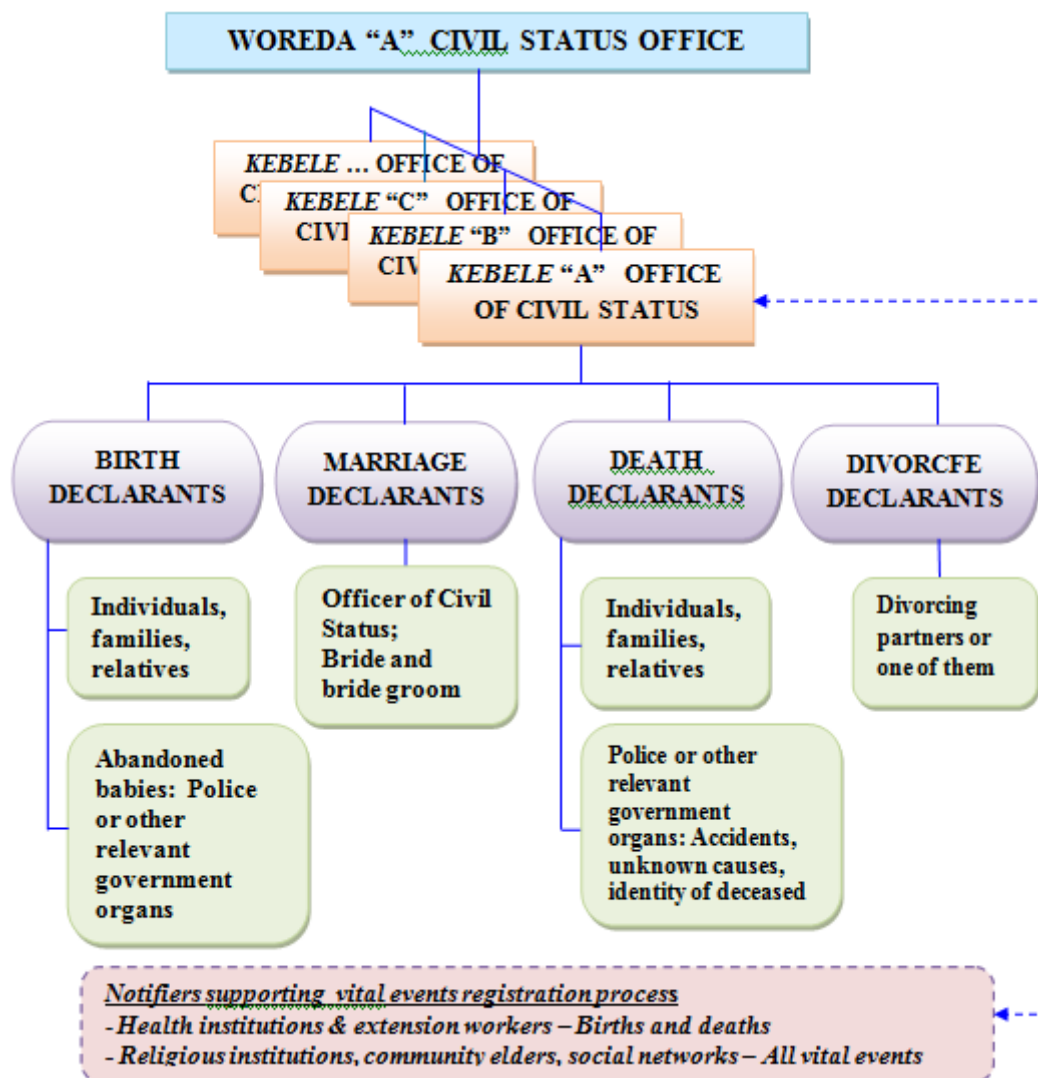


Source: CSA, GIS Section

One of the key features of the *kebele* offices is that they are easily accessible to the population living within their boundaries in terms of distance. Most of these offices are located at walking-distances to the households living within their boundaries. The furthest household would about 3 hours walking distance from the *kebele* office, thus not involving excessive travel and high cost, if any.

Article 2/8 of the 2012 law requires the registration of vital events to be carried out at the *kebele* level. The *kebele* offices are, therefore, the cornerstones for the vital events registration system. *Wereda* offices could also play an important role in the vital registration process, in particular by providing document movement logistics support, and monitoring and evaluation of the operation. The RVERAs should take necessary actions to establish, develop and sustain *kebele* and *wereda* civil status registration offices. The first important task for the RVERAs would be to incorporate vital events functions in existing structures of *kebele* and *wereda* offices.

**Figure 5: Vital Events Registration Structure at *Wereda* and *Kebele* Levels**

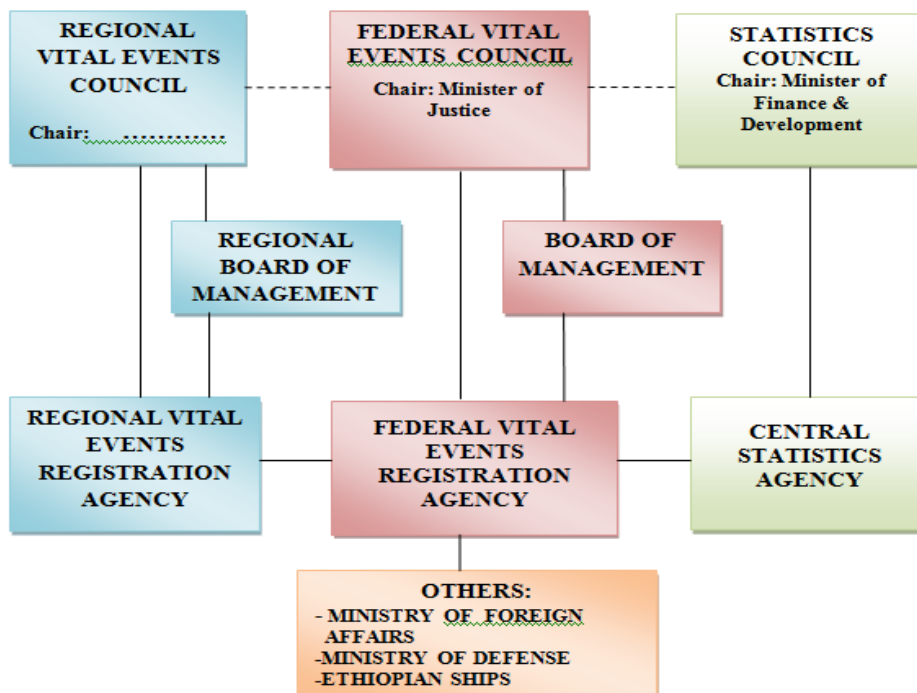


Taking into account the existing administrative arrangements within their regions, RVERAs should decide whether registration offices should be established at the zonal levels, probably to facilitate movement of documents and assume a certain level of monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. Regions with large numbers of *weredas*, such as Oromia, Amhara and SNNP, might consider giving the zone administration offices more role to play in the vital events registration process.

#### 2.4.4 Expected linkage between the federal and regional vital events registration organs, and CSA

Coordination and collaboration, and clearly delineated roles and responsibly is key to the success of the implementation of vital events registration system. This should lead to improved mutual understanding of responsibilities, make clear relations between different government organs, and strengthen areas of cooperation and common interest. Figure 6 shows the expected links between VERA, RVERAs, CSA and other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, and Ethiopian Shipping Lines.

**Figure 6. Link between Federal and Regional Vital Registration organs, and CSA**



## CHAPTER 3. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

### 3.1 Introduction

The scale and complexities of establishing a civil registration system is a daunting task. Hence, to develop a system from scratch requires a detailed understanding of opportunities existing in the different areas of interventions and challenges that need to be overcome. The course of action required to develop effective civil registration and vital statistics systems will depend on existing country situation, such as availability of national expertise, capacities and resources. Identifying the main factors that could be considered as opportunities to build on and those that would be expected to pose challenges helps in the formulation and implementation of appropriate interventions that will help maximize the strengths and minimize the weaknesses.

### 3.2 Opportunities and challenges

The situational analysis was based on the opportunities and challenges that are expected to play an important role in the establishment and development of civil registration and vital statistics systems. The analysis has benefitted from the inputs of the Technical Committee, which made the analysis reflect the current situation in the country and relevant for the purpose. The opportunities and challenges are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2. Opportunities and challenges in the establishment and development of civil registration and vital statistics systems<sup>5</sup>**

Areas	Opportunities on which to build	Challenges to be addressed
Legal framework	- Federal level vital events registration law (Proclamation No. 760/2012)  - Vital Events Council with	- Appointing of the Director General of VERA and formation of the VERA office  - Speed with which regional vital

<sup>5</sup> Points under “Opportunities” and “Challenges” columns are not necessarily mapped one-to-one.

Areas	Opportunities on which to build	Challenges to be addressed
	<p>representation at the highest level of government (Regulation No. 278/2012)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity to enforce law at all administrative levels</li> </ul>	<p>events organs are to be established according to Article 5 of the law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of knowledge of the vital events registration law by the general population and law enforcing bodies</li> </ul>
Political and socio-economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current social and economic growth conducive for implementing vital events registration</li> <li>- Growth and Transformation Plan</li> <li>- Government's recognition of the importance of civil registration and vital statistics and commitment to establish and maintain conventional vital events registration</li> <li>- Scale-up approach is implemented by the government in different initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Affordability of fees by poor households to obtain certificates</li> <li>- Low awareness of benefits of vital events registration</li> </ul>
Institutional and administrative Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government commitment to establish VERA (Regulation No 278/2012)</li> <li>- Support provided by MoH, CSA and others to the civil registration initiative</li> <li>- Task Force and Technical Committee set up by MoH provide substantive support in the civil registration preparatory activities</li> <li>- Task Force sub-committees formed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutional capacity in terms of human resources and infrastructure</li> <li>- Low level of participation of concerned organs</li> <li>- Recruitment and retention of qualified staff, if salary scale and compensation scheme of VERA is not competitive</li> <li>- Delay in preparatory phase activities (Registration documents and manuals, procurement of goods and equipment, etc.) slowing down</li> </ul>

Areas	Opportunities on which to build	Challenges to be addressed
	<p>in each of the key stakeholders represented in the national Task Force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decentralized administrative structure of the country down to the <i>kebele</i> level in urban and rural areas covering the entire national territory is conducive for a decentralized vital events registration operations</li> </ul>	<p>implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standard of offices in some <i>kebeles</i> (structure, office space and office furniture) may not be conducive for registering vital events and storing records</li> </ul>
Social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Widely practiced communal support systems in both rural and urban areas, such as <i>edir</i>, <i>mahiber</i>, <i>equb</i><sup>6</sup>, etc.; community elders officiating over marriage and divorces; etc.</li> <li>- <i>kebele</i> organized community support systems such as “and-le-amist”<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of some individuals not participating in any of the social and <i>kebele</i> organized self-help networks.</li> <li>- Cultural taboos and traditional practice in registering some of the events</li> </ul>
Other major government undertakings that could support civil registration and vital statistics systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Health: Penetration of the health extension workers into rural areas could contribute to improve coverage and completeness of registration as notifiers</li> <li>- Ministry of Agriculture: Development Agents, same as above</li> <li>- Ministry of Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordination of activities among ministries and agencies</li> <li>- Additional work load on individual workers</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> *Edirs* are groups of households, mostly neighbours, that support each other mostly at times of death in a family and during the ensuing culturally accepted bereavement period. *Mahibers* and *equbs* have similar objectives, where *Mahiber* is more or less get together once a month or so while *equb* has economic objective.

<sup>7</sup> *And-le-Amist* literally means one-for-five. It is a cell of five people from the same neighbourhood that informally look after each other’s interest. They were originally organized by rural and small town *kebeles* to promote health and development initiatives. The group creates greater interaction between members and generates a greater sense of community spirit. They share norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within and among groups.

Areas	Opportunities on which to build	Challenges to be addressed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Urban Development and Construction</li> <li>- Ministry of Women, Children and Youth</li> <li>- Municipalities</li> </ul>	
Other infrastructure (road, communication, power, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wide and far reaching road networks in the rural areas</li> <li>- Telephone communication</li> <li>- Rural electrification</li> <li>- <i>Wereda</i>-Net; School-Net, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of constant supply of power in many of the rural <i>kebeles</i>;</li> <li>- Accessibility of the Civil Status Office in some of the <i>kebeles</i> during the rainy season</li> </ul>
Information, education and communication (IEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation with Government Communications Affairs; Teachers Vocational Education Training (TVET); professional associations such as the Ethiopian Statistical Association; civic society such as women's associations, national and international NGOs, etc.</li> <li>- The press at national and regional levels</li> <li>- To work with higher learning institutions to introduce civil registration and vital statistics systems in their curriculums;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of human, material and logistical resources supporting sustained training and educational programmes</li> <li>- Insufficient coverage of TV or lack of availability of TV sets, newspapers and Internet in many of the rural <i>kebeles</i></li> <li>- insufficient civil registration and vital statistics related materials adopted to the country's needs</li> </ul>
Vital statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Strategy for the Development of Statistics</li> <li>- Possibility of decentralization of data capture and archiving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordination of statistical activities among ministries and agencies still a challenge</li> <li>- Good back-end system</li> </ul>
UN Country programmes: UNFPA, UNICEF,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial support</li> <li>- Sponsoring in-country training and study visits</li> <li>- Technical documents</li> <li>- Procurement (international)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fund absorption capacity of VERA in the first few years could be challenging</li> <li>- Projects with short life span</li> <li>- Sometimes national needs</li> </ul>

Areas	Opportunities on which to build	Challenges to be addressed
WHO	- Consultancy and advisory services	and requirements and priorities of international programmes not aligned as desired
Initiatives supporting civil registration and vital statistics at continental and international levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Civil Registration organized by UNECA and the African Development Bank</li> <li>- UNECA's MTP – regional plan for 2010-2015 and APAI-CRVS developed to support reform and improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa, providing intellectual resources for CRVS</li> <li>- African Charter on Statistics</li> <li>- United Nations international standards and guidelines</li> <li>- Africa Knowledge Hub</li> </ul>	- Focus of the various initiatives is mostly of improving and strengthening of civil registration and vital statistics; and less attention given to establishment of civil registration and vital statistics systems



## **CHAPTER 4. STRATEGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This document was prepared to facilitate the implementation of the vital events registration part of the law on the Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card. Developing and implementing a national plan requires that stakeholders have a shared understanding of what needs to be done, reach agreement on priority actions, and on feasible strategies for establishing and developing civil registration and vital statistics systems over an agreed period of time. As mentioned in Section 1.6, the strategies and objectives were defined through (i) desk research on past national experiences on activities related to civil registration and vital statistics systems; (2) literature review of African and international experiences; (3) lessons learnt from field visits within the country; (4) inputs by the Technical Committee; and (5) a process of consultations with the Task Force on the establishment of civil registration and vital statistics systems. Informal discussions were also conducted with other stakeholders.

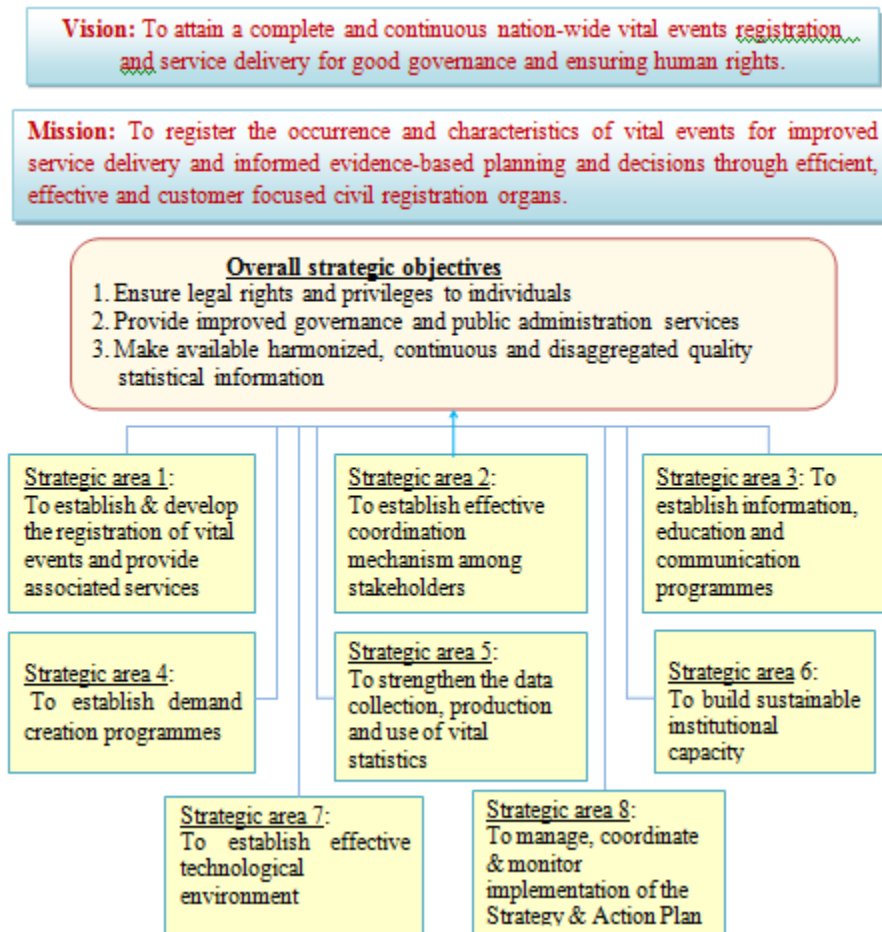
The knowledge base from available past civil registration and vital statistics-related national documents and in particular the model projects in SNNP, Amhara and Tigray regions have played an important role in informing this document. Similarly, the forms, registers and other documents used in the sample registration areas in these regions would be useful input during the crafting of comprehensive registration instruments required by the 2012 law along with the corresponding manuals and guidelines. To the extent possible, the document is in line with major international documents on civil registration and vital statistics such as the UN principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system and accompanying handbooks (see reference) and the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APAI-CRVS).

The roadmap for the development of the strategy for the implementation of the vital events registration and vital statistics systems is as follows:

1. Formulating the vision for a national civil registration system;
2. Laying out the mission to be accomplished in the broadest sense;
3. Developing overall objectives of the strategy;
4. Identifying (prioritized) strategic intervention areas for the attainment of the overall objectives;
5. Defining specific objectives for each strategic intervention areas, in order to attain the overall objectives; and
6. Identifying actions needed for the attainment of each of the specific objectives (the proposed actions are given in Chapter 5).

The strategy presents the vision, mission, overall objectives and the priority intervention areas along with justifications. Specific objectives were formulated for each of the identified strategic areas to ensure that the overall objectives are attained. Graphical presentations of the vision, mission and overall objectives and the strategic intervention areas are mapped in Figure 7 for easy reference. For lack of space, the specific objectives were not itemized in the map.

**Figure 7. Strategic Map**



#### 4.2 The overall objectives of the Strategy

Civil registration is the system with which a government records the vital events of its citizens. The primary purpose of vital events registration is to create legal documents that are used to establish and protect the civil rights of individuals. A secondary purpose is to create data for the compilation of vital statistics to be used for informed planning and decision making. In light of this, the overall objectives of the strategy are as follows:

1. *to establish and develop a system that would guarantee legal rights and privileges to individuals by providing access to registration and certification of vital events, and creating the link between the individual and the state;*

2. *to ensure sound governance and improved public administration services by mainstreaming vital events registration at all administrative levels; and*
3. *to make available continuous, comprehensive, quality and harmonized vital statistics and related information disaggregated down to the local administrative levels for informed policy making and decisions.*

### **4.3 Scale-up approach**

As mentioned before, the Ethiopian government has put in place a comprehensive vital events registration law in 2012 that would lead to conventional vital events registration and vital statistics systems. There are also several supporting opportunities that would facilitate the establishment of the systems (see Chapter 3). However, for a country like Ethiopia with a large geographic area and large population, it will require several years of strategic and prioritized investment to establish fully functioning and complete systems.

#### **4.3.1 Scale-up approach in the establishment of vital events registration and vital statistics systems**

The availability of basic services, such as power supply, communications and road networks are important for the smooth flow of registration documents between vital events registration offices at all levels. Although the road network connecting each *kebele* with its *wereda* is progressing at an amazing pace, there still remains more to do. The Government's plan for complete electrification of all rural and urban centres is also on track. This would take a few years to attain. The current level of these services would not deter the implementation of a paper-based civil registration, although it could determine the pace of progress towards automation of the systems.

Taking the above mentioned factors into account, the best possible approach to achieve the long-term goal of registering every birth, death, marriage and divorce in a satisfactory manner is through step-wise and scaled-up implementation until complete coverage is

achieved over a period of time. This approach is in line with general government policy in the implementation of nation-wide initiatives. It would be advisable to select manageable number of *kebeles* to be operational in phases according to certain criteria, which would be determined by each regional organ. It is expected that a regional registration office would be setup in each capital city simultaneously, immediately after VERA is established, to start the preparatory activities.

Items that could be considered to construct a set of criteria for selecting *kebeles* that would start registration of events in each phase, out of a total of over 16,475 *kebeles*, is proposed below:

- (i) There are over 1,618 urban *kebeles* in cities and towns of all regions. Put the vital events registration system in place, starting with urban *kebeles* that satisfy a set of criteria. The regions can select additional rural *kebeles* that would satisfy a set of selection criteria. Examples of the criteria that should be met could be the following:
  - a. Appropriate office for conducting the registration process, which would accommodate the declarant<sup>8</sup>, witnesses, and possibly also notifiers, if any;
  - b. Sufficient office space for a filing cabinet where used and unused registers and other documents could be filed and locked;
  - c. Keble offices should be easily accessible to registrants throughout the year;
  - d. Those *kebele* offices that conduct normal office work on Sundays;
  - e. *Kebele* offices that have easy year-round access to *wereda* and regional offices;
  - f. Communication capability through landlines or mobile phones; and
  - g. Availability of continuous and stable power supply.

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<sup>8</sup> In the 2012 law, a person who has the responsibility to declare a vital event for registration is referred to as “declarant” (Article 2/4). This is equivalent to “informant” used by most literature on civil registration.

- (ii) Scale-up the coverage progressively by including more and more *kebeles* in small towns and rural areas to start the vital events registration operation in subsequent phases.
- (iii) At the last phase, complete the vital events registration coverage by reaching out to pastoralist populations and those in remote and not easily accessible places.

It should be noted that, as implementation progresses,

- (i) comprehensive assessment should be conducted when a phase is completed so that improvement could be made on the operation of the systems in place, and the subsequent phase can benefit from the experience; and
- (ii) useful vital statistics could be generated for those *kebeles* who are implementing the recording of vital events in the different phases in the scaling up process to aid planning, resource allocation and programme monitoring. The data can also be used for assessing the vital events registration system being put in place progressively.

#### **4.3.2 Proposed numbers of kebeles that would be operational in three consecutive phases**

If the phased implementation approach suggested in Section 4.3.1 is followed, the minimum number of *kebeles* starting vital events registration in all regions is proposed as given in Table 3. It should be noted that:

- (i) the proposed number of kebeles to start operation in the first phase are fewer than those expected to be operational in the subsequent two phases; and
- (ii) the duration proposed for the first phase is two years, whereas it is only one year each for phase II and phase III.

The main reason for the above proposals is that the first phase is also in a sense a learning period where the registration instruments, training and awareness could be sharpened if needed. In short, The latter two phases would improve operations based on the experience

of the first phase. Besides, not all regions would be able to put the registration system in place at equal pace. The longer duration assigned to phase I would allow all regions to progress to the next phase, more or less, at the same time.

**Table 3. Proposed number and percentage of urban and rural *kebele* offices that would implement vital events registration by phase**

Phase	<i>Kebeles</i> starting registration		Total coverage of <i>kebeles</i>		Time frame
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Preparatory activities	-	-	-	-	July 2013 - June 2014 (Hamle 2005 - Sene 2006)
Phase I	3,000	18%	3,000	18%	July 2014- June 2016 (Hamle 2006 - Sene 2008)
Phase II	6,000	37%	9,000	55%	July 2016 - June 2017 (Hamle 2008 - Sene 2009)
Phase III	7,475	45%	16,475	100%	July 2017 - June 2018 (Hamle 2009 - Sene 2010)
Total	16,475	100			

#### 4.4 Strategic areas and specific objectives

The strategy is designed in such a way that it builds on opportunities and address challenges identified in Chapter 3, in order to achieve the overall objectives and attain the mission. At a time when much needs to be done to guarantee the successful establishment, development and implementation of civil registration and vital statistics systems, it is important to define strategic priority areas to focus on. Several interdependent and strategic areas were identified to achieve real progress towards the overall objectives through concrete actions. These interdependent and strategic areas would provide a framework for the plan of actions elaborated in Chapter 5.

Past experience in the design, development and implementation of sample registrations in different regions of the country is fundamental for the development and maintenance of

vital events registration, as well as to avoid processes and activities that could have negative impacts on it. This knowledge, along with African and international initiatives on civil registration, have played a central role in shaping the identified strategic areas. The overall strategy is structured around eight areas, indicated in Figure 7. Each strategic area has its set of specific objectives.

### **Strategic area 1: To establish and develop the registration of vital events and associated services at all administrative levels**

As mentioned before, conventional civil registration has never existed in Ethiopia. The main reason for this was the absence of a comprehensive law that made registration of vital events compulsory. This has changed with the 2012 law on the establishment of a conventional vital events registration. The law paved the way for an accessible, comprehensive and compulsory registration system which would provide citizens with legal documents and cater to the needs of the government for a proper and timely statistics from the records of vital events. Strategy area 1 is a clear approach to the major and priority actions needed to implement the law. It aims at achieving 4 strategic objectives:

#### ***Strategic objective 1.1: Institution building for the registration of vital events***

This strategic objective aims at institution building at federal, regional, and down to *kebele* levels as follows:

##### ***(a) Establish the federal organ for registration of vital events***

The first and crucial step in the effort towards vital events registration institution building would be implementing Regulation No. 278/2012. The priority measures to implement at the national level would be:

- (i) To establish the federal Vital Events Council according to Article 7(2) of the Regulation; and



- (ii) To lay the ground for the establishment of VERA. The priority issues would be,
  - a. Identify and recruit the Director-General of VERA;
  - b. The Director-General, with support from the MoJ and CSA, prepares a proposal for the organizational, management and administrative structure of the federal agency with appropriate staff and resources;
  - c. If Board of Management is put in place by the Government, the Board reviews the proposal and provides input for improvement; and
  - d. The Council reviews the final proposal, and if it finds it satisfactory it approves it.

***(b) Establish the regional organs for registration of vital events***

The federal law gives mandate to the regional governments to establish or designate an appropriate regional organ responsible for registration of vital events (Article 5). The establishment of RVERAs is fundamental for a viable conventional vital events registration system in Ethiopia. They are the major building blocks for the national effort on this undertaking. It is recommended that all regional states establish their vital events registration agencies simultaneously, immediately after VERA becomes operational. VERA is required by Regulation 278/2012 to collaborate with and provide assistance to regional state organs in the establishment and development of vital events registration systems in their respective regions.

***(c) Establish, develop and sustain Kebele, Wereda and Zone Civil Status Offices***

This strategic objective recognizes the *kebele* offices to be the corner-stones for the vital events registration system. *Wereda* offices could also play an important role in the vital registration process. The RVERAs should take necessary actions to establish, develop and sustain *kebele* and *wereda* civil status registration offices by incorporating vital events functions in existing structures of *kebele* and *wereda* offices. Taking into account the existing administrative arrangements within their regions, RVERAs should decide if registration offices should be established at the zonal levels, probably for facilitating movement of documents and assume a certain level of monitoring and evaluation

responsibilities, as needed. Regions with large numbers of *weredas*, such as Oromia, Amhara and SNNP, might consider giving the zone administration offices more role to play in the vital events registration process.

### ***Strategic objective 1.2: Formulate and implement vital events registration operations***

#### ***(a) Vital events registration operations at federal level***

One of the major and priority tasks of VERA would be to roll-out the operations for the implementation of the vital events registration system. VERA has the responsibility for directing, coordinating and monitoring nation-wide vital events registration operation. It should provide administrative and technical oversight, provide needed guidance and coordinate registration procedures.

Mechanisms to make certain that uniform standards and registration procedures are applied in the registration process and the collection of information across all *kebeles* is a necessary aspect of ensuring coherence at all levels. The federal and regional organs should setup rules and procedures to enforce minimum standards of practices and procedures. While there could be some variations in the procedures and rules across regions, as far as possible they should follow the same pattern. In this respect, it would be the responsibility of VERA to develop registration instruments and requisite manuals, and work out an efficient document flow process from the federal to the local level and vice versa; and devise accessibility, affordability and timeliness of services to individuals ensuring accountability on the part of the various officials involved.

Operation manual that elaborates activities to be accomplished by all actors involved in the process should be prepared to ensure the establishment of a viable conventional civil registration system. Similarly, model laws, registers and forms, and other manuals and guidelines on specific topics, such as advocacy and awareness creation, should be made ready in the preparation stage for implementation of the vital events registration and vital statistics systems.

***(b) Vital events registration operations at regional administrative levels***

RVERAs are responsible for running the vital events registration operation in their respective regions. Regulation 278/2012 requires VERA to collaborate and provide assistance to the appropriate regional organs in formulating the operational process and the preparation and distribution of registers of civil status to be used by the regions; and in cooperation with the regions prepare action plans for registration of vital events and a system for the usage of information, and monitor the implementation of same. It is expected that RVERAs will emulate the institutional and administrative setup of VERA, with some modifications to meet the regional laws and regulations, and peculiarities of their own.

***(c) Vital events registration operations at kebele administrative levels***

*Kebele* offices are the posts where most registrants will go to register occurrence of births, deaths, marriage and divorces. Many *kebele* offices, particularly in urban areas and small towns, can easily handle the registration of vital events and issuance of certificates. The advantages of *kebele* offices handling the registration and issuing of certificates of vital events are:

- (i) *Kebele* offices are easily accessible to all their residents and of walking distance even to the furthest located households;
- (ii) In some regions, the weekends of *kebele* office workers are Fridays and Saturdays. They have re-arranged their weekends so that they serve the community better by opening their offices on Sundays. Residents who have business with the *kebele* office can conduct their business on this day, if they choose to;
- (iii) *Kebeles* are run by an executive body or cabinet made up of elected officials and representatives of line ministries. The composition of the elected officials could have some variation from place to place. The elected officials would consist of all or some of these: a chairman, deputy chairman, Afe-Gubae (spokesman), and a member charged with justice and security responsibilities. The other representatives are government employees, usually the director of the school or one

of them if there are more than one school within the *kebele*; one of the development agents of the Ministry of Agriculture (usually there would be four agents); and one of the two health extension workers posted in the *kebeles*. The composition of the *kebele* management structure is conducive for conducting civil registration;

- (iv) Each and every *kebele* office has a salaried manager. The managers have a minimum of high-school education, and most of them are diploma holders. The manager could serve as the *kebele* Civil Status Officer (registrar) at no or minimal cost to the vital events registration system. The registration of vital events is not going to add too much to the workload of the manager as on an average only about 25 to 27 vital events per month are expected in a *kebele* for registration (see Annex 5). The director of the school or one of the health extension workers could serve as deputy registrar, when the *kebele* manager is on leave or cannot do his work;
- (v) There are several community-based networks, such as *edir*, *mahiber*, *and-le-amist*, etc. (see footnotes of Table 2 in Chapter 3 for explanations of these terms) everywhere in Ethiopia. These are social capital which would be asset in diffusing information when *kebeles* conduct awareness and educational campaign on registration of vital events. If this networking of communities is harnessed properly they could serve as notifiers of occurrences of vital events, thereby contributing to increase coverage of registration; and
- (vi) During field visits, unparalleled commitment and enthusiasm was demonstrated by elected executive bodies as well as salaried managers of the *kebeles* to undertake any additional task that would be beneficial to their communities.

On the other hand some *kebele* offices while they can conduct the registration of vital events, they may not be ready at this stage to issue certificates. This is discussed in Section 1.2(e) below.

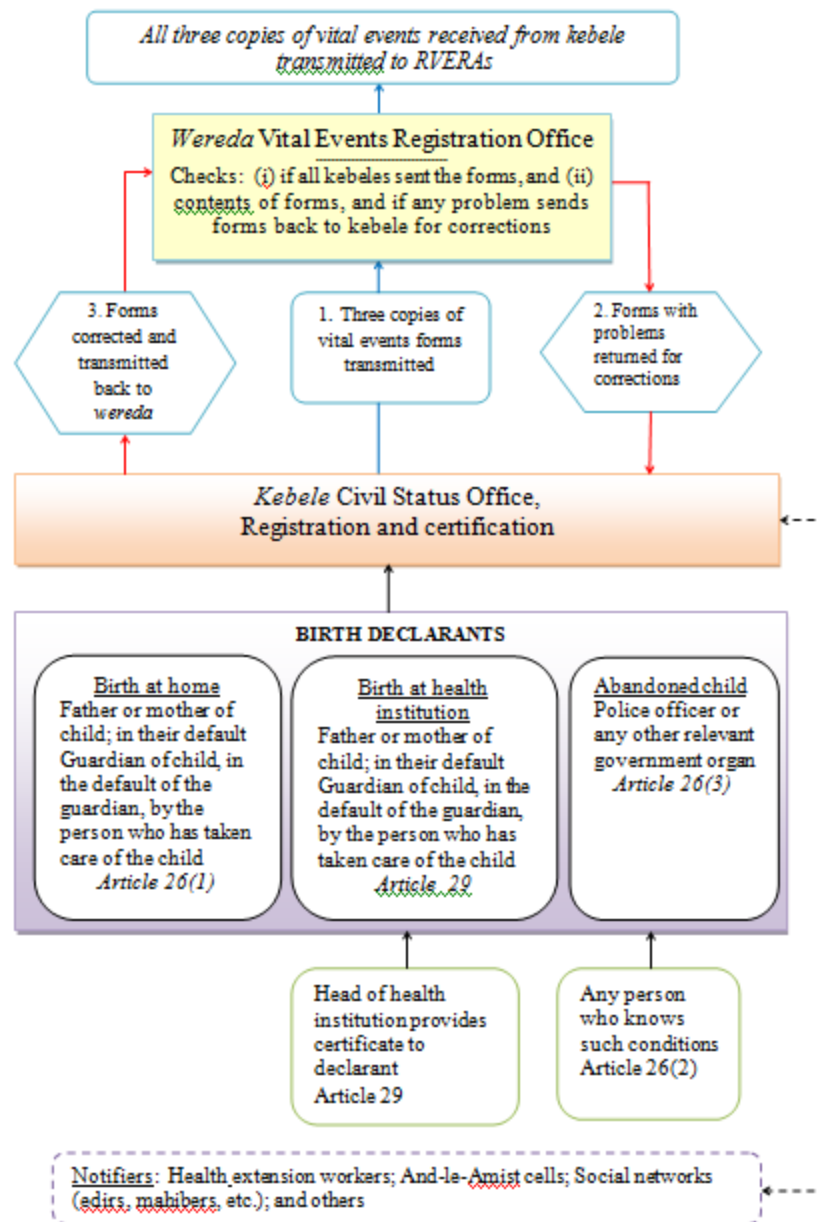
***(d) Vital events registration operations within a region***

From field visits, it was observed that some of the rural and small town *kebeles* offices are very small in size and in few cases they share office with other local government agencies. The existing documents in many of them were exposed to the elements and rodent infestations. Therefore, it is recommended that all *kebeles* and *weredas* Civil Status Offices should be equipped, at the minimum, with safe, strong and fire resistant filing cabinet for storage of vital events registers, certificates, and seals.

Currently, most of the *kebele* offices are in a position to conduct registration and issue certificates. The birth registration workflow between these *kebele* offices and their corresponding *wereda* and RVERA offices is depicted in Figure 8. The workflow will be similar for deaths, marriages and divorces with changes in the list of declarants.

Figure 8 shows that declarants would visit the *kebele* Civil Status Office within the period of registration specified in the 2012 law. Births shall be registered within 90 days. Notifiers (informants) can play supporting role by informing the local registrar on the occurrence of births, deaths, marriages or divorces within the *kebele* boundary. Notifiers could be health extension workers, *and-le-amist* cell members, or one of the other social networks mentioned earlier. The *kebele* Civil Status Officer registers the event and transmits the completed records to the *wereda* Civil Status Office within 30 days following the date of registration (Article 45/1). If the *wereda* office finds errors or some problem with a record, it sends it back to the *kebele* Civil Status Officer for corrections (Articles 49-53). The *kebele* Civil Status Officer takes the appropriate corrective measure as specified in the 2012 law and completes the loop. If there are no problems with records, the *wereda* Civil Status Office transmits them to the appropriate regional organ within a period of time to be specified by RVERA.

Figure 8. Proposed work-flow of birth registration from *kebeles* to RVERAs



**(e) Vital events registration by kebele and issuance of certificate by wereda offices**

It is believed that all *kebeles* can easily handle the registration of vital events; however some of them may not be in a position to issue certificates at this stage. The reasons are that some *kebele* offices are very small, in some cases shared with other agencies, and the physical conditions of the offices expose them to the elements. Therefore, it is

recommended that for those *kebele* offices that have sub-standard offices or those operating in a borrowed space from Government offices, vital events certificates be issued by *wereda* offices on a temporary basis. This would be a provisional arrangement until such time that all *kebele* offices are of equal standing in terms of their physical conditions. The *kebeles* with sub-standard offices have to be identified by RVERAs and the relevant zones and *wereda* administration offices. This temporary measure will **not** necessitate a declarant to travel to a *wereda* office as it will be handled by administrative arrangements between the *kebele* and *wereda* offices (see Annex 6 for an example of the modified workflow for birth registrations and certifications under such scenario).

### ***Strategic objective 1.3: Periodic assessment of vital events registration practice***

Each regional state is expected to promulgate its own vital events law that is consistent with the federal law. Similarly, several regulations and directives are expected to be issued by the relevant organs in the course of the implementation of the civil registration and vital statistics systems. The strengths and weaknesses of the federal and regional laws and regulations, the vital events registration structure in place, and the implementation process should be assessed during implementation.

It is essential to assess other issues that impede implementation of the systems at each administrative level. This should be led by each of the RVERAs, in collaboration with VERA. The federal agency should see to it that regions are operating their vital events registration and vital statistics systems in harmony with all concerned taking into account international recommendations and continental initiatives. Hence, bottleneck analysis should be conducted periodically reviewing achievements, strengths, shortcomings, gaps and risks in order to make the system responsive to the needs of the citizens and the country. A technical committee, with representation from various stakeholders can be setup to conduct the assessment, as the implementation progresses from one phase to the next, taking corrective steps wherever required. It is recommended that the assessments should be conducted within three months before the end of any phase.

## **Strategic area 2: To establish effective coordination mechanism among stakeholders**

The vital events registration system model follows the country's existing decentralized political structure and administrative infrastructures. An integrated and coordinated multi-sectoral approach to civil registration linking key stakeholders is crucial to the success of the establishment and implementation of registration of vital events. Coordination between all the different ministries and agencies and others stakeholders must be built at all administrative levels for the success of the vital events registration and vital statistics systems.

One of the duties of VERA's Board of Management is to "coordinate relevant organs in relation with activities of the Agency" (Article 12(5) of Council of Ministers Regulation No. 278/2012). It is expected that similar articles would be included in the vital events registration laws that will be promulgated by the regional states. A formal coordination, collaboration and communication mechanism should be established between VERA, RVERAs, CSA and other stakeholders for an effective use of resources and a regulated environment for the establishment and development of vital events registration. In this regard, strategic area 2 aims at achieving the following two specific objectives:

### ***Strategic objective 2.1: Establish or maintain existing multi-sectoral coordination mechanism at all administrative levels***

It would be prudent for the national, regional and lower administrative level vital events registration offices to maintain and strengthen coordination mechanism where it exists and establish one where it does not. For instance, most *kebeles* are administered by an Executive Committee representing the key stakeholders of the community. This Committee could serve as the civil registration coordinating committee. See Strategic objective 1.2(c)(iii) for composition of the Executive Committee. Similar executive committees are functional at *wereda* level.

It will not be difficult to integrate the registration of vital events activity in the existing *kebele* administration structure. Within the framework of the federal law, regional states



and city administrations should work out roles and responsibilities of *kebeles*, *weredas*, zones and regional offices on the vital events registration process. A clear assignment of duties and responsibilities, along with accountability mechanisms should be put in place for all administrative units and the key institutions working in the implementation of registration of vital events. The managers in each *kebele* could serve as a Civil Status Officer (registrar) and focal point for coordination, with the appropriate training (see Strategic objective 1.2 (c)(iv)).

***Strategic objective 2.2: Institutionalize partnerships between key line ministries and others involved in civil registration activities at federal level***

The Task Force for the preparation of civil registration and vital statistics systems mentioned in 1.6.2(a) is a good example of coordination among key line ministries. This group would satisfy the requirements of the ground-work needed for pre-VERA establishment. Once VERA is established, a new coordination committee with representation of more key government ministries and agencies, with expanded functions and responsibilities that would support the General Manager of the Agency should be formed. The coordination committee should focus on the coordination of various organs of the Government and civil society and related administrative issues. A formal understanding and agreement, such as memorandum of understandings (MOUs) elaborating on roles and responsibilities, have to be put in place to ensure the regular and continuous representation of key stakeholders for effective coordination.

**Strategic area 3: To establish information, education and communication (IEC) programme for civil registration and vital statistics systems**

An effective IEC programme is basic for the establishment, development and maintenance of civil registration and vital statistics systems in any country. For the civil registration system to take root and function effectively, the public has to be effectively informed, educated and convinced on the uses and benefits of registration of vital events. People will not declare the occurrence of vital events if they are not aware of the need and the obligation to do so, as well as the benefits of doing so. The public has also to be educated

on the vital events registration law. Hence, developing IEC programme on civil registration and vital statistics systems should be a basic and priority function of VERA.

As part of the IEC programme, awareness creation and advocacy strategies should be prepared in order to motivate senior government officials, regional governments and local authorities on the benefits they can derive from establishing and maintaining their civil registration and vital statistics systems as policy-makers and as individuals. The IEC programme should target different groups in such a way that community support for vital events registration could be harnessed effectively. Individuals have to be informed and educated on the legal, administrative and statistical values of the civil registration and vital statistics systems. Strategic area 3 aims at achieving the following five specific objectives:

***Strategic objective 3.1: Setup an IEC unit in VERA and in RVERAs and form IEC committees at all relevant administrative levels***

The IEC programme should be one of the main components of the vital events registration process. To ensure this, a unit should be setup in the federal and regional vital events registration organs. The unit should start, among others, by preparing a national IEC plan as a component of an overall long-term civil registration and vital statistics systems development process. A national IEC committee should be formed consisting of senior level representatives from relevant public and parastatal institutions in the field of communications. The committee could be chaired by a senior representative of the Ministry of Communication and Information. The committee would review the national IEC plan, which would include detailed publicity and educational programmes; and make recommendations to the Board of Management through the Directors General of VERA. The IEC unit would prepare IEC handbooks, guidelines and other related materials.

Similar committees could be replicated at the regional, zonal and *wereda* levels. The IEC committees to be formed at the regional, zonal and *wereda* levels would prepare publicity and educational guidelines, coordinate the implementation of the IEC activities within their administrative areas, and tailor the publicity package to the peculiarities of different groups, without altering its essential message. At the *kebele* level, the Executive

Committee of the *kebele* administration should collaborate with the *Kebele* Civil Status Officer in launching publicity and promoting public awareness at the local level, and mobilize social networks in diffusing the IEC messages.

In the proposed stepwise implementation of vital events registration, IEC activities also need to be taken up, albeit in a lower key, in all areas where the civil registration and vital statistics setup are yet to be established. This would help generate enough awareness by the time these areas are brought under coverage. It should also be noted that IEC activities need to continue even after a high coverage of registration is achieved in a *kebele* or *wereda* to ensure that the knowledge level is sustained and the remaining events are also captured.

***Strategic objective 3.2: Research and devise an effective advocacy strategy for different segments of the population***

There is no question that, in today's Ethiopia, there is ample political will to implement civil registration and vital statistics systems and bring about their benefits to the citizens. The promulgation of the vital events registration law is a testimony to that. This does not mean, however, that all politicians, policy makers, the private sector, community leaders, and others are necessarily well versed in the knowledge that investing in civil registration and vital statistics systems is necessary and in the best interests of individuals and the country.

A strategy need to be devised that would guarantee a well orchestrated and sustained advocacy campaign. It should identify the different target audiences, the process to be followed and the tools to be used to engage and persuade them of the benefits of registering vital events and on the uses of vital statistics obtained from the records. A model IEC handbook should be prepared at the national level that provides guidelines on identifying target groups, developing key messages and tools of communication such as mass media, policy briefs, forums and workshops, and for use at training sessions. Research should be conducted to tailor the handbook to the situation in the regions by the concerned vital events registration authorities, in collaboration with VERA. The

programme, among others, has to plan implementation of new ideas and overcome any resistance.

***Strategic objective 3.3: Formulate a broad education strategy that considers non-formal and informal education for the raising of civic consciousness to promote civil registration and vital statistics systems***

Educating and galvanizing the public for various development initiatives at the *kebele* and grass-root level has been implemented successfully over the years. These had been done through the media, discussion fora, community-level meetings, etc. The education strategy for vital events registration could benefit from this experience and also piggy-back on any existing civic education system.

*Kebele* and *wereda* officials should be educated first and foremost on the benefits of the civil registration and vital statistics systems, and on their duties and responsibilities to make this work. The requisite skills on the registration process should be imparted to them. When these officials are empowered both as individuals and as part of the management of the *kebele* and *wereda* offices, then they can effectively impart knowledge, motivation and confidence to the *kebele* inhabitants in their jurisdictions. This would enhance the transparency of the vital events registration process and contribute greatly to its credibility and public confidence in the system. Civic education is a critical and effective empowerment tool for promoting citizens' participation in the registration initiative as part of the overall national democratic and development processes.

***Strategic objective 3.4: Mobilize communities and social networks in kebeles to participate in the advocacy campaign***

Local communities and social networks need to be mobilized to support and participate in the registration of vital events by conducting IEC campaigns on the uses and benefits of civil registration and vital statistics systems. Strengthen the role of social networks, both in rural and urban areas to ensure comprehensive and continuous registration of vital events. Existing networks operating at grass-root level, such as “and-le-amist”; “edirs”, “mahibers”, clans, village elders, opinion leaders, educators, religious institutions, and the

like, could play key role as IEC agents in support of the *Kebele* Civil Status Office. It is, thus, of capital importance to the coverage and maintenance of civil registration that these community networks become “friends of the Civil Status Officer” in facilitating his/her task on a voluntary basis. The expected passive nature of *Kebele* Civil Status could be more activated if they capitalize on the support that could be provided by social networks, civic societies and development workers.

***Strategic objective 3.5: Collaborate with potential advocates and partners for vital events registrations***

The potential advocates and partners for implementing, developing and maintaining civil registration and vital statistics systems include line ministries, the media, local NGOs and international development partners. Among government ministries the key players would be health, education, urban development agencies, and others that need population data for decision-making. Likewise, local NGOs are keen on the availability of continuous, comprehensive and disaggregated vital statistics for designing interventions and monitoring and evaluations in their respective areas of interest. There are also many international organizations, such as UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR and others, who have vested interest on the benefits of vital events registration and the statistics generated from it in their respective areas of mandates. All these are potential advocates of civil registration and vital statistics systems.

**Strategic area 4: To establish demand creation programmes for vital events records**

A well organized IEC would bring to the population the importance and obligation of registering the occurrence of vital events. However, IEC alone would not be sufficient reason to increase registration coverage. The registration process would be spontaneous if the need for it is realized by the population. It has to be supported by government ministries, department, and private entities that need reliable data and statistics that inform decision-making for policies, programmes and service delivery. An ECA document

(UNECA, 2010) has articulated the need for demand creation at central and local government administrations and in service rendering line ministries and departments. It also elaborates incentive for individuals and households to seek for vital records. These are highlighted briefly in the following two strategic objectives.

***Strategic objective 4.1: Promote a culture of use of information in government administrations***

Government administrations at all levels, from the federal to the *kebele* level are the primary beneficiaries of a well functioning registration of vital events and the vital statistics obtained from it. As mentioned before, the vital events records are required for legal, administrative and statistical purposes. For instance, the judicial services require evidence of occurrence of vital events in their day-to-day businesses and for administering legal cases. Public administration requires evidence of vital events and related personal information to deliver services such as issuance of identification cards and passports, to update electoral rolls. Public health sector requires the vital statistics to formulate interventions and monitor health at the smallest geographical and administrative levels. There is need to promote a culture of use of information collected through vital events registration system and processed by the vital statistics system among government ministries and departments, and other stakeholders.

***Strategic objective 4.2: Creating demand for vital events records by the public through key government ministries and departments that provide service to the public***

Government ministries and agencies that deliver service to the population could help create demand for evidence of vital events from records of a legal register. For instance, the need for legal certificates could be realized if birth certificate is mandatory at the time of school enrollment or at any place where the age of a person is to be proved. Similarly, parents should be encouraged to get birth certificates at the time of vaccinations of children. This would contribute to the accurate and comprehensive registration of vital events as they occur. Some of the many service-giving government agencies that require legal vital events

records are electoral commissions, passport issuing department, public health facilities and schools.

### **Strategic area 5: To improve and strengthen the data collection, production and use of vital statistics**

Timely and quality vital statistics is crucial for the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and the evaluation of their impacts on society. There is need for such statistics to feed into the decision-making process at national, regional, and lower administrative areas, including the *kebele* administrations.

Article 7(1) of the law on statistics mandates CSA to collect data through population and housing censuses, household surveys and administrative records (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2005). The practice in CSA has, so far, been collecting data on vital events mainly through population and housing censuses, every ten years or so, and through periodic sample surveys. There were efforts at collecting data on vital events from sample registration areas; however no systematic compilation of vital statistics was done before.

The vital events registration law has now provided the basis for establishing a vital statistics system<sup>9</sup> from continuous and permanent legal records of births, deaths, marriages and divorces occurring in all parts of the country. CSA has therefore to reorganize and improve its administrative and operational framework to strengthen the compilation and dissemination of timely vital statistics on a continuous basis, and develop a safe and accessible archiving system for the records. It has also to establish an integrated and collaborative interface with civil registration organs to facilitate efficient registration process and smooth flow of documents from the *kebele* offices through the different higher administrative levels up to the federal level.

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<sup>9</sup> A vital statistics system 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, analysing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form. (United Nations, 2001; p. 3).

Strategic area 5 is an approach to ensure the availability of continuous vital statistics generated from vital events records. It aims at achieving the following seven objectives:

***Strategic objective 5.1: Establish and maintain interface and collaboration between CSA and vital events registration organs***

The legal basis for the interface between CSA and VERA is set out in Article 45(7) of the vital events registration law, where the latter is required to send one of the copies of the registration forms it has received from regional vital events registration organs within 30 days of receiving them. CSA should work with VERA on the modalities for the smooth and effective transfer of documents. In this respect, these institutions should agree on their roles and responsibilities, and put in place accountability mechanisms for efficient and effective work environment.

Given that CSA is already established, it is recommended that it should take the initiative to formulate the institutional collaboration and interface and provide support in setting up the organizational and operational arrangements required by the federal, regional and lower levels of vital events registration organs. The CSA should also collaborate on other important issues such as advocacy and awareness creation campaigns, training of federal and regional headquarters staff, *kebele* registrars and other stakeholders. Once the vital events registration system is standing on solid ground, maintaining it will be the responsibility of all concerned.

The preparation of vital events registers and related forms, certificates, manuals, guidelines, and other related materials should be the joint responsibility of VERA, RVERAs and CSA. When these materials are agreed upon and approved by the Board of Management, the registration organs should own the documents and the operation, including the distribution of blank registers, forms, certificates and other documents, and collecting the completed ones as per the schedule specified in the law. Monitoring and evaluation of the functioning of the registration system should be a joint venture.



***Strategic objective 5.2: Improve and broaden the scope of existing statistical processes and practices***

The current setup of CSA is to collect economic, social, demographic and cultural data through periodic regular population and housing censuses and household surveys. Not only does registration of vital events enable CSA to collect continuous and comprehensive data at lower administrative units, it also provides the opportunity to expand the scope of data collection. This strategic objective aims at expanding the existing statistical information base, for instance by including health statistics in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and vital events registration organs.

There is need to strengthen the vital statistics unit in CSA so that it can handle the expected huge task when vital events registration is fully operational nation-wide. This requires a new structure within in the existing administrative structure of CSA. The expected new activities can be done at headquarters, but it would be efficient and effective if the coding, editing and data entry functions are conducted in a designated branch office in each region. VERA can delegate RVERAs to transmit one of the forms to the designated CSA branch offices in their respective regions.

This partial decentralization of activities will require setting up of a vital statistics sub-unit within each of the selected regional branch offices to handle the work in a continuous manner. The reorganization of CSA necessitated by the work would require new office space and archiving rooms with appropriate staffing and other resources. The human resource base of the vital statistics system should include statistical clerks, coders, and IT personnel to convert information in individual records to useful data. Similar efforts needed for developing human resources for the vital events registration system is indicated in Strategic objectives 6.2 and 6.3.

During the stepwise implementation process the staff requirement may be less at the beginning. However, it may be better to recruit as many of the staff as possible at the beginning as they can also be used for other statistical activities of CSA and also for assisting in IEC activities relating to civil events registration and vital statistics. It should

also be kept in view that once computerization takes place at the registration centers, the manpower requirement would change significantly. There would not be any requirement of coding or editing of data as the coding has to be done at the time of data entry either manually or assisted by the computer. All the edit checks would have to be in-built into the data entry software for registration so that the data are free from errors when it is captured. It is this data that would be electronically transferred to CSA branch offices in such a scenario.

The 2012 law specifies the particulars of the vital events to be recorded (births, Articles 24 and 25; marriages, Article 30; divorce, Article 34; and deaths, Article 38). The law also makes allowance to collect additional information on births, deaths, marriages and divorces, deemed necessary by the appropriate organ, which in this could be CSA. Regarding the type of additional information to be collected from individuals, CSA should take the initiative to work with VERA and RVERAs and other relevant ministries and agencies. The variables specified by the 2012 law and those listed in the internationally recommended list are given in Annex 7.

Ministry of Health should also be consulted to include some health-related variables without overloading the civil registration system, if possible. For instance, significant health interventions work is underway currently at *kebele* levels in all parts of Ethiopia, through health extension workers<sup>10</sup>. There is need to measure the achievements in the health sector in terms of lives saved, vulnerable population groups benefiting from the programmes being implemented at local level for decisions on resource allocation and prioritizing activities at local levels. Health statistics are also needed for Millennium Development Goals (MDG) reporting and other international uses.

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<sup>10</sup> There are at least two health extension workers at *kebele* level responsible for a package of 16 health care interventions, such as reducing infant, child and maternal mortality; vaccinations, sanitation, and others. These health workers are aware of births and deaths occurring in households and in health facilities.

***Strategic objective 5.3: Harmonize concepts, standards and methods for data collection and statistical production***

Adapting international concepts, standards and methods in vital events registration, population and other censuses, and sample surveys would ensure harmonized production of statistics in the national statistical system. Mechanisms to ensure that uniform concepts, standards and methods are applied to the registration process across all *kebeles* are critical aspects of ensuring coherence at all administrative levels. CSA should setup, in collaboration with VERA and RVERAs, rules and procedures to enforce that they are aligned with forms and registers are appropriate for legal use and statistical purpose; and that internationally accepted concepts and definitions. They should agree on minimum standards of practices and procedures for recording vital events and background information so that comparable vital statistics are produced throughout the country.

Standard forms allow the aggregation of data from the *kebele* to the national level, and for comparisons to be made over time and across administrative areas. CSA should collaborate with VERA and RVERAs and provide technical support in setting the standard for collecting information. Civil registration and vital statistics systems should be a major component of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics.

***Strategic objective 5.4: Review existing policies and regulations on archiving, confidentiality and release of individual records***

It is a legal and ethical responsibility of CSA to protect the confidentiality of individual records. The vital events registration law clearly states that any breach by staff that involves vital events records or any data misuse is punishable (Article 66). CSA also has such complementary provisions in its directives on the use of micro-data and other statistical issues (CSA, 2004). The perception that data confidentiality measures are inadequate could damage the public trust in the civil registration and vital statistics systems. All possible measures have to be put in place to keep records containing personal information, whether they are paper-based or digital, safe and secure. This applies to, for instance, reviewing existing policies and regulations on release of micro-data, sharing and

dissemination of aggregated vital statistics, storage facilities where copies of completed paper-based forms received from the vital events organs are kept; and to any digital forms, such as scanned copies or data not released for dissemination.

It is a requirement that the vital events registration organs at federal, regional and *kebele* offices should keep the registers indefinitely. It is understandable that there will be a permanent and secure archiving system for the paper-based records at VERA, RVERA and *kebele* civil status office; until such time that an acceptable, safe and efficient digital archiving is implemented. On the other hand, the vital events registration law is vague on how long CSA should keep copies of records in its archives. There are some compelling reasons that the archiving of copies of vital events records in CSA should not be permanent. Some of the reasons are:

- (a) Large statistical undertakings such as population and housing census, agricultural census, and large and small sample surveys are conducted by CSA periodically. Many of these are space-intensive operations that would compete for any archiving space at headquarters or regional branch offices. Acquiring additional space because of the above mentioned activities could be expensive; and
- (b) The data required by CSA from the records would be computerized, and there is no need to keep the paper forms after that for a long period.

Taking the above points into account, it is recommended that CSA's copies of vital events records be destroyed in 3 years period after data has been compiled and disseminated. This should be done under the supervision of representatives of the relevant vital events registration organs and CSA.

***Strategic objective 5.5: Review existing data collection and tabulation plans, and data release dates***

If the data collected is to be relevant to users, it has to be timely and complete. The tabulation plan has also to take users' needs into account. This requires revising existing tabulation plans in consultation with users of the data. Looking at document flow, *kebele*

civil status officers have to transmit vital events records to regional and federal registration organs, through *wereda* and/or zone offices, and then a copy is transmitted to CSA for compilation of the data. The law requires that the three detachable copies of the registration forms have to reach the RVERAs within 30 days of following the date of registration. The RVERAs keeps one copy and transmit the remaining two copies of the records to the federal organ in another 30 days. The federal agency in turn sends one set of the registration forms to CSA within 30 days. Taking these dates into account, the expected time it would take the registers to reach CSA, excluding late registers, would be as indicated in Table 4.

**Table 4. Maximum number of days it could takes for copies of vital event records to reach CSA, excluding delayed registrations**

Vital events	Time given for declarant to register occurrence of an event (Article 18)	<i>Kebeles</i> transmit records to RVERAs (Article 45/1)	RVERAs transmit records to VERAs (Article 45/2)	VERAs transmit records to CSA (Article 45/7)	Maximum number of days it takes to reach CSA
Birth	90 days (Article 18/2)	30 days	30 days	30 days	180 days
Death, Marriage and Divorce	30 days (Article 18/1)	30 days	30 days	30 days	120 days

The time it would take for records emanating from Ethiopian embassies, Ethiopian ships, the Ministry of National Defense to reach VERA is shorter than those indicated above (see Articles 45/3-45/6).

Table 4 shows that it would take up to 6 months for copies of the birth registration form to reach CSA. It could take up to 3 months to code, edit and key-in data into computers as well as to get clarifications/corrections on the references made to the registration agencies on specific entries in the form or regarding illegible forms. Compiling and tabulating the data at different administrative levels could take another 3 months. Taking all these into account, the feasible frequency of dissemination of vital statistics would be on annual basis.

Vital events registration operation would be step-wise with certain number of *kebeles* implementing the registrations process in different phases, as mentioned in Section 4.3 until the registration becomes operational throughout the country. Useful vital statistics could be generated for those *kebeles* that are implementing the registration of vital events in the first phases of the scaling-up process. *Kebele* can also be trained on how to compile simple tables such as number of births by sex on a monthly basis for use by *kebele* administrations and for assessing the vital events registration system being put in place progressively.

***Strategic objective 5.6: Use of new technology for data collection, storage and retrieval***

Computerization would greatly facilitate the management and maintenance of an effective vital event registration system. It would also speed up the compilation and dissemination of vital statistics. In the medium to long term, the vital events registration system should develop the capacity to capture, store, abstract, archive and retrieve individual records using computers. This, however, has to be done in stages starting from the central offices and going down to the local offices. It is in the best interest of CSA to collaborate and support vital events registration organs to computerize the system for registration, data transfer and storage in due course to ensure that necessary requirement for compiling statistics out of the data are inbuilt in the system.

Research need to be also conducted into the potentials of new technologies such smart-phones for use by declarants, and if feasible for recording vital events at the *kebele* level. See Strategic objective 7.3 on use of new technologies and measures to enhance security and minimize fraud.

***Strategic objective 5.7: Monitoring and evaluations***

It is important to identify areas of success or failure in managing the registration and vital statistics systems. Close collaboration between the vital events registration organs and the

CSA is required for an efficient monitoring and evaluation of the functioning of the system. CSA management should be involved in the control functions to assure adherence to timeliness, completeness and quality of data. It will need to make independent assessments of statistical data, by conducting sample surveys or integrating data from other sources, such as electoral database, with data from the registration system. The registration and certification would have checked the information collected before one copy is transmitted to CSA and therefore the quantity of statistical monitoring is expected to be low. However both systems would benefit if CSA implements monitoring mechanism to assess inconsistencies, internal completeness of each document and the completeness of the civil registration system itself, among other things. If problems are identified, measures should be taken to adjust or modify the registration and data compilation processes to maintain data quality.

Demographic techniques can be used to assess internal completeness of each document. For instance, frequency count by geographical area and comparing it to projected estimate based on its prior history, say from a census, can yield a general estimate of how many vital events should be anticipated in a given period of time from that area. If there is significant difference from that recorded by the vital events registration process, then action to determine what is causing the changes needs to be investigated and reported to all concerned authorities.

On the other hand, matching of infant death reports to corresponding birth records can be used to check completeness of a birth register and conversely the birth register can be used to verify completeness of the infant death record. For further considerations of monitoring and evaluations, see strategic objective 8.3.

## **Strategic area 6: To build sustainable institutional capacity for civil registration and vital statistics systems**

Capacity-building focuses on the development of sustainable skills, infrastructures, resources and commitment to establish and develop vital events registration and vital statistics systems. Building institutional capacity in vital events registration and vital statistics systems in all regional states and city administrations and lower administrative levels is a core activity that would enable sustained delivery of services and outputs and ensure quality and continuous flow of data. The expected outcomes of capacity-building include, among others, competent civil registrars, statisticians, IT experts, and strengthened training institutions. The strategic objectives for capacity-building activities to establish, develop and strengthen civil registration and vital statistics systems are the following:

### ***Strategic objective 6.1: Establishing an organizational unit with appropriate staff***

Opening an organizational unit for institutional capacity building should be an integral part of the overall vital events registration establishment and development plan at federal and regional states levels and in CSA. The unit should be well staffed, and if necessary with advisory committees formed from key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education and universities.

### ***Strategic objective 6.2: Developing an integrated capacity building strategy***

Capacity building is an approach to medium and long term development of human resources. To be effective, capacity building efforts should focus on individuals, groups, and organizations. There is need for use of combination of strategies for this purpose that should include developing training materials, conducting short training and in-service training, technical assistance, vocational capacity building, study visits abroad, and professional development activities. The strategy could include:



**(a) *Developing and conducting a sustained and integrated training programme for civil registrars up to the kebele level***

It is of utmost importance that sustained and targeted training for registrars at *kebele* level be conducted in order for them to have a sound understanding of the purpose and rules of registration. They need both pre-service and in-service training. This can be accomplished, for example, by strengthening the capacity of existing training centers in the country to conduct on-the-job training on a regular basis. Officials assigned responsibilities for the registration of vital events at *wereda*, zonal and regional levels should also participate in specialized training tailored to their needs, including the purpose and rules of registration, legal duties and responsibilities to protect the integrity of the vital events records, monitoring and evaluation, and an understanding of the value of quality and timely statistical outputs.

**(b) *Mainstream civil registration and vital statistics training in education and training institutions***

Formulate proposals to incorporate civil registration and vital statistics issues into the primary and secondary schools curricula. TVET, Ministry of Education, is currently drafting a programme to train civil registrars and middle level statisticians. This is to be encouraged. VERA should provide TVET with the training materials. The federal and regional vital events organs and CSA should coordinate and collaborate with Ministry of Education in this endeavor.

**(c) *Establish and maintain a national pool of civil registration and vital statistics professionals***

Staff attrition should be expected in such a large and complex activity. Short, medium and long term plans need to be set to establish and maintain a pool of civil registration and vital statistics professionals over the years as follows: (i) identify existing skills in the country; (ii) link with partners who have content and context expertise with the programme; (iii) coordinate with universities, the Ethiopian Statistical Association and other relevant professional associations; and (iv) establish

and maintain technical assistance and cooperation programmes with national and international development partners, especially the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

### **Strategic area 7: To establish effective technological environment**

The introduction of major automation into government administration such as the vital events registration system is a complex and costly process, which may take several years to complete. However, because of its many advantages, more and more countries are applying computer technology in the administrative and operational activities of vital events registration.

#### ***Strategic objective 7.1: Establishing Information Technology (IT) Units in VERA and RVERAs and strengthening it in CSA***

An organizational unit is required in VERA to plan, develop and maintain automation in the civil registration and vital statistics systems. The units should be well staffed, and if necessary with advisory committees formed from CSA and other key stakeholders. The unit's roles and responsibilities include proposing for decision the goals and purposes of the automation of vital events registration, computer interface between vital events registration and vital statistics system and other governmental agencies, and identifying some of the major decisions and problem areas, such as security measures to ensure confidentiality and the preservation of data.

Each regional state is expected to have its own laws and regulations which govern registration processes and functions, including the application of information technology. The regulations would not guarantee equal progress among the regions in automating their systems. Although the needs and problems for meeting demands for registration services in one region are quite similar to those in other regions, some could move into computerization of the registration system quickly while others are still operating a paper-

based system. The extent to which automation can take place in each region depends on the availability of competent staff, resources and equipment.

***Strategic objective 7.2: Formulate IT development strategy for scalable automation of civil registration and vital statistics systems***

The use of computers and scanners has become an integral part of modernizing civil registration and vital statistics systems. All of these technologies facilitate and help to speed up data management and the transferring and archiving of records. IT, like other activities of the vital events registration organs, has to be built in phases. It is recommended that computerization be introduced progressively down from the federal office to the regional and local offices. It would be wise to start with a manual paper-based system and move to an e-system that issues registration certificates from a database.

A broad IT development structure and implementation strategy has to be prepared as an integral part of the overall civil registration and vital statistics systems implementation plan. As the vital events registration is a new undertaking, the strategy for its automation should follow a scalable approach using criteria that would be proposed by the IT Unit for management decision. It is recommended that each phase be completed, assessed and improvements incorporated before initiating the next phase. This will ensure incremental improvements to the automation of the vital events registration process.

***Strategic objective 7.3: Introduce measures to enhance security and minimize fraud***

The introduction of computers in vital events administration requires that there are laws, policies and mechanisms governing the release of individual data and its use, and to avoid identity fraud of various types. The programmes to be used also should have security-enhanced features to avoid data theft. Article 65(2) of the law requires that measures should be taken to protect individual information from electronically designed attacks, theft or other similar criminal abuses.

***Strategic objective 7.4: Establish and enhance interoperable ICT infrastructure and systems***

The civil registration and vital statistics computer systems should be able to exchange information and to use the information that has been exchanged. The vital event registration system should be interoperable with other government systems such as the national identity card and electoral databases. ICT infrastructure and systems to be procured at federal and regional levels should be interoperable so that they work with each other at present and in the future.

***Strategic objective 7.5: Develop and conduct a sustainable and integrated training programme for data processing staff***

The availability of trained staff, resources and equipment often dictate the pace and the extent to which automation can take place. A detailed training programme has therefore to be developed by VERA and RVERAs to train a cadre of IT staff. It is recommended that CSA and other key stakeholders with IT systems in place and with previous experience of training large number of IT operators and experts be involved in preparing and conducting the training programme. Staff turnover in the IT sector is usually high, thus the training programme should be sustained to replace those that might leave and to upgrade the skills of those staying within the system. Such training should also be integrated with strategic objectives 5.8 and 6.2.

***Strategic objective 7.6: Conduct research and development on new technologies***

It is advisable that new technological development should be scanned on a continuous manner and research conducted to investigate new technological advances that make automation of the civil registration and vital statistics systems a feasible option. Conduct research into the potential of using smart-phones or other innovations for notification of occurrences of vital events at community level. For instance, mobile phones can be used to notify the Civil Status Officer on the occurrence of vital events by households in outlying parts of a *kebele* or by the pastoralist population.

## **Strategic area 8: To manage, coordinate and monitor implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan**

Several actors will be involved in the implementation of the actions contained in this strategy document. A mechanism should be setup to ensure that the actions are an integral part of other government and regional states programmes, and that of local and international development partners; and to ensure the civil registration and vital statistics systems are functioning effectively and efficiently.

### ***Strategic objective 8.1: Management and coordination of implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan***

A management and coordination unit should be set up in VERA, reporting directly to the General Manager, to advise on the conditions and mechanisms necessary for the effective implementation of the actions contained in this strategy document; and to follow up and report on their implementations on a regular basis; among other things. The Unit would liaise with development partners on possible areas of cooperation in this effort. The Unit can also be charged with setting up a multi-sectoral coordination committee, with representatives of the key stakeholders in civil registration and vital statistics, including, for example, the Ministry of Justice, the Central Statistical Agency, the Ministry of Health, the National Identity Card Agency, and other relevant line ministries including those represented in the Board of Management of Vital Events Registration. Similar arrangements could be replicated in the regional states.

### ***Strategic objective 8.2: Devise sustainable funding***

Establishing, developing and sustaining country-wide civil registration and vital statistics systems is complex and costly. For a country like Ethiopia, with a large surface area and a large and growing population, the programme could be expensive. What is very encouraging is that the government has made it clear that budget for programme is the prime responsibility of the state and the regional governments. This does not however preclude the support needed from development partners, for instance, in terms of human

resources development, procurement of equipment and vehicles needed to jump-start the operation, among others. The Unit would liaise with development partners on possible areas of cooperation in this direction.

***Strategic objective 8.3: Monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan document***

Periodic and regular monitoring and evaluation of the extent to which civil registration and vital statistics systems are functioning is a must. Periodic assessment of the implementation of the development plan will enable to monitor progress made and to identify bottle-necks. The monitoring of progress in implementation of the plan should be simple, with few but important performance indicators to measure progress every few years. During the scaling up from one phase to the next, it is necessary to assess the implementation of the current phase and take remedial actions before moving to the next phase. The civil registration and vital statistics systems should support each other on the monitoring and evaluation exercise. For instance, civil registration system can be evaluated in terms of its functioning, accessibility, customer satisfaction, and the like; while the vital statistics system can be evaluated in relation to coverage, completeness, data quality, timeliness of the data and how the data is used. The findings in one will be input for the other.

## **CHAPTER 5. ACTION PLAN**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The Strategies and Action Plan consists of eight interconnected strategic areas that were defined through a process of consultations that involved the members of the Technical Committee and others. Each of the strategic areas comprises a number of strategic objectives. The action plan presents priority activities needed to realize the strategic objectives described in Chapter 4. These priority activities are aimed mainly at translating the law into the day-to-day activities of the implementing bodies identified. In this regard, actions were proposed in the eight strategic areas to establish and implement vital events registration system for legal purpose and to strengthen the vital statistics system to provide data for socio-economic development on a continuous basis.

This document was formulated to serve as an integrated strategy framework, within which the civil registration and vital statistics systems would be organized and coordinated for the implementation of the action plan over a period of five years. Whether total coverage would be achieved in five years would depend on how quickly VERA and RVERAs would be established and start operations, and on the pace of implementation of the law by the regional states. Consequently, the period until acceptable vital events registration coverage fulfilling the legal requirements of all citizens and the ability of the records to provide vital events statistics at national, regional and lower levels is achieved could be shorter or longer than five years.

The Action Plan is organized by (i) actions to be taken, (ii) priority of the actions, where VH stands for very high priority actions; H stands for high, and M for medium priority actions, respectively; (iii) the proposed time frame for implementing the identified and prioritized actions; (iv) the implementers of the identified actions; (v) expected outputs; and (vi) the milestones which are measures of the achievements of the identified actions, quantified wherever possible.

## 5.2 Result based action plan

<b>Strategic area 1: To establish and develop the registration of vital events and associated services at different administrative levels</b>					
<b>Strategic objective 1.1: Institution building for the registration of vital events</b>					
Actions	Pri- rity	Time frame <sup>11</sup>	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<i>Strategic objective 1.1 (a) Establish the federal organ for registration of vital events</i>					
Establish Federal Vital Events Council	H	Early 2013/ 2005	Government	Regulated environment for establishment and development of vital events registration	Council formed; Council's meetings
Recruit Director General (DG) and establish VERA	VH	Before May 2013/ Guenbot 2005]	Chair of the Federal Vital Events Council	Basic requirement for operationalizing registration activities at federal level in place	DG appointed; VERA's office secured and furnished; Skeleton staff recruited ; Agency starts operation; Materials essential to start operation in place
Establish Board of Management	VH	As soon as possible in 2013/ 2005	Government	Better coordination and development of registration activities ; Adopts its own rules of procedure; Monthly or more frequent meetings for decisions	Annual work program, budget and performance reports of the Agency reviewed
VERA starts operations - Organizational structure of VERA	VH	Up to May 2013/ Guenbot 2005	Vital Events Council; Director general of VERA; Secretariat for Coordination	Final draft of VERA's organizational structure submitted for approval (work has started)	Organizational structure approved
- Staffing	VH	June – Aug 2012 / Sene – Nehasse 2005	Vital Events Council; Board of Management	VERA skeleton staff recruited to begin operation	VERA gets minimum infrastructural, human, financial and technical capacity
- Draft model law for use by regions	H	May-June 2013 / Guenbot – Sene 2005	DG of VERA; Secretariat for Coordination	Model law ready	Model law distributed to regional governments

<sup>11</sup> Dates within square brackets are in the Ethiopian calendar.



Actions	Priority	Time frame <sup>12</sup>	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.1 (a) Establish the federal organ for registration of vital events .... Continued</i></b>					
Organize orientation seminars	H	June 2013 / Sene 2005	VERA and CSA	Orientation seminars for high level government officials	Support and commitment of senior government officials
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.1(b) Establish the regional organs for registration of vital events</i></b>					
Regions issue vital events registration law	H	Jul – Sep 2013 / Hamle 2005 – Meskerem 2006	Regional government; VERA	Basis for vital events registration	All regions promulgate their laws
Establish Regional Vital Events Council	H	Jul – Sep 2013 / Hamle 2005 – Meskerem 2006	Regional governments; VERA	Regulated environment for establishment and development of vital events registration	Regional Councils formed; Councils' meetings
Establish Regional Board of Management	H	Oct 2013 / Tikimt 2006	Regional governments; Regional Vital Events Councils; VERA	Better coordination and development of registration activities ; Adopts its own rules of procedure; Monthly or more frequent meetings for decisions	Annual work program and budget of RVERAs reviewed; vital events registration manuals and guidelines for each region approved
Establish Regional Vital Events Registration Agencies (RVERAs); Recruit managers	H	Oct 2013 / Tikimt 2006	Regional Vital Events Councils	RVERA offices established	Managers appointed
Prepare organizational structures of RVERAs	H	Nov 2013 / Hidar 2006	Region's Vital Events Council; VERA	Final draft of RVERA's organizational structure submitted for approval	Basic requirement for operationalizing registration activities at regional levels in place; Organizational structure approved

<sup>12</sup> Dates within square brackets are in the Ethiopian calendar.

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.1(b) Establish the regional organs for registration of vital events ..... continued</i></b>					
Staffing of RVERAs	H	Nov - Dec 2013 / Hidar – Tahsas 2006	Region’s Vital Events Council; Board of Management; RVERAs	Skeleton staff recruited and RVERAs start operation; Materials essential to start operation in place, including rules and procedures for registration finalized	RVERAs get infrastructural, human, financial and technical capacity
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.1(c) Establish, develop and sustain Kebele and Wereda Civil Status Offices in a phased manner to be determined by RVERAs and VERAs</i></b>					
Incorporate vital events functions in existing structures of <i>kebele</i> and <i>wereda</i> offices in Phase I	VH	Jul 2014- Jun 2016/ Hamle 2006 - Sene 2008	<i>Kebele</i> Executive Committee, RVERA, VERA, CSA	Registration activities integrated into the regular office activities in about 3,000 <i>kebeles</i> ; List of <i>kebeles</i> and <i>weredas</i> that become operational in Phase I	18 percent coverage in terms of numbers of <i>kebele</i> achieved
Incorporate vital events functions in existing structures of <i>kebele</i> and <i>wereda</i> offices in Phase II	H	Jul 2016 - Jun 2017/ Hamle 2008 - Sene 2009	<i>Kebele</i> Executive Committee, RVERA, VERA, CSA	Registration activities integrated into the regular office activities in about 6,000 <i>kebeles</i> ; List of <i>kebeles</i> and <i>weredas</i> that become operational in Phase II	37 percent coverage in terms of numbers of <i>kebeles</i> achieved for Phase II; and total for Phase I and Phase II reaching 55 percent
Incorporate vital events functions in existing structures of <i>kebele</i> and <i>wereda</i> offices in Phase III	H	Jul 2017 - Jun 2018/ Hamle 2009 - Sene 2010	<i>Kebele</i> Executive Committee, RVERA, VERA, CSA	Registration activities integrated into the regular office activities in the remaining <i>kebeles</i> ; List of <i>kebeles</i> and <i>weredas</i> that become operational in Phase III	45 percent coverage in terms of numbers of <i>kebeles</i> achieved for Phase III; and almost total national coverage achieved
<b>Strategic objective 1.2: Formulate and implement vital events registration operations</b>					
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.2a: Vital events registration operations at federal levels</i></b>					
Prepare operations plan	VH	Jul - Dec 2013 / Hamle 2005 – Tahsas 2006	VERA; CSA; Development partners; key stakeholders; Consultants	Operations plan at federal level, including human, technical and financial resources necessary	Detailed operational manual prepared, printed and distributed on schedule
Preparation of registration tools and manuals	H	Jun - Dec 2013 / Sene 2005- Tahsas 2006	VERA; RVERAs; CSA experts; Consultants	Vital events registration documents (registers, certificates, manuals, publicity materials, etc.); Readiness for operation phase	Board reviews and approves documents; Timely distribution of documents to the relevant organs

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.2b: Vital events registration operations at regional levels</i></b>					
Prepare operations plan including human, technical and financial resources necessary	VH	Jan 2014 / Tir 2006	RVERAs; VERA; CSA; Development partners; key stakeholders; Consultants	Operations plan at regional level	Detailed regional operational manual prepared, printed and distributed on schedule
Preparation of registration tools and manuals	H	Jun - Dec 2013 / Sene 2005- Tahsas 2006	VERA; RVERAs; CSA experts; Consultants	Vital events registration documents (registers, certificates, manuals, publicity materials, etc.); Readiness for operation phase	Board reviews and approves documents; Timely distribution of documents to the relevant organs
Definition of cataloguing, classification, etc. of vital events records; Directives on monitoring of movement of records	H	Jan – Mar 2014 / Tir – Megabit 2006	Vital event registration organs, CSA, Consultants	Archiving system designed; Safe and smooth flow of documents	Functional record management system
Create a website	M	Jan 2014 / Tir 2006	VERA, RVERAs, MoJ, Ministry of Communication & Information	Website created and updated regularly	Website operational
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.2c: Phased vital events registration operations at wereda and kebele levels</i></b>					
Assign Civil Status Officers in <i>kebele</i> offices, and in <i>wereda</i> offices	H	Starting March 2014/ Megabit 2006	Regional governments, RVERAs, <i>Wereda</i> and <i>Kebele</i> Executive Committees	Qualified Civil Status Officers assigned	1 <sup>st</sup> phase – 3,000 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase – 6,000 3 <sup>rd</sup> phase – 7,328
Training of registrars (one month)	H	Mar -Apr 2014/ Megabit - Miazia 2006	RVERA, VERA, CSA, TVET	Training conducted	Minimum number of registrars trained in each phase: 1st phase – 3,000 2nd phase – 6,000 3rd phase – 7,328
Obtain vital events registers, certificates, manuals, advocacy materials, etc	H	Apr 2014/ Miazia 2006	RVERAs, VERA	All vital events registration manuals and forms prepared in Amharic and the regions official language	Number of kebeles and weredas in Phase I that received the documents in sufficient number

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 1.2c: Phased vital events registration operations at wereda and kebele levels ..... continued</i></b>					
<b>Strategic objective 1.3: Periodic assessment of vital events registration practice</b>					
Periodic comprehensive assessment analysis, in addition to those mentioned in Strategic objective 5.1, 8	H	Phase I – Apr – Jun 2015/ Miazia – Guenbot 2008; Phase II – Apr – Jun 2016/ Miazia – Guenbot 2009; Phase I – Apr – Jun 2017/ Miazia – Guenbot 2010	Technical committee comprising stakeholders	Timely corrective measures implemented; subsequent phases benefit from the assessment exercises	At least two comprehensive assessments conducted (See Section 4.3.2)

**Strategic area 2: To establish effective coordination mechanism among stake holders**

Actions	Priority	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 2.1: Establish or maintain existing multi-sectoral coordination mechanism at all administrative levels</i></b>					
Devise coordination mechanism at national levels	H	Jul 2013 – Jun 2018 / Hamle 2005 – Sene 2010	Council, Board, VERA, CSA	Coordination committee formed; Roles and responsibilities delineated	Smooth operations
Devise coordination mechanism at regional levels	H	Jan 2014 – Jun 2018 / Tir 2006 – Sene 2010	Regional Council, Regional Board, VERA	Coordination committee formed; Roles and responsibilities delineated;	Smooth operations
Devise coordination mechanism at <i>wereda</i> and <i>kebele</i> levels	H	Jul 2014 – 2018 / Hamle 2006 – Sene 2010	RVERA	Coordination committee formed; Roles and responsibilities delineated	Smooth operations
<b><i>Strategic objective 2.2: Institutionalize partnerships between key line ministries and others involved in vital events registration activities</i></b>					
Formalize partnership with key stakeholders	H	July – Nov 2013/ Hamle 2005 – Hidar 2006	VERA, RVERAs, CSA, MoH, MoE, Media, Others	Formal partnership institutionalized through memorandum of understandings	Synergy of activities created among stakeholders

**Strategic area 3: To establish information, education and communication (IEC) programme for vital events registration and vital statistics systems**

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 3.1: Setup an IEC unit in VERA and in RVERAs</i></b>					
IEC Unit in VERA; Form multi-sectoral IEC committee; Draft IEC plan	H	Jun – Nov 2013/ Sene 2005 – Hidar 2006	Federal Council; Board of Management; VERA; CSA; Government Communication Office; MoH;MoE	IEC Unit well staffed; National IEC plan; IEC handbook	IEC plan approved; Number and frequency of meetings; IEC handbooks distributed on schedule
IEC Unit in RVERAs; Form multi-sectoral IEC regional committees; Draft IEC plans	H	Jan – Mar 2014 / Tir – Megabit 2006	Regional Councils; Boards of Management; Government Communication Office; RVERAs; CSA;MoH;MoE	Regional IEC Units well staffed; Regional IEC plan; IEC handbooks tailored to regional needs	IEC plan approved; Number and frequency of meetings; IEC handbooks distributed on schedule
<b><i>Strategic objective 3.2: Research and devise an effective advocacy strategy for different segments of the population</i></b>					
Prepare national advocacy strategy	H	Jun – Dec 2013/ Sene 2005 – Tahsas 2006	Federal Council; Board of Management; VERA; CSA; Government Communication Office; MoH;MoE	National advocacy strategies	Strategies implemented effectively
Organize orientation seminars	H	National June 2013/ Sene 2005; Regional Nov 2013 / Hidar 2005	RVERAs, VERA and CSA	Orientation seminars for high level regional government officials and other stakeholders	Support and commitment of senior government officials
Prepare regional advocacy strategies	H	June – Dec 2013/ Sene 2005 – Tahsas 2006	Federal Council; Board of Management; VERA; CSA; Government Communication Office; MoH;MoE	Advocacy strategies tailored to regional peculiarities	Strategies implemented effectively

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 3.3: Formulate a broad education strategy that considers non-formal and informal education for raising civic consciousness to promote civil registration and vital statistics systems</i></b>					
Educate <i>kebele</i> and <i>wereda</i> officials on civic consciousness to promote vital events registration and vital statistics	H	Mar – Aug 2014 / Megabit – Nehasse 2006	Council; Board of Management; VERA;RVERAs, Government Communication Office; CSA; MoH;MoE	Target group well versed in CRVS matters	Large number of <i>kebele</i> officials
<i>Kebele</i> and <i>wereda</i> officials impart knowledge and motivate the public	H	Sep 2014 Jun 2017/ Meskerem 2007 – Sene 2010	VERA;RVERAs, Government Communication Office; CSA; MoH;MoE	Social networks involved in the process	Large number of <i>kebeles</i> covered
<b><i>Strategic objective 3.4: Mobilize communities and social networks at the Kebele levels to participate in the advocacy campaign</i></b>					
Identify and mobilize social networks in <i>kebeles</i>	H	2014 / 2006	<i>Kebele</i> CSO; <i>Kebele</i> Executive Committee	Integration of vital events registration in activities of existing social networks	Informed, committed and effective social networks
<b><i>Strategic objective 3.5: Collaborate with potential advocates and partners for vital events registrations</i></b>					
Identify and engage national and international stakeholders	H	Sep 2013 – Feb 2014/ Meskerem – Yekatit 2006	VERA; RVERAs; National and international development partners	Modalities for collaboration established	Functional partnerships; Funding and appropriate materials

#### **Strategic area 4: To establish demand creation programmes for vital events records**

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 4.1: Promote culture of use of information in government administrations</i></b>					
Identify and engage potential users of vital events records	H	Aug 2013/ Nehasse 2005	VERA, RVERAs, CSA and other stakeholders	Ministries and agencies identified	Number of ministries using vital statistics for informed decision making
<b><i>Strategic objective 4.2: Creating demand for vital events records through key government ministries and departments that provide service to the public</i></b>					
Encourage individuals to register and get certificates by creating the need for it through ministries and agencies	H	Aug 2013 – Jun 2018/ Nehasse 2005 – Sene 2010	VERA, RVERs, key ministries and agencies	Number of ministries and agencies requiring vital records in their day-to-day activities	Number and percent coverage in each <i>kebele</i>

**Strategic area 5: To improve and strengthen the data collection, production and use of vital statistics**

Actions	Prio- rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 5.1: Establish and maintain the interface and collaboration between CSA and vital events registration organs</i></b>					
Establish and sustain institutional interface and collaboration	VH	Jun 2013 – Jun2018 / Sene 2005 – Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	roles and responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms	efficient and effective collaboration and interface
Collaborate on issues such as awareness creation campaigns, training of registrars and others	H	Jun 2013 – Jun2018 / Sene 2005 – Sene 2010	VERA, RVERA, CSA, <i>wereda</i> and <i>kebele</i> Civil Status Office		Good quality vital events information and percent coverage achieved
Participate in the preparation of vital events registers and related forms	VH	Jun 2013 – Jun2018 / Sene 2005 – Sene 2010	Joint responsibility of VERA, RVERAs and CSA	Vital events registers and related forms, certificates, manuals, guidelines, and other related materials	Documents prepared and distributed efficiently on time
Monitoring and evaluation (see Section 1.3)	H	Jun 2013 – Jun2018 / Sene 2005 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs and CSA	Smooth functioning of the registration and vital statistical systems	Smooth functioning of the registration and vital statistical systems
<b><i>Strategic objective 5.2: Improve and broaden the scope of existing statistical processes and practices</i></b>					
Strengthen existing vital events statistics unit at headquarters and in branch offices of the regional capital cities	M	Jul 2013 – Jun 2018/ Hamle 2005 – Sene 2010	CSA	Vital statistics units strengthened and well staffed	Capacity to produce current vital statistics
Broaden scope of vital statistics	M	Jul 2013 – Jun 2018/ Hamle005 – Sene 2010	CSA, MoH, RVERAs, other stakeholders	Additional variables on health and other sectors collected	Relevant and timely disaggregated statistics and indicators generated



<b>Actions</b>	<b>Prio- rity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Implementing bodies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b>Strategic area 5: To improve and strengthen the data collection, production and use of vital statistics .... Continued</b>					
<i>Strategic objective 5.4: Harmonize concepts, standards and methods for data collection and statistical production</i>					
Apply harmonized concepts, standards and methods for data collection	H	Apr 2013 – Mar 2014 / Miazia 2005 – Megabit 2006	CSA, VERA, RVERAs	Integrated data collection system	Harmonized concepts, standards and methods applied in population censuses; household surveys and vital events registration
<i>Strategic objective 5.5: Review existing policies and regulations on archiving, confidentiality and release of individual records</i>					
Review the present policies and guidelines on microdata confidentiality and release	H	Apr 2013 – Mar 2014 / Miazia 2005 – Megabit 2006	CSA	New policy guidelines specific for CRVS documents	Policy guideline prepared
Training on the new guidelines	H	Apr – Jun 2014/ Miazia – Sene 2006	CSA	Staff involved in handling the records are trained	Archiving guidelines well understood and applied at all levels
<i>Strategic objective 5.6: Review existing tabulation planned date of release dates</i>					
Prepare a tabulation plan for the data; Decide on data file formats	M	2014	CSA, VERA, RVERAs	New tabulation plan prepared; File formats finalized	Tabulation plan available to users
Prepare manual on editing and coding	M	2014	CSA	Manual ready	Editors and coders trained
Train CSA staff on editing and coding	M	2014	CSA	Training on editing and coding	Training completed
Prepare necessary software for data processing	M			Software ready	Tables prepared and tested

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Prio- -rity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Implementing bodies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b><i>Strategic objective 5.7: Use of new technology for data collection, storage and retrieval</i></b>					
Use scanning for data capture and archiving	M	Jul 2014 - Jun 2018 / Hamle 2006 - Sene 2010	CSA, VERA, RVERAs	Improved data capture and archiving and efficient services to individuals	Shorter time for releasing data at all levels
Scan and conduct research into new technologies	M	Jul 2014 - Jun 2018 / Hamle 2006 - Sene 2010	CSA, VERA, RVERAs	Use of new technologies, such as smart phones for notifiers	Very low number of delayed registration
<b><i>Strategic objective 5.8: Monitoring and evaluations</i></b>					
Use sample surveys and other sources	M	Jul 2014 - Jun 2018 / Hamle 2006 - Sene 2010	CSA, VERA, RVERAs	Demographic and other techniques applied to evaluate the vital events registration	Content and coverage shows improvemen

**Strategic area 6: To build sustainable institutional capacity for civil events registration and vital statistics systems**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Prio- -rity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Implementing bodies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b><i>Strategic objective 6.1: Establishing an organization unit and appropriate staff</i></b>					
Establish capacity building units in VERA and RVERAs	H	Jun – Aug 2013 / Sene – Nehasse 2005	VERA; RVERAs	Units established; Capacity building plan prepared	Units operational
Strengthen existing training system in CSA	H	Jan - Dec 2014 / Tir 2006 – Tahsas 2007	CSA	Capacity building plan prepared	Training scope expanded
<b><i>Strategic objective 6.2: Developing an integrated capital building strategy</i></b>					
<b><i>Strategic objective 6.2a: Developing and conducting a sustained and integrated training programme for civil registrars up to the kebele level</i></b>					
Develop a training programme for vital events registrars	VH		VERA, RVERAs, weredas, CSA, TVET, MoH, etc	Quality training materials prepared and translated into languages of the regions; training programme developed for each phase of implementation	Number of trainers, and number of civil registrars trained in each phase
Conduct sustained and integrated training of registrars	VH	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, weredas, CSA, TVET, MoH, etc	Cascaded training conducted , starting with training-of-trainers	Number of trainers, and vital events registrars trained
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Prio- -rity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Implementin g bodies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b><i>Strategic objective 6.2b: Mainstream civil events registration and vital statistics training in education and training institutions</i></b>					
Civil events registration and vital statistics education introduced in primary and secondary curriculum	M	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, TVET/MoE, CSA	School children educated on the benefits of vital events records and information obtained from it	Number of students educated
Include lessons in the pre-service training programs for those joining civil services like that of health workers	M	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, MoE, Civil service institutes	All those who join civil service, health service, etc. are aware of CRVS related rules and regulations	Number of people in the service trained

Actions	Prio- -rity	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 6.2c: Establish and maintain a pool of civil registration and vital statistics professionals</i></b>					
Identify existing skills in the country	H	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Database of experts established	Directory of experts
Link and coordinate with partners who have content and context expertise with the programme	H	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Link created with universities, the Ethiopian Statistical Association and other relevant professional associations	Number of universities, and relevant professional associations
Establish and maintain cooperation programmes with development partners	H	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Cooperative arrangements established and maintained with UNFPA, UNICEF, UNECA, AfDB, and others	Number and nature of technical assistance
Establish network of registrars at national, regional and local levels	M	Apr 2014- Jun 2018/ Miazia 2006 - Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs	Functional network; Directory produced and updated	Database of institutions and registrars; Professional association of registrars formed

## Strategic area 7: To establish effective technological environment

Actions	Priority	Time frame	Implementing bodies	Outputs	Milestone
<b><i>Strategic objective 7.1: To establish an Information Technology Units in VERA and RVERAs and strengthening the IT capacity in CSA</i></b>					
Establish IT Units in VERA and RVERAs	M	Jul 2013 – Jun 2014 / Hamle 2005 – Sene 2006	VERA, RVERA, CSA, NISS	IT units with appropriate manpower established	Functional IT units at VERA and RVERAS
Identify appropriate hardware for networking that can be upgraded to link all registration centres	M	Aug 2014- Jun 2015 / Nehasse 2006 – Sene 2007	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Appropriate hardware identified and the minimum number to start with installed	Computer network available
Prepare specifications for software keeping in view the security of individual information and statistical needs	M	Aug 2014- Jun 2015 / Nehasse 2006 – Sene 2007	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Software specifications ready and software prepared/purchased and tested	Computer systems ready
Enhance the IT capabilities in CSA	M	Aug 2014- Jun 2015 / Nehasse 2006 – Sene 2007	CSA, VERA	Procure necessary additional equipment and software for automatically taking data from those registration centres where registration work is computerized	CSA have capability to process all data and also to access data from the server of the VERA/RVERAs
<b><i>Strategic objective 7.2: To formulate IT development strategy for scalable automation of CRVS systems</i></b>					
Formulate IT strategy	H	Aug 2014- Jun 2015 / Nehasse 2006 – Sene 2007	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Strategy drafted	Management information system developed
<b><i>Strategic objective 7.3: Introduce and maintain measures to enhance security and minimize fraud</i></b>					
Enhance security	H	Jul 2013 – Jun 2018 / Hamle 2005 – Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Security strategy drafted	Strategy implemented

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Prio- rity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Implementin g bodies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b><i>Strategic objective 7.4: Establish and enhance interoperable ICT infrastructure and systems</i></b>					
Conduct research into interoperability of ICT information and systems	H	Jul 2013 – Jun 2018 / Hamle 2005 – Sene2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Research results	Number of research projects
<b><i>Strategic objective 7.5: Develop and conduct a sustainable and integrated training programme for data processing staff</i></b>					
Design continuous training programme	H	Apr 2014/ Miazia 2006	VERA, RVERAs, CSA	Training strategy drafted	Number trained
<b><i>Strategic objective 7.6: Follow-up on developments in new technologies</i></b>					
Scan development in new technology and	M	July 2014/ Hamle 2006	VERA, RVERAs, CSA, other stakeholders	New developments identified and applicability to the Ethiopian context determined	Relevant development incorporated in the vital events registration process

**Strategic area 8: To manage, coordinate and monitor implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Prio- rity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Implementin g bodies</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b><i>Strategic objective 8.1: Management and coordination of implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan</i></b>					
Assign a focal point to manage, coordinate and monitor implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan	V H	Jul 2013 - Jun 2018 / Hamle 2005 – Sene 2010	VERA	Management structure worked out; continuous coordination activity	Actions implemented as per plan
<b><i>Strategic objective 8.2: Devise sustainable funding for the implementation of the action plan</i></b>					
Liaise with national and international development partners	H	Jan 2014 - Jun 2018 / Meskerm 2006 – Sene 2010	VERA	All priority activities well funded	Implementation proceeds without hitch
<b><i>Strategic objective 8.3: Monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan</i></b>					
Monitor progress of implementation plan against expected outputs, set milestones, and other appropriate measures	H	Jan 2014 - Jun 2018 / Meskerm 2006 – Sene 2010	VERA, RVERAs, CSA, other stakeholders	and monitoring of implementation progress	Revisions made to the plan as many times as necessary based on findings of the assessment

### 5.3 Timeline for implementation of strategic objectives (SO)

Actions	2013					2014					2015					2016					2017					2018																								
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M
SO1.1	Institution building for the registration of vital events																																																	
(a)	Establish the federal organ																																																	
	Establish Federal Vital Events Council																																																	
	Recruit DG and establish VERA																																																	
	Establish Board of Management																																																	
	VERA starts operations																																																	
	Staffing																																																	
	Draft model law for use by regions																																																	
	Preparation of registration tools & Organize orientation seminars																																																	
(b)	Establish the regional organs																																																	
(c)	Establish Phase I Kebele Civil Status																																																	
	Establish Phase II Kebele Civil Status																																																	
	Establish Phase III Kebele Civil Status																																																	
SO1.2	Formulate and implement vital events registration operations																																																	
(a)	Registration operations at federal levels																																																	
(b)	Registration operations at regional levels																																																	
(c)	Registration operations at wereda& kebele levels																																																	
SO1.3	Periodic assessment of vital events registration practice																																																	
SO2.1	Establish/maintain multi-sectoral coordination mechanism																																																	
SO2.2	Institutionalize partnerships between key stakeholders																																																	
SO3.1	Setup an IEC unit in VERA and in																																																	
SO3.2	Research and devise an effective advocacy																																																	
SO3.3	Formulate a broad education strategy																																																	
SO3.4	Mobilize social networks at the Kebele levels to participate in the advocacy																																																	
SO3.5	Collaborate with potential advocates and partners for vital events registrations																																																	





## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Establishing a conventional vital events registration system is a massive undertaking that would take several years starting from the preparation phase to the time when total nationwide coverage is achieved. It is apparent that challenges are to be faced in such a huge first-time operation which would mobilize over 16,000 *kebeles* and even more number of people. On the other hand, there are many opportunities that are envisaged to contribute towards the success of the registration operation.

Some of the opportunities mentioned in Chapter 3 and elsewhere are:

(i) Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card Proclamation No. 760/2012:

Ethiopia has an enabling legislation for establishing a vital events registration system and collecting and processing vital statistics from the records.

(ii) Integrating registration activities in existing *kebele* administrative activities: *Kebele*

(the lowest administrative area) office is run by Executive Committee, also called cabinet, comprising elected officers and representatives of government ministries (education, health and agriculture). It has a salaried office manager, with a minimum of high-school education, in most cases. The manager could serve as the *kebele* Civil Status Officer (registrar) at no or minimal cost to the vital events registration system. The registration of vital events is not going to add too much to the workload of the manager as on an average only about 27 vital events per month are expected in a *kebele* for registration (see Annex 5). The director of the school or one of the health extension workers in the *kebele* could serve as deputy registrar.

(iii) Coverage, access and monitoring at the lowest administrative levels: Ethiopia is administratively de-centralized with nine regions and two city administrations. The regions are further subdivided into 95 zones; 741 *weredas* (districts); and 16,475 *kebeles* (see

Table 1). *Kebeles* consist of roughly 700 to 1,200 households (CSA, 2012). The *kebele* offices are spread out all over, covering the length and breadth of the country in all regions (see Figure 4). One of the key features of the *kebele* offices is that they are easily accessible to the population living within their boundaries in terms of distance. Most of them are located at walking-distances to the households living within their boundaries. The administrative structure and hierarchy of *weredas* and zones is also conducive for monitoring and supervision of vital events registration activities at *kebele* levels. These administrative units could play crucial role by providing logistics, especially during training and distribution of registration materials.

(iv) Social capital: There are several community-based networks, such as *edir*, *equb*, and *mahiber*, everywhere in Ethiopia that create social capital which would be asset in diffusing information when *kebeles* conduct awareness and educational campaign on registration of vital events. If properly trained, they could also become “friends of the Civil Status Officer” and serve as notifiers of occurrence of vital events in their neighborhoods. These organizations, usually with members ranging from few to many, are bonding social networks with many mutual benefits to the members, including sharing of information and exchange of ideas. In addition to this, traditionally and culturally community elders usually play important roles in officiating over marriages and divorces. A recent introduction to the existing traditional social networks is the concept of *And-le-Amist*, which literally means one-for-five. It is a cell of five people from the same neighbourhood that informally look after each other’s interest. They were initially organized by rural and small town *kebeles* to promote health and development initiatives. The group creates greater interaction between members and generates a greater sense of community spirit.

All the above, are opportunities unique to Ethiopia, that would facilitate high coverage of vital events registration. Many challenges were also identified in the document along with proposals to address them. It is expected that Vital Events Registration Agency’s management and administration would go through it and assess their merits on a case-by-case basis and apply them. Few of the many recommendations which will have far reaching implications are given below.

**(i) Federal organs for registration of vital events:**

Regulation No. 278/2012 establishes the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Vital Events Council, the Board of management and the Vital Events Registration Agency (VERA). These federal bodies are yet to be formed. Given that 2012 law requires the registration of vital events to begin before July 2014, it is vital that the federal organs be operational without any further delay.

Vital events registration operation requires careful planning, appropriate organizational and administrative arrangements and procedures that are vital to ensure that each vital events registration is properly resourced and organized; and that the output of each activity is of adequate quality for all succeeding ones and that dependencies among the different activities are identified. This necessitates that VERA should be established and a Director-General assigned quickly as possible. This is key to jump-start a full-fledged vital events registration system.

**(ii) Other recommendations**

**a. Definitions of vital events:** The 2012 law does not provide clear and unambiguous definitions of the vital events. On the other hand, Article 4(1) of the 1960 Civil Code considers whether a birth is viable or not if the child lives for forty-eight hours. The 2012 law repeals most of the articles in the 1960 Civil Code relating to civil registration except Article 4. The spirit of the law in Article 4(1), although it could make sense for legal purpose, is not consistent with international definition for live births. The 1960 Civil Code and the 2012 law do not define death. The international definitions given for marriage and divorce are not inconsistent with the provisions in the Revised Family Law enacted in 2001. It is, therefore, recommended that definitions of vital events be aligned with international recommendations and issued as a regulation or a directive by the Vital Events Council.

- b. Late and delayed registration of vital events:** Most countries have a grace period within which “late registrations” are accepted before penalties apply. A late registration is when vital events registration happens after the deadline specified in a law or regulation and within the grace period, which is usually considered to be one year following the occurrence of the vital events. A delayed registration is the registration of vital events after the grace period has expired. There is no provision in the 2012 law to differentiate late and delayed registrations. Specific provision for the handling of late and delayed registration of vital events should be made, as it is important to avoid delayed registration as much as possible. A scale of fees may also be established in accordance with the length of delay: the longer the delay, the larger the fee.
- c. Cost of certified copy of birth record:** The 2012 law requires that fees should be charged for certified copies of vital records as provided. To encourage individuals obtain birth certificates, it is recommended that the fee for the first copy issued be nominal. The cost of issuing certificates can be partially offset by increasing the fee if additional copies are requested; and distributing the rest on certificates for deaths, marriages and divorces.
- d. Preparation of registers and forms:**
- The 2012 law requires that each registration form be accompanied by three detachable copies bearing identical particulars attached to a counterfoil. A research should be conducted, as soon as VERA is operational, to identify the appropriate quality of paper, carbon, and the type of writing pen to be used. Advance copies of the registers should be printed and tested for their suitability before mass production. This exercise will help avoid wastage and repeated request to *kebele* civil status offices for clarification and correction of unreadable entries or misplaced information in the cells of the copies. Above all, the archived copies might not last long if quality of these materials is compromised.

- It is expected that very soon a local consultant is going to start work on drafting of registers, certificate, manuals, guidelines and other related materials, with funding from UNICEF. This is an important step in the implementation process. However, it could take 6 to 9 months to finalize all the requisite materials and this in turn will delay training and implementation. It is therefore recommended additional local consultant be recruited to cut the delivery time of these materials by half.
  
- e. **IEC and training programmes:** A very well planned IEC should be conducted in a sustained manner targeting different groups and in all major languages. Training of *kebele* Civil Status Officers (registrars) is vital to the success of the whole operation. The key message here is TRAINING - TRAINING - TRAINING. It can be safely assumed that coverage may not be a problem in Ethiopia, given the number and spread of *kebele* offices. On the other hand the quality of the content of the records depends on the messages and intensity of the awareness creation and publicity programme; and on the quality and adequacy of the training of registrars and other officials at different administrative levels.

Finally, it is critical that this Strategy and Action Plan be implemented taking into consideration the priorities and related time schedules of the identified actions to encourage more participation of stakeholders and development partners; and minimize the risk of delays in any of the implementation phases or risk postponement of some of the activities. It is imperative that an advisor to the Director General be appointed to manage and coordinate the activities contained in the Action Plan (see Figure 2). As the establishment of a viable vital events registration system is usually of very long duration, it is suggested that this document should be a “living plan” where the initial plan is continually updated by taking into account changes that could occur and assumptions made throughout the implementation phases.

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## **ANNEXES**

## **Annex 1. Proclamation No. 760/2012<sup>13</sup>**

### **PROCLAMATION NO. 760/2012: A PROCLAMATION ON THE REGISTRATION OF VITAL EVENTS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD**

**WHEREAS**, establishing a system of registration of vital events plays a key role in planning political, social and economic developments, in providing different social and economic services to citizens and in making the justice administration expedient and effective;

**WHEREAS**, it has become necessary to create accessible, comprehensive and compulsory registration system on the basis of which citizens can effect proper and timely registration of vital events;

**WHEREAS**, the issuance of national identity cards to citizens has become important for the protection of national security, and for providing efficient services to citizens by the public and private sectors;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in accordance with Article 55 sub-article (1) and (6) of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, it is hereby proclaimed as follows:

#### **CHAPTER ONE - GENERAL PROVISIONS**

##### **1. Short Title**

This Proclamation may be cited as the “Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card Proclamation No. 760/2012”.

##### **2. Definition**

In this Proclamation unless the context otherwise requires:

- 1/ “vital event” means birth, marriage, divorce or death, and includes adoption, and acknowledgement and judicial declaration of paternity;
- 2/ ”register of civil status” means a register wherein particulars of vital events are recorded in accordance with this Proclamation;
- 3/ “officer of civil status” means an officer assigned to register vital events in accordance with this Proclamation;
- 4/ “declarant” means a person who has the responsibility to declare a vital event for registration in accordance with this Proclamation;
- 5/ “principal residence: means the place where an individual resides that satisfies the

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<sup>13</sup> The Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia. *Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card Proclamation No. 760/2012*, Federal Negarit Gazeta, 18<sup>th</sup> Year No.58, Addis Ababa, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012.

provisions of Article 183 to Article 191 of the Civil Code;

6/ “appropriate federal organ: means an organ established by the Council of Ministers regulation with respect to the registration of vital events or the issuance of national identity card;

7/ “appropriate regional organ” means a regional organ established or designated pursuant to Article 5 of this Proclamation;

8/ “administrative office” means an office of a region’s lowest level of administrative hierarchy where the registration of vital events carried out;

9/ “national identification number” means a number used to identify an Ethiopian from other individuals;

10/ “attainment of majority” means attainment of the age of eighteen years, and includes emancipation;

11/ “region” means any state referred to in Article 47(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and includes the Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city administrations’

12/ “person” means any natural or juridical person;

13/ any expression in the masculine gender includes the feminine.

### **3. Scope of Application**

This Proclamation shall apply:

1/ to any Ethiopian with respect to the registration of vital events; and

2/ to any Ethiopian who has attained majority with respect to the issuance of national identity card.

## **CHAPTER TWO - REGISTRATION OF VITAL EVENTS**

### **SECTION ONE: ORGANS FOR REGISTRATION OF VITAL EVENTS**

#### **4. Federal Organ**

An appropriate federal organ shall be established by regulation of the Council of Ministers to direct, coordinate and support the registration of vital events at national level and to centrally organize and keep records of vital events.

#### **5. Regional Organ**

An appropriate regional organ shall be established or designated by each region to direct, coordinate and support the registration of vital events at regional level and to transfer records of vital events to the appropriate federal organ.

## **6. Officers of Civil Status**

1/ Regions shall cause the assignment of an officer of civil status for each administrative office.

2/ An officer of civil status assigned pursuant to sub-article (1) of this Article shall, in accordance with the provisions of this Proclamation and regulations and directives issued hereunder:

- a) Register vital events;
- b) send copies of records of vital events to the relevant organs;
- c) issue a certificate of registration of vital even to the concerned person;
- d) properly preserve records of vital events and secure their confidentiality;
- e) create awareness among the community on the registration of vital events;
- f) carry out other functions assigned to him by the appropriate regional organ.

## **7. Ethiopian Embassies and Consulates**

1/ The Ethiopian embassies and consulates shall serve as administrative office for Ethiopians residing in foreign countries; and the head of the consulate or an embassy staff assigned by the ambassador shall act as an officer of civil status.

2/ Registration of vital events with respect to Ethiopians residing in a country where there is no Ethiopian embassy or consulate shall be carried out in accordance with directive to be issued by the appropriate federal organ in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **8. Vital Events on Board Ethioian Ships**

1/ An Ethiopian ship shall serve as administrative office for the registration of birth or death that occurs on board; and the captain of the ship shall act as an officer of civil status.

2/ The captain of an Ethiopian ship may assign an assistant officer of civil status for each voyage from among the crew of the ship.

## **9. Members of Defense Forces on Active Duty**

1/ The Ministry of National Defense shall serve as administrative office for registration of death of members of the defense forces on active duty.

2/ The Ministry of National Defense shall assign an officer that shall act as officer of civil status.

## **SECTION TWO: REGISTER OF CIVIL STATUS**

### **10. Types of Register of Civil Status**

Each type of vital event shall have a separate register of civil status.

### **11. Preparation of Register of Civil Status**

- 1/ Any register of civil status shall be prepared in the form of a bound book.
- 2/ A register of civil status shall be prepared in a manner that ensures its durability and its convenience for handling.
- 3/ The cover page of a register of civil status shall contain a label indicating the particular type of vital event and the place of registration.
- 4/ The information in a register of civil status shall be recorded in the official language of the concerned region and in Amharic.

### **12. Forms and Copies of Register of Civil Status**

- 1/ Each registration form shall be accompanied by three detachable copies bearing identical particulars attached to a counterfoil.
- 2/ Copies of the record shall be detached from the main form and sent to the concerned organs.
- 3/ Each form, together with the copies, shall serve only for the registration of one vital event.
- 4/ The last page of a register of civil status shall contain an index showing the events registered according to their sequence.
- 5/ Each register of civil status shall be given an exclusive code during publication.

### **13. Preparation and Distribution of Registers of Civil Status**

- 1/ Registers of civil status to be used by a region shall be prepared by the appropriate regional organ in collaboration with the appropriate federal organ and be dispatched to all administrative offices.
- 2/ Registers of civil status to be used by the Ethiopian embassies and consulates, Ethiopian ships and the Ministry of National Defense shall be prepared and distributed by the appropriate federal organ.

### **14. Restriction to Remove Register of Civil Status**

A register of civil status may not be removed from the administrative office where it is kept unless authorized by the concerned official.

### **15. Safeguarding Registers of Civil Status**

The organ entrusted to keep registers of civil status shall be responsible for their safeguarding.

**16. Loss, Destruction and Damage of Register of Civil Status**

- 1/ Where a register of civil status is lost, destroyed or damaged, the officer of civil status shall recompile the register by using copies of the registration forms transferred to the relevant organ in accordance with Article 45 of this Proclamation.
- 2/ Where a copy of registration form deposited with the relevant organ is lost, destroyed or damaged, it shall be replaced by another copy taken from the register of civil status.

**SECTION THREE: PROCEDURES OF REGISTRATION OF VITAL  
EVENTS**

**SUB-SECTION ONE. COMMON PROVISIONS**

**17. Principle**

- 1/ Any vital event shall be registered with necessary detail information that can be used for legal, administrative and statistical purposes.
- 2/ No vital event may be registered more than once.
- 3/ A declarant shall appear in person before an officer of civil status to have a vital event registered.
- 4/ The officer of civil status, after entering the vital event and related information in the register of civil status, shall cause the declarant to confirm the information as it appears in the register.

**18. Period of Registration**

- 1/ Any vital event, other than birth, shall be registered within 30days following the date of its occurrence unless there is sufficient cause for delay.
- 2/ Any birth shall be registered within 90 days following the date of its occurrence unless there is sufficient cause for delay.
- 3/ Where the registration of a vital event is not effected within the period specified under sub-article (1) or (2) of this Article the declarant shall produce evidence to justify the delay.

**19. Entering of Particulars**

- 1/ Any vital event shall be registered in the register of civil status prepared and distributed in accordance with Article 13 of this proclamation.
- 2/ Particulars of a vital event shall be entered in the blank spaces provided in a registration form of the register of civil status.
- 3/ The words used to enter particulars of vital events shall be written clearly and without abbreviation, erasure, words written over others or any other additional word.



**20. Prohibition**

No words other than the particulars specifically provided for in this Proclamation or directive issued hereunder may be entered on the forms of a register of civil status.

**21. Voiding Forms**

If, as a result of a mistake, a form has been left unutilized or if, on account of erasure or for any other cause, a recording has to be redone, the form shall be cancelled by drawing two diagonal lines forming a cross; and the phrase “Form not Utilized” shall be written on its backside.

**22. Confirmation and Approval of Records**

- 1/ A declarant of birth, marriage, divorce or death shall confirm, by signing, the validity of particulars entered in the register of civil status.
- 2/ Any person who has acknowledged his paternity shall confirm, by signing, the validity of particulars entered in a register of civil status.
- 3/ Any person who adopted a child shall confirm, by signing the validity of particulars entered in the register of civil status.
- 4/ The officer of civil status shall finally approve, by signing, the registration of a vital event upon ascertaining the completeness of the records.

**23. Signature**

If a person required to confirm the particulars entered in a register of civil status in accordance with Article 22 of this Proclamation cannot sign, he shall affix on the registration form his finger print instead of signature.

**SUB-SECTION TWO. REGISTRATION OF BIRTH**

**24. Particulars of Records of Birth**

The records of birth shall contain the following particulars:

- 1/ the child’s full name, sex, date of birth, place of birth, type of birth (whether single or more) and aid rendered during birth;
- 2/ the child’s parents full name, date and place of birth, principal residence, martial status, citizenship, religion, ethnic origin and, if they are alive, their signatures.
- 3/ where the declarant is other than the parent of the child the declarant’s full name, relation with the child, sex, date and place of birth, principal residence and signature;
- 4/ name and signature of the officer of civil status, seal of the administrative office and date of registration; and
- 5/ other necessary information as may be determined by the appropriate federal organ.

**25. Particulars of Records of Birth of Abandoned Child**

The records of birth of an abandoned child shall contain:

- 1/ the name given to the child, sex and estimated age of the child and the date and place where the child was found; and
- 2/ a phrase “abandoned child” on the backside of the registration form.

**26. Obligation to Declare Birth**

1/ The birth of a child shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, in their default, by the guardian of the child or, in default of guardian, by the person who has taken care of the child.

2/ Where the child is abandoned or his parents are unknown, any person who knows such condition shall have the duty to report same to the nearest police or other relevant government organ.

3/ A police officer or any other government organ which has received a report in accordance with sub-article (2) of this Article shall have the duty to declare the birth to the officer of civil status of the nearest administrative office within three days from the date of receipt of the report.

**27. Name of a Child**

1/ The officer of civil status, prior to the registration of birth, shall enquire the name given or intended to be given to the child from the declarant.

2/ Where the name of the child is not disclosed or the name given is contrary to the law or custom, the officer of civil status shall himself choose a name for the child.

**28. Place of Registration of Birth**

1/ The place of registration of birth of a child shall be the nearest administrative office to the principal residence of the parents.

2/ The place of registration of birth of an abandoned child or child whose parents are unknown shall be the nearest administrative office to the place where the child was found.

**29. Birth in a Health Institution**

Where birth takes place in a health institution, the head of the institution shall forthwith prepare a certificate containing the relevant particulars specified under sub-article (1) and (2) of Article 24 of this Proclamation and give such certificate to the person having the duty to declare the birth in accordance with Article 26 of this Proclamation.

**SUB-SECTION THREE. REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE**

**30. Particulars of Records of Marriage**

The records of marriage shall contain the following particulars:

1/ the couples' full name, date and place of birth, principal residence, citizenship, ethnic origin and religion;

2/ the date, place and form of the marriage;

3/ the couples' signature;

4/ the evidence or the names and principal residences of witnesses of the marriage, as the case may be;

5/ name and signature of the officer of civil status, seal of the administrative office and date of registration; and

6/ other necessary information as may be determined by the appropriate federal organ.

**31. Obligation to Declare Marriage**

1/ Where marriage is celebrated before an officer of civil status, the officer of civil status who observed the marriage ceremony shall immediately register the marriage.

2/ Where marriage is celebrated by religious or customary ceremony, the couples shall present to an officer of civil status, for registration, the evidence of the marriage referred to in Article 33 of this Proclamation.

**32. Place of Registration of Marriage**

The place of registration of marriage shall be the place where the couples have jointly decided, the place where either of the couples had used to reside or the principal residence of the parents or close relative of either of the couples.

**33. Evidence of Religious or Customary Marriage**

Where the marriage is celebrated by a religious ceremony or customary practice, the religious institution or the elders who have observed the marriage shall immediately provide the couples with evidence of the marriage containing the following:

1/ the names, ages and principal residences of the couples;

2/ the date and place of the marriage; and

3/ the names and principal residences of the witnesses.

**SUB-SECTION FOUR. REGISTRATION OF DIVORCE**

**34. Particulars of Records of Divorce**

The records of divorce shall contain the following particulars:

1/ the full name, date and place of birth, principal residence, citizenship, ethnic origin and religion of each divorcing partner;

2/ the date and place of conclusion of the marriage and the date of divorce;

3/ a reference to the decision of the competent court on the divorce;

4/ the name and signature of the officer of civil status, the seal of the administrative office and date of registration; and

5/ other necessary information as may be determined by the appropriate federal organ.

**35. Obligation to Declare Divorce**

The divorcing partners or one of them shall present the decision of the competent court on the divorce to an officer of civil status for registration of the divorce within the period specified under sub-article (1) of Article 18 of this Proclamation.

**36. Place of Registration of Divorce**

The place of registration of divorce shall be the nearest administrative office to the place where the divorce took place.

**37. Evidence of Divorce**

Any court which has rendered decision on divorce shall forthwith provide copies of the decision to the divorcing partners.

## **SUB-SECTION FIVE. REGISTRATION OF DEATH**

### **38. Particulars of Records of Death**

The records of death shall contain the following particulars:

- 1/ the full name, title, sex, age, occupation, principal residence, citizenship, ethnic origin and religion of the deceased;
- 2/ date, place and cause of the death and a reference to evidence of the death, if any;
- 3/ the name and signature of the officer of civil status, the seal of the administrative office and a date of registration; and
- 4/ other necessary information as may be determined by the appropriate federal organ.

### **39. Obligation to Declare Death**

1/ Any person who used to live with the deceased shall declare the death for registration.

2/ In the absence of persons used to live with the deceased, his relatives by consanguinity or affinity, close neighbors or any person who knows his death shall declare the death for registration.

3/ Any police which has received a report on the death of a person by accidental or unknown cause and whose identity is not known shall declare the death for registration within three days following the date of receipt of the report.

### **40. Death of Member of Defense Force on Active Duty**

The death of a member of defense force on active duty shall be declared, for registration, by the commanding officer of his unit to the officer assigned by the Ministry of National Defense to act as an officer of civil status.

### **41. Death Occurring in Common Dwelling Place, Prison or Health Institution**

1/ If a person dies in a boarding school or in any other common dwelling place, the person who is in charge of such institution shall declare the death for registration within five days.

2/ If a person dies in prison or if a death sentence is executed, the head of the prison shall declare the death for registration within five days.

3/ Where a death occurs in a health institution or a corpse is brought to it for examination, the head of the institution shall forthwith prepare a certificate of death containing the name, sex and date of birth of the deceased, the date, place and cause of death and other related information and give the certificate to the person having the responsibility of declaring the death for registration pursuant to Article 39 of this Proclamation.

### **42. Death of Several Persons by Calamity**

Where several persons die simultaneously due to a calamity, the death of a person who disappeared thereafter shall be registered upon presentation of evidence issued by the organ that have investigated the occurrence of the calamity and the presence of that person among the victims during the calamity.

#### **43. Place of Registration of Death**

1/ The place of registration of death shall be the nearest administrative office to the principal residence of the deceased.

2/ Where the identity or principal residence of the deceased is unknown, the place of registration of death shall be the nearest administrative office to the place where his corpse was found.

3/ The place of registration of death referred to in Article 41 (1) of this Proclamation shall be the nearest administrative office to the institution declaring the death.

#### **44. Absence**

1/ Any person who has, upon lodging an application to the competent court in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Civil Code, obtained a judicial declaration on the absence or death of a person shall present the copy of the judgment, for registration of death, to the officer of civil status of the nearest administrative office to the last principal residence of the person whose absence or death has been declared.

2/ The records of death entered in accordance with sub-article (1) of this Article shall be cancelled where the officer of civil status received another judgment rendered by a competent court revoking the previous judgment declaring absence.

### **SECTION FOUR: COPIES AND CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF VITAL EVENT**

#### **45. Transfer of Copies of Records**

1/ Where the registration of a vital event is completed, the officer of civil status shall send three copies of the registration form to the appropriate regional organ within 30 days following the date of registration.

2/ The appropriate regional organ shall send two of the copies of the registration form it has received in accordance with sub-article (1) of this Article to the appropriate federal organ within 30 days following the date of receipt.

3/ An Ethiopian embassy or consulate shall send three copies of the registration form to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within 30 days following the date of completion of the registration of a vital event.

4/ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall send two of the copies it has received in accordance with sub-article (3) of this Article to the appropriate federal organ within 10 days following the date of receipt.

5/ The Ministry of National Defense shall send two copies of the registration form of the death of a member of defense force on active duty to the appropriate federal organ.

6/ The captain of an Ethiopian ship shall send two copies of the registration form to the appropriate federal organ within 30 days following the date of completion of the registration of a vital event.

7/ The appropriate federal organ shall send one of the copies of a registration form it has received in accordance with this Article to the Central Statistics Agency within 30 days following the date of receipt.

**46. Preparation of Certificate of Registration of Vital Events**

- 1/ A certificate of registration of vital events shall contain the particulars entered in the register of civil status pursuant to the relevant provisions of this proclamation.
- 2/ Certificate of registration of vital events shall be prepared in the official language of the concerned region and in Amharic.

**47. Issuing certificate of Registration of Vital Events**

- 1/ A certificate of registration of birth shall be given to the person who has declared the birth in accordance with this Proclamation.
- 2/ A certificate of registration of marriage shall be prepared in two copies and be given to each spouse.
- 3/ A certificate of registration of divorce shall be prepared in two copies and be given to each divorcing partner.
- 4/ A certificate of registration of death shall be given to the person who has declared the death in accordance with this Proclamation.
- 5/ A certificate of registration of vital event shall be issued upon payment of service fee prescribed by regulation issued hereunder.
- 6/ Any person whose certificate of registration of vital event is lost or damaged shall have the right to get a replacement certificate upon payment of the prescribed service fee.

**48. Probative Value**

The certificate of registration issued in accordance with Article 47 of this Proclamation shall have equal probative value as the records of the register of civil status.

**SECTION FIVE:**  
**CORRECTION OF RECORDS OF REGISTER OF CIVIL STATUS**

**49. Clerical Mistakes**

- 1/ The officer of civil status shall, at the request of an interested party, make corrections involving clerical mistakes in the particulars of a register of civil status.
- 2/ Where the correction involves cancellation of word or number, the cancellation shall be carried out in a manner that the word or number remain legible.
- 3/ Where the correction affects all copies of the registration form, the officer of civil status shall give notice of same to all bodies which have already received such copies.

**50. Other Corrections**

Corrections in particulars entered in a register of civil status, other than those involving clerical mistakes, may not be corrected except by virtue of judgment given by a court.

**51. Application for Correction**

An application for the correction of particulars entered in a register of civil status may be made to a court by the public prosecutor, officer of civil status or any interested person.

**52. Judgment of Court**

1/ The court may, upon examining the application submitted to it in accordance with Article 51 of this Proclamation, decide on the correction of the previous record or the drawing up of a new record.

2/ A judgment rendered pursuant to sub-article (1) of this Article shall have equal probative value as the register of civil status until the record is corrected or a new record is drawn up in accordance with Article 53 or Article 54 of this Proclamation.

**53. Manner of Entering Corrections**

1/ The particulars the correction of which is decided by the court shall be cancelled in the register of civil status, provided that they shall remain legible.

2/ The particulars which replace them or which are added in the register shall be entered on the back of the registration form, with a reference to the judgment of the court.

3/ The officer of civil status shall, with reference to the judgment of the court, give notice of the corrections to all organs which have already received copies of the registration form.

**54. Drawing up a New Record**

1/ Where the correction of a record entails substantial changes, the court may order the annulment of the record and the drawing up of a new record in its place.

2/ Where a correction is made pursuant to sub-article (1) of this Article:

- a) the previous registration form shall be cancelled and a reference to the judgment of the court and the new record shall be made on its back side;
- b) a reference to the judgment of the court and the previous record shall be made on the back side of the new registration form.

3/ Where a new record is drawn up pursuant to this Article:

- a) copies of the registration form shall be sent to the relevant organs in accordance with Article 45 of this Proclamation;
- b) a replacement certificate of registration shall be issued to the interested person in accordance with Article 47 of this Proclamation.

### **CHAPTER THREE - NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD**

#### **55. National Identity Card Issuing Organ**

An appropriate federal organ having the powers and duties to issue national identity card shall be established by regulation of the Council of Ministers.

#### **56. Obligations to Obtain National Identity card**

1/ Any Ethiopian who has attained majority shall have the obligation to obtain national identity card.

2/ Any parent or guardian of an Ethiopian minor shall cause the registration of such child on his family register.

#### **57. Registration for National Identity Card**

1/ Any Ethiopian who has the obligation to obtain national identity card in accordance with Article 56(1) of this Proclamation shall get registered at the place and within the period notified by the appropriate federal organ.

2/ The registration made in accordance with sub-article (1) of this Article shall contain the following information of the person registered:

- a) full name including grandfather;
- b) special identification, if any;
- c) parents' full name and citizenship;
- d) date and place of birth;
- e) sex and marital status;
- f) principal residence and occupation;
- g) ethnic origin and religion;
- h) photograph and finger print; and
- i) other necessary information as may be determined by the appropriate federal organ

3/ Notwithstanding sub-article (2)(h) of this Article, a disabled person who cannot give his finger print shall be registered in the presence of the appropriate officer by other means of verification.

4/ The appropriate federal organ shall carefully ensure the identity of a person registering for national identity card.

5/ The appropriate federal organ shall have the power to make inquiries and to demand the production of relevant evidences to verify the identity of the person to be registered.

6/ The registered person shall confirm the veracity of the information provided in accordance with sub-article (2) of this Article.

#### **58. Issuance of National Identity Card**

1/ The appropriate federal organ shall issue a national identity card to an Ethiopian citizen who has furnished the full information specified under Article 57(2) of this Proclamation and effected payment of the service fee prescribed by regulation issued hereunder.



2/ A national identity card to be issued in accordance with this Article shall have the quality of lasting for the period of its validity referred to in Article 59 of this Proclamation, have security features and contain the following particulars:

- a) the full name including grandfather, sex, date and place of birth, principal residence, photograph, finger print and signature of the holder;
- b) national identification number and identity card number; and
- c) issuance and expiry date.

3/ The appropriate federal organ, before issuing national identity card, shall ensure that the registered individual has not already received a national identity card.

4/ The appropriate federal organ, before assigning a national identification number, shall ensure that the number is not already assigned to another citizen.

5/ An Ethiopian who has not obtained a national identity card by getting registered within the period notified by the appropriate federal organ shall, unless he proves the existence of force majeure, be required to make payment of additional service fee prescribed by regulation issued hereunder, for issuance of the identity card upon late registration.

#### **59. Validity Period and Renewal of National Identity Card**

1/ A national identity card shall be valid for ten years from the date of its issuance.

2/ A national identity card shall be renewed upon the expiry of its validity period.

#### **60. Obligations of the Holder of National Identity Card**

1/ The holder of a national identity card shall:

- a) keep the identity card with care and always carry it with him;
- b) show the identity card when requested by the concerned body;
- c) inform the appropriate federal organ within 15 days of any change in the particulars of the identity card;
- d) present the identity card to the appropriate federal organ for renewal upon the expiry of its validity period.

2/ Any Ethiopian who has changed his nationality shall forthwith return his national identity card to the appropriate federal organ.

3/ The person whose national identity card is cancelled in accordance with Article 61 of this Proclamation shall return the identity card to the appropriate federal organ.

#### **61. Cancellation of National Identity Card**

1/ Where it is proved that a national identity card is issued on the basis of fraudulent or false information provided during registration, the identity card shall be cancelled without prejudice to criminal liability of the holder.

2/ Any Ethiopian whose identity card is cancelled pursuant to sub-article (1) of this Article shall obtain a national identity card upon getting registered anew.

**62. Loss or Damage of national Identity Card**

1/ Any person whose national identity card is lost or damaged shall apply to the appropriate federal organ for issuance of a replacement upon attaching with his application:

- a) in case of loss, an evidence of a report made to the police or
- b) in case of damage, the damaged identity card.

2/ The applicant shall be issued with a replacement national identity card upon payment of the fee prescribed by regulation issued hereunder.

3/ The appropriate federal organ shall, upon receiving the information referred to in sub-article (1)(a) of this Article, register the loss of the national identity card in the central data base to prohibit its illegal use.

4/ Any person who finds a lost national identity card shall immediately handover it to the appropriate federal organ or to the nearest police station.

**CHAPTER FOUR - ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION**

**63. Exchange of Information**

1/ Information collected in relation to registration of vital events and national identity card shall properly be stored in a central data base kept by the appropriate federal organ so that the information collect for one purpose may also be used for the other.

2/ The appropriate federal organs established in accordance with Article 4 and Article 55 of this Proclamation shall exchange information kept in accordance with sub-article (1) of this Article.

**64. Conditions of Disclosure of Information to Other Organs**

1/ Information collected in relation to registration of vital events or national identity card may be disclosed to other organs for the following purposes:

- a) for national intelligence and security services;
- b) for crime prevention and investigation;
- c) for tax collection;
- d) for administrative and social services;
- e) for implementation of risk management systems of financial institutions; and
- f) for other purposes authorized by law.

2/ The organ which has obtained information pursuant to sub-article (1) of this Article may not disclose the information to other organs or use it for other purpose.

3/ Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-article (1) of this Article, information specific to an individual may not be disclosed to any other person unless upon obtaining the consent of the concerned individual or an order of the competent court.

4/ A person entitled to obtain information specific to an individual by virtue of the consent of the individual or an order of the competent court shall be provided with the information upon payment of the service fee prescribed by regulation issued hereunder.

5/ Where disclosure of information specific to an individual is likely to prejudice public interest, such information may not be disclosed to any other person irrespective of the consent of the individual.

## **CHAPTER FIVE - MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

### **65. Handling and Safeguarding of Information**

1/ Information collected in relation to registration of vital events or national identity card shall be kept properly to make them easily accessible for use.

2/ The information shall be protected from electronically designed attacks, theft or from other similar criminal abuses.

3/ Documents containing the information shall be protected against insects, fire, moisture and other causes of damage.

4/ The documents shall be kept in a place where there is sufficient air and light to protect written data from the risk of fading and other types of damages.

### **66. Penalty**

1/ Whosoever:

- a) fails to declare vital events or to obtain national identity card in accordance with the provision of this Proclamation or fails to observe any other requirement provided for in relation to the registration of vital events or national identity card shall be guilty of an offence and be punishable with simple imprisonment not exceeding six months or with a fine from Birr five hundred to Birr five thousand;
- b) falsifies or conceals a fact in declaring a vital event or registering for a national identity card in accordance with this Proclamation shall be guilty of an offence and be punishable with simple imprisonment from one to five years;
- c) makes use of forged or falsified certificate of registration of vital event or national identity card shall be guilty of an offence and be punishable with rigorous imprisonment from five to ten years;
- d) forges or falsifies a certificate of registration of vital event or a national identity card shall be guilty of an offence and be punishable with rigorous imprisonment from seven to fifteen years; provided, however, that the rigorous imprisonment may extend up to twenty five years where the offence is committed by a civil servant or an official entrusted with the power to issue certificate of registration or national identity card;
- e) falsifies data collected in relation to registration of vital events or national identity card by altering, modifying or deleting its content or by any other means shall be guilty of an offence and be punishable with rigorous imprisonment from ten to twenty five years;
- f) damages, destroys, suppresses or unlawfully accesses the data collected in relation to registration of vital events or national identity card shall be guilty of an offence and be punishable with rigorous imprisonment from ten to twenty five years.

2/ Whosoever commits other offences in violation of the provisions of this Proclamation shall be punishable in accordance with the relevant provision of the Criminal Code.

**67. Transitory Provisions**

1/ Existing organs providing services relating to registration of vital events and issuance of residential identity cards shall continue functioning until the organs to be established for the implementation of this Proclamation becomes operational within a period not exceeding two years from the effective date of this Proclamation.

2/ Vital events registered and certificates issued on the basis of the existing laws or customary practices shall remain valid.

3/ A residential identity card issued on the basis of the existing laws or customary practices, and the period of validity of which has not expired, shall remain valid until replaced by a national identity card.

4/ A vital event not registered on the basis of the existing laws or customary practices shall, upon application of the interested person accompanied by a supporting evidence, be registered in accordance with this Proclamation and a certificate of registration of vital event shall be issued to the applicant.

**68. Repealed Laws**

1/ The provision of the 1960 Civil Code from Article 47 to Article 153 are hereby repealed.

2/ No law or customary practice shall, in so far as it is inconsistent with this Proclamation, be applicable with respect to matters provided for by this Proclamation.

**69. Power to Issue Regulation and Directive**

1/ The Council of Ministers may issue regulation necessary for the implementation of this Proclamation.

2/ The appropriate federal organ may issue directives necessary for the implementation of this Proclamation and regulation issued in accordance with sub-article (1) of this Article.

**70. Effective Date**

This Proclamation shall enter into force on the date of publication in the Federal Negarit Gazeta.

**Done at Addis Ababa, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of August, 2012.**

**GIRMA WOLDEGIORGIS  
PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF  
ETHIOPIA**

## Annex 2. Uses of Registration Records and Vital Statistics<sup>14</sup>

Records of civil registration have important uses for both individuals and societies. For individuals, copies of registration records can be used as legal documents for evidentiary purposes. Registration records when compiled to become vital statistics are needed not only for administrative applications such as serving to design and implement public health programmes, but also for carrying out social and demographic research.

Reviews of some of the known demands for individual records for use by individuals and by society for legal and other purposes are given here. It discusses the uses of continuous vital statistics for demographic studies, for medical research, public health programmes and other purposes. This discussion intends to be a suggested list for administrators, who are seeking the fullest utilization of vital records and statistics. It will also be of help to civil registrars, statisticians and training personnel directly concerned with these activities.

### A. Uses of Vital Records

Registration records of vital events are intended primarily as legal documents of direct interest to the person concerned. From those official records, evidentiary proof of the occurrence of a vital event and its characteristics can be made by a civil registrar or any other designated authority. Each certificate constitutes testimony of the particulars set forth therein in all courts of law and in public offices. There is a wide variety of circumstances, legal and administrative, for which a certified copy of the legal record of live birth, foetal death, death, marriage and divorce is usually required. Foetal deaths, however, are mostly recorded for statistical purposes rather than for legal purposes.

Individual records also serve as the starting point of a number of operational programmes, particularly in public health, family planning, medical research, maternal and child care programmes, historical demography, genetic studies and so forth.

The following discussion illustrates the usefulness of records and statistics related to live births, deaths, foetal deaths, marriages and divorces, records and statistics. However, certified copies of the records of other registrable events such as adoptions, legitimations recognitions and so forth, are not discussed but are useful in much the same way.

#### 1. Uses to individuals

The records of birth, death, marriage and divorce are mainly designed for the protection of the individual's rights as a member of society. The most common uses the individual makes of the vital records of live birth, death, marriage and divorce are as follows:

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<sup>14</sup> *Extracted from Handbook of Vital Statistics System and Methods. Volume I. (UN, 1991; paragraphs 80 to 112)*

### *Live birth*

- a. Provides evidence of the fact of a person's birth and the facts related to birth (i) To establish family relationship (parentage), ancestry, lineage, dependency, some elements of the person's identification; (ii) To register marriages, divorces, adoptions, legitimation, naturalizations, change of name(s), additions or alterations to vital records; and (iii) To establish rights to inheritance, property, birth grants, maternity grants, child care, family allowances (for every child up to a certain age), maternity leave after confinement, protection against job dismissal during maternity leave, milk and food rations, bonuses to families based on a scale increasing with the number of children, allowance for disabled child.
- b. Provides proof of the person's age or date of birth to establish rights contingent upon attainment of a certain age to enter school, obtain permission to work in certain industries, professions, and in government civil service, enter in the armed forces or the right to be excused from them, apply for identity cards, own property, apply for a license to operate a motor vehicle or carry firearms, establish inheritance rights, exercise voting rights and citizenship, apply for a marriage licence, apply for education allowance, qualify for social security pensions or early retirement.
- c. Provides proof of the person's place of birth and place of registration to establish nationality, citizenship; provide basis for immigration and naturalization claims; apply for internal or external migration permits; apply for passports for foreign travel; obtain exemption for alien restrictions or if an alien, to obtain exemption from taxes or military service in the country of residence; apply for repatriation.

### *Death*

As evidence of death to be used by his/her heir to apply for burial or cremation permit; claim inheritance rights on the part of beneficiaries; make insurance claims; make claims for family allowances; establish the right to a second or subsequent marriage for the surviving partner, make notification to the correspondent authorities in case of doubtful or criminal cause of death.

### *Marriage*

- a. Provides proof of the fact of occurrence of a marriage to establish the inviolability of the marriage as a social institution; confer legitimacy for family formation; prove ancestry and lineage; ensure legal responsibility for family support; establish rights to inheritance; apply for family allowances; make insurance claims if one of the partners dies; apply for marriage grant; settle tutorial rights on his/her children when the marriage breaks up; establish such facts in order to obtain passports for foreign travel; register adoptions, divorces, separations, annulments of marriage; prove legitimacy of children.
- b. Within the support programme for family formation, wherever applicable, to apply for provision and allocation of governmental housing for married couples; apply for

housing governmental subsidies; apply for guaranteed minimum monthly family income varying with the number of children; apply for low interest loans for purchasing and furnishing a home; apply for income tax reduction; apply for interest-free loans; apply for bonuses to families.

c. As evidence of the date and place of marriage to apply for low interest loans for newlywed couples; apply for interest-free loans for young couples under certain age within the support programme for family formation; apply for family allowances for young couples; establish the legality of the marriage itself; establish the legitimacy of their own children and register legitimacy of a child by subsequent marriage; apply for change of nationality.

### *Divorce*

a. Provides proof of the fact of divorce to establish the rights to alimony or family pensions; establish the right to remarry; obtain release from financial obligation incurred by the other party.

b. Provides evidence of the date of divorce and the place where it was granted to: establish paternity; establish the legality of a subsequent marriage; establish rights contingent upon marital status and age, and prove absence of responsibility of a financial nature; establish the legality of divorce in other jurisdictions; support a request for delayed registration of a birth; apply for income tax reductions; apply for guaranteed minimum monthly family income (varying with the number of children) within the support programme for family formation.

### 2. Uses to society

Birth and death registration records are useful in public policy and programmes which require reliable information. Social programmes can be designed, monitored and evaluated with the aid of reliable vital records and statistics. An important use is the identification of subgroups of the population in need of medical and health programmes, nutritional programmes, family planning services, maternal and child care programmes and other social services.

Vital records can also be used extensively in medical research and in epidemiological and genetic studies. For instance, the death record, in particular causes of death such as cancer or AIDS, plays a prominent role in scientific research studies. There are also potential uses in historical demography and genetic studies that use record linkage techniques for family reconstitution in order to learn about the mortality and fertility patterns of these family groupings.

The information in vital records can be increased by means of supplementary information in the corresponding statistical report, as well as through follow-up and follow-back or retrospective surveys. The latter are conducted on a sample of individuals related to the vital records. Vital records have the potential to be linked to other records collected

through population census, specific surveys, health services or any other available routinely collected records. Pertinent information can be combined for those matched records, thus allowing more comprehensive studies to be made. The common uses of specific vital records are as follows:

(a) *Uses of birth records*

(i) *Use in public health programmes in post-natal care of mother and child.* The starting point of the programme is the birth register and the listing of births of mothers living in a particular community. These lists, including certain particulars about the birth, serve as a basis for visits by public health nurses to instruct the mother on the care of the newborn, and on postnatal management, including nutrition of both the child and the mother. This is of particular importance for the first-born child, low-weight babies, and where there were any complications during the birth process, or congenital malformations.

(ii) *Use in other public health programmes to identify population at risk.* For example, children are vaccinated and immunized against the common child diseases; children born with congenital defects (cleft lip or palate, club foot) are identified so that medical assistance for them can be arranged to alleviate or cure those malformations; physically handicapped newborn children may be followed up to provide them with medical services and educational programmes; premature infants not attended by physicians can receive special care if weight is provided in the vital record; multiparous women can be eligible for family planning programmes and those primiparous can contribute to studies on high mortality risks.

(iii) *Use for social services and programmes.* Governmental offices concerned with the protection and well-being of children can use alphabetical listings of birth records for family allowance administration and for implementing and monitoring other social services and programmes.

(iv) *Use for research*

a. Genetic studies using family reproductive histories which can be derived from vital records. A birth registration record contains a number of details about both the father and the mother to enable it to be identified unambiguously with the marriage record of the parents if legally married. Similarly, a death record can be identified with the corresponding birth record and with the parents' marriage. A marriage record can, in turn, be identified with the births of the husband and wife, and also with the marriage of both sets of parents. Research in this field has also been done by cross-linking birth records to marriage registrations and health records to detect differential fertility (mortality) in families carrying hereditary defects.

b. Comprehensive studies of infant and child mortality and their socio-economic and biological correlates can be done by linking the birth records with the corresponding infant and child death records. This procedure allows for matched records, the combination with data on birth records, such as the health of the child at birth, weight at



birth, congenital defects, delivery complications, age of mother, parity order and so on. There is also potential for valuable research studies by matching vital records with other independent sources of data as part of a test of birth registration completeness. Similarly, neonatal death records may be matched with the corresponding birth records as part of a test of birth registration completeness.

c. Follow-up survey using selected birth records as the basis. The base registration birth records can be supplemented with data from special surveys undertaken on a sample of those birth records.

(b) *Uses of foetal death records*

For research purposes, retrospective surveys may be conducted to find out the social and economic background of the parents of the foetus, the physical and mental health of the mothers, conditions of the foetus such as birth weight and length" in order to ascertain the causes of foetal deaths, including both early and late foetal death. Foetal death records are also used in studies of registration of the outcome of pregnancy when combined with health and birth records.

(c) *Uses of death records*

(i) *Use in public health programmes to control infectious diseases.* Measures to find cases of tuberculosis, AIDS, and so forth within a family may be undertaken upon the registration of the death of a member from that disease. In areas where major epidemic diseases such as smallpox, yellow fever, malaria or plague have been eradicated, the appearance of a death from one of these causes will set in motion a chain of actions designed to confirm the diagnosis and to uncover all possible contacts which the deceased may have had for immunization or treatment during the period of illness.

(ii) *Use in programmes for public safety, accident prevention and crime eradication.* The death registration record also finds a use in clearing social security files, morbidity case registers, electoral lists, military service and tax registers.

(iii) *Use in health research.* Death records have been used in some countries in the prevention of maternal deaths. After special investigations of maternal death records have been carried out in selected areas to learn the causes of deaths, programmes of prevention may then be introduced. A similar approach has been taken with respect to infant deaths to determine the preventable factors of infant deaths.

(iv) *Use in epidemiological research.* Epidemiological approaches to studying the association between low-birth-weight children and infant mortality can be done by linking all live births weighing less than 1.5 kg (or any other lower limit) to the corresponding infant death records. Similar approaches can be taken to study neonatal mortality (infant deaths under four weeks of age) or post-neonatal mortality differentials (infant deaths above four weeks of age and up to one year). Other types of epidemiological research include the use of the records of two control groups to learn the effects of certain causes of

death, either retrospectively or prospectively.

(v) *Use in the study of mortality differentials.* Mortality rates by age, sex, occupation, education, income, type of family, and urban and rural residence characteristics could be better studied by matching death records for persons who died after the date of the census to their census enumeration schedule. The information about the deceased reported on the death record is supplemented by any additional demographic and socioeconomic information required about the deceased and other persons reported in his or her household in the census schedule.

(vi) *Use in historical demography research.* Efforts to assess long-term trends in the past in infant mortality by cross-linking death, birth and marriage records at the micro community level have been made by scholars. Reconstitution of the past series of deaths from the registers of burial permits kept in parishes can be possible for this purpose.

(d) *Uses of marriage and divorce records*

(i) *Use in social and demographic studies.* Longitudinal studies of married couples and family patterns can be based on a sample of marriage records to assess the dynamics of the social and demographic process at the micro-level. Studies in family history focusing on local demographic patterns and family size variations over time can also be undertaken by reconstituting families based on the marriage records and matching them with the corresponding births and deaths records of their children and with their own death records. Divorce records may be the starting point in studies of trends in remarriage patterns or in studies to assess differentials in the probability of divorce by type of interfaith marriage or other relevant characteristics. The latter is made possible when complemented with sample survey data.

(ii) *Use in genealogical research.* Records of birth, adoption, legitimation, death, marriage and divorce can be used for tracing the lineage of individuals interested in constructing the family tree.

(iii) *Use in administrative work.* Marriage listings can help in the administration of family allowance programmes or family food rations distribution programmes, wherever such programmes exist.

## **B. Uses of Vital Statistics**

The obtaining of detailed vital statistics has now become a major function of the civil registration system. The vital events and the related characteristics of the events provided at the time of registration also lend themselves readily for compilation of continuous series of vital statistics. In addition, vital statistics derived from the civil registration system (and the population registration system) can provide the flow statistics from the smallest civil divisions, a characteristic that no other data collection system can provide.

Among the demographic uses of vital statistics are the preparations of population estimates and projections, studies of mortality, fertility and nuptiality and the construction of life tables. Vital statistics are also invaluable for planning, monitoring and evaluating various programmes such as those dealing with primary health care, social security, family planning, maternal and child health, nutrition, education, public housing and so forth.

### *1. Uses in population estimates and projections*

Data on births and deaths obtained through the civil registration system can be used with population census data to prepare population estimates and projections for different areas of a country. Depending on how detailed the vital statistics are, population by various subgroups such as age, sex and other characteristics may also be estimated.

The analyses of the trends of fertility, mortality, nuptiality and divorce obtained from vital statistics provide inputs for the formulation of population projections assumptions. Live birth order (i.e., the order of the present live birth in relation to all previous live births), a characteristic that is usually collected in the vital record (or in *its* statistical report) for each registered live birth, can be cross-tabulated with the age of the mother to allow a more refined analysis of fertility patterns and changes to be made and to prepare special fertility projections.

### *2. Uses in cohort and period studies*

Vital statistics form the basis of cohort analysis. Statistics derived from the civil registration system can be used to study various characteristics of the population from either the period point of view or the cohort point of view. Estimation derived from registration data are direct estimates which do not depend, or depend very little, on assumptions. In particular, the estimation of the infant mortality rate can be made directly using registration data.

### *3. Uses in constructing life tables*

An important tool in mortality analysis is the life table that summarizes the mortality experience of a population independent of its age composition. It has, in turn, a variety of uses in demography, public health and actuarial work. Both the standard life table, which deals only with the mortality experience of a population and the multiple decrement table, which describes the separate and combined effects of other factors in addition to mortality, can be calculated. The first calculation, of deaths by age and sex produced by the civil registration system, is straightforward. The second requires death statistics by age and sex and specific rates by other social variables, such as the labour force participation rate. For example, the attrition of the married population can be studied through divorce and mortality.

There are two kinds of life tables, the current or period life table and the generation or cohort life table. The current life table is based on the registered mortality data for a given period of time, usually one to three years, and on the population relating to the middle of

the period. The generation life table is based on the mortality experience of a specific birth cohort, that is, persons born during a particular period of time. The construction of life tables for smaller geographical areas must depend on vital statistics derived from the civil registration system as it is always difficult to use sample data to represent certain small areas.

#### *4. Uses in preparing health indicators*

Vital statistics are the basic data for the calculation of various indices of mortality. They also serve as an aid to public health programmes and research. For the purpose of international comparison, the World Health Organization has recommended that the infant mortality rate, the life expectancy at birth, the crude death rate and the proportionate mortality rate at ages 50 years and over be used to measure the levels of health.

In addition to the infant mortality rate, the post-neonatal mortality rate has also been used as an index of public health to measure the effect of environmental influences on health. Data on post-neonatal and neonatal mortality can only be obtained from the registration data. For an understanding of specific health problems, mortality statistics by cause of death are essential. They can be obtained mainly from the registration data.

#### *5. Uses in epidemiological studies*

Death records can be used as the starting point of retrospective epidemiological studies. Their use as the end point in prospective epidemiological studies has already been mentioned. These studies make possible the testing of hypotheses regarding disease causation. There is still another kind of epidemiological study which is descriptive in nature and where the differentials observed from mortality statistics by cause of death lead to hypotheses about the causative factors. These descriptive studies have played a useful role in showing the association between possible etiological factors and diseases.

#### *6. Uses in public health programmes*

In the absence of morbidity data, public health programmes rely on mortality statistics to learn the magnitude and the distribution of major disease problems. Although certain infective and parasitic diseases may be reported, morbidity reports on communicable diseases are generally incomplete and they do not accomplish more than indicate the seasonality of diseases. Mortality records collected on a regular basis can serve as a useful source of data in dealing with problems of public health.

Statistics on deaths from drug use and poison have been instrumental in obtaining passage of legislation to protect the individual. In some countries, poison control centres have been established. Public health education programmes have been launched utilizing data on various kinds of poisons as the base mortality cause at different ages.

### *7. Uses in maternal and child health services*

Maternal care and child health programmes can be carried out effectively by the availability of statistics on births, foetal deaths, maternal and infant deaths. These data, classified by place of occurrence (hospital, home and urban/rural places), birth weight, gestation age, parity, age of mother and the like, will provide useful information for planning, operating and evaluating services to prevent maternal and infant deaths.

The pregnancy wastage involving foetal and neonatal deaths is assuming great importance, particularly in low fertility societies. The matching of birth to infant death records will provide additional characteristics of the mother, such as age, marital status and socio-economic status, for intensive studies of pregnancy outcome.

### *8. Uses in family planning services*

Family planning services require fertility data by age of mother and parity for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of family planning programmes. Marriage rates and age at first marriage are also useful data for an understanding of the dynamics of fertility. For example, it is known that the age at marriage has a close bearing on total fertility and is therefore a potential policy instrument to limit family size.

### *9. Other uses of vital statistics*

Birth, death and marriage rates and data on family size and composition are important information in planning for public housing. The trends of the birth and marriage rates are indicators of the future house needs, size of school population and are essential in planning and providing school facilities, as well as in the training of teachers.

Vital statistics are useful in planning for future markets of consumer goods such as medicine, food, clothing and furniture. If the birth rate remains high, it may be expected that the demand for maternity clothing will remain high, that medicine, food, clothing, equipment and furniture will continue to be in demand and that housing and house furnishings will be at a premium price. Statistics on births and projections are useful for commercial firms and enterprises to plan for stocks of clothing, toys and play equipment and the like, for growing children.

The number of marriages has importance for the building industry and the trend in marriage rate will influence the business prospects of clothing and furniture manufacturers among others. These are some of the commercial uses of vital statistics that are available at local level.

### Annex 3. List of *kebeles* offices and *weredas* visited by region

Region	Zone	<i>Wereda</i>	<i>Kebele</i>
Amhara	North Shoa	Basna Werena	Goshe Bado
Amhara	Dessie city	urban	8
Amhara	Oromo special	Batu	Chachatu
Affar	1	Dubti	Ayiralona Geblayitu
Affar	3	Gewane	Qurafeta
Oromia	East Shoa	Fentale	Gelcha
Oromia	East Shoa	Adama	Deka Adi
Oromia	East Shoa	Lomme	Shera Dibadiba
SNNP	Welayita	Sodo zuria	Wereza Lasho
SNNP	Konso special	Konso	Fasha
SNNP	South Omo	South Ari	Alga
SNNP	Gamogofa	Arba Minch Zuria	Genta meyiche
SNNP	Hadiya	Lemmo	Alela
SNNP	Hadiya	Lemmo	-
SNNP	Hadiya	Shashego	-
SNNP	Gurage	Meskan	Direma

## **Annex 4. Regulation No. 278/2012 to Provide for the Establishment of the Vital Events Registration Agency**

### **COUNCIL OF MINISTERS REGULATION TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE VITAL EVENTS REGISTRATION AGENCY**<sup>15</sup>

This Regulation is issued by the Council of Ministers pursuant to Article 5 and Article 34 of the Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 691/2010 and Article 4 of the Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card Proclamation No. 760/2012.

#### **1. Short Title**

This Regulation may be cited as the “Vital Events Registration Agency Establishment Council of Ministers Regulation No. 278/2012”.

#### **2. Definitions**

In this Regulation, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 1/ “Proclamation” means the Registration of Vital Events and National Identity Card Proclamation No. 760/2012.
- 2/ definitions provided for under Article 2 of the Proclamation shall be applicable;
- 3/ “Ministry” or “Minister” means the Ministry of Minister of Justice, respectively;
- 4/ any expression in the masculine gender includes the feminine.

#### **3. Establishment**

- 1/ The Vital Events Registration Agency (hereinafter the “Agency”) is hereby established as an autonomous federal organ having its own legal personality.
- 2/ The Agency shall be accountable to the Ministry

#### **4. Head Office**

The Agency shall have its head office in Addis Ababa, and may have branch offices elsewhere as deemed necessary.

#### **5. Objectives**

The Agency shall have the objectives:

- 1/ to direct, coordinate and support the registration of vital events at national level; and
- 2/ to centrally organize and keep records of vital events.

#### **6. Powers and Duties of the Agency**

The Agency shall have the powers and duties to:

- 1/ ensure the proper registration of vital events and the issuance of certificate of registration in accordance with the Proclamation;
- 2/ Collaborate with the provide assistance to the appropriate regional organ in the

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<sup>15</sup> Council of Ministers Regulation No. 278/2012. Council of Ministers Regulation to Provide for the Establishment of the Vital Events Registration Agency; Federal Negarit Gazeta, 19<sup>th</sup> Year No.13, Addis Ababa, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012, Page 6710

- preparation and distribution of registers of civil status to be used by the regions;
- 3/ prepare and distribute registers of civil status to be used for the registration of vital events involving Ethiopians residing in foreign countries and defense force members on active duty and vital events occurring on Ethiopian ships;
  - 4/ in cooperation with the regions prepare action plans for registration of vital events and a system for the usage of information, and monitor the implementation of same;
  - 5/ provide or cause the provision of awareness creation education and trainings, through different methods, on the importance of registration of vital events;
  - 6/ conduct surveys on the quality and coverage of vital events registration, and forward recommendations to resolve problems encountered in the course of the registration;
  - 7/ facilitate the application of vital events registration and information exchange system which is supported by used friendly technology;
  - 8/ undertake coordination activities necessary for the timely transmission of collected data to the relevant organs as stipulated by the Proclamation;
  - 9/ organize central data base for registered vital events, and take necessary precautionary measures to protect the technology infrastructure and the data thereof from risk exposure;
  - 10/ forward policy ideas on vital events registration system to the relevant organ and implement same upon approval;
  - 11/ act in collaboration with the relevant federal and regional state organs;
  - 12/ coordinate government organizations, societies and charity organizations to provide the necessary support in the making of the country's vital events registration system comprehensive;
  - 13/ own property, enter into contracts, sue and be sued in its own name; and
  - 14/ perform such other related activities as may be required for the attainment of its objectives;

## **7. Organization of the Agency**

The Agency shall have:

- 1/ a Vital Events council (hereinafter the "Council");
- 2/ a Board of Management (hereinafter the "Board");
- 3/ a Director General and, as necessary, a Deputy Director General to be appointed by the government; and
- 4/ the necessary staff.

## **8. Members of the Council**

- 1/ Members of the Council shall be drawn from the relevant federal government offices and regions and be designated by the government.
- 2/ The Minister shall be the Chairperson of the Council.
- 3/ The Director General of the Agency shall be the secretary of the Council.

## **9. Powers and Duties of the Council**

The Council shall have the powers and duties to:

- 1/ initiate policy ideas regarding vital events registration;
- 2/ review the country's vital events registration action plans, and forward recommendations for improvements;



- 3/ review performance reports of the Agency and regional vital events registration organs, and forward recommendations for improvements;
- 4/ review the nationwide implementation of the Proclamation, and suggest recommendations for implementation problems;
- 5/ establish sub-committees as may be necessary.

#### **10. Meetings of the Council**

- 1/ The Council shall meet twice a year; provided, however, that it may hold a meeting at any time where necessary.
- 2/ The presence of more than half of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.
- 3/ Decisions of the Council shall be passed by majority vote; provided, however, that the Chairperson shall have a casting vote in case of a tie.
- 4/ Without prejudice to the provisions of this Article, the council may adopt its own rules of procedure.

#### **11. Members of the Board**

- 1/ Members of the Board, including the Chairperson, shall be designated by the government, and their numbers shall be determined as necessary.
- 2/ The Director General of the Agency shall be member and secretary of the Board.

#### **12. Powers and duties of the Board**

The Board shall have the powers and duties to:

- 1/ oversee the activities of the Agency;
- 2/ review the annual work program, budget and performance reports of the Agency;
- 3/ review and approve guidelines to be issued by the Agency;
- 4/ deliberate and, as may be appropriate, decide on issues related with implementation of the Proclamation;
- 5/ coordinate relevant organs in relation with activities of the Agency.

#### **13. Meeting of the Board**

- 1/ The Board shall meet once a month; provided, however, that it may hold a meeting at any time where necessary.
- 2/ The presence of more than half of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.
- 3/ Decisions of the Board shall be passed by majority vote; provided, however, that the Chairperson shall have a casting vote in case of tie.
- 4/ Without prejudice to the provision of this Article, the Board may adopt its own rules of procedure.

#### **14. Powers and Duties of the Director General**

- 1/ The Director General shall be the chief executive officer of the Agency and, subject to the general direction of the ministry, direct, administer and control the activities of the Agency.
- 2/ Without prejudice to the generality stated in sub-article (1) of this Article, the Director General shall:

- a) exercise the powers and duties of the Agency specified in Article 6 of this Regulation;
- b) employ and administer employees of the Agency in accordance with the federal civil service laws;
- c) prepare and submit to the Ministry the strategic plans, annual plans and budgets of the Agency and implement same upon approval;
- d) effect expenditure in accordance with the approved budget and operational program of the Agency
- e) represent the Agency in all its dealings with third parties;
- f) prepare and submit to the Ministry the operational and financial reports of the Agency.

3/ The Director General may delegate part of his powers and duties to other officials and employees of the Agency to the extent necessary for the efficient performance of the activities of the Agency.

#### **15. Budget**

The Agency's budget shall be allocated by the government.

#### **16. Books of Accounts**

1/ The Agency shall keep complete and accurate books of accounts.

2/ The books of accounts and financial documents of the Agency shall be audited annually by the Auditor General or by an auditor designated by him.

#### **17. Effective Date**

This Regulation shall enter into force on the date of publication in the Federal Negarit Gazette.

Done at Addis Ababa, this 31<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2012.

**HAILEMARIAM DESSALEGN  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF  
ETHIOPIA**

## Annex 5. Estimated Number of Vital Events per Kebele per Month by Region

Region	Number of Zones	Number of weredas	Number of kebeles	Population per <i>kebele</i> 2007	Number of events per month per <i>kebele</i>				
					Births	Deaths	Marriages	Divorces	Total
Tigray	6	47	692	6,197	19.9	5.7	10.4	1.2	37.2
Afar	5	30	380	3,633	9.7	4.4	7.1	0.2	21.5
Amhara	12	139	3,379	5,065	15.7	5.8	8.2	0.9	30.6
Oromiya	20	278	6,889	3,899	14.9	4.3	3.3	0.4	22.9
Somali	9	53	431	10,250	26.3	8.8	11.2	4.2	50.5
Benishangul									
Gumz	5	20	440	1,770	6.7	3.1	2.0	0.2	12.0
S.N.N.P	22	145	3,851	3,858	14.6	4.8	3.3	0.5	23.2
Gambela	4	13	224	1,353	4.8	2.4	1.7	0.1	8.9
Harari	1	1	36	4,997	14.3	4.5	5.1	2.2	26.1
Addis									
Ababa	10	10	99	27,147	42.1	24.6	27.8	4.1	98.6
Dire Dawa	1	1	42	8017	21	9	9	3	42
Total	95	741	16475	4,449	15.0	5.0	4.5	1.7	26.2

## Annex 6. Proposed work-flow of registration of births by *kebeles* and issuance of certificates by *wereda* offices on a temporary basis

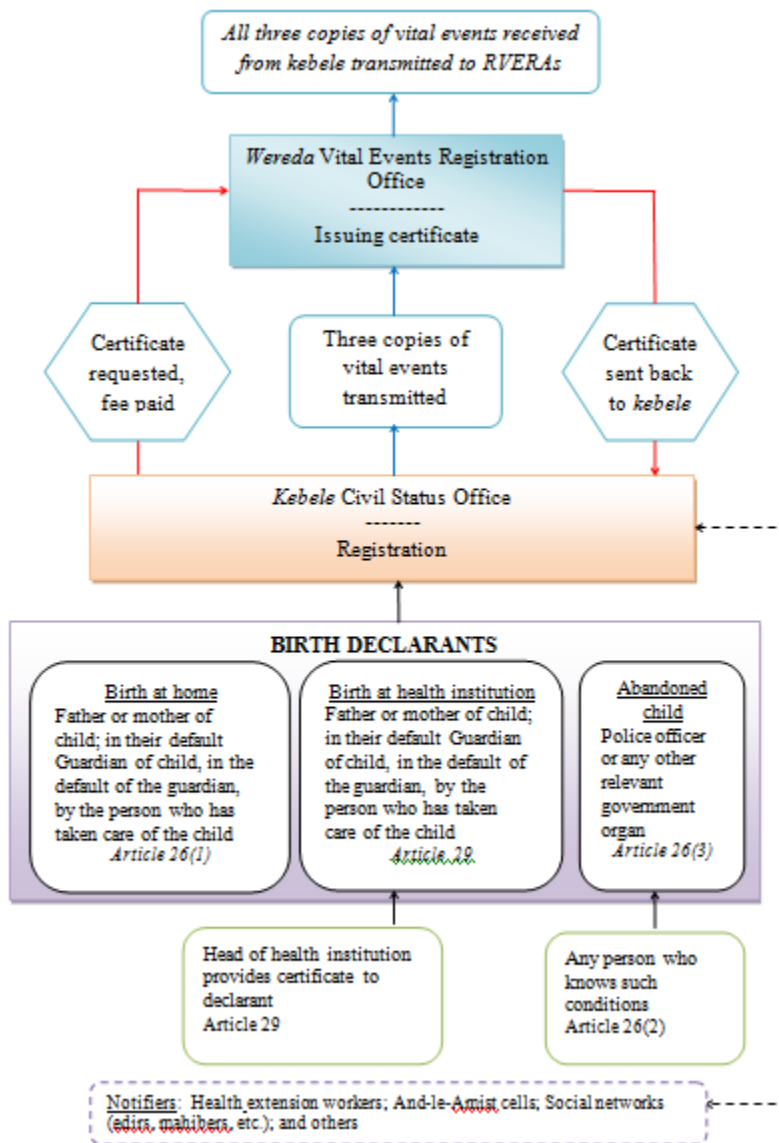
As mentioned under Strategic Objective 1.2(e), although *kebeles* can easily handle the registration of vital events, it would be wise that certificates are issued at *wereda* level for some of them on a temporary basis. The document flow between *kebele* and *wereda*, under this temporary arrangement, could be as follows:

- i. A Civil Status Officer registers vital events at the *kebele* office;
- ii. If certificates are requested by registrants, the *Kebele* Civil Status Officer charges fees and sends the three copies of vital events registration forms along with copies of receipts of paid fees to the *Wereda* Civil Status Office within 30 days following the date of registration (Article 45(1)).
- iii. *Wereda* Civil Status Office
  - a. checks that all *kebeles* within its jurisdictions have sent the registers;
  - b. checks the forms are completed as per instructions in the Registrar's Handbook for *Wereda* Civil Status Offices (to be prepared by VERA). If there are errors, returns the forms with problems back to *Kebele* Civil Status Officer for corrections, say within 3 days (actual duration for this activity to be determined by RVERAs);
  - c. prepares the certificates requested by *kebeles* from the completed forms after checking if the appropriate fees were paid; and
  - d. sends the certificates to the respective *kebeles*; and
  - e. transmits all three copies received from *kebeles* to the appropriate regional organ, say within 5 days (actual duration for this activity to be determined by RVERAs).

All in all, the proposed time that would elapse between request for certificate by a declarant, *kebele* transmitting the request to a *wereda* office, *wereda* office preparing certificate and transmitting them back to *kebeles* should not take more than 10 days. RVERAs should decide (i) which *kebele* offices should be supported by *wereda* offices in the issuance of certificates and the time required for this temporary measure; and (ii) the

proposed duration for document flow. The whole work flow is demonstrated with registration of births by *Kebele* Civil Status Office and certification of same by *Wereda* Civil Status Office in Figure 9.

**Figure 9. Registration of births by *kebeles* and issuance of certificates by *wereda* offices**



All registrants are not expected to request certificate at the time of registration of vital events. In the case of late request for certificates, all kebeles can handle this without any difficulty. In the case of the temporary arrangement for some of the kebeles supported by

weredas, *kebele* Civil Status Officer should fill in the appropriate information for the vital events from the registers in a separate temporary form, to be provided by RVERAs, and send a request for issuance of certificates to the wereda's civil status officer along with a copy of receipt of fees paid for the requested service. For uniformity, RVERAs should prepare standard forms for those kebeles operating within this temporary arrangement.

## **Annex 7. Particulars of records of birth, death, marriage and divorce**

The 2012 law specifies certain information that should be collected on the incidence of births, deaths, marriages and divorces in time and on specified characteristics of each event and of the persons directly concerned with it. In this section, these variables are presented along with the international recommendation of list that may be investigated for each of these events. According to the UN (2001), the higher priority topics, indicated in **bold** typeface, are designed to constitute an immediate goal, while those not so indicated constitute a less urgent goal.

This list of recommended topics will need to be supplemented by other information for judicial and administrative purposes to permit identification of the persons and events under consideration. This is done by inclusion of information such as registration serial number; place of registration; identification of the registrar; given names and surnames of the person or persons directly involved with the event, including personal identification number, if available; and characteristics of the informant, including personal identification number if available, etc. These information, which will be common to all events, are not listed below.

The recommended topics are grouped under two main headings: *(a)* characteristics of the event in question and *(b)* characteristics of persons directly involved with the event, such as the child, the decedent, the partners in the marriage, the divorcees etc. The section deals with only direct topics which are collected through specific questions by the registrar.

**Annex 7 - Table 1. Contents of Birth Registration Record: Ethiopian case and UN Recommendation**

Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
I. Characteristics of the Birth		
<b>Date of birth</b>	X	X
<b>Date of registration</b>	X	X
II Geographic Characteristics		
<b>Place of birth</b>	X	X
<b>Place of registration</b>	X	X
III Other Characteristics		
<b>Types of birth( single or more)</b>	X	X
<b>Attendant at birth</b>	X	X
Type of place of birth (hospital, home, etc.)		X
IV. Characteristics of the Child		
<b>Sex</b>	X	X
Birth weight		X
V. Characteristics of the Mother		
<b>Date of Birth</b>	X	X
<b>Marital Status</b>	X	X
<b>Educational attainment</b>		X
Literacy status		X
Ethnic group	X	X
Citizenship	X	X
Religion	X	
Economic activity status		X
Usual Occupation		X
<b>Place of usual residence</b>	X	X
Duration of residence in usual place		X
Place of residence at a specified time in the past		X
Place of birth	X	X
Date of last menstrual period of the Mother		X
Number of prenatal visits		X
Month of pregnancy prenatal care began		X
<b>Children born alive to mother during her entire life time</b>		X
<b>Children born to mother during her entire life time and still living</b>		X
<b>Foetal deaths to mother during her entire lifetime</b>		X
<b>Date of last previous live birth</b>		X
<b>Date of marriage</b>		X
VI Characteristics of the Father		
<b>Date of birth</b>	X	X
<b>Marital status</b>	X	X
<b>Educational attainment</b>		X
Literacy status		X
Ethnic group	X	X



Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
Citizenship	X	X
Economic activity status		X
Usual occupation		X
<b>Place of usual residence</b>	X	<b>X</b>
Duration of residence in usual place		X
Place of residence at a specified time in the past		X
Place of birth		X

Additional information to be collected on the Birth Registration Records Required by Proclamation 760/2012 (Article 24, 25)

Particulars of the registration area (Article24/1): Name of Region; Name of Zone; Name of Wereda; Name of Town; Name of Kebele/Number (Urban); Name of Kebele/Number (Rural); Registration Office Number; Name of the Place where the Registration Office is Located (rural/urban); File Number; and Serial Number.

Particulars of the declarant if different from the parents: Where declarant is the guardian of child, in the default of the guardian, by the person who has taken care of the child (Article24/3) - Name, Sex, Relationship with child, Date of birth, Place of birth, Place of principal residence.

Other particulars - Signature of declarant; Name of the Officer of Civil Status; Signature of Officer of Civil Status; Seal of the Administrative Office; and Date of registration (Article24/3).

**Annex 7 - Table 2. Contents of Death Registration Record: Ethiopian case and UN Recommendation**

Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
I. Characteristics of the Death(event)		
<b>Date of Death (Occurrence)</b>	X	X
<b>Date of Registration</b>	X	X
II. Geographic Characteristics		
<b>Place of Death</b>	X	X
<b>Place of Registration</b>	X	X
III. Other characteristics		
<b>Cause of Death</b>	X	X
Manner of Death		X
Whether Autopsy findings were used to establish cause of death		X
Pregnancy related death (for females)		X
<b>Certifier</b>	X	X
Attendant at birth (for deaths under 1 year)	X	X
Type of place of death (home hospital)		X
Hospitalization	X	
IV. Characteristics of the decedent		
Title	X	
Date of Birth	X	X
<b>Sex</b>	X	X
<b>Marital Status</b>		X
<b>Date of Marriage</b>		X
Children born alive to mother during her entire life time (Females)		X
Children born to mother during her entire life time and still living (Females)		X
Educational Attainment		X
Literacy Status		X
Ethnic group	X	X
Citizenship/Nationality	X	X
Religion	X	
Whether birth was registered (for deaths under 1 year of age)		X
Born in wedlock( for deaths under 1 year of age)		X
Economic Activity Status		X
Usual Occupation	X	X
Place of usual residence	X	X
Place of previous residence		X
Place of residence at a specified time in the past		X
Place of birth		X

Additional information to be collected Death Registration Record based on the recommendations of Proclamation 760/2012 (Articles 38, 39, 43)

Particulars of the Registration Area (Articles 43): Name of Region; Name of Zone; Name of Wereda; Name of Town; Name of Kebele/Number (Urban); Name of Kebele/Number (Rural); Registration Office Number; Name of the Place the Registration Office is Located (rural); File Number; and Serial Number.

Particulars of the Declarant (Article 39): Name; Sex; Relationship with Child; Date of Birth; Place of Birth; Place of Principal Residence; Personal Identification Number

Evidences presented by the Declarant (Articles 38/2): Medical Certificate; Witness  
*Name and Signature of Declarant* (Articles 38/4) Name of Declarant; Signature of Declarant

Name of Officer of Civil Status and Office of Registration (Articles 38/2): Name of the Officer of Civil Status; Date of Registration; Signature of Officer of Civil Status; and Seal of the Administrative Office.

**Annex 7 - Table 3. Contents of Marriage Registration Record: Ethiopian case and UN Recommendation**

Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
I. Characteristics of the Marriage		
<b>Date of Marriage</b>	X	X
Names of Witnesses of marriage	X	
Place of residence of witnesses	X	
<b>Date of Registration</b>	X	X
II. Geographic characteristic		
Place of Marriage	X	X
Place of Registration	X	X
III. Other characteristics		
Type marriage	X	
IV. Characteristics of the Bride		
<b>Date of birth</b>	X	X
Previous marital status		X
Number of Previous marriages		X
Educational attainment		X
Literacy status		X
Ethnic group	X	X
Citizenship	X	X
Religion	X	
Economic activity status		X
Usual occupation		X
<b>Place of usual residence</b>	X	X
Duration of residence in usual (present) place		X
Place of previous residence		X
Place of residence at a specific in the past		X
Place of birth	X	X
V. Characteristics of the Groom		
<b>Date of birth</b>	X	X
Previous marital status		X
Number of Previous marriages		X
Educational attainment		X
Literacy status		X
Ethnic group	X	X
Citizenship	X	X
Religion	X	
Economic activity status		X
Usual occupation		X
<b>Place of usual residence</b>	X	X
Duration of residence in usual (present) place		X
Place of previous residence		X

Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
Place of residence at a specific in the past		X
Place of birth	X	X

Additional information to be collected on the Marriage Registration Record based on recommendations of Proclamation 760/2012

Particulars of the Registration Area (Article 32): Region; Zone; Wereda; Town; Kebele/Number (Urban); Place the registration office is located (rural).

Evidences of Marriage (Articles 30/4): (i) Certificate: File name; Institute providing certificate; (ii) Witness (3witnesses): Name of Witnesses, Place of Residence, Region, Zone, Wereda; Town; Kebeles; House Number

Name and Signature of Bride Groom and Bride (Articles 30/4):

Name of Bride Groom; Signature of Bride Groom  
Name of Bride; Signature of Bride

Name of Officer of Civil Status, signature and date of Registration (Articles 30/5): Name of the Officer of Civil Status; Date of Registration; Signature of Officer of Civil Status; Seal of the Administrative Office

**Annex 7 - Table 4. Contents of Divorce Registration Record: Ethiopian case and UN Recommendation**

Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
I. Characteristics of the Divorce		
<b>Date of Divorce</b>	X	X
<b>Date of Registration</b>	X	X
Type of Divorce	X	
Cause of divorce	X	
II. Geographic Characteristic		
<b>Place of Divorce</b>		X
<b>Place of Registration</b>		X
III. Characteristics of the Husband		
<b>Date of birth</b>		X
Type of marriage being dissolved		X
Number of dependent children	X	X
Number of children born alive to the marriage being dissolved		X
<b>Date of Marriage</b>	X	X
Duration of marriage being dissolved		X
Number of previous marriages		X
Educational Attainment		X
Literacy Status		X
Ethnic group		X
Citizenship		X
Economic Activity Status		X
Usual Occupation		X
<b>Place of usual residence</b>		X
Duration of residence in usual (present) place		X
Place of previous residence		X
Place of residence at a specific in the past		X
Place of birth		X
Place of occurrence of marriage being dissolved		X
IV. Characteristics of the Wife		
<b>Date of birth</b>		X
Type of marriage being dissolved		X
Number of dependent children	X	X
Number of children born alive to the marriage being dissolved		X
<b>Date of Marriage</b>	X	X
Number of previous marriages		X
Educational Attainment		X

Direct Topics	Required by the 2012 law	Recommended by the UN
Literacy Status		X
Ethnic group		X
Citizenship		X
Economic Activity Status		X
Usual Occupation		X
<b>Place of usual residence</b>		<b>X</b>
Duration of residence in usual (present) place		X
Place of previous residence		X
Place of residence at a specific in the past		X
Place of birth		X
Place of occurrence of marriage being dissolved		X

Additional information to be collected on the Divorce Registration Record based on recommendations of Proclamation 760/2012

Particulars of the Registration Area (Article 36): Region; Zone; Wereda; Town; Kebele/Number (Urban); Kebele/Number (Rural); Registration office number; Place the registration office is located (rural).

Evidences of Divorce (Articles 35- 37): Reference of Court order; File name; Institute providing certificate

Name of Officer of Civil Status and Office of Registration (Article 34): Name of the Officer of Civil Status; Date of Registration; Signature of Officer of Civil Status; Seal of the Administrative Office.

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**Date:** 25 April 2013