



## UHC Life Course Cluster

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**Key areas of focus for improving the reporting of births, deaths and causes of deaths**

WHO Regional Office for Africa

# Context

- Currently, many birth and majority of deaths that occur in Africa remain unregistered.
- This fact affects the ability of African countries to understand their population dynamics and adequately plan for them.
- African countries therefore have a fundamental responsibility to develop and strengthen the systems and capacities for birth, death and cause of death reporting, and for analysis, communication and use of the information.

# Where some of the important gaps?

- ***The governance-related challenges:***
  - the lack of or insufficiently enforced legal requirement in many African countries to report a birth or death event, with cause of death information.
  - Absence of specific policies requiring medical workers to determine and report a cause of death
  - Limited central or leadership role of the health sector in civil registration and vital statistics systems
  - Limited investments in CRVS and health information system in general
  - Insufficient number of health workers with functional knowledge, skills, expertise and interest in medical certification and coding of cause of death
- ***Challenges related to systems for data and information generation:***
  - Paper-based systems that are cumbersome
  - Fragmentation of the data collection and reporting efforts
  - Limited capacity to analyse birth and mortality data

# Proposed actions

- Review and update legal frameworks to improve death (and birth) registration and statistics.
- Enhance the central or leadership role of health ministries in the management of civil registration and vital statistics systems
- Ensure that strategic plans, policies and data architecture frameworks are up to date.
- Enhance investments in systems for reporting births, deaths and causes of deaths
- Ensure that work on mortality data by partners is harmonized and aligned with country priorities
- Involve national institutes in the generation, analysis and promotion of the use of mortality data
- Leverage innovations in digital technology
- Implement medical certification and coding of causes of death in all facilities where there is medical doctors and verbal autopsy instrument in communities and in facilities where there is no medical doctor
- Strengthen mortality surveillance:
- Develop and institutionalize skills for the analysis of mortality data.

# What support you can expect from WHO

- Technical support in implementation of the activities
- Training to improve the skills and knowledge of health workers to collect, analyse and communicate information on births, deaths and causes of deaths
- Advocacy e.g., for enhancing investments in systems and capacities for birth, death and cause of death reporting
- Tools, standards and guides: The following tools are currently available for the countries to use:
  - Reference classifications within the WHO-FIC – ICD 11, ICF and ICHI
  - An ICD 11-based electronic tool for medical certification and coding of causes of death – implemented within the DHIS 2 environment
  - An online tool for training medical doctors on medical certification of cause of death
  - The international form of the medical certificate of cause of death – for medical determination of cause of death
  - The verbal autopsy for determination of a probable cause of death – used where there is no medical doctor
  - The DORIS (WHO Digital Open Rule Integrated Cause of Death Selection) tool for an automated selection of the underlying cause of death
  - ANACOD 3 (Analysing Mortality and Causes of Death 3) – for analysis of mortality data
  - A brief guide for mortality surveillance – already shared with countries



**Thank you**