The Life-cycle of Legal Identity

Presented by: Kristen Wenz, Global Technical Lead for Civil Registration & Legal Identity, UNICEF

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Legal identity: Where do we start?
The age old question......
How Digital Technology is DISRUPTING Chicken & Eggs
Health system:
- Immunization and child health services

Civil registration:
- Birth
- Death
- Inheritance, land ownership

Civil registration: Identity of your own children, including adoption

Adult identity: National ID, driver license, voter ID

Nutrition, Protection

Education

Employment, taxes, bank account
Civil Registration Systems

Legal proof of family ties (parents, spouse, children) to claim:

- Inheritance
- Land
- Nationality
- Custody of children

How can we prove a child is a child so they can enjoy their rights?

- To healthcare
- To go to school
- To receive social support
- Not be married before age 18
- Not be recruited into armed forces child
- Not be forced into harmful labor
Without a birth to death approach to identity....

○ How to authenticate identity and eligibility teenagers/adults registering for adult ID schemes?

○ How do you avoid fraud and multiple “identities”?

○ How to ‘retire’ identities upon death?

○ Unverified entries, multiple registrations, exclusion errors, inclusion errors, fake identities, and dead voters
Linkage between the national identification database and the civil registration system

29 countries have a national identification database, but only 13 is linked to the civil registration

Information from the birth certificate is the primary source for issuing national ID in 33 countries, and passports in 35

*Based on responses obtained from 39 countries out of the 54 member States.

Use of technology in African identification systems:

**Paper-based still dominates BR, less so for NID**

- **Most birth registration processes are still largely paper based...**

- **Whereas NID systems have more sophisticated solutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper-based</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart card</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper card</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bar code card</td>
<td>45%</td>
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In 2000 about 40% of Africa’s children under age 5 were registered...

this figure remains unchanged today.
In sub-Saharan Africa, only 25% of newborns have a birth certificate.

Over 20 million do not have their births registered.

28 million do not have a birth certificate.

80 per cent of children U5 do not have birth certificates in the east and southern Africa region.
10 countries in Africa require a birth certificate to access public health or immunization.

Evidence shows, better civil registration leads to better health outcomes.
Children living in poverty are 1.5 less likely to have their birth registered compared to children living in weather households.

28 countries in Africa require a birth certificate to access social support.
Children without birth certificates face major obstacles enrolling in education services and completing school.

39 countries in Africa require a birth certificate for education.
Without a birth certificate, by age of National ID children may be excluded from:

- Health & immunization services
- Childhood nutrition & development
- School enrollment or completion
- Social support systems
The Sustainable Solution: Integrated Civil Registration and National ID Systems

- Cost Savings
- Reduces barriers for access to identity systems
- Avoids duplicative/fragmented identity systems
- Lowers risk for identity fraud
- Can assign a unique identity number from birth
- More accurate population coverage rates
- Enables accurate and timely demographic data generated by vital statistics systems
- Greater inclusion
- Better health outcomes
- Increased educational attainment
- Reduction in poverty
THANK YOU!

Kristen Wenz: Kwenz@unicef.org

Global Technical Lead on Civil Registration and Legal Identity

UNICEF Headquarters, New York, New York
• Digital technologies provide a unique opportunity to expand reach through mobile phones, leverage functional systems like health information systems to increase birth and deaths.

• HOWEVER, they can not leapfrog civil registration systems
Number of countries in Africa which require a birth certificate to access the following services

- Education: 39
- Social Assistance: 19
- Health: 10

Source: A Snapshot of Civil Registration in Sub-Saharan Africa (2017) extracted from data.unicef.org
There is a direct inverse relationship between birth registration and voter ID coverage between low and high income economies.