A PASSPORT TO PROTECTION

A GUIDE TO BIRTH REGISTRATION PROGRAMMING

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A mother displays her child's short birth certificate generated by Mobile Vital Records System (Mobile VRS), at Mulago Hospital. At the hospital, birth registration is done using Mobile Vital Records System (Mobile VRS) an innovative technology supported by UNICEF to improve birth registration in Uganda. This was part of the activities during the Uganda Pan African Study Tour Conference under the theme, 'Breaking with broken systems'. The purpose of Uganda Pan-African Study Tour, is to enable government counterparts from countries implementing the above project and members of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APAI-CRVS) Core Group to share and learn from each other's innovations in improving national civil registration and vital statistics.

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Prashenjit is held by his mother Hoimanti Bhaumik, who is holding his birth registration card at Mirtinga Tea Estate in Maulavi Bazar, Sylhet on 5 December 2012. Birth certificates not only prevent child marriages and child labour but also play a vital role as a legal identity in stopping other evils including trafficking, underage criminal prosecutions and child abuse. Under recent government legislation, a person with a birth certificate gets access to 16 essential services such as school and university admission, marriage recognition and passports for foreign travel. With the support of UNICEF, the Government of Bangladesh has replaced manual registration of births with a computerized system known as Online Birth Registration Information System (BRIS). The system links more than 5,000 registration centres based in Unions, Municipalities, City Corporations, Cantonments and Embassies abroad. To date, more than 56 million birth records have been captured in the system. By June 2013, all birth information will be recorded through the online system, which will serve as a basic database for other services including monitoring, planning and service delivery by the health administration. In addition it will be used by the Election Commission for voters' identification cards.

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Mileidis Gonzales, an indigenous Wayuu woman, holds her newborn daughter Wuileidis, as she and her husband Wolfang José wait for a civil birth certificate to be issued by a health worker at Armando Castillo Plaza Hospital in Maracaibo City in the north-western state of Zulia.

Mileidis and her family are participating in the National Identity Plan "I am" ("Yo soy") for birth registration created by national government (2003) to ensure that all children within its territory are registered at birth. This policy was supported by UNICEF. According to National Statistics Institute (INE) the program has contributed to increase birth registration by 26 percentage points of the total number of birth registered (from 50 per cent to 76 per cent between 2003 and 2012). Currently the INE supported by UNICEF is improving the national system of data collection about birth registration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
BCC	behaviour change communication
BM	bottleneck methodology
BRIC	Brazil, Russian Federation, India and China
C4D	Communication for Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DfID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
GNI	gross national income
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ID	identity document
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDP	internally displaced persons
ILTAM	institutionalist legislative theory and methodology
INGO	international non-governmental organization
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MAF	Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework

MBB	Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks Methodology
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoRES	Monitoring Results for Equitable Systems
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
NGO	non-governmental organization
RENIEC	National Registry of Identification and Civil Status (Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil)
RITA	Registration Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency
SEM	Social Ecological Model
SMART	specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (objectives)
SOWC	State of the World's Children
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
URSB	Uganda Registration Services Bureau
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Registering a child's birth is a critical first step towards safeguarding lifelong protection. Promoting children's right to birth registration falls clearly within UNICEF's mandate. It has been a key component of its programming since the late 1990s. Approximately 230 million children under the age of 5 have not had their births registered.[1] There has been some progress, albeit small in raising birth registration levels. Between 2000 and 2010 global birth registration levels rose only slightly, from 58 per cent to 65 percent.[2] Certain trends in the international environment provide opportunities for rethinking approaches to birth registration.

What has changed?

The impact of the lack of a birth certificate on the individual is becoming ever more evident in the modern world, as identification is required to access an increasingly wide range of services, entitlements and opportunities. For example, in many low- income countries, even in remote rural areas, proof of identify is required for the acquisition of a mobile phone.

The impact of globalization, trade liberalization, economic shocks, war, natural disasters and climate change has led to an acceleration of cross-border population movements worldwide, including mixed migration. The situation of the growing number of persons who have no documented identity or are stateless is serious. Governments are now according much higher priority to addressing this situation. Internationally, greater attention to identity and security issues is reflected through initiatives such as the Euro-African Process of Migration and Development (Rabat process) that seeks to engage governments in Europe and Africa to address illegal migration. INTERPOL is investing significant resources in improving identity documentation, in which birth registration and certification has been identified as the weakest area.

For the first time, governments in the regions in which registration is the lowest are coming together with development partners to improve civil registration systems. Rapid progress has been made in Africa in the last couple of years under the leadership of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union and the African Development Bank (AfDB). Similar processes are unfolding in Asia and the Americas. South-South learning is

also taking place. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has been advocating for action to strengthen civil registration in Latin America for some time now and is sharing experiences with Africa and Asia in a global learning process. There is a global call to form an alliance between UN and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for civil registration. The United Nations organizations, including the World Bank, and NGOs have also been partners in these processes.

Drivers for change

Thanks to these collaborative efforts, the required drivers for change are increasingly clear. Coordinated multi-sectoral approaches to improving civil registration need to be developed by governments in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders.

Legal and organizational civil registration reform is urgently required in many countries. Observation of the principle of central control of civil registration services is essential while addressing the issues of distance and cost, which are important impediments to registration in developing countries.

Innovative measures to bring civil registration services to people have been evolving through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Electronic records and storage should replace paper-based records, and the use of mobile phone technology in remote rural areas needs to be further exploited.

'Interoperability' with other services is a key strategy. Making use of the health service infrastructure enables greater access to rural populations. Connecting with education allows for reviews of the registration of school-aged children. The growing scope and reach of social protection programmes provide an opportunity to reach the most vulnerable, who are the least likely to be registered. Linking civil registration with the momentum and resources that are being invested in national identity document (ID) systems affords the possibility of integrated identity management systems. All of these services may be assisted to connect with civil registration, to ensure that people accessing their service are also able to access birth registration.

What does this mean for UNICEF?

The increasing focus on birth registration opens a unique opportunity to push forward UNICEF's aim of free and universal registration of births by 2015. Working with governments to strengthen effective and efficient birth registration within the civil registry, can include human capacity development, development of birth registration materials, reform of policy and legal frameworks and identifying synergies with other service areas.

The risks that are faced by children who are not registered are tremendous, and may hinder access to other child rights. UNICEF supports universal birth registration within the context of an overall child protection system. Such an approach recognizes the link between non-registration and the risk of exploitation and abuse; that knowing the age of a child provides protection from child labour, from being arrested and treated as an adult in the justice system, forcible conscription in armed forces and child marriage. A birth certificate can support the traceability of unaccompanied and separated children, promote safe migration and be a vital factor in preventing statelessness.

It is also a key aspect for country planning. Knowing how many children there are and their age allows countries to plan the service requirements for health and education. It provides the information for the country to track the well-being of its population.

The objective of this guide is to provide practical guidance to UNICEF country offices. Working with the drivers of change described above, UNICEF can support governments in establishing and strengthening robust systems of birth registration within civil registration, which permit free, universal and timely registration and offer inclusive services that will reach marginalized children.

How to use this handbook

This handbook provides those working on birth registration with the background, general principles and programming process. The guide is divided into three main chapters:

Understanding birth registration in the context of civil registration sets the scene for the rest of the guide, discussing why birth registration matters in the lives of children. It provides an overview of what birth registration is and the international framework that governs its implementation. It discusses

the principles of birth registration and the registration process from notification to certification. It also provides some basic data on birth registration and an overview of other organizations engaged in this area.

Situation analysis: Understanding the programme task sets out an 8-step approach to conducting an analysis of the birth registration situation in the country, leading to the analysis of possible directions for UNICEF support. It starts with an analysis of the general conditions in the country that impact on civil registration supply and demand. It includes guidance on carrying out an assessment of the current standing on birth registration, and an organizational and legal review as well as government policy directions. It also delves specifically into communication for development options, and analysis of possibilities and gaps in the birth registration process.

Programming for birth registration in the context of civil registration gives guidance on how to translate the outcomes of the situation analysis into birth registration programmes. It includes a discussion on birth registration programming within civil registration and some specific intervention areas that are particularly relevant to UNICEF's strengths and mandate, including civil registration management, organization and resources; and the use of ICT and interoperability with other sectors such as health. It also reviews the possibilities that communication for development programmes offer and some of the national and international coalition activities, including work with parliamentarians. The Annexes provide some further detailed information, including a glossary of terms necessary for working in this area.

1

UNDERSTANDING BIRTH REGISTRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

1.0   BIRTH REGISTRATION AND WHY IT MATTERS

What is birth registration?

The right of a child to birth registration and to a name and nationality is enshrined in international human rights law through the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other treaties.

> Birth registration is the continuous, permanent and universal recording, within the civil registry, of the occurrence and characteristics of births in accordance with the legal requirements of a country.[3]

Birth registration is the official recording of a child's birth by the State. It is a permanent and official record of a child's existence. Birth registration is part of an effective civil registration system that acknowledges the person's existence before the law, establishes family ties and tracks the major events of an individual's life, from live birth to marriage and death.

Why birth registration matters

Although birth registration is almost complete in all developed countries,[4] the lack of progress on civil registration in many developing countries means that global inequalities in birth registration are now extreme. The births of approximately 230 million children under the age of 5 have not been registered. Of these, around 85 million are in sub-Saharan Africa, 135 million in Asia (east and south Asia and the Pacific) and the remainder in the rest of the world.[5] But does this matter in their lives?

Birth registration may signify the beginning of the legal contract between the individual and the State known as citizenship. Birth registration serves as important proof of the place of birth and parentage, and while birth registration does not in itself confer citizenship upon the child, it is often essential for its acquisition based on each country's laws. Birth registration may also be vital for confirmation of nationality[6] following tumultuous events such as armed conflict and situations of state succession. The registration of births and acquisition of citizenship are distinct processes, however birth registration serves as important proof of the facts that form the basis for conferral of citizenship

at birth. More specifically it establishes a legal record of where the child was born and who his or her parents are and thus whether the child can acquire citizenship on the basis of place of birth *(jus soli)* or descent *(jus sanguinis)*.

Children who are not registered are excluded from the benefits of citizenship in ways that vary between countries. A birth certificate may be required to obtain access to basic services such as health and education, and it can also help to protect children from situations of exploitation and violence, such as child marriage and child labour, and achieve convictions against those who have abused a child.

> "I never thought birth registration was so important.... After becoming registered, my life changed as they say in TV commercials... (since then) the doctors have carried out many treatments on the scar on my hand."
>
> *An 11-year-old boy in Colombia who was initially denied treatment to bad scarring on his hand.*

> "If only I had registered my daughter at birth, I would have won the case. I would have protected her."
>
> *Mukasa, from Uganda, who tried to prove that his 13-year-old daughter was a child when she was sexually abused.[7]*

In adulthood, birth certificates may be needed for many purposes: to obtain social security or a job in the formal sector; to buy or prove the right to inherit property; to obtain identity cards; to vote; and to obtain a passport. The lack of a birth certificate can have a serious, cumulative, negative effect on people's life opportunities.

As well as providing the individual with legal proof of identity, birth registration also plays a crucial role in the generation of vital statistics.[8] Birth registration is part of national civil registration systems that also record marriages and deaths. Civil registration provides the demographic data that are needed by governments to track the size, differentials and trends of their populations.

When complete and accurate, civil registration facilitates democratic governance. It enables governments to develop policies and plans for basic service delivery and social and economic development that respond to the needs of different sectors of their populations. Through these mechanisms, civil registration facilitates the access of both children and adults to protection under the law, to services and entitlements and to social and economic opportunities, and can improve their ability to exercise their civil rights.

Why so many children are not registered

There are many barriers to birth registration. Parents may be unaware of its importance and may have other priorities, particularly if birth registration does not appear to be essential to their daily lives. There may be cultural barriers, such as when naming children traditionally takes place some time after birth or where names are traditionally changed frequently during childhood. Fear of the consequences of registering a birth may act as a deterrent in some States. In addition, procedures may be complicated, and may be discriminatory, for example against single mothers, people from ethnic minorities, or refugee children.

> "None among my seven brothers and sisters has a birth certificate. Our parents decided not to register our births until we are about 10 years old, as they do not want to waste time registering the births of babies who might die at any moment."[9]

> "In order to get a birth certificate I had to get a baptismal certificate!"

Community member, Bolivia.[10]

> "If the people talk mainly in Kichwa and don't pronounce well they treat them badly because they say they don't speak clearly and they don't explain things so that they can understand."

Community member, Ecuador.[11]

Some country governments do not regard birth registration as important when faced with a lack of resources and other pressing and competing priorities. History has shown, however, that a comprehensive identity registration system is necessary for social and economic development,[12] and is affordable even for low-income countries. Despite its importance in the measurement of development progress and the effectiveness of international aid (for example, towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals or MDGs), civil registration has not been given high priority in international assistance to developing countries, and civil registration development has stagnated over the last half-century in many countries.

The case for civil registration support

In comparison to typical country government capital and running expenditure, the investment required in civil registration is generally small.

But, while the investments required are manageable and the financial returns are substantial, there has been half a century of stagnation in civil registration systems in most sub-Saharan and about a dozen Asian countries (among which are some with very large populations), where registration rates can be less than 10 per cent. According to civil registrars, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, governments have not given sufficient budgetary priority to civil registration. But likely reasons for a lack of local political support are also that problems of civil registration have been misunderstood and that measures taken, such as legal changes, have failed to deliver results because they have been "the wrong solutions for the wrong problems." For example, deep-rooted problems have been responded to with incremental changes in organization and legal frameworks, or with backlog registration drives and awareness-raising campaigns. The consequent lack of tangible progress has left governments disillusioned about the feasibility of change.

Recognising the importance of civil registration development, international collaboration in a mix of formats is required to turn the tide. UNICEF's advocacy for domestic and international attention to civil registration improvement is essential.

1.1 BIRTH REGISTRATION AND THE GLOBAL RIGHTS AGENDA

Following the devastation of the two world wars, the international human rights framework was founded on the concepts of the dignity, worth, equality and inalienable rights of human beings. There is consensus within the human rights framework on the importance of the right to birth registration and to a name and nationality, and these rights are recognized in several of the core instruments.

The right to birth registration, a name and nationality

The right to a nationality was recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and was expanded in the treaties that followed. The 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness gives effect to the right to a nationality by setting out rules for granting of nationality to those who are born within a State's territory or abroad to one who is a national and who would otherwise be stateless, as well as to abandoned children. The right of the child to a name and nationality from birth was contained in Principle 3 of the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which formed the basis for Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989.

> ### Use of the multiple references to birth registration in the international human rights framework for advocacy
>
> The multiple references to the right to birth registration in the international human rights instruments can be used for advocacy purposes. Advocacy by UNICEF contributed to Thailand's dropping its reservation to article 7 of the CRC in 2010, using the argument that Thailand was also party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which committed it to birth registration for all children within its jurisdiction.[13]

UNICEF's seminal article in *The Progress of Nations 1998* highlighted birth registration as the 'first right' on which access to other rights was dependent, and gave impetus to UNICEF's current work on birth registration. UNICEF bases its birth registration work principally on articles 7 and 8 of the CRC, which give every child the right to be registered at birth by the State within whose jurisdiction the child was born, the right to a name and nationality and to the preservation of his or her identity.

Main international human rights instruments that support the right of the child to birth registration, a name and nationality[14]

International instruments

1948:   Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 15

1961:   Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, articles 1-4

1965:   International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, article 5(d)(iii)

1966:   International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 24

1979:   Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, article 9

1989:   The Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 7-8

1990:   International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, article 29.

2006:   Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 18

Regional instruments

1969:   American Convention on Human Rights, article 20

1990:   African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, article 6

1997:   European Convention on Nationality, articles 4 and 6.

2004:   Arab Charter on Human Rights, article 29

2005:   Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam, article 7

2006:   Council of Europe Convention on the Avoidance of Statelessness in Relation to State Succession, article 2

Articles 7 and 8 of the CRC

Article 7

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

Article 8

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.

2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to speedily re-establishing his or her identity.

There are other articles of the CRC that should be used to inform the way in which the right to birth registration should be administered.

Articles of the CRC that inform the way birth registration should be administered[15]

Article 1: Definition of the child

Article 2: Non-discrimination

Article 3: Best interests of the child

Articles 4, 42, 44(6): General measures of implementation

There are many other provisions of the CRC that may require birth registration for their fulfilment. Birth registration by itself does not guarantee children's fulfilment of their other rights. This also depends on the existence of effective, inclusive systems of child protection, health, education, social welfare, justice, and social and economic development. Without birth certificates, however, a child and his or her family are less likely to be able to realize many of their social, economic and civil rights.[16]

Some of the articles of the CRC that may require birth registration for their fulfilment

Article 9: Separation from parents

Article 10: Entering or leaving countries for family preservation

Article 19: Protection from all forms of violence

Article 21: Adoption

Article 24: Right to health and health services

Article 28: Right to education

Article 32: Child labour

Article 34: Sexual exploitation of children

Article 35: Prevention of abduction, sale and trafficking

Article 38: Protection of children affected by armed conflict

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The Committee on the Rights of the Child addressed the issue of birth registration in its General Comment No. 7 on Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood.[17] The Committee stated that comprehensive services for early childhood should begin at birth. It noted that provision of registration for all children at birth is still a major challenge in many countries and regions. This can impact negatively on a child's sense of personal identity, and children may be denied entitlements to basic health, education and social welfare. As a first step in ensuring rights to survival, development and access to quality services for all children (article 6), the Committee recommended that States parties take all necessary measures to ensure that all children are registered at birth.

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) is responsible for civil registration standards, including those for birth registration. While adhering to these standards, the Committee on the Rights of the Child formulated what have become de facto standards for UNICEF in its General Comment No. 7 (see the box on the following page).

The international development agenda and birth registration

The United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000[19] reaffirmed the principles and values under which the United Nations was founded, and pledged to free people from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations. This pledge was transformed into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the achievement of which by 2015 has been the leading international development objective.

Birth registration is necessary for achievement of international development goals such as the MDGs. The first MDG is concerned with the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. One econometric study on under-registration of births in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Nicaragua concluded that action to reduce under-registration is central to poverty reduction as "children and adults without legal identity are often denied access to health, education, housing, nutrition and many other benefits guaranteed by public poverty reduction policies."[20]

Birth registration is also necessary as one component of an effective civil registration system that is required to provide the vital statistics that are necessary to accurately measure progress towards the achievement of international development goals.[21] The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness has highlighted the need for better statistics to enable governments and international organizations to improve their accountability for development aid.[22] The box below shows the MDGs, Targets and Indicators that require the use of vital statistics for their measurement.

Millennium Development Goals that require the use of vital statistics derived from civil registration for their measurement		
Goals	**Target**	**Indicators**
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.	6. Net enrolment rates in primary education
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	Target 5: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.	13. Under-five mortality rate 14. Infant mortality rate 15. Proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.	21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria 23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis

Source: Adapted from Harbitz, Mia, and Bettina Boekle-Giuffrida, 2009.

Recent reports have drawn attention to the growing inequalities both within and between countries that are impeding the achievement of the MDGs.[23] Inequality in birth registration rates compounds inequalities in access to basic services, protection and economic opportunity.[24] UNICEF is committed to promoting an equitable approach to the achievement of the MDGs and to the achievement of future development agendas (e.g. the post-2015 development agenda) through its child rights- based work. Supporting birth registration is a powerful way of furthering equality, as part of a holistic strategy to promote the wider realization of children's rights.

The achievement of the vision set out for sustainable development at the Rio Summit[25] in 2012, which included aspirations for social and economic development, such as poverty reduction, health, education, employment and gender equality, will, like the MDGs, be dependent on effective civil registration systems for its achievement and monitoring. The recognition of the importance of birth registration for good governance is also reflected in the inclusion of birth registration as one of the recommended target indicators in the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Under Goal 10 – Ensure Good Governance and Effective Institutions – the target 'Provide free and universal legal identity, such as birth registrations' is identified.[26]

1.2 BIRTH REGISTRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

Birth registration as part of civil registration

Birth is one of the main vital events recorded within a comprehensive civil registration system. Improvements in birth registration are rarely possible unless the civil registration system as a whole is improved.

In countries with relatively undeveloped civil registration systems, the main focus of activity is the registration of births (and events related to birth registration such as legitimation, recognition and adoption). Even though registration of deaths and marriages may be provided for by law, the rate of registration of these events is generally much lower in developing countries.[27] Improving civil registration systems in these countries will thus have a relatively large impact on birth registration, as this is one of the main activities of the civil registration function.

Defining civil registration

The most recent, "official" definitions of civil registration – those from UNSD – are shown in the text box below. The two definitions complement one another: The first mentions the characteristics of civil registration (continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal), while the second provides detail on civil registration processes (gathering, screening, documenting, etc.).

Civil registration – definition 1[28]

Civil registration is the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events in accordance with the legal requirements of a country, carried out primarily for the purpose of establishing the legal documents provided for by law.

Civil registration – definition 2[29]

Civil registration is a state-run public institution that serves both general and individual interests by (a system of) gathering, screening, documenting, filing, safekeeping, correcting, updating and certifying the occurrence of vital events and their characteristics as they relate to the civil status of individuals, and as they affect them and their families, and by providing the official, permanent record of their existence, identity and personal and family circumstances.[30]

The main vital events recorded within civil registration systems are: *live births, adoptions, legitimations, recognitions; deaths* and *fetal deaths;* and *marriages, divorces, separations* and *annulments of marriage*. The registration of vital events determines the civil status of individuals and their capacity to act within the legal system of a country. Vital events occurring to an individual will also often have legal implications for other individuals.

The characteristics of civil registration

Civil registration is, by definition, characterized as *continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal*. Other important characteristics of civil registration include the confidentiality of personal information and the timeliness and accuracy of civil registration records, and that it remain under central control.

Continuity, permanence and availability

These are achieved through the functioning of an institution with stability and permanence, mandated by civil registration law. Civil registration records should be permanent records, that is, they need to be kept forever.[31] The availability of records is compromised when retrieval is hard or impossible because of poor archiving practice, damage through wear and tear, or outright loss of records so that they cannot be produced for making certified extracts.[32] The availability of records also depends on whether it is possible to access records and obtain extracts in an office other than that where the vital event was registered.

Compulsoriness

Ensuring all events are registered is required for the system to be effective, and therefore needs to be laid down by law.[33] UNSD acknowledges that enforcement may be difficult, especially when incentives for civil registration are weak or non-existent.[34] The compulsory nature of civil registration may be seen as being in conflict with birth registration as a child right, and under very special circumstances this could be in conflict with the best interest of the child, for example when it would lead to discrimination or stigmatization of the child (see text box on page 19).[35]

Compulsory birth registration

UNSD principles for civil registration, including birth registration, have included that of compulsoriness since they were first developed by the Statistical Commission and approved by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in 1953.[36] UNSD has maintained this principle to date. In one of its latest publications it states:

"Legislation that makes registration compulsory is the best way to ensure continuous, permanent recording of vital events. Such legislation should provide sanctions to ensure fulfilment of the requirements of the registration system. Failure to register should be punishable by law. Since penalties for failure to comply with registration laws may not always be invoked, and penalties may also be a deterrent to registration, it is imperative to have a legal basis for prosecution if general compliance with the registration law is to be achieved."[37]

UNSD is cognizant of the problems that arise when the conditions are not in place for the population to be able to exert their right to register vital events.[38] It notes that most countries have basic laws that make registration compulsory, but that in many cases inadequate administrative systems make it difficult to produce complete records.

With regard to the compulsory nature of civil registration, the Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child states the following:[39]

"Universal registration requires that domestic law makes registration a compulsory duty both of the parents and of the relevant administrative authorities. Universal plainly means all children born within the State, irrespective of their nationality."

The Handbook refers to the commendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child of actions that governments have taken to reduce the risks that certain groups may face in being registered by eliminating information on birth certificates that may lead to discrimination, such as ethnicity.

But it also mentions: *"The Committee has concluded that the imposition of fines or other sanctions on parents for failing to register their children is likely to be counter-productive."*

The latter consideration is expressed in very much the same way in virtually every handbook on civil registration issued by UNSD.

In conclusion: while the principle of the compulsory nature of civil registration is recognized, for UNICEF, in the case of birth registration, it is only when the other principles of confidentiality and universality are in place that this principle of compulsory would apply to birth registration. Specific attention must be paid to ensuring that there are no discriminatory practices, and that birth registration is at no cost, including for late registration. All organizations, UNSD, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF emphasize that the standard should be used with caution.

Universal coverage

This is in the interest of individuals and the State both for the "normal functioning" of the State, and for the use of data from the civil registration system for statistical purposes. Universal coverage also accounts for the principle of non-discrimination – every person should be registered regardless of their race, religion, national origin, sex or any other trait, and the use of such registration should also maintain the principle of non-discrimination. Some of the most important contributions civil registration makes to the normal functioning of society that depend on universal coverage are:[40]

- Establishing the identity of all persons (essential for individual rights and the rule of law)
- Family organization (the family being the fundamental building block of society)
- Generating of vital statistics for the study and understanding of social and economic phenomena
- Planning for social sector programming, such as protection, health, housing and education.

A universal and well-maintained civil registration system is the single best source of information on vital events for administrative, demographic and epidemiological purposes.[41] When coverage is not complete, data from civil registration are skewed towards those with higher incomes and better education and towards urban populations (which are generally richer and better educated) because they are over-represented among those registered.[42] To be universal, UNICEF advocates for birth registration to be without charge. The principle that all registration, including late registrations, be free of charge is recognized in General Assembly resolution A/HRC/22/L.14/Rev.1, 2011, and the General Assembly resolution 'Human Rights in the Administration of Justice', 2012.

It is recognized that in countries in which civil registration is lacking, deficient or insufficiently reliable, other methods of demographic data collection can be used to gather information on the incidence of vital events and to estimate or calculate vital rates; such methods include population censuses, and household and demographic sample surveys.[43]

Costs of registration and certificates

To reach universal birth registration UNICEF advocates that birth registration should be free at any time. Several UN bodies have adopted resolutions or statements that birth registration should be free – see, for example, General Assembly resolution A/HRC/22/L.14/Rev.1 (2011), and the General Assembly resolution 'Human Rights in the Administration of Justice' (2012). UNICEF's Implementation handbook for the CRC (2007) states that birth registration should be free, at least for the poor. It also states that fines or charges for late registration are counterproductive and a hindrance to birth registration. This is slightly different from the UNSD recommendation that when registration is within the time period prescribed by registration law no fee should be charged for registering births. The same applies to marriage and death registration.

As the birth certificate is often required to secure other documents, UNICEF would recommend that the initial certificate be free. UNSD considers fees for extracts of the register (certificates) acceptable, and recommends a higher fee for certificates issued when registration is later than the prescribed period.

It should be kept in mind, however, that even when no fee is levied, birth registration or obtaining a certificate rarely is without cost; often there are costs for travel, costs for accommodation and costs of lost income.

UNICEF advocates that birth registration should be free, including late registration, and we recommend that the initial certificate also be at no cost.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality of individual data is dependent on the quality of management and organization of the registration office, compliance with rules and regulations, archiving practices, and the professional ethics and competence of civil registrars.

Some information obtained through civil registration processes (such as race, religion, birth out of wedlock) is highly sensitive and personal, and could be misused to instigate discrimination. It should therefore be kept confidential by law. Indeed, countries may have registration laws that intentionally rule out collecting sensitive information, for example, on ethnicity or race.

The information on a birth certificate does not need to be as complete as the information kept on a birth record, and can omit details that may be prejudicial to the individual. For UNSD Standard Birth Records and Birth Certificate, see Annex A.

Timeliness and accuracy

The accuracy of the information contained in the civil registration record – related to age, sex, parentage and the nationality of parents – has implications both for the rights and obligations of the individual.

It is preferable to allow only a short time period between a vital event and its registration because of problems of recall and the increasing likelihood of failure to report an event as time passes. Late registration because of extenuating circumstances can be allowed within a grace period (the UNSD recommendation is one year).[44] Delayed registration after the grace period may require age assessment and involvement of the courts. Such procedures may be so cumbersome that large numbers of the population remain unregistered.[45] There are a number of age assessment methodologies, however, that have been developed and are in use, including medical, physical, psychosocial and other forms of assessments.[46]

The period allowed between the occurrence and the obligatory registration of a vital event ("the prescribed *period by law*") **should be as short as possible**. For the reporting of deaths, public health considerations require immediate registration. For extenuating circumstances UNSD recommends that a grace period of up to one year may be allowed for birth registration. Registration after the prescribed period but within the grace period is called *late registration*. During the grace period the registration will still be within the authority of the registrar. Registration after expiry of the grace period is called **delayed registration.** Generally, delayed registration will require a judicial procedure and an age assessment.[47]

The impact of late registration could be a lesser degree of accuracy, but a greater number of births registered.[48] Evidence for the positive results of longer registration periods is lacking, however, and caution is advised in advocating for longer periods for registration.

Registering a birth

Notification of birth

The notifier is the individual (or institution) who in some countries is responsible by law for informing the registrar of the vital event. This report has no value other than as a control, and it cannot be turned into a legal registration record. It may lead the registrar to take steps towards creating such a legal record. The notification process is generally limited to live births, stillbirths and deaths. The notification role is usually played by health institutions and birth attendants, and in a limited number of cases a local government official such as a village chief.[49]

```
┌─────────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Declaration of birth   │ ◀┄┄┄┄┄  │   Notification of birth  │
│      by informant        │          │  (by hospital, midwife,  │
│                          │          │      village chief)      │
└─────────────────────────┘          └─────────────────────────┘
            │                                      │
            ▼                                      │
┌─────────────────────────┐                        │
│   Registration of birth  │ ◀┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┘
│     by civil registrar   │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│   Issuance of birth      │   │  Notification (additional       │
│    certificate by        │   │  requirements in some countries)│
│    civil registrar       │   │  Supplementary evidentiary      │
└─────────────────────────┘   │  documentation (e.g. hospital   │
                              │  attestation of birth) either   │
                              │  given to informant to present  │
                              │  to registrar or to civil       │
                              │  registrar directly.            │
                              └─────────────────────────────────┘
```
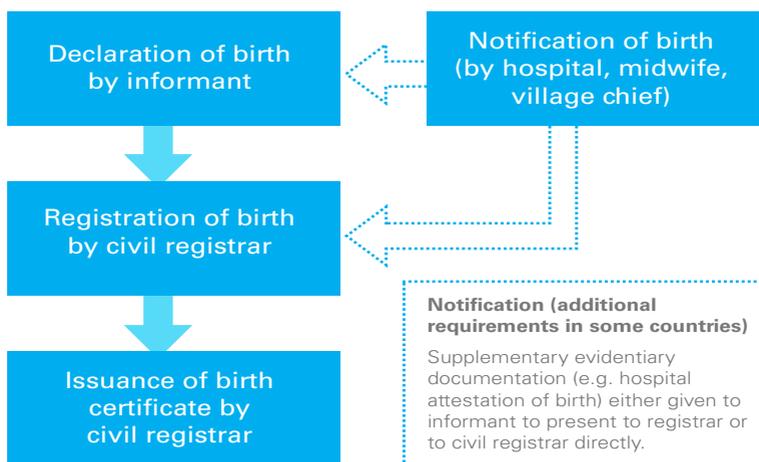
Declaration of birth by the informant

As a rule, civil registrars can legally register vital events only on the basis of an informant's verbal or written declaration of the event. The informant is the individual who, as required by law, reports to the local registrar the occurrence of the vital event, its characteristics, the persons directly concerned with the event and their characteristics.

UNSD recommends that in the case of (live) birth, in order of preference, the appropriate informants are: 1) The head of the institution (or designee) if the birth occurred in an institution, or 2) the mother, 3) the father, 4) the attendant at the delivery, 5) the nearest relative of the mother, and 6) any other adult person having knowledge of the facts.[50] The designation of informants needs to be included in the law. In a majority of countries one or both parents are the legal informants for live births. Recognition of the important role of the health sector led UNSD in 2001 to recommend that health staff should be the preferred primary informant, before the mother.[51] A number of countries now follow this recommendation.

The informant is required to prove her/his identity through documentation and/or a witness (or witnesses) before registration can take place. In the majority of countries the informant should report the event in the location where the vital event has occurred, but in some it is the place of usual residence of the mother, or the father.

Additional evidence required in some countries

The informant's declaration may have to be supplemented by documentary evidence – for example, a medical certification of birth from a hospital or a midwife. The informant must be able to supply accurate information for legal and statistical purposes. The documentary evidence of the event is generally more reliable than evidence provided by the informant, which should generally be considered supplementary (rather than sole or primary) proof of the event.

Registration of the birth

The registrar will make a birth record (an entry in the birth register), the completeness and accuracy of which will be checked before being signed by both the registrar and informant. For safety reasons it is recommended that a duplicate of the registration record is made and kept in another location.

The minimum information that should be included in a birth registration is: 1) the child's name at birth, 2) the child's sex, 3) the child's date and place of birth, 4) the parents' names and addresses, and 5) the parents' citizenship (note: not the child's citizenship). This information is important for the fulfilment of the legal role of birth registration. The information collected for the generation of vital statistics is often much more elaborate. See Annex A for more detail.

Issuance of the birth certificate

When a birth registration record has been created the registrar can issue a certificate of registration. A birth certificate is a certified extract from the birth registration; as such it is a document that proves the registration. A UNSD-recommended practice is that **birth certificates** contain some security features.[52] This is also reflected in the recommendation from INTERPOL's Second Counterfeit and Security Documents Working Group Meeting: "The base material should be a security substrate image using secure printing techniques and a unique identifier."[53] It also assumes that the base material is distributed in a secure manner for the further personalization process. This minimum level of security is deemed to be affordable, while also deterring risk of forgery.[54] Extensive biometrics are not required noting that current biometrics provide a weak link between infants and the certificate; this is in part the reasoning behind the above recommendation. Instead, scarce resources are better spent on improving the quality of registers.[55] Further, of prime importance—and recommended practice—is that **vital records** are **kept in a secure way** by the civil registry, and are readily available for the verification of birth certificates and the identity and civil status of individuals.

In order to promote the protection of children, deter any misuse of certificates, and for reasons of security and confidentiality UNICEF recommends that the information recorded on the birth certificate is kept to a minimum (e.g. name, date of birth, place of birth). In some countries a distinction is made between a short-form ("abridged") and a long-form ("unabridged") birth certificate. The long form is more detailed and is often issued by the central registration office, while the short form is less detailed and is issued by a local registration office.

The difference between the birth certificate and the birth registration record

As the description of the birth registration process above will have made clear, there is an important difference between the birth certificate (or the extract that is provided to the individual) and the birth registration record that is kept by the registration office.

The birth certificate may contain the same information as the birth record, but this is not always the case. For example, information held on the birth record for statistical purposes is not always shown on the birth certificate. For example, the birth parents of an adopted child may not be shown on the birth certificate. Other data may also be collected at the same time as the birth is registered, for vital statistics, such as the child's weight, ability or health status, which are usually not transcribed on the certificate. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has commended good practice examples that protect a child's right to privacy: for example, Rwanda for not including ethnicity in new birth certificates and identity documents, and Belgium for allowing registration of single filiation from a mother in the case of an incestuous relationship.[56] A difference between record and certificate can also function as a means to assess the authenticity of the certificate.[57]

The record rather than the extract is the basis of the legal identity of individuals, so it is important that the records are permanent and maintained in good condition, including provisions to ensure the physical integrity of paper documents, and that files and records are maintained in a well-archived, secure and ordered manner.

Civil registration, identity document systems and population registry

In recent years, national identity document (ID) systems have been initiated or upgraded in many countries, often introducing IDs with advanced biometric features.[58] This sometimes takes place prior to elections when national IDs serve as proof of identity and eligibility to vote. Biometric voter ID systems have also been rolled out in both rich and poor countries, although less commonly than ID systems. When a person is older, it is possible, through biometrics, to tie an individual to this ID document, something that is not possible with a child. IDs that are portable and difficult to counterfeit do have tangible advantages over birth certificates, hence their popularity.

ID systems that have been introduced in developing countries involve issuing identity documents to the **adult population**. Their expansion has taken place during a time in which there has been little improvement in birth registration, thus by contrast **leaving much of the childhood population without identity documentation.**

Enrolment in ID systems, which is often conducted through campaigns, depends on identity information obtained from other sources ('breeder' documents), such as birth certificates.[59] Determination of the identity and assessment of the age of an adult without a verifiable birth record is much more costly and less accurate than establishing the identity of a newborn. Introducing ID systems for the adult population without improving birth registration coverage and the quality of the civil registration system as a whole is, therefore, an inefficient approach and neglects children's rights laid out in articles 7 and 8 of the CRC.

Civil registers have a close interrelationship with population registers that are the basis for the issuance of IDs and unique identity numbers. Civil registers are a mechanism for the continuous recording of selected information **pertaining to vital events (births, deaths, etc.) where they occur.** Civil registration is the most cost-effective way to establish and record the civil status of individuals. Civil registers do not keep track of migration, i.e. when people move house, but civil registration records play a crucial role in continuously updating and maintaining population registers.

The population register, which should be built on the foundation of the civil register, is a mechanism for the continuous recording of selected information pertaining to **each member of the resident population of a country or area,** making it possible to determine up-to-date information about the size and characteristics of the population at selected points in time. The main uses of

population registers are to provide reliable information for various government tasks, such as programme planning, budgeting and taxation, for issuing unique personal identification numbers, for establishing the eligibility of individuals for voting, education, health, military service, social insurance and welfare and pensions, and for police and judicial references. They are also used for population estimation, census planning and census evaluation, and as a sample frame for household surveys.

Birth registration, as the key 'breeder document', within the context of civil registration, is a sound basis for the integration with other registration systems such as population registers and national ID systems. It may also encourage efficient resource use.

A short world history of civil registration and vital statistics

Population registration or population census as means to obtain data on the population can be clearly associated with important phases in the history of a country or a civilization. The emperor Qin, who unified seven empires into present-day China (as well as building the Great Wall and creating the Terracotta Army for his afterlife), ruled for only 14 years (221–207 BC) but introduced the "hokou" family registration system still used in China today. Chandragupta, in India, conducted its first population census around 300 BC. The Incas established the first civil (secular) registration system outside Asia during the 15th century. Secular systems of registration were also used in Ancient Egypt, Greece and the Roman Republic.

Generally these systems of civil registration and population census were for the purpose of military recruitment or revenue. Registration systems used by churches in Europe were also primarily meant for the administration of church revenue obtained for officiating baptisms, marriage and burial ceremonies. These registration systems laid the basis for later secular registration at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century. In France and other parts of Europe, national registration systems were established through the Code Napoléon of 1792. In England the General Register Office was established in 1836.

Civil registration systems have been "exported" from the Old World (Europe) to the Americas, parts of Asia, and Africa (with Egypt being a special case as earlier it had an elaborate registration system under Ramses II, circa 1250 BC). Asia has both "home-grown" systems such as the ones in China, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand, as well as imported European systems.

Data on birth registration completeness

Data on the completeness of birth and death registration are published by UNSD on an on-going basis. According to UNSD, progress has been made in registration coverage over the past 60 years in some countries, but there are still serious deficiencies. In September 2012 only 60 per cent of 230 countries and areas had complete birth registration, and only 47 per cent of countries had complete registration for deaths.[60]

Regional data were published in a series of articles in the Lancet in 2007 and reproduced in the table below.[61] The table shows the percentage of the population living in countries with complete[62] birth registration by region.

Table 1: Percentage of population living in countries with complete civil registration systems, by WHO region

	Deaths				Births			
	1965-74	1975-84	1985-94	1995-2004	1965-74	1975-84	1985-94	1995-2004
Total	**27%**	**25%**	**28%**	**26%**	**33%**	**31%**	**28%**	**30%**
Africa	2%	4%	2%	7%	7%	7%	9%	5%
Americas	69%	66%	64%	61%	58%	55%	53%	53%
Eastern Mediterranean	17%	21%	15%	1%	21%	25%	17%	42%
Europe	62%	61%	92%	86%	95%	94%	93%	92%
South-East Asia	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Western Pacific	12%	11%	10%	13%	12%	14%	13%	18%

Source: *Lancet,* vol. 370, 10 November 2007. Based on UNSD *Demographic Yearbook* data. Here "complete" means that at least 90 per cent of events (births or deaths) are registered by the system.

The data show that during the periods 1965 to 1974 and 1995 to 2004, only 33 per cent and 30 per cent respectively of the world's population lived in countries with complete birth registration. Thus, the situation may have worsened between these two periods. The most likely reason is that in countries with incomplete birth registration, registration has not kept up with population growth.[63] Regions with the lowest percentages of population in countries with complete birth registration are South-East Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Western Pacific (including China). These data also show that death registration coverage is even lower than birth registration coverage.

Using MICS and DHS data

Data on birth registration are mainly available for low- and middle-income countries through the UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and the USAID-supported Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). MICS is a household survey programme developed by UNICEF to assist countries in collecting and analysing data on the situation of children and women. DHS surveys collect data on a variety of topics. Data on birth registration derived from MICS and DHS refer to the percentage of children under the age of 5 (0 to 59 months) whose birth was registered at the time of the survey and differ from those published by UNSD.

DHS and MICS	UNSD
The proportion of children aged 0–59 months whose birth is registered.	The proportion of live births that are registered within the legal time frame during a year.[64]

Questions on birth registration in the MICS and DHS standard questionnaires are asked for all children aged 0 to 4 years, and the survey results are published by age group, e.g., for children 0–11 months old, 12–23 months old, etc. It is important, however, to remember that the CRC and UNSD principles clearly advocate registration immediately after birth.

Regional and global estimates on birth registration were first published by UNICEF in *The State of the World's Children 2006*, while prior SOWC publications included individual country data. The latest UNICEF publication on birth registration includes country statistics on birth registration for 161 countries.[65]

The figure below shows that approximately four in ten children under 5 have not had their birth registered. South Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa are the regions with the lowest birth registration level, at 39 and 38 per cent respectively, followed by West and Central Africa at 47 per cent.

Figure 1: Percentage of children under five years who are registered, by region
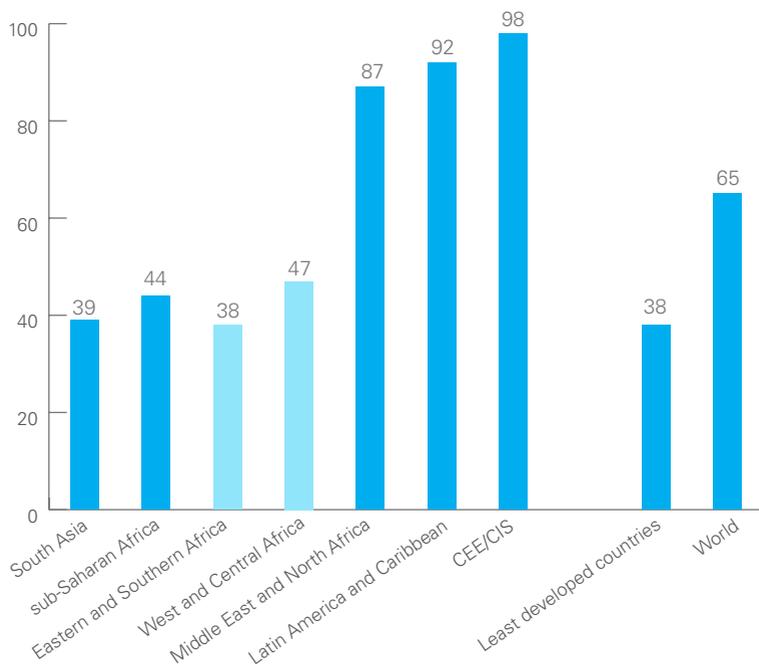
Note: Estimates are based on a subset of 158 countries covering 83% of the under-five population in the world. Regional estimates represent data from countries covering at least 50% of the regional population. Data coverage was insufficient to calculate a regional estimate for East Asia and the Pacific.

Source: United Nations Children's Fund, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration*, UNICEF, New York, 2013.

While there appears to be no difference in the numbers of girls and boys registered, differences are found when examining economic poverty and rural and urban households. In general, those living in rural areas are less likely to be registered than those in urban areas, and those children living in the highest quintile of the population are more likely to be registered than those living in the poorest households.

Table 2: Percentage of children under five years who are registered, by sex, place of residence and household wealth quintile and by region

	Boys	Girls	Children living urban areas	Children living in rural areas	Children of households in the poorest quintile	Children of households in the richest quintile
South Asia	39	39	53	34	24	65
Sub-Saharan Africa	42	41	61	35	26	63
West and Central Africa	48	47	64	40	27	71
Eastern and Southern Africa	32	32	49	29	24	50
Middle East and North Africa	88	87	95	78	76	94
Latin America and the Caribbean	-	-	96	88	-	-
CEE/CIS	98	97	98	97	96	99
Least developed countries	38	38	54	34	28	55
World	63	63	80	51	51	79

Notes: Regional estimates represent data from countries covering at least 50% of the regional population. Data coverage was insufficient to calculate regional estimates for the East Asia and Pacific region and by sex and household wealth quintile for the Latin America and Caribbean region. Figures in the table cannot be directly compared with those presented in Figure 2 because they are based on a different number of countries.

Source: United Nations Children's Fund, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration*, UNICEF, New York, 2013.

UNICEF's interest is especially in birth registration, but low levels of death and marriage registration (they are often substantially lower than birth registration) are also a concern. Poor death registration affects the quality of data on mortality, including perinatal mortality. Low levels of marriage registration have an impact on the legal status of partners, on rights to inheritance for partners and offspring, and may hide child marriages.

National income as an indicator of expected birth registration coverage

National income per capita is an important determinant of the civil registration coverage rate within a country. As a general rule civil registration improves with economic development. Unusually high or low rates for a given level of national income signify that other factors impact on the level of registration. For example, island countries tend to show relatively good registration rates because of the importance of communication with and travel to the outside world, and hence the requirement for travel documents and systems for the issuance of identity documents to inhabitants.

Birth registration coverage is close to 100 per cent in all high-income countries – those with a gross national income (GNI) per capita above US$12,616. Figure 2 shows the 'scatter' for birth registration rates and national income per capita for 96 middle- and low-income countries. In general, as the figure illustrates, the level of income in a country does not determine whether a country can achieve complete registration.

Birth registration rates in countries with an income above $6,000 GNI per capita: The figure on the following page shows that when national income is above $6,000 GNI per capita a country is very likely to have a birth registration rate above 90 per cent. A few exceptional countries with an income above this level have low registration rates.

Birth registration rates in countries with an income below $6,000 GNI per capita: The figure also shows that birth registration rates are variable in countries with a per capita income below $6,000, some having complete coverage and others very low coverage. In other words, a country can realize high birth registration rates with a low level of GNI per capita.[66]

Figure 2: Birth registration rates and gross national income per capita, in selected low and middle income countries
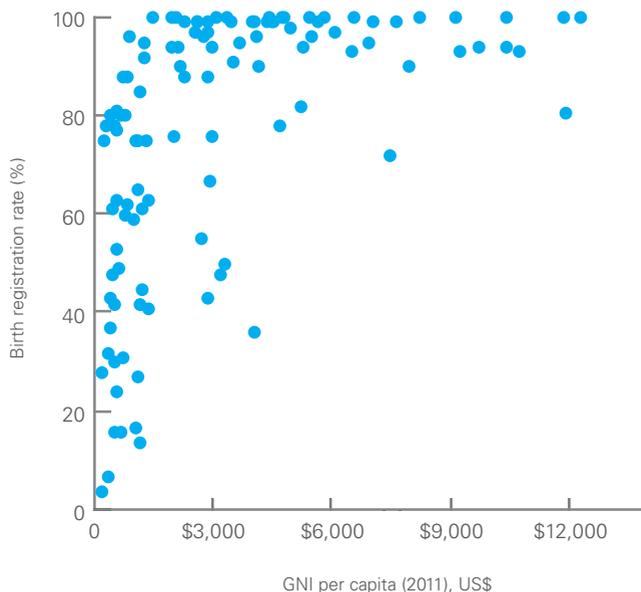
GNI per capita (2011), US$

Source: United Nations Children's Fund, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration*, UNICEF, New York, 2013.

At the same time, the data below show a general increase in the birth registration rate as national income increases, from an average of 32 per cent in low-income countries and 49 per cent in lower-middle-income countries to 94 per cent in upper-middle-income countries. In the low-income group the birth registration rate is very variable. The high standard deviation shows that the rate can be well below or above the average of 32 per cent. When countries graduate into the high-income group they are much less likely to have low birth registration rates.

Table 3: Birth registration rate averages by country income groups

Income Group [1)	Number of Countries	Population Total (Millions)	Weighted Average Birth Registration Rate [2)	Standard Deviation as Percentage of Birth Registration Rate
Low-income countries GNI pc US$1,005 or less	30 [3)	695	**32%**	78%
Lower-middle-income countries GNI pc US$1,006–US$3,975	45 [4)	2,408	**49%**	45%
Upper-middle-income countries GNI pc US$3,976–US$12,275	27 [5)	703	**94%**	5%
Total	102	3,806	**51%**	40%

Source: World Bank; *The State of the World's Children 2012*, UNICEF, New York. For notes see Annex B.

The reason for the more consistent improvement in civil registration rates in middle-income countries is that an increasing degree of sophistication in civil registration and an intensified need for personal identification appears to go hand in hand with economic development.[67] In most countries, and especially those in the low-income group, this is also reflected in the higher birth registration rates of the wealthiest, the better-educated and the urban population.[68] The increase in national birth registration rates with income is both the result of increased demand as well as the result of improved 'supply', as governments with higher GNI per capita have more resources to spend on government services, including civil registration.

The quality of civil registration

The collection of quantitative data on birth registration over the years has greatly improved our knowledge of where the problem of low birth registration is most serious. To focus solely on birth registration **rates** is dangerous, however, as it distracts from the need to assess and promote the **quality** of civil registration. For example, when registration rates are improved by a campaign but vital records are of poor quality, with content errors and serious deficiencies in preservation, little if anything may have been gained.

The quality of civil registration depends on the civil registration characteristics of **continuity, permanence, confidentiality, timeliness** and **accuracy** that have been discussed in Section 1.2. However, there is much less data on the status of the quality of civil registration services globally than on birth registration rates.

In countries with low registration rates the quality of registration is also likely to be problematic, with record keeping, as shown in the photograph below, often being of worrying quality. Digitization of paper-based and handwritten civil registration systems is a positive advancement as it may greatly enhance the possibility of reducing content error through better controls and allows for data and extracts to be available in a more timely manner.

Rates – but what about records?

© UNICEF/NYHQ2010-1029/Olivier Asselin

Birth certificates are piled on a desk in the Lumley Government Hospital in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone.

Inequality in birth registration rates

As noted previously, a high degree of **inequality** is reflected in birth registration rates. In the least developed countries rates are significantly better for urban populations than for people in rural areas, while the rates for the people in the richest quintile are twice those for the poorest 20 per cent.[69] Urban/rural differences converge as a country's national income increases.[70] It is probable that with urbanization a growing gap opens up between the 'haves' within cities (being registered) and the 'have-nots' (being undocumented).

In 2005 UNICEF published a statistical analysis of registration rates and their association with certain family and child characteristics.[71] While it does not prove a causal link, the study showed, for example, that the higher the mother's education, the higher the birth registration rate of her children. This is again confirmed in the 2013 UNICEF study.[72] Quantitative analysis shows that the cost of registration (out-of-pocket and indirect) and distance to the registration office are the factors most critical to whether people register their children.[73]

Universal registration coverage is possible at low levels of socio-economic development.[74] However, inequality in registration generally declines with socio-economic development and the evolution of the civil registration system, through which cost and distance barriers are overcome and awareness increases among less affluent rural populations. Communicating to the population the tangible incentives for registration may be an essential way to reduce the inequalities in registration.

Gender differences

In civil registration differences in rates by sex are minimal. Gender inequality works in an indirect way. Many countries have a bias towards the nationality of fathers in determining the nationality of the child.[75] Children born out of wedlock to single mothers or with a father absent for work may not be registered, irrespective of whether the child is a boy or girl, due to discrimination against the mother or in an attempt to avoid potential future legal impediments for the child. Non-registration affects not just the children but may also affect the potential for them to register their children.

Registration of children from marginalized groups in Sri Lanka[76]

In Sri Lanka, The NGO Plan International identified that despite the country's high national registration rates (96 per cent) increased efforts were needed to target specific groups with low registration rates –internally displaced people (IDP), refugee returnees, families living and working on the streets, Roma and other ethnic groups such as *Veddahs, Rodi* (low-caste) people, and tea plantation workers – in order to ensure that these groups were not excluded. A study of more than 1,400 children was undertaken, including those living in IDP camps, refugee returnees previously displaced by war, children living on tea plantations and on the streets. The birth registration of these children indicated an overall registration rate of 68 per cent. By group, the breakdown shows 82 per cent registered among IDPs, 44 per cent among refugee returnees, 84 per cent of children on estates and 37 per cent of children living and working on the streets. The study also looked at a sample of children from three vulnerable and marginalized groups: the *Veddahs, Rodi* and Roma. Of these groups, parents claimed that 76 per cent of their children were registered, with the *Rodi* highest at 97 per cent, *Veddahs at* 74 per cent and Roma the lowest at 61 per cent.

The main reasons cited by respondents who failed to obtain birth certificates were the following: They were unable to apply for registration, they failed to receive certificates after submitting applications, they simply were unaware, they did not apply, or were not interested. For those eligible persons who did not hold a Sri Lankan National Identity Card, more than 31 per cent noted that the absence of a birth certificate was the main reason why they did not hold identification.

Marginalized children

Registration rates are generally lower than average for vulnerable children, including: urban slum-dwelling children; children from minority groups, migrant, refugee and IDP populations; children who are stateless, disabled, or orphaned; and children born during or just after wars or natural disasters.

Birth registration, statelessness and refugees

There is a growing discord between many governments and their citizens in terms of granting nationality. Governments are moving towards a stricter application of *jus sanguinis* (the granting of citizenship on the basis of the citizenship of parents), which is often difficult to prove when parents are undocumented. *Jus solis* (the granting by governments of citizenship and/or nationality to individuals born within their territory) also does not take into account traditional patterns of mobility that are still a way of life for many in Africa and in parts of Asia.[77] Strict application of nationality law is found in many African and Asian countries, affecting minorities whose habitat traditionally straddles political borders, or who have fled from violent treatment or political unrest in their "official" home area. Other States have placed limits on conferral of nationality to children born abroad. Such limitations are not inherently problematic if the children concerned are not left stateless. The 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness strikes a balance between the various approaches to acquisition of nationality by children, thereby avoiding the problem of statelessness.

In many countries, civil registration is confined to nationals so that government services are available to them only. When people are denied nationality, even when it is their right, this may create serious conflicts when lack of birth registration leads to denial of nationality. On the other hand, addressing peoples' right to civil registration may help prevent conflict.[78]

Children (and adults) without a nationality (i.e. nationality in the legal sense, or citizenship) are the **de jure stateless. De facto statelessness** occurs when an irregular immigration status renders people stateless – stateless in the sense that despite having a nationality, they cannot turn to the State in which they live for protection or assistance. **Effectively stateless** children are those who have both a nationality and legal status but – typically because their birth is not registered – they cannot prove either their nationality or their legal identity.

Civil registration and citizenship

Article 7 of the CRC speaks of the right to birth registration, a name and nationality. The UNSD handbook on the legal framework for civil registration states that all births in a country should be registered, but it also states:

"It is desirable that civil registration should be seen as an important instrument of proof with respect to nationality, because civil registration gives credence to some of the basic requirements for the initial attribution of nationality [...] through the actual entry of the birth of the individual concerned, since it records place of birth – *jus solis* – and filiation – *jus sanguinis* – which, although not based solely on the entry of birth, will usually be accredited upon presentation of the pertinent record […] or, alternatively, upon presentation of the marriage certificate of the parents.[79]

UNHCR is successful in registering refugees, and does so on an individual, case-by-case basis but this does not replace birth registration. For the under-registration of any group the best and only long-lasting response is to support the strengthening of the civil registration system in a generic way, at the same time as being aware of any vulnerable group that may have difficulty accessing the registration. The better the civil registration authority manages routine registration the better will be its capacity to register births universally.

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and birth registration

UNHCR has developed a Protection Framework for Children[80] aligned to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One of the six goals in the Framework for Children commits the organization to ensuring that girls and boys obtain legal documentation and have access to birth registration and birth certificates. Promotion of birth registration is in line with UNHCR's overall efforts to strengthen child protection systems and to ensure access for children under its mandate to national child protection systems.

UNHCR therefore advocates with governments to ensure that children falling under its mandate have non-discriminatory access to national birth registration systems and that they are issued birth certificates irrespective of the nationality, migration and residence status of their parents. UNHCR's Executive Committee highlighted in a recent Conclusion the importance of civil registration and in particular birth registration for refugees. The Conclusion urged States to ensure that every child is registered immediately after birth without discrimination of any kind.[81]

UNHCR also has a role to directly address obstacles to birth registration – for example, if refugee and displaced populations are located in remote and inaccessible areas, UNHCR can facilitate access of civil registration officials to these populations. Sometimes these populations will require sensitization to the importance of birth registration, and UNHCR can work with civil registration authorities to clarify and facilitate procedures that allow for late registration.

As refugee and vulnerable populations often tend to be particularly vulnerable to protection risks, having proper documentation, including birth certificates, is a key intervention to strengthen protection of children from these communities. For refugees born in countries of asylum, a birth certificate can document their linkage to the country of origin. Having a birth certificate is also important to facilitate voluntary repatriation and reintegration should there be an opportunity for refugees to return home.

UNCHR's work to advocate for birth registration for refugee children is also linked to its mandate to prevent and reduce statelessness.

1.4 INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR CIVIL REGISTRATION

The importance of birth registration to national and international interests

The impact of globalization is reaching ever wider segments of the population and national and international mobility, especially of the young, is increasing, giving rise to an expanding demand for identity documentation. This is happening in the context of low birth registration rates and movements of undocumented people across porous borders in many countries.

Birth certificates act as the key 'breeder document' for obtaining IDs and passports, but are often the weakest link in identity documentation as the birth certificate is not tied to the person, while documents produced when a person is older may be tied to the person (e.g. picture, biometrics). This has led to an expanding market in counterfeit documents that poses a threat to regional and global security. National and international interests in addressing the problems of civil registration are growing, explaining the active role of INTERPOL, Europol and the European Union – the last including its initiative of the Rabat process and partnership with Africa.[82]

The role of the international community in supporting national efforts

Recently there has been a greater focus in international aid policy on self-reliance, domestic resource mobilization, aid-effectiveness and good governance.[83] Civil registration (and ID) systems, by their nature, are a routine activity of government and therefore reliance on foreign support should be minimal. The donor community, however, can and should assist with advocacy and financial and technical assistance to achieve what can be complicated civil registration reform processes.

Civil registration and identity management are essential to ensuring good governance and therefore are in line with the outcome statement from the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) held by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2011. There is also real potential for South-South cooperation and for three-way cooperation. Countries in Latin America (for example Chile, Peru and Uruguay) as well as in Asia (for example Malaysia and Thailand), which have advanced civil registration and

identity management systems, offer an ideal learning ground for countries in need of civil registration reform.[84] That said, some of these same countries continue to try to achieve universal birth registration.

The international community has a particular role to play following natural disasters or conflict, during which civil records may be destroyed or the service interrupted, as has been the case in Côte d'Ivoire as a result of the civil war. The World Bank, for example, is supporting Côte d'Ivoire in its post-crisis reconstruction of the civil registration function (together with the European Union).[85] UNICEF is providing capacity building support, including equipment to the civil registrar as well as legal aid and direct support to unregistered children such that they can be registered and obtain a birth certificate. Such situations can be used as a starting point for modernizing the system, rather than solely re-establishing outdated methods.

Roles and responsibilities of international organizations for birth registration

International organizations have different mandates and expertise in relation to birth and civil registration. These need to be understood in order to develop the collaborative, multi-sectoral approach at national, regional and international levels that is essential for ensuring progress in achieving children's right to birth registration.

The United Nations

UNSD under the Department of Economic and Social Affairs within the Secretariat of the United Nations establishes the highest professional standards for all aspects of the generation of vital statistics and to ensure that concepts, definitions, classifications, sources, methods and procedures meet professional scientific standards and are transparent for users. In this way the UNSD mandate guides the work on civil registration and vital statistics in all countries.

UNSD has brought out eight handbooks on different aspects of civil registration and vital statistics that have been published in all six languages of the UN. They offer comprehensive guidance, including international standards in developing civil registration and vital statistics at the country level. *The Handbook on Training* has been used for the training of master trainers in many countries and is also a source book for self-learning.[86]

UNSD and the regional economic commissions, – such as the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) – and the World Health

Organization play an important role in providing technical assistance, although WHO's focus is in vital statistics rather than in the organizational and legal aspects of civil registration.

UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNHCR and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), are more focused on the rights implications of civil registration and provide technical and financial support to countries. UNICEF works in more than half of its programming countries to enhance the resource capacity of the civil registry to develop birth registration materials, reform policy and legal frameworks and promote synergies with other service areas. As children are increasingly crossing borders, UNICEF is also increasingly involved in cross-border policy discussions. UNDP and UNFPA include aid for civil registration and the issuance of national IDs within programmatic interventions in some countries.

UNHCR operates a registration system for asylum seekers and refugees, and also supports governments in developing similar registration systems.[87] These systems are not linked to civil registration, however. Besides this, UNHCR advocates for birth registration both globally and at country level, as UNHCR sees it as a tool to protect asylum-seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons and returnee populations. Birth registration is also linked to UNHCR's mandate to prevent statelessness because it establishes a legal record of place of birth and a child's parents, which are the facts most commonly leading to acquisition of nationality at birth.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is engaged, as is INTERPOL, in birth registration considering the use of the birth certificate as a 'breeder document' for obtaining a passport.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), founded in 1889, with members from 146 parliaments, could play an important role in nudging parliamentarians around the world to push for legal identity to be placed higher on the agenda of the executive branches of their countries. IPU and UNICEF have been partners for many years. In June 2013, UNICEF and IPU collaborated to bring together parliamentarians from Latin America and the Caribbean to discuss means of forwarding progress for birth registration in Latin America. IPU has also supported the process of country ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (see also section 3.2.5).

Theft of identity, trans-border crime, birth certificates and INTERPOL[88]

Every year countries invest enormous amounts of money to ensure that their travel documents are secure. Recent investments, such as including biometric data in passports to meet new standards set by the ICAO[89], have resulted in modern travel documents that are more difficult to forge or counterfeit than ever before. Merely increasing the security of the physical passport does not go far enough, however. Increasingly, criminals and associates of organized crime are using counterfeit or otherwise fraudulent birth certificates ('breeder documents') to obtain genuine passports issued under a false name.

Criminals target birth certificates because they incorporate fewer security features than other identity documents such as passports, national ID cards or even driver's licenses. Moreover, as national authorities recognize birth certificates as a prima facie claim to identity, the threat posed by birth certificate fraud is both immediate and dire.

Globalization and the increasing power of the Internet have given rise to a new form of organized crime, one that is increasingly interconnected and global in nature. The ability to travel across national borders without alerting law enforcement agencies is essential to the functioning of this integrated underground economy. INTERPOL has been at the forefront of global efforts to ensure the integrity and security of travel documents and to help member countries determine when a person is crossing a border with a fraudulent or stolen document. Some of the initiatives undertaken by INTERPOL in this connection are:

- Support to law enforcement agencies/authorities and travel documents specialists in their examination of identify documents
- Enhancing the global exchange of information about genuine and forged documents through the INTERPOL network
- Developing and maintaining a global operational platform to exchange information about false travel documents
- Providing capacity-building measures, training and expert assistance to member countries to further develop their expertise and national databases.

The INTERPOL Travel and ID Document Reference Centre contains five databases related to: stolen, lost, blank or revoked travel documents; images of alerts on false documents to assist border control officers and immigration authorities; images of genuine travel documents from 206 countries and organizations; travel documents associated with wanted or missing persons; and a range of civil status documents like birth, death, marriage, ID and citizenship from 169 countries.

Development banks

The global and regional development banks also provide technical and financial support to civil registration. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) have both commissioned important research on birth registration.[90] The regional development banks are potential providers of loans or grants for civil registration and national ID management (for example, the ADB has provided loans to Indonesia and Nepal, and the IDB to Chile, El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru and Uruguay).

Regional development agencies

Civil registration, including birth registration, is of key interest to regional development agencies such as the African Union, Organization of American States, the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. As noted previously each has played a role in convening governments to tackle under-registration, and to move forward common policies for civil registration.

International NGOs, foundations and academic institutions

International NGOs (INGOs), such as Plan and World Day of Prayer and Action[91] – are well placed to support local civil society in advocating reform where needed, and to give special attention to ensuring that vulnerable groups have equal access to civil registration. Other organizations have specific areas of specialization such as the International Development Law Organization in the area of legal reform, and the Soros Open Society Foundation (in particular the equality and citizenship program of the Open Society Justice Initiative). Academic institutions have also engaged in supporting civil registration such as the University of Queensland among others.

2

SITUATION ANALYSIS:
UNDERSTANDING THE
PROGRAMME TASK

2.0 A STEP WISE APPROACH TO THE SITUATION ANALYSIS

A situation analysis of the status of a country's civil registry is needed to determine appropriate UNICEF interventions. An evaluation of previous UNICEF support is essential. This chapter proposes an 8-step approach to the situation analysis. The results will help UNICEF country offices identify priority actions. An imaginary country example, Caseland, will be used to illustrate the approach.

As Communication for Development (C4D) is a priority intervention for UNICEF, elements of the situation analysis required to inform a C4D strategy have been highlighted in the checklist at the end of each relevant step. These points have been further elaborated in Section 2.6, although in practice the investigation necessary for C4D should be integrated into the overall situation analysis process.

8-Step approach to conducting the situation analysis		
Step 1	Country birth and civil registration situation	Analysis of the status of birth and civil registration in the country
Step 2	Organizational review	Examination of supply-side factors: how the civil registration service is organized and the legal framework on which it is based
Step 3	Legal review	
Step 4	Demand for civil registration services	Analysis of factors related to demand
Step 5	Government policy, plans and international support	Analysis of the policies and plans that the government has in place and the international support for civil registration that it receives
Step 6	Analysis for Communication for Development	Analysis of factors that influence birth registration rates, that are relevant to the development of communication strategies
Step 7	Analysis and identification of gaps and priority interventions	Consolidation of the review that can be used by government to frame future action
Step 8	Analysis and possible directions for UNICEF support	Review of previous interventions by UNICEF and the type of support that it may provide in the future

The following sections detail each step and use the fictional country "Caseland" as an illustration of the types of analysis that may result after each step.

2.1 *STEP 1:* **COUNTRY BIRTH AND CIVIL REGISTRATION SITUATION**

✓ ## Country situation - Checklist

- Detailed analysis of birth registration rates over time and by age, sex, residence, educational level of the mother, and by wealth quintile
- National income as an indicator of expected birth registration coverage.
- Population density and volume of vital events
- Vital event registration volume and workload per registration office
- Special circumstances and the response to them

Detailed analysis of birth registration rates

The latest, official data for birth and civil registration as reported by the country to UNSD, as well as data from MICS and DHS surveys should be analysed.[92] The difference between the two data sets was discussed in Section 1.3. MICS and DHS surveys may collect birth registration data for a country at different points in time which makes it possible to follow its development **over time.**

When disaggregation of data allows, it is important to look at **birth registration rates for different ages,** including the rates for children 0–5 years old, and also those for children aged 0–11 months, as these latter rates are a better indicator for registration immediately after birth. The MICS and DHS data sets also need to be examined for registration rates by at minimum, **sex,** by **residence** (urban/rural and region), **ethnicity**, **educational level of the mother** and by **wealth quintile.**

National income as an indicator of expected birth registration coverage

National income is a factor in determining the civil registration coverage rate. How national income impacts on birth registration rates in order to interpret the significance of coverage rates in any particular country was explained in Section 1.3. Unusually high or low rates for a given level of national income may signify exceptional circumstances that need to be identified.

A simple way to assess the country's birth registration rate is to determine to which income group the country belongs and compare its birth registration rate with the average rate for that income group (see table 3). It is noted however, as illustrated in figure 2, that a country's wealth is not necessarily a determinant of the possibility to achieve high birth registration rates.

Population density and its impact on vital events volume

The volume of vital events is strongly influenced by population density. In countries in which the rural population is still relatively large, the civil registration workload is spread over a large area, making civil registration coverage and service access difficult.

Declining birth registration rates in a lower middle income country signal problems with the civil registration system

Example country Caseland has an income per capita (GNI, 2010) of US$ 1,160, i.e., it is only just in the lower-middle-income group. Its birth registration rate is 70 per cent (2006). That is a comparatively good rate.

Birth registration rates appear to have deteriorated over the last two decades, however. In 1995, Caseland reported a birth registration rate of >90 per cent at a regional civil registration workshop, but in 2000, the MICS birth registration rate was 79 per cent.

Caseland illustrates the fact that at low levels of GNI per capita a country's birth registration rate is unpredictable and may be high or low. Death registration and marriage registration in Caseland are at very low levels. Something is not quite right with civil registration in the country….

Vital events registration volume and workload per registration office

An analysis of vital event volume and workload per registration office and its impact on cost-effectiveness needs to be conducted. The stage of development of the civil registration service has an impact on workload. In the early stages of development, there is usually a very modest workload, which has implications for the way that it needs to be organized. The vital events registered for an individual in low-income countries are often confined to birth, marriage and death, and the certificate of the registration of a vital event is usually issued only once. As the civil registration service develops and the demand for its services increases, many more vital events can be registered per individual and extracts from the register are issued much more often. In low-income countries, the relatively modest resources of the government may affect the quality of the service, and the poverty of the population may limit their ability to use the service, especially when distances are large. Distance and cost are critical influences on registration rates.

A low workload per registration office means higher costs for the government, and a range of managerial problems such as: the supervision of numerous offices; the high cost of training staff; the logistics of distribution of supplies and collection of documents and data; and the payment of salaries. Computerizing low-workload service points is usually impossible.

Key strategies to extend coverage within a country include: interoperability, in which civil registration services are combined and offered together with other government services, such as the registration of a child when born in hospital. These are discussed further in Section 3.2.

Increasing the number of civil registration offices in low-density populations may not solve the coverage problem

In Caseland 58 per cent of the population is living in the rural area. The total annual number of vital events (births and deaths only) for the rural population is approximately 512,000. In order to have a centre within 5 km of the population nationwide Caseland needs 6,000 centres in the rural areas The problem is that each of these centres would have an annual workload of only 85 vital events – just one every three working days (if all vital events are registered!). Caseland only has 2,231 registration centres in total (urban plus rural), many of which are not operational.

The current civil registration reform programme, however, still states that more offices are needed, and 60 per cent of the €27 million programme is earmarked for new offices and furnishing/refurbishment of the new and existing offices (computerization not included). The Government of Caseland still appears convinced that more offices may be the solution to service delivery in sparsely populated areas.

ID systems are often more advanced than civil registration systems. Integration is advised.

Caseland enacted its first law on national identity documents in 1964, four years after independence. Every adult citizen (18 years and older) of Caseland is required to have the national ID. Prior to elections in 2011 the national ID was upgraded to serve as identification for voting. In order to obtain the national ID the applicant is required to have a birth certificate. Delayed registration, when it is necessary, requires a doctor's assessment of probable age and a court verdict based on witness statements, which need to be obtained in the place in which the birth of the applicant should have been registered.

While no official coverage data are known, close to 100 per cent of the adult population of Caseland has the national ID. The only computerized national database for the Caseland population is the one for the national ID. The civil register, on the other hand, consists of over 2,000 local, paper-based registers, often in a poor state of archiving. For the moment, while it is impossible to obtain vital statistics from the civil register, the national ID database offers a potential alternative source for vital statistics.

Special circumstances[93]

The ability of the civil registration service to function is highly affected by certain special circumstances, such as natural disasters and conflict. Nationals may need to flee from emergency situations, and vital events among refugees and displaced people may go unregistered. Emergencies may lead to the presence of substantial numbers of refugees or people with unknown nationality, such as groups near unclear or porous borders, and this poses a challenge to the civil registration system. Emergencies can also result in the destruction of registers (which then need to be 'reconstituted') and/or halt routine registration activity, leading to backlogs. At times, civil war or unrest can make certain areas of a country inaccessible or unsafe for government officials such as civil registrars. Similar challenges can also apply in countries with large numbers of refugees and migrants. Finally, situations of state succession – where the international borders of States change – usually pose unprecedented challenges for the civil registration systems of States, in particular where new States are created and population registration and documentation systems need to be built from scratch.

If a country was still using a traditional, ill-functioning system when a cataclysmic event occurred, the response may need to go beyond re-establishing the previous practice to starting a modernization process instead. International support that usually becomes available in a post-crisis situation can thus be used in a more sustainable way.

Countries may pass laws to restrict the acquisition of nationality by refugees through birth registration

Caseland is a relatively 'welcoming' country with porous borders. There are substantial numbers of refugees from two neighbouring countries that are in a state of civil war. On both sides of a long border with a third country, little clarity exists about the nationality of people living in the area. Caseland has passed a new law in 2011 that, inter alia, now requires – in line with UNSD-recommended practice – that the nationality of the mother and father is included on the birth registration, since the old birth registration format did not have this information and was often erroneously understood to imply that the birth certificate conferred Caseland nationality to the birth certificate holder.

2.2 *STEP 2:* HOW IS THE COUNTRY'S BIRTH AND CIVIL REGISTRATION SYSTEM ORGANIZED?

✔ ## Civil registration organizational review - Checklist

- History of the civil registration service: home-grown or introduced by a colonial power
- Legal status of the civil registration organisation: government or private
- Organizational structure and functioning
  - Centralised or decentralized control
  - Interoperability with other government sector
  - Relationship of civil registration with national identity systems and electoral registers
  - Country network of civil registration offices and notification points
  - Supply chain management, security, audit
  - Civil registration workforce and financial resources
  - Specific process required for the registration
- C4D aspect of the organisational review.

History of the civil registration service

It is important to identify whether a country's civil registration system is **home-grown** or imported from a **colonial power.** This is because when such a system is imposed from outside, it may not be an optimal fit with local conditions. For example, the French system (under Napoleon) was exported to many countries in Europe during the 19th century with relative success, but with much less success to former French colonies in Africa.

Legal status of the civil registration organization

The legal status and nature of the organization(s) with responsibility for civil registration needs to be determined. As one of the main purposes of civil registration is to confer legal ('civil') status to individuals, it may appear appropriate for the service to be managed only by government, and in many countries this is the case. However there are countries in which civil registration has been entrusted to semi-governmental or private organizations. For example, RITA in the United Republic of Tanzania, the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) in Uganda, NADRA in Pakistan and RENIEC in Peru are all semi-governmental bodies responsible for the civil registration service. Regardless, the government does hold the ultimate oversight responsibility for civil registration.

Organizational structure and functioning

Understanding how the civil registration service is managed, particularly whether there is **centralized or decentralized control**, is crucial. Centralized control ensures the standardization of forms, procedures and methods, and promotes coordination, advice and assistance to registrars, and uniform interpretation of the law. The current availability of information and communication technology makes centralized control more feasible and, in principle, allows services to be delivered from offices across the country, rather than only in the office where a vital event was registered.

In developing countries, the civil registration function can rarely achieve proximity of the service to the population without **interoperability** with other government services. Analysis of the organization of the civil registration function thus requires mapping all the authorities and organizations with a role in civil registration, and should include whether and how collaboration is formalized, organizationally and financially.

Analysis of the **relationship of civil registration with the national identity system, electoral register and other registries** should be undertaken, as enrolment in these systems usually requires civil registration records or certificates as 'breeder documents'. Other registries that may require a connection with the civil registry includes population registries, taxation, social insurance, and national IDs. The review should include both the legal and operational connections between these registries.

An examination of the **country's network of registration offices and notification points** and whether they serve or underserve the population should be conducted. This should consist of an inventory of offices and their potential workload, given the population they serve.

Many countries have complex and overlapping roles and responsibilities for civil registration between different branches of government

In Caseland several departments of government have responsibility for different aspects of civil registration, leading to unclear roles.

- The Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization has overall responsibility for civil registration.
- The Ministry of Health plays a role in declaring births in health institutions, death attestations and probable age assessment in case of delayed registration.
- The Ministry of Justice also has a role in exercising control over registration offices, in keeping a duplicate archive of civil registration records, in the issuance of court judgements for delayed registration and nationality certificates.
- The police force is entrusted with the issuance of national identity cards.

The decentralization law of 2004 strengthened the autonomy of municipalities and their responsibility for civil registration. In 2011 a new central office for civil registration was created that will be responsible for countrywide civil registration, but no changes have been made in other laws, such as the laws that govern the role of the Ministry of Justice or the municipalities.

The review of the civil registration organization should include examination of **supply chain management, security and audit:** whether uniform certificates and registers are used; how they are distributed or whether they are locally procured; provisions for the safe keeping of records, back-up records and supplies; provisions for safe transmission and storage of computer files; and provisions for supervision and audit of the service. This aspect of the review should also include a review of the birth certificate requirements – the level of security as well as the process for personalization of the certificate.

The analysis should encompass the **civil registration workforce:** their number, the organizational structure, job descriptions, skills, training and pay, as well as the **financial resources** (income and expenditure) of the civil registration system. In many developing countries (and even in developed countries) collecting reliable and usable information can be an uphill task, because, for example, there are no budgets specific to civil registration. It may be necessary to rely on expert opinion and qualitative assessments, and to look for corroborating evidence to find confirmation for crucial pieces of information.

An assessment of the **process that a person needs to enter to register a child,** and for late registration is also required. This should include a review of the documents required, the offices and workforce that the individual needs to be in direct contact with and how that contact needs to occur (e.g. in person, by mail, etc.), the time frames for the different aspects of the process, and any costs. For example, sometimes the registration occurs immediately but the naming of the child on the birth registration occurs later. Or potentially for different groups of the population the registration and time frames may be unique. There may also be differences in costs for the registration. The assessment should also review the process for receiving the birth certificate after the registration occurs, as well as the process for retrieval of the birth registration.

The organizational review and communication for development

The C4D aspect should include the analysis of the perception of the civil registration delivery system. This includes the perception of the population to register and their understanding of the benefits of birth registration, as well as the attitude of the workforce involved in the registration, particularly in instances where the process is different for different population groups or in different geographic areas of the country. Finally, the review would look at the current actions and potential of the private sector and civil society to strengthen advocacy and service delivery as well as generate and sustain demand for services. See section 2.6 for more details.

2.3 *STEP 3:* **REVIEWING THE COUNTRY'S CIVIL REGISTRATION AND RELATED LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

✔ Legal review - Checklist

International law

- Relevant international and regional instruments to which the country is a State party
- Effective translation of international treaties into national law
- Alignment with the regional human rights charters
- Reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other treaty bodies
- Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW) and the Human Rights Committee (HRC)

National law

- Consistency with international civil registration recommended standards
- History of civil registration legislation
- Adequacy of legislation
- Consistency with related law

Legal review and C4D

- Review of requirements in other social sector laws for birth registration and birth certificate requirements

International law

Relevant international treaties related to civil registration to which the country is a State party need to be reviewed. See Section 1.1 for relevant human rights treaties to which countries may be signatory.

National legislation should be reviewed to ascertain whether there has been **effective translation of international treaties into national law.** International treaties vary in the nature of their provisions on birth registration. For example, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) provides equal rights to men and women in relation to their children. Some country legislation, however, demands the identity of both parents when registering the birth of a child. Similarly, the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness does not make explicit mention of birth registration, but is concerned with the right of children to nationality in the State in which they are born, if they would otherwise remain stateless.[94]

The review should also look at how far the country is in **alignment with the regional human rights treaties and charters** to which it subscribes. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the African Union all commit to complete registration.

The review will also need to include the **reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other treaty bodies**, and **'Concluding Observations'**, which generally include observations about birth registration in the country.

National law

The way in which the civil registration system is organized is very much a product of national legislation. Both legislation and organizational structures and functions need to be developed over time in order to accommodate new developments. For example, the recent increased mobility of people puts a strain on systems that were designed for an age in which people hardly left their place of birth; and currently available technology may not have been foreseen when laws were developed.

An analysis of the legal framework should include examination of:

- **Consistency with international civil registration law:**[95] whether national law adequately reflects provisions in international law
- **The history of civil registration legislation:** when the latest change in the law took place and the frequency of legal changes over the past decades
- Whether civil registration law and organizational structure and functions are modelled on systems introduced in colonial times, or are 'home-grown', and whether they are tuned to local **sociocultural realities**

- **The adequacy of legislation:** whether legal changes constitute an adequate response to service bottlenecks
- **Consistency with related law:** civil registration law may or may not be cross-referenced to related law, such as electoral law or privacy law (see table on the next page) and possible inconsistencies in related law may provide a source of legal confusion

The table on the next page shows the possible sources of civil registration legislation and what to look for within it.[96]

Incremental changes in civil registration legislation may result in complex and contradictory rules and regulations governing civil registration

Changes in legislation on civil registration in Caseland have been incremental.

- The first law on nationality and the nationality card was passed in 1964, four years after independence.
- The first law on civil registration was enacted in 1968. This law meant that civil registration continued to be organized differently in the two parts of the country, which had been under the rule of two different colonial powers.
- In 1981 a new civil registration law introduced the civil registration system nationwide.
- In 1987, a new law led to the creation and opening of about 1,800 'special offices', in addition to 360 existing main offices. Many of the special offices were created in urban areas where they were needed much less than in the rural areas.
- In 2004, a law on decentralization saw the main offices gaining a certain amount of independence from central government;
- In 2011, a new law gave the main offices oversight of the 'special offices' (400 of which had gone out of operation).
- In a law in 2011, a national civil registration office was created for the supervision of the civil registration services, which is also a responsibility of the Ministry of Justice and the courts.

As each new law has been introduced there have not been the necessary adjustments to harmonize previous legal provisions, resulting in a complex array of roles and responsibilities.

Checklist of legislation relevant to birth registration and what to look for	
Type of legislation	**What to look for**
The Constitution Nationality law Family law Children's act	• How nationality is granted: from the birth having occurred within the country's territory *(jus solis)* or by birth to a parent who is a national (through the principle of *jus sanguinis)* • Evidence of gender discrimination against women or men being able to pass their nationality to their children • Whether births have to be registered before an identity card can be issued • Do laws or practice relating to grant of nationality and registration of births discriminate between children born in and out of wedlock?
Electoral law	• Are voters identified through civil registration?
Civil registration law	• The regulation of semi-government organisations to which civil registration has been outsourced • The regulation of the role of government agencies involved in civil registration • The regulation of the use of technology to ensure that civil records maintain their probative value in court • Consistency with international law commitments, and international standards for civil registration • Related regulations (including cost, access, time periods) • Late and delayed registration procedures • Extent of information to be contained on the birth certificate, noting in particular if any stigmatising information is noted • Privacy, sharing of information for statistical purposes • Regulations for obtaining a birth certificate
Laws on privacy, statistics and e-governance[97]	• Regulation of e-governance and the use of the confidential information contained in the civil register • Provision for sharing of data with national statistics office
Decentralisation law	• How these impact on how civil registration is organised
Criminal law	• Provisions against the counterfeiting of identity documents
Administrative law	• Regulation of civil registrar liability
Social sector laws	• Requirements for birth certificates or birth registration to access services (e.g. income support, school leaving certificates, etc.).

The legal review and C4D

The legal review should – with a special focus on marginalized groups – include the communication for development aspect of the legal framework and enforcement mechanisms in place. In many countries there is a requirement for proof of registration, a birth certificate, in order to access other social services, such as school-leaving certificates. Understanding these requirements can inform activities to encourage registration. They can also support advocacy to reduce the barriers to access of other child rights such as health care and education. See section 2.6. for more details.

2.4 *STEP 4:* **ANALYSING FACTORS AFFECTING DEMAND**

✓ ## Demand analysis – Checklist

- Demand incentive and disincentives
- Interaction between demand and supply
  - ○ reasons why people have not been registered: cost, quality of service, social barriers, distance, exclusionary policies
  - ○ demand and supply among different population groups according to location, income and education
  - ○ effective demand for registration among socially and economically marginalized groups
- Demand and C4D

Demand incentives and disincentives

It is important to identify incentives and disincentives to registration and to determine their impact on demand for registration. One of the oldest UN publications on civil registration states that improvement of a civil registration system depends on a demonstrated need for legal documents,[98] illustrating this point with a case from Tennessee during 1941–1945 when the issuance of a ration card, which required a birth certificate, provided an incentive to registration.[99]

Social transfer programmes provide an incentive to register.[100] Income transfers, for example, often target the poorest in society, and often require or support beneficiaries to be registered as a means of establishing their identities. Social transfer programmes have been successful in countries such as Brazil and Mexico, and are quickly expanding to other parts of the world.[101] Another example is education, where schools may require a child to be registered to

attend school, or to obtain a passport to safely cross borders. Critical here is that the lack of access to one right should not hinder a child's ability to access another right. While, through the interoperability of the child protection system, another service may promote birth registration, it should also not be used to deny children their access to a right. If the ability to access a service or avail oneself of a right is tied, by law, to being registered, then the State has an obligation to ensure that barriers to registration are removed, and that those who were not registered at birth have the means to register later in life.

Interaction between demand and supply

A lack of demand for registration services cannot be seen in isolation from the status of supply; therefore, an analysis must include the degree to which supply satisfies demand and vice versa. One publication[102] mentions five categories of **reasons why people have not been registered**: economic (***cost*** of registration, including indirect cost); administrative (***quality of civil registration service***); cultural (***social barriers***); geographic (***distance*** of civil registration offices); and political (***exclusionary policies***).

Demand and supply among different population groups should be examined. Across countries, MICS and DHS surveys clearly show the discrepancies, although not the causality, in registration rates according to the **location** (between urban and rural areas), **income** and **education,** of the person to be registered and/or their caregiver/family. These characteristics tend to be interrelated, as the educational and income levels in urban areas are higher than in the countryside. It is important to note, however, that inequality within urban areas is greater than in rural areas, and that the poorest and most disenfranchised in a country are usually found in urban slums.[103]

'Effective' demand for registration among socially and economically marginalized groups should be determined. Findings from assessments carried out in Latin American countries[104] show that a high proportion of undocumented citizens are to be found among the most disenfranchised groups and communities, namely: the rural population, people of indigenous or African descent, the internally displaced, people residing in border areas, foreigners and illegal immigrants, and children born out of wedlock. The situation analysis should examine the ways in which disenfranchised groups are excluded from the registration service for reasons lying within the service itself and also if, and furthermore why, these groups avoid or are unable to access registration.

Disincentives and incentives to register births

In Caseland, according to a survey done in 2006, the most important reasons given for non-registration were:

1. the costs are too high (35 per cent)
2. does not see the benefit of registration (18 per cent)
3. registration office too far away (15 per cent)
4. too late for registration (12 per cent)
5. does not know the child needs to be registered (10 per cent)
6. does not know where to register (8 per cent), does not want to pay the late/delayed registration costs (2 per cent).

In one region that has the lowest registration rates of Caseland all parents in a small survey possessed national IDs and were well aware of the importance of being able to identify themselves, especially when travelling. An ID card has to be shown in order to obtain a SIM card and almost all the adults possessed a mobile phone. This requirement for mobile phone ownership generates a tangible demand for identity documents, which may be passed on from adults to their children – who would also aspire to own a mobile phone.

At present minors need to show the ID of a parent when they want to obtain the SIM card.

Demand analysis and C4D

The review of demand should include analysis of the availability of services and their physical and social accessibility (cost, language, etc.) among different population groups. See section 2.6. for more details.

✓ Review of government policy, plans and international support – Checklist

- Policy analysis at all levels
- Policy development processes
- Civil registration reform and reform process
- International support
- The C4D aspect of government policy, plans and international support

Policy analysis at all levels

Among the developing countries in which UNICEF is working, large differences can be found in the political priority given to birth and civil registration. In middle-income countries with relatively high coverage, minorities (like the Roma in Europe) may be left out of the mainstream of civil registration. Even in rich countries, UNICEF may need to remind governments of articles 7 and 8 of the CRC when registrars refuse to register the children of asylum seekers.

In all settings it is necessary to ascertain what the government's policies are for civil registration – with particular attention to special groups, such as children with disabilities, children who live and work on the streets, ethnic minorities, refugees and asylum seekers. Proceedings of discussions in parliament may help identify government policy, and annual and medium-term budgets will help ascertain how much the government is allocating for civil registration (although the involvement of several ministries and offices may make it difficult to find precise information).

Policy development processes

The situation analysis also needs to explore the status of on-going policy development processes. In some countries the Governments decide to develop civil registration and identity management policy prior to changing their civil registration law. In other countries 'white papers' are used to explore an issue prior to legislative change. Financial planning documents, such as expenditure frameworks and budget papers should also be reviewed to reflect on the capacity for civil registration policy and reform. Such policy development processes make it possible to consult all stakeholders in order to enhance ownership, as well as inform legal development.

Dozens of countries are in need of major reform of their civil registration systems. Many have plans for registration reform or modernization in various stages of development.

Civil registration reform and reform process

The content, status and sequencing of civil registration reforms need to be assessed. Comprehensive reform of a civil registration system may take a number of years to implement and needs careful preparation and planning of the stages of implementation. The stages of modernization can be introduced geographically and/or by function, with the law allowing the continuation of old practice side-by-side with the phasing-in of new practice – for example, the continuation of a paper-based, hand-written system in parallel with the introduction of a digital system.

International support

Technical and financial support for civil registration reform within each country needs to be identified. In many countries, governments need to make civil registration reform and achieving universal birth registration a political priority, as it is so essential to good governance, the rule of law, domestic and international security and economic development. The financing of reform needs to be a largely domestic responsibility. International support can help to resource reform plans, however. As a way of reducing costs, governments could also look at successful examples of the part-privatization of the civil registration function as a whole (for example, RENIEC, Peru) or of certain tasks.

C4D and government policies and plans, and international support

The analysis should include the levels of awareness, knowledge and attitudes among policymakers and planners, at both national and international levels, of the importance of birth registration as a critical factor in social and economic development among different population groups. For More Detail See Section 2.6.

Civil registration reform in Caseland

In Caseland the first steps for reform of the civil registration system were taken in 2002. With modest technical and financial support from the former colonial power, studies were done during the 2006–2007 period and by the end of 2007 the civil registration reform plan was launched, at an estimated cost of €27 million.

During the formulation of the plan various scenarios were presented and costed:

- The digitization of legacy records (the existing register) was estimated to cost €15 million. In the chosen reform scenario the digitization of legacy records is no longer included, which is worrisome because of the poor and quickly deteriorating state of civil records. While understandable as a priority to focus on registering the newborns, this may be an area to revisit as resources permit.
- Of the total reform cost of €27m, 65 per cent is earmarked for the construction and furnishing of new offices and the makeover of existing offices.
- Fifteen per cent (€5 million) is estimated as the cost of computerization – an amount that is only a third of a cost estimate for a comparable country. The use of mobile phone and web-based hospital notification may be a way to reduce the cost for offices, while freeing up resources for computerization.

During the 2007–2012 period only 8 per cent of the reform plan cost has been spent, as local government and international support have not been forthcoming. This may change when the government budgets a substantial amount for the 2013–2015 time period, in which case international support may received. The country will pay 60 per cent of the reform cost from domestic resources. UNICEF support is being considered for the testing of mobile phone technology and hospital hook-up, while some training support, and support for legal reform are contemplated as well.

2.6 *STEP 6:* ANALYSIS FOR COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

✓ **Analysis for Communication for Development (C4D) –Checklist**

- Organizational review: attitudinal aspects of service delivery
- Role of the private sector
- Legal review: focus on marginalized groups
- Demand for birth registration among different segments of the population
- National government policies, plans and international support
- Innovative C4D approaches at country and regional level
- Communication for Development strategy

While the C4D analysis should be integrated into the reviews already described in the previous sections of this chapter, it has been pulled together and positioned separately here for purposes of clarity and re-emphasis. It is important to note that the processes of conducting the C4D review and analysis, identifying strategic options and developing the C4D strategy must be undertaken in close collaboration and coordination with key stakeholders and partners.

Traditional social marketing approaches usually limit C4D situation analyses to conducting formative research, usually in the form of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) studies at community level. Unfortunately, this tends to limit the information and data collection to the individual, household and community levels, without adequately investigating and analysing the context in which certain population groups are consistently neglected and left outside the purview of social services. Therefore, it is important to expand the scope of information and data collection and analysis by using the social-ecological approach, to include contextual issues and the complex interaction of policy, legislative, systemic, social, economic and personal factors in determining the provision of services, their physical and social accessibility and consequently, the extent to which they are utilized and demanded.

Organizational review

The C4D aspect of the organizational review should include the analysis of the attitudinal aspects of the civil registration delivery system and whether some population groups are left and/or "pushed" out due to discriminatory behaviours of policymakers, managers and service providers, based solely on the socio-economic class, ethnicity or minority status of the person seeking the service.

Legal review

Laws and enforcement mechanisms should be reviewed with a special focus on marginalized groups, to identify whether the attitudes of legislators and law enforcers facilitate or obstruct equal access to services, and whether legal recourse is available in case of discriminatory practices. The perspectives and voices of communities, especially of groups that face discrimination and marginalization, should be included in legal/policy review and in developing the advocacy strategy.

Demand for birth registration

Among different segments of the population, demand should be examined in the context of the availability of services and their physical and social accessibility. This will include an analysis of the awareness of the importance of birth registration and perceptions of its relevance and 'value addition' among different population groups. Social and cultural factors that facilitate or obstruct birth registration should be identified, including people's perceptions of self-efficacy and confidence to demand services. The levels of integration and inclusion of children from traditionally marginalized groups also need to be examined. This will require moving beyond the investigation of KAP, to include a social-anthropological study at community, household and kinship group levels.

National government policies and plans, and international support

The analysis should include the levels of awareness and knowledge among policymakers and planners, at both national and international levels, of the importance of birth registration as a critical factor in social and economic development. It should also include their attitudes towards the rights of specific groups (including minority and indigenous and internally displaced persons). The analysis should also take into consideration the views and voices of traditionally marginalized groups regarding the extent to which they feel that national policies, legislation and enforcement mechanisms are responsive to their situation and to the unique problems that they may face.

Innovative C4D approaches at country and regional level

The UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development (2011) and the World Congress on Communication for Development (2006) have showcased innovative C4D approaches, including the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for increasing demand for, and access to, social services.[105] An analysis of case studies relevant to the country and regional context could provide a good starting point for the development of the C4D strategy as well as for advocacy, resource mobilization and new partnerships within and outside the organization.

Communication for Development strategy

Identification and examination of strategic options for the use of communication tools and methods should be carried out. These need to address key issues and effect positive attitudinal, behaviour and social change vis-à-vis birth registration, at all levels. Sustaining increased rates of demand and utilization requires a close examination and analysis of the context in which services are provided. From this base, a multilevel communication strategy can be developed that addresses the issues listed above. (Further information on the development and use of a communication for development strategy to promote birth registration is included in section 3.2.4).

2.7 *STEP 7:* **IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS AND PRIORITY INTERVENTIONS**

> ## Identification of gaps and priority interventions
>
> - • Systems analysis and synthesis
>   - o Bottleneck methodology
>   - o Marginal budgeting for bottlenecks approach
>   - o Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework
>   - o Gantt chart and PERT (Programme Evaluation and Review Technique) methodology

Once the investigations described in Steps 1 to 6 have been conducted, the information gathered needs to be analysed in order to identify gaps in service delivery and priority interventions that UNICEF will recommend to government and other partners, and will support. UNICEF uses the systems approach to guide its choice of programme interventions.

Systems analysis and synthesis

During the last few years, UNICEF's programming approaches to promoting birth registration have been increasingly informed by the recognition that a systems approach is needed to achieve better, sustained programming results. It is important to understand the interdependencies that exist *within* the birth and civil registration system, and *between* the birth and civil registration system and other service systems. This requires both the analysis of the system as a whole in order to identify gaps and potential interventions, and a synthesis that acknowledges how the proposed intervention will impact on the system as a whole and on one another. This approach helps avoid the implementation of isolated interventions that have minimal impact, such as the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns without paying attention to the problems of supply.

A number of tools have been introduced to assess the child protection system. Comprehensive mapping and assessment of the system promote the review of the impact of the reform of the civil registry on other aspects of the child protection system.[106] Another tool that has recently been introduced within UNICEF to facilitate the analysis of specific issues areas is the *bottleneck analysis approach* or **bottleneck methodology** (BM). This method was derived from the **marginal budgeting for bottlenecks approach** (MBB), which was developed for the health sector by UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank.[107] MBB is an analytical costing and budgeting tool that helps countries choose the most effective health interventions.

Another method that can be used to improve systems and service delivery is the **Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework** (MAF), which was developed by the United Nations Development Group.[108] The identification and prioritization of bottlenecks to the effective implementation of interventions at scale, as well as the selection of feasible, multi-partner solutions to overcome the bottlenecks are at the heart of MAF. Other methodologies that can be borrowed from the discipline of project management are Business Analysis, Business Process Analysis, Business Process Redesign and Gap Analysis.[109]

The importance of the correct sequencing of civil registration reform programmes

Caseland conducted several in-depth studies of the status and problems of the civil registration service as part of the 2007 civil registration reform programme. The reform programme included a change of civil registration law that, among other things, paved the way for the creation of the national civil registration office.

In the most recent version of the reform programme a Gantt chart shows the sequencing of the remaining sub-programmes still to be implemented:

1. training and sensitization of the population
2. office construction and improvement
3. computerization.

The sequencing seems incorrect in some respects, but most important, the information about the sub-programmes is not very detailed, The law reform of 2011 has not been well communicated, and registrars are either unaware of it or unprepared to put it into practice.

The bottleneck template below shows the application of the bottleneck methodology to the analysis of data on civil registration, using the domains of: enabling environment, supply, demand and quality. The table includes suggested indicators.

Bottleneck methodology template		
Domain	**Determinants**	**Suggested Indicators Birth and Civil Registration** *Indicative – to be adapted for each country*
Enabling Environment	Social Norms [Widely followed social rules of behaviour]	Customs related to naming babies including time taken for naming. Patriarchal traditions insisting on father's name and identity as essential to names. Indicators for discrimination and exclusion
	Legislation /Policy addressing barriers and disincentives [Adequate laws and policy]	Registration (including first copy of birth certificate) free and compulsory? Provisions for late/delayed registration? Electronic signatures and documentation legally valid? Adequate provision for security of individual data records available? Key partnerships with health, other ID systems including national IDs, social protection in place?
	Budget/ Expenditure [Allocation and disbursement of required resources]	Government budgets cover all expenditure for civil registration? Birth registration not expected to be an income-raising activity for central or local governments? Donor assistance not covering core expenditures?
	Management/ Coordination [Roles and accountability; coordination; partnership]	Civil registration organized efficiently? Inter-ministerial coordination arrangements in place?

Domain	Determinants	Suggested Indicators Birth and Civil Registration *Indicative – to be adapted for each country*
Supply	Availability of essential commodities/inputs [For delivering the service]	Hardware availability for electronic data transmission and processing in place with adequate security safeguards?
	Access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information. [Physical access, services, facilities, information]	Staff availability/ skills Staff well trained and motivated?
Demand	Financial access [Direct and indirect costs for services]	Costs of registration, including travel and wages lost for this purpose?
	Social and cultural practices and beliefs; perceived benefits [Individual and community beliefs, awareness, behaviours, practices, attitudes]	What is the value of registration of children for parents? Does it outweigh the costs?
Quality	Quality of service delivered [Adherence to required quality standards – national or international norms]	Time taken to register births. Time and cost necessary to obtain birth certificate. Quality of preservation of records, ease of retrieval of records.

Source: Adapted from Tanahashi, T., Geneva, 1978 by UNICEF staff, Durban, South Africa, 2012.

The interventions prioritized as a result of any analysis need to be subject to appropriate sequencing in order to ensure the best possible result on birth registration. For example, a high-impact, achievable intervention may require a very difficult intervention to be implemented first, the use of a **Gantt chart,** or the application of the **PERT methodology,** may assist with the management of the programme.[110]

2.8 *STEP 8:* IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS FOR UNICEF

> ### Identification of possible directions for UNICEF and other organizational support
>
> - Review and evaluation of UNICEF and other organizational support
> - Future UNICEF support in line with its strengths and comparative advantage
> - Supporting government to convene different stakeholders

Evaluation of UNICEF and other organizational support to civil registration

It is important that UNICEF-supported birth registration interventions are regularly reviewed and evaluated, so that interventions can be adjusted with the latest evidence and any new directions are informed by the latest lessons learned by the organization and other actors in the sector. Understanding the location of UNICEF work in relationship to the actions of other organizations supports a comprehensive approach to birth registration.

Future UNICEF support

UNICEF at a global level is a strong advocate for free and universal birth registration within civil registration, working with the various regional and international bodies. Its analysis of birth registration rates and barriers to registration has placed UNICEF at the forefront of broader policy discussions on birth registration principles and application. In all cases this is based on the evidence and practice within countries.

UNICEF responds to government requests, hence, when the government has sound policies and plans for the improvement of the system, UNICEF can agree with government to give support in accordance with UNICEF's financial capacity, particular strengths, specific interests and mandate. UNICEF has supported countries in situation analysis, legal and policy reform, planning, capacity development, communication for development, advocacy and statistical analysis. It has supported programming actions such as networking service delivery agents, and introducing communication technology for registration. It has worked in individual countries, and also uses its network of offices to share practices across borders, bring together practitioners from different countries for trainings and draws on international expertise. UNICEF is widely considered to be a leading organization in the field of birth registration and therefore has a natural role in supporting government to convene different stakeholders to coordinate their support to the improvement of birth and civil registration. UNICEF, however, is only one organization among many that can make contributions to birth and civil registration improvements (see section 1.4).

The following chapter indicates potential programming roles that UNICEF could play in birth registration in specific countries. The actions taken by UNICEF need to be considered in relation to the comparative advantage of the organization in light of the comparative advantage of others.

The importance of evaluation

In Caseland for many years UNICEF supported the establishment of birth certificates for children (especially girl children) in primary school who, without a birth certificate, would not be allowed to take the end of primary school examination. UNICEF outsourced to local and international NGOs the task of facilitating connections between the civil registrar and the child. An evaluation of this activity showed that over a period of nine years 9,000 children received their birth certificates through a complicated court procedure and an assessment of probable age. The cost per child was about US$20. During the same nine years about 2.5 million children reached the age at which the examination takes place without a birth certificate. The result of the evaluation was the termination of this programme.

The office has decided to discuss with government possible amendments to the Education Act such that a birth certificate is not required to take the end of primary school examination. Facilitating birth registration at the time of school enrolment would complement this. Further, UNICEF will be putting increased efforts towards the registration of children at birth, rather than on 'catching up'. To this end, UNICEF will focus on the use of mobile technology and the strengthening of the role of hospitals by digitization of their notification function. UNICEF works in close coordination with international NGOs and local NGOs who also support the work on birth registration as well as with local training institutes.

3 PROGRAMMING FOR BIRTH REGISTRATION

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides guidance to UNICEF country offices on how to translate the outcomes of the situation analysis and synthesis into birth registration programmes. While considering UNICEF's approach to programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, it is recommended that, in order to strengthen the system as a whole, UNICEF addresses birth registration in the broader context of civil registration and the child protection system, in collaboration with a wide range of country stakeholders.

3.1 THE ROLE OF UNICEF IN BIRTH REGISTRATION AND ITS INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

UNICEF's overall programme and where birth and civil registration fit in

In most UNICEF offices birth registration is part of the child protection area of work. In some offices, birth registration is located within the planning, social policy or health clusters. Wherever birth registration is located, it is important for UNICEF offices to recognize that birth registration is important for all of these areas; for child protection, as well as social protection, health and education, and to recognize its wider role in strengthening good governance, and contributing to the generation of stronger national data.

Birth registration should be viewed as a key systems-strengthening intervention that contributes to two cross-cutting strategic objectives:

1. **Improving governance:** by ensuring that all children are counted and thereby strengthening the quality of vital statistics and demographic data to enable governments to improve the planning of interventions for children (including the sectors in which UNICEF works).
2. **Furthering equity:** by ensuring a legal identity for all children, reaching the most vulnerable in society and removing barriers to health, education and development opportunities, citizenship benefits and participation in governance.

UNICEF programming for birth registration is becoming more tightly integrated with the other sectors in which UNICEF works. For example, the health sector has unrivalled national reach through its service infrastructure. Collaboration with the health sector offers an opportunity to bring civil registration services closer to people and to coordinate birth and death information from hospitals and health facilities. Beneficiary identity is an essential ingredient for the operation of social transfer schemes, which by their nature are designed to assist the most vulnerable, who are the least likely to be registered or to have a legal identity, and whose graduation from these safety nets could not be envisaged without their empowerment through registration.

Because of its CRC mandate, governments look to UNICEF to assist them with birth registration. UNICEF's convening role in relation to birth registration has been well established at the country, regional and global levels, particularly in responding to the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on States party reports.

UNICEF's work on maternal and child health and the protection of women's rights also give it an interest in the ability of States to generate more accurate data on the mortality of children and women and marriage registration. While UNICEF has a limited role in programming in the area of the registration of death, or the registration of marriages, it is not feasible or logical to address only one component of the civil registry without considering the other aspects that comprise the registry. These other aspects play an important role in UNICEF work such as inheritance and social service planning, and death registration is key to UNICEF's overall statistical analysis on the status of children. The role UNICEF needs to play in this broadened agenda is primarily one of advocacy with other partners. These partners will bring in the technical resources necessary to address other aspects of civil registration.

Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 7 and 8 and the CRC Reporting Process

Governments of countries that have ratified the Convention are required to report to, and appear before, the Committee on the Rights of the Child periodically to be examined on their progress with regard to the advancement of the implementation of the Convention and the status of child rights in their country. Their reports and the Committee's written views and concerns are available on the Committee's website. UNICEF plays a key role in the reporting process with regard to article 7 since it is recognized as one of the best-informed UN organizations concerning the status of birth registration. The UNICEF supported MICS surveys, conducted regularly, help include in the reporting process the key indicators for the birth registration situation in a country. UNICEF's situation analyses provide other possible sources of information for the status of birth registration in a country.

UNICEF has developed its own handbook for the implementation of the CRC (UNICEF, New York (2007–1). For the implementation of all the articles, the handbook presents the following checklists:

- Checklist for general measures of implementation
- Checklist for specific issues of implementation
- Reminder about general principles and other related articles

The checklist for specific issues is a detailed and very useful tool, especially for the review of the organization of civil registration and the legal framework.

3.2 PROGRAMMING FOR BIRTH REGISTRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COUNTRY CIVIL REGISTRATION

Programme design and implementation should be based on the situation analysis process described in Chapter 2, and on results-based programming processes. The most important recommended actions for government and UNICEF fall under five key intervention domains, where each intervention corresponds to an important component of the civil registration system. These are:

- Organizational change
- Legal change
- Stimulating demand
- Communication for Development
- Building coalitions and strengthening collaboration

Importance of expert organizational advice

Governments sometimes draft critically important civil registration reform without the requisite organizational development and management expertise at hand. UNICEF can also use its international network to support governments to locate expertise and provide examples of successful organizational reform. This can incorporate lessons from countries with similar profiles that have well-functioning civil registration systems.

3.2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

✔ ## Main Areas of Intervention for Organizational Reform – Checklist

Optimal control and development of the service network

- Central control of civil registration systems
- Local registration offices dependent on a national office
- Proximity of the service to the population
- Supply chain process for individuals to obtain their registration
- Issuing of birth certificate

Interoperability

- Adequate organizational, and human and financial resource arrangements
- Adequate control of the civil registration service being offered
- Civil registration and health, education, social protection, housing and other social sectors
- Civil registration and national IDs, and other registries

Digitalization and the use of ICT (as required)

- ICT as part of an integrated approach with adequate resourcing
- Organizational redesign that allows optimal use of appropriate technological solutions, such as mobile phones
- Ensuring technological solutions are secure
- Legal provision for digitalization

Resources

- Adequate provision in the state budget
- Coordinating international technical and financial support

Optimal control and development of the civil registration service network

UNICEF should promote **central oversight of civil registration systems** especially in developing countries. UNSD has recommended that, "when the administrative and geographic organization of the country permits", **local registration offices will be directly dependent on a national office.**[111] In federal States, where central control is not possible, the recommendation is that "effective coordination" will be in place instead.

Afghanistan: Connecting provincial registries to the national database

After decades of conflict and unrest, Afghanistan has recorded low birth rates; rising from an estimated 6 per cent in 2003 to 37.4 per cent according to estimates from MICS 2011. UNICEF worked with government partners to establish of an inter-ministerial task force for birth registration as per a Presidential Decree, with an aim to reach at least 60% registration rates by the end of 2014. Towards this goal, UNICEF supported the change from a manual system to a secure web-based computer database that will be used for recording births and deaths at provincial level and will eventually, using SMS technology, enable each and every registrar across the country to register births directly. The registration process now includes community elders, health professionals and religious leaders. As well as improving registration rates, the database will provide vital statistical information, and allow the Ministry of Interior to monitor the performance of registrars at various levels.

The importance of the **proximity of the service to the population** is often translated into proposals to increase the number of offices, without taking the workload of an office or registration service point into consideration. In rural areas of low-income countries with low population density, traditional office solutions are not economically feasible because of the minimal workload. This requires a paradigm shift towards novel solutions for service delivery, such as interoperability and the use of mobile phones for vital event notification. These interventions are discussed below.

Interoperability

Interoperability with other government services is a key strategy for extending civil registration countrywide, particularly in developing countries with large, low-density rural populations. For interoperability to work it is necessary to put **adequate organizational and human and financial resource** arrangements in place, such as a Memorandum of Understanding between ministries, clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, training for civil registration roles and adequate funding.

The civil registration service should work with a small and select group of other government services or ministries, over which it can exercise **adequate control of the civil registration service** being offered; otherwise civil registrars will be overwhelmed by too many collaboration arrangements.

Civil registration and health

An important sector for interoperability is health, due to its outreach and its position at the centre of the events of birth and death. Collaboration between the civil registration service and the health sector is one recommended area of interoperability.

UNICEF commissioned a study, which provides qualitative evidence of the advantages and potential of the partnership between civil registration and the health service.[112] The study examined four cases: Bangladesh, Brazil, the Gambia and the city of Delhi. It looked at three approaches: 1) placing civil registrars in health institutions, 2) engaging community health officers as outreach registrars, and 3) including a birth registration component in public health campaigns. Like any programme it is important to assess the specific context to determine its appropriateness.

The placement of civil registrars in health institutions is an economically feasible solution only when the workload is sufficient. A more common and more appropriate arrangement is for health staff to play an **attestation or notification role**. Similarly, **attestation** rather than civil registration tasks provide the most appropriate role for health outreach officers. In some cases a health institution may also play a role in the delivery[113] of the birth certificate. Public health campaigns can be a vehicle for raising awareness provided that the civil registration service is there to deliver registration services at low cost and reasonable levels of convenience.

Birth registration and equity in Brazil

The birth certificate is the first step towards citizenship in Brazil – only with this document is it possible to obtain other fundamental documents, subscribe for social protection programmes and matriculate in school. National legislation ensures the right to birth registration and legal reform took place in 1997 to make sure birth registration is free of charge.

The national registration rate increased from approximately 15 percentage points between 2000 and 2010. However, the 2010 National Census revealed that 600 thousand children between 0-10 years old are still not registered, 400 thousand of these living in the North and the North East. This is also where the highest concentration of indigenous, riberinhos and quilombola children is located. While observing the sharp increase in the national registration rate, through strategic advocacy UNICEF is currently stressing the serious inequalities hidden behind the national statistics.

UNICEF has supported the government of Brazil at federal, state and municipal levels with efforts to increase birth registration for more than a decade. In 2007 a comprehensive national policy was adopted by Government, providing for long-term budget allocations and joint collaboration at all levels between civil registration authorities and the health sector. As a part of this strategy, the government through the Human Rights Secretariat has supported the deployment of civil registration services in public hospitals.

Civil registration services have been placed in public hospitals such that new-borns can be registered by the civil registry before they leave. Additionally, UNICEF has contributed substantially to progress on birth registration through the "Approved Municipality Seal" initiative, which involves monitoring of child rights indicators at municipal level in the North-East. The best performing municipalities are awarded with the UNICEF Seal. Over a two-year period from 2006-2008, birth registration rates of 0-1 year old children increased by 12.8 per cent in the North-East, four times more than the increase at the national level.

In recent years, UNICEF in Brazil has focused on improving registration rates among marginalized groups. This includes C4D activities to inform indigenous leaders and communities about the importance of birth registration for access to other services, the fact that birth registration is free of charge and their entitlement to register with traditional names. In response to the demands of the indigenous peoples in Brazil, indigenous people may claim to have their ethnicity figuring on the birth certificate.

Civil registration and national IDs

The recent expansion of national ID systems provides an important opportunity to expand and upgrade the quality of the civil registration service. It is important for UNICEF to capitalize on opportunities that national ID systems offer to extend child protection.

In less developed countries ID and civil registration systems are often the responsibility of separate departments of government, competing for scarce resources, which is not good practice. The general recommendation for the relationship between civil registration and the national ID is one of optimal legal and organizational integration.

The important ground rule for any national identity management system is that every individual should have a legally documented unique identity. For this reason the recommendation would be that a birth record should be a requirement for the issuance of the national ID. Where this is not the case the very idea of identity management is compromised. Non-observance of this practice is quite common, however, particularly in countries in which birth registration coverage is low and retrieval of birth records is difficult (which is generally true when the system is paper-based).

Examples of good practice integration of civil registration and ID systems

Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Sudan have all developed new civil registration and national ID legislation in one law. This is good legal practice, provided that only one agency is responsible, or if two they are optimally interoperable as is the case in the Americas. In the Americas in general the integration of civil registration and national ID systems is a positive development.[114,115] In Uruguay newborns (99 per cent of whom are born in hospital)[116] receive a unique identity number, a birth certificate and a national ID before being released from hospital.

Digitization and the use of information and communications technology

The possibility of digitization of civil registration is a breakthrough for otherwise intractable organizational problems facing the civil registration service in many countries, as well as for a step-change in customer service. That said, any move towards the use of ICT should be driven by the ultimate aim of registering all children, distinct from the drive to use a technological solution.

UNICEF has considerable experience in information and communications technology for development, which is a potentially very fertile intervention domain for UNICEF's support to civil registration redesign. Few innovations have had so much impact on the organization of civil registration as the rapid development and diminishing cost of powerful information and communication technology over the past two decades. At the same time ICT is not a magic bullet to solve the multifaceted problems that beset civil registration and needs to be **part of an integrated approach with adequate on-going and sustainable resourcing.**

The introduction of electronic records requires a major revision in the way in which civil registration is done. This should be based on an **organizational redesign** of the service that allows **optimal use of appropriate technological solutions,** such as the low-cost technology of the **mobile phone.**

Birth registration and mobile technology in Tanzania

The recent Demographic Health Survey (DHS) conducted in the United Republic of Tanzania in 2010 showed that only 16 per cent of children under the age of five have been registered, of whom only 6 per cent had received birth certificates. Registration rates have not improved significantly for over a decade.

July 2013 marked the beginning of the roll out of a new birth registration system in Mbeya region utilizing a mobile application to five priority regions. Innovative technology means that data is now quickly being uploaded to a centralized system through mobile phones to record all birth registrations. Transmission of data are done through SMS and it does not require internet connectivity. The application is not dependent on a hand set or operating environment. It is designed to work on all models of mobile phones and operating systems. It only requires mobile coverage and the receiving (RITA) server to be active to receive data.

Before the start of the campaign in Mbeya Region, there were more than 383,000 children aged under 5 without a birth certificate – approximately 90 per cent of under-5s in Mbeya Region in the region. Three months later 125,199 under-5s were registered and issued with birth certificates, representing 29 per cent of children under the age of five. Following the success in Mbeya the system will be rolled out to an additional four regions over the next few years.

UNICEF has been a pioneer in the use of mobile phones for birth and death registration, for example in Vanuatu, with technical support from the civil registration service of New Zealand.[117] The mobile phone is particularly appropriate given its relative simplicity and low cost compared with computers. In virtually every location in which a traditional civil registration office would be prohibitively costly, cellular network coverage and solutions for powering mobile phones are now available. Such places are usually not suitable for computers and the Internet is not usually available. Offline computer software and mobile phones are less dependent on a continuous power supply. Such software has just been developed for birth and death registration in Uganda.

Birth registration and mobile technology in Uganda

With support from UNICEF, the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), is developing a BDR (Birth Death Registration) policy to create an enabling environment; is implementing a Mobile Vital Records System (Mobile VRS) that was developed through a public-private partnership, to improve timely delivery of BDR services in hospitals and local governments; and has worked with the Ministry of Health to integrate birth registration into health outreach programs known as Family Health Days (FHDs). Faith Based Organizations mobilize their congregations to access outreach services including birth registration, and also provide spaces where the services are delivered.

Mobile VRS enables the use of internet connected computers in hospitals and local governments to register births as well as the use of mobile phones in communities to send birth notifications from any part of Uganda into the central government Civil Registration database, in real time. Mobile VRS generates real time reports of birth registered by sex, by geographical location and within a given time frame selected by the user.

Since September 2011, when the first baby was registered using Mobile VRS in Mulago national referral hospital, a total of 1,486,344 persons have been registered in the system in 135 hospitals and 33 out of 112 local governments, of which 602,925 are children under 5 years (49 per cent girls). This contributes to an estimated national increase of birth registration of under-5s from 30 per cent (UDHS 2011) to approximately 47.18 per cent as of October 2013. About 72 per cent of birth certificates have been printed from the MVRS database and are progressively being distributed to the registered children.

Mobile phone providers have shown interest in supporting development projects that use mobile phone technology. Especially when it concerns the highly sensitive information managed by civil registrars it is important that **technological solutions are secure**, and also 'open source', meaning that the government does not get 'locked' into a proprietary solution that by nature is exclusive rather than universal, and may lead to steep payments of software licenses.

Legal provisions for digitalization

The replacement of paper-based records by electronic records and the electronic transmission and sharing of civil registration information need to be supported by law, for example to ensure that civil registration records maintain their evidentiary value in court. Whether to digitalize the paper records of the past ('legacy records') is an important matter that needs serious analysis and resolution, not least because the costs can be substantial, while electronic formats also have a short lifetime. Solutions for the permanent preservation of electronic records need to be found.

Security concerns related to civil registration

The security of civil registration and identity documents has become an international concern. This has led to substantial efforts by INTERPOL and other law enforcement agencies to gather intelligence on counterfeiting, identity theft and other identity-related crime. Concerns are voiced regarding the security of data transmission via cellular networks.

The widespread use of the same networks for moving mobile money is evidence that there is a considerable degree of security. A recent study came to the following conclusion regarding the security of cellular networks compared with the Internet[118]: "*To date, incidents from malware and other identified dangers that have occurred against handheld devices have been limited when compared with those against desktop and networked computers.*"

Another study concluded: "*…the mobile banking channel has the potential to be more secure than traditional online banking.*"[119] The security of data stored or transmitted electronically should also be compared with the security of the traditional modes of storage and transport of paper documents.

This both highlights the opportunities digital and mobile technology offers as well as the attention that must be paid to the security of the information.

Adequate resources

Civil registration services cannot be delivered adequately unless they are **sufficiently resourced.** Even in a well-advanced economy such as Australia, income derived from fees for civil registration in one of its states only covers 40 per cent of the cost of the civil registration service.[120] While birth registration should be without cost, it does depend on the functioning of the whole civil registry. UNICEF can play a role in lobbying for **adequate provision of birth registration in the state budget** and by **coordinating international technical and financial support** for civil registration, particularly when major reforms are necessary.

The decision to manage civil registration outside of government is generally made because the private sector is deemed more efficient than government, with the ability to set its own salary levels and keep its income from the delivery of services. But, because civil registration is not financially self-supporting, the privatized service remains dependent on government subsidy. In some cases, such as RENIEC in Peru, the private organization is also given responsibility for other government services, such as the issuance of IDs, driving licenses, passports etc. so that it can be more financially self-reliant through the use of 'cross-subsidizing' between profitable and loss-making services. The production of the base material for the birth certificate is also usually outsourced to a private company. It is critical that there is government oversight of any aspect that is outsourced, and that the authority for registration itself is held by the government.

3.2.2 LEGAL CHANGE

> ### Key recommendations for legal reform
>
> - Evidence-based support to legal change
> - Civil registration law may need comprehensive revision
> - Civil registration and national ID systems may need to be brought under one legal umbrella
> - Civil registration law should be culturally, socially and religiously sensitive and inclusive
> - Provisions for the digital age need to be covered by civil registration law or related law

UNICEF has been involved in processes for civil registration legal reform for many years, and in the past five years has been involved in supporting policy development for legal reform in approximately 30 countries. UNICEF's advocacy and support to legal change in birth registration, like legal change in any area, should be **evidence based.**[121] Legislative reform in this area must consider birth registration within civil registration and be conscientious in applying the principles of **continuity, permanence and availability universal coverage, confidentiality, and timeliness and accuracy.**

> ### Policy initiatives in Thailand
>
> In Thailand, successful UNICEF advocacy elicited a government commitment to invest in holistic, equity-focused early childhood development policy in January 2012 that included targets for universal birth registration; the policy was approved by the Cabinet in October. As part of the drive towards universal registration, 534 hospitals have been linked to the civil registry through ICT, as part of the national plan to link almost 900 public hospitals by end of 2013. This will ensure that records of all hospital births are captured in the registrar database for follow up of non-registered births. Birth registration in these pilot hospitals increased from 94 per cent to 96 per cent.

In many countries the civil registration law has undergone only incremental change, which often causes difficulties in terms of the consistency and adequacy of the law for civil registration in the modern era, therefore requiring a **comprehensive revision of civil registration law.** Kenya, for example, is in the process of replacing a law dating from 1929, which had been incrementally changed up until 1972. Bringing civil registration and national ID systems under one legal and organizational umbrella is something new, but is important to consider with the current rapid expansion of national ID systems.

UNICEF should ensure that civil registration law is **culturally, socially and religiously sensitive and inclusive** and promotes the availability and access of marginalized groups to civil registration services. In addition, **provisions for the digital age need to be covered by civil registration law** or related law. It must also adhere to the overall principle of **confidentiality** and within this any data exchange considerations.

Particular issues promoted by UNICEF have been universal coverage and free services, the prevention of discrimination against children born out of wedlock and the simplification of delayed registration procedures.[122]

A change that some offices have advocated is the extension of the legal time frame for registration. This is actually in conflict with the civil registration principle: that the shorter the period for registration, the better the registration rates and the accuracy of the registration information. An alternative solution (for example, for minorities that name children some months after birth), may be to allow the given name to be registered later (see the text box below on naming practices). Another solution is the temporary adjustment or lifting of the condition of registration within a legal time frame.

Other legal issues that UNICEF may choose to promote, depending on the situation analysis, may include:

- Central coordination and control of civil registration laid down in law
- National IDs issued only on the basis of a birth record (if needed created by a delayed birth registration procedure)

In advocating for legal change, UNICEF works with in partnership with others at both national and international levels, recognizing the comparative advantage that each may bring to the enhancement of civil registration.

Name giving and birth registration legislation

Customs often determine when and how a child can be named. In some cultures the prerogative of naming a child is that of the grandparents. If they are not alive or live in a distant place, the naming of the child may be delayed beyond the time prescribed by law for registering births.[123]

To address this problem, some countries are now allowing for births to be registered without a name, making it possible for names to be added to the record later. Section 14 of India's 1969 Registration of Births and Deaths Act provides for parents or guardians of a child who has been registered without a name to add the name within a prescribed period. This information can be given either orally or in writing to the registrar, who is bound to enter the name in the register.

In 2012, Trinidad passed a Birth and Death Registration (Amendment) Bill in which a new section permits recording of the name at any time, on application to the registrar with the set of prescribed supporting documents. Persons older than 18 can make this application themselves.

These laws demonstrate that the name is only one part of the identity of a child. Information in the record on the parents and the date and place of birth makes it easy to ensure that the possibility of error is negligible. On the other hand the risk of 'content error' increases when the registration in its entirety is postponed for reasons such as delayed naming.

3.2.3   STIMULATING DEMAND

✓ Stimulating demand – Intervention checklist

- General improvement in the civil registration service
  - near to where people live
  - free
  - procedures that are transparent, clear, simple and culturally sensitive
- Incentives, such as connections with other social programmes
- Services that are tailored to marginalized groups

The analysis of factors affecting demand should indicate the key issues that need to be addressed to increase demand among different segments of the population. Generally the key issues that affect demand are cost, distance and the quality of the service. Low registration rates and markets for counterfeit identity documents indicate that part of the demand for identity documents is satisfied through the black market. The supply of documents in the black market may be partly provided by civil registrars themselves, especially when their work conditions are poor and pay is low or even non-existent, as is the case in some low-income countries, although black market supply of such documents will of course also involve other actors.[124]

Stimulating demand for birth registration in Nicaragua

In 2012, the UNICEF office in Nicaragua launched its first crowdsourcing challenge on InnoCentive, an online platform for open innovations with more than 270,000 members worldwide. The challenge was to increase demand among indigenous families in Nicaragua for birth registration services for children under 5. The weakness in demand side was identified during the problem analysis process as one of the main barriers to increase the birth registration rate in this population. Crowdsourcing was identified as an innovative way to look for novel solutions to the challenge from the public. A total of 28 proposals and 19 comments were received, and reviewed through a peer-review process with a multi-disciplinary, multi-country panel created within UNICEF. In early 2013, two winners were selected for implementation. To test the ideas, the office opted for prototyping, which is a design technique used to test the validity of new ideas using real-world scenarios. The experience involved frontline service providers and UNICEF staff, quadrupling the numbers of registrations during the one week trial period.

A **general improvement of the civil registration system** goes a long way to reducing or eliminating disincentives to obtaining registration documents through the proper channels. Services should be **nearer to where people live,** delivered instantaneously, be **free**, and use **procedures that are transparent, clear, simple and culturally sensitive.** In other words: measures to improve the service (supply) through the measures described under the other intervention domains will increase demand. Improving the service should also lower the transaction cost for the population: At lower cost there will be more demand.

In its efforts to improve civil registration around the world, UNSD has emphasized the importance of **incentives** for people to register, such as the requirement for registration in order to access certain government services. Social transfer programmes provide an opportunity to link the requirement for identity documentation with economic assistance to very poor people, who are among the least likely to be registered, with the proviso that beneficiaries are not excluded from such programmes if they do not have identity documentation but are assisted to register.

In some instances social transfer programmes have the establishment of the **legal identity of programme beneficiaries as a required programme outcome.** This means that UNICEF should advocate for the use of birth certificates as a default. This is a concrete way by which demand for birth and civil registration can be enhanced through institutional coordination. There are other examples, such as the requirement of a birth certificate to access health care or enrol in school.

As noted earlier, UNICEF is concerned that requiring identity papers to access basic social services could potentially be punishing children by denying their basic rights.[125] There is a strong case for abolishing or suspending such requirements when the government fails in the delivery of adequate civil registration services. There is a crucial point, however, at which the advantages of requiring identity papers outweigh the disadvantages. This is an area to be assessed specific to the country context.

If a minority of the population are disadvantaged or in a special position (such the extreme poor, displaced persons, ethnic minorities or seasonal migrants) then the civil registration service needs to reach out with **services that are tailored to these marginalized groups.** Civil registrars will be in the best possible situation to perform such services when they have managed routine registration, achieving complete registration for the general population.

Albania: Birth registration amongst marginalized communities

It has long been known in Albania that many children from the Roma community are not registered at birth, and that this led to difficulties in accessing services later in life. UNICEF supported a geo-mapping of the known 108 Roma communities, to identify the locations, maternity homes and civil registry offices where children are born but not registered. UNICEF is now working with the Ministry of Health and the Civil Registry to establish a system where the records of these maternity homes are electronically linked to those of the Civil Registry. This is expected to allow for the identification of children who require their births to be registered, and to reduce the incidences where birth registration does not take place due to errors in filling in the required information, and to an overall improvement in the quality of child health statistics of the country.

3.2.4 COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Role of UNICEF in using C4D strategies to strengthen birth and civil registration programming

- Strengthening the identification and analysis of who is being left out and why
- Analysing both the technical and interpersonal capability of front-line workers
- Building a broad coalition of partners to develop and implement advocacy strategies for birth registration
- C4D planning: Developing appropriate strategies and techniques for demand creation and update of birth registration, fostering positive change in attitudes, behaviours and social norms
- Mobilizing children and young people
- Supporting demands for transparency and accountability
- Community engagement and capacity-building

A review of reports from the field indicates that C4D is increasingly being used to: (a) garner political support to shape and implement policies and ensure adequate allocation of resources, by amplifying community voices and connecting them to upstream policy advocacy; (b) motivate and mobilize civil society, community- and faith-based organizations and social networks to help traditionally excluded groups to claim their rights; (c) raise awareness, foster positive attitudes, social norms and practices for decision-making; and (d) actively empower households and communities to demand accountability and good governance at local, provincial/state and national levels.

Building on UNICEF's guiding principles, particularly the rights to information, communication and participation enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (articles 12, 13 and 17), the values and principles that guide UNICEF's C4D work include:

1. **Facilitating enabling environments that:**
   - Create spaces for plurality of voices/narratives of community
   - Encourage listening, dialogue, debate and consultation
   - Ensure the active and meaningful participation of children and youth
   - Promote gender equality and social inclusion

2. **Reflecting the principles of inclusion, self-determination, participation and respect** by ensuring that marginalized groups (including indigenous populations and people with disabilities) are prioritized and given high visibility and voice.

Areas in which C4D approach can contribute to free and universal birth registration include:

Strengthening the identification and analysis of who is being left out and why. Universal birth registration requires non-discriminatory practices, legislation and policies. This may be hindered by, for instance: inadequate or exclusionary policies, legislation that leads to the benign neglect or active exclusion of certain groups of the population (e.g. ethnic minorities and children with disabilities); lack of political will and/or a lack of understanding regarding the importance of birth registration in national planning; social norms and practices that facilitate or obstruct registration at the time of birth; economic conditions and related concerns that prevent resource-poor families from accessing distant facilities, etc. Based on the situation analysis, communication strategies can be developed to address these key issues.

Analysing the technical and interpersonal capability of front-line workers in acting as **informants** of births and in creating awareness of, and receptivity towards, birth registration among families and communities. Appropriate C4D strategies can be used to foster positive attitudes and to strengthen the technical and interpersonal skills, commitment and confidence of front-line workers in promoting birth registration.

Building a broad coalition of partners to develop and implement advocacy strategies for birth registration. UNICEF should work with partners, including civil society, faith-based organizations[126] and the media, to develop and implement strategies to raise the profile of birth registration as a critical part of national policies and plans, create political will, and mobilize resources for the strengthening of birth registration.

Developing appropriate strategies and techniques for raising awareness and fostering positive change in attitudes and social norms. The investigation of personal beliefs, value systems and social norms of households, communities and social groups in regard to naming a new-born and registering her/his birth should inform such strategies. Analysis should include the perspectives of people on the importance or not of birth certificates in their lives.

Mobilizing children and young people to help create awareness and understanding of both the value of birth registration and of the process of registering a child's birth.

Supporting demands for transparency and accountability by aiding civil society organizations to strengthen the capacity of communities and households in the delivery of services at local, provincial and national levels, and to influence provincial and national policy.

Community engagement/Participation throughout the process of planning, implementing and monitoring communication for behaviour and social change interventions contributes to effective change. Community participation encourages people to be engaged in their own development processes and also leads to more effective programme results and sustainable changes.

Capacity-strengthening activities ensure that stakeholders not only incorporate the behavioural changes promoted but also contribute to sustained changes in social norms and communities' perceptions and attitudes. C4D uses **four key approaches** to engage participants in the required change: (1) **advocacy**, to mobilize resources, support, and leadership commitment to development goals and actions, (2) **social mobilization**, to enlist wider participation and ownership of programmes within a community, (3) **social change communication**, to create public spaces for individuals and groups to make their voices heard and exercise their rights, and to change normative and value-laden practices, and (4) **behaviour change communication** (BCC), to change individual knowledge, attitudes and practices among the members of a social system.

The C4D process is interactive and applies a holistic view of a social system, referred to as the Social Ecological Model (SEM), which focuses on the complex interplay of (1) national and international policy, legislation and systemic factors and (2) social, economic and personal factors, all of which influence both the provision and uptake of services, and can affect sustainable social transformation. Figure 3 presents the Social Ecological Model and the corresponding C4D approaches appropriate to each level of the SEM.[127]
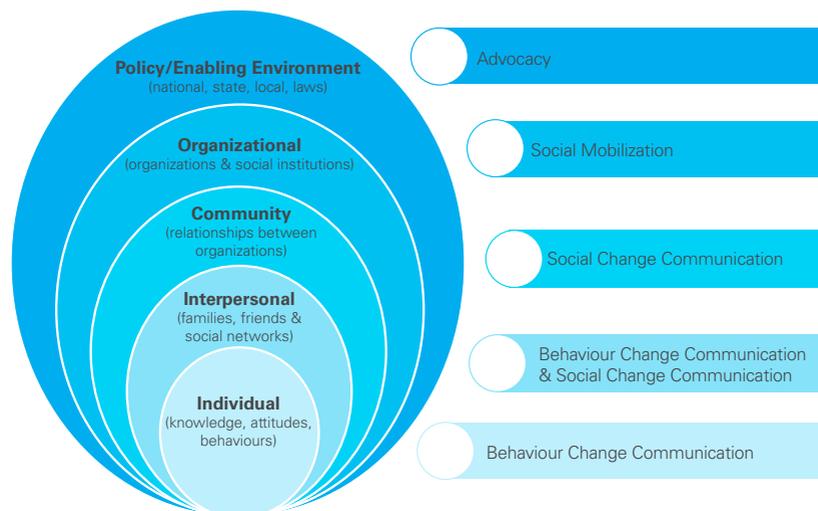
Steps for the development of the C4D strategy

Any C4D action must be contextualized within the overall birth registration programme, and consider its impact on the full birth registration reform agenda.[128]

STEP A: Situation analysis[129]

C4D programming, like any programming, needs to be based on a sound situation analysis. For C4D programming it is important to understand the knowledge, attitudes and cultural values of those directly engaged in the birth registration process, and how these values are put into practice.[130] It is critical that the full range of actors involved in birth registration are identified and included in the analysis. These may be people, such as the policymaker, legislator, registrar, parent, as well as institutions, such as the hospital, registry office and school, that may also have an attitude towards the birth registration process. Together this contributes to understanding what needs to change and the readiness for change of each participant.

STEP B: C4D strategy design[131]

This strategic design step is the point at which (1) the information from the analyses (Step A) is translated into SMART objectives, (2) appropriate communication approaches are decided upon, (3) communication processes and channels are selected, (4) an implementation plan is developed, and (5) the monitoring and evaluation plan for the programme is written. Unique for C4D is the focus on framing the action within the social ecological model.

Defining the position of C4D action and the advantage of this approach in balance with others helps to clarify the overall programme. It needs to address key issues that affect positive, attitudinal behaviour and social change relevant to birth registration, at all levels. Sustaining increased rates of demand and utilization for birth registration services, for instance, requires a close examination and analysis of the context in which services are provided. The change must be able to be supported by the civil registration system. Hence the monitoring of the C4D intervention is not only based on the change specific to the C4D action, e.g. an increase in demand for birth registration, but also links with the overall goal, e.g. of children being registered.

STEP C: Development and testing[132]

Step C requires translating the situation analysis (Step A) and strategic plan (Step B) into the communication interventions/activities for each participant group (key audience), including dialogue-based interventions, messages and materials that will be used to reach and engage the intended populations. The interventions/activities and messages should relate to the programme objectives and be created with participation from key stakeholders, including partners, community health workers, media experts and others.

STEP D: Implementation and monitoring[133]

As noted earlier in section 2.7, PERT and Gantt methodologies may assist in developing and following the implementation of the C4D activities. These tools may assist in tracking the materials and activities produced and disseminated or implemented, timing of community meetings, advocacy events, or other participatory or interactive activities, and the distribution channels or event locations, a promotion plan, and people responsible for each action. Having a clear tracking in place supports programme monitoring including the routine (day-to-day) tracking of activities and deliverables, alerting managers to problems or deviations, and allowing for efficient and timely responses. It is important to monitor project inputs, outputs, programme coverage and process (partnerships, collaborations, reporting mechanisms). Monitoring, as part of implementation, also needs to be carefully prepared, planned and implemented.

Monitoring information can be collected through various sources (Table 7). Rapid appraisal methods are quick, low-cost ways to gather the views and feedback of intended participant group members and other programme participants. The feedback can be quickly analysed to determine whether any of the programme elements requires changes. The findings, however, are usually related to specific communities and not necessarily generalizable to all communities in the programme. Community group interviews involve a series of questions and facilitated discussions in a meeting open to all community members. The use of mystery clients is primarily for monitoring the quality of services at targeted facilities.

Table 7: Examples of quantitative and qualitative monitoring methods

Quantitative Methods	Qualitative Methods
- Rapid appraisal survey or rapid audience assessment - Pre-post surveys for trainings - Audits (e.g., of medical records) - Tracking logs - Content analysis (e.g., of media coverage)	- Focus group discussions - Community group interviews - Key informant interviews - In-depth interviews - Direct observation (field visits) - Mystery client

STEP E: Evaluation and replanning[134]

Like any project, the C4D activity requires evaluation, and this must be integrated within the evaluation process noted in section 2.8. While monitoring is the routine (day-to-day) follow-up of inputs and outputs, evaluation is the episodic assessment of the outcomes and impacts of the C4D programme on the intended populations, and on their social system at large. In the case of C4D, the evaluation aspect, while it would focus on the specific objective (e.g. number of people who are knowledgeable about birth registration) it must also be cognizant of the overall aim of the registration (e.g. number of children who have registered). All of the conclusions need to be seen together. The evaluation is designed specifically with the intention of attributing changes to the programme interventions.

3.2.5 BUILDING COALITIONS AND STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION

National level

> #### Role of UNICEF in building coalitions and strengthening collaboration for birth registration
>
> **National level**
>
> - Working with civil society organizations and NGOs to promote the role of children, families and communities
> - Supporting government to mount coordinated multi-sectoral response between and among government agencies, local and national civil society and international organizations
> - Coordinate advocacy
>
> **International level**
>
> - Convening, supporting and providing technical assistance to regional and international intergovernmental meetings
> - Partnerships for international advocacy on birth registration
> - Facilitate bilateral and multilateral learning and support, both North/South and South/South

In a multifaceted endeavour, such as strengthening civil registration, each stakeholder should support the elements best suited to its capacity. UNICEF should **work in partnership with the public and private sector** to promote the role of **children, families and communities** as primary stakeholders that can contribute to the dissemination of understanding on the importance of civil registration and contribute their views and perspectives on the design of culturally sensitive civil registration systems. Local NGOs are an important bridge between families, communities and the government agencies responsible for registration and invaluable sources of local know-how that should inform policymaking.

UNICEF has a key role to play in **supporting government to bring about a coordinated, multi-sectoral response** to strengthening the civil registration system in which all stakeholders participate. In many countries, coordination between government agencies with responsibility for civil registration is particularly challenging. Coordination mechanisms may exist between ministries but they are not always effective.

UNICEF can coordinate advocacy efforts directed to concerned ministries and agencies, including exposure to good examples from other countries. UNICEF can also work with the higher levels of government to ensure that a strong signal regarding the importance of civil registration, together with a requirement for regular reporting, could also facilitate better coordination. Commitments made by the government to bodies like the Committee on the Rights of the Child or to meetings of Heads of State, as happened in the case of the African Union[135], could also result in higher levels of commitment to joint action on civil registration. Finally, it has to be recognized that in some cases better coordination is not enough, and profound reorganization supported by legal reform is inevitable.

International level

UNICEF's country presence and work with birth registration in over 125 middle- and low-income countries, and the breadth of its relationships and partnerships with the wide range of different actors with an interest in birth registration, gives it a unique role in facilitating advocacy and the sharing of experiences at the regional and international levels. In particular, UNICEF can play a role in **convening, supporting and providing technical assistance to regional and international intergovernmental meetings** on civil registration. In Africa, such processes have included the APAI-CRVS, (see the box below). The Latin American Regional Conferences on Birth Registration and the Right to Identity, held in 2007 and 2011, resulted in the 'Inter-American Program for a Universal Civil Registry and The Right to Identity', which include a commitment by States to achieve full, universal and free registration by 2015. In EAPRO, the December 2012 High-level Meeting on CRVS organised by the ESCAP Committee on Statistics resulted in a Regional Strategic Plan that was subsequently endorsed by member States through the ESCAP Committee on Statistics and in ESCAP resolution 69/15. The plan included ministerial endorsement of regional milestones, political and budgetary commitment for the improvement of CRVS and indicators for monitoring and reporting

the state of CRVS systems and progress in implementing the Regional Strategic Plan. In recognition of the importance of CRVS, a global summit was convened in Bangkok in April 2013 to call for further action. The 'Call for Partner Action' asked partners and governments to accelerate their actions to support CRVS, include a CRVS goal in the post-2015 agenda and foster innovation, including in technologies with potential to accelerate progress in CRVS systems. The call resulted in a global alliance on CRVS designed to align partner actions behind country and regional leadership and political commitment for CRVS.

African Programme on Accelerated Improvement of CRVS (APAI-CRVS)

In Africa, ECA, together with the African Union Commission and the AfDB, organized the first Civil Registration Ministers Meeting in Addis Ababa in August 2010. This was in recognition of the fact that there was inadequate understanding of the importance of civil registration and vital statistics at higher levels of government. The meeting attended by over 40 ministers from the continent resulted in a Declaration and Plan of Action for subsequent work. A core group of UN organizations – UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and the Health Matrices Network of WHO – came together to support the process. UNICEF has been playing a catalytic role in the core group.

The second ministerial meeting, in which several ministers of health also participated in recognition of the role of the health sector in strengthening civil registration and vital statistics, took place in Durban, South Africa in September 2012. This ministerial meeting has now been elevated in official status by the African Union with a mandate to report progress to the Heads of State and Government once every two years. It has been agreed that all countries will prepare "costed national plans of action reflecting country priorities mainstreamed into the national development plans and programmes" that will be "implemented with support from the Secretariat and partners"[136]

UNICEF is in an excellent position to develop **partnerships for international advocacy for birth registration.** For example UNICEF and Plan have been working together since the late 1990s to develop international partnerships, learning and advocacy in birth registration with a focus on Africa, Asia and Latin America.

UNICEF can **facilitate bilateral and multilateral learning and support between countries, both North/North and South/South.** Countries in Latin America as well as in Asia, which have state-of-the-art civil registration and identity management systems, offer an ideal learning ground for countries in need of civil registration reform.[137]

Working with parliamentarians for birth registration

Parliamentarians can ask tough questions, demand answers and hold governments to account. Each major function that Parliaments perform has the potential to further the cause of children and to support civil registration.

Main areas for parliamentary partnership

1. Law-making and law revision. Laws may need revision to improve the quality of the service and make registration available free of cost and easily accessible to all families. Some contexts may also require the drafting and adoption of new laws. Legal review also requires examining related laws for interoperability between birth registration and other services as well as the potential for any exclusion in access to rights due to the requirement of birth registration.

   - South Africa incorporated child rights including the right to a name and nationality from birth in their 1996 Constitution. This places civil registration within the overarching legal framework for the country.
   - Recent revisions of law in Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan bring civil registration and national IDs under a single law.
   - Law reform should be broad-based and consultative. The involvement of academics, practitioners, civil society and the general public enriches understanding, expands the base of expertise that informs law reform, broadens awareness and strengthens networks and partnerships.

2. Budgeting. Adequate funds from core government budgets are essential to strengthening civil registration. Parliamentarians can monitor how the budgets are utilized and review results. In particular, Members of Parliament can call attention to discrepancies between the civil registration budget and the budget for ID systems. Most countries also require Parliaments to ratify their budgets. Parliamentarians can leverage the budget process so as to ensure adequate national resources are directed to registration as part of the overall child protection system.

3. Monitoring birth registration rates. Parliamentarians can throw a spotlight on areas where governments need to do more, as in the case of regions or population groups where the registration rates are low. They can use their oversight power to solicit information about why registration rates are low and what governments plan to do to improve them. For example, Parliaments can hold hearings and compel government testimony and response as a way to hold government accountable.

Engaging with parliaments

There are both formal and informal entry points across a Parliament's work. Department committees have this responsibility in some Parliaments; specialized committees, informal caucuses or working groups in others. It is essential that a thorough study of the parliamentary procedures and the political situation be made before a strategy of engagement with Parliament is initiated.

Initiating parliamentary partnerships

It is desirable that contacts with the Parliament should be initiated through the office of the UNICEF Representative in the country office and followed through by a clearly identified focal point.

Briefings

A good first step is to start with briefings of parliamentarians. They can be made aware of the disaggregated registration levels in their own constituencies and what this means to the children they are responsible for. Field trips to places where children's births are registered are also useful to understand the problems and help identify solutions.

Examples of parliamentary partnerships for birth registration

Indonesia

UNICEF was one of the founders of the National Consortium on Civil Registration in 2001 and remained an active member until the Law on Population Administration was adopted in 2006. The Consortium played a key role in providing technical input to the law. UNICEF also provided technical assistance to the parliamentary team by hiring a consultant for one year to provide day-to-day technical inputs to lawmakers, and follow up on all parliamentary processes surrounding the law. It also brought in international experts on birth registration to make accessible international good practices on the issue. At the policy level, UNICEF also provided technical support to the development of local laws on birth registration, with over 30 UNICEF-supported districts having adopted legislation on free birth registration by January 2007.

Uganda

A petition to Parliament about child abuse led the Parliamentary Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development to invite the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) in 2010 to present its views on the petition. The petition mentioned ten points in relation to birth registration, and made five suggestions, including a change of the law and the development of a national policy on birth registration. URSB reported that it had hired a legal consultant who had made suggestions for changes in the law, which were discussed in a national consultative workshop. The Minister of Justice, having received the suggestions for change of the law, required the development of a national policy first. URSB requested UNICEF for assistance in the development of the National Policy on Birth Registration, which was provided. UNICEF gave financial support, resulting in a draft policy and a discussion in a consultative workshop early in 2012. This activity is also mentioned in Uganda's bottleneck analysis (section 3.2.6).

3.2.6 SYNTHESIS: THE AGENDA FOR GOVERNMENT AND UNICEF

In previous sections of this chapter five key intervention domains were presented and some selected priority areas for intervention were discussed in depth. The situation analysis of chapter 2 and the intervention domains of chapter 3 now need to shape UNICEF action in the context of the broader government and other stakeholder effort with the aim of universal birth and civil registration. In section 2.7 some of the tools for such a synthesis were briefly discussed. The methodology that has gained much currency in UNICEF is the bottleneck methodology. An example of the application of this methodology for priority setting applied to birth registration programming in Uganda is found in Annex D.

The example of Uganda (birth registration rate 30 per cent) shows a broad civil registration reform agenda organized into 14 major areas of work. The selection of areas for implementation – based on their impact, ease of conducting the intervention and urgency – was undertaken with government partners. In Uganda UNICEF is the government's main partner in the improvement of birth and death registration, which made the use of the bottleneck methodology in partnership possible. In other countries UNICEF may not be as prominent and the joint use of the bottleneck methodology may not be feasible or needs to be done in a 'simplified' way.

UNICEF is well positioned to help governments learn from good practice in other countries. That includes international good practice UNICEF is associated with directly, such as the enhancement of the role of the health sector for civil registration, the application of technology such as the use of mobile phone technology for the notification of vital events, the development of the legal framework, the capacity-building of the corps of civil registrars locally and through regional learning events, and the judicious use of UNICEF's convening strength in the area of child protection, and in birth registration especially. The specific country situation may suggest still other areas suitable for UNICEF to support and add value.

The translation of the selected interventions into concrete action may require the development of an overall plan for civil registration reform and detailed implementation plans that will include a monitoring and evaluation component. These plans need to be approved through a process of appropriate administrative measures. UNICEF can assist the government with technical and financial support for the development of detailed action plans, and extend assistance in seeking further support.

4 CONCLUSION

This handbook provides the necessary basic information on what birth registration is, the principles and areas to consider when assessing birth registration in a country, and potential programme options.

Birth registration is the continuous, permanent, and universal recording, within the civil registry, of the occurrence and characteristics of birth in accordance with the legal requirements of a country. It is a right of all children recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (article 7), and other instruments support birth registration as well as the right to a name and a nationality.

International instruments

1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 15

1961: Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, article 1

1966: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 24

1979: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, article 9

1989: The Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 7

1990: International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, article 29

2006: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 18

Regional instruments

1969: American Convention on Human Rights, article 20

1990: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, article 6

1997: European Convention on Nationality, article 6

2004: Arab Charter on Human Rights, article 29

2005: Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam, article 7

2006: Council of Europe Convention on the Avoidance of Statelessness in Relation to State Succession, article 2

Approximately 230 million children under the age of five are not able to access this right, however, hindering their ability to access protection from violations (e.g. trafficking, prosecution as an adult), and the provision of documents that support their life capacities and participation in state activities (e.g., driving license, passport, voter lists, ID cards). It is very important to know the number of children in a country in planning policy in social sector and other programmes. The registration itself provides two important pieces of information – place of birth and parentage – either of which can prove to be essential for obtaining citizenship and thereby preventing statelessness.

Several characteristics of birth registration have been detailed in this handbook, and these are imperative for it to be considered well-functioning. **Birth registration must be:**

- **Within the civil registry** – a birth can only be registered by this authority. Ideally this is a national authority or, if not, there is a mechanism to ensure national coordination.
- **Free** – to ensure that no one is hindered from realizing this right, registration must be without charge, whether for regular or late registration. It is recommended that the copy of the registration, otherwise known as the birth certificate, should also be free of charge. It is recognized that there are some costs that may be borne by the family such as travel expenses to the registrar, time away from employment to register the child, etc.
- **Continuous, permanent and available** – the civil registration records must be kept forever. This also requires that the records need to be retrievable, including in an office other than where the event was registered. It also means that the registrar should be easily accessible anywhere in the country.
- **Universal in coverage** – all people who are born in the country must be able to be registered without prejudice.
- **Confidential** – access to the information in the registry must be strictly controlled, noting in particular that some information is highly sensitive and personal and could be misused.
- **Timely and accurate** – the information has implications for other obligations and rights for the individual. Completing the registration as soon as possible increases the probability of a precise recording of the event.

Birth registration may be **compulsory** but only if the above characteristics have been firmly established.

To register a birth there is first a **notification** of birth and **declaration** of birth by the informant. The **registration** is generally followed by the issue of a **birth certificate** that is personalized in a secure manner on a secure base paper that is not prohibitive in terms of expense.

Complete birth registration within civil registration is possible even in low-income settings. Understanding the status of birth registration in a country is not only about looking at the **number** of those registered but also about examining the **institutional reality** of the civil registry. Beyond looking at the application of the human rights framework in the legal framework, this includes reviewing how the registrar is organized and what the process is for a person who is trying to register. For programming purposes it is important to consider the service network and the interoperability of birth registration with other services. It may also be necessary to consider the means used for notification, registration, the issuance of a birth certificate, and document retrieval, and whether newer technology may support these areas.

Promotion of registration also requires monitoring the **demand** for civil registration both from the population and from the government. Considering the social and cultural norms associated with any rites of passage may affect the structure of the birth registration, e.g., when a child is named. The connection of the person to a country may also impact on whether a child is registered. This demand may also come from other services that required registration in order to participate. Reviewing the accessibility of the civil registrar, procedures required and incentives for registration allow for the programme to be informed by those who are to benefit. And finally there is a requirement to **monitor** progress and make adjustments based on the results.

8-Step approach to conducting the situation analysis		
Step 1	Country birth and civil registration situation	Analysis of the status of birth and civil registration in the country
Step 2	Organizational review	Examination of supply side factors: how the civil registration service is organized and the legal framework on which it is based
Step 3	Legal review	
Step 4	Demand for civil registration services	Analysis of factors related to demand
Step 5	Government policy, plans and international support	Analysis of the policies and plans that the government has in place and the international support for civil registration that it receives
Step 6	Analysis for Communication for Development	Analysis of factors that influence birth registration rates, that are relevant to the development of communication strategies
Step 7	Analysis and identification of gaps and priority interventions	Consolidation of the review that can be used by government to frame future action
Step 8	Analysis and possible directions for UNICEF support	Review of previous interventions by UNICEF and the type of support that it may provide in the future

UNICEF is widely considered to be a leader in the field of birth registration. Its statistics on birth registration contribute to any analysis of birth registration rates and coverage. Its programming has supported government in situation analysis leading to actions to promote organisational and legal reform, planning and capacity development. It has an established role in finding innovative solutions to improve the registration process, including through the use of mobile and digital technology. Well placed to stimulate demand including through communication for development actions, UNICEF also has a powerful convening role with private and public entities. The programming actions are undertaken, in coordination with the civil registry, considering the comparative advantage of UNICEF in the specific context.

Birth registration is an essential part of any governance structure. Registering a child's birth is a critical first step towards safeguarding his or her lifelong protection. Improving birth registration improves a child's access to services, to protection, and will improve the access of their own children to these benefits in turn.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A – UNSD STANDARD BIRTH RECORD AND BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Birth record for legal purpose and for statistical purpose

The birth record serves two purposes: a legal purpose and a statistical purpose. The content of the record must meet the requirements of the registration law. Depending on the law, the birth record will **either** only include the information sufficient for legal purpose, i.e. sufficient to legally provide proof of the birth (see birth record A details below), **or** it will also include information for statistical purpose (see birth record B details below). In case of the latter the information for legal and statistical use should be clearly separated. Further, the information collected should be balanced against the aim of the registration, which is the protection of children. As noted earlier, if information is not available (the name of one of the parents) or the parent's personal identification record (because they are not registered), this should not detract from registering the event. Certified copies of the record produced for legal purposes should not include the statistical information that is on the record.

Information recommended for inclusion in Live Birth Record A (for legal use)[138]	
Characteristics of the registration record	Name and location of the local registration office
	Number of the record
	Date of registration
Characteristics of the child	Name
	Sex
	Assigned personal identification number
Characteristics of the event	Date and time of occurrence
	Place of occurrence
	Type of birth (single, multiple issue)
	Attendant at birth (person who assisted the mother in delivering a live-born child)

Characteristics of the mother	Name
	Personal identification number
	Age or date of birth
	Place of usual residence
	Nationality/ethnic group or citizenship
	Place of birth
	Marital status
Characteristics of the father	Name
	Personal identification number
	Age or date of birth
	Place of usual residence
	Nationality/ethnic group or citizenship
	Place of birth
	Marital status
Characteristics of the informant	Name
	Personal identification number (optional)
	Place of usual residence
	Relationship to the child
Documentation provided by the informant	Medical certificate issued by physician or midwife (or, alternatively, names and individual identification numbers of witnesses to the event)
Remarks and signatures	Signatures of informant and local registrar
Space for complementary notations and remarks and for official stamps	

Information recommended for Inclusion in Live Birth Record B (for statistical use)[139]	
Characteristics of the event	*Date and time of occurrence*
	Date of registration
Geographic characteristics	*Place of occurrence*
	Locality of occurrence (derived)
	Urban/rural occurrence (derived)
	Place of registration
Other characteristics	*Type of birth (single, multiple issue)*
	Attendant at birth (person who assisted the mother in delivering a live-born child)
	Type of place of occurrence (hospital, home, etc.)
Characteristics of the child	*Sex*
	Birth weight
Characteristics of the mother	*Age (derived when date of birth only) or date of birth*
	Marital status
	Child born in wedlock (derived)
	Educational attainment
	Literacy status
	Ethnic and/or national group
	Citizenship/nationality
Other characteristics of the mother	Date of last menstrual period of the mother or gestational age (derived when date of last menstrual period asked only)
	Number of prenatal visits
	Month of pregnancy prenatal care began
	Children born alive to mother during her entire lifetime
	Children born to mother during her entire lifetime and still living
	Foetal deaths to mother during her entire lifetime
	Birth order or parity (derived)
	Date of last previous live birth
	Interval since last previous live birth (derived)
	Date of marriage
	Duration of marriage (derived)

Economic characteristics	Economic activity status
	Usual occupation
	Socio-economic status (derived)
Geographic characteristics	*Place of usual residence*
	Locality of residence (derived)
	Urban/rural residence (derived)
	Duration of residence in usual place
	Place of residence at a specified time in the past
	Place of birth
	Migrant status (derived)

Characteristics of the father	*Age (derived when only date of birth asked) or date of birth*
	Marital status
	Educational attainment
	Literacy status
	Ethnic and/or national group
	Citizenship/nationality
Economic characteristics	Economic activity status
	Usual occupation
	Socio-economic status (derived)
Geographic characteristics	*Place of usual residence*
	Locality of residence (derived)
	Urban/rural residence (derived)
	Duration of residence in usual place
	Place of residence at a specified time in the past
	Place of birth
	Migrant status (derived)

As can be deduced by comparison of the two records, the names and personal identification numbers are not included in the statistical report. Information on whether the child is born within or outside of wedlock is included in the statistical report while the legal report is silent about it. Likewise, information about ethnicity of the parents is only included in the statistical report. Another difference is that the birth record is a dynamic record: it is subject to corrections and amendments throughout the life of the individual whose birth is registered.

The record for legal purposes can be less elaborate than shown. A minimal approach is to include only that information which is sufficient to legally provide proof of an event: personal particulars, the date and place of the occurrence of the event and the place of usual residence.

The items shown in the statistical report do not have the same importance. The items that are high priority are shown in italics.

Certified copies

An important task of civil registrars is to issue certificates of registration for legal or other use. Because certificates have evidentiary, legal value, civil registration law should specify how they should be issued and what information they will include. In general UNICEF suggests that the information on the certificate is minimal, noting that a more detailed copy can be available. The information shown in the certificate does not need every single particular as shown in the birth record, but the particulars that are shown in both should be exactly the same.

ANNEX B

NOTES WITH TABLE 3

"Birth Registration Rate Averages by Country Income Groups"

1. Countries have been classified on the basis of GNI per capita 2010. A few countries have moved between groups since then, but they have been classified here on the basis of their GNI for 2010.

2. Weight: Number of births 2010 (Source: *The State of the World's Children 2012*)

3. The World Bank classified 36 countries in this group in 2012, including Mauritania, which in 2010 was a lower-middle-income country. Five countries could not be included here because either the birth registration rate is not given in *SOWC 2012*, or the GNI per capita is not given, or neither, are: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Malawi, Myanmar and Somalia. Inclusion would hardly affect the average or the standard deviation.

4. The World Bank classified 55 countries in this group in 2012. Ten countries could not be included here because either the birth registration rate is not given in *SOWC 2012*, or the GNI per capita is not given, or neither, are: Fiji, Guatemala, Kosovo, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, South Sudan, Sudan, Tonga and West Bank and Gaza (State of Palestine). Inclusion would probably increase the average as the islands in the Pacific, the Latin American countries, Kosovo and the West Bank and Gaza all have relatively good birth registration rates. Even Sudan would raise the average. Only South Sudan and Papua New Guinea have below-average birth registration rates.

5. The World Bank classified 54 countries in this group in 2012. Half that number of countries could not be included here because either the birth registration rate is not given in *SOWC 2012*, or the GNI per capita is not given, or neither, are: Antigua and Barbuda, Belarus, Bulgaria, China, Costa Rica, Dominica, Grenada, Iran, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Palau, Panama, Romania, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Tuvalu and Uruguay. Inclusion would hardly affect the average or the standard deviation, as virtually all these countries are known to have close to complete birth registration.

ANNEX C

Make Your Child Count; Example from Belize[140]

The context

As a country, Belize has signed on to Convention on the Rights of the Child with article 7 stating that every child has the right to have his or her birth registered. The Make Your Child Count Campaign was launched in 2011 in an effort to advance work in favour of the most disadvantaged children. This communication intervention aimed at targeting parents or guardians with unregistered children under the age of 18. One of the goals of the campaign was to achieve universal birth registration in Belize by having all unregistered children registered by the end of 2012.

While Belize has made some progress on birth registration in recent years, many children are still not registered. To address this problem, UNICEF, along with the Government of Belize, Vital Statistics, Ministry of Health, Social Security, National Committee on Families and Children, Toledo Programme for Children and Adolescents, Special Envoy for Women and Children and Organization of American States and local community-based organizations have partnered in a 24-month campaign to ensure that all children in both rural and urban areas are reached.

The Registration of Births and Deaths Act requires a child to be registered within 42 days of birth – in default, the parent may be summoned within one year and a fee for late registration is levied. The second country Committee on the Rights of the Child Report estimates that only 50 per cent of births are registered within the required 42 days. The situation analysis indicated that there needs to be greater understanding of the value of birth registration. It was essential that multilingual communication materials be produced and disseminated in this multi-ethnic country. In addition, there was a greater need to better coordinate between the Vital Statistics Unit and Ministry of Health delivery of social services, especially as this relates to maternal health clinics where children are born. Based on individuals interviewed, there was also a need to improve the national legislation to incorporate the elimination of all discrimination.

Behaviours promoted through communication

- Parents need to register their child as soon as s/he is born and ensure that they obtain a birth certificate.
- Parents will register their unregistered children not only during this campaign but also as soon as the child is born (long-term perspective).
- Government will accept its responsibility as a duty bearer that birth registration is a basic right it must provide to all its citizens and will provide all necessary resources.
- Civil registry staff will facilitate the process, especially to all disadvantaged and rural people in Belize (equity approach).

Barriers enablers to adopt the desired behaviour

The literature review, focus group discussions and the interviews with key informants indicated the following facilitating factors:

- Schools still accept children without a certificate
- Voter's card can be obtained without the certificate
- Available information is limited
- The duty bearers do not make great efforts to register newborns
- The duty bearers do not recognize birth registration as a right
- Support from community leaders and key influencers is not difficult to obtain
- Activities of UNICEF spearheading the campaign can really further this cause

The communication landscape

Belize has one private radio with full national coverage with strong transmission and at least one private radio station in each district, with Belize City having five radio stations. There is no national radio or television. There are seven television stations. Television sets are available in 81 per cent of the homes, and 77 per cent own radios and 74 per cent use cell phones.[141] Most of the rural population listens to the national radio and the local one. Radio listenership and television viewing is quite high. With only 29 per cent of the population having a computer and 18 per cent having access to Internet,[142] social media technologies such as Facebook are limited to that number of people only. Regarding SMS, it can serve as a communication medium but low-income families generally do not use cell phones. Local consumption of radio programming is highest and is the primary source of information for many Belizeans. Both radio and television are good avenues for dissemination of messages.

The key informants indicated that media provide a good source of information for people in general and trusted sources such as teachers and helpful civil officers in the Vital Statistics Registry Unit and Ministry of Health. Messages that come from trusted sources are listened to and can be widely disseminated. Teachers are also seen as a key resource, and can also be promoters of the message of the right to identity through registration at birth. All participants suggested the Church as a key social network resource.

Communication and information need to be made available at all times so that people understand the processes. Parents mentioned that they do not have money to pay the hospital bill for the birth of their child, so they are unable to register their child, although the Ministry of Health is promoting the need to have children registered, regardless of bill payment. This campaign is also providing information regarding the cost of registration not related to the cost of the delivery services provided by hospitals.

This communication strategy, therefore, seeks to educate parents in Belize to adopt a positive behaviour by registering their children if they are unregistered or if they have another child to register at birth. Strong partnerships with the organizations dealing with the process of birth registration especially the Vital Statistics Unit will also serve as the platform of change required to achieve universal birth registration in Belize.

The theoretical framework

The theoretical frameworks underlying the communication strategy for the Make Your Child Count are the **theory of reasoned action, attribution theory, social learning theory** and **socio-ecological theory.**

The theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen,1975)[143] is a two-prong model: First, it addresses elements that shape intentions. Second, it addresses the intentions that will lead to behaviour. The theory considers aspects that shape an individual's attitude to a behaviour as well as pre-existing subjective norms. The theory considers that intentions are the most important driver of behaviour.

The attribution theory (Heider, 1958; Jones et al., 1972; Weiner, 1974, 1986)[144] is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behaviour. Attribution theory assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do. A person seeking to understand why another person did something may attribute one or more causes to that behaviour. According to Heider, a person can make two attributions: 1) internal attribution,

the inference that a person is behaving in a certain way because of something about the person, such as attitude, character or personality; and 2) external attribution, the inference that a person is behaving a certain way because of something about the situation he or she is in.

Proponents of social learning theory (Sears, 1951, 1957 and Bandura, 1977)[145] take the view that people learn within a social context. It is facilitated through concepts such as modelling and observational learning. People, especially children, learn from the environment and seek acceptance from society by learning through influential models. Social learning theory is a perspective that posits that social behaviour (any type of behaviour that we display socially) is learned primarily by observing and imitating the actions of others. The behaviour is also influenced by being rewarded and/or punished for these actions.

The Social Ecological Model/SEM (Sallis and Owen, 2002)[146] is a composite of a variety of theories. It targets the individual, interpersonal, organizational, community and public policy levels and enables comprehensive initiative approaches. The social ecological model further incorporates the context of the actors and implementers of the behaviour change initiatives. This is especially important, as previous models have shown how the nature of interaction and relationships substantially shape behaviour change.

Coordination and partnership

Partnership with the governmental institutions as well as the community-based organizations and agencies is important to ensure that all levels of the community are involved, aware and participate. Thus, the programme that will coordinate/partner with the Vital Statistics Unit, churches, village councils, Ministry of Health, Social Security Board, Special Envoy for Women and Children, Association of Principals (primary and secondary schools), and community NGOs will be critical for the achievement of 100 per cent birth registration.

Programme audience participants

1. **Primary audience participants**
   - Parents: Male and female parents or guardians living in Belize especially the poor, marginalized rural and indigenous. They may not know that registering a child allows them to exercise the right to have all services rendered to all citizens in Belize
   - Vital Statistics Unit
   - Officers who can facilitate access to services such as birth registration

2. **Secondary audience participants**
   - Medical professionals: They are expected to create the enabling environment and provide the systems to support the behaviour of our primary audience and the Vital Statistics Unit.
3. **Tertiary audience participants**
   - Community leaders, chairpersons, teachers, church leaders. They directly affect the behaviour of the primary participants. They are active members of community and churches.
4. **Quaternary audience participants**
   - Media institutions. They are expected to promote public discourse on birth registration as a right for a citizen who must claim this right through the behaviour of the primary audience.

Communication objectives – By the end of 2012:

- Ninety-nine per cent of new parents in Belize will state the benefit of registering their child at birth.
- Ninety per cent of medical personnel and influencers of parents in Belize will know about the right of all children in Belize to their national identity through birth registration.
- Ninety per cent of individuals in Belize will respect the right of children to be registered at birth, and subsequently obtain a birth certificate, which will allow them access to basic services such as education and health care.
- One hundred per cent of the members of the Vital Statistics Unit will complete a two-day workshop on the policies and legal framework surrounding birth registration in Belize, and will be able to demonstrate their understanding to members of the communities in which they are working.

Applying the attribution theory, theory of reasoned action and Social Ecological Model (SEM)

The table on the following page illustrates the interventions and approaches to address beliefs and attitudes at each of the programme levels.

Participant segments and interventional approaches

Level/ Participants	Communication approach	Activity	Theories
Parents and family	Interpersonal communication (IPC)	Participation in community meetings including women's groups Public service announcements (PSAs)	Theory of reasoned action Social learning theory SEM
Vital Statistics Unit and others	Peer education Advocacy	Lobbying; training/ workshops; conferences; PSAs	Attribution theory Theory of reasoned action SEM
Religious congregations	Interpersonal communication with opinion shapers and leaders Advocacy for universal birth registration	Talks, information, education and communication (IEC) materials (Make Your Child Count brochure) Add this to the agenda item of the Council of Churches	Attribution theory Social learning theory SEM
Medical health personnel, including the midwives who serve the rural populations	Peer education Peer training	IEC materials provided	Attribution theory Theory of reasoned action Social learning theory SEM
Teachers	Social mobilization/ Presentations	PTA meetings Meetings Distribute brochures/posters	Social learning theory SEM
Community leaders, including NGOs working in the social sector	Social mobilization/ Presentations	Presentations and materials	Social learning theory SEM
Media	Advocacy TV and radio broadcast	Lobby for support from media to promote birth registration	Social learning theory SEM

Monitoring and evaluation plan

The monitoring and evaluation of the programme includes interviews following meetings and campaign events as well as reports on the events. Media coverage will be monitored during the campaign/ programme and documented. The data on the number of birth registration will also be recorded. A midterm evaluation will be undertaken using qualitative methods (e.g., focus group discussions) to assess the impact of the approaches. The evaluation will help to address any unforeseen or new barriers to implementation and allow for adjusting the programme.

Results as of May 2012[147]

- Birth registration increased (nearly 18,000 in 186 communities)
- Partnerships and coordination among key actors in birth registration strengthened
- Secondary School Birth Registration Programme established
- Access to services at the community level improved
- Awareness of the importance of birth registration among parents increased
- Empowerment of communities to claim their right to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics.

ANNEX D

	BOTTLENECK ANALYSIS BIRTH AND DEATH REGISTRATION UGANDA – NOVEMBER 2011[148]					
	Area of work	**Situation**	**Impact of removal (High, Medium, Low)**	**Ease of addressing bottleneck (Achievable, Challenging, Difficult)**	**Bottleneck priority**	**Key Activities/ Interventions**
Policy and Planning	Development of comprehensive BDR Policy	Important to bring coherence, some work underway	High - essential step for coordination	Achievable - work already on-going, government engaged	High	Bringing stakeholders together to formulate comprehensive policy
	Harmonisation of registration systems through the legal framework	A legal system exists, but needs to be harmonized with other legislation	Medium - Can operate without change, but only in the short term	Challenging- Legal changes require policy in place first. UNICEF in unique position to support change	Medium priority –this should be a longer term intervention	Once policy is formulated bring together stakeholders to agree on harmonization of systems
	Planning with health sector around registration at hospitals and health centres. Engagement with education sector	Currently some collaboration, but some way from full integration	High - For sustainable system to register new births	Achievable - Health sector engaged	High	Agree work plans Hold quarterly co-ordination meetings
Budget and Financing	Resource envelop for BDR is increased (donor)	Rough estimates on costs of delivery are US $6M capital and US$1.2M recurrent needed. More sophisticated costing including national estimates needed.	High - Large scale change requires rapid financing	Challenging - Some interest in committing more resources from donors	Medium	Formulate advocacy plan for increased donor funds Fundraise with internal and external donors
	Resource envelope increased (national resources)		High - district level financing a priority	Challenging - Some interest in committing more resources from government	Medium	Analyse current budget Advocate at national level to have greater resources for BDR

Area of work	Situation	Impact of removal (High, Medium, Low)	Ease of addressing bottleneck (Achievable, Challenging, Difficult)	Bottleneck priority	Key Activities/ Interventions
Service Delivery	Increase national and district capacity at URSB and UBOS to undertake registration	Orientation of staff is weak at national and district levels	High – vital for sustainable national owned registration	Challenging	Medium	Hire 1 FT staff member to concentrate on e-registration Train existing staff
	Increase district capacity through increased human resources	Hire staff at crucial posts including CDO, parish and sub-county chiefs and Town Clerks. Now large % unfilled	High - Vital for registration	Difficult - National problem not easy to solve.	Low	
	Hardware requirements at sub-country, parish, village level	Currently none of the 112 districts have full equipment.	High - Vital for registration	Challenging - Achievable given existing work on supplies	High	Provide key hardware to districts (including hospitals)
	Notifications of births, and increasing role of FBOs and CHWs	Notifications need to be increased.	High - vital for comprehensive registration	Challenging - would involve training, system change and stronger institutional linkages	High	Increase collaboration with FBO's and MoH[149]
	Data storage improved and historical update of data storage	Records are scattered & difficult to find	Medium- Make collection of BDR less problematic	Challenging - but attempts using mobile VRS underway	Medium	E-store updated data
	Training of duty-bearers needed at district level, including training of trainers	Currently none districts of 112 have full training.	High - Vital for registration	Achievable given existing work on supplies. A lot of training required	High	Training of trainers at district level in all 112 districts

	Area of work	Situation	Impact of removal (High, Medium, Low)	Ease of addressing bottleneck (Achievable, Challenging, Difficult)	Bottleneck priority	Key Activities/ Interventions
Utilization	Affordability	Long certificates currently costs UGX 5,000, short UGX1,000	High - Limits demand for Birth Certificates	Challenging - Achievable, linked to financing. Bill currently before Parliament	Medium	Change policy on paying for certificates Communicate this
	Mandatory registration for access of services	In practice not undertaken. More information needed on formal regulations	Low – may have high impact on demand, but negative impact on update of services	Difficult	Low Priority – not an appropriate intervention at this time	
	Incentives and knowledge about BDR	Limited hard data, but interactions in the field indicate low awareness of personal interest/ incentives	Medium - BDR can be supply driven	Challenging - Behaviour change challenging	Medium	Raise awareness of personal interests and incentives plus linkages to other services

This analysis is a simplified version of the MDG Acceleration Framework, based on assessment of UNICEF expertise from SAFE team and T4D. High priority bottleneck areas are those that are both high impact and achievable. Medium bottleneck areas are those that are High or Medium impact and Challenging to Achieve, or Medium impact and achievable. If an area is either Low impact or Difficult to achieve it is considered Low priority. Based on this analysis we programme based on achieving progress in High and Medium priority areas.

GLOSSARY

BIRTH CERTIFICATE
Vital record that documents the birth of a child. The term 'birth certificate' can refer either to the original document certifying the circumstances of the birth, or to a certified copy or representation of the registration of that birth, depending on the practices of the country issuing the certificate.

BIRTH REGISTRATION
Birth registration is the continuous, permanent and universal recording, within the civil registry, of the occurrence and characteristics of births in accordance with the legal requirements of a country.

BIRTH REGISTRATION RATE
Birth registration rate is the proportion of registered live births or children out of the total number of live births or the total number of children.

BREEDER DOCUMENT
An identification document issued to support a person's identity and used to obtain another document or privilege of greater perceived value. The most important breeder document is the birth certificate.

INCOME TRANSFER
Income-smoothing mechanisms whereby resources (such as cash, food) are transferred to a person and/or family.

CITIZENSHIP
Legal nationality of a person.

CIVIL REGISTER
Loose-leaf file, ledger book, electronic file or any other official file set up for the permanent recording, in accordance with established procedures, of each type of vital event and its associated data, occurring in the population of a well-defined area (a country, district, municipality, parish, etc.)

CIVIL REGISTRAR

Official authorized to register the occurrence of a vital event and to record the required details.

CIVIL REGISTRATION

Continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events (live births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages and divorces) and other civil status events pertaining to the population as provided by decree, law or regulation, in accordance with the legal requirements of the country. Civil registration establishes and provides legal records of such events.

CIVIL REGISTRATION RECORD (OR VITAL EVENT RECORD)

A legal document entered in the civil register, which attests to the occurrence and characteristics of a vital event.

CIVIL REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The institutional, legal and technical measures established by government to conduct civil registration in a technically sound, coordinated and standardized manner throughout the country, taking into account cultural and social circumstances particular to the country.

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D)

A systematic, planned and evidence-based process to promote positive and measurable individual behaviour and social changes that are integral to development programmes, policy advocacy, humanitarian work and the creation of a culture that respects and helps realize human rights. It uses research and consultative processes to promote human rights, mobilize leadership and societies, influence attitudes and support the actions of those who have an impact on the well-being of children, their families and communities

CONTENT ERROR

See Correctness of Registration

CORRECTNESS (OR ACCURACY) OF REGISTRATION

The accuracy with which data for each vital event on the vital event record has been completed, i.e., there are no response errors and there are no missing items. The measurement of any deviation from correctness is called 'content error'.

DELAYED REGISTRATION

The registration of a vital event after the prescribed period denoted in existing laws, rules or regulations (including any grace period, if one is prescribed). A late registration is the registration of a vital event after the prescribed time period but within the grace period. Since the grace period is usually considered to be one year following the vital event, delayed registration is usually considered the registration of a vital event one year or more after the event has occurred.

E-GOVERNANCE

The electronic delivery of government services.

INFORMANT

The individual whose responsibility, designated by law, is to report to the local registrar the occurrence of a vital event and to provide the information and characteristics of the event. On the basis of such a report, the local registrar can legally register the event.

INTEROPERABILITY

The ability of diverse systems and organizations to work together.

JUS SANGUINIS

The principle by which nationality or citizenship is determined by one or both parents being citizens of the State.

JUS SOLIS

The principle by which nationality or citizenship is recognized by the State for any individual on the basis of his or her birth in the territory of the State.

LATE REGISTRATION

See Delayed Registration.

LEGACY RECORDS

Civil registration records from the past.

LONG-FORM BIRTH CERTIFICATE

In some countries a distinction is made between a long-form and a short-form birth certificate. The long form is more detailed and is often issued by the central registration office and the short form is less detailed and issued by a local registration office.

LOW-INCOME COUNTRY

The World Bank classifies countries according to their GNI per capita. In 2012, the income levels set for this classification were: low-income countries, US$1,025 or less; lower-middle-income countries, US$1,026–US$4,035; upper-middle-income countries, US$4,036–US$12,475; high-income countries, US$12,476 or more.

PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

The Paris Declaration was produced as a result of a high-level meeting in Paris in 2005 aimed at improving aid effectiveness. It is founded on five core principles: ownership, alignment, harmonization, results and mutual accountability.

POPULATION DENSITY

The number of people per square kilometre (population size divided by land area).

REGISTRATION COMPLETENESS

The level of birth registration at which every vital event that has occurred to the members of the population of a particular country (or area), within a specified time period, has been registered in the system, i.e., has a vital event registration record. Thus the system has attained 100 per cent coverage. Any deviation of complete coverage is measured by 'coverage error'.

SHORT-FORM BIRTH CERTIFICATE

See Long-Form Birth Certificate

SOCIAL PROTECTION

The set of public and private policies and programmes aimed at preventing, reducing and eliminating economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation.

STATELESSNESS

A stateless person has no citizenship or nationality and is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law.

TREATY BODY

A committee of independent experts that monitors one of the core international human rights treaties.

UNIVERSAL REGISTRATION

While indicated by complete registration (see Completeness), it specifically considers the inclusion of all/non-discrimination in the registration regardless of race, religion, national origin, sex or any other trait.

VITAL EVENT

The occurrence of a live birth, death, fetal death, marriage, divorce, adoption, legitimation, recognition of parenthood, annulment of marriage, or divorce.

REFERENCES

1   UNICEF, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration*, UNICEF, New York, 2013.

2   Ibid.

3   See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, for the definition of civil registration from which this definition is derived, 2001, p. 50.

4   The UNSD definition of complete registration is identical to the one for universal registration: 100 per cent of vital events (births, deaths, etc.) registered. Cf. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 46. See also note 62.

5   UNICEF, 2013.

6   The terms 'citizenship and 'nationality', in common usage, are often used interchangeably when referring to the legal contract between a person and the State. However, 'nationality' is also used more broadly to denote the ethnic, linguistic and cultural grouping to which a person belongs, whereas 'citizenship' is specific to the legal contract between a person and a State.

7   Plan, 2005.

8   "A vital statistics system is defined as the total process of (a) collecting information by civil registration or enumeration on the frequency of occurrence of specified and defined vital events, as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the person or persons concerned; and (b) compiling, processing, analysing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form. The vital events of interest are: live births, adoptions, legitimations, recognitions; deaths and fetal deaths; and marriages, divorces, separations and annulments of marriage," from Proposals for Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Rev. 3 – Part One, Chapter 2, The vital statistics system, United Nations Secretariat, ESA/STAT/AC233.3, June 2011.

9   Plan, 2007.

10 Plan, UNICEF, 2009.

11 Ibid.

12 Szreter, S.,2007.

13 UNICEF, 2010–5.

14   Adapted from UNICEF, 2002.

15   Adapted from UNICEF, 2002.

16   UNICEF, 1998, pp. 4–5, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2002, pp. 5–8, and UNICEF, 2007–1), pp. 97–119 discuss links between non-registration and access to other rights.

17   United Nations, Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006, pp. 11–12. See also UNICEF, 2007–1, pp. 99–100, where UNICEF's *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child* aligns itself with the Committee with regard to the standards for civil registration systems from a child rights perspective.

18   Ibid. The Committee on the Rights of the Child mentions mobile registration as an example of being responsive to the circumstances of parents. Mobile registration and awareness-raising campaigns have proved to be interventions with a problematic cost–benefit ratio in many situations.

19   <www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

20   Harbitz and Boekle-Giuffrida, 2009, p. 11.

21   Ibid, pp. 8–10.

22   <www.oecd.org/development/aideffectiveness/34428351.pdf> (accessed 19 August 2013).

23   United Nations, 2012.

24   The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor identifies the lack of a legal identity and the lack of registration of the poor as a crucial impediment to the eradication of poverty. The lack of documentation leads the poor to be confined to the informal economy, which greatly reduces their potential to invest and be productive. Possible escapes from the poverty trap are illegal emigration (which perpetuates the problem of a lack of identity papers), or the use of counterfeit documents. Cf. UNDP, 2008.

25   United Nations, 2012–2.

26   <www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf>

27   Cf. UNSD data on birth and death registration coverage by country: <unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/CRVS/CR_coverage.htm>

28   United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 50.

29   United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 1998, p. 9.

[30] (Re second definition) In some countries civil registration may actually have been entrusted to semi-governmental institutions, such as the Registration Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA) in the United Republic of Tanzania or the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status (RENIEC) in Peru. These institutions will, however, be regulated and controlled by government, e.g. for their budget and their management.

[31] Australia played a pioneering role in establishing that electronic records can be kept forever. Cf. CSIRO, Ernst & Young, Public Records Office Victoria, 1999, and International Commission on Civil Status, Françoise Banat-Berger, 2009.

[32] Some countries also issue 'certificates of non-registration' before a late or delayed registration is conducted (to avoid duplicate registration).

[33] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 60.

[34] Even while in developed countries many incentives for civil registration are in place, they will generally also have substantial penalties for violation of civil registration law.

[35] In none of UNSD's official publications is this potential problem mentioned. UNICEF may have to advocate for the elimination or resolution of such special circumstances.

[36] Cf. United Nations. Department of Economic Affairs. Statistical Office, 1953, pp. ii, 2 and 7.

[37] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, 2001, pp. 50 and 52.

[38] Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, 1998–5), pp. 104-105.UNICEF, 2007–1), p. 100.

[39] UNICEF, 2007–1, p. 100.

[40] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 1998.

[41] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 90.

[42] UNICEF, 2005.

[43] Well-known examples are the Demographic and Health Survey, funded by the United States Agency for Development (USAID) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, led by UNICEF.

[44] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 57.

[45] For age assessment practices see: Smith, Terry and Laura Brownlees. UNICEF, New York, 2011.

46 See UNICEF, 'Age Assessment Practices: A literature review and annotated bibliography –a discussion paper', 2011. Available at <www.unicef.org/protection/files/Age_Assessment_Practices_2010.pdf> and Age Assessment: A technical note. Available at <www.unicef.org/protection/files/Age_Assessment_Note_final_version_(English).pdf>

47 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 1998–5, p. 61 and United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2000, p. 57. See also note 43 for a discussion on methodologies for age assessment, beyond medical examinations.

48 UNSD handbooks state that the effect could be less registration rather than more (and more inaccuracies); for example, in United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 60: "A shorter period of time allowed for registration is preferable to a longer one. The principal reason is that the informant may forget details of the event or may fail to report the event when the period allowed is too long. Such problems lead to misreporting or under-reporting of events."

49 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistical Office, 1955, p. 70. More recent UNSD handbooks give less information about notification.

50 Cf. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, New York, 2001, p. 59.

51 Ibid.

52 Cf. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 69.

53 Recommendation outcome from the Second Counterfeit and Security Documents Working Group Meeting of INTERPOL General Secretariat, 30–31 May 2012.

54 A study in Cameroon revealed that, according to 35 per cent of registrars interviewed, "false" certificates were issued by their peers (in which case security features are not the solution). Cf. République du Cameroun, CIVIPOL, IFORD, Groupe Agence de Développement, Yaoundé, 2007, p. 29.

55 In countries with advanced registration systems, e.g. in Europe, extracts are commonly printed on ordinary paper: they rely on verification with data held in registers when this is requested. An example of how a low-cost solution can be extremely effective is discussed in Agar, John, 2001, p.109. A study done in the US showed that even there a more sophisticated birth certificate design could reduce "availability" of birth certificates. About 90 per cent of fraud was committed not through forged certificates, but with genuine certificates fallen in the wrong hands. Cf. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General. Office of Evaluation and Inspections, Kansas City, Mo., 2000.

56 Cf. UNICEF, 2007–1, pp. 100–102.

57 The Registrar General of England and Wales designed the national ID used during the second world war intentionally with a minimum of information shown in comparison to the information kept in the National Register, e.g. without showing the birth date on the card the holder could be asked for the birth date (kept in the register), which proved a very effective low-cost solution to reduce fraud.

58 According to Civil Registration Centre for Development research, 30 low-income and lower-income countries announced the introduction or upgrading of their national ID over the period of 15 February 2012 through 14 February 2013. The total population of these countries is 2.8 billion and their combined average birth registration rate only 44.8 per cent. These countries, 11 of which belong to the 20 most populous countries in the world, account for no less than 90 per cent of the non-registration of births.

59 The birth record/certificate is commonly known to be the foundation of (and the 'breeder document') for all other identity documents. Cf. Mercer, John, 2009.

60 http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/CRVS/default.htm

61 Mahapatra, Prasanta, Kenji Shibuya, Alan D. Lopez et al., *Lancet*, vol. 370, 10 November 2007, p. 1655.

62 UNSD definitions of completeness are inconsistent. Most UNSD handbooks equate complete and universal. UNSD defines the latter as 100 per cent On the UNSD website, however, countries are shown with birth registration rates, or death registration rates, which are complete when more than 90 per cent of vital events are registered. The table shown here is based on UNSD *Demographic Yearbook* data. For UNICEF a safe choice is to use universal and define universal as all vital events, births, etc., that is 100 per cent.

63 The data from the table should be interpreted with great care, as they do not show changes below the cut-off of 90 per cent. According to UNSD, data available as of February 2013 show no significant difference from the 2004 registration levels.

64 UNSD data on completeness are either obtained from countries (self-assessment) or from international agencies, predominantly UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO). For country self-assessment the data depend on the methodology used by the country.

65 United Nations Children's Fund, *Every Child's Birth Right: Levels and trends in birth registration,* UNICEF, New York, *2013*.

66 The best fit of a regression line to the scatter shown in the chart is a "polynomial" – a curvilinear relationship between GNI per capita and regression rates starting with a steep slope (rising quickly with rising GNI per capita) that gradually becomes less steep (rising less quickly) until registration reaches completeness at 100 per cent.

67 Cf. for example: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistical Office, New York, 1955, p. 12.

68   UNICEF, 2005, and UNICEF, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration*, UNICEF, New York, 2013.

69   UNICEF, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration,* UNICEF, New York, 2013.

70   Ibid.

71   UNICEF, 2005.

72   UNICEF, 2013.

73   Inter-American Development Bank, 2012, p. 4.

74   This is one of the points made in Szreter, 2007 and 2011.

75   Cf. UNICEF, 1998 and Plan, UHI Centre for Rural Childhood, 2011 and UNHCR: <www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f59bdd92.html>

76   Adapted from Plan, 2009.

77   Bakewell, Oliver, 2007, p. 17.

78   A seminar organized by NGO Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) of Finland in Sierra Leone in 2012 was held on the potential of civil registration to prevent conflict. Cf. http://www.cmi.fi/news/616-civil-registration-contributes-to-conflict-prevention.html, accessed 29 October 2012. Cf. also Bronwen, Manby, 2009.

79   United Nations (1998-5), p.24. UNSD has defined citizenship as "legal nationality." Cf. also Inter-Parliamentary Union and UNICEF, 2005.

80   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *A Framework for the Protection of Children*, Geneva, 2012.

81   UN High Commissioner for Refugees, *Conclusion on civil registration*, 17 October 2013, No. 111(LXIV)-2013, available at: <www.refworld.org/docid/525f8ba64.html>, accessed 5 November 2013.

82   http://www.dialogueuroafricainmd.net/web/the-rabat-process.

83   Making international aid work better for people and development was on the agenda at the OECD/DAC (Development Assistance Committee) Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, or HLF-4 from 29 November to 1 December 2011. About 2,000 delegates from both donor and receiving countries of official development assistance (ODA) gathered in Busan, Republic of Korea. Participants came from a wide range of sectors including representatives from governments, civil society and the private sector. The outcome document is available at http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/fourthhighlevelforumonaideffectiveness.htm

84 Cf. for example: Triangular Cooperation Program, GTZ-Brazil, 2009. South-South cooperation examples are those between National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) Pakistan and civil registration authorities in Nigeria and Sudan in Africa.

85 http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P115148/ci-data-collection-cap-bldg-prs-licus?lang=en

86 All UNSD handbooks on civil registration and vital statistics are included in the bibliography, although not all of them are referred to in the text of this guide.

87 Cf. UNHCR, 2003 and 2008.

88 INTERPOL communication to UNICEF New York.

89 Cf. International Civil Aviation Authority, Machine Readable Travel Documents, Part 1; Machine Readable Passports – Volume 1 , Passports with Machine Readable Data Stored in Optical Character Recognition Format, 2006, Quebec.

90 Asian Development Bank, Manila, 2007; Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., 2012; Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., 2009.

91 Other INGOs that have done birth registration work are Save the Children, World Vision, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), Aide-et-Action and Crisis Management Initiative.

92 The UNSD data can be accessed by using this link: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/CRVS/CR_coverage.htm

93 For example, see UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2007.

94 See also: UNHCR, Interpreting the 1961 Statelessness Convention and Preventing Statelessness among Children: ('Dakar Conclusions'), September 2011, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e8423a72.html

95 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, New York, 1998. This handbook deals specifically with civil registration law, but all other handbooks also contain relevant information for the drafting or redrafting of civil registration law.

96 An excellent example of how to screen a policy or law for 'equality' can be found in the screening method used in the United Kingdom: see Department of Finance and Personnel, Government of the United Kingdom, Belfast, 2012. This shows a screening of civil registration regulations in Northern Ireland.

97 E-governance is the electronic delivery of government services.

98 United Nations. New York. 1955, p. 12 and pp. 209–210.

99   During the same period, the linkage with ration cards was seen as the reason for the success of national identity cards in the United Kingdom. Cf. Agar, Jon, 2001.

100   UNDP Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor. New York, 2008.

101   Cf. for example: Garcia, Marito and Charity M.T. Moore, Washington, 2012; Barrientos, Armando and David Hulme. Manchester. U.K., 2008; and Department of International Development–DfID, London, 2005.

102   Cf. Inter-American Development Bank. Washington, Working Paper, 2009. It is important to note that birth registration rates in Latin America are generally very good compared with African countries and about a dozen Asian countries (some of which have large populations) with low registration rates. Also of note, however, is that in middle-income countries, such as those in Latin America, those not registered appear to be the hardest to reach and possibly the most excluded. The registration rate of the poorest quintile in urban and rural areas was found to be the same, while the richest quintile showed better registration rates in the cities than in the countryside.

103   Too little statistical evidence is available still. It is one of the areas for detailed analysis of DHS and MICS data sets. UNICEF Nigeria found greater registration disparities between rich and poor in urban than in rural areas, using DHS data.

104   Ibid.

105   UNICEF, 2011.

106   See for example, United Nations Children's Fund, *Child Protection Systems: Mapping and assessment toolkit*, UNICEF, New York, 2010.

107   Cf. UNICEF, New York, 2006. The MBB methodology is based on a framework developed by T. Tanahashi. Cf. Tanahashi, T., Geneva, 1978.

108   Cf. UNDG, New York, 2011.

109   For Africa, ECA will develop a template for country civil registration reform plans, which should become available in 2013. Another method of country civil registration assessment with an emphasis on vital statistics has been developed by WHO and has been applied already.

110   Cf. for example, Fazar, W., 1959, p. 10, and Project Management Institute, 2003.

111   United Nations, 1955, p. 33. In later publications UNSD has taken a less prescriptive position with regard to centralized or decentralized systems. For highly developed countries decentralized systems work with sophisticated country-level coordination. In developing countries the evidence for the effectiveness of decentralized systems is negative.

112   Cf. UNICEF, New York, 2010–2.

[113] Note that this is distinct from the issuance of the birth certificate, the authority for which rests with the designated national authority (the Civil Registry).

[114] According to data from CLARCIEV (the association of civil registrars in Latin America), among 20 Latin American countries 14 (70 per cent) have a single agency responsible for both civil registration and national ID. Among them a substantial number has an electoral body responsible for civil registration and national ID, which is optimal integration – when used in people's interest.

[115] The integration in Latin America has also led to use of the term 'civil identification', while it is not a common term anywhere else in the world. Cf. http://clarciev.com/

[116] Information from Inter-American Development Bank.

[117] The use of the mobile phone, by authorized 'informants' or 'civil registration agents', is no different with respect to data management and data security to the use of the computer and the Internet. The explosion of commercial mobile money transactions is testament to relative data security on mobile phones and within cellular networks. For information on the use of mobile technology for civil registration see Gambo, Johannes (2010) for Vanuatu and New Zealand and Toivanen, Hannes, et al. (2011), Virhiä, Tuulia, et al. (2010) and Virhiä, Tuulia (2010) for Liberia. The civil registration agency of New Zealand provided technical assistance through one of its staff, alongside technical backstopping by the University of Auckland.

[118] Cf. U.S. Department of Commerce, Gaithersburg, Md., 2008

[119] Goode Intelligence, London, 2012.

[120] Information obtained from the civil registration service of Victoria. The deficit is 'subsidized by the Government of the state of Victoria.

[121] See for evidence-based legislation: Seidman, Ann and Robert E. Seidman, Boston, 2009 and [S&R: <www.box.com/s/orjiny3m6bl5thlglp90>]

[122] From 2007 until end-2012, UNICEF staff members have been involved in the legal development of civil registration in more than 30 countries.

[123] Communication from UNICEF Uganda regarding customs for naming children in the central and western parts of Uganda.

[124] One study for Cameroon provides relatively candid detail about the market for counterfeit documents in giving the average cost of a counterfeit birth certificate by location in the country. Cf. République du Cameroun, CIVIPOL, IFORD, Groupe Agence de Développement, Yaounde, 2007, p. 29. Among interviewed registrars across the country 35 per cent said that officers themselves issue false certificates and a similar percentage reported having seen them.

[125] See UNICEF, *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Geneva, 2007.

126 See World Day of Prayer and Action for Children as an example of working with faith-based organizations to promote birth registration at http://dayofprayerandaction.org/take-action/abc-for-action-advocacy.

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130 See section 2.6, particularly organizational review, legal review, review of the demand for birth registration; national government policies and plans, and international support.

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148 Explanation of terms used: BDR: birth- and death registration; URSB: Uganda Registration Services Bureau; UBOS: Uganda Bureau of Statistics; FBO: field-based organization; CHW: community health worker; CDO: county district officer; GOU: Government of Uganda; VRS: vital registration system; FT: full time; MOH: Ministry of Health; E-store: electronic filing of data; UGX: Uganda Shilling.

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