

World Vision



Institute of Policy Analysis
and Research - Rwanda

Technical Analysis of Birth Registration in Rwanda

Status of child registration and possible action

WORLD VISION - RWANDA

Final Report

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child
AIDS	Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome
CHW	Community Health Workers
CR	Child Registration
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSO's	Civil society organizations
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EICV4	Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie 4
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
GoR	Government of Rwanda
GSMA	Global System Mobile Association
HMIS	Health Management Information System
IPAR	Institute of Policy Analysis and Research
JADF	Joint Action Development Forum
KIs	Key informants
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MININFRA	Ministry of Infrastructure
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
MYICT	Ministry of Youth and ICT
MINIJUST	Ministry of Justice
MoH	Ministry of Health
NIDA	National Identification Agency
NCC	National Commission for Children
NSDS2	National Strategy for Development of Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NISR	National Institute of Statistics Rwanda
OVCs	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
PBF	Performance based finance
RSSB	Rwanda Social Security Board
RPHC	Rwanda Population and Housing Census
UNECA	United nations Economics commission for Africa
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VRS	Vital Registration System

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An effective and efficient birth registration system is critical both as a fundamental right and a strong device towards promoting the wellbeing of children and their protection against all forms of violence and deprivation. International law, regional and the national legal frameworks as well as scholarly articles all acknowledge that the child's registration immediately after birth guarantees the rights from birth to a name, nationality, family relations and all the related privileges.

The government of Rwanda through the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS-2) envisages an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy for all infants and young children in order to achieve their full development potential. In addition, the ECD policy recognizes low birth registration in Rwanda as one of the hindrances to the protection, promotion and fulfillment of the rights of a Child, as enshrined in the EDPRS: *'For this purpose, the government of Rwanda is committed to scale up birth registration technology such as CVRS, HMIS, and Cell phones' SMS-based data collection systems across the country, should they prove to be effective.'*¹

However, in spite of the on-going efforts towards effective birth registration, the latest Demographic and Health Survey (DHS 2014-2015) shows that 91% of children in Rwanda are born at health facilities.² Of these children, only 56% are registered into the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) System³ and only 50% of those are registered into the Sector's Civil Registry Book and are eligible for Birth Certificates. In all, although birth notification is 56%, birth registration is less than 10%. This situation thus hinders the realization of children's rights.

This study aimed to conduct a high quality technical analysis of the factors causing the current low levels of birth registration in Rwanda and finding out ways to address them both at community and policy levels. For this purpose, World Vision contracted the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR-Rwanda).

The technical analysis consisted of field data collection among 157 citizens who participated in 20 Focus Group Discussions and more than 50 key informants in 10 Districts purposely selected in all provinces of Rwanda and the City of Kigali.

Findings from the analysis show that children of less than two years of age from poor families, and those from families in rural area are the least registered and thus unlikely to have birth registration certificates. This finding, which is consistent with other referenced research, suggests that socio-economic status does play a role in birth registration. Interventions towards increasing birth registration prevalence should then factor in all social-economic dimensions impeding parents' registering their children immediately after birth.

Furthermore, overlapping birth registration systems, logistical deficiencies, namely power cuts and internet unreliability were identified as limiting factors to an effective birth registration system

¹ Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS-2) 2013-2017, P. 66

² Population projection: National Census, Medium, 2015

³ CVRS Annual Progress report 2015 P.7

especially at Sector level. As for the observed high transactional costs (time, distance and cost), related to birth registration, it remains difficult and even expensive for most parents to travel, at times for eight hours to the nearest civil registry office, and compensate three witnesses brought to attest in the birth registration.

As a response, in the recently revised family law, the period for birth registration was doubled to 30 days after birth, while the requirement to seek a Court Judgment Supplementing Birth Registration, was simply removed (article 100 of the new Civil Code Book-I on Persons and the Family 28/8/2016)⁴, as an attempt to increase the chances of parents to prepare themselves and register their newborn within legal limits. However, the technical analysis found that the new deadline may not change much in the birth registration prevalence and that one-month is equally short.

The study also found that the legal status of parent(s) matters a lot in their child's registration. The system does not cater for informally married couples, and special cases such as unwanted pregnancies; juvenile births; in other words parents whom are reluctant to register their children.

In response to the identified challenges, the study has proposed the following actions:

1. Ensure coordination and accountability at national and local levels, setting birth registration as major objective during the Performance Contract (*Imihigo*) process;
2. Harmonize the current birth registration systems;
3. Establish one-stop centers for birth registration at health facilities;
4. Provide technical and logistical support to community health workers (CHW) for further sensitization;
5. Continue law and institutional reform addressing main birth registration bottlenecks
6. Strengthening Civil Society Networks on Child-rights within the Joint Action Development Fora (JADF);
7. Initiate Mobile Birth registration systems to reduce the birth registration transaction costs identified; and
8. Conduct seasonal birth registration campaigns nationally to clear the existing backlogs;

⁴ LAW No32/2016 OF 28/08/2016 PERSONS AND FAMILY, Official Gazette No 37 of 12/09/2016

1. INTRODUCTION

Birth registration is known as the official and permanent recording of a child's birth by the state. It is the first point of contact between a child and the state; it is the first and fundamental right in and of itself, a door to other rights, providing a measure of protection against age-related exploitation and abuse. Although it seems simpler than recording the name, sex, parentage, time and place of a child's birth; the reality in many parts of Africa is complex, Bequele [1]. UNICEF describes birth registration as 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 birth to marriage and death[2]. Furthermore, birth registration stands both as a fundamental right and strong institution towards the promotion of the wellbeing of children and their protection against any form of violence. In a recent study, Comandini et al.[3] linked birth registration and child under-nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa and found that stunting and underweight showed stronger negative associations with birth registration in many countries. They continue to argue that children from the richest segments of the society, or children who have a well-educated mother, are more likely to be registered and receive adequate care including nutrition. This argument was confirmed by our study.

International and country level policy and legal frameworks acknowledge the need for birth registration as a legal device promoting the rights of children. Article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) provides that 'the child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to a nationality'⁵, also emphasized in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) in its article 24, "every child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall be given a name and every child has the right to acquire a nationality". The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) in its article 6 echoes to the above rights to a name and a nationality.

In Rwanda, the constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 as revised in 2015 in its article 19, gives a strong provision of children's rights to specific mechanisms of protection by his /her family, other Rwandans and the state, depending on his or her age and living conditions, as provided for by the national and international law. There are also a number of laws supporting this commitment such as law No 22 of 28th June 2011 establishing the National Commission for Children and determining its mission, organization and functioning. Among its main mandates include the role to promote and ensure child education that enables the child to be a worthy and patriotic citizen; to develop a national partnership and coordination framework aimed at promoting child's rights, among others. Other laws, policies, and national documents relating to child's rights include the Law relating to the rights and protection of the child of 14th December

⁵ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 7 and 8 [online] Available from: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx> [Accessed March 2015].

2011, the GBV law, the Civil Code, the OVC policy, General Comments on birth registration by the CRC committee, the Action Plan of the National Commission for Children, etc.

The recent DHS (2014-2015) shows that 91% of children in Rwanda are born at health facilities[4] which makes approximately 300.000 children (National Census, Medium, 2015) as reported by the Health Management Information System (HMIS). Of these children, only 50% are registered into CRVS (152,163)⁶ and only 50% of them are registered into the sector Civil Registry and are eligible to Birth Certificates. In other words only a quarter (1/4) of children born at health facilities is registered in Rwanda.

One of the explanations for this low registration rate, according to the National Institute of Statistics' (2014), is due mainly to the non-harmonization of HMIS with CRVS⁷ and a cumbersome, broadly unknown legal process with which parents seldom engage⁸. It is also not yet clear from the literature, the prevalence of parents who apply for birth registration, even though the NISR estimates less than 10% of overall birth occurrences.

Looking at some of the national statistics from the DHS (explored in the assessment below); the registration process is uneven across all regions of the country. For instance child registration is higher in the North (67%) and the City of Kigali (59%) in comparison to other provinces, while Children in poor households (43%) are less likely to be registered than children in well to do households (53% to 66%). With respect to age category, the registration is greater among children between two and four years old (60%) compared to 50% for those with lower than two years old, and finally, the current percentage of birth registration estimated at 56% shows a decline from 63 % previously achieved in 2010.

The government's role is to protect, promote and fulfill the rights of children. And it does so in collaboration with non-stake actors since the rights of children are linked to other social and economic benefits. World Vision International is committed to ensuring that children are protected against abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence. Its current understanding is that birth registration is an enabler for many other ways to improve and sustain the well being of a child. However, birth registration rates in Rwanda remain low.

World Vision contracted the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research - Rwanda (IPAR) to carry out a study that would inform the commitment and investment in birth registration and facilitate the implementation of an integrated Universal Birth Registration programme with strategic government partners, NGOs, corporate and multilateral organizations. It is expected that the results from the assessment will inform programming, campaigning, advocacy and awareness raising, all aimed at achieving full birth registration in Rwanda.

⁶ CVRS Annual Progress report 2015 P.7

⁷ Demographic and social statistics unit: Concept note for the National Training of Civil Registration Actors on the New CRVS web-based Application, 2014 P.3

⁸ Art. 16, Law N°54/2011 of 14/12/2011 relating to the rights and the protection of the child

The remainder of this report is structured as follows: The Second section presents the legal and policy context of birth registration. Section three describes the research objectives and the expected deliverables. Section four outlines the methodology and data collection techniques. Findings of this analysis are presented in Section four, followed by a conclusion and proposed policy actions.

2. OVERVIEW OF BIRTH REGISTRATION WORLDWIDE AND IN AFRICA

A recent study conducted by UNICEF[5] provides a general overview of birth registration globally, and highlights critical challenges associated with low birth registration in some specific countries. Globally, the births of nearly 230 million children under the age five have never been recorded, of which 59% are from Asia, 37% from Sub-Saharan Africa, and 4% from the rest of the World. The percentage of birth registration is high and surpasses 90% in all industrialized countries and in some countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Taking in account the respective size of populations, the lowest level of birth registration is found in Sub-Saharan Africa (44%) and South Asia (39%). Particular to Eastern and Southern Africa, only 38% of children are registered, leaving more than 44 million children under five unrecorded. In Rwanda, where 63% of children under five are reportedly registered, only one in 10 have a document that can attest to their registration with civil authorities. In some countries, fees and other factors were prohibitive, or, as in other cases, birth certificates are not issued and no proof of registration is available to families.

The Following Table (1) depicts the current status of birth registration in selected African Countries.

Table (1.) Low Birth Registration countries for children less than five years

Ser No.	Name of the Country	Percentage of children under five registered
1	Somalia	3%
2	Liberia	4%
3	Ethiopia	7%
4	Zambia	14%
5	United Republic of Tanzania	16%
6	Chad	16%
7	Yemen	17%
8	Guinea Bissau	24%
9	Pakistan	27%
10	Democratic Republic of Congo	28%

Source: Extracted from UNICEF publication 2013

Despite the low trend of birth registration overall, there are a number of interventions elsewhere, that are worth mentioning as best practices, that managed to increase birth registration:

2.1. UNICEF'S SUPPORT POLICY TO SOME COUNTRIES

In 2012, UNICEF supported the registration of almost 30 million children in 75 countries with five major activities including assistance in the area of legal, policy, and standards development; improving service delivery, identifying barriers and bottlenecks, forging community based-approaches, and encouraging innovation [5]. UNICEF continues to provide technical support, advocacy for the enactment of laws, policies and standards for free and universal birth registration (e.g. Zambia and Thailand). UNICEF also mobilizes non-governmental partners to provide birth registration paperwork and services to marginalized groups and in war-torn countries (e.g. Democratic Republic of Congo: focus on most vulnerable people, resulting in the registration of more than 350,000 children). In terms of identifying barriers and bottlenecks, UNICEF supported Togo to conduct a study in two Northern Districts, which found that a third of children in rural areas were not registered due to challenges associated with the training of the civil registry officers and the unavailability of standardized registers. This shows that a strong base of evidence is essential for an effective advocacy for increased public investment. In Guinea-Bissau, UNICEF introduced a pilot exercise using mobile units into the birth registration system, which was eventually expanded. During that phase, UNICEF supported birth registration campaigns, resulting in birth certificates for more than 4,200 children. Furthermore, many UNICEF offices are exploring the use of mobile communication technologies including cell phones, to increase birth registration coverage as detailed in the following sub-sections.

2.2. MOBILE BIRTH REGISTRATION IN SENEGAL AND UGANDA

Another best practice is the one introduced in Senegal and Uganda by the GSMA Mobile Identity Team in collaboration with a non-state organization known as Aide & Action [6]. It appeared that the best way to improve birth registration rates was to make it easier for village chiefs to inform regional and national registration offices about the new births. A reference was made to the existing widget solution to capture and communicate the market price and it was advised to extend the same platform to deploy a birth declaration service. Distant villages were selected for the pilot and these proven more effective.

For the case of Uganda, UNICEF worked with Uganda Telecom and 3 government hospitals and 6 local government catchment areas with further roll out to the remaining 131 hospitals and 61 local governments. There is an office mandated by law to oversee the registration of births and deaths and adoption orders effective since 1st of January 2016, which is the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA). Its mandate is similar to the National Identification Agency (NIDA). Through a public private partnership between the government of Uganda and Uganda Telecom and with support of UNICEF a Mobile Vital Records System (Mobile VRS) was

developed and introduced. The Mobile VRS enables the use of a web-based application and mobile phones to register births and deaths in health facilities and communities respectively.

Since Rwanda has a high Mobile *teledensity*⁹ estimated at 70.8%, this constitutes an opportunity for the government and development partners to consider use of mobile based birth registration to address some of the challenges linked to high transaction costs in birth registration as detailed in subsequent sections. The current CRVS and HMIS, two web-based systems are focusing on the internet with significantly fewer subscribers (3,140,310), instead of mobile based system which has more subscribers (7,913,986) [7].

2.3. KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

In view of the best practices identified in the literature above, the following factors were identified as key drivers for a successful innovation towards increasing birth registration. These include the adaptation to existing local procedures, user-friendly systems introduced to the community, strong collaboration between various stakeholders, and to some extent, commercial incentives. The learning drawn from this, as far as Rwanda is concerned is that, it is important to optimize existing systems and infrastructure and tailor the implementation to the specific needs and challenges facing the villages. Offering uncomplicated solution to end users made it possible to achieve higher registration rates from the start of the above projects. Furthermore, close cooperation between stakeholders was a key factor to the success in the birth registration pilots. A birth registration using mobile telephones constitutes a sales opportunity and an incentive for the agents to visit more villages, and meet more families regularly[6].

⁹ Teledensity: Mobile telephone penetration

3. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF BIRTH REGISTRATION IN RWANDA

3.1. LEGAL ANALYSIS

Even though policies and specific legislation on the rights of a child came into force after the Civil Code Book of 1988, they did not seek to set preferential conditions for birth registration. For instance, they had maintained fifteen days as a compulsory period for birth registration and the requirement on parents who couldn't meet the deadline, to seek a judgment supplementing birth registration. The just promulgated Civil Code has increased the legal period for birth registration to 30 days after birth; it has also removed the requirement to seek a court order supplementing birth registration, for parents whom had missed the deadline. Other than that nothing much has changed, which means that it is unlikely that this extra 15 days or the removal of court requirements will help improve the current status of low birth registration.

'The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda (2003) as amended to date, reaffirms the adherence to principles and commitments of various international instruments and specifically invoking the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which entitles every child to special measures of protection by the family, society and Government[8]. Section 19 speaks of Child Rights' Protection, in these terms: Every child has the right to specific mechanisms of protection by his or her family, other Rwandans and the State, depending on his or her age and living conditions, as provided for by national and international law.

Internationally, the CRC in its Article 7(1) stipulates that '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.'¹⁰

¹⁰ Convention on the Rights of the Child, Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49

Article 4 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child [11] insists on the primacy of the 'Best Interests of the Child; Art. 4(1) in all actions concerning the child undertaken by any person or authority the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration. This should be the guiding principle in defining birth registration in practice in Rwanda. Indeed, a child should be registered at birth and at the hospital, regardless of the marital status of his or her parents. This principle is buttressed by Article 2 of the CRC stipulating that the state shall ensure that the rights of a child are guaranteed, irrespective of his/her parent's status.

The Civil Code stipulates on the registration of birth for a child born out of wedlock in Article 123 stipulates that 'In case the parents of the child were not legally married, the declaration of the names of the child's father and mother in the office of the civil status registrar does not mean that they recognize the child unless it is declared by the father himself or the mother herself.'¹²

In other words, the physical presence of the father is not a requirement for registering a child. Unfortunately, the technical analysis has shown that parents believe that they, and the child have to both be physically present during birth registration, or at least that the mother has to bring the Identity Card of the father while carrying the baby at the office of Civil Registrar of the Sector. This mind-set of parents has been a hindrance to registering children born to parents who are not legally married or fathers who are unwilling to recognize their children.

The Law relating to the rights and protection of the child¹³, in its Article 6: 'Best interest of the child', stipulates as follows: 'In all judicial and administrative proceedings related to the child, the primary consideration shall be in the best interests of the child. The law goes as far as stipulating in its Article 11: 'Beginning of the enjoyment of the child's rights': The child shall enjoy his/her rights as of conception and he/she is reputed born whenever his/her interests are concerned. This means that no one may base on the absence of a birth certificate, or indeed birth registration in the Civil Registry to deny or deprive any child his or her rights.

Article 12: 'Right of the child to an identity: A child has the right to an identity whose essential elements are a name, a nationality and family relations.'

A review of the 1988 Civil Code is in its final stage and a draft bill has been adopted by the Chamber of Deputies and submitted to the Senate for final voting.

In the upcoming bill in its provisional draft Article 100, the deadline for birth registration has been extended from fifteen to thirty days and it reads: 'Declaration of birth: Every newly born child must be registered within thirty (30) days after birth.'

The draft bill also envision in provisional Art. 101, a 'Special Registrar' to record births occurring in private and public health facilities in a chronological order of dates of birth.

¹¹ Africa Union (1990) African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

¹²Article 123 Registration of birth for a child born out of wedlock:

¹³ Law relating to the rights and protection of the child, Law N°54/2011 of14/12/2011

Article 13: ‘A child is given a name immediately after birth according to the law. The names of both father and mother of the child shall be recorded in the register of births and any other registers of the population regardless to the birth circumstances of the child in relation with the marital status of his/her parents.’

However we see some clarifications in the law in Article 16 on Birth Registration: *‘Any child born is registered in the civil status registry by his/her parents or his/her guardian in accordance with modalities and time limits specified by the law, and a certificate shall be issued. A child born out of wedlock is registered upon declaration by one of his or her parents. The one who is designated as being the father or the mother of the child is informed by the civil registrar before the registration of the child where he/she was not present at the time of declaration. When there is consent the child is immediately registered. Disputes concerning the identification of one of the child’s parents shall be referred to courts.’*

3.2. POLICY CONTEXT

The Government of Rwanda has put children at the forefront of its development agenda. The EDPRS-2¹⁴ recognizes that the long-term future of Rwanda will be built upon the next generation, whose development will impact on the pace of development in the next 25 to 50 years. While EDPRS-2 focuses on major macro-economic activities such as reducing chronic malnutrition for children less than two years and above, it takes into consideration the importance of developing physiological and cognitive capacities at an early stage of childhood development. It is in this line that the EDPRS-2 incorporates *early childhood development (ECD)* and basic education as part of its foundational crosscutting issues.

The same EDPRS-2 provides for an ECD Policy which envisions *“all infants and young children will fully achieve their developmental potential: mentally, physically, socially and emotionally. The ECD Policy recognizes low birth registration in Rwanda as one of the hindrances to the protection of the rights of a Child”*

The EDPRS-2 is committed to scale-up more ICT-based technologies including birth registration technology, namely CRVS, HMIS and Cell phones’ SMS-based data collection systems across the country should they prove to be effective. For that it pledged that all local government offices as well as hospitals and health centers would be equipped with appropriate Information Communication and Technology infrastructure and applications, improved internet connectivity, and rapid SMS and *mUbuguzima* systems. All these outputs have been put in place and may have contributed in modernizing birth registration mechanisms. However, a lot needs to be done by the relevant agents and the general public, to optimize them in leveraging birth registration in Rwanda.

¹⁴ Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS-2) 2013-2017, P. 78

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

An analysis of birth registration in Rwanda echoes the universal registration programme to recognize the critical role of birth registration and that of an appropriate legal framework to planning and accessing services, as well as to ensuring that the rights of the child are met. The overall objective of the study was to conduct a technical analysis for an integrated, Universal Birth Registration Program, implemented in close collaboration between the government, the One UN and the civil society. The study also analysed how service delivery impacts the CRVS process. More specifically, the aim of this research was to assess the factors explaining the current low levels of birth registration observed and ways to mitigate them at community and policy levels.

From the overall objective, the following deliverables were expected:

- (i) A situation analysis of birth registration in Rwanda: Exploring the current registration; the legal and institutional framework; regional and international commitments of the government of Rwanda with regards to children's rights as related to birth registration.
- (ii) An analysis of the effectiveness and the efficiency of birth registration systems: Documenting the current processes of birth registration in Rwanda, identifying roles and capacities of duty bearers at national and community levels.
- (iii) Analyse the current government strategy for Birth Registration: Identifying strengths; weaknesses; areas that need further consideration for policy actions.
- (iv) Contextual analysis of birth registration in Rwanda, using exiting national statistics (desegregated in terms of age, poverty categories and geographic location).
- (v) Analysis of the current level of citizens' awareness on the importance of birth registration: identifying constraint areas and policy actions.

5. RESEARCH APPROACH AND DATA

A Technical analysis was carried out to provide a detailed picture of the current CRVS's landscape and an objective view on feasible and cost-effective means of strengthening CRVS systems and processes. The main research question for this study was: why are some children not registered and what are the consequences?

A qualitative approach was used as the main technique, partly because the study aimed to understand the dynamics of birth registration from both a legal and a socio-economic perspective. Focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews were the main data collection techniques. Members of FGDs included women and men legally or not legally married. Two focus group discussions were carried out in each sample District (one exclusively female and another one mixed for both men and women). Special attention was given to particular cases (e.g. single mothers, juvenile mothers, unplanned births, widows and divorced parents). However, secondary data from the National Institute of Statistics (e.g. the EICV4) and other official sources were used to conduct triangulation in order to validate the research findings and complement the qualitative information collected.

Furthermore, during the data collection at District level, researchers also conducted a stakeholder's analysis of key partners in the promotion of children's rights in general and birth registration in particular. The generated analysis will help World Vision to strategize on the potential advocacy activities and joint interventions to enhance birth registration in Rwanda.

With regard to the study area, the study was carried out in ten Districts purposely selected as depicted in the following Table (I). This implies two districts in each province plus the City of Kigali (one that is urban and another one from rural or remote area). Special consideration was attached to districts in bordering areas in order to assess some of the cross-border effects including unplanned births (possibly due to prostitution). Therefore, the choice of these districts was mainly purposive although the respondents were randomly selected.

Table 2. Sample Districts, Ministries, and Agencies considered for data collection

PROVINCE (FGD)	DISTRICTS (FGDs)	GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (KIs)	AGENCIES (KIs) ¹⁵
NORTH	GAKENKE GICUMBI	MINISANTE MINALOC MINIJUST MIGEPROF	NISR Rwanda Online UNICEF
SOUTH	NYARUGURU KAMONYI		UNWOMEN UNFPA WORLD VISION
WEST	KARONGI RUBAVU		UNECA
EAST	GATSIBO KIREHE		
KIGALI CITY	GASABO KICUKIRO		

While secondary data sources was used to gather some quantified data in different sample Districts and Sectors, the study focussed on how Districts and agencies coordinate birth registration (understanding the value chain from the family - village to Districts and community health centres) through interviews with selected key informants from the agencies indicated in the table above and the detailed list attached in the appendices (Appendix 3).

¹⁵ We will try to consult those organizations that mainly focus on children's rights to have their respective practitioner's experience.

6. KEY FINDINGS OF TECHNICAL ANALYSIS ON BIRTH REGISTRATION

The aim of this section is to present the key findings from the study. It entails the current status of birth registration in Rwanda; factors or reasons supporting the observed levels of birth registration; consequences and proposed mitigating strategies or mechanisms.

The section also presents a mapping of the stakeholders currently involved in promoting birth registration in Rwanda. The Information used in this analysis was obtained during 20 focus group discussions (between 7 and 8 participants per FGD). In total 157 citizens participated in the FGDs of them 75% were women and 25% were men. Additional information came from 50 key informants at District and Sector levels (these include Vice Mayor Social Affairs, Civil Registrar and Notary Officer, Data manager at health Centre, and 2 community health workers). At national level, consultations were made with policy and programme-makers to have a strategic level position on birth registration.

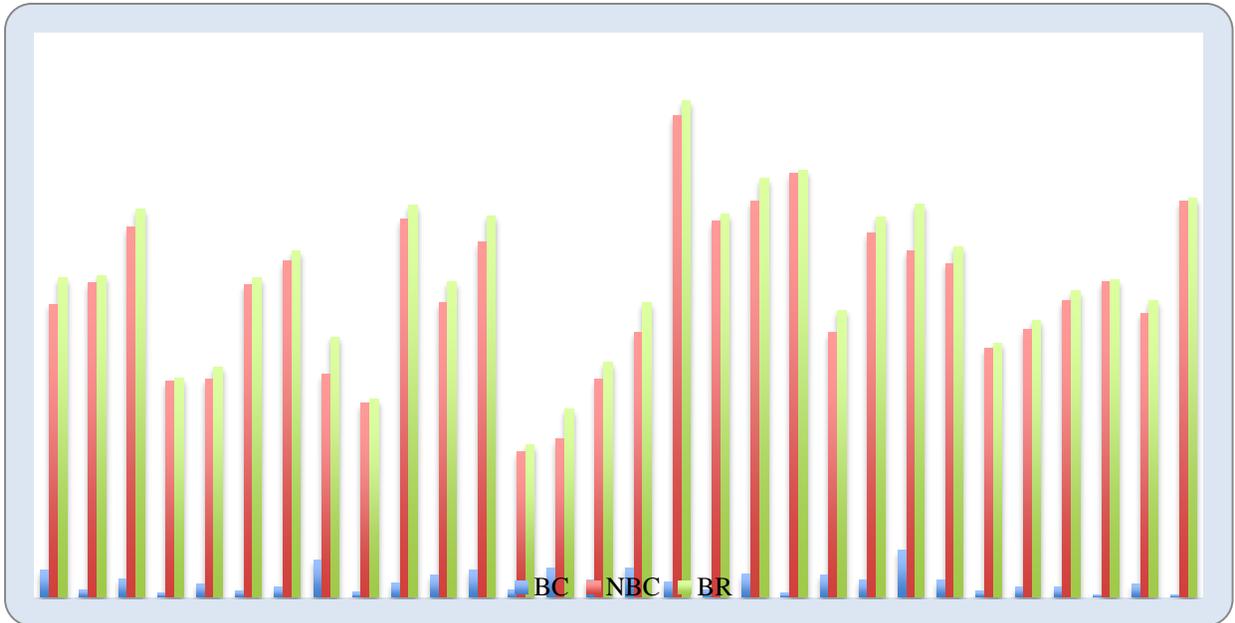
6.1. CURRENT STATUS OF BIRTH REGISTRATION IN RWANDA

Estimates from DHS (2014-2015) show that only 56% of children are notified at the Sector Civil Registration and Notary Services. This rate of birth notification has declined from 83% in 2005 and 63% in 2010 to 56% in 2015.

The observed decline in birth registration in the last 15 years does not reflect the reality due to the following reasons as obtained from the research:

1. The figures shown above had been based on a confusion between the terms ‘notification’ and ‘registration’ and other knowledge gaps among the general public on the real meaning of ‘Birth Registration’.
2. Parents confuse the NISR Census, the *Ubudehe* (Poverty classification) and other national surveys where they are asked to give information on their children, with birth registration. These overlapping national data collection exercises tend to mislead respondents during the DHS. Therefore, the more aware the population has gotten on birth registration, the more accurately they have responded; hence the latest figure is closer to the reality on the ground.
3. The DHS being a census, it relies on perceptions, which may not be in all cases accurate to reflect the actual status of birth registration.
4. With the launching of new web based systems, data is being collected more accurately; and it is anticipated that the next DHS will be even more accurate and reliable.

Figure 1. Status of birth registration at District level



The same survey substantiated that birth registration is higher among children between two and four years (60%) and lower for those below the age of two (50%). The findings from this research suggest the explanation to be that from birth to two years mothers are more focused on taking care of their children including breastfeeding, and it is only after two years when they think of placing their children in Early Childhood Development Centers (e.g. nursery schools) where birth certificate is required to establish the age of the child. In terms of sex, 56% of birth registration is males compared to 55% of females.

Figure 2. Birth registration by age (2005 to 2015)

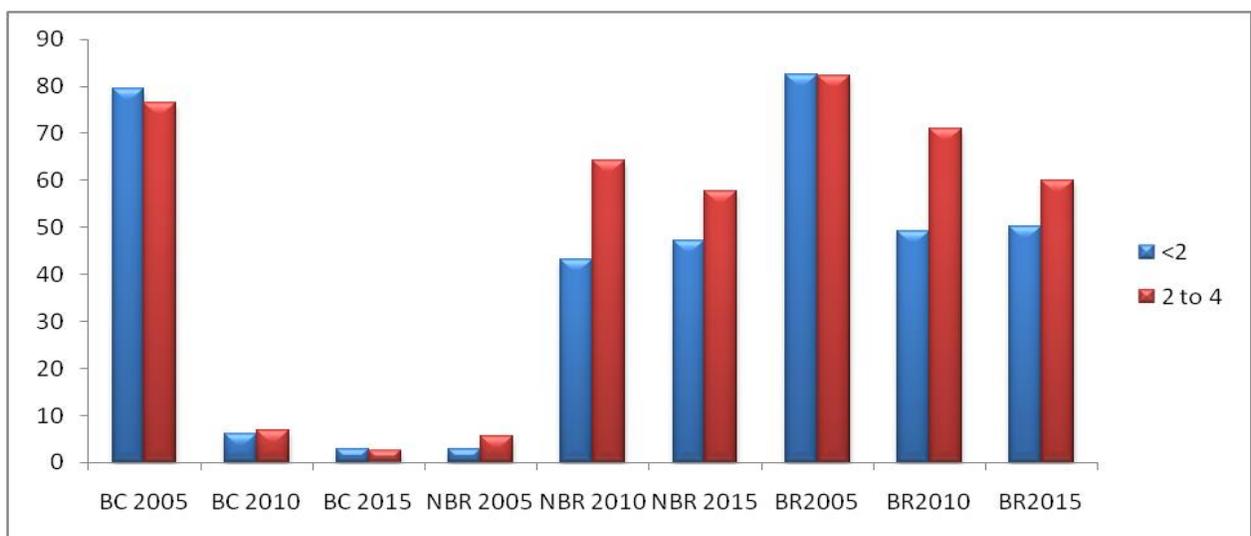
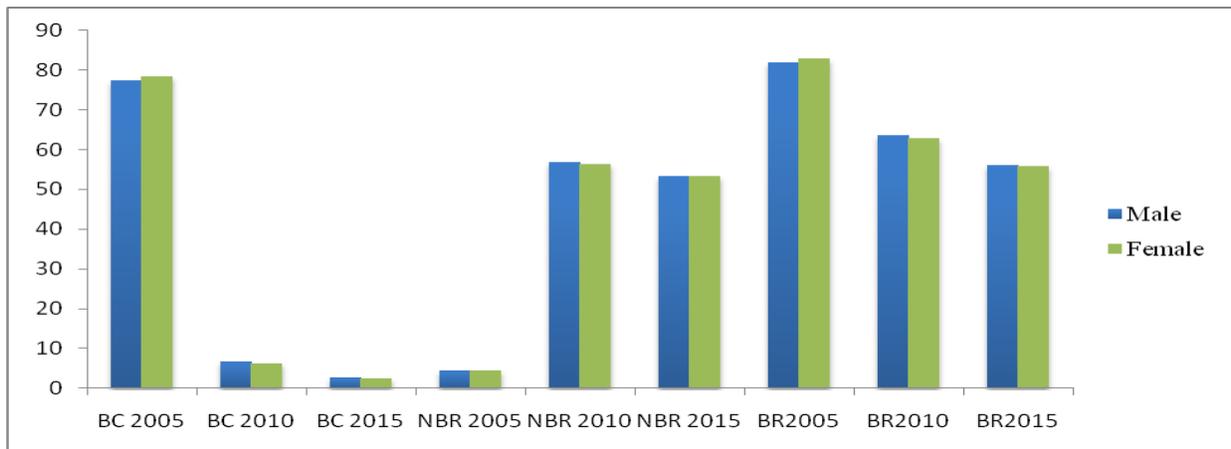
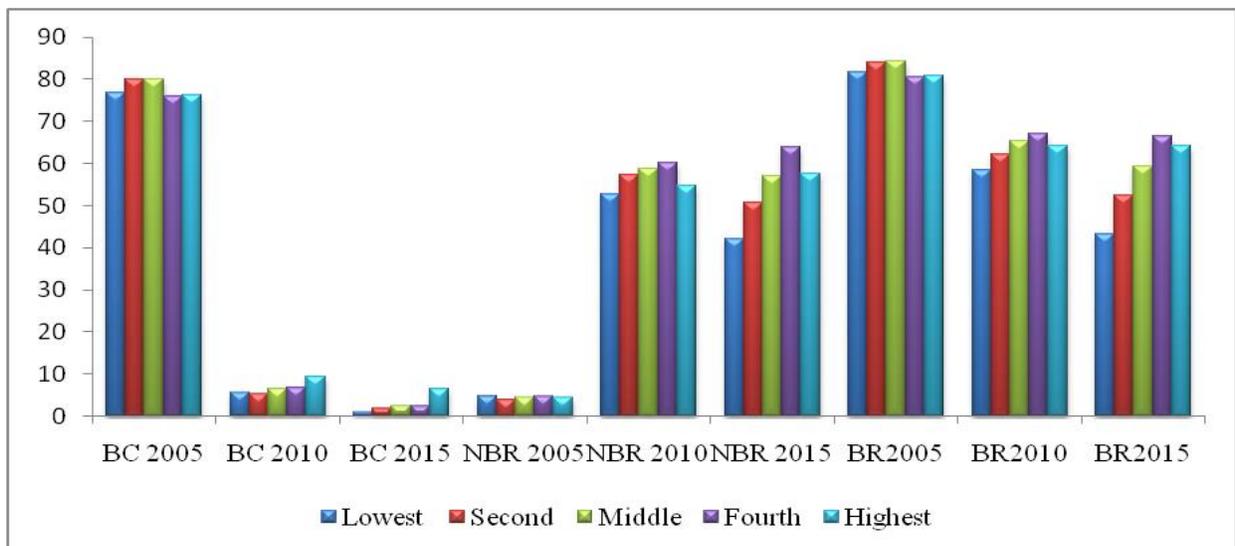


Figure 3. Birth registration by gender (2005 to 2015)



Another finding from the EICV showed that children in well to do families were likely to be more registered (53%-66%) than those in poor households (43%). The technical analysis found the explanations to be that well-to-do parents are more likely to travel with their children, send them to study abroad; they anticipate leaving an inheritance to their children and finally; well-to-do parents are usually married legally; all being incentives for registering their children, which parents in poor households and unofficial unions do not have.

Figure 4. Status by wealth quintile



It was also observed from secondary data that birth registration is higher in the North (67%) and the city of Kigali (59%) in comparison to other provinces. The study found the reason to be that the two provinces are more urbanized and the awareness is higher compared to other provinces. Particular to the City of Kigali, civil registration services have been decentralized to cell levels, which has made birth registration services more accessible to parents. In addition, birth

registration and notary services officers take personal initiatives to reach out to the families in their respective villages and register their children. For the Northern Province, a ‘Civil Society Platform on Child-rights Network’ has been set-up within the Joint Action Development Forum of the Districts, to follow-up on a daily basis, on children’s rights in general and birth registration in particular; World Vision is a member of the Network in *Gicumbi* District.

Figure 5. Status of Birth registration by province, and by rural and Urban Rwanda

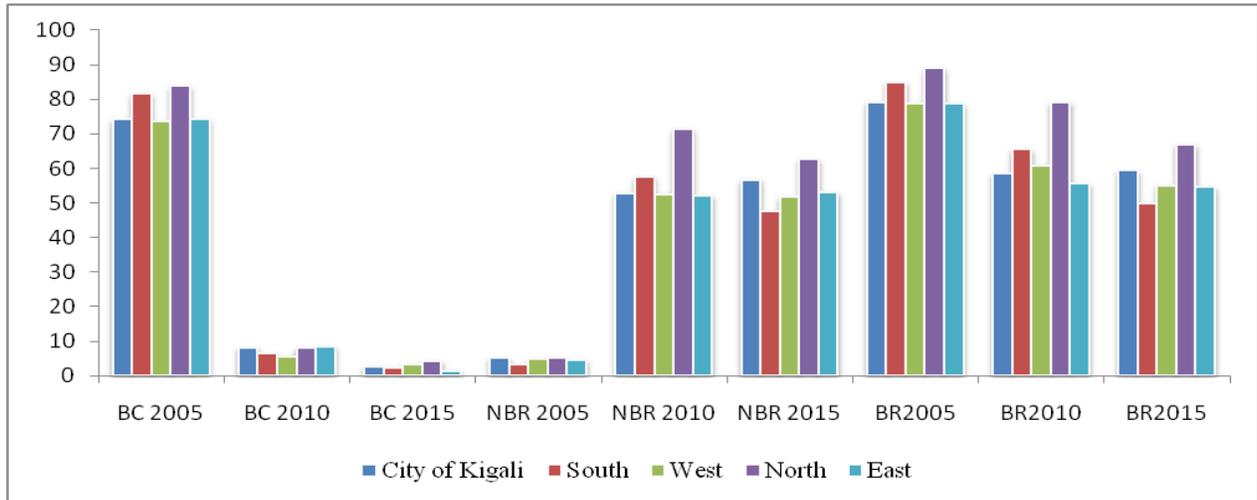
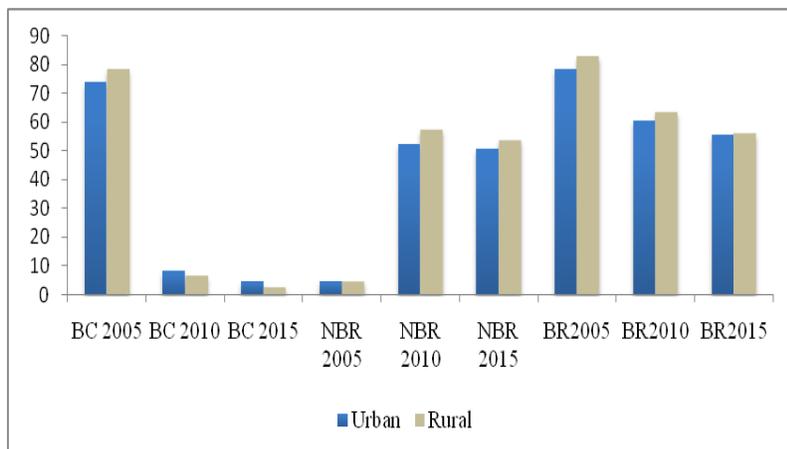


Figure 6. Percentage of birth registration by Rural and Urban areas



The figures above show the difference in terms of registration, birth certificate, and non-registration of birth across social economic characteristics. Two-sample means comparison were performed to assess whether the above differences are statistically significant. The statistical analysis confirms the expectation at 5% and 10% level of significance. One may conclude that children under 2 years, those from poor families, and those from families in rural areas are the least registered and do not have birth registration certificates (See Table 2).

Table 3. Means comparison of birth registration among social differences

“The **notification of birth** is made by an individual or institution to the Registrar of vital events. The notification role is usually played by health institutions and birth attendants, and in a limited number of cases by a local government official, such as a village chief. The notification report has no value other than as a control, and it cannot be turned into a legal registration record” Source, *UNICEF 2013*.

Variable	BC1	BR1	NBR1	BC2	BR2	NBR2	
Age (less 2 years old against 2 to 4 years old)		2.9	50.1	47.2	2.5	60	57.6
Gender (Male against Female		2.7	56	53.3	2.6	55.9	53.4
Wealth (lowest-Highest)		1	43.3	42.2	6.6	64.2	57.6
Rural -Urban		2.3	56.1	53.8	4.7	55.4	50.7

Two Sample Mean Comparison	Category 1	category 2	Pr [T>t]
Birth Certificate (BC)	2.2	4.1	0.064
Birth Registration (BR)	51.4	58.9	0.043
Non-Birth Registration (NBR)	49.125	54.825	0.064

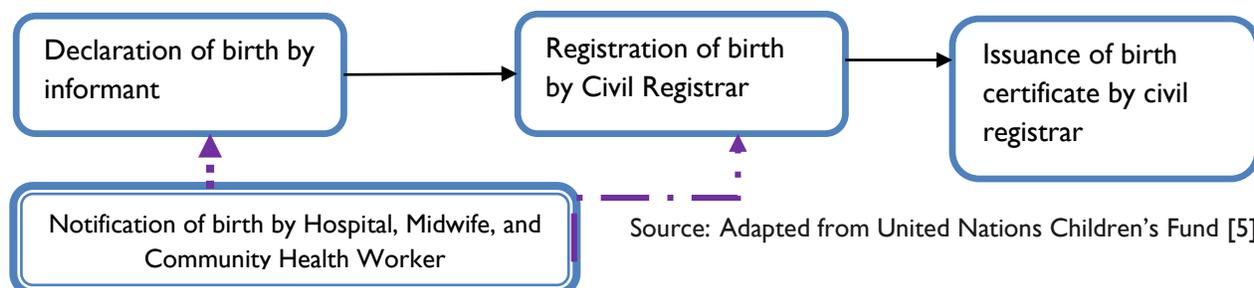
In all, birth registration is less than 10% although birth notification is 56%. This is a serious situation that needs to be address to avoid consequences to the fulfillment of the rights of children. Estimates from sample Sectors where the study collected part of the information used in this analysis echo the national trend. On average, 67% of births are pending birth registration, thus these cannot obtain birth certificates unless they seek first a *Court ruling supplementing birth registration* (This was recently removed with the new Family Law), which is also difficult to afford by the majority of parents due to the costs related and the scarcity of legal aid for that particular action of seeking birth certificate.

Table 4. Estimates of birth registration and birth notification in sample Sectors

District	Sector	Acte de naissance	Registre de naissance	Total	% Pending Registration
Kirehe	Kirehe	37	838	875	95.8
Gatsibo	Gitoki				
Karongi	Mubuga	15	137	152	90.1
Rubavu	Kanama	44	231	275	84.0
Kicukiro	Masaka	260	50	310	16.1
Kamonyi	Runda	228	999	1227	81.4
Gakenke	Gashyenyi	201	530	731	72.5
Gasabo	Kininya	787	7892	8679	90.9
Nyaruguru	Rusenge	457	34	491	6.9
Gicumbi					
Overall Mean		253.6	1338.9		67.2

Part of the overall explanation of this low birth registration is the confusion by parents with the overlapping registration system as detailed the section below. A birth registration should follow immediately the birth notification and hence resulting to a birth certificate. A one stop centre should comprise the following steps as describe by Figure (7).

Figure 7. Flow of Birth Registration



6.2. CHALLENGES: REASONS FOR LOW BIRTH REGISTRATION

The rationale of this study was to understand what are the key factors or reasons for the low birth registration observed in Rwanda. From the research findings, these can be grouped in four categories, including: (1) overlapping systems of children's registration, (2) high transactional costs (3) Short the proposed duration required for birth registration, (4) Inefficiency in the registration system and cultural barriers hindering parents' compliance to the proposed system:

1. **Overlapping registration mechanisms:** There are a number of registrations exercises such as national identification service, the national population census, the poverty categorization known as *Ubudehe*, the health insurance coverage scheme (known as *Mutuelle de Santé*), and hospital registration system after birth. Once parents have registered their children and other members of their family in one or more of the above registration exercises; they tend to believe that this serves for all purposes including those of birth registration, since most of them record children's details too. The difference between these systems as far as children's registration is concerned does not come out clearly to some parents. The majority of respondents argued that once they have registered their children at the hospital, they do not have more motivation to go back at the sector for the civil registry. This implies the need to explain well the rationale and the basis of each registration in any of the above registration systems. By this, parents will be able to appreciate the relevance of the birth registration systems.

Quotation: 'I think our children have been registered at least five times; during the 'Ibarura rusange' (NISR Census), the *Mutuelle* (Healthcare), the *Ubudehe* (Poverty classification), the vaccination and the baptism' – Women FDG, Gasabo

2. **High transactional costs for birth registration:** Respondents from the various focus group discussions contended that the distance, the cost and the time for birth registration is too high. In terms of distance, parents from the remote cells have to travel 3 to 4 hours on foot or pay transport fees of 3000 to 5000 Rwf (one way) to reach sector offices. While birth registration is a free service, if parents go beyond the 15 days requirement, they have to pay 2500 Rwf as fine and cover transport and compensate workday income of the tree witnesses required by law. *With the new Family law, the fine has to be determined by the presidential order.* Children born out of wedlock are unlikely to be registered.
3. **The proposed duration of birth registration:** as above indicated, by law, registration of births has to be conducted within 15 days after birth occurrence. Past that date, parents must seek a court order.¹⁶ This

Quotation: 'The father refused to recognize our child. I couldn't register the child alone, and my brothers wouldn't allow my father to recognize my child because they think he would claim on their inheritance...' – Single mother in Gicumbi FDG"

¹⁶ Art. 117-126 Civil Code Book 1: Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Successions.

duration of 15 days was perceived a short period by every respondent for the following reasons: Firstly, only two weeks are in 15 days and the civil registration and notary services at sector level give only two occasions (once a week) to register a new born. Once parents miss such occasion, they must seek a court order to register their children, which the majority doesn't do. This though changed with the new Family Law, which first increased the period to 30 days and removed the court requirement, replacing it with administrative measures by the registrar.

Secondly, the task of birth registration comes as part of other multiple tasks for the civil registrars at sector offices and data managers at hospitals and health centers. Their high volume workload include but it is not limited to the following tasks:

(1). Civil Registrar: CRVS, Notary services, civil registration, marriage registration, death, officiating in marriage ceremonies, several certificates and attestations, being in charge of Good governance at Sector level, organize 'Umuganda' (community work), follow-up on population requests etc.

(2). Data Managers at health centers: HMIS, CRVS, Database management, Assisting in Book Keeping, Tracking individual health cases for the entire 'health zone' (which may be the size of the district and beyond), delivering birth attestation, delivering medical statements for every patient, etc.

In addition to the above, another reason advanced is related to the parents. One month is short for mothers whom just after giving birth and still going post-delivery treatment are unable to worry or withstand registration processes, not least; it is too early for them to carry the baby on motorbike to seek registration. This hinders timely registration. A fine of 2400 Rwf is requested for delays in birth registration and mothers have to come with their husbands (or their husbands 'identity cards) and three witnesses to receive birth notification or registration. The responsible parents will have to pay also the transport costs for the three witnesses' depending on the distance from home to their sector office and compensate their workday income. This, as a result faults the system whereby some parents seek witnesses among random citizens seeking other services at the sector office to avoid the above-mentioned costs.

4. Effectiveness and Efficiency of the birth registration System: there are a number of factors explaining low birth registration relates to the effectiveness and efficiency aspects of the current birth registration systems. The policy requires identification of both parents, if one of the parents is not identified, then the registration is not possible. This is mainly linked to cases of single mothers, births occurring in abnormal conditions (such as rape, forced marriage, juvenile pregnancies) and other cases where the parent's union is not regularized in line with the matrimonial regime.

In addition, cultural practices conflict with registration requirements. Children are not named before they are born. Naming is a function that takes place at home after the child was born and the father is seen with sole responsibility of naming the child.

Therefore, if the parent is not available for the period of more than 15 days after birth, the remaining option is to notify the child in the registry book – and in the CRVS at the Sector office. Other factors include shortage of the personnel qualified on the Health Management Information System (HMIS), unreliable Internet and electricity for operating the online registration software. All these factors affect the effectiveness and the efficiency of the current registration system.

The following Table (3) gives more detailed factors indicated during the FGDs as the bottlenecks to effective birth registration system in sampled Districts.

Table 5. Key issues identified during FGDs and KIs

Issues	Kamunyi	Nyaruguru	Gicumbi	Gakenke	Gasabo	Rubavu	Gatsibo	Karongi	Kirehe	Kicukiro	Frequency	% Frequency
Lack of information, parents who don't understand the importance of registering a child			X	X				X	X		4	40
Parents using different names during birth registration. Thus when registering at health center and at the sector offices)			X	X				X			3	30
Neglect of child registration by parents, mainly men				X			X	X	X	X	5	50
Different surveys conducted for different data needs eg census, ubudehe categories are miss interpreted by parents as birth registration.							X	X			2	20
Fine charges imposed on parents for late registration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10	100
After the deadline it is expensive and difficult for most parents to seek a court ruling supplanting birth registration.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10	100
15/30 days is a short period of time for birth registration.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10	100
Long-distance travel from some house hold to sector offices				X			X	X			3	30
Shortage of some specific tools and logistics.	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	7	70
Lack of enough trained personnel				X							1	10
Limited Internet connection at sector offices	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	8	80
The system of CRVS's is not user friendly	X	X	X	X				X		X	6	60
The system does not cater for particular cases like unwanted pregnancies, illegally married couples and under age ladies who give birth therefore they are reluctant to register their children	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10	100
Temporary and pending lists are used to register children at health centers and sector level				X				X		X	3	30
Civil registra and Data manager experience work over load and this affect the quality and effectiveness	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	9	90
Little respect for the law about registration.				X			X	X		X	4	40

Source: Information from FGDs

6.3. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVED BIRTH REGISTRATION

The existing and potential mechanisms of birth registration can be grouped into the following two categories: Web-based and paper-based systems.

6.3.1. PAPER BASED REGISTRATION SYSTEMS

Birth Registration Register and (2) Birth Notification Register. The birth registration register allows registration of newborn within 15¹⁷ days. This does not involve any charges, only requires the identification of both parents, witnesses from the neighborhood, and birth certificate provided by the health center from which the child was born. A child registered in those conditions can be given a birth registration certificate. Whereas, the birth notification register allows registration of all births including those that occur beyond the period of 15 days although they do not qualify for a birth registration certificate or 'Acte de naissance' unless they seek a ruling supplementing birth registration. The duration was recently increased to 30 days as per the 2016 law governing persons and the family.

Furthermore, the same law stipulates that 'Any person wishing to receive a birth record without having declared the child's birth within the period provided for by this Law is liable to an administrative fine determined by a Presidential Order. However, in case the child requesting a birth record has no parents, he/she receives the record without paying the fine.' During the focus group discussions but parents pointed out that they are not interested in pursuing court procedure for birth registration, due to the cumbersome process related costs and the general inconvenience.

Quotation: Umwaka w'imbabazi' (The promotion year is great; we are pleased that the fine of RwF 2500 has been removed. – Gicumbi Women FDG

It is critical to note that, **birth notification guarantees all the rights of a child**; both statistical and legal, except the right to access national identification and travel document such as passport. Clearly, there is no big difference in terms of child's rights with or without a birth registration certificate. This is mainly explained by the provisions of the Law relating to the Rights and Protection of the child¹⁸, in its article 11 and beyond that 'The child shall enjoy his/her rights as of conception and he/she is reputed born whenever his/her interests are concerned'. This means that no one may base on the absence of a birth certificate, or indeed birth registration in the Civil Registry to deny any child his or her rights. As a result, respondents from the FGDs could not easily differentiate birth registration and birth notification. Some see birth certificate as "a document for rich families"

Quotation 1: *Birth certificate is for children whose parents want to send them to study abroad, most of us don't need it]. A resident from Kinyinya Sector.*

¹⁷ The New family law provides for 30 days.

¹⁸ Law n°54/2011 of 14/12/2011 relating to the rights and the protection of the child

Table 6. Child's rights upon the two registration systems

Child's Rights	Birth Registration	Birth Notification
Demographic rights	x	x
Right to Nationality	x	x
Right to access Identification and Travel documents	x	N/A
Right to a lineage name (Parents)	x	x
Right to inheritance	x	x
Right to health facilities	x	x
All other rights guaranteed to Rwandan Citizens	x	x

Source: this study

6.3.2. Web-based birth registration systems

1. Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS)

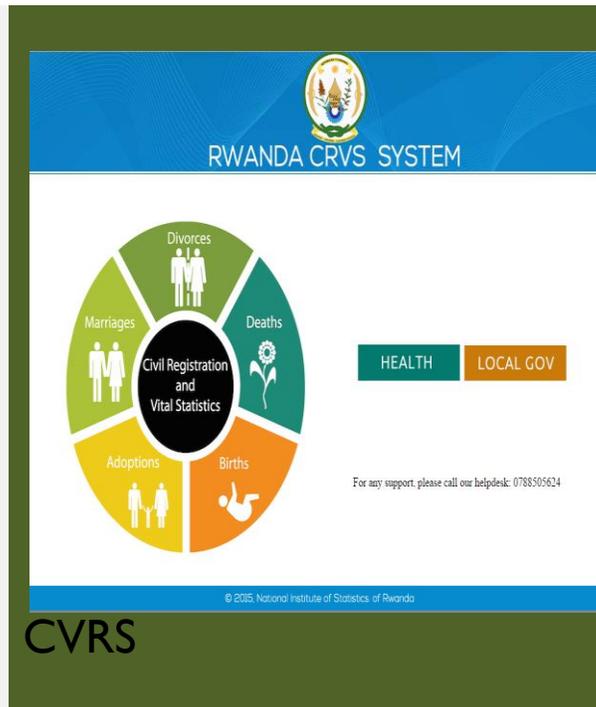
Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) are systems concerned with the legal registration and analysis of vital events in the population [9]. Accordingly, vital events include births, deaths, marriages, divorces, fetal deaths, annulments, judicial separations and adoptions, and through the registration process these events are made legal and legitimate. Whereas, civil registration (CR) is defined by the United Nations as the universal, continuous, permanent, and compulsory recording of vital events provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirement of each country. In Rwanda, this system was piloted in 2015 and is operational in the whole country in all sectors, districts and national hospitals, health centers, district hospitals, referral hospitals and private clinics.

The CRVS Annual Report (Finalized but not approved yet) shows that the web-based system introduced last year in 2015 has begun to show results; more than 100% increase in notifying births in health facilities; 117,552 births were notified by health facilities, compared to 56,095 notified within the same period in 2014. With the launch of the CRVS, new practices have emerged, including proposing or preparing a name of the child before she/he is born for potential registration in the CRVS during the antenatal consultations. To date, 85% of women giving birth in health facilities are providing names for their children¹⁹. The following Box (1) describes how the system operates both at health facility and local government and how it is linked to other systems namely HMIS and IREMBO.

Box (1). Some of the shortcomings of CVRS include the following:

¹⁹ The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Annual Report, P4

1. The CRVS system is inflexible. It does not accept to register a child without the identity of the father. Unless the mother says that the father is unavailable, which establishes a permanent status of: 'Father unknown or absent' for the child;
2. The system does not accommodate more than two children born on the same dates to the same parents (this does not apply for triplets or more);
3. The system does not accommodate certain professions, it is not exhaustive in terms of occupations;
4. The system does not allow for editing of data after validation of the entry;
5. The internet connection and the electricity are not reliable and hinder the registration of children; while the registrars record the information in a Register book, they hardly find time to upload that information in the system, which creates backlogs and eventually discrepancy between the books and the web-based systems;



2. Health Management Information System (HMIS)

Health Management Information System (HMIS) is a Ministry of Health-run system that collects technical data for epidemiological and other health related use. While it somewhat overlaps with the CRVS, the HMIS is entirely for specific statistical and technical health purposes. HMIS collects aggregated data whereas CVRS collects individual identity related data. In terms of capturing births, CVRS is yet to catch-up with the HMIS. For example, the NISR –CRVS annual report (2016-Q1) shows that the CRVS captured only 75% (117, 552) of births captured in the HMIS (156,418).

3. IREMBO

Irembo is Rwanda's program managed by Rwanda Online²⁰ in partnership with the NIDA. Irembo's birth registration system was introduced recently (July 2016) as a one-stop portal for e-government services. It is aimed to increase easy access, efficiency, and reliability of government services. As far as birth registration is concerned, Irembo will be generating electronic birth certificates (see image bellow). However, the Data Managers of Hospitals and health centers are not connected to Irembo, nor are the Civil Registration and Notary Services Officers at Sector level. For the success of the project, all these actors need to be given the appropriate credentials and training to log onto Irembo and factor Irembo in their daily work. It is yet to be harmonized with other systems such as the CVRS, HMIS, and NIDA.

Figure 8. Irembo portrait

²⁰ www.irembo.gov.rw



Source: [Internet]: <https://irembo.gov.rw/rolportal/web/rol>. Accessed 21st September, 2016.

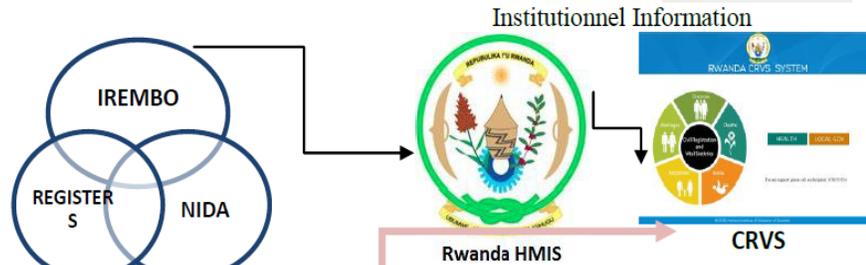
In view of the above systems, the following Figure (9) depicts inter-connected model of registration

Figure 9. Inter-operability of the birth registration systems

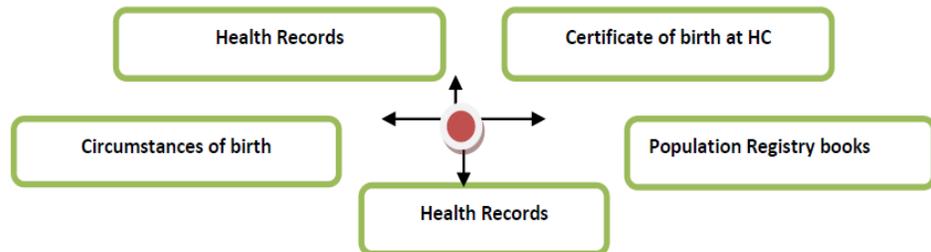
Level 1: Information needs, Users, usage across organizations, social system level (community health workers).



Level 2: Software applications and information systems, Civil registrar, data managers at health centres.



Level 3: Technical level, inter-operability and standards, technical infrastructure (NIDA, NISR, IREMBO, MOH, MINALOC)



Source: Adapted from WHO, 2013.

The first level describes the information needs while the second level depicts the software application and information systems. The third level represents technical level, the interoperability and standards. One of the lessons from this figure is that there is need to further understand the operability of the existing systems and how they can be integrated for an improved and effective birth registration.

6.4. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING TO SCALE UP BIRTH REGISTRATION IN RWANDA

One of the deliverable of this technical analysis was to identify existing and potential key stakeholders as well as existing and possible areas of interventions. This will inform future actions of World Vision and other interested partners promoting birth registration, related services and the rights of children in Rwanda. The stakeholders mapping exercise point to four major activities where the civil society in general and World Vision in particular possess a comparative expertise and added value in the following areas:

- Advocacy at all levels and especially within the Justice Sector and the Social Protection Sector to build momentum for birth registration in Rwanda;
- Logistical support to local government and community health centers;
- Technical and financial support to community health workers;
- Community sensitization, including campaigns of fighting taboos and stigma; and
- Coordination of all stakeholders involved in promoting children's rights.

For the public sector partners, they have a comparative advantage in policy design and coordination, law and policy reform, education campaigns and special governance programs (such as governance month, legal aid week, land week) and support to community structures (e.g. *Umugoroba w'ababyeyi*, *Umuganda*, etc.).

Some best practices observed in Gicumbi District namely the '**Civil Society Platform on Child-rights Network**', set-up within the Joint Action Development Forum of the District', to follow-up on a daily basis, on children's rights in general and birth registration in particular and of which World Vision is a member. This can be one of the flagships of the upcoming national strategic plan on birth registration in Rwanda. The expected role of the JADF at District level and the Sector Working Group at national level is crucial to ensuring that children's rights including birth registration are guaranteed and the gaps in birth registration are bridged.

Table 7. Stakeholder mapping for birth registration

Institution/ Organization	Current and Potential Roles/ areas of Interventions	Level (National, District, and Cell and Community level)
Non-State Actors		
NGOs/CBOs	- Training/capacity building of Civil Registration agents;	Health Centre/Civil Registration Office
INGOs/One UN	- Policy advocacy	National level;
	- Logistical support;	Health Centre/Civil Registration Office
	- Training Civil Registration Officer	Health Centre/Civil Registration Office
	- Research/partnership	National level
World Vision	- Training of media and campaigns	National Level
	- Advocacy for Fines waiver;	Cell level
	- Birth registration campaigns;	
	- Advocacy in Sector Working Groups	National Level
FBOs/Churches	- Community sensitization;	Community level
	- Support/organizing parents congregations;	
	- Empowering Fathers (He4She)	
Public Institutions		
MIGEPROFE	- Policy/Strategies/Coordinatio	National Level
	- Support to community structures (Umugoroba w' Ababyeyi)	
	- Governance month	
NIDA/NISR	- Implementation and M&E	All levels
CNF/NCC	- Coordination of stakeholders	All levels
	- Support to Community Structures	
Media	- Sensitization;	Community level

Source: the study

7. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY ACTIONS

6.1. CONCLUSIONS

This report has analyzed the current status of birth registration in Rwanda, identified areas of improvement and proposed a number of programmatic and policy actions for increasing birth registration in Rwanda. The leading assumption in the analysis is that birth registration is currently low which is contrary to the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) that ‘the child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to a nationality’. There are developmental priorities linked to an effective birth registration such as access to quality and primary healthcare, property rights, right to nationality, and access to identification and travel documents, which bring into focus the urgent need to strengthen the current birth registration systems. Findings in this report are a step, in this orientation, in trying to identify the limitations and possible actions towards a strengthened system of birth registration.

An overall finding of this research is that the current status of birth registration at national level is quite low. The number of children with birth certificate in all districts is less than 10% compared to a birth notification rate of 56%. This implies that although the CVRS register at hospitals show many registered births, almost half of those births have not been registered at the sector level, in the civil registration books

While trying to understand this status of birth registration, it is important to place it in the prevailing legal, social, and policy development context. Legally, the rights of a child are guaranteed upon conception regardless whether they are registered or not! Despite birth registration being necessary for national planning purposes, there is no incentive to most parents to register their children as a matter of urgency. As for the ‘Acte de naissance’ (Birth Certificate), there is no big difference in terms of fulfilling children’s rights when the child has a birth notification certificate and a birth certificate, save from having access to travel documents.

However, once children are notified at sector level, they are eligible to ‘attestation de naissance’, which perfectly serves *in lieu* of a birth certificate.

The current status of birth registration is also seen along some socio-economic characteristics. Children between 2 to 4 years are the most notified at the civil registration system. Similarly, children in well to do families are the most registered compared to those in poor families, and children in urban areas are more registered than those in rural areas. The city of Kigali and the Northern Province have better rates of registration compared to other provinces. This implies that registration rates are the lowest among socially disadvantaged children. The statistical analysis above attempt to confirm that being socially disadvantaged does play role in the current birth registration. In addition, birth registration is a critical in the period for early child development where health care is most needed.

Scientific evidences show that inadequate nutrition before birth and in the first years of life can seriously interfere with brain development. Infants exposed to good nutrition and adequate psychosocial stimulation are likely to have better brain functioning at age 12 years. Therefore, interventions towards improved birth registration should factor in all social dimensions impending parents registering their children, which in turn will inform better planning of children's development.

Other reasons and challenges identified for low birth registrations are linked to the current birth registration system. These include the overlapping birth registration systems, high transactional costs for birth registration (time, distance and fines or charges for late registration), Inadequate legal duration of birth registration (30 days), and the effectiveness and efficiency factors of the existing birth registration systems.

Results from the technical analysis had shown that after the deadline it was difficult and expensive for most parents to seek a 'ruling supplementing birth registration' this was removed in the new Civil Code as indicated above. Some logistical deficiencies in operating the existing birth registration systems were also identified as limiting factors for an effective birth registration system, especially at Sector level. Furthermore, the marital status of the parent(s) matters a lot in child's registration, while the system does not cater for special cases such as unwanted pregnancies, illegally married couples, and juvenile parents etc. whom therefore, are reluctant to register their children.

Birth registration service is among many civil and vital registration services offered at sector level. Due to an overload of tasks for civil registrars at Sector offices and data managers at hospitals and health centers, the quality and the effectiveness of birth registration is highly affected. The existing web-based registration system is mainly operated by the civil registrars, in case they are not present, no one else is trained to run the system – this affects parents, whom have two chances before the fifteen days run out. Finally the unreliability of electricity and Internet would go a long way in speeding up the registration process.

6.2. Proposed policy Actions

The proposed actions are in response to the current status of birth registration and the challenges identified during this research. These are in line with coordination and accountability of birth registration, harmonization and integration of birth registration systems, technical and logistical support needed for an effective birth registration system, and legal and policy reform.

1. **Ensure coordination and accountability at national and local level on birth registration.** Findings suggest that there are many institutions involved in birth registration in their respective portfolios. However, there is no specialized outfit that is accountable for birth registration. Furthermore, there is poor coordination in birth registration between health center data manager and the sector civil registrar and notary officer. Initiatives towards improved coordination can base on the on-going comprehensive civil registration assessment under the

coordination of the NISR and UNECA, all state and non-state actors, which will be followed by a costed Strategic Plan on the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics.

2. **Harmonization of current birth registration systems.** The technical analysis made in this study shows no harmonization between the birth registration systems namely CVRS, HMIS, and NIDA as regard to data needs, more specifically, types of variables or characteristics, measurement, data aggregates, and the like. Each system appears to stand alone and working independently without necessarily feeding each other's data needs as far as birth registration is concerned. For the birth registration to be more effective there is a need to harmonize and integrate all these web-based systems that work on birth registration without compromising the data needs.

Establish one-stop centre for birth registration at health facilities. One stop center will facilitate successful completion of birth registration modalities and processes upon birth and before the mother leaves the health facility. It will guarantee registration within the legal period, save mothers from an extra trip to the district offices for the registration bureaucracy, avoid other related transactional costs and observed systems inconsistencies. Indeed, the technical analysis observed that duplication in birth registration by different systems has caused inconsistencies in birth statistics. For example in Rubavu District, of the 12121 births registered at health center only 9% (1102) of them were registered in all districts by the Civil registrars while (91%) 11019 were pending registration. In Karongi District, out of 7737 children registered by health facility, only (32%) 2490 were registered by the civil registrars and (68%) 5247 were pending. In addition, when asked to name children before birth, parents give them provisional nicknames pending the traditional 'naming ceremony' (e.g. bebe, boy, etc.) new names are given later on, with a risk of double registration

3. **Provide technical and logistical support to community health workers (CHW).** For an effective birth registration, couples are expected to play major role and for that they need to be more sensitized. To this effect, Community Health Workers require technical and logistical support, such as (*Igare ryo kwandikisha abana*, air time, mobile birth registration); facilitating the sensitization of men on their roles in the registration of their children; support to existing community mechanisms such as (Umuganda, Umugoroba w'ababyeyi), as well as national campaigns, namely (Governance Month, Land Week, Legal Aid Week), etc.
4. **Law and institutional reform addressing main birth registration bottlenecks.** Since there is no outfit accountable for birth registration, the law should establish it to coordinate and fast track birth registration in Rwanda. The law should be also flexible to allow decentralization of birth registration services to cell levels as is the case in the City of Kigali. This is likely to enable cost-effective birth registration (e.g. reduce time, distance, transport costs).
5. **Initiate Mobile Birth registration system.** The experience from Senegal and Uganda suggests that the use of mobile Vital Registration System can increase birth registration. Rwanda has a good existing telecommunication infrastructure to base on potential initiatives in the same perspective. A *Teledensity* of more than 70% suggests that once Mobile Vital Record System is introduced it may greatly improve the current levels of birth registration. Since other

Mobile records and transaction systems have succeeded (e.g. Mobile money Banking System and E-payment Cell Phones system), any adaptation towards increased birth registration can also be successful if well implemented.

6. **Strengthening Civil Society Networks on Child-rights within the Joint Action Development Forum.** There is need to advocate and support the establishment of birth registration networks within the JADF at District level. This is likely to strengthen interventions in birth registration in the community, among others.
7. **Birth registration should be considered among Performance Objectives (Imihigo).** It was established that one of the reasons of low birth registration was that local government performance contracts where birth does not come out as one of the targets.

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10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Some Selected quotations from the Focus Group Discussions

Area of quotation	Quotation
On Waiver of fines for late registration	Umwaka w'imbabazi' (The promotion year) is great; we are pleased that the fine of RwF 2500 has been removed. – Gicumbi Women FDG
On children born out of wedlock	'The father refused to recognize our child. I couldn't register the child alone. And my brothers wouldn't allow my father to recognize my child because they think he would claim on their inheritance...' – Single mother in Gicumbi FDG
On Notification and Registration	I think our children have been registered at least five times; during the 'Ibarura rusange' (NISR Census), the <i>Mutuelle</i> (Healthcare), the <i>Ubudehe</i> (Poverty classification), the vaccination and the baptism – Women FDG, Gasabo.
On regularization of marriage:	Tuzaba tubabaruzza umunsi tuzashakana imbere y'amategeko (We will have our child registered the day we regularise our marriage) - a man during a mixed FDG – Gicumbi
On late registration:	<p>When we ask them to come with us, they say they have no time; they give us their ID but do not want to accompany us. And they are right, both of us cannot afford to spend a weekday off at the Sector office registering a child, instead of trying to find food for the said child;</p> <p>The Vice Mayor informs you that: 'if you write the child in your names only and they write (father absent) because he couldn't make it, do not bother the father should anything arise' (Which is a scary disclaimer because the rights of the child vis-à-vis the father are thereby relinquished. So we have to wait for the father to be available;</p> <p>'Sometimes mothers lie about the exact date of birth of the child to meet the 15 days deadline' – Civil Registration and Notary Services Officer, Gicumbi</p>
On the three witnesses	We just find random people who have come for diverse business at the sector, and ask them to be our witnesses;
Community Health Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those legally married follow the rules of child registration; those not, aren't much interested; - Kinyinya had a promotion, the fine has been waved and now all children are being registered in the 'One month promotion' being run by the Kinyinya Sector. - Community Health Workers play the role of informing us, that indeed that woman, who doesn't

live with the father of the child; - Registration Officer, Kinyinya

- If your child wasn't born at the hospital, how can you take them for registration? They may ask you many other questions and other fines - FDG

On the court process:

No one goes to court. When you tell them that, they go and never come back' -Registration officer, Kinyinya.

'Is the court requirement still there? I thought it was no longer necessary' – Mother, Female FDG Kinyinya

On Community sensitization:

'When they give birth in America, they don't come back before 15 days, they can't register their children in time then...'

'People in big compounds do not open for us. They have dogs... Tumeze nka Yezu, turi kumuryango turakomanga...(We are like Jesus, we are at the door knocking. Only those who open can be sensitized about birth registration)' – Community Health Worker Kinyinya

On father's child recognition

We have transformed the 'Amende', into the fees to be paid for 'Acte de reconnaissance'. (Where fathers recognize their child) So we explain to parents that instead of charging them money for coming late to register their child, we are trying to make sure we deliver the Child Recognition Certificate to enable children to inherit in the future' – Kinyinya Sector

On the law:

- By law, the rights of a child are guaranteed upon conception in Rwanda. Which is not the case in some other countries, such as South Africa. This serves as a disincentive to birth registration.' –Key Informant at Unicef;

On duplication of systems (CRVS, HMIS, NID, IREMBO): Civil Registration and Notary Services Officer

- When we have a meeting with all of them (MINISANTE, NISR, NID, IREMBO) they claim that their system is harmonized. But they know it isn't and none of them accept data collected using the other's format'.

- We do double, triple work because we have to fill the NIDA form, which is more important. Yet the information on the form is identical to the information in the CRVS;
- No one accept the other's data.
- NIDA does not accept CRVS it accepts its own Form;
- MINISANTE claims that their HMIS is the only data they trust
- NISR doesn't accept HMIS or NIDA, they accept only CRVS
-
- When they are in a meeting, they claim to accept each other's data, 5 years later, we are still duplicating the same information in four systems;
- Everyone who needs information brings their own software;
- If systems were harmonized, it would reduce paper
-

On naming the child before birth: Data Manager at Hospital

- Birth Registration isn't a household priority; especially at the wake of family expansion.
- HMIS creates confusion: in the HMIS parents are asked to offer names of newborns that parents think they have been registered;
- There is a big of a cultural barrier. At the hospital they ask the mother to find a name before birth, name the child immediately after, yet in the Rwandan culture: A pregnancy can't be named;
- A child is named 8 days after birth, there is a specific ceremony to that end;
- The father has a bigger say on the name of the Child;
- As a result, while mothers may offer a name, for the sake of the HMIS it remains provisional and may mislead data, when the real, permanent name is given.

On giving birth at the hospital or at home:

- In July people do not give birth at their health centers because their *Mutuelle* (health insurance) are expired, so they prefer to give birth hors-zone (Outside their healthcare centres);

On unreliable internet and electricity

- Internet and electricity go everyday. So we have to write in the books and fill on the computer later. With a lot of work sometimes we forget, or we

have to do that on the weekend, we always have a backlog.

Appendix 2: Proposed timeframe

ACTIVITY	PROPOSED PERIOD	ASSUMPTION
Literature review and Secondary collection	16th -19th /August	
Presentation of the inception report	16th / August	World Vision's availability
Field data collection	21st – August to 2nd September	Availability of key informants
Draft report writing plus some other key consultation	5th to 15 th September	Depending on the data availability
Draft report submission	15th September 2016	
Reaction to the comments and submission of the final draft report	19th to 23rd September	Upon reception of the Client.
Validation workshop	TBD	To be organized by the client (the discussion will focus on the scope of this work).

Appendix 3: Interview guide

1. Introduction

- Thank the interviewees for their participation.
- Explain the purpose of the Technical Analysis and this interview.
- Note that the interviewee should feel free to raise her/his own relevant issues if they are not covered in the questions.
- Explain that all information provided will be treated confidentially and anonymity will be respected.
- Indicate that the interview will take around 1 hour
- Ask if you may proceed with the interview.

2. Proposed list of Questions for Key Informants (District and Community levels)

1. How is the current birth registration in your district? (Figures)
2. Considering the status you have given what are the reasons?
3. Are there challenges in birth registration?
4. How has the introduction of CRVS/HMIS systems helped you?
5. What is strategy to address these challenges?

3. Proposed List of Questions for Key Informants (Central level)

1. List of questions for key informants at Central Level

2. What is the current status of birth registration nationally;
3. What measures/strategies/policies/legal frameworks are in place to enhance child birth registration in Rwanda?
4. What are the key challenges and proposed solutions?
5. What kind of information on birth registration you normally generate?
6. What are the reasons why there is a declining trend in birth registration in the last five years?

1. Proposed Discussion guidelines for the focus groups

1. Are you aware the advantages and consequences of registering a newborn child?
2. Why do you think some people fail to register their newborn?
3. Are you aware of any government program for registering children?
4. What are the challenges in registering children?
5. What should be done to encourage people for a newborn registration?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Appendix 4: List of key informants

Names of key informants	Position / Areas of intervention	Institution	Contacts
National Level			
Mugabo Nyiringabo	Child Protection Specialist	Unicef	
Umuhoza Alice	Child Protection Specialist	World Vision	
Muhire Andrew	Head HMIS	MINISANTE	
Batete Redempter	Director Gender Promotion and Mainstreaming	MIGEPROFE	
Ndakize Michel	DG Social and Demographic Statistics	NISR	
David Nzeyimana	Consultant on CRVS Comprehensive Assessment	UNECA	
Joseph Kirenga	Head of Product Development (Irembo)	Rwanda Online	
Local Level			
Appoline Muhigirwa	Sanitization, sponsoring children's school supplies	AVSI	
Ngendahimana Charles	Child care and child right	STC	
Rwabuhungu Callixte	Child care	SOS	
Jean de Bonheur Munyandamutsa	Child's rights and care, food security	WVR	
Hategekimana Ignace	OVCs	Appel pour l'Avenir de l'enfant au Rwanda	
Sserwadda Gerard	Childcare	ADRA	
Mgr Emmanuel Ngendahayo	OVCs	Compassion international Rwa	
Chantal	Child right	Plan	
Numupfasoni Beata	Fight child labour	FHI	
Abiathar Izabayo	Put measures in place to stop child labour and encourage enrollment into schools	ADEPE	
Local Administration and Health Centres			
Names of Key Informants	Positions	Institution/ District	(+250)
Uwamahoro Prisca	Vice Mayor	KAMONYI DISTRICT	788478496
Gasengayire Marie Yvonne	Civil registra and Notary officer		788478675
Bigirimana Fidele	Data manager		781279608
Mukamutezi Bernadette	Community health worker		783114809
Nsengiyumva EGIDE	Community health worker		783121654
Kayitesi Collette	Vice Mayor		783131797
Nsanzimana Frederic	Civil registra and Notary officer	NYARUGURU DISTRICT	784206724
Mukamana Assoumpta	Data manager		781406866
Uwizeyimana Agnes	Community health worker		782200985
Uwizeyimana Helene			
Uwimana Catherine	Vice Mayor		788453885
Seshoba Aimable	Civil registra and Notary officer	GAKENKE DISTRICT	788303816
Nsengiyumva Jean M.V	Data manager		782774233
Nyirambajima Rosette	Community health worker		
Twagirimana Dominique	Community health worker		
Benhirwe Charlotte	Vice Mayor		782679509
Rugenerwa Bemira	Civil registra and Notary officer	GICUMBI DISTRICT	781770874
Nyirabahire Languida	Vice Mayor		788858370
Uwizeza Egenie	Civil registra and Notary officer	GASABO DISTRICT	788864572
Mukandarikaguye Gerardine	VICE MAYOR in charge of social Affairs		788612250
Musafiri Moris	Civil registrar and Notary officer	KIREHE DISTRICT	
Uwingabire Pacific	Health community worker		
Habakubaho Gusto	Health community worker		
Mary Kantengwa	VICE MAYOR in charge of social Affairs		788430929
Kayumba Gratien	Civil registrar and Notary officer	GATSIBO DISTRICT	
Uwamaliya Valentine	Health community worker		
Murenzi Pierre	Health community worker		
Muvandimwe Enock	Data Manager		
Mukashema Drocelle	VICE MAYOR in charge of social Affairs		783725640
Kwizera Aron	Data Manager	KARONGI DISTRICT	
Yankurije Cecile	Health community worker		
Rwanteri John	Health community worker		
Uwampayizina Marie Grace.	VICE MAYOR in charge of social Affairs		788869239
Nyenyere Gentile	Data Manager	RUBAVU DISTRICT	783190373
Fatuma syvia	Civil registrar and Notary officer		788699157
Mujawamariya consilla	Health community worker		
Ngirumukiza Ruth	Health community worker		
BAYINGANA Emmanuel	VICE MAYOR in charge of social Affairs	KICUKIRO DISTRICT	788464964

Appendix 5: Terms of Reference for Birth Registration Technical Analysis - IPAR

Birth registration, “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,”²¹ is a fundamental right of all children and a basic function of all modern governments. It comprises two elements: entering details of a child’s birth (in addition to other relevant information) into official government records, and issuing a ‘birth certificate’ to the child’s parents, including information on the date and place of birth, parents’ names, and further information such as nationality.

UNICEF describes birth registration as 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 birth to marriage and death.²²

The right to birth registration is contained in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which provides that “the child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to a nationality.”²³ As well as being a ‘right’ in itself, birth registration has also been linked with a wide range of other rights and benefits, such as securing a child’s access to essential services and protecting children from abuse and exploitation. As part of a complete and accurate civil registration system, birth registration has also been linked to more effective child rights planning and governance, and, more broadly, to promoting social and economic growth.²⁴

World Vision is committed to protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence. It is in this regard that World Vision Rwanda (WV Rwanda) has prioritized birth registration because it is a key enabler for many other ways to improve and sustain child well-being. Birth registration is one of the WV Child Well-being Outcomes: “Children celebrated and registered at birth.” One of the key indicators that must be tracked for every registered child is whether her/his birth has been registered. Unfortunately, birth registration rates remain low in many national offices, both for registered children and for other children.

WV Rwanda aims to a support consultancy to help mobilise both commitment and investment in birth registration and facilitate the implementation of an integrated Universal Birth Registration programme with strategic government partners, NGOs, corporates and multilateral organisations. Strengthening our evidence base through this consultancy will inform both programming and advocacy work on birth registration, and subsequently increase our influence by furthering our communications and campaigning work to raise awareness of the importance of birth registration.

Justification

In 2002, the General Assembly resolution ‘A World Fit for Children’ reaffirmed governments’ commitment to ensure the registration of all children at birth and to invest in, care for, educate and protect them from harm and exploitation. To achieve these goals, governments must have accurate data from which they can plan. Birth registration is not only a fundamental right in itself but also a key to ensuring the fulfillment of other rights.

²¹ UNICEF (2013) A passport to protection: a guide to birth registration programming, UNICEF, New York, p.11

²² Idem

²³ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 7 and 8 [online] Available from: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx> [Accessed March 2015]

²⁴ Ibidem

However, sound national policies and the commitment of government agencies are often not enough. Whether parents register the birth of their child(ren) depends on their awareness of the process and its importance, their ability to access civil registrar services, and their willingness to interface with State authorities.

In Rwanda, where 63 per cent of children under 5 are reportedly registered, only one in 10 have a document that can attest to their registration with civil authorities.²⁵ Child birth registration is a prevalent area of focus for Rwanda whose average stands at 79% which is still far below the international standards of 95%.²⁶ Over the years there has been a regressive decline in childbirth registration Rwanda. “Currently, 21 per cent of children in Rwanda are not registered with authorities as birth registration has dramatically decreased from 82 per cent in 2005 to an average of 63 per cent in 2010 with fewer than 6.6 per cent of children having birth certificates.

WV Rwanda recognizes the critical role of birth registration and an appropriate legal framework to planning and accessing services, as well as ensuring that the rights of the child are met. In partnership with government and partner organizations, WV Rwanda seeks to:

- Strengthen civil registration to promote child protection and services.
- Hold Advocacy campaigns for civil registration, especially birth registration.
- Support governments to remove barriers to birth registration, including fees.

About the research topic

In Rwanda the law obliges registration of children under 16 years of age by the guardians/ caregivers, adoptive parents to register the adopted child within 30 days. The law also provides for late registration fees, for parents/ guardians failing to register their children within the stipulated time. ²⁷Birth registration is decentralised with a Civil Status Officer at the sector level for the purposes of registering births and other official records.

The Technical Analysis is carried out to provide a detailed picture of the current CRVS landscape and an objective view on feasible and cost-effective means of strengthening CRVS systems and processes.

Where relevant, the analysis also provides a blueprint for a technical solution along with programme components required to ensure that the proposed approach is able to address the current registration barriers and process bottlenecks at scale whilst at the same time providing a sustainable method of strengthening CRVS systems.

Primary Objective of the Consultancy

To develop a high quality technical analysis study for an integrated Universal Birth Registration programme in close collaboration with government and other key players, and elaborate how service delivery impacts CRVS processes.

Key Deliverables

²⁵ <http://data.unicef.org/child-protection/birth-registration#sthash.MNzdVSbC.dpuf>,

²⁶ RPHC4 – Theme 14 – Socio-economic status of children, NISR, 2012.

²⁷ Strategic Plan for the Integrated Child Rights Policy in Rwanda, 2011.

http://www.unicef.org/rwanda/RWA_resources_icrpstratplan.pdf

- 1) Contextual analysis of birth registration in Rwanda (rate, data disaggregation, current birth registration system, system gaps etc)
- 2) Literature review on birth registration, including collection and analysis of lessons learned and good practices from major stakeholders
- 3) Analysis of the current legal and policy framework, including Rwandan government strategy, on birth registration
- 4) Analysis of knowledge and capacity at the governmental level as well as the birth registration infrastructure
- 5) Brief report of potential donors and partners (a list of targeted donor/partner, including private corporations. Initial list will be provided by WV Rwanda)
- 6) Partner workshop report

Primary Tasks of Consultant:

- Conduct a literary review of current legislation relating to birth registration,
- Review documentation to identify/quantify the current level of birth registration in Rwanda, disaggregated by region, age and gender.
- Analyse the effectiveness of birth registration systems currently in place in Rwanda.
- Analyse the roles and capacities of principal duty bearers at national, regional and community level (governmental and non-governmental) to ensure the effective and timely registration of children.
- Analyse the current government strategy for Birth Registration focusing particularly on strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities.
- Meet with key officials in government, NGOs and CSOs responsible for birth registration.
- Meet representatives of communities to understand the principal barriers to birth registration.
- Meet community members to identify needs, capacities at community level and opportunities for collaboration.
- Meet potential donors to identify opportunities for collaboration on birth registration and digital birth registration (UNICEF, UNHCR, etc)
- Prepare a participative workshop with partners to analyse findings of the consultancy.
- Facilitate the workshop and ensure consensus on key tenets such as Results Framework, timeframe, budget, role of partners and potential donors.
- Document feedback from the workshop in a workshop report.

Terms and Conditions

- 35days consultancy
- Competitive daily rate (Amount to be agreed in advance with consultant).
- Contract with WV Rwanda to be signed in advance on commencing consultancy.

Support from WV Rwanda

WV Rwanda will provide the support of a small advisory group comprising of internal WV Rwanda staff. At the beginning of the project and after each output, the group will provide the consultants with consolidated feedback. This will be via a meeting or conference call and in written form where appropriate.