

## Forum on the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration in Asia-Pacific

A regional gathering of experts in civil registration and vital statistics of 17 ESCAP member states was organized by **ESCAP** and **WHO** in collaboration with **ADB** and **UNDP**. The regional meeting, held from 23 to 25 June 2010 at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok, brought together, for the first time, representatives from all the three sectors involved in civil registration and vital statistics – health, statistics and the office of the civil registrar.

The Forum's main objectives were to:

- a. Bring key national agencies together to establish consensus regarding interagency collaboration on vital statistics;
- b. Gather detailed information about the status of countries' civil registration systems;
- c. Improve the understanding of NSOs, registrars general and health ministries about the importance of vital statistics– and how they should be used and advocated for;
- d. Inform participants about the tools, resources and technical expertise available to assist countries in improving their vital statistics;
- e. Map out the main components of a regional programme to improve vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

The forum was attended by senior representatives from each attending country's National Statistical Office, Health Ministry, Registrars General Office and other relevant agencies. Experts from leading academic institutions and international organizations, together with members from the donor community also attended. Countries invited to participate will have demonstrated their active interest and commitment in the improvement of their civil registration and vital statistics. The participants took the opportunity to explore common challenges, discuss potential solutions and share experiences.



The participants from the Pacific countries, Fiji and the Cook Islands met in Brisbane prior to the Forum in Bangkok. The discussion was facilitated by Dr Rasika Rampatige from the Health Information Knowledge Hub of the School of Population Health of the University of Queensland. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss on the applicability/usefulness of the HMN Assessment Framework for small Pacific nations. The meeting expected to obtain specific comments on how the tool can be modified to make it more applicable to the Pacific nations and territories. The Cook Islands was represented by the Government Statistician Taggy Tangimetua, Registrar Ms Claudine Henry-Anguna and the Health Statistician Tearoa Carson Iorangi.