**Civil Registration in Refugee Settings:**

**Advancing Assessment of CRVS in Unsettled Environments**

**Technical Meeting on Design and Implementation Issues**

**December 19-20, 2016**

**United Nations House, Beirut**

Civil registration entails the continuous recording of information on all relevant vital events, such as births, marriages, divorces, adoptions, and deaths, occurring within the boundaries of a country or a well-defined area territory. Civil registration is critical for individual human rights reasons as well as public policy and social planning purposes. For the individual person, civil registration procedures facilitate the official documentation needed to establish legal identity and family relationships. Such documentation is necessary for individuals to exercise their human rights, access public services and participate in modern society and economic life. At the aggregate population-level, an important by-product of civil registration data is vital statistics – which provide insight into population size, structure, composition and dynamics. Reliable and timely vital statistics are essential for evidence-based policy formulation, effective economic and social planning, and accountability in public resource management.

There are a variety of legal, financial and practical reasons why civil registration of vital events for refugees is challenging. These include lack of awareness of its importance, inability to access the civil registration system amongst refugee populations, and various disincentives or complications associated with registering vital events.

This technical meeting seeks to bring together a small group of professionals to discuss conceptual and technical issues associated with the assessment of vital registration processes and data for Syrian refugees in Jordan. The purpose of this meeting is to identify conceptual/definitional issues and measurement challenges associated with vital registration assessment of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan and Lebanon, and to develop a modest plan for initial pilot testing of different large-scale assessment approaches. The expected output from this meeting is a draft project document for the 1-year inception phase of this project. This project document will describe the conceptual and technical challenges of the project and outline the pilot tests and field experiments that will be carried out during the inception phase.

In particular, this meeting will seek to

1. Undertake a systematic review of available (qualitative) studies on vital registration issues for Syrian refugees in Jordan,
2. Define and discuss the conceptual and definitional challenges associated with measurement of vital registration processes for Syrian refugees,
3. Explore the validation challenges of birth and death registration completeness and quality – particularly for non-camp Syrians in Jordan and Lebanon,
4. Identify conceptual, semantic and syntactic issues associated with undertaking a survey of Syrian refugees in Arabic (and writing up findings and analysis in English),
5. Develop a detailed analysis plan for the inception phase that will guide design and implementation decisions for the full project.

**Meeting Agenda**

**Day 1: Monday December 19, 2016**

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| 8 – 8.45am | **Registration** | |
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| 8.45– 9.30am | **Welcome & Opening Remarks**  Abdallah Al-Dardari, Deputy Executive Secretary, UN-ESCWA  Marwan Khawaja, Chief, Demographic and Social Statistics, UN-ESCWA | |
| **Overview of Draft Proposal for Project to Assess and Improve Completeness and Quality of Civil Registration Data for Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon**  Romesh Silva, Demographic and Social Statistics, UN-ESCWA | UN-ESCWA Concept Note |
| **Session 1**  **A Situation Overview of CRVS Systems in Jordan and Lebanon and Syrian Refugees**   * What are the current status of civil registration laws and procedures in Jordan and Lebanon in relation to Syrian refugees? * What are the awareness and accessibility issues for refugees associated with the civil registration? * What are the strengths and limitations of existing evidence on CRVS systems in Jordan and Lebanon and Syrian refugee awareness and accessibility? * What data gaps still exist on CRVS systems and refugee populations in Jordan and Lebanon? | | |
| 9.30 – 11am | ***Presenters*:** *Tina Gewis, Rasha* *Machmouchi,*  *Emad Quraan, NRC*  *Amit Sen,UNHCR Regional Office* | Norwegian Refugee Council (2015) Registering Rights: Syrian refugees and the documentation of births, marriages and deaths in Jordan.  Norwegian Refugee Council (2014) Birth Registration Update: The challenges of registration in Lebanon for Refugees from Syria  UNHCR (2016) In Search of Solutions: Addressing Statelessness in the Middle East and North Africa |
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| ***Discussant****: Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA* |
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| ***Chair****: Marwan Khawaja, UN-ESCWA* |
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| 11– 11.30am | Coffee Break | |
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| **Session 2**  **Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon: Population Size, Structure, Composition and Spatial Distribution**   * What do we know about the size, structure, composition, and spatial distribution of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan? * How has the Syrian refugee population evolved over the last 5 years? * What are the recent lessons learned (in terms of technical design and field implementation) from recent surveys of Syrian refugees? | | |
| 11.30 – 1pm | **Presenter**:   * Rana Ksaifi, UNHCR | UNHCR Background Note |
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| ***Chair:*** *Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA*  ***Discussant*:** *Marwan Khawaja, UN-ESCWA* |
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| **1– 2pm** | Lunch Break | |
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| **Session 3**  **Preliminary Findings from the 2015 Population and Housing Jordanian Census & Existing UNHCR Registration Data Sources**   * What is known about birth, marriage and death registration based on supporting information collected by UNHCR via its refugee registration processes in Jordan and Lebanon? * What does the 2015 Jordanian Census tell us about the size, distribution and composition of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan? * What can we learn about the mortality levels and trends amongst Syrian refugees in Jordan based on the 2015 Jordanian Census? * What can we learn about death registration completeness amongst Syrian refugees in Jordan based on the 2015 Jordanian Census? | | |
| **2 – 3.15pm** | **Presenters:**   * Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA * Rana Ksaifi and Amit Sen, UNHCR | UN-ESCWA Background Paper  UNHCR Background Note |
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| **Chair:** Helge Brunborg, Statistics Norway  **Discussant**: Marwan Khawaja, UN-ESCWA |
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| **3.15-3.40pm** | Coffee Break | |

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| **Session 4**  **Towards Systematic Pilot Testing and Coherent Field Experiments to inform assessments of vital registration completeness and quality**   * What are the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative work carried out to-date by UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council on vital registration for Syrian refugees in Jordan? * What data gaps still exist – both in terms of population coverage and substantive vital registration issues? * What lessons learned are relevant or informative from recent pilot project work undertaken by UNHCR in Kenya? * What new conceptual and measurements are involved when working in Jordan and Lebanon with Syrian refugees? * What language issues need to be factored into the design and implementation of any fieldwork? | | |
| **3.40 – 5pm** | **Panelists:**   * Martin Clutterbuck, Norwegian Refugee Council * Neil Ferguson, ISDC * Helge Brunborg, Statistics Norway | UNHCR Kenya Pilot Project Report |
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| **Chair:** Jon Pedersen, FAFO  **Discussant**: Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA |
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**Day 2: Tuesday December 20, 2016**

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| **8.30 – 9am** | **Taking Stock from Day 1: critical questions, cross-cutting themes, and emerging priority issues**  **Chair**: Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA | |
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| **Session 5**  **Sampling Design and Implementation Considerations**   * What are the critical design and implementation issues to be considered for carrying out a validation study in Jordan – given that part of the refugee population lives outside of camps and that there are useful data from the 2015 population census? Can particular use be made of the 2015 Jordanian census and available UNHCR registration data? If so, what coverage limitations of the Jordanian Census and the UNHCR Registration data need to be considered? * What are the critical design and implementation issues to be considered for a validation survey in Lebanon – given that the last population census was in 1932? | | |
| 9 – 10.30am | Presenter: Jon Pedersen, FAFO  Chair: Marwan Khawaja, UN-ESCWA  Discussant: Tilman Brück, ISDC |  |
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| 10.30-11am | Coffee Break | |
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| **Session 6**  **Technical Design Issues in Constructing Migration Event Histories**   * Retrospectively-collected vital events need to be accurately located in calendar time and geographic space. What are the recent lessons learned from related projects that have collected migration event histories? * What are the specific contextual issues that need to be factored in given the Jordanian and Lebanese context and the Arabic-language settings? | | |
| 11am– 12.30pm | Presenter: Tilman Brück, ISDC  Chair: Marwan Khawaja, UN-ESCWA  Discussant: Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA |  |
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| 12.30-1.30pm | Lunch | |
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| **Session 7**  **Technical Design Issues in Collecting Retrospective Information about Births and Deaths (for validation of CR systems & demographic estimation)**   * The retrospective collection of vital events is subject to various non-sampling errors and biases. What have we learned from recent field surveys about such non-sampling errors and biases? * What additional issues need to be factored in to account for the Jordanian and Lebanese context? * What specific pilot tests or field experiments are needed to inform the design of retrospective birth/death event modules? | | |
| 1.30 – 3pm | Presenter: Bruno Masquelier, UC-Louvain  Discussant: Romesh Silva. UN-ESCWA  Chair: Marwan Khawaja, UN-ESCWA |  |
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| 3-3.30pm | Coffee Break | |
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| **Session 8**  **Open Discussion & Closing Remarks**   * What are the critical knowledge and data gaps about civil registration completeness and quality for Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon? * How can we start to address these knowledge gaps and fill the associated data gaps? | | |
| 3.30 – 4.30pm | Chair: Romesh Silva, UN-ESCWA | |

**Invited Participants**

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| 1 | Jon Pedersen | FAFO | Oslo, Norway |
| 2 | Youssef Courbage | INED | Paris, France |
| 3 | Amit Sen | UNHCR | Amman, Jordan |
| 4 | Rana Ksaifi | UNHCR | Amman, Jordan |
| 5 | Tilman Bruck | International Security and Development Center | Berlin, Germany |
| 6 | Neil Ferguson | International Security and Development Center | Berlin, Germany |
| 7 | Tina Gewis | Norwegian Refugee Council | Beirut, Lebanon |
| 8 | Martin Clutterbuck | Norwegian Refugee Council | Amman, Jordan |
| 9 | Emad Quraan | Norwegian Refugee Council | Amman, Jordan |
| 10 | Rasha Machmouchi | Norwegian Refugee Council | Beirut, Lebanon |
| 11 | Sarah Ghanem | Norwegian Refugee Council | Beirut, Lebanon |
| 12 | Helge Brunborg | Statistics Norway | Oslo, Norway |
| 13 | Henry Doctor\* | World Health Organization | Cairo, Egypt |
| 14 | Bruno Masquelier\* | Catholic University of Louvain | Brussels, Belgium |
| 15 | Patrick Gerland\* | Population Division, United Nations | New York, USA |
| 16 | Danzhen You\* | UNICEF | New York, USA |
| 17 | Maletela Tuoane-Nkhasi\* | Global Financing Facility, World Bank | Washington, D.C., USA |
| 18 | Rita Maalouf | American University of Beirut | Beirut, Lebanon |
| 19 | Zeinab Khadr | Cairo Demographic Center, American University of Cairo | Cairo, Egypt |
| 20 | Hala Youssef | Arab States Regional Office, UNFPA | Cairo, Egypt |
| 21 | Irina Dincu\* | International Development Research Center | Ottawa, Canada |
| 22 | Petra Nahmias\* | UNHCR | Copenhagen, Denmark |
| 23 | Maletela Tuoane-Nkhasi\* | Global Financing Facility, World Bank | Washington, D.C., USA |
| 24 | Francois Pelletier\* | Population Division, United Nations | New York, USA |
| 25 | Thomas Spoorenberg\* | Population Division, United Nations | New York, USA |
|  | \* Participation via WebEx | |  |

**UN-ESCWA Staff and Consultants**

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| 1 | Romesh Silva | Demographic and Social Statistics Section |
| 2 | Marwan Khawaja | Demographic and Social Statistics Section |
| 3 | Abdallah Al Dardari | Office of the Executive Secretary |
| 4 | Basel Kaghadou | National Agenda for the Future for Syria |
| 5 | Ismail Lubbad | Demographic and Social Statistics Section |
| 6 | Martti Antola | Strategy, Evaluation and Partnerships Section |
| 7 | Ramla Khalidi | Strategy, Evaluation and Partnerships Section |
| 8 | Tarek Alami | Emerging Conflicts and Related Issues Division |
| 9 | Federico Neto | Social Development Division |
| 10 | Gisela Nauk | Social Development Division |