

DRAFT discussion paper for the Meeting of the Civil Registrars of South Asia (CR8)

The Potential for Cross-Border Collaboration between Civil Registrars in South Asia

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Introduction

International migration for the purpose of economic betterment is a common practice in South Asia,¹ at both the individual and familial level (Srivastava & Pandey, 2017; Wickramasekars, 2011; Saraswati, et al., 2016). South Asia has also come to host a substantial number of refugees due to the security situation in Afghanistan and Myanmar (Wickramasekara & Baruah, 2013; UNHCR, 2018). As people cross-borders, the daily tasks of life do not cease, and neither does the occurrence of vital events such as births, deaths, and marriages. Cross-border movement can result in a person being born in one country, getting married in another country, and perhaps even dying in a third country. This can have implications for the registration of vital events of those crossing borders, as registration of vital events with an international element can add an extra layer of challenge to already strained national civil registration systems. For example, in the case of a marriage, Civil Registrars may need to verify and receive birth, marriage, and divorce certificates from a civil registry office in another country in order to proceed with the registration of the event. The necessity to gather and verify information from foreign civil registry offices can add an additional impediment to achieving the goal of universal registration of births, deaths, and other vital events as set forth in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP, 2015).

Cross-border collaboration among Civil Registry Offices has the potential to support civil registrars in overcoming some of the challenges posed by cross-border movement, and achieving the goal of universal registration. This paper presents some instances when cross-border collaboration may be beneficial, along with several existing bilateral and regional modalities of cross-border collaboration, components of which could be considered by registrars in South Asia to expand collaboration to achieve the goal of universal civil registration in the Region.

Cross border movement in South Asia

South Asia has a long history of international migration, particularly between countries that share a border. Cross-border migration is permitted without passports and/or visas between India, Nepal, and Bhutan as a result of treaties and bilateral agreements (Khadria, 2005; UNODC, 2018). Other major migration corridors, sometimes in the form of irregular (undocumented or illegal) migration, include the border areas between Bangladesh and India, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and India and Pakistan (Srivastava & Pandey, 2017). The rising price of oil in the 1970s created another economic pull for South Asian migrants as a result of the economic boom in the Gulf countries and the need for low-skilled labor, particularly in the construction sector. Regional migration and migration to Gulf countries, which include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, has persisted up until present time (Wickramasekars, 2011).

South Asian emigrants by the numbers, 2017:

- 38.4 million emigrants from the region
- 16.6 million Indian emigrants - the largest diaspora of any country in the world
- 43% of South Asian emigrants were from India
- 16.9 million (44% of South Asian emigrants) migrated to Gulf countries
- 24% of South Asian emigrants migrated to another country in South Asia
- 37% of South Asian emigrants were female

¹ South Asia, for the purposes of this paper, includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

In 2017, South Asia was the source of an estimated 38.4 million emigrants (Table 1). The largest proportion of South Asian emigrants (44%) migrated to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries; many on fixed term contracts as temporary contractual labor (Wickramasekars, 2011). As these contracts were fixed-term, return migration and the consideration of circular (repeat) migration is an important part of South Asian migrational patterns (Srivastava & Pandey, 2017).

Key Facts about immigrants in Gulf countries, 2017:

- 60% originated from South Asia
- 16.9 million South Asians in Gulf countries
- 23% of South Asian immigrants in Gulf countries are female
- 69% of all female immigrants are between the ages of 15-49

Table 1: Total emigrants from South Asia by country of origin and destination region, 2017

Country of origin	Total emigrants	Destination regions for South Asian emigrants			
		South Asia	Percent to South Asia	Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries	Percent to GCC Countries
Afghanistan	4,826,464	1,523,875	32%	448,806	9%
Bangladesh	7,499,919	3,178,887	42%	3,103,607	41%
Bhutan	43,970	35,147	80%	-	0%
India	16,587,720	2,419,636	15%	8,904,781	54%
Maldives	2,883	1,606	56%	-	0%
Nepal	1,738,442	578,582	33%	665,441	38%
Pakistan	5,978,635	1,192,606	20%	3,065,435	51%
Sri Lanka	1,726,900	161,324	9%	726,331	42%
Total	38,404,933	9,091,663	24%	16,914,401	44%

Estimates derived from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

As shown in Table 1, **almost one quarter of South Asian emigrants migrate to another country in South Asia**. In 2017, South Asia was home to approximately 11 million international immigrants; 9 million of these originated from another South Asian country (see Annex Tables for more information). The five major migration corridors in the region included migration of:

- Bangladeshis to India,
- Indians to Pakistan,
- Afghans to Pakistan
- Pakistanis to India and
- Nepalis to India.

Key Facts about immigrants in South Asia, 2017:

- 10.9 million international immigrants in South Asia
 - 9 million originated from other South Asian countries
- 49% of migrants were female
- 5 largest migrant stocks:
 - 3.1 million Bangladeshis in India
 - 1.87 million Indians in Pakistan
 - 1.5 million Afghans in Pakistan
 - 1.1 million Pakistanis in India
 - 537,000 Nepalese in India

The Rohingya Refugee Crisis

An estimated 882,676 Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangladesh from Myanmar since 25 August 2017, and more refugees continue to arrive on a daily basis (UNHCR, 2018). Most of this migration had not yet occurred and thus was not included at the time of the UN's 2017 revision of Trends in International Migrant Stock; however, these refugees represent a sizable cross-border movement and should be considered when examining international migration in South Asia.

Why cross-border collaboration is important

The high level of migration in South Asia has important implications for the registration of vital events in the Region. Persons who reside or who experienced vital events outside of their country of nationality, persons with dual citizenship, or families where spouses are citizens of different countries all bring an international element and another layer of complexity to the registration of their vital events. In the case of registrations involving persons of two different nationalities, such as marriages or births to a mother and father from two different countries, procedures may be further complicated. For example, when nationality is passed down through the father, as was previously the case in Nepal, children born to foreign fathers may encounter difficulties when trying to register their births (Cody, 2009). In some cases when there is not enough evidence or clarity as to the nationality of a child and a birth certificate cannot be issued without a nationality, delayed or incomplete registration may result (Marskell & Sorchik, 2018).

Cross-border collaboration among Civil Registry Offices can help overcome some of the barriers brought on by the registration of vital events with an international element, and support the achievement of the goal of universal registration.

When might Civil Registrars need cross-border collaboration?

Civil registrars may need to verify the veracity of a civil registry issued certificate from another country in order to register a vital event in their own country. Conversely, they might be called upon by a foreign civil registry office to verify the veracity of a document issued in their office so that an event may be registered in another country. Verification of civil registry issued certificates may also be done for other legal purposes. For example, a person who was habitually living in Australia but receiving a pension from the UK may pass away in Australia and be issued an Australian death certificate. In order to cancel the pension, the UK will need to receive a copy of the death certificate and determine how to authenticate it.

Some instances where cross-border collaboration could be beneficial in reference to **births** may include cases where the individual(s) involved:

- Were married overseas but need to register a birth that occurred in their home country. The registry office may need to verify their marriage certificate with a foreign civil registry in order to register the birth
- Need to register the birth of a child that occurred in their home country, but one or both parents were born overseas, and the registry office needs to verify the parent's birth certificate and potentially marriage certificate if the marriage also occurred overseas
- Had a birth overseas, but need to register the birth in their own country. This may involve verifying the birth notification or possibly birth certificate (if one was issued aboard) from the country where the birth occurred

- Are non-nationals, but need to register the birth of their child in the country where it occurred. In cases where embassies or diplomatic missions are not able to provide services, civil registrars may be called on to contact civil registry offices in other countries to verify the marriage and possibly birth certificates of the parents
- Is entitled to dual citizenship and needs to register his or her birth in the second country. This may involve verifying the birth notification or possibly birth certificate (if one was issued abroad) from the country where the birth occurred as well as verifying the marriage and possibly birth certificates of the parents if either of them were issued overseas.

Examples where this might occur in reference to **marriages** may include cases where the individuals involved:

- Have citizenship from different countries (one spouse is a national and the other is a foreigner) and in order to register their marriage, confirmation that the foreign individual is not currently married along with documentation of previous marriage and divorce records from a foreign Civil Registry Office is needed.
- Are non-nationals, but need to register their marriage in the country where it occurred. In cases where embassies or diplomatic missions are not able to provide services, civil registrars may be called on to contact civil registry offices in other countries to verify the birth certificates of those wishing to get married, and to confirm they are not currently married to another individual
- Got married overseas, but need to register their marriage in their own country. This may involve verifying the foreign marriage certificate (if one was issued abroad) or other documentation from the country where the marriage occurred

Examples where this might occur in reference to **deaths** may include cases where the individual involved:

- Died overseas but family members need to register the death in the home country. Civil registrars may be called on to contact civil registry offices in another country to verify the details of the death and receive a copy of the death certificate (if one was issued)
- Died overseas and family members need to register the death in the country where it occurred. In cases where embassies or diplomatic missions are not able to provide services, civil registrars may be called on to contact civil registry offices in other countries to verify the birth certificate of the deceased and possibly marriage certificates to list next of kin in order to issue a death certificate for the deceased.
- Died overseas and the civil registrar in the home country wishes to “close out” the records for such persons so as to prevent fraud and identity theft for security reasons. In this case, civil registrars will need to contact civil registry offices in other countries to verify death records that match birth records in the home country.

How Civil Registrars can benefit from cross-border collaboration

As outlined above, Civil Registrars may need to contact registry offices in other countries to verify certificates, request copies of certificates, or receive records of certain individuals (i.e. to close out a birth record for a deceased person or to ensure someone applying for a marriage certificate is not currently married). When registrars need to contact a civil registry office in another country, they may spend countless time and resources trying to find the correct person to contact. By formally collaborating with civil registry offices in other countries, some of this burden can be alleviated by having a point of contact and a process for fulfilling requests.

Cross-border collaboration can put in place the framework for how to request information and for what information can be shared and how it can be shared. Civil Registrars are compelled to follow the stipulations of the law in regard to the registration and certification of vital events.² However, the law may not be explicitly clear in terms of allowing registrars to share information or verify records with civil registry offices in other countries. When registry offices are contacted for information, they may not have the authority to share this information outside of their offices, particularly in regard to data confidentiality regulations. A formal agreement between registries can give them agency to collaborate for a variety of purposes and registrars can be assured sharing the information specified in the agreement is within their purview. This will allow civil registry offices to develop standard operating procedures for fulfilling such requests in a timely manner, and can act as a basis on how to field requests from other countries that may be outside the formal agreement. For example, requests may be required to come via email to a specified individual or email address, only records for persons of nationality that are the same as the requesting office can be shared, information shared may be specified by particular biographic fields (i.e. name, date of occurrence etc.), and information could be sent to the requesting office within so many business days via encrypted email.

Other benefits of cross-border collaboration also include the sharing of knowledge, good practices, and lessons learned in relation to the registration of vital events. Additionally, cross-border collaboration networks and formal agreements can help coordinate registries to collect information in a similar fashion and share innovations in IT and other arenas.

Current modalities for cross-border collaboration between countries

While the specific challenges of registering vital events with an international element may vary by country, they are present in some form worldwide. In order to overcome these obstacles, regional civil registration networks have formed to facilitate communication, good practices, and innovations. Additionally, countries have entered into bilateral and regional agreements to improve registration and ease of use of services, as well as to improve national security by understanding who is residing on their territory, and decrease identity fraud by closing out records for deaths of citizens who have passed away overseas. Some examples of cross-border collaboration in South Asia and around the world are outlined below. While regional examples from South Asia generally focus on issuance of identity cards, they do involve sharing information and records between two countries.

The Pacific Region

The Pacific Civil Registrars Network (PCRN) was established in 2014 as a medium for registrars in Pacific Island countries and territories to share information, lessons learned, and good practices (Henry-Anguna, 2018; PCRN, 2014). Data sharing between the civil registries in the region has become a major focus of PCRN's initial workplan as migration between countries is commonplace among Pacific Islanders (PCRN, 2014). Many Pacific Islanders are born on their home island, but travel overseas for educational and employment purposes, or to be closer to their family (Henry-Anguna, 2018). Additionally, many Pacific Island citizens are required to travel overseas for medical treatment when their home island does not possess adequate facilities; thus, many pass away in New Zealand and Australia (Henry-Anguna, 2018; PCRN, 2014). Subsequently, births, deaths, and marriages occurring overseas do not become registered on the home island

² See the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (Statistical Division) (2014). *Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system, revision 3*. Available online: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/M19Rev3en.pdf>

and the birth record is left 'open,' which has implications for both identity theft and for the accurate compilation of vital statistics (Henry-Anguna, 2018).

In order to overcome this problem, the first data sharing trial of death records and name changes was implemented between New Zealand and the Cook Islands in 2016 (Henry-Anguna, 2018; PCRN, 2018). There was already a provision under the New Zealand Birth, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act of 1995 which gave authority to the New Zealand Registrar General to "share name change and death information with foreign registration authorities relating to a person whose birth is registered in the State in which the foreign registration authority has jurisdiction (Henry-Anguna, 2018; New Zealand Registration, n.d.)." However, the Cook Islands had no mandate for the sharing of personal information with other countries. Thus, an agreement was formed between the two countries to supply and receive New Zealand name change information, death information, or both for Cook Islanders registered in New Zealand. The sharing of information was meant to: allow for positive identification of an individual, update birth records with death notifications, update birth records with name changes, and provide data for statistical analysis and genealogical purposes (Henry-Anguna, 2018). New Zealand now has five data sharing agreements either in place or in the works with New South Wales, Australia; Victoria, Australia; the Cook Islands; Tokelau and Niue (Montgomery, 2018).

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Organization of American States (OAS) developed a Universal Civil Identity Program in the Americas (PUICA - its Spanish acronym), which supports Member States to improve civil registration (OAS, 2018). Through PUICA, the OAS supported El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala in improving birth registration in the border regions where these three countries meet. As people often work and perform their daily tasks in a country other than the one where they reside, births are also occurring outside of the country of residence, which leads to under-registration (OAS, 2015). Approaches to improve birth registration in the border region included the establishment of: civil registration offices in border points between these countries, common criteria for the registration of births in border areas, information campaigns about the importance of civil registration targeted to border populations, and a technical committee comprised of the civil registry offices of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (OAS, 2015; CLARCIEV, n.d.). Similarly, PUICA also facilitated mobile registration to increase birth registration and identity card registration in the border regions between Peru and Ecuador and Bolivia and Paraguay (OAS, 2018).

The OAS, through PUICA, has also facilitated cross-border collaboration between civil registry offices for the purposes of verifying and sharing national identity information. PUICA supported the national registration offices of Ecuador, Colombia and Peru in signing a cooperation agreement to strengthen registration and identification of citizens residing in the border regions of these countries (OAS, 2013; OAS; CIM, 2015). The initiative "establishes mechanisms for cooperation and interoperability that will allow for the gathering of information on the identification of people as well as the creation of opportunities for the exchange of human resources, training and information (OAS, 2013)." Colombia and Ecuador have taken the first step to establish interoperability between their registration databases in order to verify biometric and biographic information. The process is performed manually or via email and "the agreed response that Colombia sends to Ecuador based on the biometric and biographic verification is as follows:

- a) Full identification (biometric and biographical data match);
- b) Biographical data match (when there is no biometric information and all biographical data match);
- c) Some biographical data match (when the result is a partial coincidence) and;

d) There is no confirmation (when there is no match in terms of biometric and biographical data) (OAS, 2015).”

Additionally, under PUICA, the OAS supported El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala in establishing procedures to verify the identity of citizens in their databases. Responses to inquiries about the identity and matching of an individual are delivered as either ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses so as to safeguard the privacy of individual’s information. Inquiries are done via email using a standardized form, but open source software is being outfitted to keep a record of inquiries, verify identity of citizens, and improve response times of communication between the three countries (OAS, 2015).

Finally, as one of PUICA’s five objectives, international and regional cooperation through the Latin America and Caribbean Council for Civil Registration, Identity and Vital Statistics (CLARCIEV by its Spanish acronym) was formed (OAS, 2018). Article 1 of the CLARCIEV by-laws states:

“The Latin American and Caribbean Council for Civil Registration, Identity, and Vital Statistics, hereinafter “CLARCIEV,” is hereby created as an inter-agency organization that links the institutions of each one of the countries. Its purpose is to promote and facilitate coordination, support, and cooperation of the member states’ government institutions and agencies, modernization, and incorporation of technologies whose compatibility enables interoperability among institutions in order to provide reliable, timely, secure, and credible services that are vested with public trust, in full collaboration with the rest of the public and private agencies of our countries, supporting the democratic system, human and transaction security, but above all individuals’ access to their rights through the recognition of their identity, in keeping with the legislation in effect in each country (CLARCIEV, 2012).”

European Union

The European Association of Civil Registrars ((EVS) - short for Europäischer Verband der Standesbeamtinnen und Standesbeamten) was formed in 2000 with the purpose of exchanging information and best practices related to civil registration, identity management, and family law in the European Union (EVS, n.d.). Currently, 10 European countries are members of the EVS, with several other countries closely contributing to or in the process of joining the association (EVS, 2015; EVS, 2015). EVS facilitates the sharing of legal developments within member countries that could affect the registration of vital events. EVS also plays a key role in advising European Union policy makers on the need for harmonization of laws in relation to civil registration in the European Union in close cooperation with the International Commission on Civil Status (ICCS), an intergovernmental organization which facilitates international co-operation in European civil-status matters and aims to improve the operation of national civil-status departments (ICCS, n.d.; EVS, 2015). To allow members to network, share experiences, and discuss the implications of belonging to the European Union, the EVS organizes an annual two-day congress held in a Member State (EVS, 2015).

Due to the large number of European citizens who migrated to other European countries for work, education, and even for healthcare, the European Union recognized the need to share and verify data across civil registries. In order to do this, a pilot project was set up in Italy, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands which established a secure and certified electronic infrastructure to exchange information on births, deaths, and marriages (European Union, 2017). Subsequently, the European Civil Registry Network (ECRN) was established “to ensure the safe and certified transmission of Civil Act (birth, death, and marriage) certificates exchanged among the local administrations of the EU Member States (European Union, 2010).” In establishing ECRN, an analysis of the existing regulations and legislation regarding civil registration in each Member State was conducted, along with an analysis on how to standardize systems and create

interoperability in a sustainable way without sacrificing security (D'Amico, 2010). Under ECRN, a certificate can now be obtained from a Member State in 2-3 working days and without persons and/or paper having to cross borders. The secure web platform also ensures the authenticity of certificates (European Union, 2010; D'Amico, 2010).

The ECRN follows the recommendations and conventions developed by the ICCS (D'Amico, 2010). The Vienna Convention on multilingual extracts from civil-status acts, which is signed by almost all EU countries, acts as the basis for international cooperation among EU civil registries (D'Amico, 2010; ICCS, 2017). The Vienna Convention outlines the minimum information to be filled out for a valid birth, death, and marriage record and sets up a standard template which can be translated to many different languages so the information can be used in different member countries (ICCS, 2017). Another 33 conventions regarding data exchange among civil registrars or the issuance of civil documents to citizens of the EU, also form the legal framework for the ECRN but their ratification varies by country (ICCS, 2017).

South Asia: Afghanistan and Pakistan

The Afghan National Registration Project is a collaboration between the Pakistani and Afghan Governments to provide undocumented Afghans living in Pakistan with Afghan citizen identity cards, as part of the Pakistani Government's Comprehensive Policy on Voluntary Repatriation and Management of Afghan Nationals (NADRA, 2018; UNHCR, 2017). This project will allow Afghans to prove their legal status in Pakistan until they can be issued identity documents, such as passports, by the Afghan Government (UNHCR, 2017). The Pakistani National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and Ministry of States and Frontier Regions along with the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation will oversee the project with support from IOM and UNHCR (UNHCR, 2017). While the focus of this collaborative project is mainly on issuance of identity cards, Proof of Registration centres operated by NADRA and mobile registration vans issue birth certificates to children under 18 years of age as part of this project (UNHCR, 2017).

South Asia: Bangladesh and Myanmar

In conjunction with the Bangladesh Department of Immigration and Passports, the Bangladesh Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission has begun biometric registration of Rohingya refugees for the purpose of repatriation (Mahmud, 2018; Mamun, 2018; Mahbub-ul-Alam, 2018). While this project focuses on identity and biometric registration, it involves the sharing of records between two countries.

The use of a professional civil registration network to enable cross-border collaboration to achieve universal registration in South Asia

The establishment of a professional civil registration network in South Asia could be useful for sharing information and good practices on registration, as well as act as a medium for verifying records of vital events in order to achieve universal registration in the region. Table 2 below outlines some of the key characteristics of existing regional networks, while Table 3 illustrates the range of how data sharing and verification are manifested in practice. These models can serve as a starting point for discussion on the interest in the establishment of a regional civil registration network in South Asia, and on how that network might best serve the civil registrars in the Region.

Table 2: Comparison of key characteristics of several regional civil registration networks

	PCRN	CLARCIEV	EVS
Membership	Open to civil registrars in the Pacific Region	Open to Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS)	Currently 10 EU countries are members with several others closely contributing
Purpose	Share information, lessons learned and good practices; foster coordination and peer-peer relationships and support in tackling common challenges	Facilitate: coordination, support, and cooperation of member states; modernization and incorporation of technologies; bilateral, multilateral, and sub-regional cooperation mechanisms to improve registration	Facilitate sharing of information, best practices, and legal developments within member countries; advise EU policy makers on the need for harmonization of laws
Meetings	Aim to meet every 2 years	General Assembly meets annually	Annual two-day congress in a Member State

Information compiled from: PCRN, 2018; New Zealand Department of Internal and Cook Islands Ministry of Justice, n.d.; Montgomery, 2018; Henry-Anguna, 2018; CLARCIEV, n.d.; OAS, 2015; OAS, 2018; OAS, 2018; OAS; CIM, 2015; EVA, n.d.; EVS, 2015; EVS, 2015.

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Table 3: Comparison of key characteristics of regional data sharing and/or verification projects

Characteristics	PCRN: Bilateral agreements with New Zealand	OAS: PUICA facilitated civil registries of Colombia and Ecuador to verify ID information*	EU: ECRN
Legislation	Bilateral agreements for data sharing between New Zealand and each country	Bilateral or multilateral agreements between countries are created for data sharing and collaboration	34 conventions regarding data exchange or the issuance of civil documents signed by various EU countries; Vienna Convention on multilingual extracts from civil-status - signed by most EU countries - acts as the basis
Type of data verified and/or shared	Death and name change information relating to a person whose birth is registered in the State in which the foreign registration authority has jurisdiction	Confirmation of a match of: a) biometric and biographical data; b) biographical data (when there is no biometric information and all biographical data match); c) Some biographical data match (when the result is a partial coincidence) or; d) no match.	Birth, death, marriage data and certificates as requested
Method of data transfer	Secure on-line computer connection or an encrypted CD	Email as needed	Electronic submission as needed, systems are interoperable in that they connect to a database to “talk to each other” and send information
Response time	N/A: Data transferred on a predetermined timeframe i.e. every 12 weeks transfer all relevant data	2 days to 4 weeks	2-3 days

*Columbia and Ecuador example involves collaboration of civil registration offices but for the purposes of exchange and verification of identity information. Information compiled from: (New Zealand Department of Internal and Cook Islands Ministry of Justice, n.d.; Montgomery, 2018; Henry-Anguna, 2018; CLARCIEV, n.d.; OAS, 2015; OAS, 2018; D'Amico, 2010; European Union, 2010; ICCS, 2017; PCRN, 2018)

Conclusion

Cross-border collaboration among Civil Registry Offices has the potential to support civil registrars in achieving the goal of universal registration. A regional civil registrars' network can facilitate the sharing of innovations and good practices, which can improve the registration of births, deaths, and marriages in South Asia. Additionally, cross-border collaboration can foster relationships between civil registrars so that they can contact each other for verification of records that may be needed to register vital events in their home country. The development of a regional framework for data verification and/or sharing can support civil registrars in overcoming some of the challenges posed by cross-border movement, which ensures all vital events become registered, leading to the achievement of the goal of universal registration in South Asia.

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Annex Tables

Annex Table 1: Number and percent of emigrants from South Asia by sex and country of origin, 2017

Country of origin	Total emigrants	Female emigrants	Percent female
Afghanistan	4,826,464	2,281,794	47%
Bangladesh	7,499,919	2,546,016	34%
Bhutan	43,970	21,334	49%
India	16,587,720	5,752,410	35%
Maldives	2,883	1,561	54%
Nepal	1,738,442	676,446	39%
Pakistan	5,978,635	2,091,750	35%
Sri Lanka	1,726,900	738,250	43%
Total emigrants from South Asia	38,404,933	14,109,561	37%

Estimates derived from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

Annex Table 2: South Asian immigrants in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, by country of origin

Destination country	Total immigrants	Country of origin, both sexes						
		Afghanistan	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	South Asia*
Bahrain	722,649	673	80,457	310,591	3,888	76,674	10,099	482,382
Kuwait	3,123,431	2,908	381,669	1,157,072	24,713	340,481	39,837	1,946,680
Oman	2,073,292	..	276,518	1,201,995	..	218,522	26,268	1,723,303
Qatar	1,721,392	1,602	163,386	658,488	154,340	135,876	55,825	1,169,517
Saudi Arabia	12,185,284	435,810	1,157,072	2,266,216	455,905	1,343,737	479,391	6,138,131
United Arab Emirates	8,312,524	7,813	1,044,505	3,310,419	26,595	950,145	114,911	5,454,388
GCC Total	28,138,572	448,806	3,103,607	8,904,781	665,441	3,065,435	726,331	16,914,401

*Bhutan and Maldives are not shown as their migration to GCC countries is estimated to be close to zero

Estimates derived from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

Annex Table 3: Female South Asian immigrants in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, by country of origin

Destination country	Total female immigrants	Country of origin, females						
		Afghanistan	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	South Asia*
Bahrain	200,302	221	11,139	76,316	1,280	18,059	4,758	111,773
Kuwait	1,000,139	1,081	59,534	320,326	9,199	90,359	21,150	501,649
Oman	331,966	..	17,072	145,988	..	20,207	11,298	194,565
Qatar	276,704	296	12,709	90,911	28,669	17,982	14,777	165,344
Saudi Arabia	3,843,720	137,470	284,688	693,407	100,666	398,434	152,381	1,767,046
United Arab Emirates	2,105,200	2,339	131,239	738,203	7,967	203,112	49,144	1,132,004
GCC Total	7,758,031	141,407	516,381	2,065,151	147,781	748,153	253,508	3,872,381

*Bhutan and Maldives are not shown as their migration to GCC countries is estimated to be close to zero

Estimates derived from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

Annex Table 4: Percentage of South Asian immigrants in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries who are female, by country of origin

Destination country	Percent female immigrants	Country of origin, % females						
		Afghanistan	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	South Asia*
Bahrain	28%	33%	14%	25%	33%	24%	47%	23%
Kuwait	32%	37%	16%	28%	37%	27%	53%	26%
Oman	16%	0%	6%	12%	0%	9%	43%	11%
Qatar	16%	18%	8%	14%	19%	13%	26%	14%
Saudi Arabia	32%	32%	25%	31%	22%	30%	32%	29%
United Arab Emirates	25%	30%	13%	22%	30%	21%	43%	21%
GCC Total	28%	32%	17%	23%	22%	24%	35%	23%

*Bhutan and Maldives are not shown as their migration to GCC countries is estimated to be close to zero

Estimates derived from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

Annex Table 5: Intra-regional migration in South Asia by country of origin and destination, 2017

Destination country	Total Immigrant stock by country	Number immigrants by country of origin									% South Asian
		Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	South Asia Total	
Afghanistan	133,612	..	..	..	..	..	..	95,041	..	95,041	71%
Bangladesh	1,500,921	..	..	..	35,250	..	39,988	..	..	75,238	5%
Bhutan	52,296	..	53	..	45,788	..	733	22	33	46,629	89%
India	5,188,550	8,005	3,139,311	6,580	..	197	537,517	1,095,149	153,643	4,940,402	95%
Maldives	67,026	..	38,620	..	13,936	..	..	315	7,062	59,933	89%
Nepal	502,670	..	229	28,334	440,198	..	..	1,250	45	470,056	94%
Pakistan	3,398,154	1,515,738	..	..	1,873,650	..	..	..	541	3,389,929	100%
Sri Lanka	40,018	132	674	233	10,814	1,409	344	829	..	14,435	36%
Total immigrant stock in South	10,883,247									9,091,663	84%

Estimates derived from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

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