CRVS and SDGs: Bangladesh Perspective

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Introduction

Civil Registration (CR) is the compulsory, continuous, universal and permanent recording of vital events such as births and deaths. From these records, vital statistics (VS) on births, deaths, fertility and mortality data can be produced for policy and planning. Since civil registration has a high level of both coverage and completeness, it is generally accepted to be the preferred source of vital statistics.

There are so many data instruments to provide data support for SDG monitoring. CRVS is one of the recognized tools for reporting against development framework such as the SDGs. At its most fundamental, CRVS is essential for population data as a denominator for all population-based targets and indicators. Population census is a big source for benchmark data but is available once in every five or ten years. Bangladesh is experienced with decadal census and the next one is scheduled to be conducted in 2021. CRVS can be thought of an option in providing regular and up-to-date population-based data.

Vital Statistics: Bangladesh Practice

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) introduced a Sample Vital Registration System (SVRS) for the first time in 1980 to determine the population change during the intercensal periods. The survey is being conducted in a fixed number of primary sampling units identified in an integrated multipurpose sample or master sample. A pool of locally recruited 2012 female registers is responsible for data collection.

The SVRS is a continuous data collection system by the BBS for generating reliable demographic data to monitor the progress of the indicators of Seven Five Year Plan and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), socio-economic development and sectoral plans relating to Population and Health. SVRS collects data on births, deaths, marriages, migration, disability and other key demographic indicators on a regular basis and publish reports annually.

As many as 11 data recording schedules are currently being used to collect data on a wide range of vital events and other socio-economic indicators.

Schedule 1 (Household Listing): It contains the area identification of each Primary Sampling Unit (PSU) along with holding number and household number of all the households of the PSU. There is a line for each household where some information of head of the household

and quarterly updates of population is recorded. It also contains map of the PSU and classification codes of variables.

Schedule 2 (Household Card): This schedule has two modules. In module 1, household related data and in module 2 population related data are collected. In all, there are 21 questions. It is generally canvassed in the month of January of each year.

Schedule 3 (Birth): The birth schedule has 9 questions on live births and 4 questions about the mother of the children. The schedule is filled-in by the local registrar as and when a birth occurs in the PSU. Filled-in schedule is returned back to the headquarters in the first week of the following month.

Schedule 4 (Death): The death schedule contains 8 questions related to the particulars of the deceased persons who died during the index calendar year. It is filled-in as and when a death occurs and is sent to the headquarters in the first week of the following month.

Schedule 5 (Marriage): The marriage schedule contains 9 questions about the occurrence of marriage among the population of the PSU during a quarter of the calendar year and is sent to the headquarters on quarterly basis in the first week of every fourth month.

Schedule 6 (Divorce/Separation): This schedule has 9 questions about divorce and separation. It is also sent to the headquarters on quarterly basis.

Schedule 7 (Out-Migration): This schedule is used to collect 7 different types of data about out-migration. It is sent to the headquarters on half -yearly basis in the first week of July and January of each year.

Schedule 8 (In-Migration): This schedule contains 7 questions related to in-migration. This is also sent to the headquarters on six- monthly basis.

Schedule 9 (Contraceptive use): This schedule is used to collect data about contraceptive use and methods of contraceptives. It is canvassed in January of each year.

Schedule 10 (Disability): This schedule has 6 questions and is used to collect data about the disabled persons by age and sex, type of disability and reasons behind becoming disabled. It is also canvassed in January of each year.

Schedule 11(HIV and AIDS): This schedule is used to collect data on the knowledge of the respondents on HIV and AIDS. This schedule includes four questions and the respondents are asked about their name, age, knowledge on reasons of HIV/AIDS disease and its infection.

With these schedules, vital statistics are currently produced at aggregate level. CRVS can be of great help in producing vital statistics at any disaggregation for better monitoring the SDGs and thus ‘no one would be statistically invisible’. CRVS can help in bringing them in policy attention and priority.

CRVS and SDGs

Whenever legal identity, social protection and birth registration concern, CRVS would be the complete solution for protecting such rights. Besides, CRVS would be a basis for population-based total, proportion, and ratio, etc. There are so many goals and targets where the role and relevance of CRVS is pronounced. CRVS will be able to provide information for 67 indicators corresponding to 12 goals. There would be ample scope of customizing CRVS in line with country context. Thus CRVS is of great importance in monitoring SDGs.

Data disaggregation and SDGs

Data disaggregation is a great challenge for SDG monitoring. In Bangladesh, the existing surveys, by design, fail to provide statistics at finer level. Most of the surveys usually produce statistics at aggregate level. Once CRVS has been developed, statistics particularly vital statistics can be generated at any disaggregation level. Due to its universal coverage and real time nature, any disaggregation with adequate and high frequency information will fill in data gaps and address data needs appropriately. Thus CRVS will save resources for not doing the same jobs, that is, CRVS can assure the surveyors for not to go for the similar surveys. Rather, BBS can go for new surveys with new areas where CRVS is not feasible. Hence, data availability will be ensured through the maximum utilization of CRVS and trade-off with CRVS.

Conclusions

In Bangladesh, Sample Vital Registration System (SVRS), Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS), Bangladesh Maternal Mortality Survey (BMMS) are in operation to provide data support particularly for vital events and health related statistics. Multiple sources for the same indicators should be harmonized. It would help avoiding duplication and saving resources and thus exploring new areas. Hence, CRVS can be a comprehensive data base to generate vital statistics in a coordinated manner and a real time approach. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics as the national statistics office can be benefited with such type of dynamic civil registration in providing vital statistics.

References

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