

**PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN THE CIVIL
REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR THE CHILDREN'S
RIGHT TO IDENTITY:
“IDENTIFICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT” (ID)**



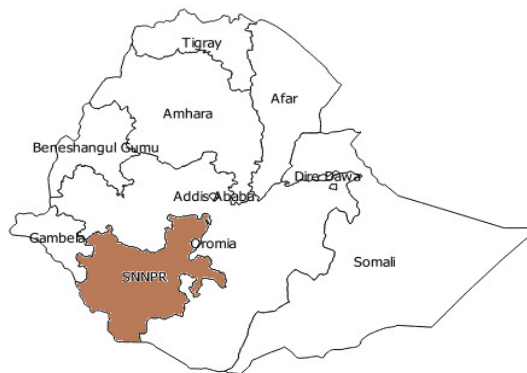
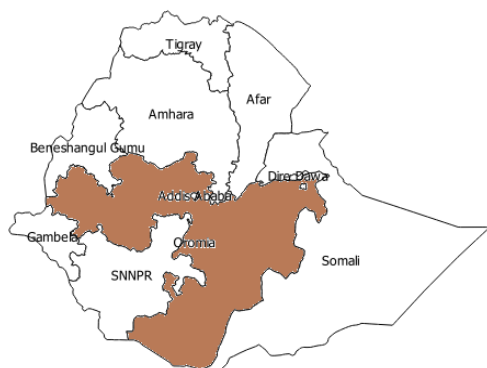
**UNICEF Proposal to the
Italian Agency for Development Cooperation**

September 2016

**Concept Note for
Project to Strengthen the Civil Registration System
for the Children’s Right to Identity:
“Identification for Development” (ID)**

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Country | Ethiopia |
| Project Budget | Euro 500,000.00 |
| Intervention Areas | Oromia Regional State Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR) |
| Partners | Oromia and SNNPR Regional Vital Events Registration Agency (VERA) Bureau of Justice (BoJ) of the two regions Bureau of Health (BoH) NGO/s to be identified |
| UNICEF Contact Persons | Ms. Gillian Mellsop, UNICEF Representative, gmellsop@unicef.org Ms. Shalini Bahuguna, UNICEF Deputy Representative, sbahuguna@unicef.org Mr. Nikodimos Alemayehu, UNICEF OIC- Chief of Child Protection Section, nalemayehu@unicef.org |

Map of Project Target Regions



Oromia Administrative Zones



SNNPR Administrative Zones



Acronyms

| | |
|--------------|---|
| AWPs | Annual Work Plans |
| BoFEC | Bureau of Finance and Economic Cooperation |
| BoH | Bureau of Health |
| BoJ | Bureau of Justice |
| BR | Birth Registration |
| CC | Community Conversation |
| CRVS | Civil Registration and Vital Statistics |
| CSA | Central Statistics Agency |
| C4D | Communications for Development |
| EFY | Ethiopian Fiscal Year |
| FMoH | Federal Ministry of Health |
| FVERA | Federal Vital Events Registration Agency |
| GC | Gregorian Calendar |
| HEP | Health Extension Program |
| HEWs | Health Extension Workers |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| IEC | Information and Communication Technology |
| MoFEC | Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation |
| MIS | Management Information System |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| RVERA | Regional Vital Events Registration Agency |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SNNPR | Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region |
| SOPs | Standard Operating Procedures |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| VER | Vital Events Registration |

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1 PROJECT GOAL

The goal of the project is to contribute to children's right to identity through the improvement and standardization of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system in order to protect them from violence, abuse, exploitation and ensure their access to basic services.

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Provide standardized Vital Events Registration and Certification Services in Oromia and SNNPR.

1.3 PROJECT OUTPUTS

1. Improved institutional and technical capacity of Regional Vital Events Registration Agency (RVERA) in Oromia and SNNPR to effectively lead and coordinate the registration of vital events
2. Established digital data/information management system on CRVS
3. Improved knowledge of the importance and benefits of birth registration in selected kebeles
4. Improved inter-sectoral collaboration, monitoring and supportive supervision for delivery of standardized CRVS program
5. Generated evidence on effectiveness of CRVS intervention and results

1.4 KEY ACTIVITIES

- Organize Training of Trainers (ToT) and roll out trainings targeting 5,580 civil registrars (1 trainee x 3,655 kebeles in Oromia, 1 trainee x 1,925 kebeles in SNNPR) in the target kebeles of the two regions
- Produce 10,044 birth registration books (100 births to be registered in a single BR book) and 1,004,400 birth certificates for the registration of new born children in the selected kebeles of the identified regions (the number of copies of birth certificates considers the expected total birth for the targeted kebeles in the two regions, covering 12 months period)
- Conduct an assessment on office logistic needs for 5,580 VERA Offices (1 office x 3,655 kebeles in Oromia, 1 office x 1,925 kebeles in SNNPR) in the project target locations to define the procurement plan
- Procure and supply basic office equipment and furniture to Vital Events Registration Offices based on assessment's outcomes
- Develop data collection tools by Management Information System (MIS) consultants recruited by RVERAs
- Procure hardware and software to operationalize the CRVS MIS
- Organize training on developed tools for data encoders (at woreda and regional levels)
- Develop CRVS communication strategy through the recruitment of a communication company/consultant
- Produce and distribute Information Education Communication (IEC) materials in the local languages to promote birth registration and certification (200,880 posters = 36 posters/kebele x 5,580 kebeles)
- Organization of training of 220 Community Conversation (CC) facilitators, including religious

leaders and community leaders (1 facilitator x 148 woredas Oromia, 1 facilitator x 72 woredas SNNPR)

- Conduct 220 quarterly awareness raising CC (1 CC x 148 woredas Oromia, 1 CC x 72 woredas SNNPR every 3 months)
- Conduct pre and post assessment on Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP survey) to measure awareness improvement among the community
- Set up coordination and technical advisory groups (1 Oromia, 1 SNNPR) composed of representatives of relevant government bureaus, CSA, UNICEF, CSOs, academic institutions
- Conduct a rapid assessment and provide logistical support (vehicle rental, fuel etc.) to improve RVERA's efficiency in managing the project
- Organize trainings of 11,160 Health Extension Workers (HEW) (2 HEWs/kebele) on notification of births for 3 days (100 participants x session for a total of 111 sessions; additional 60 HEWs will be included)
- Conduct a rapid assessment on the achievement of project results
- Organize a workshop on project lessons learnt

1.5 PROJECT TARGETS

The project will target 50% of the woredas and kebeles (220 woredas and 5580 kebeles) of Oromia and SNNPR. An estimated 1,004,400¹ new born children in the target kebeles of the two regions are expected to benefit from registration and certification services.

Direct beneficiaries:

- 1,004,400 new born children in the two regional states

Indirect beneficiaries

- 5,580 kebele registrars (3,655 registrars in Oromia and 1,925 registrars in SNNPR) have improved knowledge and skills to deliver standardised birth registration and certification services
- 220 woreda registrars (148 woreda in Oromia and 72 woreda in SNNPR) have improved knowledge and skills to coordinate standardised birth registration and certification services
- 11,160 HEWs have improved knowledge and skills to undertake birth notification²
- Community groups and parents in 5,580 targeted kebeles have benefited from communication and demand creation interventions

1.6 PROJECT LOCATION

- Target locations of the project are 50% of the woredas and kebeles in Oromia and SNNPR regions (3,655 kebeles in Oromia and 1,925 in SNNPR). Identification of the target woredas and kebeles will be made in consultation with the RVERAs and considering parameters such as: convergence with UNICEF ongoing programs on child protection and newborn and maternal health, community based structures such as Community Care Coalitions, availability of registration offices and registrar/kebele managers in individual kebeles etc.

¹ Identification of target has considered a birth rate of 15/kebele/month for both regions, in 12 months period, and covering 50% of kebeles in Oromia (3,655 kebeles) and 50% of kebeles in SNNPR (1,925)

² Target identification considers two HEWs per kebele and covering 50% of kebeles in the two regions

1.7 PROPOSED IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Oromia and SNNPR Vital Events Registration Agency for the overall coordination of the project
- Bureau of Justice (BoJ) of the two regions for implementation of policies and strategies
- Bureau of Health (BoH) for birth notification interventions
- NGO/s to be identified to manage birth registration awareness raising and Community Conversation (CC) interventions

1.8 PROJECT BUDGET AND DONORS

- Total Project Budget: **EURO 500,000**
- Donors: Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 National context

According to the 2007 census the general population of Ethiopia reached 73.7 million. In 2013, the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) projected this population size to have reached 85.89 million based on the 2012 Inter-Censal Population Survey (ICPS). Over 80 ethnic groups were counted, and of these, Oromo is the largest and accounts for 34.5%. Ethiopia is a federal republic with nine regional states and two administration cities, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. The regional states are divided into 83 zones and 801 woredas (districts).

With a national registration rate of 7% or less children registered, Ethiopia is one of the countries with the lowest levels of birth registration.³ With no proof of age or identity, children do not have the minimal protection needed against diverse child protection concerns. The impacts of the absence of birth registration system on children's welfare were identified by PLAN International and the Africa Child Policy Forum – namely the denial of children's rights to a name, identity and nationality, protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, including early marriage, child labour and trafficking, and access to basic social services, including education and health.

2.2 Regional Context

A. Oromia Regional State

Oromia is the largest regional state with a forecasted population of 33.9 million people in 2014/15, with almost similar proportion of males and females. It accounts about 37.3% of the population (CSA, 2013) and occupies about 34.3% of the land mass of the country (Oromia National Regional State, 2011). The fertility rate in Oromia is higher than the national average, namely the total fertility rate per woman (age group 15-49) in Oromia is 4.4.⁴ This rate has declined considerably since 2011

³ UNICEF, Progress for Children: A Report Card on Child Protection (2009)

⁴ Mini-DHS 2014, p. 29

when the rate was 5.6.⁵ Children below the age of 15 constitutes slightly lower than half (47%) of the population but including those with the age of 15 to 19, it constitutes 60%.

Many children in Oromia have been subjected to different forms of violence. According to the Bureau of Justice, 4,888 cases involving cases of violence against children and women have been considered during the 2006 E.C Fiscal Year⁶, out of which 4,834 or 98.89% have been disposed. Nevertheless, these figures do not represent a complete picture of the scale of violence as many of the crimes remain unreported. As opposed to the conventional thinking that only girl children are victims of sexual abuse, cases of sexual violence against boys are also encountered. Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs) such as child marriage, abduction and bride price payment are widespread in the region. The 2008 survey by EGLDAM indicated a 23.1% prevalence of early marriage in the region down from 31.6% in 1997.⁷

Child labor is another serious concern in Oromia. In terms of number of children who are involved in child labor, Oromia holds a top position in Ethiopia. Oromia children are particularly vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation, because the region hosts major investments and serves as a corridor. Child trafficking continues to be one of the issues of concern in Oromia. Internal trafficking in children is increasing at an alarming rate and has become a serious problem in the region. Studies indicate that both internal and external trafficking in children is pervasive in Oromia. According to the latest figures from the Bureau of Women and Children Affairs about a total of 259 trafficked children have been placed under institutional care from June 2014 up to January 2015 of whom 189 are boys and 70 are girls.⁸

The regional administrative structure is composed of 34 zones, 296 woredas and 7,310 kebeles. An average of 4,637 people live per kebele⁹, and with an estimated 14.9 birth occurring per month per kebele. The regional Vital Events Registration Agency was established in June 2014, by virtue of Regulation number 169/2014. The Regulation lays the foundation for the establishment of accessible, comprehensive and compulsory registration system. Since the Vital Events Registration Agency of the region is nascent, it has not yet started the actual task of registration. At present, the Agency is undertaking preparatory works including ironing out the structure of the institutional set up, office lay out, undertaking studies and awareness raising activities. The Agency has undertaken Business Re-engineering process and the human resource requirements are defined and approved from region to kebele level. In addition, hiring and assignment of human resources is ongoing in all identified structures at kebele level. Out of the required 7,310 kebele managers/registrars, 6,677 positions are filled- providing 91.3 % completion rate.

⁵ EDHS 2011, p. 71

⁶ Oromia National Regional State, Bureau of Justice, Action Plan 2007 Fiscal Year, p.18

⁷ Ethiopia Goji Limadawi Dirgitoch Aswogaj Mahiber (EGLDAM), Follow up National Survey on the Harmful Traditional Practices in Ethiopia (2008) 82

⁸ Bureau of Women and Children Affairs, FTR Monthly Reporting (June 2014-January 2015) (Report completed by Ewnetu Busheri)

⁹ This figure considers the 2014/15 population projection of the region divided by the number of administrative kebeles. The 2007 National Population Census reports 3,899

B. Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR)

The SNNPR has an estimated population of 18.7 million people, which constitutes approximately 21.7% of the Ethiopian population, 90% of the population living in rural areas and 10% in urban areas. The fertility rate in the SNNPR is high, namely the total fertility rate per woman (age group 15-49) is 4.3.¹⁰ It accounts for about 10% of the total area of the country, with 113,539 square kilometers areal coverage. Children below the age of 15 constitute slightly lower than half (46%) of the total population, and this percentage goes up to 60% when children aged 15 to 19 are added.

Violence against children is also widely practiced. Anecdotal evidence revealed that 38% of children have experienced corporal punishment by their family members, 37% faced emotional abuse like insulting and humiliation, and 8% were the victim of sexual violence; although most sex-related violence is still hidden. The prevalence of early marriage and FGM/C in the SNNPR is lower than the national average. One current challenge regarding FGM/C is that it is often carried out in a disguised manner in order to escape the growing public disapproval and legal sanctions. Child labor and child trafficking are serious concerns in the SNNPR. The DHS 2011 survey shows that 31% of children between the age of 5 and 14 are involved in child labor. Child labor takes place in both rural and urban areas. Children who are involved in child labor in the urban centers are often also the victim of trafficking. Examples of child work in are fishing, assisting fishermen in preparing fish for customers, cleaning work, street trading and vending, construction, domestic servitude, etc. In the context of SNNPR a pilot study conducted by the Regional Labor and Social Affairs Bureau on 5 selected cities of the region showed that, streetism is an ever increasing phenomenon and challenge in the growing capital cities and towns of the region (LSAA, 2011). According to the same study, among populations living and working on the street nearly one-third (29.7%) constitute children below the age of 18 years.

The region is divided into 22 zones, 145 woredas and 3851 kebeles (7% urban and 93% rural). There are about 56 ethnic groups. An average of 3,858 people live per kebele, and with an estimated 14.6 birth occurring per month per kebele. The regional Vital Events Registration Agency was established in 2014 by virtue of Regulation number 760/2014. The Agency has undertaken Business Re-engineering process and the human resource requirements are defined and approved from region to kebele level. 85% of the required staffs of VERA at all level are recruited/assigned. So far, 4184 registrars (98.9% of the requirement) are designated to manage registration and certification services. The region has produced a five year Strategic Plan (EC 2008-2012) or (GC 2015-2019).

2.3. Legal and Institutional Framework

A. Legal Framework

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

¹⁰ Mini-DHS 2014, p. 29.

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.

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).

Although the Ethiopian Civil Code sets out a detailed system for civil registration under articles 47 to 153, these provisions have not entered into force because of Article 3361 of the Code, which states that these rules will not become operational until the issuance of an order by the state. This has not yet been issued. Similarly, article 656 of the newly adopted Criminal Code does not articulate that the failure to declare birth is punishable by law, on account of the absence of the mechanism to enforce birth registration.

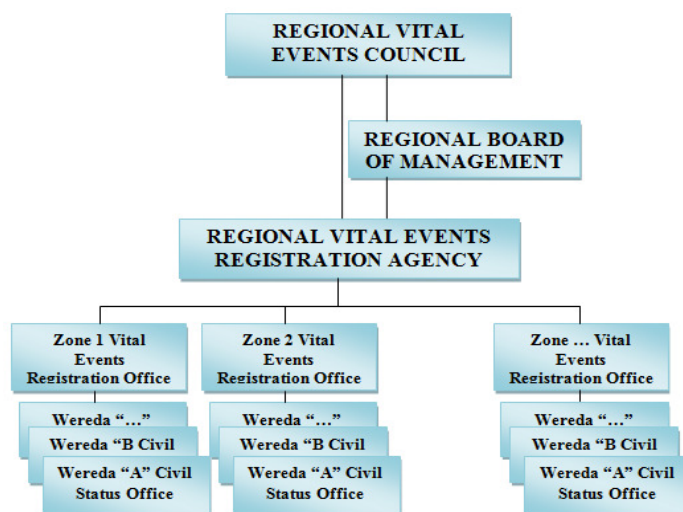
The absence of a legal framework for a national vital events registration and vital statistics system has resulted in unconventional and uncoordinated practices of producing civil status evidence, such as issuance of certificated of birth, death, marriage and divorce by hospitals, churches and municipalities. In response to the situation, the Government of Ethiopia adopted the Proclamation on Vital Events Registration and National ID (Proclamation No. 760/2012), in August 2012. By virtue of the new law, the Government has defined the institutional and operational framework of vital events registration that includes the registration of births, deaths, marriages, divorces and other vital events. The Proclamation was followed by a Council of Ministers Regulation-entitled ‘Regulation No. 278/2012 to Provide for the Establishment of the Vital Events Registration Agency’, which formally set up the Federal Vital Events Registration Agency (FVERA), as Federal institution entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating and guiding the establishment of a decentralized system of vital events registration. Significantly, the Government, through the National Council on Vital Events Registration, has made a commitment to accelerating the implementation of the necessary preparatory activities and successfully launched registration of all vital events as of 6th of August 2016.

Following the introduction of the legislative framework, progress has been made at national and regional levels towards the establishment of a standardized vital events registration system in the country. The formation of Federal and Regional vital events council and boards of management, adoption of regional laws, and drafting of a national strategy are amongst the key achievements made in the area thus far. Similarly, registration instruments and guidelines are developed and disseminated to all regions.

B. Institutional Framework

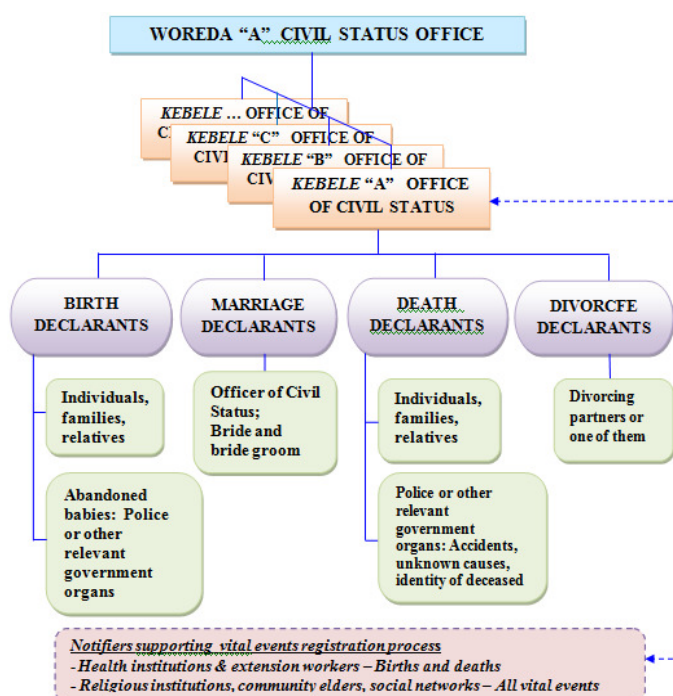
Regional Vital Events Registration Agency has been set up in Oromia and SNNP Regions, by virtue of Regulation number 169/2014 and Regulation number 760/2014 respectively with responsibility to direct, coordinate and support the registration of vital events at regional level and to transfer records of vital events to the appropriate federal organ. The establishment of Regional Vital Events Registration Agencies (RVERAs) is fundamental for a viable conventional vital events registration system in the two project target regions and for the country at large.

Figure 1: Structure for the Vital Events Registration at Regional Level and links with Zone and Woreda Civil Status Offices



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. Woreda 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. 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.

Figure 2: Vital Events Registration Structure at *Woreda* and *Kebele* Levels



2.4. Opportunities and Challenges of Building a Standardized CRVS System in the Project Target Regions

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 an effective civil registration and vital statistics system will depend on existing country and regional 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.

The Regional Government of Oromia and SNNPR, with the support of UNICEF aim to build the CRVS system by capitalizing on the existing governmental and community based structures and resources. The decentralized governance structure of the government that goes down to the kebele level is a unique opportunity bestowed to the CRVS system, allowing effective management and opportunity to sustain results with minimal cost implications. Similarly, Ethiopia has 38,000 Health Extension Workers (HEW) (22,322 HEW for the two project target regions), that are deployed on the ground and who are on the government's payroll through the Health Extension Program (HEP). For this reason, HEP is considered as a unique opportunity to rapidly capture the occurrence of vital events such as births and deaths on a timely basis.

Table 1. Opportunities and challenges in the establishment and development of civil registration and vital statistics system

| Areas | Opportunities | Challenges |
|--|---|---|
| Legal framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federal level vital events registration law (Proclamation No. 760/2012) - For Oromia Regulation number 169/2014. - For SNNPR Regulation number 760/2014 - Capacity to enforce law at all administrative levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of knowledge of the vital events registration law by the general population and law enforcing bodies |
| Political and socio-economic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current social and economic growth conducive for implementing vital events registration - Growth and Transformation Plan - Government's recognition of the importance of civil registration and vital statistics and commitment to establish and maintain conventional vital events registration - Scale-up approach is implemented by the Regional governments in different initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordability of fees by poor households to obtain certificates - Low awareness of benefits of vital events registration |
| Institutional and administrative framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government commitment to establish RVERAs - Support provided by MoH, CSA and others to the civil registration initiative - Decentralized administrative structure of the country down to the kebele level in urban and rural areas covering the entire territory is conducive for a decentralized vital events registration operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutional capacity in terms of human resources and infrastructure - Low level of participation of concerned organs - Recruitment and retention of qualified staff, if salary scale and compensation scheme of VERA is not competitive - Delay in preparatory phase activities (procurement of goods and equipment, etc.) slowing down implementation. - 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 |
| Social networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Widely practiced communal support systems in both rural and urban areas, such | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility of some individuals not participating in any of the social and |

| Areas | Opportunities | Challenges |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>as edir, mahiber, equb 11 , etc.; community elders officiating over marriage and divorces; etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kebele organized community support systems such as “and-le-amist”¹² | <p><i>kebele</i> organized self-help networks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural taboos and traditional practice in registering some of the events |
| Other major government undertakings that could support civil registration and vital statistics systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Health: Penetration of the health extension workers into rural areas could contribute to improved coverage and completeness of registration as notifiers - Ministry of Agriculture: Development Agents, same as above - Ministry of Education - Ministry of Urban Development and Construction - Ministry of Women, Children and Youth - Municipalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination of activities among ministries and agencies - Additional work load on individual workers |
| Other infrastructure (road, communication, power, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wide and far reaching road networks in the rural areas - Telephone communication - Rural electrification - <i>Woreda-Net</i>; School-Net, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of constant supply of power in many of the rural <i>kebeles</i>; - Accessibility of the Civil Status Office in some of the <i>kebeles</i> during the rainy season |
| Information, education and communication (IEC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - The press at national and regional levels - To work with higher learning institutions to introduce civil registration and vital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of human, material and logistical resources supporting sustained training and educational programs - Insufficient coverage of TV or lack of availability of TV sets, newspapers and Internet in many of the rural <i>kebeles</i> - Insufficient civil registration and vital statistics related materials adopted to the country’s needs |

¹¹ *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

¹² *And-le-Amist* literally means one-for-five. It is a cell of five people from the same neighborhood 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 | Challenges |
|---|---|---|
| | statistics systems in their curriculums; | |
| Vital statistics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Strategy for the Development of Statistics - Possibility of decentralization of data capture and archiving | |
| UN Country programs; UNICEF, WHO UNFPA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial support - Sponsoring in-country training and study visits - Technical documents - Procurement (international) - Consultancy and advisory services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fund absorption capacity of VERA in the first few years could be challenging - Projects with short life span |

3. THE PROPOSED PROJECT

This project will contribute to the process of reinstating a decentralized universal birth registration system as part of an overall civil registration and vital statistics system in the project target regions. It is envisaged that birth registration and certification will cover 50% of woredas and kebeles of the project target regions through specific interventions that are in conformity with international standards and national legislation.

This project is designed to address the major challenges and gaps in the institutional, technical and operational capacity of the two regional vital events registration agencies. The regional governments of Oromia and SNNPR, being cognizant of the limitations to meet the pressing demand, have made a formal request to UNICEF for technical and financial resources. Following consultative processes with the RVERAs, program priorities have been identified and Annual Work Plans (AWPs) are finalized for the Ethiopian Fiscal Year (EFY) 2009 and 2010, Gregorian Calendar (GC) 2016/2017-2017/2018). To achieve these results, a total of EURO 500,000 is requested from the Italian Development Cooperation to compliment the efforts of UNICEF and government partners towards the establishment of functional birth registration and certification system.

3.1. UNICEF STRATEGY

- a) Based on concrete recommendations made by federal and regional vital events counterparts, and considering government's national strategic direction and regional context, the following strategic interventions were adopted for operationalization of the project duration. Building the technical and institutional capacity building vital events registration organs. This strategy involves provision of basic office equipment to VERAs, and adaptation of training manuals and undertaking of ToTs and rollout trainings for target officials

- b) Strengthening coordination, monitoring and reporting mechanisms including identification of viable digital MIS on CRVS
- c) Supporting the development and operationalization of communication strategy for BR
- d) Lead by the RVERAs, information, communication and education strategy will be developed. Regions will be responsible for development, adaptation and operationalization of the strategy and tools considering their specific socio-cultural context.
- e) Supporting interoperability of birth registration into the health system through development and adaptation of birth notification guidelines and tools, and training of health personnel on birth registration and notification processes

3.2 UNICEF's COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

During the past five years, UNICEF has assumed a central position in supporting the Government of Ethiopia in the design and operationalization of a conventional system of vital events registration. Beginning from the drafting of the proclamation and the national strategy to the validation of the latter, UNICEF has played an instrumental role throughout the process. Bridging gaps in the institutional and human resource capacity of the FVERA and REVERAs through the provision of supplies and through the recruitment and embedment of professionals are attributable to UNICEF. Recognizing the unique and complex task of setting up a Vital Events Registration (VER) system, which is further complicated by the acute technical capacity limitation of VER officials, UNICEF has supported the participation of VERA officials in a number of learning opportunities. These include trainings, conferences and international study tours organized in Africa and Asia countries.

Such contributions have yielded considerable results, leading to the formation of groundwork and leading to a commencement of preparatory activities for the nationwide scaling of the CRVS system in Ethiopia. UNICEF contribution to the CRVS system building is embedded within the joint AWP that is signed with the FVERA and corresponding agencies of the two regional states. At Federal level, as the sole development partner to have entered a formal program partnership/agreement with the FVERA, UNICEF serves as a convener of the technical advisory group on CRVS, which is composed of UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, WHO, UNECA and UNDP.

UNICEF program support to the two regions in the area of CRVS

As of the 2006 EFY, UNICEF has developed a joint AWP with the RVERAs of the two regions. Under the framework of the AWP, UNICEF has contributed to strengthening the technical and institutional capacity of the VERAs. Part of the contribution includes embedment of a Technical Assistance (TA) within the offices of the two RVERAs to manage day-to-day support to the respective agencies. Support has been also provided to furnishing the offices of the VERAs with the required office equipment. Other areas of interventions include technical capacity building to staff of RVERAs and officials designated at the lower administrative levels in order to create preparedness to support the CRVS system.

In Oromia Region, UNICEF has supported piloting of the registration program, which was carried out in three zones focusing on four woredas and two city administrations. A total of 30 kebeles were reached through the pilot program. In order to create awareness to the general public with the

support of UNICEF, the Oromia RVERA has developed and disseminated key messages on the importance of registration and certification services using print and electronic media operating in the Region. Similar investments at regional level will continue to be made by UNICEF to maintain standard of the CRVS system and its interoperability with health.

In SNNPR, similar support has been provided to build the technical and institutional capacity of RVERA. With the support of UNICEF, the RVERA has led the undertaking of various technical capacity building and awareness raising activities focusing on key administrative officials and members of the community. In the last Fiscal Year, an estimated 722 representatives were trained on CRVS concept and process. In the area of community mobilization and demand creation on registration services, UNICEF has supported the SNNPR RVERA in the development of communication materials in the form of booklets, brochures and leaflets, and disseminated the messages using different community platforms. Print and electronic media in the region were also engaged to broadcast selected messages on regular basis. An important part of UNICEF support in SNNPR is on interoperability of CRVS and health services. TA rendered for the purpose has resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the RVERA and the Bureau of Health.

Whereas, UNICEF program interest focuses on birth registration, its role and contribution within the wider package of CRVS is provisionally mapped out. UNICEF will provide support for the design, planning, management, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of jointly agreed activities with government and partners. This will be achieved through incorporating the planned outcomes and activities in the jointly agreed AWP. At governmental level, the program will be led by the RVERAs in close collaboration with and support from all main institutions and organizations of the justice, health, social and education sectors. Non-governmental and intergovernmental level development partners such as the World Bank, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Africa Development Bank, UNECA, UNFPA, UNICEF, Save the Children International, Plan International etc. are expected to make significant contribution within the partnership framework.

Gender Equality

CRVS interventions contribute to efforts aimed at addressing gender equality. The absence of a conventional system of birth registration in Ethiopia has been a major setback on efforts addressing violence against girls, which is a critical issue affecting gender equality in Ethiopia. Taking into consideration the present CRVS context of Ethiopia, more than 90% of girls do not have birth certificates and hence lack the legal means to prove their age. Although relevant national laws accord special protection to minors, particularly girls, in relation to response services and enforcement of cases of violence, due to challenges associated with proof of age, young girls who are survivors/victims of violence and child marriage are devoid of the means to obtain legal remedy and protection. As a result, investments made by the project to strengthen the CRVS system invaluablely contribute to upholding gender equality and protection of girls from violence.

Similarly, a robust CRVS information management system allows for systematic gathering of disaggregated data based on age group and gender. Among the information required during registration of birth is health status of the mother upon delivery, which is crucial to measure important gender indicators such as maternal mortality and morbidity. The presence of up to date

data generated from the CRVS system provides a solid basis for planning of health services aimed at mitigating maternal mortality and morbidity associated with pregnancy and delivery. Moreover, the project will make considerable contributions to ensure gender equality through training of female HEWs in relation to notification of birth.

3.3. KEY ACTIVITIES

Output (1): Improved institutional and technical capacity of Regional Vital Events Registration Agency (RVERA) in Oromia and SNNPR to effectively lead and coordinate the registration of vital events

The project output envisages to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of the Regional Vital Events Registration Agencies of the two project target regions including kebele level registration offices. Technical capacity building through training of responsible kebele registration officers on registration processes, organizing experience sharing consultations and visits are part of the interventions under this output. Technical capacity building trainings helps to ensure that the responsible actors are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities; and are empowered to confidently conduct their tasks. At implementation levels, technical assistance will be provided in the area of vital events registration system and management to regional, zonal, woreda, and importantly kebele registrars and health workers.

In the area of institutional capacity building, an assessment of the office of RVERAs and target kebele registration offices will be undertaken to determine requirements for basic supplies. Based on outcome of this assessment basic office supplies, including materials for data archiving, will be procured and delivered to respective registration offices.

Specific Activities:

- Organize Training of Trainers (ToT) and roll out trainings targeting 5,580 civil registrars (1 trainee x 3,655 kebeles in Oromia, 1 trainee x 1,925 kebeles in SNNPR) in the target kebeles of the two regions
- Produce 10,044 birth registration books (100 births to be registered in a single BR book) and 1,004,400 birth certificates for the registration of new born children in the selected kebeles of the identified regions (the number of copies of birth certificates considers the expected total birth for the targeted kebeles in the two regions, covering 12 months period)
- Conduct an assessment on office logistic needs for 5,580 VERA Offices (1 office x 3,655 kebeles Oromia, 1 office x 1,925 kebeles SNNPR) in the project target locations to define the procurement plan
- Procure and supply basic office equipment and furniture to Vital Events Registration Offices based on assessment's outcomes

Output (2): Established digital data/information management system on CRVS

Under this output, targeted investments and interventions to dictate the design of CRVS data storage, management and maintenance system will be made. A computerized management information

system will be established at Regional level. Whereas at the Zonal, Woreda and Kebele levels, paper based data storage is considered. As the CRVS system is at the initial phase, government has set direction to go paper-based at the lowest registration structures. The project support for the creation of digital CRVS MIS at regional level will also serve as a model for future scale up efforts to cover all registration structures.

Specific Activities:

- Develop data collection tools by Management Information System (MIS) consultants recruited by RVERAs
- Procure hardware and software to operationalize the CRVS MIS at regional level
- Organize training on developed tools for data encoders (at woreda and regional levels)

Output (3): Improved knowledge of the importance and benefits of birth registration in selected kebeles

Lead by the RVERAs of the two project targeted regions, and with the technical assistance of Civil Society Organization/s (CSOs), information, communication and education strategy and tools will be developed for dissemination among community groups and parents in the targeted woredas and kebeles.

Specific Activities:

- Develop CRVS communication strategy through the recruitment of a communication company/consultant
- Produce and distribute Information Education Communication (IEC) materials in the local languages to promote birth registration and certification (200.880 posters = 36 posters/kebele x 5.580 kebeles)
- Organize trainings of 220 Community Conversation (CC) facilitators, including religious leaders and community leaders (1 facilitator x 148 woredas Oromia, 1 facilitator x 72 woredas SNNPR)
- Conduct 220 quarterly awareness raising CC (1 CC x 148 woredas Oromia, 1 CC x 72 woredas SNNPR every 3 months)
- Conduct pre and post assessment on Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP survey) to measure awareness improvement among the community

Output (4): Improved inter-sectoral collaboration, monitoring and supportive supervision for delivery of standardized CRVS program

The overall purpose is the formation of Regional inter-agency coordination platforms that will provide consolidated support to the initiative, including regular monitoring and review of progress of work based on a defined plan and operational arrangement. Through review meetings and systematic assessments, partners will be in a position to document lessons learned and promising practices, as well as identify gaps and bottlenecks in order to come up with directions for efficient program delivery. Stakeholders will develop benchmarks and ensure performance improvement through the development of data collection tools, reporting formats and evaluation instruments, in collaboration

with Central Statistical Agency (CSA) of Ethiopia. Members of the inter-agency coordination group consists of the Regional Vital Events Registration Agency, Bureau of Justice, Bureau of Health, CSA, Academic Institutions, UNICEF and NGOs.

Specific Activities:

- Set up coordination and technical advisory groups (1 Oromia, 1 SNNPR) composed of representatives of relevant government bureaus, CSA, UNICEF, CSOs, academic institutions
- Conduct a rapid assessment and provide logistical support (vehicle rental, fuel etc.) to improve RVERA's efficiency in managing the project
- Organization of training of 11,160 Health Extension Workers (HEW) on notification of births for 3 days (100 participants x session for a total of 111 sessions; additional 60 HEWs will be included).

Output (5): Generated evidence on effectiveness of CRVS intervention and results

This output area aims at generation of knowledge and evidence on the successfulness of the project interventions in the achievement of output and outcome level results. For the purpose, lessons will be drawn from the project implementation to guide scaling up interventions for a national level CRVS results.

Specific Activities:

- Conduct a rapid assessment on the achievement of project results
- Organize a workshop on project lessons learnt

3.4 KEY ACTIVITIES

| Key Activities | | 2016/2017 | | | |
|---|---|-----------|---|---|--|
| 1. Improved institutional and technical capacity of Regional Vital Events Registration Agency (RVERA) in Oromia and SNNPR to effectively lead and coordinate the registration of vital events | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Organize Training of Trainers (ToT) and roll out trainings targeting 5,580 civil registrars (1 trainee x 3,655 kebeles in Oromia, 1 trainee x 1,925 kebeles in SNNPR) in the target kebeles of the two regions | x | | x | |
| 1.2 | Produce 10,044 birth registration books (100 births to be registered in a single BR book) and 1,004,400 birth certificates for the registration of new born children in the selected kebeles of the identified regions (the number of copies of birth certificates considers the expected total birth for the targeted kebeles in the two regions, covering 12 months period) | x | | x | |
| 1.3 | Conduct an assessment on office logistic needs for 5,580 VERA Offices (1 office x 3,655 kebeles Oromia, 1 office x 1.925 kebeles SNNPR) in the project target locations to define the procurement plan | x | | | |
| 1.4 | Procure and supply basic office equipment and furniture to Vital Events Registration Offices based on assessment’s outcomes | x | x | | |

| 2. Established digital data/information management system on CRVS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Develop data collection tools by Management Information System (MIS) consultants recruited by RVERAs | | | | x |
| 2.2 | Procure of hardware and software to operationalize the CRVS MIS | | | | x |
| 2.3 | Organize training on developed tools for data encoders (at woreda and regional levels) | | | | x |
| 3. Improved knowledge of the importance and benefits of birth registration in selected kebeles | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Develop CRVS communication strategy through the recruitment of a communication company/consultant | x | | | |
| 3.2 | Produce and distribute Information Education Communication (IEC) materials in the local languages to promote birth registration and certification (200.880 posters = 36 posters/kebele x 5.580 kebeles) | | x | x | |
| 3.3 | Organize trainings of 220 Community Conversation (CC) facilitators, including religious leaders and community leaders (1 facilitator x 148 woredas Oromia, 1 facilitator x 72 woredas SNNPR) | x | x | x | x |
| 3.4 | Conduct 220 quarterly awareness raising CC (1 CC x 148 woredas Oromia, 1 CC x 72 woredas SNNPR every 3 months) | x | x | x | x |
| 3.5 | Conduct pre and post assessment on Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP survey) to measure awareness improvement among the community | x | | | x |
| 4. Improved inter-sectoral collaboration, monitoring and supportive supervision for delivery of standardized CRVS program | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Set up coordination and technical advisory groups (1 Oromia, 1 SNNPR) composed of representatives of relevant government bureaus, CSA, UNICEF, CSOs, academic institutions | x | x | x | x |
| 4.2 | Conduct a rapid assessment and provide logistical support (vehicle rental, fuel etc.) to improve RVERA's efficiency in managing the project | x | | | |
| 4.3 | Organization of training of 11.160 HEW on notification of births for 3 days (100 participants x session for a total of 111 sessions; additional 60 HEWs will be included) | x | x | | |
| 5. Generated evidence on effectiveness of CRVS intervention and results | | | | | |
| 5.1 | Conduct a rapid assessment on the achievement of project results | | | | x |
| 5.2 | Organize a workshop on project lessons learnt | | | | x |

4. KEY PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLES

Since the national vital events registration system is at an embryonic stage, partnership and funding are quite limited. UNICEF is the only development partner to have a formal program partnership with the federal and regional government agencies in supporting the establishment and strengthening

of the system. For this purpose, by mobilizing its regular resources and other (additional) funds secured from donors, UNICEF already assists ongoing preparatory activities at federal level and in all the nine regional states. Other UN agencies, such as UNFPA and UNECA, provide technical assistance to FVERA and RVERAs on an *ad hoc* basis.

The national program is coordinated and implemented by the Federal Vital Events Registration Agency, with support from federal and regional government organizations and development partners. At regional level, Oromia and SNNP RVERAs are responsible for the program implementation and oversight. The partnership is guided by AWPAs agreed with both federal and regional implementing partners.

CSO/s will be identified, to lead implementation of selected activities of the project (Output 3), according to UN rules and regulations, and on the basis of CSOs sectoral expertise and presence in the intervention areas in consultation with the donor, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

UNICEF's support to the program contributes to the outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which includes relevant United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa as strategic partners in Ethiopia's vital events registration system reform efforts.

Investments that are made under the present project are considered as being the foundation stones for generating evidence for scalable results in building a national system on birth registration, including interoperability with health.

5. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

The proposed project will be implemented within 12 months with a total budget of Euro 500,000.

The Project will be managed by UNICEF Child Protection Section with the support of other relevant program Sections and Operations Unit. The day to day oversight and support to the implementation of the project interventions will be carried out by UNICEF Field Offices (FOs) in Oromia and SNNPR Regions. Joint AWPAs signed between the Regional Vital Events Registration of the two Regions and UNICEF will serve as a framework for accountability for delivering of the project results. In addition, UNICEF has field offices in the two regions, which will give us an advantage in interfacing with local community structures and institutions to monitor program implementation and track results obtained based on the investments made.

UNICEF will sign a Program Cooperation Agreement (PCA), in consultation with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, to manage implementation of activities falling under output 3 of the results matrix.

In accordance with the Program Implementation Manual (PIM), agreed between Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF and other UN agencies, UNICEF FOs in the two regions undertake due-diligence activities to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the program implementation and

management role of RVERAs. Some of these activities include spot-checks and program monitoring based on the annual risk assurance plans developed for the two RVERAs. Similar risk assurance activities together with ‘micro-capacity assessment’ will be carried out by UNICEF on the CSO/s to be identified to manage the aforementioned component of the project.

In order to ensure that the two RVERAs have the required technical financial systems in place, UNICEF will undertake the following arrangements for channeling funds through contractors:

- A financial management capacity assessment of all UNICEF implementing partners is mandatory using the [Framework for Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners](#) (otherwise known as HACT¹³);
- Prior to transferring funds to implementing partners/contractors on the basis of the agreed upon work plan, UNICEF will assess the organisational capacity of the implementing partner and risks associated with the transfer pursuant to HACT;
- The agreed arrangement for the transfer of cash implementing partners/contractors are as follows: reimbursement or direct payment, and the frequency of disbursements are generally on quarterly basis. The scope and frequency of monitoring, reporting and assurance activities are agreed prior to program implementation, taking into consideration the capacity of the implementing partners which is adjusted as a function of the results of the assessments, the related degrees of risk and corresponding mitigation measures including support for capacity development;
- UNICEF will notify BoFED and regional VERAs of the transfer in writing as soon as funds are transferred;
- All fund releases are monitored, spot-checked and liquidated as per UN regulations.

6. FUND TRANSFER MODALITIES

Italian Agency for Development Cooperation will transfer funds to UNICEF Headquarters as per the terms of the agreement signed with UNICEF.

In line with established UNICEF program implementation and cash disbursement procedures, as well as signed AWP, funds will be channeled to RVERAs using accounts managed by the Regional BoFEDs. The regional VERAs will submit a request to UNICEF itemizing the programmatic interventions that are to be implemented alongside a budget corresponding to all those activities on a quarterly basis. The cash transfer modality for the implementation of this program will employ suitable mechanisms that will maximize efficient and cost effective utilization of resources. In a bid to reduce the risk of aid fungibility and track expenditure of funds against program performance, three modalities using UNICEF financial systems are applied. These modalities are applicable for both government partners and CSOs:

- a) Direct payment to vendors by UNICEF in the case of procurement of goods and services
- b) Reimbursement of expenses by UNICEF after the completion of activities by RVERAs
- c) Direct cash transfer to RVERAs

¹³ This framework is in pursuant to the UN general Assembly Resolution 56/201 of the triennial policy review of the operational activities for the development of the United Nations system. UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP (UNDG ExCom agencies) adopted a common operational framework for transferring cash to government and civil society implementing Partners. This approach is a further alignment of development aid with national priorities and needs in implementing the Rome Declaration on harmonization and Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

7. PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND REPORTING

The monitoring of project activities is guided by the Program Implementation Manual (PIM), adopted by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC). This manual articulates implementation, monitoring and reporting of United Nations assisted programs in Ethiopia. Within the framework of the PIM and the AWP developed with the two RVERAs, a monitoring tool will be developed to track progress in the achievement of key activity, output and outcome milestones relating to the project document.

The following review meetings will be conducted during the course of implementing this project for regular follow up to ensure achievement of project results :

Monthly Review Meetings

The monthly review meetings involve representatives of RVERA, Regional Health Bureau, Regional Bureau of Justice and UNICEF Field Offices in Oromia and SNNPR regions. At zonal level, focal points who will be responsible for maintaining and sharing of data will be designated to guide monthly and other regular review meetings. The RVERAs manage the compilation of data from respective sectors to guide the joint meetings. These monitoring and review meetings will enable counterparts and partners to document lessons learned and promising practices, as well as to identify gaps and bottlenecks and map out solutions and suggestions for efficient program delivery.

Quarterly Review Meetings

In addition to the monthly review meetings, quarterly monitoring visits to project target kebeles and woredas will be conducted with the involvement of corresponding federal agencies and other members of the CRVS Technical Advisory Group.

Mid-year AWP Review Process

The AWP review process takes place at mid-year and will be used to make necessary revisions and adjustments to activities based on lessons drawn from the monthly and quarterly review meetings. For this purpose, technical assistance will be provided to develop birth registration monitoring and data management tools and the required logistical support will be provided to the RVERAs. With the introduction of the monitoring tool, regular gathering and reporting of relevant data will be improved in both regions. Before the end of the project RVERAs and UNICEF will carry out a rapid assessment to measure and document progress made in the achievement of project results, as well as to draw lessons to inform similar investments in the future. Findings of the rapid assessment will be presented and discussed in the presence of relevant stakeholders including government bureaus/agencies, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, UNICEF, academic institutions and CSOs.

Under the framework between the Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF, the Child Protection AWP which includes birth registration is reviewed annually and at mid-year point. Given their contribution to birth registration, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation will be invited to these technical meetings the purpose of which it to review progress against birth registration outcomes and outputs (covering all investments made by the government, donors and UNICEF to the birth registration sub-sector), and to discuss bottlenecks and suggest concrete technical actions to

accelerate progress, taking into account ground realities. These meetings will be held annually and at mid-year review stage.

As per the terms of the project agreement, UNICEF and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation will conduct two technical joint field visits during the one year of project implementation.

UNICEF will prepare one final report at the end of the project period detailing results achieved, fund utilization status, lessons learnt etc.

8. SUSTAINABILITY

The project interventions are aimed at strengthening the government system for standardisation and scaling up efforts for nationwide coverage. It particularly builds the human and institutional capacity of the CRVS entities in order to sustain the delivery of these services. An important manifestation of the sustainability element is the increased commitment and ownership of the government (Federal and the two regional governments) to allocate budget and assign the required human resource to sustain the system. For instance out of the 300 million USD 5 years budgetary requirements for the national system, the government has committed 51% of the budget- covering both capital and operational costs of the system. Another aspects of the sustainability of the project is linked to the fact that investments are planned to be made on existing government human and institutional structures on CRVS- such as the kebele managers and kebele offices that are designated to manage and deliver registration and certification services. The project support provided to enhance the institutional and technical capacity of these registration agencies, offices and their respective staff will enable delivering standardised registration and certification services beyond the lifespan of the project.

- A decentralized administrative structure of the country, down to the kebele level in urban and rural areas, covering the entire country is conducive for a decentralized and sustainable vital events registration operation. The designated civil registrars are kebele managers, who are government civil servants and on the government payroll. Hence there is no dependency created with the project support that may disrupt provision of registration services after the end of the project. A widely practiced communal support system in both rural and urban areas such as *Iddirs* (community self-help group), community care coalitions, traditional men and/or women associations is imperative to ensure a strong community uptake of the project. The project interventions in the area of community awareness raising and demand creation will serve as a catalytic effect to empower these community groups and enable them to engage in advocacy and sensitization undertakings among their constituency. This will ultimately help to improve awareness of members of the community on registration services, and importantly sustain such results using the regular conversations and dialogue platforms available among the community groups.
- Health extension workers who are assumed who have assumed the responsibility of notification of birth are also embedded in the structures and payroll of FMoH and RHB. Hence, project interventions aimed at improving their technical capacity to support birth notification services

would allow them to manage such services to the required standard and extending beyond the project period.

- Recent recognition given by the regional governments of Oromia and SNNP to build and scale up the CRVS system, and the improving annual budgetary allocations is a critical factor to ensure sustainability of the project results. In particular, the approach and Government recognition of the importance of civil registration and vital statistics, deliverables and results gained through the project investment will serve as a model for advocacy for improved government ownership and scale up efforts within the two regional states and beyond.