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# Compendium of **Good Practices** in Linking **Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS)** and **Identity Management Systems**



**PERU**

**CASE STUDY 6**

Prepared by Verónica Álvarez



**Global  
Partnership**  
for Sustainable  
Development Data

This publication is a single chapter in a larger body of work. The *Compendium of Good Practices in Linking Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) and Identity Management Systems* was developed by the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in collaboration with the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD). The full compendium is available starting November 2019 at [crvssystems.ca/IDcompendium](http://crvssystems.ca/IDcompendium).

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# PERU

## CASE STUDY 6

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## Acronyms

CLB	Certificate of live birth
CRVS	Civil registration and vital statistics
EsSalud	<i>Seguro Social de Salud</i> (social health insurance)
ID	Identity
OREC	<i>Oficina de Registros del Estado Civil</i> (Office of the Registries of the Civil State)
RENIEC	<i>Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil</i> (National Registry of Identity and Civil State)
UIN	Unique Identification Number

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## Executive summary

After operating a disperse system of civil registration and an identification system closely tied to electoral purposes for more than a century, Peru established a single national agency (*entidad*) in charge of both functions in 1993. Against a backdrop of intense political violence, Peru's *Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil* (RENIEC), or National Registry of Identity and Civil State, was created under the Constitution to become the governing body on matters related to civil registration and identification.

Over the past 25 years, RENIEC has articulated a widely decentralized system, increasing the coverage of vital events registration, identifying citizens, and integrating civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) and identity management systems. By establishing standard processes and guidelines, introducing digital technology, and digitizing civil registration and identification records, RENIEC has successfully built two main databases: the civil registration database and the identification register.

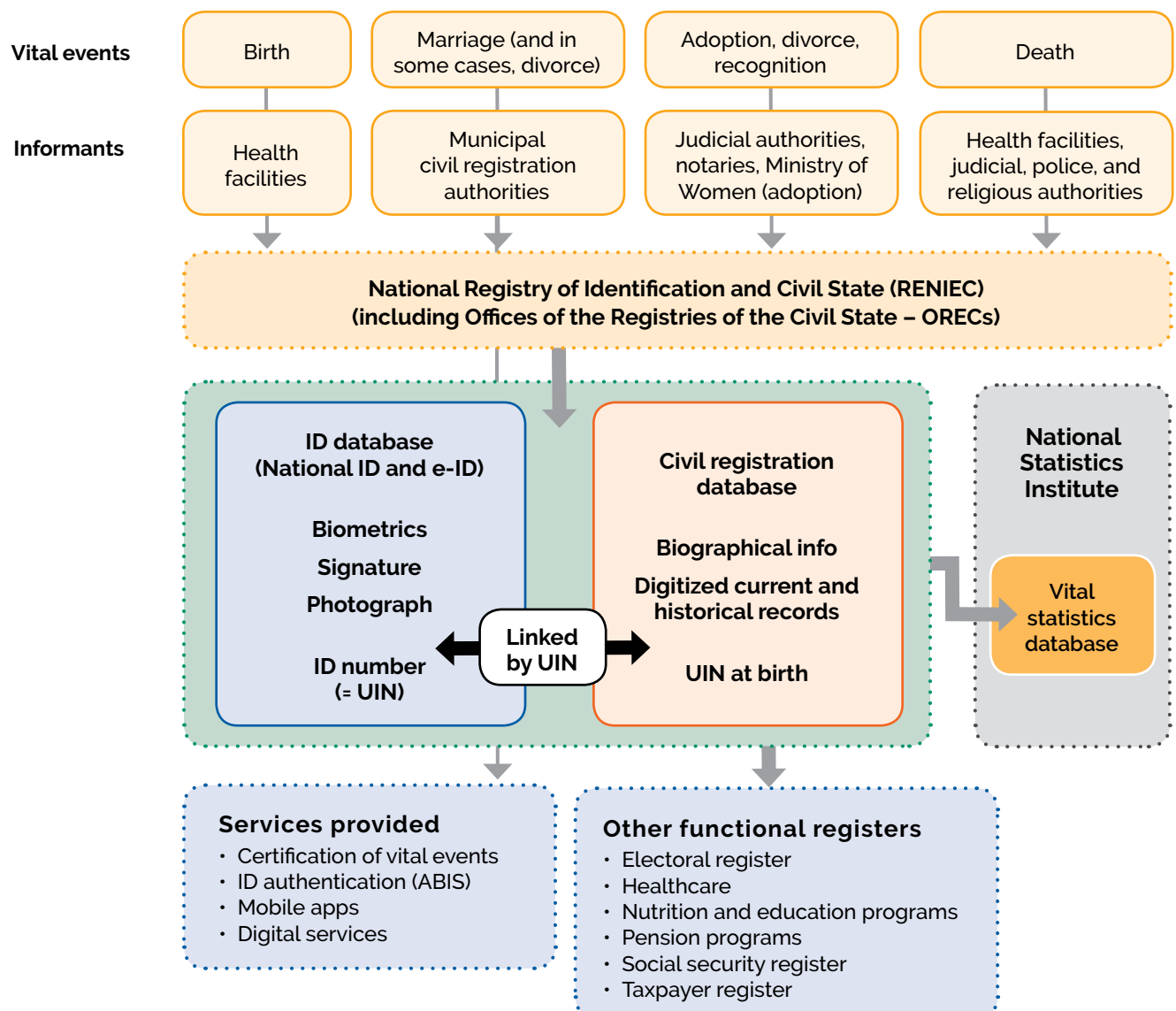


Figure 6.1: CRVS and identity management systems in Peru.

Throughout the process, RENIEC has increased collaboration between public and private organizations through the exchange of data, and has become Peru's primary resource for identity authentication. Information provided by RENIEC allows for more efficient and inclusive services since it helps to improve identification of beneficiaries and targeting of social benefits, reduce leakages, and eliminate duplicate and fraudulent registrations that result in undue payments from social programs.

The management of nutrition subsidies is one example of how civil registration information can significantly improve service provision and save time and money. RENIEC has been instrumental in guaranteeing that more newborns get nutrition support in time by reducing the application process from two months to 72 hours, and reaching 71% of beneficiaries within the first month, up from 36%.

## Summary of good practices

RENIEC has worked to make civil registration the backbone of ID management, implementing many good practices that have strengthened the CRVS system and service provision:

- Constitutional independence and autonomy;
- Digitized records;
- Information exchange between public and private sectors;
- Integration strategies combined with information technology (IT); and
- Online services at health facilities for birth and death certification and registration.

To reach the most vulnerable segments of the population and close gaps in registration and identification, RENIEC has also introduced good practices to ensure that everyone is counted:

- Improved services for Indigenous communities;
- Inter-institutional alliances and cooperation; and
- Mobile registration units.

As a result, RENIEC has become Peru's most trusted institution. RENIEC's ability to provide reliable data, combined with its contribution to service provision efficiency and inclusivity, illustrates how integrating CRVS and identity management systems is fundamental to guaranteeing citizens' access to rights and implementing better policies.



## 6.1 Introduction

### General information

Country name	Peru
Surface	1,285 million km <sup>2</sup>
Geographic location	Andean region of South America; it borders Ecuador and Colombia to the north, Brazil to the east, Bolivia to the southeast, Chile to the south, and the Pacific Ocean to the west.
Total population	31,237,385 (2017 census)
Share of urban population	79.3%
Official language	Spanish, Quechua, Aymara, and all other Indigenous languages (estimated at 48 in total)
Civil registration and civil identification agency	RENIEC (National Registry of Identity and Civil State)
Birth registration rate	98.3% (RENIEC 2017, based on total estimated births by the National Statistics Institute)
Death registration rate	78.1% (RENIEC 2017, based on total estimated deaths by the National Statistics Institute)
Identification coverage	99.3% (RENIEC 2018)

**Table 6.1: Peru country information.**



**Figure 6.2: Peru geographical map.**

*Disclaimer: The boundaries used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.*

### Historical context

Civil registration was instituted in Peru in 1852 with the first Civil Code, which created the *Registros del Estado Civil* (registries of the civil state), replacing parochial registry, where births, marriages, and deaths were registered through the Catholic church.

With the creation of municipalities in 1856, mayors became responsible for managing and maintaining civil registration records. The civil registration system was widely decentralized and heterogeneous, scattered across more than 2,500 offices, with no national agency acting as governing or regulatory body. To some extent, Peru's current civil registration system remains decentralized.

In contrast, identification has traditionally been tied to elections. In 1931, the *Registro Electoral del Perú* (Peruvian Electoral Registry)<sup>1</sup> issued the first identification (ID) credential for all Peruvian adult males, the only segment of the population that was eligible to vote. Until the creation of the current civil registration and identification agency, Peru's electoral registry maintained responsibility for issuing electoral credentials. During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, electoral credentials were used as the primary national ID document for all adult citizens, and the main proof of legal identity when interacting with public and private organizations. Within this system, minors were not identified and, in the absence of clear guidelines and standard procedures, irregularities in registration were common.<sup>2</sup>

From 1980 to 2000, Peru faced intense political violence. As a result of confrontations between Peru's military and security forces, and the Shining Path and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, more than 69,000 people died or disappeared. The conflict resulted in the destruction of local

government buildings. Local government documents were burned to sever the link between individuals and the central government.<sup>3</sup>

Fear of violence and the destruction of records added to existing difficulties in accessing civil registration services and information. As a result, thousands of Peruvians were undocumented, especially in remote rural areas and Indigenous communities. The conflict internally displaced approximately 600,000 people, who in many cases either did not have identification documents or did not carry them. Some created duplicate records by later registering in different offices. Others changed their names to protect their physical integrity, or altered their identity by changing their date of birth to avoid penalties for failing to report to military service on time.<sup>4</sup>

In the midst of political turmoil in 1993, the Peruvian government approved a new Constitution, which currently remains in effect. It established the *Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil* (RENIEC), a civil registration and identification organization with national jurisdiction.

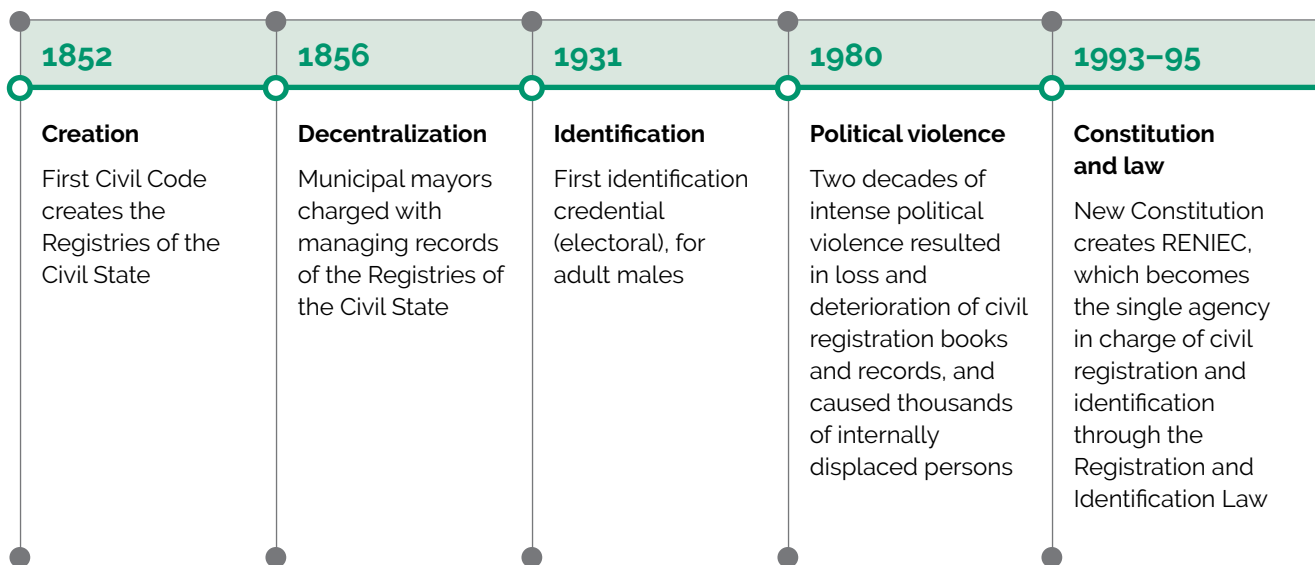


Figure 6.3: Timeline of civil registration and identification before RENIEC.



## 6.2 Legal and institutional arrangements

When RENIEC was created in 1993, the responsibilities for civil registration and identification fell under a single national agency. However, RENIEC was only officially established in 1995, with the enactment of Peru's Organic Law.

### Good practice: Establishing constitutional independence and autonomy

RENIEC was created as an autonomous agency with constitutional independence. RENIEC's National Chief is elected by the National Board of Justice through a public competitive examination of candidates and can only be removed by the Board. The National Chief is appointed for a four-year period, with an option to renew for a second tenure. Given the unstable political conditions under which it was created, RENIEC's independence and autonomy are considered crucial to its stability and sustainability.

RENIEC is supported by a constitutional mandate and the Organic Law, which is higher in legal hierarchy than ordinary laws. This provides a solid legal basis for RENIEC to operate and lead the integration of civil registration and identification systems.

RENIEC is the only agency that is constitutionally mandated to provide civil registration services, assign a unique identification number (UIN), and issue national ID cards – or *Documento Nacional de Identidad* – to all Peruvian citizens in the country or abroad. RENIEC manages and maintains the *Registro Único de Identificación de las Personas Naturales*, Peru's unique identification register. Identity information is recorded in the database

when citizens receive their first national ID card. This register is RENIEC's main database and is used by multiple public and private stakeholders to authenticate identity.

RENIEC also manages the integrated civil registration and microforms system, or *Sistema Integrado de Registros Civiles y Microformas*. This digital civil registration database serves two relevant purposes:

- It provides an online platform where civil registrars can register vital events in RENIEC offices, at civil registration offices located in provincial and district municipalities, and in rural areas and Indigenous communities that have not been fully incorporated into RENIEC and still function with some decentralization. Offices require an internet connection to use the platform.
- It works as a digital archive for current and historical records, combining digital images of original documents (certified microforms) with digitized text, making data easily searchable and retrievable.

The registers are linked using unique identification numbers, which are assigned during birth registration and help connect a person's vital events within the civil registration database. Together, these registers are indispensable to RENIEC in the integration of civil registration and identification data.

Other relevant laws that relate to RENIEC's work are:

- *Digital Signatures and Certificates Law* (2000);
- *Law that Regulates the Reconstruction of Birth, Marriage, and Death Records due to Negligence, Accidents, or Criminal Activity* (2009);
- *Personal Data Protection Law* (2011); and
- *Digital Government and Digital Identity Law* (2018).

For almost 25 years, RENIEC has prioritized providing national ID cards over civil registration. Originally decentralized, Peru's civil registration system included various procedures and forms that were scattered across the country, with no systematic or centralized mechanism to transfer or archive civil registration records. RENIEC has made significant progress, standardizing principles and guidelines for registration, modernizing processes, integrating diverse systems, and more recently, providing services in Indigenous languages. Some key steps include:

- Introducing overarching legislation to regulate civil registration and identification processes;
- Centralizing the production and distribution of standardized forms;
- Developing a common digital platform for online vital event registration;
- Approving specific criteria for the designation of civil registrars;
- Developing detailed procedure manuals and clearly defined responsibilities for civil registration officials; and
- Creating an internal registry training centre (*Escuela Registral*) to provide ongoing training to civil registration staff.

In addition, RENIEC created the Civil Registrar Web Portal,<sup>5</sup> an online tool that keeps registrars updated on legislative and regulatory changes, and civil registration processes and procedures. The portal also provides access to signature registers and the many forms registrars need to perform their duties. By supporting civil registrars, RENIEC seeks to provide more efficient services to the community.

Although RENIEC has exclusive authority over identification functions, in some cases, the agency has delegated the responsibility for civil registration. Once part of the decentralized network of civil registration offices that existed before RENIEC, these offices are called *Oficinas de los Registros del Estado Civil* (OREC), or Offices of the

Registries of the Civil State. Although they have not been fully incorporated into RENIEC, they provide civil registration services.

It is worth mentioning that RENIEC has leveraged available digital technology to automate many of its civil registration and identification processes. There are more than 1,300 decentralized civil registration offices under municipal governments, which represent 21% of the total number of offices, but whose reach extends to more than two-thirds of the population. Currently, these offices can register vital events online, which automatically update the civil registration database and link to the identification register through a unique identification number.

### RENIEC's network of service providers

RENIEC offers civil registration and identification services through its own offices and platforms, and through Offices of the Registries of the Civil State (ORECs), which have not been fully incorporated into RENIEC (Table 6.2). In total, RENIEC provides services at more than 4,800 offices, either directly or in cooperation with municipal governments.

In 1996, RENIEC delegated civil registration responsibilities to OREC offices, as it was not possible to integrate thousands of records in the short term. However, RENIEC has since implemented an integration strategy to gradually incorporate all offices. To date, birth, marriage, and death registration records from 70 offices have been digitized and integrated into RENIEC's centralized database.

RENIEC has legally revoked the delegation of civil registration duties to some OREC offices, but these offices still provide certified copies of the records they maintain. In other OREC offices, civil registrars can register vital events directly into RENIEC's online system, with civil registration records automatically recorded in the civil registration database and linked to the identification register.

Type of office	Number	Civil registration services		ID services	
		Registration	Certified copies	Request	Delivery
Civil registration and ID agency	78	✓		✓	✓
Registration Office	63	✓	✓	✓	✓
Auxiliary Registration Office (in health centres)	186	✓		✓	✓
Permanent Support Centre	117			✓	✓
Temporary Support Centre	22			✓	✓
Multi-Service Virtual Platform*	11		✓	✓ (duplicate)	
Citizen Support Centre**	6		✓	✓	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>483</b>				

**Table 6.2: Network of RENIEC offices (August 2019).**

Source: RENIEC

\* Automatic machines similar to ATMs where individuals can pay RENIEC fees; request duplicates for deteriorated, lost, or stolen national ID cards; obtain certified copies of records that have been digitized into the RENIEC system; and update their marital status (from single to married).

\*\* One-stop windows where multiple institutions, including RENIEC, provide services to citizens.

Type of office	Total number	Fully incorporated	Integration strategy		Partially incorporated	Pending Incorporation
			Partial duties	Connected online		
Provincial	196	15	6	173	179	2
Districts	1,678	54	9	1,046	1,055	569
Communities (Centros poblados)	2,494	1	-	107	107	2,386
Indigenous communities	470	-	-	1	1	469
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,838</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>1,342</b>	<b>3,426</b>

**Table 6.3: Network of Offices of the Registries of the Civil State (OREC) (August 2019).**

Source: RENIEC

This integration strategy, coupled with digitized civil registration processes, has significantly improved civil registration in Peru. More than 85% of vital events are now registered online, which ensures faster and more secure information sharing between the civil registration database and the identification register. This has strengthened links between civil registration records and the process of issuing national ID cards, resulting in up-to-date identity information, particularly for vital events registered in the last two decades. A considerable number of older historical records have not been integrated.

Almost 5,000 offices have yet to be integrated, the vast majority of which are in remote rural and Indigenous communities. As these offices serve close to 20% of the population, the information takes longer to digitize and update. However, despite the technical difficulties, keeping offices in the field rather than concentrating services in connected centres helps make services more accessible to particularly vulnerable populations.

### Good practice: Combining integration strategies with IT

Integrating a system that is scattered across more than 4,800 offices is costly and time consuming. So far, more than 1,400 offices have been totally or partially integrated. Although this figure may seem low in relation to the total number of offices, these offices represent 80% of the population and demand for services. RENIEC has fully integrated 70 offices and has adopted complementary measures to connect as many offices as possible. RENIEC has partially revoked civil registration duties for some offices, although they can still provide certified copies of civil registration records. However, the most widespread integration was achieved through RENIEC's online platform, allowing more than 1,300 offices to provide quality registration services in provincial and district capitals, and in smaller communities (centros poblados). As a result, 85% to 90% of registrations are now completed online.



## 6.3 Civil registration and vital statistics

### Registration cycle

Peru's Constitution states that all persons have the fundamental right to identity (Article 2). Under the Civil Code, all individuals have the right to a name and a surname. This right is materialized through birth registration (Articles 19 and 25). Birth registration provides proof that the individual is recognized by the state and establishes nationality and filiation. This is a crucial step in achieving full access to civil, social, economic, and cultural rights.

As the agency responsible for registration and identification, RENIEC is part of a citizen's entire life.

By law, RENIEC is responsible for registering the following:

- Birth;
- Marriage;
- Death;
- Divorce and marriage dissolution;
- Recognition;
- Adoption;

- Forced disappearance, presumed death, and recognition of existence;
- Name changes;
- Naturalization; and
- Loss and restitution of nationality.

It is worth mentioning that in Peru, marriage is not considered a vital event, but an event that modifies a person's marital status. The concept of vital event is reserved for birth and death. However, in keeping with internationally accepted terminology, and given that RENIEC registers marriages, marriage is considered a vital event in this report to facilitate comparison with other case studies in the compendium.

Births, marriages, and deaths are the main vital events that RENIEC registers for free. In 2018 RENIEC registered 578,769 births (94% online); 89,128 marriages (89% online); and 149,066 deaths (93% online). These preliminary figures demonstrate that with the introduction of technology, online registration in Peru is now possible in more offices and has become the main way in which registration is completed. Table 6.4 details the legal registration period, requirements, and observations for birth, marriage, divorce, and death registrations.

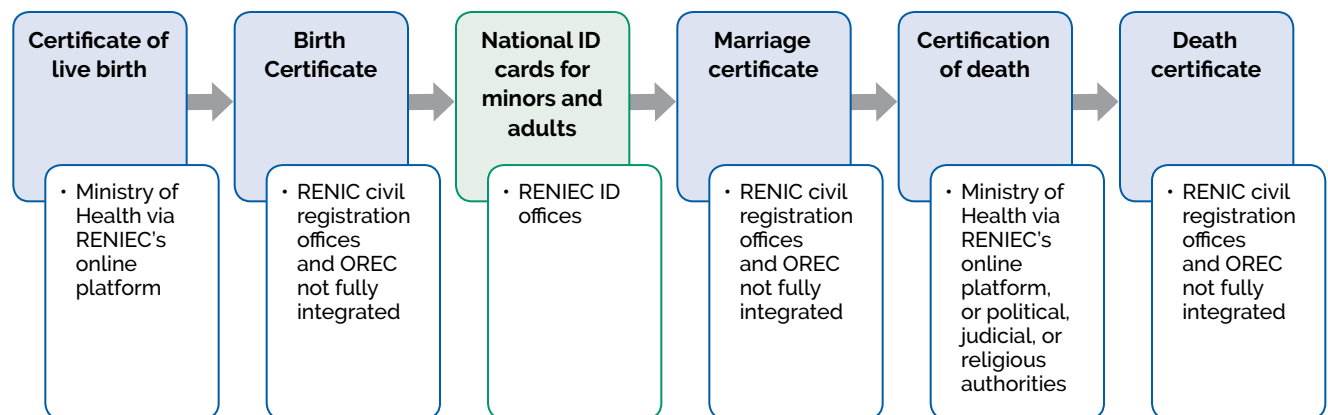


Figure 6.4: Registration and documentation cycle.

	Legal period	Requirements	Observations
<b>Birth (timely registration)</b>	Up to 60 days after birth; up to 90 days in remote or border areas, Indigenous, and rural communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certificate of live birth (free) issued by a health professional or a sworn statement by a political, judicial, or religious authority when no health professional is available.</li> <li>2. National ID card. Migration card, passport, or other document acknowledged by Peruvian authorities for foreigners.</li> <li>3. Certificate of marriage for children of married couples (unless marriage record is digitized in the civil registration database).</li> </ol>	Births that occur in health facilities where there is an auxiliary civil registration office are expected to be registered within 3 days.
<b>Birth (late registration)</b>	After 60 days or after 90 days in remote areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certificate of live birth (free) issued by a health professional or a sworn statement by a political, judicial, or religious authority when no health professional is available. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When this certificate is not available, any of these documents can be presented:</li> <li>• Certificate of baptism;</li> <li>• Proof of school enrollment (with mention of last grade attended); and</li> <li>• Declaration of two adult witnesses, who must present their ID cards.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. National ID card. Migration card, passport, or other document acknowledged by Peruvian authorities for foreigners.</li> <li>3. Certificate of marriage for children of married couples (unless marriage record is digitized in the civil registration database).</li> </ol>	Adults register their own births. In some cases, parents can complete the registration with explicit authorization from the adult son/daughter in the presence of the civil registrar.
<b>Marriage</b>	No legally established period (see observations).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certified copy of marriage celebration record issued by a municipal authority.</li> <li>2. National ID card. Migration card, passport, or other document acknowledged by Peruvian authorities for foreigners.</li> </ol>	When marriage is celebrated in municipal offices without civil registration duties, these offices must send notification of celebrated marriages to the closest civil registration office every 15 days. One or both spouses must request registration.

*continued*

	Legal period	Requirements	Observations
<b>Divorce</b>	No legally established period (see observations).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written request of registration of dissolution of marriage.</li> <li>2. Judicial resolution of divorce, or certified resolution issued by notary or highest municipal authority.</li> <li>3. National ID card. Migration card, passport, or other document acknowledged by Peruvian authorities for foreigners.</li> <li>4. Payment of fee (US\$2.50).</li> </ol>	Once a divorce is registered, the marriage record is updated. Individuals must update the civil status on their ID cards within 30 days of the change. An updated marriage certificate is needed.
<b>Death</b>	No legally established period for deaths that occur in Peru.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certificate of death signed by a health professional or a sworn statement by a political, judicial, or religious authority when no health professional is available.</li> <li>2. Present and return ID card of deceased person or sworn statement of lost ID card signed by the declarant.</li> <li>3. National ID card.</li> </ol>	Deaths of Peruvians that occur abroad must be registered at any consular registration office.

**Table 6.4: Birth, marriage, divorce, and death registrations.**

Source: *Civil Registration and Identification Organic Law (1995)* and *RENIEC website*<sup>6</sup>

As shown in Table 6.4, individuals cannot register their child, their marriage, or the death of a close relative without a national ID card. Since the civil registration database and the identification register are interconnected, information on applicants can be retrieved online to authenticate identity and to automatically populate online registration forms.

According to the Constitution (Article 52), all individuals born in Peruvian territory (*ius soli*) and those born abroad to a mother or father who is Peruvian by birth (*ius sanguinis*) have the right to Peruvian nationality. *Ius soli* is applied regardless of the parents' migratory situation. If a birth occurs in Peru and applicants bring proof of birth (certificate of live birth or sworn statement by a community authority), the newborn will be registered as Peruvian. To register the child's birth, a foreign applicant can present their migration card, passport, or the national ID from their country of origin.

Civil registration and identification are further interconnected, as each individual must present a birth certificate when requesting a national ID card. A physical copy is not required if the birth certificate has been digitized and recorded in the digital civil registration database. Given that 85% to 90% of births are currently registered online, physical copies will soon be a thing of the past.



## Using a unique identification number

A unique identification number (UIN) is assigned with every birth registration. Since 2005, UINs are included on paper registration forms and in the civil registration online platform, and will accompany individuals throughout their lives. UINs are 8-digit sequential numbers with an additional verification digit at the end. These do not reveal date of birth, location, or gender. This number becomes the national ID number and, along with biometrics, is used by RENIEC to build and link civil registration and ID databases, and to authenticate identity.

As soon as children receive their UIN, they begin to receive coverage from the *Sistema Integrado de Salud*, Peru's integrated health system. Furthermore, UINs must legally be used as the only valid identification number in tax and military registers, driver's licenses, passports, social security credentials, and in all institutions and procedures where a register must be adopted. RENIEC, in collaboration with the *Ministerio de Salud* (MINSA), Peru's Ministry of Health, is exploring the possibility of adding UINs to certificates of live birth to initiate the identification process immediately at birth.

Peru is moving towards a more integrated ID management system, using UINs to improve linking and information sharing between registers. This could save citizens and institutions time and money by facilitating identity authentication. It could also serve as the basis for creating a population register.

RENIEC is working to consolidate a digital identity system that allows citizens to increase their interactions with public institutions through an online hub, starting with electronic IDs and digital certificates. The UIN is one of the basic identity features upon which the system is built.

Vital events can be registered manually or online. Currently, registrars enter most registrations online using an electronic signature. Paper-based strategies are mostly limited to decentralized civil registration offices where RENIEC's online platform is not yet available due to connectivity issues.

### *Paper-based registration*

All information is entered manually by civil registrars in pre-printed standard registration books provided by RENIEC. These books are kept in Lima and distributed to consulates and different offices in Peru. All records are registered with a duplicate, and supporting documents are attached to the corresponding record. Currently, between 10% and 15% of vital events are registered manually, mainly by offices in remote rural and Indigenous communities.

### *Digitized online registration*

In RENIEC offices and in decentralized offices that are connected to RENIEC's online platform, information on vital events is entered electronically. Since the online civil registration platform is connected to the identification register, it automatically retrieves identification data through the UIN. For example, since the national ID number is the same as the UIN, using a mother's UIN on a birth registration form generates information on her complete name and address. Registrars sign certificates using an electronic signature. A certified copy is printed and handed to the applicant. Information recorded in the civil registration database can later be retrieved when people request a national ID card.



## Good practice: Providing online registration services at health facilities

Following an agreement signed by RENIEC and Peru's Ministry of Health in 2012, health facilities have access to the *Sistema de Registro del Certificado de Nacido Vivo en Línea* (certificate of live birth online registration system). This online platform, designed by RENIEC, allows doctors and obstetricians who assisted the mother to register a birth and generate the certificate of live birth (CLB). This system helps reduce the risk of false or duplicate identities, and securely identifies the mother and health professionals with their ID numbers. This simplifies the birth registration process by making CLB information, which is required for birth registration, available through RENIEC's civil registration database using the mother's UIN.

Birth registrations and requests for minor ID cards, issued for citizens under age 18, can be completed in one of 183 civil registration offices located in public and private health centres. This has increased timely registration rates, with approximately 85% of births currently registered online.

In 2015, in agreement with the Ministry of Health and the National Statistics Institute (INEI), RENIEC developed the *Sistema Informático Nacional de Defunciones* (national computerized death certification system). That year, only 56% of deaths had a medical death certificate and around 30% of causes of death were considered ill-defined.<sup>7</sup>

This platform, accessible via the Internet, allows for online death certification, decreases the time required to issue printed death certificates, and creates a single, current national database of deaths. Medical personnel can search and select the ICD-10 (World Health Organization's Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems) code to assess the cause of death. They can also access the deceased person's and medical professional's ID information from RENIEC's register using the UIN, thus reducing the steps required to complete the form.

The platform automatically blocks death certification for a person whose death has already been recorded, and can be used by institutions to cancel payments for deceased beneficiaries. Since death certificates are easily produced and rapidly handed to the family, this also facilitates death registration. This tool is available to all medical personnel, including forensic professionals in judicial institutions.

From August 2016 to April 2017, 135 workshops were organized to train more than 2,500 doctors to use the platform to complete a death certificate. RENIEC, the Ministry of Health, and the National Statistics Institute are working together to improve implementation in health facilities and coverage of death registration.

Digitizing birth and death registration has strengthened the partnership between RENIEC and the National Statistics Institute, as RENIEC designed both platforms to include information the institute required to produce timely and complete vital statistics. Digital technology has reduced delays created by transferring paper-based data and mitigated the risk of errors and inconsistencies.

In 2016, the National Statistics Institute published its “Fertility, Mortality, and Nuptiality in Peru” report using information provided by RENIEC. While it still relies on a variety of sources to produce vital statistics on births and deaths (RENIEC, Ministry of Health, sample surveys, census, etc.), information on marriages is drawn exclusively from civil registration data. According to the National Statistics Institute, information on these three vital events is crucial to study population growth, implement public health programs for reproductive and maternal and child health, and plan and implement housing policies and child protection programs.<sup>8</sup>

## Processing civil registration records

### *Records from online registration*

Processing and linking information for vital events that are registered online is relatively straightforward. When information is entered directly into the civil register, it is automatically linked with the identification register through the UIN. Printed copies of registration records are delivered to RENIEC headquarters to be scanned and used as backup for civil registration registries.

## Good practice: Digitizing records

Incorporating records into the digital civil registration database helps streamline processes and save citizens and institutions time and money:

- Centralizing records creates reliable civil registration records by facilitating the cancellation of duplicate registrations and the identification of fraudulent records.
- Incorporating civil registration information into the database guarantees that information is shared with the identification register to update identity data.
- Once civil registration records have been digitized, physical copies are no longer required for interactions with public institutions.
- If physical records are required, citizens can obtain a copy from any RENIEC or decentralized office that is connected online, or through RENIEC's automatic machines. If the records have not been digitized, citizens must request a copy from the office where the vital event was originally registered.
- Consolidated and up-to-date information allows other public institutions to build indicators to better plan policies and monitor implementation.

### *Records from paper-based registration*

Physical records are historical civil registration archives and documents that are generated from manual registration procedures in the Offices of the Registries of the Civil State (OREC). Physical documents and civil registration books are delivered to RENIEC headquarters in Lima, where they are classified and digitized. Digitization involves entering data from paper records and creating digital images that are turned into microforms.

### *Current records*

Paper-based registration is a slower process that involves more steps. This type of registration is done mostly in ORECs, and records must be physically transported and later digitized in central facilities. Unless they are fully integrated with RENIEC or located in health facilities, all offices must submit a monthly report that includes all vital events registered during that period, including supporting documents, duplicate records, and records of modifying annotations made to original documents.

### *Historical records*

RENIEC has implemented a strategy to integrate all ORECs, which includes retrieving and digitizing historical civil registration records from municipalities to include them in Peru's civil registration database and centralized archives. This effort will take several years and requires a significant financial investment. Because there was traditionally little information sharing between local civil registration offices and a centralized authority, it is more difficult to fully integrate civil registration and identification information and ensure the reliability of identification records and authentication services.

In 2010, an internal resolution required all Peruvian civil registration offices to send *actas de reserva*, or duplicate records, dating back to 1997 to be incorporated into the digital civil registration database. RENIEC estimates that approximately 60 million civil registration records were maintained by municipal governments, of which around 14 million have been digitized.

	%	Baseline	Progress	Pending
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>59,076,571</b>	<b>13,765,660</b>	<b>45,310,911</b>
Provinces	38	22,229,652	6,140,446	16,089,206
Districts	56	33,047,330	7,620,582	25,426,748
Remote communities	5	3,229,162	4,632	3,224,530
Indigenous communities	1	570,427	0	570,427

**Table 6.5: Processing historical records (by April 5, 2019).**

Source: RENIEC

In addition, a law enacted in 2009 gave RENIEC the mandate of reconstructing civil registration records for registry books that deteriorated or were destroyed due to negligence or criminal actions. RENIEC has digitized 91% of a total of 1.2 million identified records, including birth (72.3%), marriage (7.3%), and death (20.4%) registration records.

Despite these efforts, 77% of historical civil registration records have not yet been incorporated into RENIEC's database, which prevents up-to-date integration of civil registration and identification data. The good news is that vital events are increasingly registered online, which strengthens the integration of the civil and identification registers. In recent years, RENIEC's management has committed additional financial resources to accelerate the process of incorporating paper-based records into the civil registration database, to help bring the ID management system closer to its full functioning potential.

RENIEC also received financial support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), which allowed the full incorporation of historical civil registration records for the province of Cajamarca in northern Peru. More recently, Peru signed a US\$80million loan with the IDB, which includes a US\$25million investment to include historical civil registration records from 179 decentralized offices. This represents 50% of the archives still to be incorporated into RENIEC's system. These efforts mirror financial plans led by the Municipal Modernization Program and the Incentives Plan to Improve Municipal Management to allocate specific resources to strengthen municipal governments. Carried out during the 2010–2013 period, these initiatives included multiple indicators to help municipal offices provide civil registration services and comply with RENIEC reporting requirements.

## 6.4 Integrating CRVS and ID management

The national ID card is the only identification credential legally valid for all civil, commercial, administrative, and judicial interactions. It is the fundamental key to accessing public services and social programs. It is required to vote, interact with fiscal and judicial authorities, register a child or obtain a marriage certificate, register for the social security system, access benefits from social protection programs, obtain a passport or a driver's license, or register a vehicle or property. It is also required to open a bank account or register a cellphone SIM card. According to RENIEC, 99.3% of the population is identified,<sup>9</sup> improving the inclusivity and efficiency of public services and the management of social programs.

All Peruvian nationals must legally have a national ID card at birth. To receive an ID card, citizens must visit any of RENIEC's ID offices (see Table 6.2). For newborns, requests can be presented at RENIEC offices set in health facilities. Peruvians living abroad can obtain their national ID at consular offices. Requirements include:

- Receipt of payment;
- Certified copy of birth certificate (if not recorded in the civil registration database);
- ID of parents for minors;
- Proof of residence for adults; and
- Photo (for offices where picture is not captured electronically by RENIEC staff).

RENIEC issues two types of national ID cards: minor's ID (birth to 18 years) and adult's ID for ages 18 and over. The cost of an adult ID card is approximately US\$10 or US\$12 for an e-ID (which is optional), and US\$5 for a minor's ID. The document is free for vulnerable populations and adults aged 65 and over.

It is worth noting that RENIEC does not provide identification for legal foreign residents.

## Integrating databases

Digital technology is making the integration of civil registration and identification systems faster and more complete. RENIEC's civil registration and identification registers are linked through the use of the UIN (assigned at birth), which helps ensure that changes in civil registration are reflected in a citizen's identity.

Changes in civil registration information are not automatically reflected in the identification register. All citizens are legally required to inform RENIEC offices of any change in their personal information and request rectification. Failure to do so carries a financial penalty equal to 0.2% of the *Unidad Impositiva Tributaria*, or taxation unit (approximately US\$2.60). Mandatory reporting of changes ensures accurate information on citizens' identity and creates a strong ID management system based on current, reliable civil registration information.

Although changes are not automatically updated, once a vital event is recorded in the civil register, the system generates an alert in the identification register to notify officials that a new civil registration record is available. For marriage registrations, spouses must notify RENIEC to update the identification register. If they do not, the alert will be flagged, and they will be unable to renew or replace their national ID card (in case of loss or theft) until the rectification is made.

A new card must be issued to reflect changes of residence, name or surname, marital status, and the decision to donate organs on the ID card. Citizens must visit a RENIEC office to provide supporting documents, unless the marriage certificate has been recorded in the civil registration database. They must also provide proof of rectification fees payment, which ranges from US\$5 to \$7. Because gender and name changes require a judicial process, applicants must present a certified copy of the judicial decision with their request. Administrative corrections to a name and/or surname can be made if the change is due to clerical error.

Before digital technology, changes in civil registration information were rarely communicated to update identification data. This caused many problems in maintaining updated electoral, social security, and social program registers, such as identifying dead beneficiaries or tracking how many relatives were covered by an insured worker. Once RENIEC began digitizing historical records, they conducted a thorough clean-up process that included cancelling duplicate or irregular registrations and returning civil registration records to their original offices for correction.

## *Polygamy and fraud in Peru*

In 2010, RENIEC requested that decentralized offices send all records dating back to 1997 to be incorporated into the civil register. Before long, RENIEC officials began noticing irregularities. After receiving records from only half of Lima's municipalities, they discovered that more than 217,000 married citizens still appeared as single on their national ID cards. Even more alarming, they found close to 2,000 cases of bigamy and more than 200 cases of polygamy in Peru.

One of these cases involved Wilfredo Beltrán, who had six simultaneous marriage certificates in different districts of the capital, with three marriage registrations in one district alone. This duplication was attributed to a lack of systematic connection between decentralized civil registration offices. Mr Beltrán was later detained in Colombia, where he was accused of swindling women after persuading them to marry him. Officials learned that he had also been married in Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, and Panama.

Another example included a former congressman who, between 1984 and 2000, falsely registered as single to protect his marital property from five judicial processes.

A specialized unit within RENIEC is responsible for cleaning up the civil registration database. Members of this unit review records included in the database both ex-officio and at the request of an interested party. Corrections or cancellations may be made due to

- errors in records that affect the legality of the registration;
- duplicate registrations;
- errors and omissions in civil registration records; and
- suspicion of fraudulent registrations that result in investigation.

This unit compares records against duplicates coming from RENIEC and the Offices of the Registries of the Civil State (OREC), records coming from the National Archives, and information in the identification register.

De-duplication in the identification register is carried out using the UIN and an automatic biometric information system. Biometric data includes 10 fingerprints and a 21-point facial recognition system, which are obtained when a national ID card is issued. In 2017, as part of maintaining the identification register, 11,429 records were amended following investigations related to multiple registrations, false information, identity theft, registration with cancelled birth certificates, and outdated addresses and civil status. In addition, 165,636 records of deceased citizens were removed.<sup>10</sup>

## Sharing Information with other functional registers

RENIEC enjoys wide public recognition and is currently the institution that Peruvians trust most, according to recent surveys.<sup>11</sup> RENIEC is also considered the primary source of identity authentication for both the public and private sectors. By building an increasingly robust identity management system, RENIEC has made service provision more effective and efficient. It has also helped ensure broader inclusion in social programs and benefits.

RENIEC has become the central checkpoint for identity authentication by making national ID cards mandatory identification for social programs and social security benefits, and by granting access to the identification register. RENIEC's systems guarantee more rapid, appropriate, and transparent allocation of public services and benefits, resulting in fewer leakages, duplications, fraudulent registries, and undue payments. RENIEC has signed numerous agreements with local, regional, and national institutions and organizations that require access to the identification register to authenticate identity. On average, RENIEC receives 1.2 million queries daily.

Type of access	Number of queries
Data web service	12,501,760
Dedicated line	242,224,554
Biometric verification	125,565,446
Online access (RENIEC website)	16,439,856
Cotejomasivo (massive cross-check)	508

**Table 6.6: Annual queries to the identification register (2018).**

Source: RENIEC (2019)

These formal agreements include specific terms about the type of ID information that can be shared from the database. In addition, RENIEC must comply with Peru's Data Protection Law, which was approved in 2013 and updated in 2017.

## Good practice: Exchanging information with the public and private sectors

From 2015 to 2018, RENIEC signed a total of 2,201 agreements with public and private institutions to grant access to the identification register. Of these, 1,547 provide access through the internet, 404 share biometric verification, 159 allow access through a dedicated line, and 91 allow web access.<sup>12</sup> During that period, the number of queries to the identification register grew an average of 49%.

Some services are provided for a fee, particularly those used by private companies. In addition, RENIEC regularly shares lists of deceased citizens, including ID number and date of death, with public institutions responsible for implementing social programs to update their functional registers.

The impact of identification and identity verification on the provision of social benefits can be seen in programs for everyone, from newborns to the elderly.

### Improving the provision of nutrition subsidies<sup>13</sup>

EsSalud (Seguro Social de Salud) is the public health insurance agency that provides health coverage for 11 million workers in Peru. One of EsSalud's programs is the subsidio de lactancia, or nutrition subsidy. This program provides one-time financial support to mothers of newborn children whose parents are insured workers.

EsSalud discovered that subsidies were not reaching all potential beneficiaries. Further, those who received the subsidy were not getting it in the first weeks, as the program intended. To apply for the program, mothers were required to visit an office shortly after giving birth, fill out an application form, get evaluated, and wait for final authorization to collect the money from the bank. On average, the process took up to two months.

In 2018, EsSalud signed an agreement with RENIEC to access the institution's database of live birth certificates registered in health facilities using the online platform. This allows EsSalud to check the database daily, retrieve mothers' identification information, and immediately complete the eligibility evaluation. If the evaluation is positive, the system sends a payment authorization to the National Bank (public banking institution with a nationwide network of offices) so that beneficiaries can collect their money. This process now takes 72 hours on average.

Overall, the new process shows substantial progress in timeliness and inclusiveness:

Former process (Reference period: August 28, 2017 – March 24, 2018)			New process (Reference period: August 28, 2018 – March 24, 2019)		
Days since birth	Applications	%	Days since birth	Applications	%
1-7	5,410	6.6	1-7	59,319	57.8
8-14	8,405	10.3	8-14	5,769	5.6
15-21	7,795	9.6	15-21	4,463	4.3
22-28	7,930	9.7	22-28	3,808	3.7
29-60	31,498	38.7	29-60	14,953	14.6
61-90	11,856	14.6	61-90	7,109	6.9
91+	8,472	10.4	91+	7,246	7
Total	81,366	100	Total	102,668	100
Total amount granted	US\$20,051.06		Total amount granted	US\$25,300.53	

**Table 6.7: EsSalud's new process for completing eligibility evaluations for the nutrition subsidy.**

*continued*



As a result, the subsidy now reaches almost 60% of babies in the first week, compared to 7% with the former process. Further, there has been a 26% increase in beneficiaries. EsSalud estimates that previously, 5% to 7% of insured mothers did not complete an application. This means they did not receive financial support for their newborn children.

With this new process, mothers no longer need to go to an office. The system assigns bank offices to disburse the subsidy according to the location of the hospital where the birth was registered. The current arrangement has also helped solve problems of multiple-pregnancy cases, eliminating suspicion of duplicate registrations from the same mother. RENIEC includes a field to report multiple births in the certificate of live birth, so information can easily be validated.

Although there is no precise quantification, EsSalud estimates the changes have decreased undue payments and resulted in financial savings. In addition, EsSalud offices have processed 124,000 fewer on-site applications.

For this approach to work, births must be certified online. According to EsSalud, roughly 90% of health facilities are connected to the online system. EsSalud is also responsible for granting a subsidy for funeral expenses and has been working on a similar procedure for death certifications. However, since less than 80% of deaths are certified online, EsSalud cannot guarantee that death benefits will be received as quickly as nutrition payments.

Other examples of improved service provision include the Padrón Nominal (nominal children register) and *Pensión 65* (Pension 65) programs.

### ***Nominal children register***

In 2012, RENIEC collaborated with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Health, and local governments to create the nominal children register, a database of children aged 0 to 6 that collects information on 30 socioeconomic variables. It includes information on residence, household income, health, education, mother's language, and membership in social programs, as well as identification data coming from the civil and identification registers.

Starting with information available from the certificate of live birth online registration system, this database tracks children using their mothers' ID number. It monitors registration and identification of minors to help RENIEC locate and reach this population in their household – and to guarantee documentation. Continuously updating the database allows for targeted services and benefits provision, such as nutrition, vaccination, and school attendance. Once a birth is registered, this data is also included in the nominal children register to complete information. Information from the certificate of live birth and the birth registration are crucial to monitoring children, ensuring their identification, and identifying potential programs to assist children and their mothers.

## Pension 65

Introduced in 2011, Pension 65 is a social program that grants a monthly subsidy to persons over age 65 who live below the poverty line. RENIEC collaborated with the *Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social* (MIDIS), or the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion. Together, they organized targeted campaigns to waive registration fees for national ID cards for people aged 70 and older to facilitate their registration in the program. RENIEC also deployed staff to provide services in homes, hospitals, and care homes for citizens who had difficulties getting to an office. When the program was implemented, officials discovered that lists included deceased beneficiaries, which created the possibility of identity theft, resulting in undue payments estimated at US\$225,000.<sup>14</sup>

In 2018, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and RENIEC signed an agreement to provide e-ID cards to Pension 65 beneficiaries to improve the authentication processes. The agreement includes four-channel access to the identification register (online consultation, dedicated line, data web services, and massive cross-check), and daily reports on the deceased population.<sup>15</sup> However, RENIEC officials recognize<sup>16</sup> that these issues will not be fully resolved until death registration coverage improves.

The widespread use of national ID cards and UINs by social programs has improved information exchange among institutions and enabled targeted provision of benefits. However, some concerns have arisen in recent years about data protection. In June 2018, a civil society organization called *Hiperderecho* claimed that a security breach allowed the download of national ID card pictures of all Peruvians.<sup>17</sup>

## Electoral Register

According to the Constitution (Article 177), RENIEC is part of Peru's electoral system, together with the *Jurado Nacional de Elecciones* (National Jury of Elections) and the *Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales* (ONPE), or the National Office for Electoral Processes. As such, one of RENIEC's constitutional mandates is to help maintain an updated electoral register. RENIEC's Electoral Register Unit uses four main variables to monitor and update the electoral roll using its databases:<sup>18</sup>

- **Date of birth** – To monitor citizens' eligibility to vote and include everyone who turns 18 by the date of celebration of the electoral process.
- **Date of death** – To remove deceased voters from the register.
- **Address** – To verify residence according to the last reported address in the identification register.
- **Legal situation** – To monitor final court judgements that result in the loss of political rights.

RENIEC sends updates on the electoral roll to the National Office for Electoral Processes every three months. A first version of the electoral roll is set 365 days before an election and includes all citizens that will turn 18 by the day of the election. Registries can be cancelled and addresses changed on the preliminary list prior to the election, but new inclusions are not permitted.

If an address is not verified, the system creates an alert in the identification register to require that citizens update it. The final version of the electoral register includes biographical information, photo, and fingerprints for every registered voter, including those living abroad. According to RENIEC officials, the slow processing of manual death registrations is the hardest gap to fill in updating the electoral register, as records are not quickly integrated into the civil registration and ID databases.

## Conclusion

### Tackling challenges with good practices

Integrating civil registration and identification in Peru has brought many tangible benefits. RENIEC has expanded its service network and integrated civil registration offices. This integration has made service provision more efficient and inclusive by allowing targeting of social benefits. It has also reduced leakages, duplicate and fraudulent registrations, and undue payments in social programs.

### Civil registration as the backbone of identity management

Peru's decentralized civil registration system made it challenging to fully integrate civil registration duties under a single institution. RENIEC officials are aware of the crucial role that civil registration plays in building a solid identity management system. This report has identified good practices that, thanks to RENIEC's commitment, have strengthened Peru's CRVS system and improved service delivery.

From legal and institutional arrangements to the introduction of digital technology and collaboration with other institutions and organizations, RENIEC has made significant progress in making CRVS a key part of the ID management system. As a result, RENIEC has become the main source of identity information in Peru.

### Closing the last gaps

RENIEC has made remarkable progress in the last two decades, reaching almost universal coverage of birth registration and identification. However, some segments of the population remain left out, especially in communities with overlapping vulnerabilities, such as geographic isolation, Indigenous minorities, and poverty.<sup>19</sup> People in rural and remote areas face obstacles to registration and identification services during the entire documentation cycle:

- **Certificate of Live Birth** – More than 90% of births occur in a health facility, but figures show substantial regional variations. In areas characterized as rural forest, this percentage drops to 60.4%, which creates difficulties in obtaining a certificate of live birth. In urban areas, 97.3% of the population has a certificate, compared to 76% in rural areas. For births that occur outside of health facilities, a sworn statement by a community authority is accepted as proof of birth, but it is not always processed.
- **Birth registration** – Although registration is almost universal at 98.3%, improvements are needed to increase timely registration. Regional differences show that rural forest areas have lower rates of timely registration (80% to 83% in 2018, in contrast with the national average of 92%). Similarly, birth registration records coming from offices in Indigenous communities contain more errors (from 20% to 45% of analyzed records).
- **National ID** – Currently, 99.3% of Peruvians have a national ID, but there are two main variables that relate to documentation gaps considerably bigger than the national average of 0.7%:
  - Age, where the gap is 4.4% for children 0–3, and 1.3% for seniors 75 and older; and
  - Geography, where gaps range between 2.6% and 3.3% in the rural forest, and 1.8% to 3.7% in border areas (especially the Amazon border).

Some obstacles to closing these gaps include:

- Lack of awareness and information for beneficiaries and authorities;
- Long distances to facilities (health centres, civil registration and identification offices);
- Insufficient financial and human resources in health facilities and civil registration offices;
- Lack of internet connectivity and computer equipment;
- Insufficient and inadequate training in remote health facilities and decentralized civil registration offices;
- Illegal requests for fees; and
- Difficulties in obtaining records that have not been integrated into the digital civil registration database.

To address these remaining gaps, RENIEC has implemented concrete measures that are considered good practices in reaching out to vulnerable populations:

- Mobile registration units;
- Improved services for Indigenous communities; and
- Inter-institutional alliances and cooperation.

### ***Mobile registration units (Registraitinerante)***

RENIEC's Identity Restitution and Social Support Department organizes monthly deployments to rural and Indigenous communities to bring civil registration and identification services closer to remote and isolated areas. In 2018, this Department carried out 10,917 campaigns across Peru, most of which consisted of two-day deployments. In this period, they processed hundreds of thousands of service requests, including more than 450,000 requests for national ID cards. These services, aimed at vulnerable populations, are provided for free.

### ***Improved services for Indigenous communities***

The Identity Restitution and Social Support Department is also developing a project to provide customized training to civil registrars in Indigenous communities. This is because training material and methodologies used in large urban settings do not necessarily work with Indigenous communities' traditions and lifestyle. This initiative could prove effective as a means of guaranteeing good quality service and reducing registration errors.

Peru has 48 Indigenous languages that are spoken by approximately 16% of the population. Since 2014, RENIEC has worked to promote the use of Indigenous languages in civil registration services. In addition to removing barriers to accessing civil registration, this also contributes to promoting linguistic rights and preserving the languages. RENIEC began providing civil registration services in 2014, starting with *Jaqaru*. By 2019, it had expanded to offer services in 10 Indigenous languages.

RENIEC has developed an intercultural management model that can issue bilingual birth, marriage, and death certificates. By June 2019, more than 100,000 certificates had been issued. With an intercultural vision, RENIEC provides an online registration platform, civil registry books, civil registration forms, dissemination and training material, and certified copies of civil registration records in Indigenous languages. Available in RENIEC offices and in Offices of the Registries of the Civil State alike, this service has helped reduce registration errors, promote inclusion, reduce under-registration, and contribute to reaching the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly target 16.9 that applies to universal birth registration.

### *Inter-institutional alliances and cooperation*

RENIEC has systematically built alliances with other public institutions to expand its reach across Peru and increase awareness about the importance of civil registration and identification among the population. Due to the mandatory use of national ID cards to access social programs and benefits, campaigns related to enrollment in these programs have created valuable opportunities to offer registration and documentation services, with some services provided free of cost. Cooperation with the Ministry of Health (MINSA) has brought important results:

- Establishing auxiliary offices in health centres to allow faster and easier registration and identification of children;
- Online birth and death registration using a RENIEC designed online platform; and
- Creation of the nominal children register, which also helps monitor documentation of minors, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), local governments, and social programs. ●



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