

HANDBOOK FOR COMMUNITY LED BIRTH REGISTRATION IN KENYA

MARCH 2020

DEVELOPED BY PLAN INTERNATIONAL KENYA



Canada 





REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Canada



REPUBLIC OF KENYA 7549930

CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH

Birth in the	Kilifi	District in the	County	Province
Entry No.	014127105	Where Born	Magogoni	Nairobi
Date of Birth	27/10/2017	Sex	Female	Name and Surname of Father
Name and Maiden Name of Mother	Philicia Felix Kalama		Pascal Ngumbui Ngala	
Name and Designation of Registrar	Sgt. Sanga		Date of Registration	31/10/2017
S.P. Sanga		District Assistant		

Registrar for: *[Signature]*
 Ca 99990 of 31/10/2017
 Auth. 1006990 of 31/10/2017

Given under the Seal of the Director of Civil Registration and Statistics
 This certificate is issued in pursuance of the Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1969, which provides that a certified copy of any entry in any register or record prepared by or under the control of the Director of Civil Registration shall be received as evidence in the courts and facts therein contained without any other proof of such entry.

Entry No.	1
Date of Birth	28/10/2017
Name and Surname of Mother	Philicia Felix Kalama
Name and Surname of Father	Pascal Ngumbui Ngala
Name of Registrar	Sgt. Sanga
Date of Registration	31/10/2017
District Assistant	S.P. Sanga

DEAR READER

This handbook is a practical guide for trainers and implementers of **community led birth registration in Kenya**.

The community led birth registration model documented in this handbook focuses on improving accessibility and ease of registration for births that occur at the community level (home births). It provides an overview of a process that starts in the community and ends with the issuance of a birth certificate. It also provides step-by-step guidance for each individual involved in the process: the Informant (mother, father, guardian, occupier of the house in which the child was born), Notifier (Community Health Volunteer, Village Elder, Assistant Chief, Chief) and Validator and Registrar (CRS Registration Officer at the Sub County Level).

Plan International Kenya fully promotes births within healthy facilities when possible. Understanding that this is not always feasible for mothers and fathers, this guide is intended to ensure the children born at home are equally supported through the birth registration and certification process.

The handbook can be used as a training aid, be distributed to involved actors, and used to ensure a common understanding of the process. For those using this handbook as a training aid, you are encouraged to leave a copy with involved actors. Alternatively, provide a copy of key pages of the document (including the process overview on pages 13 – 16, as well as step-by-step instructions) for specific actors involved. Consider also printing an overview of the process (pages 13 - 16) in every service point so that those providing and accessing the service have a unified approach and purpose.

REMEMBER: Birth registration is a government responsibility and Civil Registration Services (CRS) should be engaged when supporting these activities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This document can be freely used for educational and non-commercial purposes only. For any other information on the publication, please contact:

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this publication are the author's alone and are not necessarily the views of the Government of Canada or the Government of Kenya.

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FOREWORD

Birth registration is a right in of itself, laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But that little piece of paper opens the door to a whole host of other rights as well. “Registering a birth is a critical first step in ensuring the rights of a child. Registration means proof – not only of identity but of existence. A birth certificate is confirmation of a child’s nationality, place of birth, parentage and age. In many countries it is seen as the key identity document, outweighing any other – a birth certificate is often needed to apply for a passport, driving license or national identity card, as the child becomes an adult,” states Plan’s Count Every Child report. Having a birth certificate is also a crucial tool for protecting children – especially girls – against exploitation. “Proof of age is critical in successfully prosecuting perpetrators of crimes against children such as child trafficking, sexual offences, early recruitment into the armed forces, child marriage and child labour.”

Globally, an estimated 1 billion people cannot officially prove their identity and 47% of those without a birth certificate are children. (World Bank, 2018)

For people to count, they must first be counted. This is the role of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems which record the details of major life events, such as births and deaths. Plan International Kenya has been working towards universal birth registration in Kenya since 2005. Our work is rooted in our initial “Count Every Child” campaign where we partnered with the Government of Kenya to conduct birth registration campaigns in communities across the country. Since then, our work has evolved towards more holistic programming to tackle demand, supply and legislative barriers to achieving universal coverage.

As an organization dedicated to advancing children’s rights and the equality for girls, we have been building powerful partnerships with the Government, donors, local implementing partners, communities and girls and boys themselves to bring about change. We acknowledge the strong efforts carried out by Civil Registration Services to improve national birth registration rates through more efficient service delivery and coordination amongst partners. We also share our appreciation for the Government of Canada who has provided funding through Global Affairs Canada to support a five-year initiative titled “Tulinde Tusome: Creating Safe and Protective Spaces for Improved Learning in Kwale and Kilifi Counties, Kenya”. Through this initiative, Plan International Kenya has worked in collaboration with Civil Registration Services and local partners to implement comprehensive programming to improve birth registration and certification rates in Kwale and Kilifi Counties. The programming approaches and lessons within this publication have been derived from this project and are complemented by our global experience on birth registration.

Our goal with this publication is to share insights and lessons with our allies and critical stakeholders striving to improve birth registration in Kenya. Through our joint commitment, and in partnership with Civil Registration Services, we can contribute to universal birth registration in Kenya.

Kate Maina-Vorley

Country Director, Plan International Kenya

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABN	Acknowledgment of Birth Notification
B1	Birth Register
CHV	Community Health Volunteers
CRD	Civil Registration Department
CRS	Civil Registration Services
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CRVSS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System
KVSR	Kenya Vital Statistics Report
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
NHIF	National Hospital Insurance Fund
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
VE	Village Elder



1. INTRODUCTION TO BIRTH REGISTRATION

INTRODUCTION TO BIRTH REGISTRATION

1.1 WHAT IS BIRTH REGISTRATION?

Birth registration is a process to recognize a child's existence through the recording of their birth in the civil register by the authorised government authority. It is a fundamental right of all children, no matter who they are or where they are from.

Birth registration helps children to secure their legal identity, family relationships, nationality, and gives them access to public services such as school enrolment, and private services such as health insurance or opening a bank account.

After a child is born, the details of the birth, including the child's parents or guardians are captured and officially recorded into the government's civil registry. The civil registry keeps a permanent record of all births and deaths occurring in Kenya. This data provides the basis for individual legal identity but also helps to inform the Government of Kenya on its current population and is used to make social (i.e. health, education, etc.) and economic (trade, transport, etc.) decisions for the development of the country.

When a child's birth is notified, a formal record of the birth should be issued to the informant¹ in the form of an *Acknowledgement of Birth Notification* (ABN). The ABN is used to register the birth in the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System (CRVSS), the digital birth registration system managed by the Department of Civil Registration Services (CRS). The ABN is then used to apply for a *Birth Certificate*. A birth certificate is the first proof of legal identity for the child and is recognized by the law, both nationally and internationally.

BIRTH REGISTRATION IN KENYA

*“The State shall register every birth and death that occurs in Kenya”
Births and Deaths Registration Act, Cap.149*

CRS operates under the Births and Deaths Registration Act Cap 149 of the laws of Kenya. This Act of Parliament was enacted on the 9th of June 1928, to provide the notification and registration of births and deaths and other matters incidental thereon and has undergone few amendments since then. In 1989, civil registration was elevated to a fully-fledged department in the office of the President and by 1990, registration services were fully decentralized to all districts. In 2005, the Civil Registration Department (CRD) was moved to the Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons and in the year 2013 the department was moved to the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government where it resides to date.

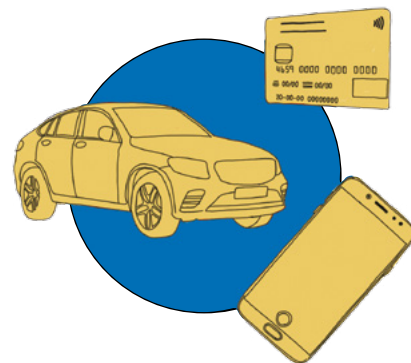
In Kenya, birth registration is FREE, COMPULSORY and MANDATORY. Birth registration must happen immediately after a birth occurs, within the first six months after birth. However, provisions exist that cater for late registration, which represents those registrations that happen after six months of birth.

¹ For the purposes of this document informant means mother, father, guardian, or occupier of the house in which the child was born.

1.2 WHY IS BIRTH REGISTRATION IMPORTANT?

For people to count, they must first be counted.

Birth registration is the first step in securing legal identity for a child and supports their access to their rights and entitlements. This legal recognition further responds to inequality faced by girls (and women) and unlocks their potential through improving their ability to claim their rights to education, health, protection, and livelihoods. Birth registration is also a great source of vital statistics for the country, aiding in planning and resource allocation for various citizen services.



1. HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

Birth registration is a fundamental right outlined in both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Birth registration facilitates direct and indirect **access to:**

- Health
- Education
- Social protection

Birth registration facilitates, directly and indirectly, **protection from:**

- Child marriage
- Child labour
- Trafficking and sexual exploitation
- Gender-based violence
- Illegal detention
- Forceful recruitment into the armed forces

Investment in gender-responsive CRVS systems and activities and ensuring that girls (and women) are registered and issued birth certificates, plays a critical role in their ability to claim their rights and exercise their agency.

2. SERVICE PROVISION AND ACCESS

Birth registration facilitates direct and indirect access to public and private services, allowing individuals to:

- Vote
- Get a drivers license
- Get a passport / travel internationally
- Register land / inherit property
- Gain formal employment
- Open a bank account
- Register a mobile phone number



3. VITAL STATISTICS

Birth records in the Civil Registry are used to produce Vital Statistics as part of the CRVSS. Vital statistics provide data to:

- Understand population dynamics
- Allocate resources efficiently
- Assess levels of inequality
- Plan and monitor development programmes
- Measure progress against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Formulate new policies across multiple sectors
- Improve the targeting and delivery of government services

1.3 WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BIRTH NOTIFICATION (ABN) AND A BIRTH CERTIFICATE?

In the birth registration process, two different documents are issued or can be issued by the informant and or the parent/guardian:



1. AN ABN (PINK SLIP)



2. A BIRTH CERTIFICATE

An ABN is issued to the informant free of charge immediately after a birth has been notified. Afterwards, the ABN record is used by the informant to apply for a birth certificate, at a fee (see cost categories below). The difference between these documents can be confusing for people. As an actor in the birth registration process, it is important to understand these differences, so you can provide correct information to members of your community.



	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BIRTH NOTIFICATION (ABN - PINK SLIP)	BIRTH CERTIFICATE
WHAT IS IT?	<p>A formal record/register that a birth has happened, allowing the informant to use it to apply for a birth certificate.</p>	<p>The first proof of legal identity for the child and proof of their existence by law, both nationally and internationally.</p>
WHAT IS IT NOT?	<p>It is not a proof of existence recognized by law.</p> <p>It is not a birth certificate</p>	<p>It is not a National ID.</p> <p>In the case of an immigrant / refugee child: it does not change the child's nationality.</p>
WHAT CAN IT BE USED FOR?	<p>Several public and private services require proof of registration of birth. An ABN can be accepted temporarily as a Birth Certificate is processed (normally an entry number is given to show registration is complete and awaiting printing of the birth certificate). These services include for example: enrolment in school (temporary approval until birth certificate is obtained).</p>	<p>A birth certificate is required when enrolling a child to school, adding the child as a dependant to the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), applying for a passport and for official use in legal issues, e.g. court, embassies, insurance or applying for asylum. In future, it is likely that more public and private services will start requesting a birth certificate as proof of identity.</p>
WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY FOR IT?	<p>Immediately after birth occurs and within six months after birth.</p>	<p>As soon as possible after receiving the ABN - pink slip; and within 12 months of birth.</p>
WHERE CAN AN INFORMANT/ PARENT APPLY FOR IT?	<p>With a Community Health Volunteer (CHV) or Village Elder (VE) in the case of a birth in the community; or directly at the Assistant Chief's or Chief's Office.</p> <p>At the maternity ward in case of a birth in a health facility.</p>	<p>At the CRS Office in a Sub-County, Huduma Centre in the County, or County CRS Office.</p>
WHO ISSUES IT?	<p>The Assistant Chief or Chief for birth in the community.</p> <p>Health Facility Administrator / Records Officer, in the case of a health facility birth.</p>	<p>The CRS Registrar at the Sub County Level, Huduma Centre in the County, or County CRS Office.</p>

<p>WHAT DOES IT COST?</p>	<p>Free of charge within six months of birth for Kenyan nationals, non citizens and refugees.</p> <p>An ABN is not provided after six months of birth, and the informant will need to fill in late registration forms.</p>	<p>Kenyan nationals: Early Registration - Kes 50 Late Registration - Kes 150</p> <p>Non citizens: 40 USD</p> <p>Special immigrants (i.e. refugees): Free to refugees</p>
<p>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO APPLY</p>	<p>The ABN is issued without any proof of identification. The informant only needs only to provide mandatory characteristics of the event of birth (i.e name of child, sex, location and date of birth). When a birth is registered late, additional information, such as a letter from the Chief, is required upon application.</p> <p>If available show the following at the moment of notification of birth:</p> <p>Kenyan nationals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National ID or Passport of at least one of the parents or guardians <p>Non citizens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport of at least one of the parents <p>Special immigrants (i.e. refugees):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee ID or Attestation Card of at least one of the parents • Child's Immunization card or baptism card 	<p>Kenyan nationals need to provide the following when applying for a birth certificate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABN Record • Photocopy of National ID of one or both parents • Proof of payment <p>Non Citizens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABN Record • Photocopy of Passport of one or both parents • Proof of payment <p>Refugees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABN Record • Photocopy of Refugee ID or Attestation Card of at least one of the parents



2. BIRTH REGISTRATION PROCESS

BIRTH REGISTRATION PROCESS

2.1 HOW IS A BIRTH REGISTERED?

Birth registration is FREE, COMPULSORY AND MANDATORY and the following have the duty to give notice of a birth (referred to as informant).

- Mother or father of the child
- Occupier of the house in which the child was born
- In the absence of the above, a guardian / person taking charge of the child shall give notice of the birth.



A birth is notified manually and registered both manually and electronically. This handbook describes the process of manual birth registration of babies born at home (i.e in the community).

2.2 COMMUNITY BIRTH REGISTRATION

In Kenya a total of 39% of births (KVSr, 2018²) occur outside health facilities and should be notified using the community birth registration model through the office of the Assistant Chief, immediately after birth. The percentage of community births is often higher in rural areas where distances to health facilities are longer and knowledge on birth registration lower. To ensure that birth registration services are accessible for every child born in Kenya, the proposed community led birth registration model can be offered at the village level through existing community structures. By introducing the CHV and VE as the first contact point for birth registration, it becomes possible to notify a birth and receive an ABN, without having to leave the village/home.

“

*“Getting the birth of my child registered with the CHV was an easy process for me, because they just came to my home.”
- Mother from Makamini Location, Kwale County*



”

2 Kenya Vital Statistics Report (KVSr) 2018. <https://www.knbs.or.ke/download/vital-statistics/>

WHEN SHOULD THIS PROCESS BE USED?

All children have the right to be registered. While the focus of these activities should be on newborns, CHVs and VEs should check whether all other children in the household have been registered.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES OF THIS PROCESS?

1. Informant receives a ABN
2. CRS officially validates and registers the birth in the civil register
3. Informant is instructed on how to apply for a Birth Certificate

WHICH APPLICATION FORMS ARE NEEDED?

1. Customized B1 Form that is used by CHVs/VEs to collect information at the household level and submitted to the Chief/Assistant Chief who in turn completes the information in an official B1 form.

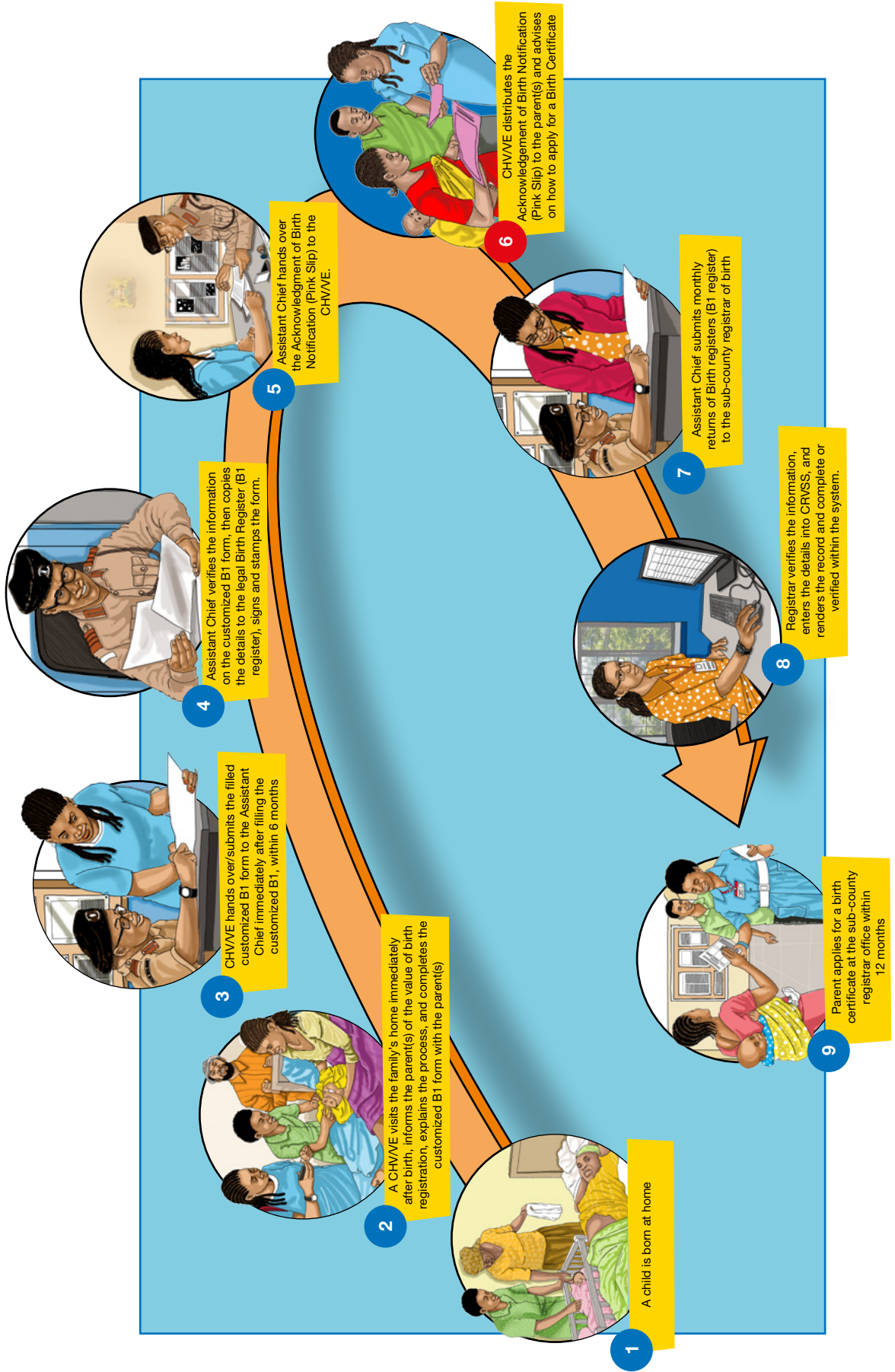
What is a Customized B1 Form: Currently, under the existing law, the role of registering births in official registers (i.e. B1 forms) remains the role of the Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs. In the community led model, CHVs and VEs, to navigate this legality safely, were issued with a specially designed data collection sheet (referred to as customized B1 form) for capturing information that Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs can use to populate the official B1 forms and issue an ABN (pink slip).

2. The Register of Birth Form (B1) whose upper portion is the ABN (pink slip)
 - a. Is used to capture official birth registration details
 - b. Each form provides space to capture one birth registration
 - c. Each form is serialised and tracked
3. Acknowledgement of Birth Notification (for parents)
 - a. ABN (pink slip) is torn out from the booklet and issued to the informant
 - b. The lower part is the birth record with more details
 - c. It is used to issue a Birth Certificate
 - d. Has to be validated, signed, and stamped by the Assistant Chief



BIRTH REGISTRATION PROCESS

MANUAL COMMUNITY-BASED MODEL



2.3 WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS?



INFORMANT

(e.g. mother, father, occupier of the house in which the child was born or guardian)

Role:

- Declare the birth of a child
- Provides required details of the occurrence of a birth



ASSISTANT CHIEF/ CHIEF

Role:

- Validates information given by the informant/VE/CHV for issuance of the ABN
- Records the event of birth in an Official Birth Register (B1 Form) and issues the top part (ABN – pink slip) to informant/CHV/VE
- Signs and stamps the ABN
- Facilitates movement of birth records from the Sub-Location Office to CRS Sub-County Office



COMMUNITY HEALTH VOLUNTEER/VILLAGE ELDER

Role:

- Point of contact for informant
- Can be informant too
- Completes the Customised B1 Form
- Delivers Customised B1 Form to the Chief or Assistant Chief for issuing of an ABN which he/she delivers to the informant



CRS REGISTRATION OFFICER

Role:

- Official validation and registration of birth in both the manual and digital system (CRVSS)
- Issue birth certification

2.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE OVERALL PROCESS – COMMUNITY LED BIRTH REGISTRATION MODEL

STEP 1. A BIRTH OCCURS IN THE COMMUNITY

- A baby that is born at home (not in a health facility)

STEP 2. NOTIFYING THE BIRTH BY CHV/VE

- The CHV/VE visits the household immediately (within 6 months) after birth
- The CHV/VE educates the informant of the birth registration process and why it is important. They instruct the informant that through this process they will receive an ABN for free and can later apply for a Birth Certificate at a fee.
- The informant shows the CHV/VE their National ID card (if applicable) of either or both of the parents or guardians.
N.B: In case both parents do not have a National ID, an ID Number of one of the parents is sufficient. In case that is also not available the birth can be notified without it.
- The child's immunization card or baptism card (not required) can be used to cross-check whether all information is entered accurately on the Customised B1 Form.
- The CHV/VE completes the Customised B1 Form and afterwards, he or she, goes through it together with the informant to check the accuracy of the information provided.

STEP 3. FILLING THE OFFICIAL B1 FORM AND VERIFICATION OF DETAILS BY THE ASSISTANT CHIEF/CHIEF

- As the official registration agent, the Assistant Chief/Chief verifies the details on Customised B1 Form, fills the Official Birth Register (B1 Form), and signs and stamps it.
- The Assistant Chief/Chief delivers two of the triplicate copies of the Official Birth Record (B1 form) to the CRS Sub County/County Registrar's Office.
- Registrar verifies and validates the record of birth for accuracy and completeness - this completes the registration and a birth certificate can be issued based on that record on demand.
- The information is manually entered into the digital CRVSS system via specialized scanning and filling of metadata.
- The Customised B1 Forms are stored at the registrar sub-county/county office for reference. The forms are not submitted to CRS Headquarters nor are they scanned in the CRVSS. The forms are used solely to capture data by the CHV/VE.

STEP 4. HAND OVER FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF TO CHV/VE

- The Assistant Chief/Chief issues an ABN to the CHV/VE to deliver to the informant (parents/guardian).

STEP 5. DELIVERING OF ABN TO INFORMANT

- The CHV/VE visits the household of the informant and hands over the ABN.
- During the visit the CHV/VE informs the informant of the difference between an ABN and a Birth Certificate. They also inform them of the application process for a Birth Certificate, encouraging them to complete the process within 12 months of the birth.
- The informant receives and stores ABN in a safe space.
- The informant applies at a later stage for a Birth Certificate.



3. PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS PER ACTOR

PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS PER ACTOR

3.1 COMMUNITY HEALTH VOLUNTEER/VILLAGE ELDER



This section describes the roles of the CHV/VE in the birth registration process.

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Customised B1 Forms
- A bag and safe container to transport the Customised B1 Forms
- At least 2 pens

WHAT AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR?

Support informants to notify the birth

- Visit the household immediately after the birth and inform the parents/guardians that:

“

“Birth registration is the first step in securing a legal identity for your child and accessing other basic rights like education, healthcare, and social protection. After notifying the birth, the Assistant Chief/Chief will issue an Acknowledgement of Birth Notification (ABN), which I will deliver back to you. This first stage of the process is compulsory and free. You can use an ABN to later apply for a Birth Certificate at a fee.”

”

- Check if the births of other children in the household have been notified. If not, you can capture their details as well in the Customised B1 Form (so long as they are not older than six months, and if they are, advise the parents to visit the Assistant Chief/Chief to register them as a late birth).

Tip: *When checking on the status of birth registration for other children, ask to see proof of registration (i.e. an ABN “Pink Slip” OR birth certificate).*

- Complete the Customised B1 Form on behalf of the parent/guardian.

Tip: Make sure the names are written in CAPITAL letters to avoid errors.

Tip: Pay attention that the name of the child is captured in the correct order, with the names in the right field. The register has fields for 'first name', 'other names' and 'father's (surname or tribal) name'. First name refers to the child's given name, other names refer to any other name given to the child and father's name refers to the child's father's name. See example below:

- *First Name: Mwanaisha*
- *Other Names: Chidzuga*
- *Father's Name: Mungatana*

- Ask to see the National ID card of the parents(s) if available to ensure the correct information is captured.
 - *Tip: In case both parents do not have a National ID, an ID Number of one of the parents is sufficient. In case that is also not available the birth can still be notified without the ID Number.*
 - *Tip: In case the parent does not have an ID, **DO NOT** use the ID number of another person such as a grandfather.*
- If applicable/available, ask to see the immunization card or baptism card of the child to ensure the correct information is captured.
- After completing all the fields, go through it together with the parent/guardian to check for accuracy. If the informant is illiterate, read out each field to confirm they are correct.

DELIVERY OF AN ABN TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Pick up the issued ABN from the Assistant Chief/Chief
 - *Tip: Ideally this can be at the same weekly visit where you hand over any new Customized B1 Forms for registration.*
- Visit the household of the informant (i.e. parent/guardian) to hand over the ABN.
- During the visit inform the parent/guardian on the difference between an ABN and a birth certificate. Inform them of the application process for a birth certificate and its importance. Within the current paper-based process the informant should estimate waiting about 2 months to visit the registrar and apply for a birth certificate.
 - *Caution: If the informant does not get the certificate because the Chief/Assistant Chief has not surrendered the birth record, they are disinterested to go back a second time due cost incurred in the first trip.*

To apply for a birth certificate, the informant has to go to the CRS Sub-County/County Office with the following completed support documents:

1. An ABN (pink slip) stamped and signed by the Assistant Chief/Chief
2. A completed Births and Deaths Application form (available from the Chief or CRS registrar for the informant to photocopy)
3. A photocopy of the National ID of at least one of the parents
 - *TIP: Photocopying needs to be done in advance of visiting the CRS office.*
4. A payment fee of Kes 50 for early registration
 - *TIP: The fees could change depending on whether this an early registration (within six months) or not, and if there are any corrections to be made. Late registration is between Kes 100 – 150.*

WHAT TO DO IN CASE ...

... both parents or guardians do not have an ID number/ National ID card?

The birth can be notified without filling in the ID card number, however parents/guardians must be informed that a National ID of at least one parent/guardian is mandatory when applying for a birth certificate. Should they be unaware, kindly inform them of the application process for a National ID.

... the child has not been named at the time of your visit?

Fill in all other details of the Customised B1 Form and leave the field for the name empty. Agree on a later date for a second visit to complete the name. Make sure that the notification of birth is completed within six months after the birth.

... there is only one parent of the child? e.g. only the mother or father is known

Both mother and father's details are required even if the parents are not married, so encourage that both biological parents' names should be used for the notification. In case one of the parents is still unknown, leave the field blank. Ensure that the details of the grandfather or grandmother are not used in the place of the biological parents' name and ID number.

... a baby is born recently (less than six months old) in a health facility but has not been registered?

Birth notification is offered at all maternal child health facilities. Inform the parent/guardian to notify the birth at the health facility where the delivery took place. Advise them to follow up with either their midwife or nurse during their next growth monitoring or immunization visit for the child and ensure that an ABN is issued.

3.2 ASSISTANT CHIEF/CHIEF



This section describes the roles of the Assistant Chief/Chief in the birth registration process.

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Your official stamp
- A secure container to store the copies of the Official Birth Record (B1 Form) for submission to CRS Sub-County/County Office (two copies of B1 form that will be submitted to the registrar)
- A secure container to store the copy of the Official Birth Record (B1 Form) for record keeping at the Sub-location (one copy of B1 form that is stored at the Chief/Assistant Chief office)

WHAT AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR?

Verification and validation of births in the community

- Continuously collect the Customised B1 Forms from all CHV/VE
- Check the documents for completeness and transfer the same information in an Official Birth Record (B1 Form)
- Store the carbon copy of the Official B1 Form at the Sub-Location Office, and submit the other two copies to CRS Sub-County/County Office
- Ensure that you have submitted two copies of the Official B1 Form to a CRS Registration Officer for storing in appropriate volumes. This is a paper trail based process. When this important step does not happen, the birth registration process could be delayed or deemed incomplete.

WHAT TO IN CASE...

... you are not present for a substantial period at the Sub-location office?

Make sure there is a clear delegation of authority to register births by an authorized agent at your Sub-Location office or neighboring one and this is communicated to CHVs and VEs within your Sub-Location.

3.3 CRS REGISTRAR



This section describes the roles of the CRS registrar in the birth registration process.

WHAT AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR?

Overall functionality of the process:

- Supply the Sub-Location with Official Birth Records (B1 Forms) and Customised B1 forms (through the Chief/Assistant Chief).
- Communication to actors in the birth registration process in case of changes in policy or process.

Tip: Define a schedule that works for all actors involved in the birth registration process in your Sub-County. When do meetings and hand-overs of forms between actors happen? How frequently? Try to make use of existing movement of people and goods.

BIRTH REGISTRATION BY CRS

- Pick up the birth register booklets (i.e. Official B1 Forms) returned by each Chief/Assistant Chief
- Check completeness, accuracy and validate birth records returns from the Chief/Assistant Chief to complete registration
- Enter the details into the digital CRVSS system.



4. BIRTH CERTIFICATION PROCESS

4.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF A BIRTH CERTIFICATE

This handbook emphasises the birth certification process to ensure registration and certification of all births in the civil registry. As a first proof of registration, the informant receives the ABN for free. However, for a child, the birth registration process does not end there! Children require a Birth Certificate to have full access to their rights and have proof of their existence that is recognized before the law, nationally, and internationally.

A few examples of when a Birth Certificate is important:

- In case of school enrolment, an ABN is sometimes temporarily accepted, but parents or guardians are expected to provide a Birth Certificate as soon as possible. This applies to enrolment in nursery, primary and secondary school; to be allowed to sit for school exams; and for university enrolment.
- In case of applying for a passport, a Birth Certificate is required.
- Civil servants, private sector and civil society employees require a Birth Certificates of their children to add them to employer health insurance schemes.
- In case of suspected child abuse (e.g. child marriage or defilement), it is crucial to know and be able to prove the exact age of the child. ABN is not recognized before law and cannot be used to prove that the child is underage. Only a Birth Certificate can be used in court.
- In case of divorce of the parents, a Birth Certificate can be used to ensure continued financial support for the children and sometimes alimony for the ex-partner.
- In case of dispute over the custody of a child, a Birth Certificate can be used in court to prove parentage.
- In case of inheritance issues for minors a birth certificate can help the child get his/her right.

REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY

Kenyan Nationals require the following to apply for a Birth Certificate:

1. An ABN (for early registration) issued by the Assistant Chief/Chief or the Health Facility
2. A completed Births and Deaths Application form
3. A photocopy of the National ID of at least one of the parents
4. A payment fee of Kes 50 for early registration

TIP! The fees could change depending on whether this is an early registration (with six months) or not and if there are any corrections to be made. Late registration is Kes 150.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE NEITHER PARENT HAS A NATIONAL ID?

Parents should ideally be advised to first apply for an ID before applying for a Birth Certificate. If an application for an ID is in progress, the Proof of ID Application document can be used instead. Alternatively, a Letter for Citizenship Verification can be provided, this document can be requested from the Chief/Assistant Chief then attached to the application.

WHAT SHOULD AN ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE SHOW?

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Names of parent(s)
- The issuing CRS official seal
- Registration date
- Issue date
- Government security seal

4.2 HOW CAN PARTNERS SUPPORT ACCESS TO BIRTH CERTIFICATES?

After receiving an ABN many people don't continue the process to apply for a Birth Certificate. Several barriers make applying for a birth certificate challenging, especially for marginalized groups and people in rural or hard to reach areas. Partners (including CHVs, VEs, Community-Based Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, etc.) can provide support at several levels to reduce the barriers and increase the access of people to apply for Birth Certificates. Be aware that in many cases when the support from partners ends, the improved access to Birth Certification stops.

	CHALLENGE	HOW CAN PARTNERS SUPPORT?
1.	<p>LACK OF INFORMATION Low awareness of the process to apply for a birth certificate.</p> <p>People don't know what they need to apply, how to do it or why they should.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated communications strategy to positively change behaviours towards birth registration Develop a change management approach to ensure consistent communication of registration procedures to all levels of service providers <p>For more information see the Birth Registration Business Case</p>
2.	<p>GENDER INEQUALITY Mothers may not have the authority to decide on applying for a birth certificate. Where the fathers or male relatives do not value birth registration, children miss out on this important right.</p> <p>Single and teenage mothers may encounter judgement and stigma hindering them from registering and retrieving birth certificates. They fear being discriminated by the authorities especially when they visit their offices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest time in understanding the root causes of gender inequality within communities and structure key messages and actions to address these issues. Develop a male engagement strategy to target fathers and male caregivers who commonly act the key decision-makers on this issue within the household and wider community. Clarify misconceptions around requirements to include the fathers name and information on birth registration forms. Encourage CHVs, VEs, Assistant Chiefs and Chiefs to be supportive of unmarried and teenage mothers (who may otherwise experience discrimination)

	CHALLENGE	HOW CAN PARTNERS SUPPORT?
3.	<p>PHOTOCOPY OF ID Not everybody has a National ID, especially in the case of underage parents.</p> <p>Often people have to travel far to make photocopies of the ID and other supporting documents. This costs time and money for transport and photocopying.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the process of applying for an ID (i.e. information dissemination, assist with photocopying and transportation, etc.) Provide photocopy machines at health centers, CRS offices, and sub-location offices. Include provision of resources such as toner, paper and routine maintenance.
4.	<p>TRAVEL COST Travel costs associated with certification process (often more than the cost of a certificate!). Distance, waiting time, and loss of wages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that informants are notified when registration is complete and they can apply for a birth certificate without multiple trips.
5.	<p>TRANSPORTATION OF DOCUMENTS Irregular transportation of the application forms from the sub-location and health facilities to CRS offices.</p> <p>Irregular issuance of birth certificates from CRS office to parents/guardians due to lack of supplies (e.g. birth certificate papers).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the regular movement of documents between health facilities / sub location and CRS so that parents and guardians can collect certificates from the sub-location office. Invest in the necessary supplies required by CRS offices.
6.	<p>LONG WAITING PERIOD TO RECEIVE BIRTH CERTIFICATES Lack of capacity at CRS Sub-County Office to process the birth registrations and applications for Birth Certificates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support to CRS to provide the resources needed at Sub-County level to issue birth certificates. Facilitate CRS to conduct certification outreaches to clear backlogs.



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For people to count, they must first be counted. This is the role of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems which record the details of major life events, such as births and deaths.

*Kate Maina-Vorley
Country Director, Plan International Kenya*

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ABOUT US

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organisation that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We strive for a just world, working together with children, young people, our supporters and partners. By actively connecting committed people with powerful ideas, we work together to make positive, deep-rooted and lasting changes in children and young people's lives.

For over 80 years, we have supported girls and boys and their communities around the world to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to claim their rights, free themselves from poverty and live positive fulfilling lives.

Plan International has been operating in Kenya since 1982 and to-date continues to work in 9 counties: Nairobi, Machakos, Kajiado, Tharaka Nithi, Siaya, Kilifi, Kwale, Homabay and Kisumu.



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