



Pacific CRVS

Bloomberg
Philanthropies



DATA FOR
HEALTH INITIATIVE



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

The Pacific and use of eCRVS tools

The Pacific Community (SPC)



- The Pacific is 1/3 of the world's surface
- SPC is the premier technical and scientific organisation in the Pacific
- Oldest Pacific regional organisation (est. 1947) and the largest (27 members; 800+ staff; \$130m budget)
- Areas include Public Health, Education, Fisheries, Geoscience, Environment Sustainability, Human Rights and Social Development, and Statistics

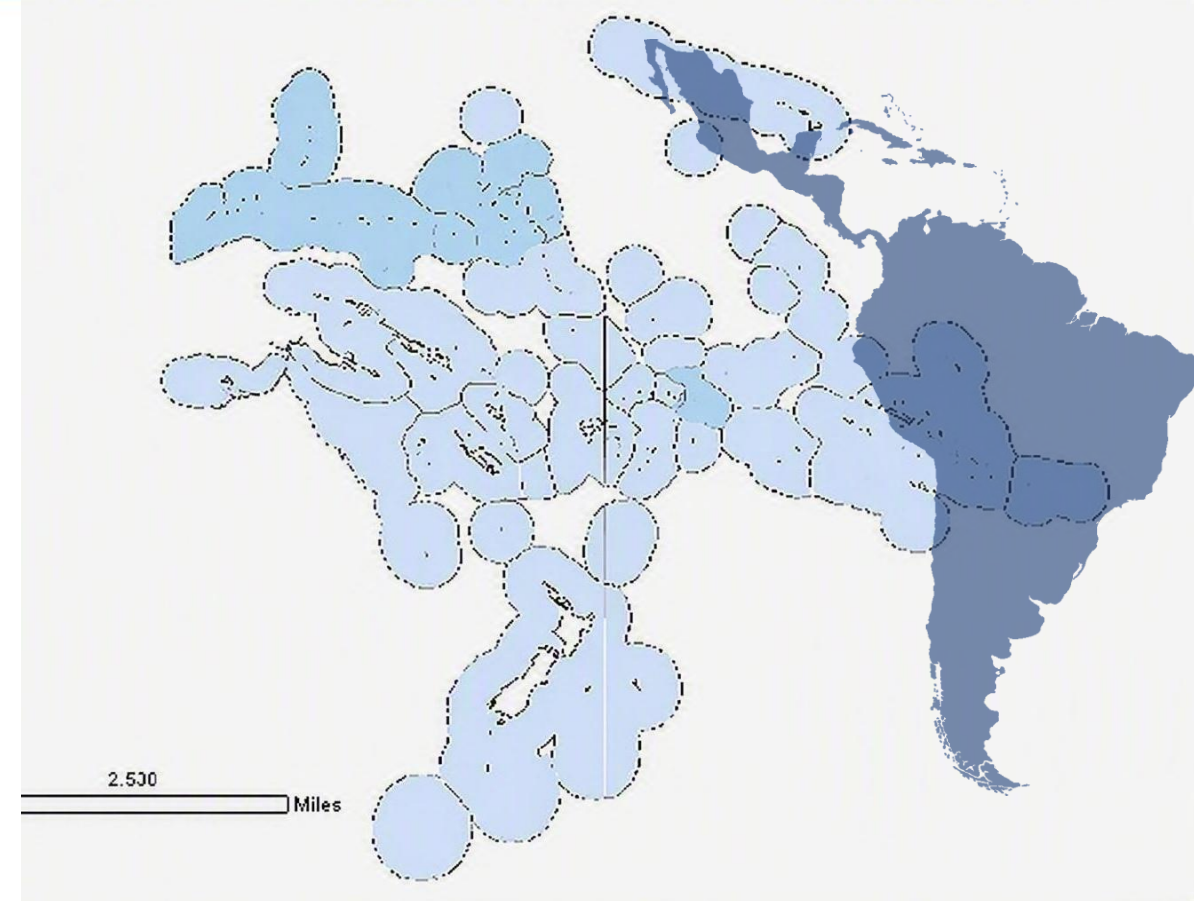
22 Pacific Countries and Territories - Large ocean, small land, many differences

AS	American Samoa
CK	Cook Islands
FM	Federated States of Micronesia
FJ	Fiji
PF	French Polynesia
GU	Guam
KI	Kiribati
MH	Marshall Islands
NR	Nauru
NC	New Caledonia
NU	Niue
MP	Northern Mariana Islands
PW	Palau
PG	Papua New Guinea
PN	Pitcairn Islands
WS	Samoa
SB	Solomon Islands
TK	Tokelau
TO	Tonga
TV	Tuvalu
VU	Vanuatu
WF	Wallis and Futuna



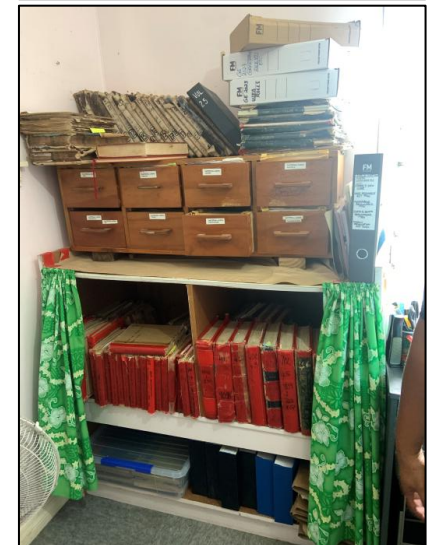
Pacific Island countries: ocean vs land

Pacific Island Country	Population (2015 est)	Land Area (sq mi)	Ocean Area (EEZ) (sq mi)	Percent Land	Max Elevation (ft)
Papua New Guinea	8,743,245	178,700	927,529	19.27%	14,793
Samoa	201,782	1,097	46,332	2.37%	6,096
Kiribati	110,136	313	1,328,890	0.02%	266
Cook Islands	17,500	91	756,771	0.01%	2,139
Tuvalu	11,000	10	289,500	0.003%	15
Niue	1,600	101	122,588	0.08%	223



Some common challenges

- Small populations, spread over multiple islands
- Public servants wear many hats
- Low-income economies reliant on overseas funding
- Frequent flooding, fire, earthquakes and volcanoes
- Registration systems paper-based or using old technology
- No on-island technical support
- Few incentives for registration, especially death
- Different operating models and multiple agencies

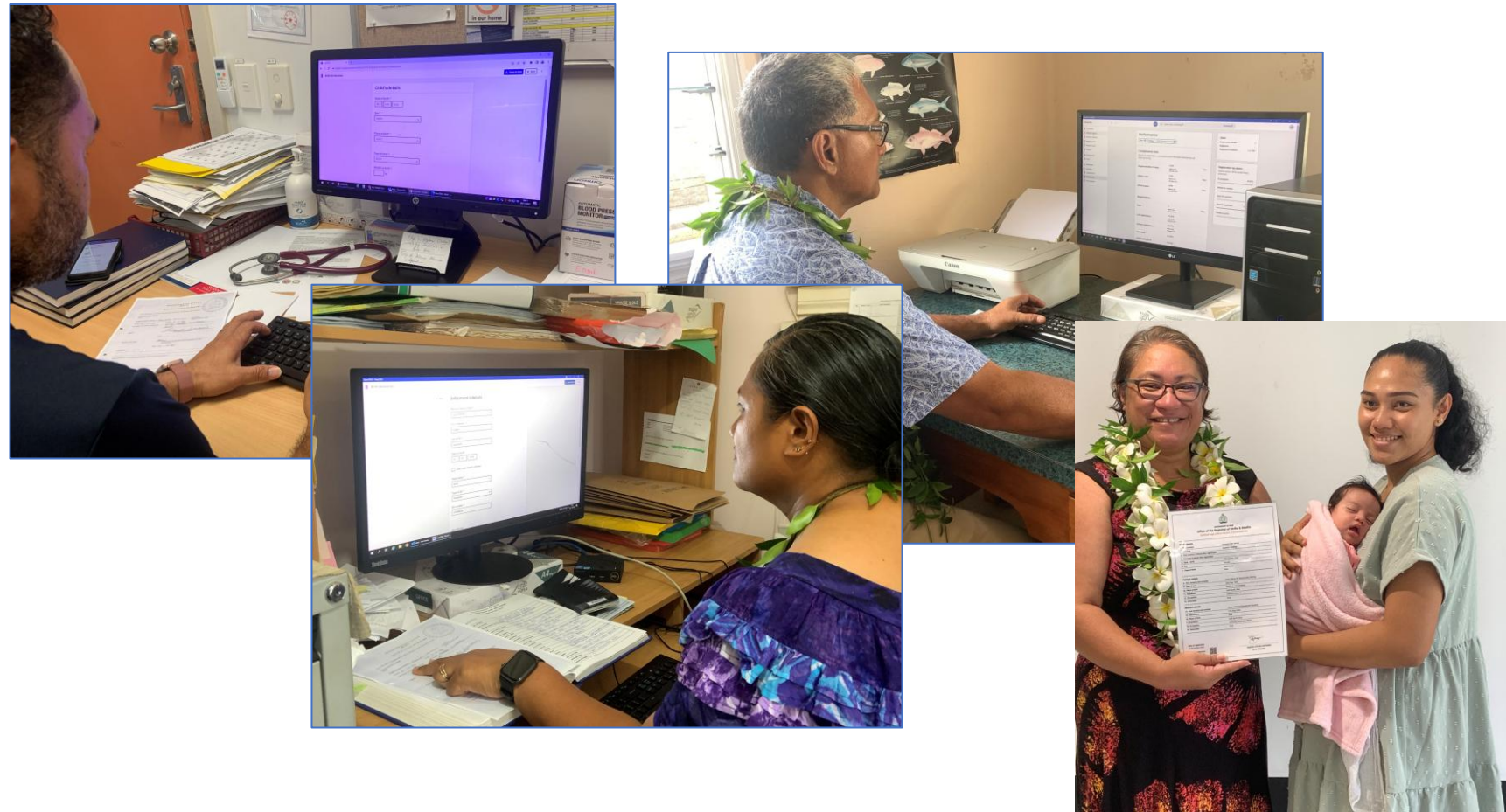


OpenCRVS – the solution to a problem

From:



To:



OpenCRVS - details

- An open-source, digital civil registration system designed to transform registration services in low-resource settings. 12 months implementation. USD170-200k
- With funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies, SPC has supported:
 - the extension of the core product to include all life events (eg marriage, name changes etc) as well as implementation in several countries.
 - Implementation completed in Niue, Tonga, and the Cook Islands, with Tuvalu and Kiribati scheduled for later in 2026.
- Plans to set up regional support hub for countries using OpenCRVS

Making Deaths Count – the problem

In the Pacific:

- Most medical practitioners are trained overseas and there is limited ongoing professional development
- Cause of death reporting is often a low priority for medical practitioners and reporting quality is low
- There are few (or no) medical coders in most countries
- Training is expensive and removes practitioners from their work for long periods
- Often trained staff move to new roles overseas
- Only Fiji is using automated coding (IRIS)
- Analysis of cause of death data is sporadic and often many years after the fact



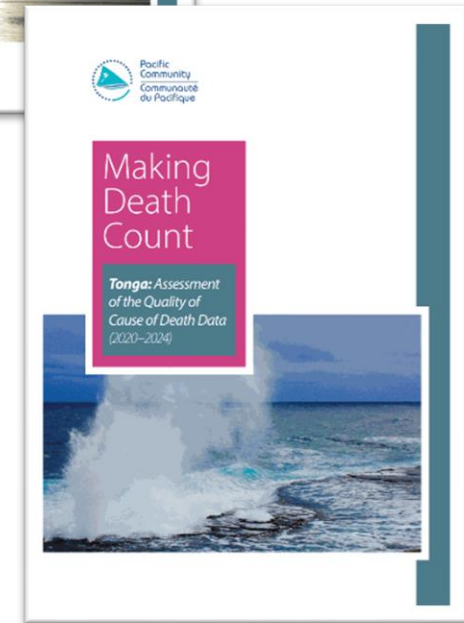
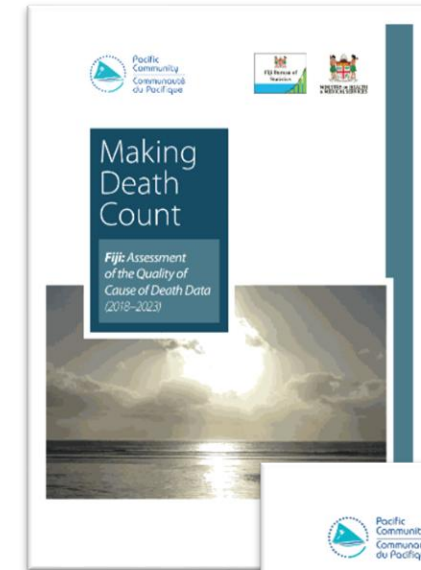
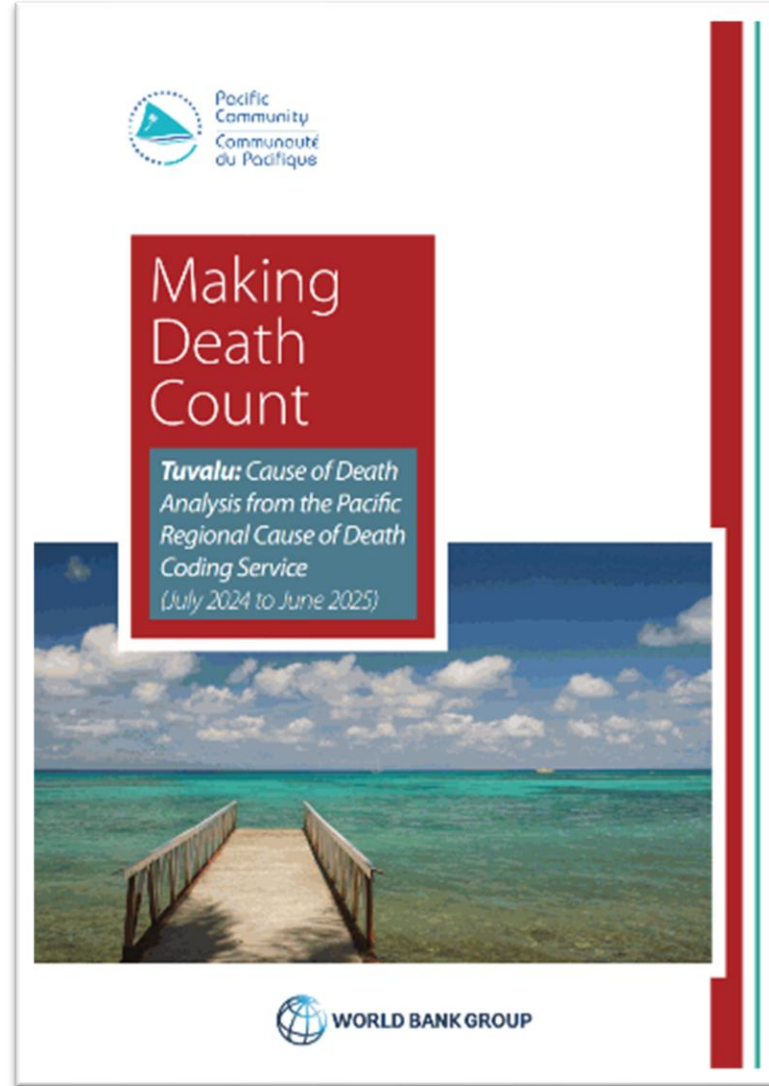
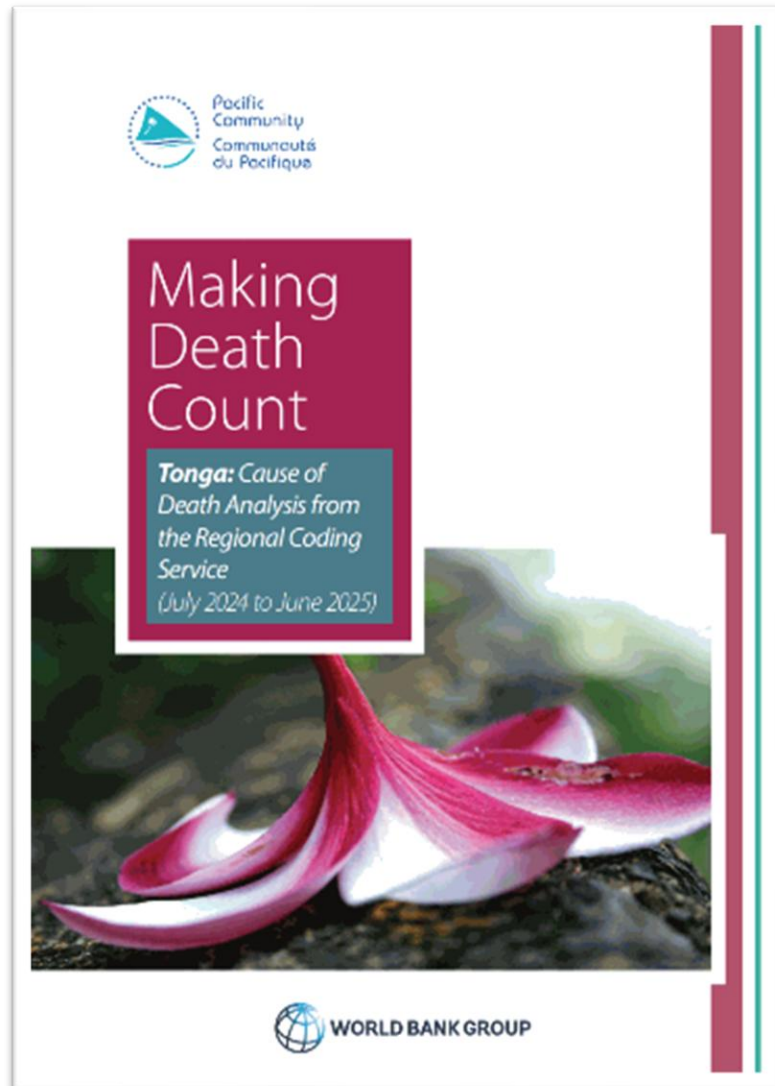
Making Deaths Count – the solution

This initiative combines two key components:

- Medical practitioner training in Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD). Previously regional or in-country, moving to train-the-trainer and a new online course through Fiji National University
- Regional Cause of Death Coding Service
 - a virtual regional team bringing together medical records officers and regional coding officers, with technical expertise from SPC,
 - Countries securely submit de-identified death records to a shared repository for coding
 - New portal (using OpenCRVS) to reduce effort to submit records for coding and to give a choice between ICD10 or ICD11
 - Annual statistical report produced within 1 month of year end



Making Deaths Count – the reports



More information:

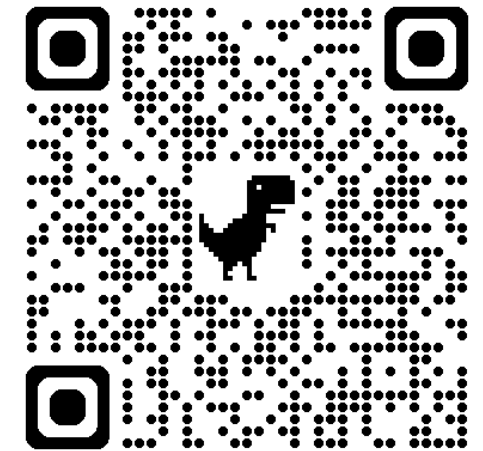
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Pacific CRVS Website
and Resources

Cook Islands (Peter Graham)

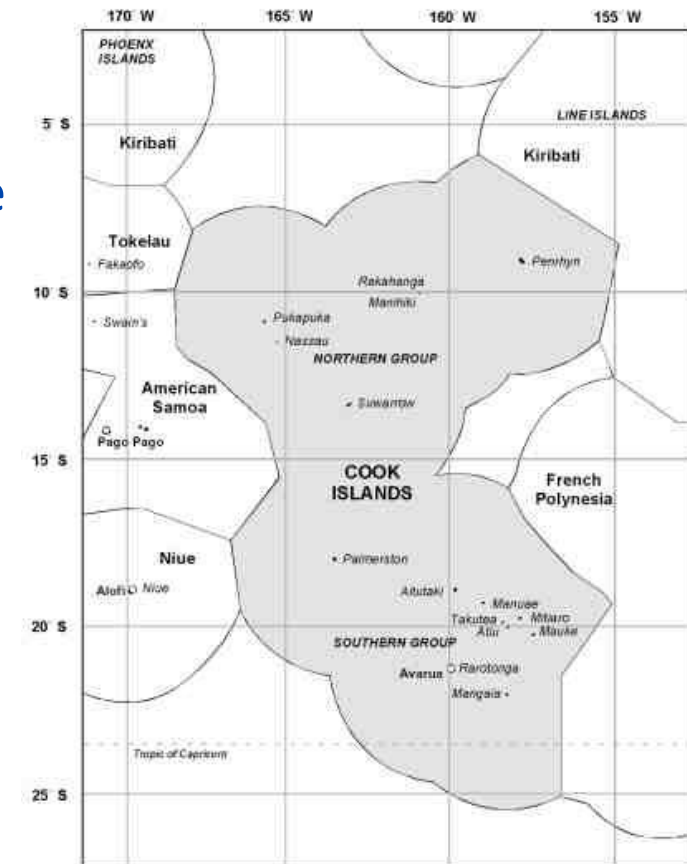
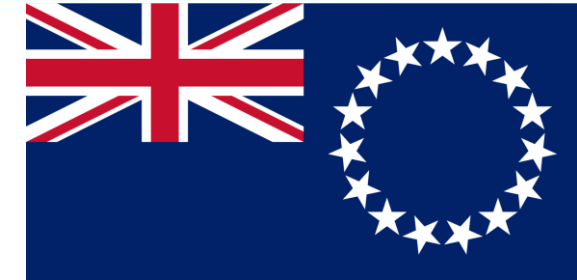


Our Country and Land

The total land area is 23,261 hectares while its exclusive economic zone covers an area of nearly 2 million sq. km or 750,000 sq. miles.

Rarotonga, with a total land area of 6,719 hectares is the largest and most populous island (over 50 per cent of the population) and also the administrative center.

The Cook Islands is defined as all the islands between 156-167° West and 8-23° South of the equator. It is situated to the east of Tonga and Samoa, to the north-east of New Zealand and midway between French Polynesia and Niue in the Pacific region.



Our People

- The total population of the Cook Islands, as enumerated on 1 December 2021, was 15,040 people: 7,392 men and 7,648 women.
- Approximately 17,000 people live within the Cook Islands today
- More than 94,000 Cook Islanders live in New Zealand
- Around 28,000 Cook Islanders reside in Australia.



Our People

- Tourism is the country's leading source of revenue 60 % of the country's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) in 2019.
- Total arrivals 18,755 in May 2026 - 17,285 visitors - 1,470 returning residents and permit holders.
- The COVID-19 pandemic set the country's economy back ... huge drop in GDP 2020 and 2021 ... slowly getting back to normal.



Our Civil Registration System

- Previously totally manual paper based ... multi-step and time-consuming for both customer and service provider
- New digital OpenCRVS platform enables seamless updates and retrievals
- Enhanced security of data and reduce the risk of data loss due to environmental or other events
- 100% registration of births, deaths and official marriages



Our Challenges and Needs

Challenges

- Legacy/manual workflows and limited local technical support
- Systems interoperability and data sharing restricted
- Interoperability of data between Agencies - MoJ-TMO-MFAI and MFEM and potentially a national identification system
- Restricted to Rarotonga ... needs to include Pa Enea

Needs

- Interoperability between all Ministries would be undertaken
- Enhance connectivity between MFAI and MoJ in terms of births and deaths amongst foreign workers,
- Payment of birth and child allowance.
- Improved tracking and updating personal information, name changes and vital events

Our eCRVS journey



Link to OpenCRVS video -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxJAuJe__Bw&t=1s

Kiribati (Tiaon Tiare)



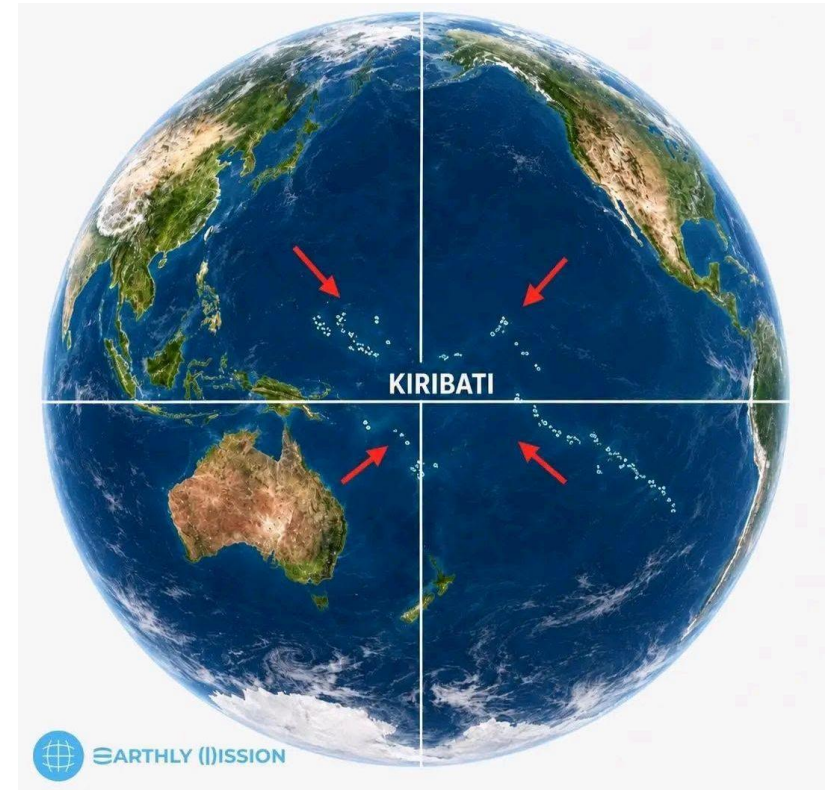
Republic of Kiribati

A small population spread across a very large ocean space

Civil Registration • Vital Statistics • Digital Identity

Some Fun Facts about Kiribati

- **All Four Hemispheres:** Kiribati is the only country in the world with land in the northern, southern, eastern, and western hemispheres.
- **First to See the Sun:** The easternmost part of Kiribati is among the first places on Earth to see each new day and celebrate the New Year.
- **Pronounced Differently:** The name Kiribati is spelled with a "ti," but it is pronounced "Kiribas" based on the local Gilbertese language.
- **On Kiritimati are five villages:** Tabwakea, London, Banana, Poland and Paris.
- **Very Few Visitors:** Kiribati is one of the least-visited countries in the entire world, welcoming only a few thousand tourists each year.



Our Country and Land

A country defined by distance, dispersion and low-lying atolls

33

Atolls & islands

Three main island groups:
Gilbert, Phoenix and Line
Islands, plus Banaba.

811 km²

Land area

Very small land footprint
compared with the country's
maritime area.

3.5m km²

Ocean area

Communities and services
are distributed across a vast
ocean space.

<2 m

Elevation

Most atolls are very low-lying
and exposed to climate and
transport disruption.

Three island groups across the central Pacific



GILBERT ISLANDS

West / main population
centre



PHOENIX ISLANDS

Central / very sparsely
populated



LINE ISLANDS

East / Kiritimati and other
islands

What this means for CRVS

- Registration services must work across dispersed islands.
- Transport and connectivity affect timely registration.
- Digital and offline-capable workflows can reduce dependence on physical travel.
- Data systems need to support national coverage while recognising local island realities.

Sources: Kiribati/DFAT country brief; SPC regional CRVS materials.

Our People

119,438

People - 2020 Population & Housing Census

59%

Urban

South Tarawa, Betio and Kiritimati are classified as urban in the 2020 census.

41%

Rural

A large share of people live outside the main urban centres.

Population concentration

South Tarawa is the country's main population and service centre, while many communities remain distributed across outer islands. This makes equitable access to civil registration services particularly important.



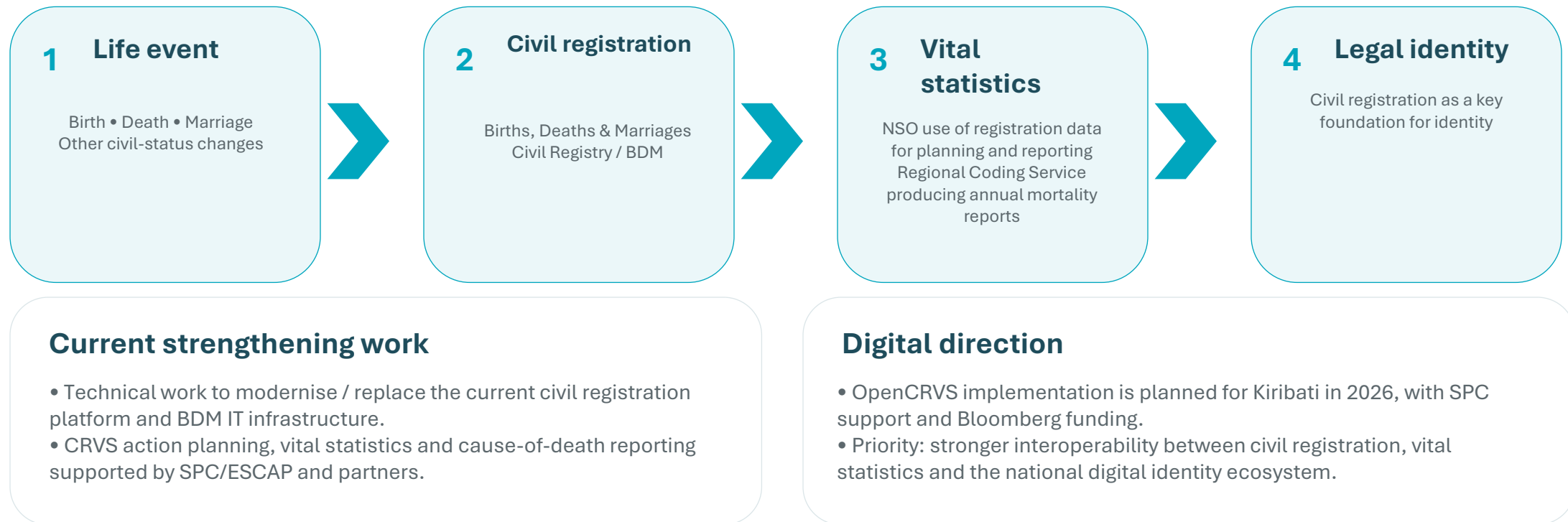
Implication for CRVS

Bring registration closer to people —
not the other way around.

Source: Kiribati 2020 Population & Housing Census; Pacific Data Hub.

Our Civil Registration System

Kiribati's CRVS system is moving from fragmented/manual processes toward a connected digital model



Source: SPC CRVS support materials; 2025 Kiribati CRVS technical support activity.

Our Challenges and Needs

Priority challenges are operational, geographic and digital — not simply technical

Key challenges

- Dispersed population across many islands and long travel distances
- Low-lying islands and transport/connectivity disruptions can delay services
- Legacy/manual workflows and limited local technical support
- Death registration and cause-of-death information need continued strengthening
- Multiple agencies and systems need better interoperability and data sharing

Priority needs / next steps

- Implement OpenCRVS with workflows suited to Kiribati's island context
- Enable reliable online/offline registration and timely transmission of records
- Strengthen the link between civil registration and national digital identity
- Use the regional Cause-of-Death Coding Service for mortality statistics
- Build sustained local capacity for system administration, data quality and analysis

2023 estimate: 80.7% of deaths were registered in Kiribati - a strong base, but roughly 1 in 5 deaths remained unregistered.

More information:

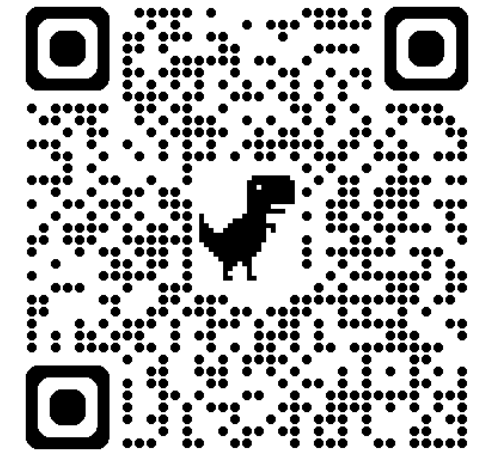
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