

# Problems Related to the Implementation of Child's Right Birth Registration in Burundi: Proposing Their Remedies

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## Abstract

The second paragraph of Article 6 of the African Charter on the right and welfare of the child obliges its States parties to register birth immediately. Birth registration is a key to other children's rights. In conjugation with UNICEF-Burundi, the State made an effort to attain birth registration completeness. Children's non-registration undermines all children's rights. The analysis through this research uses documentary methods and interviews. Civil servants do not know birth registration is a children's right. About 38% of born children in hospitals and health centers are not registered immediately at birth. To avoid children's non-registration, Burundi needs to apply systems used successfully in other countries like Kenya and Liberia as digitalization by mobile phone registration and decentralization. It is useful for Burundi to initiate sensitization of the civil servants and population about the usefulness of birth registration and apply interconnection between hospitals and civil status office data in the field.

## Keywords

Burundi, Child's Birth Registration, Mobile Registration, Sensitization, Data Interconnection, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

## 1. Introduction

Burundi is a party to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child since 28 June 2004 and has only produced a single report that covers the period from 2004 to 2016 that does not tell about the situation of the child's right to birth registration (Burundi Government, 2017: p. 6). On page 19, the report tells "The Burundian family environment is at three levels: the extended

family, the household or family compound, and the nuclear family. Following the effects of the socio-political crisis in Burundi since 1993 and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the family structure has been disrupted to such an extent that there are currently single-parent families as well as a new phenomenon known as child-headed households. The ever-increasing impoverishment has negatively affected the family structure and has not spared the living conditions of children. Some ended up in/on the streets, neglected by their parents, neglected or abandoned, thus facing exposure to situations of violence, exploitation, discrimination, and abuse” (Burundi Government, 2017: p. 19). Burundian situation call on the idea to think about the way it implements the child’s right to birth registration.

Birth registration is a fundamental child’s right. It is a right paramount without which a child does not legally exist. Birth registration, the official recording of a child’s birth by the government, is a fundamental human right and an essential means of protecting a child’s rights (*General Comment on Article 6 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*: paragr. 43). As Johannes WEDENIG, the UNICEF representative in Burundi in 2012 told, a person not appearing in the files kept by registrars does not have a legal existence, with all its consequences (Burundi: l’UNICEF appuie une campagne d’enregistrement des naissances, 2012). According to him, a child without a birth certificate has no name, no nationality, no access to education and health service like vaccination, and no protection against possible abuse and violation of his/her rights. An unregistered child is most attractive to a child trafficker and does not have legal protection. We deduce from this that a birth certificate provides protection against early marriage, child labor, recruitment in the armed forces, or detention and prosecution as an adult. Children, unable to prove their age and identity, lack fundamental protection against abuse and exploitation. According to UNICEF:

“Society first acknowledges a child’s existence and identity through birth registration. The right to be recognized as a person before the law is a critical step in ensuring lifelong protection and is a prerequisite for exercising all other rights. Yet the births of one-fourth children under age 5 worldwide have never been officially recorded” (Birth Registration, s.d.). Birth registration has been a most important children’s right and got to be considered as the key to all of children’s rights. It is acquired since birth biological and is a gate opening an entrance to all others ever since as asserted by international instruments on human rights. 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 (*African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*: art. 6; *Convention on the Rights of the Child*: art. 7).

The United Nations are strict on the rights of the child and underlines that we cannot talk about any other child’s right before birth registration. After registra-

tion, a child gets a name and nationality that are written on the birth certificate marking birth registration authenticity.

In the same view, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, esteem, all legislative, judicial or administrative measures related to the improvement of the birth registration system as well as the acquisition of nationality must also be in conformity with the best interests of the child (*General Comment on Article 6 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*: paragr. 15). The UN General comment 7 on birth registration insists also that the implementation of this right must be oriented on the fight against discrimination, the protection of children's health and well-being and their best interests (*Birth Registration OHCHR and Children*: paragr. 8).

Numerous researchers treated the issues about birth registration systems in different countries like in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Liberia, England and Palestine. In Nigeria, Makinde et al. (2016) highlighted that birth registration systems often operate as a distinct system across ministries. In Liberia, Kenya, Portugal and Sao Tomé mobile cellphone software do efficiently birth registration (Pelowski et al., 2015; Pinto et al., 2018; Toivanen et al., 2011). In England, Tanzania and Palestine, birth registration done in hospitals has been fruitful (Coathup et al., 2020; Hassan et al., 2017; Pinto et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2021). However, "integrating technology into a health care system can be a complex process, particularly in low and middle income countries LMICs" (Hassan et al., 2017). Another research shows the determinants of birth registration should take into account the household level (Ebbers, 2020). It is then important to sensitize the population about its utilities. Lack of birth registration is an obstacle to the acknowledgment of the exact age of a child and, then it is difficult to know the stunting level in case of malnutrition (Comandini et al., 2016). Birth registration is effective when a child receives a birth certificate, as it has been real in Australia (*Submission to the Victorian Parliament Law Reform Committee Inquiry into Access to Information by Donor Conceived Individuals about Their Donors by Sonia Allan: SSRN, s.d.*). Registration itself can be challenging for many people in the Aboriginal community to achieve, however, certification of a birth appears to be a particularly pressing concern (Gerber & Fawcett, 2013: p. 1).

In Burundi case, World Bank collection of development indicators highlight that Burundi attained 83.5% in the completeness of birth registration in 2017 (*World Sub-Saharan Africa Burundi—Health: Population: Dynamics Completeness of Birth Registration 83.50% en 2017, 2017*). We see about 16.5% Burundians are not registered. The average of children who have birth certificate ownership is still about 56% (Kaneko et al., 2017: p. 1). We could wonder what is about the 44% left without access to birth certificate in terms of children's rights. Despite this situation, Burundi has undertaken remarkable efforts to guarantee the child's right to birth registration. It is party to the international instruments denoting the right to birth registration.

According to the law governing persons and family in Burundi, the name is the mandatory form of designation of a human being that he or she needs to have as one mentioned in his/her birth certificate (*Décret-loi n° 1/024 du 28 avril 1993 portant réforme du Code des personnes et de la famille Burundi: arts. 11-12*).

In this case, we analyze birth registration systems in other countries to see if they can respond positively to achieve the completeness of birth registration in Burundi. Here we notice the usefulness of data from hospitals (Beddoe, 2017: pp. 24-25). Not only this, but also we prefer some reforms such parents involvement from countryside in birth registration (Bhatia et al., 2017: p. 3; Juma et al., 2016: pp. 7-9). Mobile birth registration has marked great importance in Liberia and Kenya (Pelowski et al., 2015: p. 901; Toivanen et al., 2011: pp. 3-4) can also be a saviour of most cases of unregistered children. It rhymes in the same tone, as the sensitization of the rural provinces (Bhatia et al., 2019: p. 4) Birth registration is the best way to protect children against social ills. It also opens the gate to nationality, health care services and education (Makinde et al., 2016: pp. 325-326).

Hence, we need to focus on this issue to find why some Burundians are not registered or do not have birth certificate. The question we search to what extent the child's right to birth registration is being implemented in Burundi.

## 2. Methods and Methodology

The achievement of this paper will be the results of the data collected and analysed combining qualitative and quantitative data.

I used the documentary technique to analyze the conventional and legal texts concerning birth registration. Using this technique, since 23 August to 10 September 2021, I visited six communes targeted as research zone. These communes are Ruyigi in Ruyigi province; Gitega in Gitega province; Nyanza-Lac in Makamba province; Mugina in Cibitoke province; Ngozi in Ngozi province and Giteranyi in Muyinga province. I achieved the collection (by addition of monthly reports) of data about birth registration in those communes using Excel software. The solution helped the comparison between male and female children registered apart, and legal period versus late registration apart.

In these communes, I conducted an interview with civil office agents in six communes targeted as a research area, I targeted to know whether birth registration marks gender issues. There, it was an occasion to see if people register in legal time close to birth or if late birth registration is more frequent than the former. This interview served as a means to deduce how civil office agents consider birth registration is and combined with the observation in the offices, it was opportune to know which procedure they use in the fulfilment of birth registration. Using the interview, we noticed problems civil office agents occur and what solution they esteem as professionals, fits well to solve the birth non-registration issues.

We used IBM SPSS statistics tools to analyze the results of the interview.

I used the documentary technique to get data of children born in Burundi along three years (2018, 2019, and 2020) every apart from the ministry in charge of health for they collect data of babies born from health centres and hospitals, whether private or public, time after time. I will compare them with data from the ministry in charge of inner affairs. Here, through monthly communes' reports of civil office services, they have the exact number of children registered in every province. I shall compare data on the provincial level for their circumscription is common in both ministries. Using excel software, I shall have the exact rate of birth registration by dividing the number of children born by the registered one in every province. Here, I will have the exact average birth registration state in every province of Burundi, to deduce it in the whole country.

It was also useful to analyze doctrinal criticisms and draw a comparison of some other countries' birth registration methods to evaluate their impact and see whether they can resolve Burundian birth non-registration or birth registration incompleteness.

I did this research in two sections. The first one searched to know the situation of birth registration, the exact birth registration rate, and the causes of birth non-registration. The second one analyzed different remedies to birth non-registration. This second section examined the steps made in other countries using the interconnection between hospitals and other birth registrar offices, the digitalization, and the mobile phone software in birth registration. It went for the importance of the sensitization of countryside populations.

### 3. Results (Tables 1-12)

**Table 1.** Birth registration rate at birth comparing between registered the ministry of home affairs and born children reported by the ministry of health.

Order	Province	Data from the ministry of health (C)	Data from the ministry of home affairs (D)	Birth registration rate C/D
1	Bujumbura	19,545	14,033	71.8%
2	Mairie	33,086	19,614	59.3%
3	Bururi	19,770	6654	33.7%
4	Cankuro	14,382	9014	62.7%
5	Cibitoke	29,487	16,369	55.5%
6	Karusi	23,458	11,500	49.0%
7	Kayanza	24,133	21,692	89.9%
8	Kirundo	29,816	13,919	46.7%
9	Muramvya	11,270	9572	84.9%
10	Muyinga	38,748	26,855	69.3%
11	Ruyigi	26,591	18,500	69.6%
	Total	270,286	167,722	62.1%

**Table 2.** Studies degree of civil servants in 6 communes.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
Did not finish primary school	1	5.3	5.3
Primary	4	21.1	26.3
Valid Began but did not finish secondary school	13	68.4	94.7
Secondary school diploma	1	5.3	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 3.** Consideration of birth registration according to civil servants in communes of research.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	percentage cumulated
Most important child's right	1	5.3	5.3
A common obligation from the Government to citizens	2	10.5	15.8
Valid Commune's source of income because late birth declarers pay fines and also birth certificate also purchased	6	31.6	47.4
No idea	10	52.6	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 4.** Answer of civil registrars in six communes about whether they know the international instruments about children's rights.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
No	16	84.2	84.2
Valid Yes	2	10.5	94.7
No idea	1	5.3	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 5.** Civil registrars' answers on the question of whether there are workshops on the international instruments about birth registration.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
Valid No	19	100.0	100.0

**Table 6.** Answers of civil office registrars on the question if they often sensitize the population about the child's right to birth registration.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
Valid No	19	100.0	100.0

**Table 7.** Obstacles against sensitization of birth registration as a child's rights according to point of the view of civil office registrars.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
No funds to cover the events	11	57.9	If they
They already know it, then it is not useful	6	31.6	89.5
Valid We do not have a car to move around all collines of the whole commune	2	10.5	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 8.** The category of birth registration between late and legal ones or equality.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
Late birth registration	13	68.4	68.4
Valid Equality	6	31.6	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 9.** Frequencies of late birth registration.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
At school age	4	21.1	21.1
When they finish secondary school and then they are preparing to go to university, they are required birth certificate	8	42.1	63.2
Valid When they preparing their marriage, they are required birth certificate	2	10.5	73.7
Two cases 2 and 3	3	15.8	89.5
All cases (1, 2, and 3)	2	10.5	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 10.** Methods used in birth registration.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
Books	13	68.4	68.4
Valid Both excel table and books	6	31.6	100.0
Total	19	100.0	

**Table 11.** Procedures used in birth registration.

	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulated percentage
Valid Parents' presence in front of civil servants, accompanied by 2 witnesses	19	100.0	100.0

**Table 12.** Quantity of birth registrations comparing legal time registrations to late ones on one hand and male to female children's birth registrations on the other hands in five communes of Burundi (Ruyigi in Ruyigi province, Gitega in Gitega province, Ngozi in Ngozi province).

COMMUNE	Year	Category	Gender	Total in detail	Annual Total	Parts of legal and delay registration	Registration according to gender
RUYIGI	2018	In legal time	All	1988	5992	33.18%	Not precised
		In delay	All	4004		66.82%	
	2019	In legal time	All	1170	4384	26.69%	
		In delay	All	3214		73.31%	
	2020	In legal time	All	1994	6644	30.01%	
		In delay	All	4650		69.99%	
NGOZI	2020	In legal time	F	2719	5940	91.53%	45.77%
			M	2718		45.76%	
		In delay	F	250		8.47%	4.21%
			M	253		4.26%	
GITEGA	2018	In legal time	F	3152	12,978	49.38%	24.29%
			M	3256		25.09%	
		In delay	F	3252		50.62%	25.06%
			M	3318		25.57%	
	2019	In legal time	F	2727	10,046	54.85%	27.15%
			M	2783		27.70%	
		In delay	F	2206		45.15%	21.96%
			M	2330		23.19%	
	2020	In legal time	F	3134	11,101	61.44%	28.23%
			M	3686		33.20%	
		In delay	F	2210		38.56%	19.91%
			M	2071		18.66%	
NYANZA-LAC	2019	Not precised	F	3646	7812	Not precised	46.67%
			M	4166			53.33%
	2020	Not precised	F	4808	9632		61.55%
			M	4824			61.75%
MUGINA	2019	In legal time	F	1089	10,565	21.01%	10.31%
			M	1131			10.71%
		In delay	F	4220		78.99%	39.94%
			M	4125		39.04%	
	2020	In legal time	F	1192	4677	50.59%	25.49%
			M	1174			25.10%
		In delay	F	1147		49.41%	24.52%
			M	1164		24.89%	



#### 4. Discussion

In Ruyigi commune, during whole the considered period (2018, 2019, and 2020), late birth registration is highly frequent (66.82%, 73.31%, and 69.99%) than birth registration in legal time (33.18%, 26.69%, and 30.01%). The situation is the same in Gitega in 2018 (late birth registration occupies 50.62% while legal period one takes 49.38%). The situation changed during 2019 and 2020. Legal birth registration frequencies are higher than late ones (54.85% and 61.44% legal birth registration against 45.15% and 38.56% of late ones). The same situation is in remarkable in Ngozi commune where in 2020, legal birth registration was at 91.53% against 8.47% of late ones “See **Table 1**”. Ngozi and Gitega being urban communes, the fact that the implementation of the right to birth registration is well done in town than in countryside is accepted. “The location of a child was another significant predictor of birth registration, as urban children had better odds of being registered compared to rural children” (Makinde et al., 2016: p. 325; Yu et al., 2015: p. 9) in this case, “rural dwellers were less likely to register their children than urban dwellers” (Amo-Adjei & Annim, 2015: p. 5) and this World Bank and UNICEF already found the same solution in 2017 in Burundi. Birth registration rate was 82.8 % in rural (World Sub-Saharan Africa Burundi—Health: Population: Dynamics Completeness of birth registration 83.50% en 2017, 2017) while it was 90% in urban zone (World Bank Open Data, 2017). There is no gender issue in birth registration. Male and female are registered in the same quantity. However, this is the opposite of former researches showing there is gender issue in birth registration (Bhatia et al., 2017: p. 117; Bhatia et al., 2019: p. 3).

Among 19 civil registrars interviewed, 12 began but did not finish secondary school, five finished primary schools, and only two finished secondary schools as shown in **Table 2**. Things are such even though these agents should at least have finished secondary school (*Manuel des procédures administratives et financières des communes du Burundi (Communes' Administrative and Financial Procedures Manuel, 2020: sect. 1 page 34)*). Among 19 civil servants, only one knows birth registration is a child's right as shown in **Table 3**. It is very critical if civil office registrars do know birth registration is the most important of child's rights. Mothers with some formal primary, secondary and other higher educational qualification were more likely to register their children than mothers with no education (Bhatia et al., 2019: p. 5). 16 among 19 civil office registrars did not hear about international instruments on the rights of the child “see **Table 4**”. This is a big loss for “if civil office registrars succeed, they gain not only a deep sense of personal vindication, but social glory—fame, stardom, prizes, wealth, and higher office await” (Alexander, 2018: p. 18). In these communes, without easy internet connection, children's rights are thoroughly unknown (Livingstone et al., 2016: p. 22). Besides, they did not get any formation on these essential children's rights international instruments obliging to implement children's right to birth registration just at birth as shown in **Table 5**. Not planning work-

shop of civil office registrars on these instruments, Burundi fails its assistance responsibility to parents (*African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*: art. 20 §2) even though parents are primarily responsible of the implementation of children's rights (*African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*: art. 20 §1; *Convention on the Rights of the Child*: art. 18) in the implementation of the child's right to birth registration.

In these six communes, there is no population sensitization that birth registration is a child's right "See **Table 6**". This however opposite to the point of view of the ACERWC obliging that "Civic education and awareness campaigns have demonstrated efficacy in generating improved birth registration, and they should be an integral part of governments planning and population survives" (*African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, 2021: p. 10).

In Nigeria, workshops towards stakeholders helped sensitize parents about children's rights using one-on-one campaign with market men and women (Ekine & Olaniyan, 2019: pp. 77-78). Eleven out of nineteen justify the missing of birth registration sensitization because by lack of funds while six consider that people already know it "See **Table 7**". Fundraising may respond sufficiently to this issue as it was in Nigeria (Ekine & Olaniyan, 2019: p. 78) and this may solve the question about lack of a car to move around quarters inside the commune is the main issue. Burundi needs operate fundraising for global partners should be inspired to continue to support birth registration projects as integral's development (*African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, 2021: p. 10). Lack of sensitization of the citizens that birth registration is a first and most important of children's rights is a big problem.

In consequence, thirteen out of nineteen civil office agents confirm, late birth registration is frequent than legal period ones (**Table 8**). This is to reveal that all the years before late birth registration, there had been violation of the ACERWC's aspiration that every child's birth and other vital statistics are registered (*Agenda 2040, Africa's Agenda for Children: Fostering an Africa Fit for Children, Birth Registration OHCHR and Children; Observation générale sur l'article 6 de la Charte africaine des droits et du bien-être de l'enfant*) immediately at birth time. Late birth registrations occur frequently when children finish secondary school and prepare to attend university studies and when they prepare their marriage for illiterate children, on the requisition of the very children. They notice another category of late birth registration when children begin primary school as shown in **Table 9**. The main tool they use for birth registration is hard copies as shown in **Table 10**, with the obligatory presence of parents in front of civil office agents "see **Table 11**". They use no specific software for birth registration in all six commune of research. Burundi must address the lack of universally free registration as well as the socio-demographic factors which impede registration (*African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, 2021: p. 9). The ministry of health, in eleven provinces, 270,286 children while, according to

reports from the ministry of home affairs, only 167,722 were registered during a fortnight, the average of 62.1% as shown in **Table 12**. The committee of experts on the rights and welfare of the child (ACERWC), esteemed, the violation of the right to birth registration is an open gate to the violations of many other children's rights violations. Here we consider the jurisprudential measure held on the case of *the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa and the Open Society Justice Initiative (on behalf of Children of Nubian Descent in Kenya) versus the government of Kenya (Children of Nubian Descent in Kenya v. Kenya, 2017)*. Burundi should search for a way of implementing the right to birth registration at birth. The strategies to apply will prevent it from being sentenced of violation of article 6 of the African children's Charter, and then, being accused of opening a wide gate to the violation of rights to equal access to education and equal access to health care for the 38% of born children not registered at birth. The UN general comment fourteen shows the impact of birth non-registration on children's rights. It undermines the right to education (*General Comment No. 7, (2005) Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood: paragr. 8; Sévin, 2014: paragr. 19-20*), the right to health (*General Comment No. 7 (2005) Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood: paragr. 8 and 9; Sévin, 2014: paragr. 21-22*), the right to nationality and citizenship (*Sévin, 2014: paragr. 23-24*), the children's right to protection against child labour (*General Comment No. 7 (2005) Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood: paragr. 36 lit. e; Sévin, 2014: paragr. 25-26*), the children's right to protection against participation in armed conflicts (*General Comment No. 7 (2005) Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood: paragr. 36 lit. b; Sévin, 2014: paragr. 27-28*). Not only those but, it is also an obstacle to the protection against early and forced marriage (*General Comment No. 7 (2005) Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood: paragr. 19-20; Sévin, 2014: paragr. 29*), protection against child trafficking and sale (*General Comment No. 7 (2005) Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood: paragr. 36 lit. g and h; Sévin, 2014: paragr. 30-32*). UNICEF insists on the importance of birth registration. Individual protection is nonsense without birth registration. In the comprehension of civil rights, the registration system has to be continuous, permanent, compulsory, and universal (*United Nations Children's Fund, 2013*).

#### **4.1. Remedies to Birth Non-Registration and Late Ones in Burundi**

##### **4.1.1. Forces in Favour of Birth Registration in Burundi**

The governmental decisions in the hypothesis of facilitating birth registration in Burundi concern the delete of the financial punishment of the late registration and decentralization of the registrar service (*Wodon & Yedan, 2019: pp. 2-3*). This has a value for late birth registration. Another acknowledgment towards the government is the decentralization measure at the level of the zones and free of charge late registration without asking permission from the province.

#### 4.1.2. Good Practices to Serve as Lessons in Birth Registration in Burundi

##### 1) *Birth registration from the health ministry services (hospitals and health centres)*

Burundi needs to begin another mind-set. Findings of recent researches show, in Burundi, deliverance takes place in hospitals and health centres (Kaneko et al., 2017: p. 5). Burundi, in the interest of facilitating birth registration, requires the interconnection among all services registering childbirth. Hereby, as long as nativity is a maximum service from hospitals and health centres, they are in the main position to operate childbirth registration. Interconnection between medical service offices and the civil status office will be greatly important to ensure every child rejoices the right to birth registration. Counting birth registration in hospitals involving parents, staff and stakeholders in the process is very important (Reed et al., 2021: pp. 3-7). There are many opportunities to improve successfully birth registration in hospitals as it was in England (Coathup et al., 2020: pp. 1-2).

##### 2) *Mobile telephone free line*

Burundi has experienced a census of public sector workers in 2020 using ODK collect software in mobile cell phones. That showed registration is possible utilizing them. There is the relationship existing between innovativeness, extraversion, mobile phone use, and mobile applications (van Do et al., 2016: pp. 379-380). In the financial and communication domain, in Burundi, ECOKASH, LUMICASH, and SMART PESA are the tangible facts to keep persons' SIM cards with individual identifications through cell phone applications.

Africa needs to use mobile technologies with mothers and health workers to increase coverage of essential newborn care, including birth registration. We focus on the development of a smartphone and the emerging standards for their implementation in identity systems (Freytsis et al., 2021: p. 1). Burundi has no alternative way to achieve the complete birth registration. It must follow the ICT development tools in birth registration.

Beside Kenya, Liberia "has undertaken to support the building of the Liberian population information system, and especially to develop a mobile phone-based birth registration service to be deployed in rural areas of Liberia in its Mobile Birth Registration (MBR)-project" (Toivanen et al., 2011: p. 10). These examples of Kenya and Liberia are to wink an eye to Burundi's birth registration system.

##### 3) *Sensitization of civil servants and population*

Burundi is in the same situation as what UNICEF found in Niger that parents do not know the usefulness of Birth registration (Wodon & Yedan, 2019: p. 2). Parental preferences are on the top of the cause despite the lack of sensitization by civil servants who also do not understand birth registration mainly as children's right. It is hard to imagine population is aware of the usefulness of birth registration when the daily doers do not know it. It looks like it is very essential to sensitize the population. Burundi should then proceed to the organization of political debate on media such as radio or television on birth registration. Meet-

ing of local administration agents with the population should play an essential role in the promotion of the child's right to birth registration.

## 5. Conclusion

Burundi does not regularly produce reports to the African committee on children's rights for since 2004, it has only produced the first one and ceased to do so the following years. However, it has to implement the provision of this African instrument, inside which, the obligation to proceed to birth registration, at birth. Through interview with civil servants, the only method used to register children in Burundi is writing in books when children's parents are in front of them and this, legally, within a fortnight and one day. It also assures that a large number of children are registered when they are ready to begin university studies or primary schools. Those civil servants do know that birth registration is a child's right. The documentary technique of reports from the ministry of Home Affairs compared with others from the Ministry of health reveals, about 38% of children born are not registered. The same technique shows that in other countries such as Liberia and Kenya, they have prepared a software in mobile phones helping to achieve the completeness of birth registration. Another system used in Tanzania is the interconnection of reports from hospitals and health centres about birth registration. However, it is also of the great importance to sensitize the population and civil servants about the usefulness of birth registration as a child's right and the key to all other child's rights. Burundi should proceed to the organization of political debate on media such as radio or television on birth registration. Meeting of local administration agents with the population should play an essential role in the promotion of the child's right to birth registration.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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