

# PRESS RELEASE

## **PSA hosts the 2023 Inception Meeting of South-East Asian Civil Registrars**

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In celebration of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Civil Registration Month in the Philippines, the South-East Asian Civil Registrars conducted an initial meeting in Manila on 07 to 09 February 2023 hosted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). The event was supported by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Vital Strategies, Global Health Advocacy Incubator, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Vital Strategies, CDC Foundation and other development partners.

The three-day meeting was organized to explore and possibly initiate the establishment of a network for civil registrars in South-East Asia. It facilitated knowledge exchange and potential collaboration on issues and concerns of civil registrars in the region as well as to document existing practices and common challenges.

The activity also provided a forum for civil registrars to discuss priority areas that are of common concern and served as the avenue for exchange of ideas on potential terms of references and organizational setup of a South-East Asian Civil Registrars network. For each of the priority areas, a paper has been developed by ESCAP and UNICEF which was shared with the participants for inputs.

In collaboration with the PSA, the priority areas have been identified including legislative frameworks, Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) digitization in South East Asia, assessing and addressing inequalities in CRVS, and discussions on establishing a network.

Atty. Maqtahar L. Manulon, Regional Director of PSA Region XII, chaired the session on Legislative Frameworks during the first day of the meeting wherein Atty. Eliezer P. Ambatali, Director of the PSA Legal Service presented his paper on Humanizing CRVS via Legislation. While during the session on Digitization of Civil Registration Systems, Engr. Marizza B. Grande, Assistant National Statistician of the PSA Civil Registration Service presented her paper on Improving Philippine Civil Registration and Vital Statistics through Digital Transformation.

A study tour was also conducted during the second day at the City Civil Registry Office, PSA Civil Registry System Outlet, and PhilSys Registration Center in Muntinlupa City. The activities were arranged for the participants to observe registration practices in the Philippines.

As part of the closing activity, a visit to the PhilSys Registry Office was organized by Assistant National Statistician Marela Lovely Y. Andres of the Policy Coordination and Monitoring Service, and presented the updates on the Philippine Identification System. The inception meeting was also in coordination with the PSA International Cooperation Unit.

- *Civil Registration Service, Civil Registration and Central Support Office*