

Improving Birth Registration in Burundi

An investment opportunity for the private and public sectors

2023



unicef 
for every child

Children's rights to registration

- Everyone has a right to birth registration.
 - Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

"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"
 - Sustainable Development Goal 16.9:

"By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration"



Registration is critical

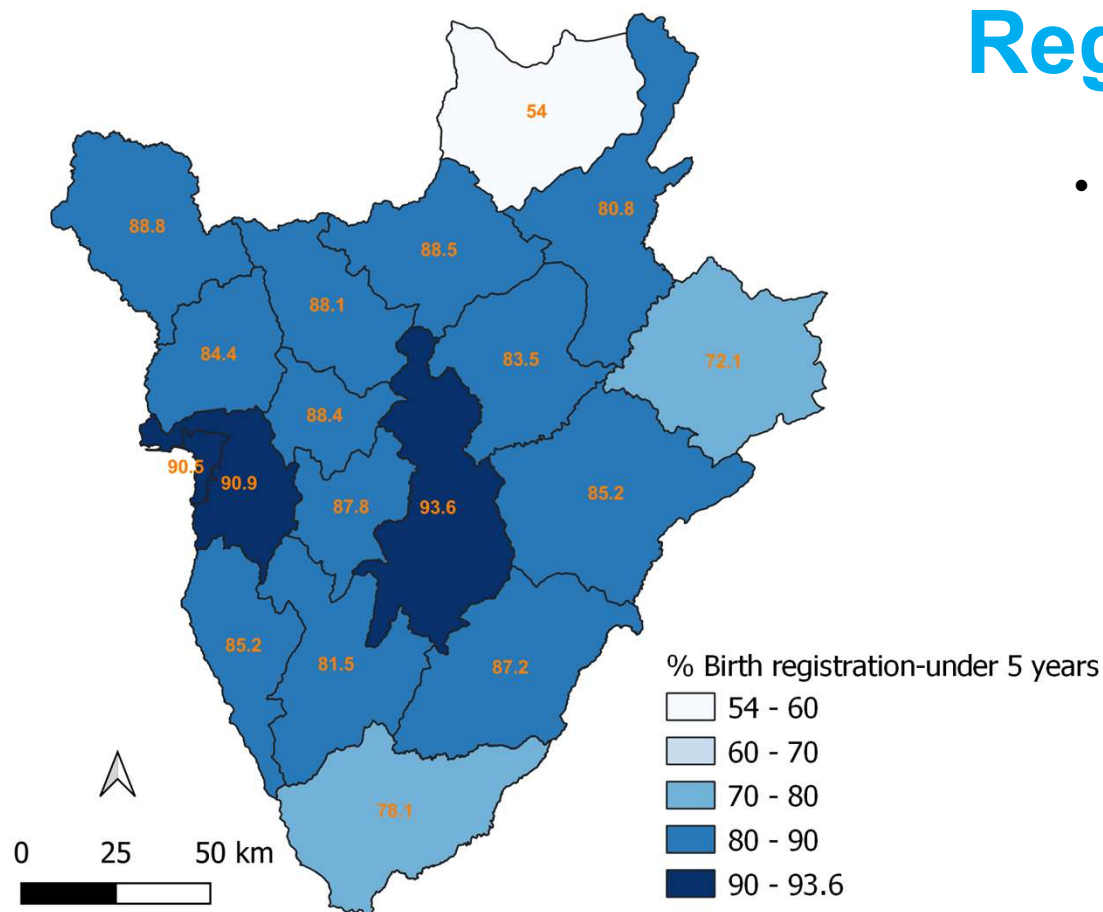
Registration affords children with many opportunities:

- Improved access to education
- Expanded healthcare access
- Protection for children in conflict with the law
- Protection from statelessness

Registration progress in Burundi

- Burundi has made good progress in the realm of birth registration .
 - About 73% of children under the age of 1 are registered and 66% of children under 5 have a birth certificate.
 - And when considering children under 5, a commendable 84% are registered.
 - In all countries across Eastern and Southern Africa, the average rate of registration for children under 5 is just 39%.
- Despite this major progress, there are still thousands of Burundian children that need support in registration and needs are more acute in some regions than others.

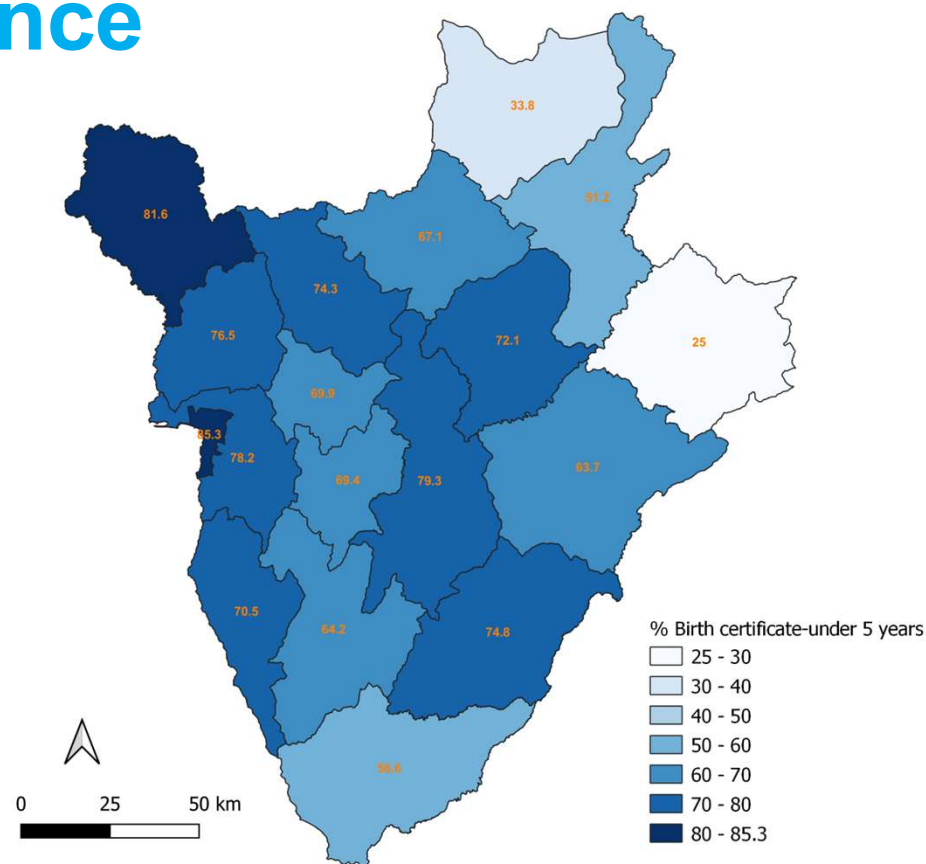
Registration by province

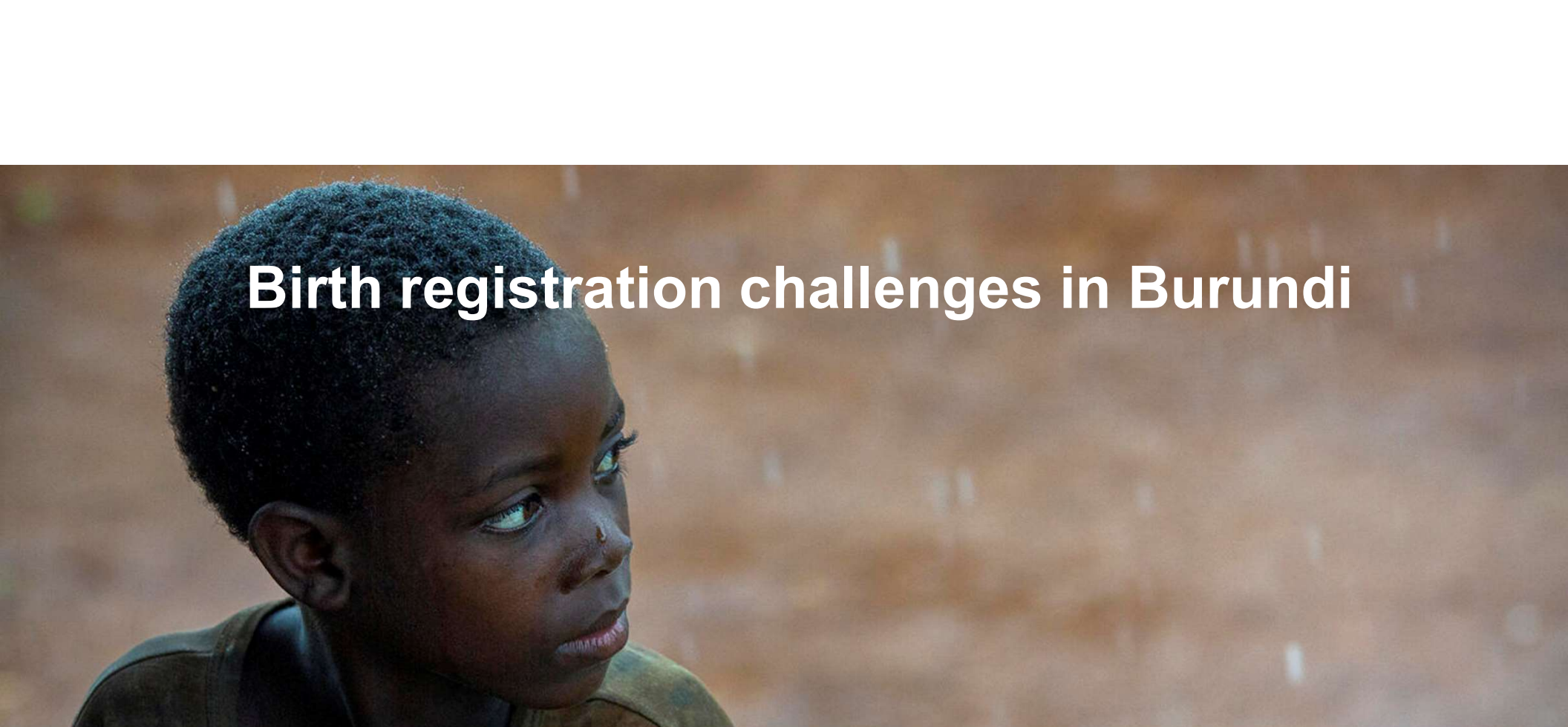


- Rates of birth registration in Burundi vary significantly by province.
 - The lowest registration rates for children under 5 years old is in Kirundo, which borders Rwanda, where only 54% of births are registered.
 - UNICEF has established specific programming targeting Kirundo.
 - The highest registration rate for children under 5 years old is in Gitega, at 93.6%.

Birth certificates by province

- The proportion of children under 5 with birth certificates varies significantly by province.
 - The lowest rate is in Cankuzo, along the border with Tanzania, where only about one-quarter of children under five years old have birth certificates. Kirundo has the second-lowest rate, at 33.8%.
 - The highest rate is in Bujumbura Mairie, the country's economic capital, at 85.3%.



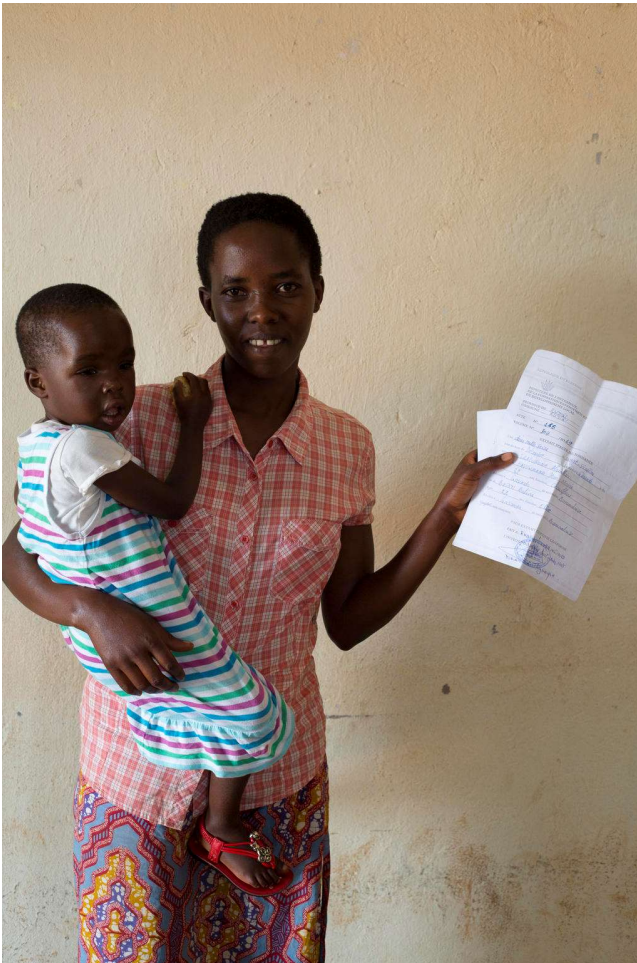
A close-up, profile view of a young child with dark skin and short, curly hair. The child is looking towards the right side of the frame with a thoughtful expression. The background is a blurred, warm-toned wall.

Birth registration challenges in Burundi

The legal framework poses several conditions for birth registration, which make the process challenging for parents.

The legal delay for free birth registration is only 15 days, making it challenging for parents to register their child free of cost in time. Late registrations incur a fee, which in turn deters late registrations altogether.

Many children whose births have been registered never actually obtain a birth certificate, due to the cost and the long distance to civil registration offices.



Registration opportunities

- About 90% of pregnant women attend antenatal care visits and deliver in appropriate health facilities with skilled staff for maternal and newborn health care.
- About 85% of children aged 12-23 months have received all the basic vaccines.

This means that there is a massive opportunity to increase birth registration through improving linkages, interoperability between the civil registration and health systems.

Proposed solutions

Legal reform

**Promoting
interoperability with
the health system**

**Supporting late birth
registrations**



Proposed solutions

Legal reform

UNICEF is conducting high-level advocacy and providing technical support to the Government of Burundi to support legal reform in order to:

- Extend the legal delay for birth registration beyond 15 days
- Remove barriers that hinder the registration of children born out of wedlock
- Facilitate the digitalization of the civil registration and vital statistics system
- Facilitate birth registration within health facilities



Proposed solutions

Promoting interoperability with the health system

UNICEF is promoting the interoperability of the civil registration system with the health system by:

- Promoting the use of the child-mother health booklet as a substitute for the legally required two witnesses
- Piloting the regular permanence of civil registration agents within health facilities



Proposed solutions

Supporting late birth registrations

UNICEF is working with partners to identify children whose births were never registered and support their late registration by:

- Working with UNHCR to ensure unregistered returnee children are registered at transit centres
- Working with community-based structures to identify unregistered children in their communities
- Advocating to waive late registration fines
- Supporting the deployment of civil registration agents to remote areas



Results

- Between 2019 and 2022, over one million Burundian children were registered and received their birth certificates thanks to UNICEF support.
- 306,650 individuals, among them 218,515 women, were reached with sensitization messages on the importance of birth registration of their children in Kirundo province in 2022.
- 130 civil registration agents have been trained in 2021.



Value Propositions

\$224,000 over 4 years

With \$224,000, we can establish and support the interoperability between the civil registration and health systems for birth registration in one commune for 4 years, which will facilitate the registration of 10,000 children per year.

\$3 per child

With \$3 per child, we can support parents to register their children's birth at health facilities, removing barriers related to the far distances to civil registration offices.

\$53,228 annually

With \$53,228 per year, we can support the registration of children's births at health facilities in a commune, reaching 10,000 children.

\$2 per child

With \$2 per child, we can support parents who were unable to register their child at birth to proceed with late registration, ensuring the child will have access to free primary education and free health care until age five .

Why partner with UNICEF?



Expansive field presence including in the world's hardest-to-reach places.



Evidence-driven investments.



Innovative solutions and field testing.



Delivering at scale.



Proven track-record of high-level advocacy and partnerships.



Thank you

unicef  | for every child