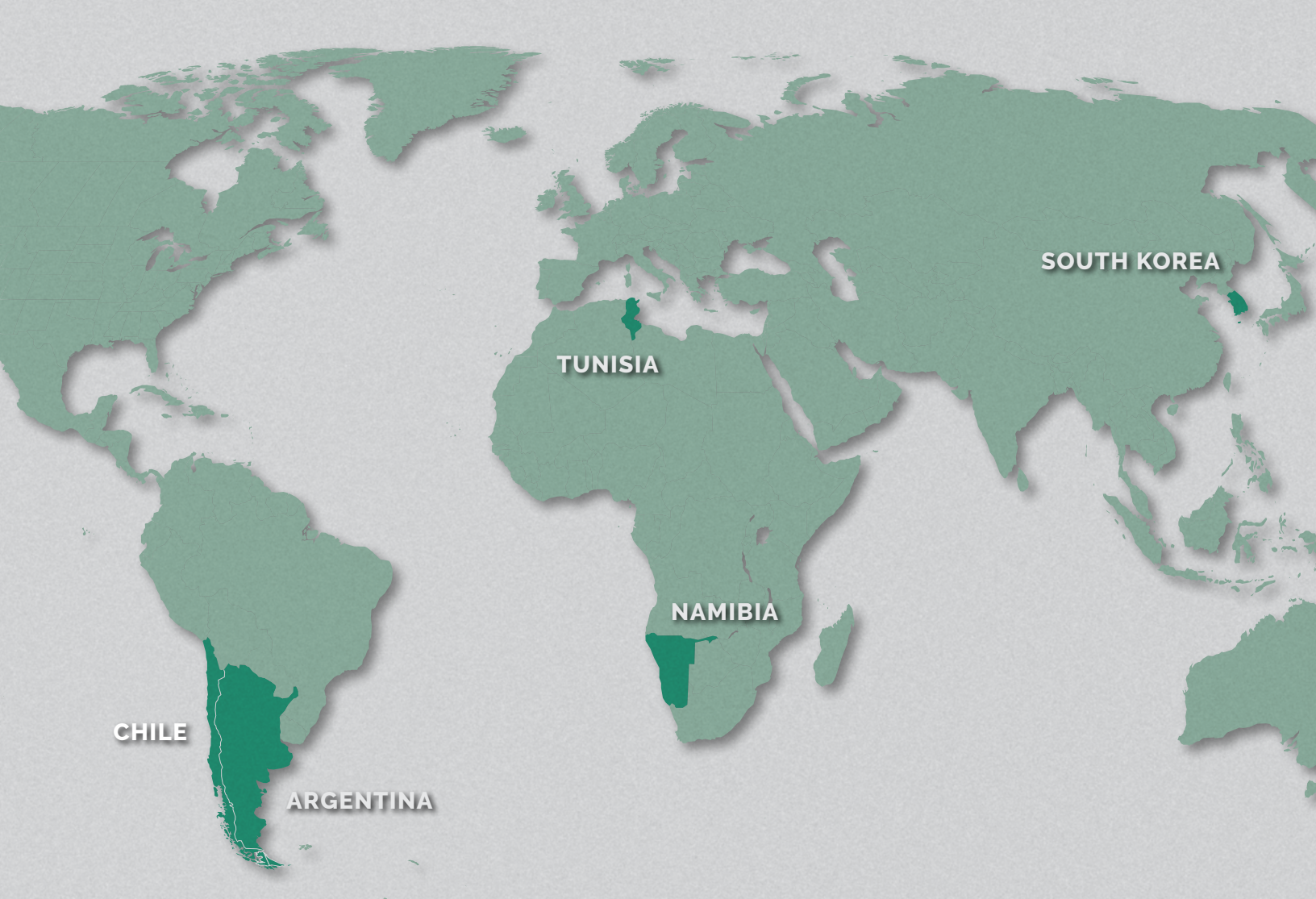CRVS

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
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The Nexus Between Civil Registration and Social Protection Systems:
Five Country Practices

SOUTH KOREA

TUNISIA

NAMIBIA

CHILE

ARGENTINA

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Foreword

It is my distinct pleasure to introduce this latest compendium of good practices compiled by the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems. Housed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Centre of Excellence is jointly funded by IDRC and Global Affairs Canada.

This publication builds on the recommendations of a conference that was hosted at IDRC in Ottawa, Canada in February 2018 on innovations in CRVS systems. Co-organized by the Centre of Excellence, the World Health Organization, and UNICEF, this event brought together more than 100 CRVS practitioners from low- and middle-income countries, along with experts from academia, UN agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations. Over the course of two days, lively discussions took place under the theme "Harnessing the Power: CRVS Systems for 2030 Global Agendas" to collectively take stock of the global state of CRVS systems, identify key challenges and knowledge gaps, share promising practices, and catalyze commitment to move the CRVS agenda forward. One key knowledge gap that the conference identified was the lack of information about innovative and tested practices that increase registration rates and provide a path to social, economic, and civic inclusion through legal identity.

Social protection programs are tools used by governments to prevent, manage, and overcome situations that adversely affect people's well-being. Social protection programs typically attempt to reach excluded or marginalized groups. Inefficiencies, mismanagement, and corruption in the distribution of social protection benefits highlight the need for individuals that depend on these benefits to have legal identity documents. The link between legal identity and social protection is a two-way relationship: individuals that don't have trusted identity credentials cannot normally access social protection benefits, and not having access to social protection benefits means there are fewer incentives for individuals to register their vital events (births, marriages, divorces, deaths) with governments. As a result, governments struggle to close the legal identity gaps. The people who are always most affected are the poorest segments of the population.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) means pursuing *inclusive* development. Put differently, social exclusion cannot be eliminated if people are invisible because they lack identity credentials. Individuals need legal identity credentials to access healthcare, education, economic opportunities, and representation. Equally important is the statistical data drawn from civil registration for governments to plan and deliver services, and to better meet the needs of their most vulnerable populations.

The purpose of this publication is to bring attention to innovative practices that individual countries have pursued to promote inclusive development based on the foundation of well-functioning civil registration systems. This compendium highlights the efforts of policymakers in Argentina, Chile, Namibia, South Korea, and Tunisia to address social protection and inclusionary policies by also addressing the role of civil registration and vital statistics for ensuring access to and delivery of benefits and services. By introducing social

and financial incentives to the registration of vital events, countries have improved registration coverage. Improved registration contributes to improved vital statistics, which offers governments a powerful planning tool for more effective interventions.

The case studies in this publication show that in addition to political will and clear national goals, promoting sustainable and inclusive social development demands both coordination among government agencies and carefully designed programs and activities. IDRC promotes the generation of knowledge to solve practical development problems and we care deeply about building evidence to break the cycle of poverty and reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities. Legal identity for all is imperative as this will improve access to and facilitate delivery of social benefits, services, and rights in a trusted and transparent manner.

It is my hope that this resource will contribute to greater understanding of the links between civil registration and social protection as vehicles for inclusive development.

Jean Lebel, President, IDRC

The Nexus Between Civil Registration and Social Protection Systems: Five Country Practices

Introduction

Mia Harbitz

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, recognized the right to birth registration and to a name. In the three decades since then, recognition of the need for a personal or legal identity has grown steadily throughout the world. At the same time, societies everywhere have undergone momentous changes in the wake of globalization and the digital revolution. In parallel, there has been an ever-increasing demand for proof of legal identity for a number of purposes.

It is difficult to overstate the significance of civil registration, especially birth registration, as the first step on the road to legal identity and access to benefits and services for all. Early childhood access to health services and vaccines, and later access to education, are building blocks for lifelong health and economic productivity.[1] Speaking at a news conference in New York in 2005, South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu described the importance of timely birth registration as a matter of life and death. "The unregistered child is a nonentity. The unregistered child does not exist. How can we live with the knowledge that we could have made a difference?"[2]

The reality for tens of millions of people throughout the world is that without identity credentials, it is difficult to access social protection services and nearly impossible to participate in modern life. This relegates many of them to a life on the margins of society. Without a civil identity, they are excluded from exercising their rights and participating in civic activities, and they have no access to schools, health care, and other social benefits for which they would be eligible. Also, they have no access to the formal sector, such as housing, or access to credit or other banking services.

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1   Harvard University Center on the Developing Child. 2010. The Foundations of Lifelong Health Are Built in Early Childhood. developingchild.harvard.edu

2   BBC News. Tutu Calls for Child Registration. 22 February 2005. news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4289393.stm

The countries with the highest estimated percentages of undocumented or non-registered residents are also among the most fragile.[3] These tend to have the weakest institutions and the fewest resources to break the cycle of invisibility, exclusion, and poverty for those without identity credentials.

Responses to the problem

The development community increasingly recognizes the importance of an identity credential to enable people to access benefits and services. A legal identity is also a precondition for sustainable development. This was acknowledged in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically in SDG 16.9, which calls for "legal identity for all, including birth registration" by 2030. While the international development community continues to discuss the meaning of legal identity, there is no denying that the lack of it should not impede access to basic rights, benefits, and services.

Governments are also becoming aware of the need for universal registration and timely vital statistics for planning, budgeting, and fiscal control for distribution of services and benefits.

There are no quick and easy solutions for the challenges governments are facing to achieve the goal of legal identity for all and universal birth registration as set out in SDG 16.9. There is no one-size-fits-all model for countries aiming to modernize their registries. Nor is there a unique model that will break the cycle of exclusion for the most marginalized and ensure access to social protection and to the fair and equitable distribution of benefits. Governments that have undertaken reforms leading to greater access and inclusion have pursued this in a variety of ways: one way is through strengthening their civil registration systems, as described in the case studies. The strengthening of civil registration systems implicitly leads to better vital statistics, which provides a better foundation for decision-making and planning.

IDRC and the Centre of Excellence response

The idea of a compendium that documents good practices in finding synergies between civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) and social protection systems took root at the February 2018 conference "Harnessing the Power: CRVS Systems for 2030 Global Agendas."[4] Co-hosted in Ottawa by the Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems with the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the event brought together experts and practitioners from low- and middle-income countries, academia, UN agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations. One key recommendation that came out of the discussions was the need to document and disseminate good practices that both

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3   OECD. States of Fragility Reports. oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/listofstateoffragilityreports.htm. World Bank Group. Identification for Development (ID4D) Global Dataset. datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/identification-development-global-dataset

4   crvssystems.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/WebVersion_CRVS_Innovations_Conference_Outcomes_Report.pdf

improved access to civil registration and had a positive impact on social development, and to make them available for those working to develop, implement, scale up, or strengthen CRVS systems around the world.

The papers in this compendium analyze the role of the civil registration system and vital statistics structure in supporting social protection and inclusive development (and vice versa) in countries that have made significant advances in delivering social protection services. At the same time, the case study countries have strengthened the capacity of civil registration agencies to ensure that citizens and residents have the documentation they need to access the services for which they are eligible. The papers also provide information and guidance for politicians, policymakers, organizations, and development practitioners working on the promotion, design, and implementation of policies and programs that improve efficient delivery and trusted access to social protection services.

The compendium features the experiences of five countries from around the world:

◉ Argentina;

◉ Chile;

◉ Namibia;

◉ South Korea; and

◉ Tunisia.

Representatives from Chile, Namibia, and South Korea presented their individual experiences at the conference. Argentina and Tunisia have successfully based enrollment in social protection programs on identities verified by the civil register — initiatives that have matured over time.

Context

The value of identity

The United Nations defines civil registration as the continuous, permanent, compulsory, universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population, as provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirements in each country, with full respect for the rules regulating the protection and privacy of individual information. The output of this recording establishes a person's identity and familial relationships, lays the foundation for legal identity, and, if the civil registration system is managed effectively, can provide valuable vital statistics.

Identity is a question of belonging and of accessing societal benefits and obligations. How a country manages civil registration and identification is often established in the country's constitution. A person's legal identity is provided by the agency that is legally authorized to issue the official identity credential — whether this is a birth certificate or identity card — that will give the bearer access to benefits, services, and rights as established by law. This identity is recognized by the society.

For most countries, registering vital events and issuing corresponding identity credentials benefits both the individual and the government. For the individual, having an identity credential grants them access to rights, benefits, and services. For the government, this has implications for resource management. In most countries, public resources are limited. Countries with universal registration have a better chance of designing and implementing public policies that deliver services and benefits efficiently and fairly, based on vital statistics created by the civil register and the capacity to verify identities.

The cost of exclusion

Exclusion is a complex condition that is felt in every aspect of social life by those who are denied access to services and participation in civic life. Lacking identity credentials guarantees exclusion in almost every aspect of life. The World Bank estimates that around 1 billion individuals lack identity credentials. While it is difficult to quantify the global cost of exclusion due to lack of identity credentials, the cost to society is staggering. For individuals and families, the lack of opportunities can have a devastating impact. Without access to education, health care, or job opportunities in the formal labour market, the poor have virtually no way to improve their economic or social status.

For governments, the cost of lost — or never collected — information for planning and public policy is enormous.[5] While it is impossible to put an exact number on the lost opportunities, the impact may be felt in growing inequality, as "highly unequal societies are less effective at reducing poverty, grow more slowly, make it more difficult for people to break out of the cycle of poverty, and close the door to economic and social advancement."[6] Benefits and services cannot be targeted to those who need them the most, because the potential beneficiaries are invisible. Without universal registration and the ability to issue identity credentials, governments lack the tools to manage public resources and deliver services.

Who are the people who lack identity credentials? Research shows that they are predominantly poor, rural, and members of minority ethnic groups.[7] They tend to live far from civil registries, or in border areas where they cannot prove on which side of the border they were born. Exclusion is often intergenerational: parents cannot register children because they themselves were never registered and never got a birth certificate. This perpetuates the cycle of exclusion. Legislation often requires people to hold an identity credential to register a vital event to ensure they have a right to do so. The aim is to avoid people falsely claiming rights such as nationality, marrying multiple times, registering a stolen child, or obtaining a death certificate to illegally claim an inheritance.

5   Mikkelson, Lene et al. 2015. Why Birth and Death Registration Really Are "Vital" Statistics for Development. UN Development Programme. hdr.undp.org/en/content/why-birth-and-death-registration-really-are-%E2%80%9Cvital%E2%80%9D-statistics-development

6   UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. World Social Report 2020. un.org/development/desa/publications/world-social-report-2020.html

7   Harbitz, Mia and Maria del Carmen Tamargo. 2009. The Significance of Legal Identity in Situations of Poverty and Social Exclusion: The Link between Gender, Ethnicity, and Legal Identity. Inter-American Development Bank. publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/The-Significance-of-Legal-Identity-in-Situations-of-Poverty-and-Social-Exclusion-The-Link-between-Gender-Ethnicity-and-Legal-Identity.pdf

Registration of vital events and the legal right to protection and social welfare are not necessarily treated articulately in national legislation. In light of the growing recognition of the problems that under-registration and non-registration may cause, countries have sought to mitigate these. One approach has been to use welfare and social programs to encourage registration of vital events.

The topic of social welfare and protection has been debated at international fora for decades, long before the current focus on the need for registration of vital events to ensure access to and delivery of social services.

The Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention[8] (SSC) of 1952 gives detailed guidance — in a single, comprehensive, and legally binding instrument — on minimum standards for each of the nine branches of social security:

- Medical care;

- Sickness benefits;

- Unemployment benefits;

- Old-age benefits;

- Employment injury benefits;

- Family benefits;

- Maternity benefits;

- Invalidity benefits; and

- Survivors' benefit.

The SSC places them under the principles for good and sustainable governance. Fifty-six countries have ratified this convention. International treaties also guarantee the right to social protection, such as the

- African Charter on Human and People's Rights;

- American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Persons;

- Arab Charter on Human Rights;

- ASEAN Human Rights Declaration; and

- European Social Charter.

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8   ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C102

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICESCR) 1966, with 172 signatories.[9]

According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the ICESCR requires States parties:

(a) To ensure access to a social security scheme that provides a minimum essential level of benefits to all individuals and families that will enable them to acquire at least essential health care, basic shelter and housing, water and sanitation, foodstuffs, and the most basic forms of education. If a State party cannot provide this minimum level for all risks and contingencies within its maximum available resources, the Committee recommends that the State party, after a wide process of consultation, select a core group of social risks and contingencies;

(b) To ensure the right of access to social security systems or schemes on a non-discriminatory basis, especially for disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups;

(c) To respect existing social security schemes and protect them from unreasonable interference;

(d) To adopt and implement a national social security strategy and plan of action;

(e) To take targeted steps to implement social security schemes, particularly those that protect disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups;

(f) To monitor the extent of the realization of the right to social security.

Providing social protection is the responsibility of the State: the delivery of social protection and services is an aspect of good governance. None of the above-mentioned conventions or treaties makes direct reference to requiring a legal identity or identity document to access social protection services and programs. However, the need for identity credentials is implicit.

Against this background, it is necessary to consider multi-dimensional approaches to remove barriers to timely and universal registration and offer social protection to all. Governments function best when each individual has only one legal identity in their interactions with society.

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9 United Nations Economic and Social Council. 2008. General Comment No. 19. The right to social security (Art. 9), paragraph 59. socialprotection-humanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CESCR-General-Comment-19.pdf

Seeking realistic and sustainable solutions

There are many ways to promote social inclusion and sustainable development that take into account national laws, conditions, and traditions. However, it is universally recognized that public policies must be developed or updated to meet the needs of the millions of people who lack legal identity. According to Amartya Sen, "In the context of developing countries in general, the need for public policy initiatives in creating social opportunities is crucially important."[10]

In the past two decades, the link between civil registration, legal identity, and social inclusion and development has become increasingly clear. For example, in the context of the conditional cash transfer programs that were created in Latin America in the 1990s, a discussion emerged around access, enrollment, and the need to track compliance with the conditions and the distribution of funds. The conditions included vaccination, school attendance, and participation in training events. Chile was one of the first countries in Latin America to require legal identity and to make registration part of the conditional cash transfer program *Chile Solidario*. Other Latin American countries, such as Argentina, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Peru, modelled their own social protection programs after Chile's and successfully established identity and identification requirements for enrollment.

It is safe to assume that birth registration in Latin America could not have increased so sharply in such a short time without the link to civil registration and identification and social protection programs. According to a World Bank evaluation of social protection programs, poverty rates would be 13 percent higher in Latin America in the absence of conditional cash transfer programs. From its origins in Latin American conditional cash transfer and social protection programs, civil registration has greatly expanded in many countries around the world.

The use of vital statistics to measure progress in social and economic development

Measuring the results and impacts of social programs is a complex task. It has often depended on anecdotal evidence rather than empirical analysis. Accurate and timely vital statistics are indispensable indicators for measuring progress in social development and as a proxy for poverty reduction.

One of the primary roles of the civil registry is to provide input into a country's vital statistics: particularly births and deaths, but also marriages, divorces, adoptions, and recognitions. Other sources of data for vital statistics are health information systems, national censuses, and household surveys, such as Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS).

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10   Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. 143.

When governments can rely on timely and high-quality vital statistics, they are in a better position to make informed policy decisions and develop targeted social protection programs. Achieving SDG 16.9 will depend on the availability of accurate, up-to-date vital statistics to track levels of registration by comparing the estimated total number of births with the absolute number of births in a given period. Death registration, along with causes of death, is a central facet of vital statistics that should inform public health policy. The accuracy of death registration statistics depends as much, if not more, on health information systems as on universal registration of vital events.

Institutional capacity

Among the persistent barriers to timely and universal civil registration are weak institutions and low administrative capacity. Traditionally, the role of the civil registrar has not been prestigious within the public sector. As often happens, the weakest institutions are frequently led by the weakest leaders, who often lack the necessary resources to upgrade and modernize registration systems. Laws and regulations are often outdated and take a long time to change, even under the best of circumstances. In many countries, the civil registration system has been riddled with corruption, with officials demanding bribes from people wishing to register a vital event. For the poorest, such practices are a clear deterrent to timely registration.

Another flaw in public sector institutions in many developing countries is the lack of public service career paths and meritocratic systems. For this reason, the best-qualified professionals tend not to choose government service. More often than not, the head or chief executive officer of the civil register is a political appointee rather than a career professional. As a political appointee, making institutional changes to improve an agency that is performing poorly can be nearly impossible without political support and access to financial resources in the span of a government cycle. Also, there may be both formal and informal administrative layers of bureaucracy to contend with.

Importance of politics and policies

Incentives to reform outdated registration practices and systems vary from country to country. They depend in part on the perceived cost of introducing changes when there are many public sector priorities competing for limited resources. However, often the benefits that would accrue from implementing the reforms are not considered.

Countries that have modernized their civil registration systems and that manage to produce and use high-quality vital statistics to inform public policy can also show progress on poverty reduction and social development, as the country studies in this compendium reveal. The changes have not been easy to implement, and they have taken time. They have demanded strong political will, leadership at the highest levels of government, clear objectives, adequate financing, and the vision and capacity to conduct long-term planning.

Lessons from the country cases

Countries like Argentina, Chile, Namibia, South Korea, and Tunisia that have implemented policies, processes, and procedures to improve civil registration and combat poverty and exclusion can also point to improvement in development indicators and in gross domestic product and standards of living.[11] Since levels of registration are not considered, causality cannot be proven. Still, this gives rise to further questions and research to quantify links between registration practices and variations in GDP or standards of living.

For each of the countries, the result of the reforms they chose to undertake has been effective organizations able to provide efficient registration services and the identity credentials that are accepted by citizens, residents, and across the public sector. Key components of these changes have been strengthening the administrative structure of the civil register and addressing the organizational culture of the civil service by offering stable employment.

The five countries — Argentina, Chile, Namibia, South Korea, and Tunisia — have undergone very different processes for civil registration and social protection. They differ in the time this has taken, the scale of the reforms, how they arrived at their present arrangement, and the maturity of their linked civil registration and social protection systems. Each country case provides lessons and alternatives that can inform practitioners, researchers, and politicians who are planning reforms to their own CRVS systems.

Although these countries are culturally and politically different and geographically far apart (except in the case of Argentina and Chile), five common strategic elements stand out that contributed to linking civil registration and social protection. The result is the betterment of both institutions in all five countries:

Political will

In all five cases, there was measurable political will to undertake social reform to reduce poverty and improve human development. There was also recognition of the importance of ensuring legal identity for all as a way to increase access and inclusion.

National development goals

The political will was supported by the capacity to introduce coherent national development goals, the availability of resources, and the willingness to revise legal frameworks and adapt long-term strategies.

Coordination among key stakeholders and agencies

The existence of national development goals required key stakeholders and agencies to coordinate their efforts. The acceptance of one identity credential in all public sector offices and agencies was a huge step forward.

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11   The World Bank. GDP Growth (Annual %). data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG

Quality and accessibility of registration services

Strengthening institutional capacity, increasing access to efficient registration services, and linking registration with enrollment in social protection programs increased registration rates.

Stability

Over time, linking civil registration, vital statistics, and social protection programs has contributed to institutional stability and increased capacity, particularly in the most mature cases.

The country cases provide invaluable insight into the preconditions and conditions for reform and change management. Recognizing that this compendium is a first attempt to document and substantiate the beneficial relationship between civil registration, vital statistics, and social development, it is evident that these topics warrant further exploration and empirical research.

For the development community and governments alike, it would be interesting to explore how experiences like the ones in this compendium can contribute to improving project design to become more human-centred and efficient through a focus on needs and requirements of the undocumented and non-registered.

How the compendium is organized

Each of the five chapters presents a unique country experience that has strengthened the capacity of the civil registry to issue trustworthy identity credentials so that the document holder can access social protection programs and other social services. While each country case represents a different administrative approach to registration and service delivery, there are some common elements.

Argentina is one of the largest economies in Latin America. It has vast natural resources, especially in energy and agriculture. It also has a history of volatile economic growth and continues to struggle with high poverty rates. According to the World Bank, 35.4 percent of the urban population lives in poverty. Argentina has focused on social protection and poverty reduction through conditional cash transfer programs and child grants. It was an early adopter of incorporating identity documentation as a program target rather than merely a prerequisite for access. Making identity documentation part of the conditions contributed to recognizing the value of identity credentials and led to an increase in birth registrations. Argentina is a federal republic: the states have responsibility for civil registration, and the civil identification agency (RENAPER) is centrally located in the Ministry of the Interior. Over time, the two systems — civil registration and civil identification — have been integrated.

Chile is a pioneer in the introduction of policies to foster social inclusion. One focus is on strengthening the technical capacity of public institutions, and as such, maintaining a high degree of institutional stability. When a democratic administration succeeded the military dictatorship in 1990, reconstruction was based on the Social Pact, a national policy that fostered a new relationship between the state, the private sector, and civil society. Social development and inclusion policies were based on evolving processes rather than specific (disruptive) modernization programs. One institution that sets Chile apart from most other countries is the Civil Registry and Identification Service (*Servicio de Registro Civil e Identificación*, or SRCeI). This public agency under the Ministry of Justice encompasses 32 registries, all of which have a unique identity number as their main attribute for identity verification. SRCeI's mission is to ensure an identity management system that is comprehensive, integrated, secure, and efficient.

Namibia considered the Convention on the Rights of the Child when the country's Constitution was adopted in 1990. Before independence, registration of vital events was voluntary for Black people and was largely inaccessible in rural areas. This has had far-reaching consequences, as the Namibian Constitution obliges persons to prove that they have the right to Namibian citizenship. This has been difficult, if not impossible, for many. Ensuring non-discriminatory inclusion has required extraordinary efforts by the National Population Registration System to set up user-friendly systems for registering vital events and for processes and procedures to verify and validate identities of people who have difficulties providing supporting documents. Namibia is on track to achieve universal registration of vital events due to one of the most well-functioning and advanced registration systems in sub-Saharan Africa. This has ensured that the identity credential is trusted and trustworthy, and has served as the foundation for distributing social protection programs. This, in turn, has been a key factor in reducing the poverty rate from 60 percent to 20 percent since independence.

South Korea undertook the most comprehensive set of changes in the shortest amount of time as a result of a political decision in 1960 to introduce a Resident Registration System (RRS). After the Korean War (1950–1953) displaced millions and left the country's infrastructure in shambles, South Korea faced massive reconstruction challenges. As part of the reconstruction effort, the government created the RRS as a national security measure and to monitor the migration of the labour force. The RRS was also linked to access to social services and benefits. Over time, the Korean government moved increasingly toward integrated electronic governance. South Korea was among the first countries in the world to introduce a unique identity number as part of its civil registration procedures. The policy decision paid off both for the society and for citizens and residents. Per capita income for Koreans grew from less than US$100 in 1961 (the lowest of the five countries) to over US$31,300 in 2018 (the highest of the five countries).

Tunisia has deep-rooted civil registration and legal identity systems. While the links with and impact on social protection programs are not explicit, there are signs that public policy recognizes the importance of verifiable identities for accessing services and social protection programs. Months after gaining independence from France in March 1956, the *Code du Statut Personnel* (Personal Status Code) was enacted as the first step of a radical reform of the Tunisian civil status system. Among other reforms, it prohibited polygamy and it regulated marriage and divorce procedures. In 2011, Tunisia began to consider creating a Citizen's Unique National Identifier Number (Citizen's UNIN). The roadmap resulting from various diagnostic and benchmark studies recommended setting up a universal identification system built on previous experiences. Since 2016, the civil registration system has been under the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment, which is responsible for issuing the Citizen's UNIN and integrating civil registration and civil identification.

This compendium is meant to give concrete examples of how beneficiaries of social protection programs and the programs themselves have benefited from having identity credentials issued by the civil registry, and how the civil registry in turn has been strengthened by increased recording of vital events, and vice versa.

The United Nations calls for "more efficient and transparent regulations" and sees "implementation of worldwide birth registration" as one of the first steps in achieving protection of individual rights. We hope that governments, politicians, policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and students of development issues will find this compendium's five country cases of interest in their endeavours.

Case Study 1

Legal Identity and Social Protection: A Look at the Last Few Decades in Argentina

María del Carmen Tamargo

Contents

1.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the links between administrative policies on legal identity[1] and public policies on social protection in the Argentine Republic over the past two decades. The focus is on the synergies between the two types of policies that have helped to improve universal access to legal identity and created better conditions for the social inclusion of people.

The analytical work relied on documents, studies, and published research that concern both identity management policies and social protection policies. However, in themselves these works do not offer a comprehensive analysis that provides irrefutable relationships or synergies between the two areas. The task at hand is exploratory: it allows some hypotheses for relevant programs and policies to be developed and addressed in future research or evaluations.

Before we begin analyzing information, it is important to clarify some basic concepts related to legal identity as a right. Both under-registration of births and lack of documentation are structural problems that are generally associated with a set of social determinants — such as poverty, rurality, geographical isolation, ethnic belonging, and gender. These issues violate people's access to rights and benefits; for instance access to full citizenship.

Therefore, birth registration and documentation mark the starting point for the social inclusion of individuals, insofar as they guarantee the recognition of individuals as citizens. They also enable access to rights, including identity, education, health, housing, work, political participation, etc. Birth registration and documentation are a fundamental starting point for the construction of an inclusive society that guarantees equal access to the opportunities and benefits of social, economic, and cultural development of the population.

Over the last two decades in Latin America and the Caribbean, most governments moved to resolve inequalities that keep people from accessing birth registration and documentation. They have done this by

- revising legal frameworks;
- modernizing administrative models of civil registration and identification;
- using technological innovations; and
- taking specific actions to make it easier to access the birth register and documentation.

In many countries, legal identity management policies became a way to change sectoral social policies (education, health, housing, work, credit, political participation, etc.) to help people access rights and benefits.

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1   In this text, management policies on legal identity are all state actions that aim to facilitate access to birth registration and documentation, improve the provision of civil records, and assist agencies that issue identity documents.

Argentina was part of this process of designing and implementing specific actions to promote inclusion. We will discuss these policies,[2] as well as those aimed at social protection, to assess

◉ the extent to which a positive relationship between administrative policies on legal identity and policies on social protection occurred; and

◉ whether their interactions generated positive effects on improving people's access to birth registration and documentation.

1.2 The status of birth registration and documentation in Argentina

To set in context the data describing the under-registration of births and the issuing of identity documents in Argentina, we need to outline the country's political and legal-administrative structure.

Below we describe the bodies responsible for registering births and granting identification. Then we present the data collected on under-registration and lack of documentation. We also give the socio-economic context of the country and each province.

1.2.1 The legal-administrative structure

The Argentine Republic is a state whose form of government is representative, republican, and federal.[3] It consists of a central (federal) government and 24 subnational jurisdictions (23 provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires[4]). The provincial governments, meeting under a common federal government, retain their autonomy, dictate their own constitution, and exercise all non-delegated powers in the federal government. Each has jurisdiction over its own territory. The federal government has jurisdiction over the entire national territory. This coexistence is based on control and mutual cooperation between the provinces and the federal government.

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2   In preparing this chapter, we interviewed institutional actors linked to the topics. We also consulted secondary data sources (documents and statistics).

3   The concept of representativeness is laid out in the national constitution. It means that the people exercise government through their elected representatives. The republican character refers to the division, control, and balance of powers that aim to guarantee individual freedoms: executive power, legislative power, and the judiciary. The federal character is based on the existence of a central government ("federal scope") and of member governments, whose existence is guaranteed in the Constitution. It underpins the form of government, where tasks are divided between the central government and the member governments. Each level of government can make decisions on its own and take on certain responsibilities. It also implies a constitutional and legal aspect. This emphasizes the existence of the three powers of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. archivos.juridicas.unam.mx/www/bjv/libros/7/3045/7.pdf

4   Each provincial government is divided into departments or parties and municipalities (these may or may not coincide with the party/department, depending on the province). Buenos Aires, which has special autonomy, is divided into municipalities.

Law 1565 (1885) makes the federal government responsible for

◉ recording vital population data;

◉ setting uniform criteria and procedures for registration; and

◉ laying the groundwork for creating provincial civil registries as well as the civil registry of the City of Buenos Aires.

In 1948, the National Register of Persons (RENAPER) was created. Its mission is to register and certify the identity of all persons of Argentine nationality who are domiciled in Argentina.[5] It is an autonomous and decentralized body under the Ministry of the Interior of the Nation.

Each provincial government and the City of Buenos Aires organizes its own local civil registries. These must record all vital events or acts that give rise to, alter, or modify the civil status and capacity of the people in their jurisdiction. In this way, the registration of births and the granting of the *Documento Nacional de Identificación* (DNI), or national identity document, are the responsibility of different institutions, but both procedures are carried out in the offices of the civil registries.[6]

A third institution, the Federal Council of Directors of Civil Registries,[7] is made up of the directors of each provincial civil registry, the civil registry of the City of Buenos Aires, plus a representative of RENAPER. The Federal Council aims to

◉ link the tasks of the civil registries across the country in a space of joint exchange and learning;

◉ create and unify criteria on interpreting registration legislation; and

◉ connect national and international bodies with links in this area.

1.2.2   Data on birth under-registration and lack of documentation

The under-registration rate of births in Argentina is seen as low in the Latin American context. Several recent studies[8] describe a stable trend showing a birth under-registration rate of around 2 percent.

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5   Except for foreign diplomatic personnel, in keeping with international rules and reciprocity agreements.

6   The issuing of birth certificates, which are needed to get ID, is done by the provincial civil registries. So is the start of ID processing, as the federal government delegates this power to the provinces.

7   The Council's last meeting took place on 24–26 October 2018, in the city of El Calafate, in Santa Cruz province.

8   Data from a study conducted for the IDB in 2010 showed that Argentina was in the group of countries with under-registration rates below 5 percent (similar to Chile, Colombia, Panama, and Uruguay). Two other groups of countries have rates between 5 and 10 percent (Brazil, Mexico, Ecuador, and Paraguay) and over 10 percent (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru). See María del Carmen Tamargo (2014), "Systematization on the Experiences of Reform and Modernization of Civil Registries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Status of Birth Registration and Documentation. 2005–2012." Source: Good Civil Registries Practices. ATN/FT 13346-RG; RG-T2020-IDBDOCS 37684159.

This number reflects the fact that some parents or legal guardians face obstacles in accessing government services and cannot fully exercise their rights. Indicators of poverty and destitution are generally seen as social determinants that restrict access to birth registration and documentation. Also, Argentina's federal character affects how registration and identification are organized and coordinated. It also restricts — based on the institutional capacities of each province — the exercising of the right to a legal identity.

In 2007, a study by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) showed that under-registration of births in Argentina was 2 percent, based on those enrolled within the statutory period.[9] In 2011, the Social Debt Observatory of the Universidad Católica Argentina revealed that:

> "1.6% of children, aged between 0 and 17, born in the country had no ID (equivalent to approximately 168,000 children); the most critical situation was among Argentine children between 0 and 4 years old, among whom 2.3% had no documents; the same situation affected the average 1% of children between the ages of 5 and 17."[10]

Also, a survey on living conditions for children and adolescents that the National Secretariat for Children, Adolescents and Family (SENNAF) and UNICEF completed between 2011 and 2012[11] showed that 98 percent of the population under the age of 18 had at some time processed a birth certificate or ID. These studies confirm the stable range or trend of the birth under-registration rate mentioned above.

On the other hand, in 2017, a study by the Ministry of Health and the UNICEF Argentina office (based on 2015 data) showed that "approximately 91 percent of the children registered were registered in the year of their birth;[12] 5 percent were born in the year prior to their registration and the rest were born in previous years."[13]

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9   Dwight Ordóñez Bustamante. 2007. "The Birth Sub-Registration in Argentina: The Consequences," Inter-American Development Bank, 4. idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument. aspx?docnum=1959580

10 Observatory, UCA. 2012, p. 7.

11 Survey conducted on a national probabilistic sample of 23,000 households that included some indicators on the registration and identification of children.

12 The regulations set a legal period of timely registration of 40 days from birth. Over the last 15 years, this was modified through different decrees. The period was extended to up to 12 years of age and, more recently, up to the age of 17. This simplified the process and provided a non-judicial administrative procedure.

13 In interpreting this data, note that in Argentina there are three instances for accrediting identity and identifying persons: the Medical Certificate of Birth and the Statistical Report of Live Birth (IENV), prepared by the professional who attended the birth at the public or private health facility; the birth certificate or record (registration or inscription) issued by the civil registry that is proof of identity; and the national identity document (DNI), the identification document for all persons (including newborns) issued by RENAPER (unique number assignment or ID number). To get ID, people need to have a birth certificate or record.

According to this study, almost all jurisdictions found that more than 95 percent of births were registered within three months of when a child was born. For registrations made after three months, there is an increased likelihood of births in public health facilities by socially vulnerable populations, such as

◉ adolescent mothers (25.3 percent of registrations after three months or more);

◉ lower levels of education; and

◉ mothers who are not living with their partner at the time of the birth.

This shows that children who are not registered in a timely manner face unfavourable conditions compared to the rest, based on their socio-economic situation.

Even though the under-registration rate of births is low in Argentina, inequalities exist in the provinces. These conditions are found throughout the Argentine territory; this leads to inequalities between the provinces for registrations done more than three months after birth:

> "… provinces with more unfavourable living conditions (e.g. those with the highest percentage of households with unmet basic needs) show a concentration of more late registrations than expected if the percentage distribution of total live births is calculated."[14]

In the past, the northwest and northeast regions have had the most unfavourable social indicators. Poverty data show levels higher than other regions. In 2018, poverty based on income was 30.2 percent for the entire country; it was 34.5 percent in the northwest and 40.4 percent in the northeast.[15] For Poverty based on Unmet Basic Needs (NBI), the last National Population Census (2010) recorded 12 percent for the whole country. The northeast provinces had values of 19 to 25 percent, and those in the northwest had values of 14 to 23 percent, well above the national average.[16]

A study by the Social Debt Observatory, through the Argentina Social Debt Survey (EDSA), shows a correlation between the characteristics of a person's living space and their lack of documentation, since "the children in shanty towns or squatter settlements have a higher likelihood of having no ID than their peers in formal urbanized areas (2.2 percent and 1 percent, respectively)." In other words, "as the conditions of the socio-residential space worsen, the propensity of the violation of the right to identity increases."[17]

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14   Ministry of Health and UNICEF Argentina. 2017, p. 10.

15   INDEC. 2018. "Incidence of Poverty and Homelessness in 31 Urban Agglomerates." *Technical Reports – Living Conditions*, Vol. 3, No. 4. Buenos Aires, Argentina.

16   National Directorate of Economic Relations with the Provinces, DINREP. 2014. NBI: 2010 Census Report, January 2014, Ministry of Economy and Finance. Buenos Aires, Argentina.

17   Observatorio, UCA. 2012, p. 6.

Around 98 percent of children born in 2014 (766,096) were registered and obtained their Year 0 ID,[18] meaning that the national proportion of registered children who did not yet have their ID would reach 2.4 percent for those born in 2014. This is important, as most social protection programs that provide social and health benefits require ID.

The same study also indicates that the socio-economic situation of households has a strong effect on the possibility of access to birth registration and documentation. In 2012, it was found that a very low-income child was 2.5 times more likely to not have an ID than a child who belongs to the upper-middle income stratum. The likelihood of children not having a document is slightly higher in single-parent households than in those with two parents (1.6 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively). Also, the likelihood of not having an ID increases in large households (2 percent) and decreases to 1.1 percent for children in smaller households.

According to the above study, children who cannot exercise the right to health care are less likely to have ID. These children are also much less likely to attend school, especially at the secondary level, as no ID is needed to enter primary school.[19]

These situations are aggravated in poverty settings, so it is assumed that children living in the northeast and northwest are more likely not to access all their rights. This includes the registration of births and identity documents.

One noteworthy point is that similar levels of timely registration of births in public, private, or social welfare establishments are observed.[20] This highlights the fact that progress is being made in ensuring equal access to the registration of children. This could be seen as a result of a set of active public social protection policies with multisectoral impact, which will be described below, as well as improvements in providing the registration service (such as having civil registry offices in public hospitals and other public institutions).

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18 The Year 0 ID is free for all newborns (Law No. 26 614, Art. 12), as is the first ID card of the identified person up to the age of 18. The ID requires two updates: at 5 to 8 years of age and at 16 years of age.

19 Argentine Social Debt Survey (EDSA), UCA. 2012, p. 6.

20 In Argentina, 99.5 percent of births occur in health facilities; 54 percent take place in public hospitals.

1.3 Identity management policies: Legal frameworks for birth registration and documentation and actions to improve access to legal identity

Analyzing the policies of legal identity management in Argentina helps to differentiate between two things:

◉ Legal frameworks that regulate the identity and identification system; and

◉ Direct actions aimed at helping people access the registration of births and identity documents.

1.3.1 Legal frameworks

Legal frameworks for registering and documenting people in Argentina describe a transition in approaches: from one based on the government's need to register and identify people, to one based on people's rights and the exercising of full citizenship. An example of this transition is the 1994 Constitutional Reform. It incorporates international conventions and recognizes identity as a human right inherent to the person that must be guaranteed by the state.

Law No. 17671[21] *(1968) on the Identification, Registration, and Classification of National Human Potential* and *Law No. 26413 (2008) on the Registration of Civil Status and the Capacity of Persons* regulate documentary activity in Argentina. Over time, changes, new decrees, and regulations have emerged. The purpose of these was to facilitate easier access to birth registration and documentation under the law in keeping with global trends outlined in international conventions and treaties. in many cases, these were a result of demands and needs expressed by different social groups.

An example is the sanctioning of *Law No. 26061 (2005) on the Comprehensive Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents*. It safeguards the right to documentation and provides:

> "... the right to identity as a broad concept, composed of the right to a name, a nationality, its language of origin, the knowledge of who their parents are, the preservation of their family relationships in accordance with the law, the culture of their place of origin and to preserve their identity and idiosyncrasy." (Art. 11)

> "... that Government Agencies should ensure simple and prompt procedures for newborns to be identified free of charge, mandatory, timely and immediately after birth, establishing a filial link with the mother." (Art. 12)

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21 Law No. 17671 established a legal period of 40 days for the timely registration of individuals; late birth registration is from the 41st day to the age of 6. This procedure was similar to that of timely registration: the difference was that the Attorney General's Office authorized the registration, recorded it, and issued the birth certificate. Beyond the age of 6, the registration of births had to be done by judicial means.

This means the government must provide, by any means necessary, the free registration of all adolescents and mothers who have not been enrolled in the civil register in a timely manner. The aim is to ensure their right to a legal identity and the commitment of government bodies to facilitate, collaborate, and guarantee respect for and the preserving of this right.

In 2003 and 2006,[22] two decrees established that there would be no cost for the first identity card (Documento Nacional de Identificación, or DNI) for children and adolescents. The Year 0 DNI[23] (for children up to 6 months) was created. Two amnesty laws were proclaimed, allowing late registrations of the births of children up to age 10 without a judicial process. To help implement these laws and meet the demand, RENAPER expanded the Year 0 ID to all provinces.[24] One study stated that "the fact that there was no charge for the document had a favourable impact, not only on the lower income strata, producing a decrease in registration times, which was impacted by the installation of civil registry departments in maternity hospitals."[25]

In 2008, the system was made more flexible: it authorized late registration in fact or *ex officio* of births that took place in health establishments within a maximum of 20 calendar days (Law No. 26413).[26] While this step was designed to make it easier for people to access registration and documentation, in Argentina, the provincial civil registries are the ones that create the birth record and issue the birth certificates. Some provinces require people to pay a fee or tariff.[27] This in some ways restricts access to the free ID.

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22 Decree 262/2003 and Decree 415/2006.

23 Ministry of Justice and UNICEF. 2009. "Right to Identity: Dimensions, Experiences and Public Policies," Argentina (p. 36), states that identification must begin in the delivery room. Two identical bands are placed on the newborn's wrist and ankle; another is placed on the mother and on the tamper-proof and coded umbilical clamp. Information on the bands should identify the relationship between the mother and her child, such as the mother's name, the sex of the child, the mother's hospital code number, and the date and time of birth. This system provides much greater protection. This number must be recorded in the medical records of the child and the mother. At the time of discharge, it must be confirmed that the bands of the mother and the child have the same number. Only one of the two bracelets is taken off the child: it is attached to the child's clinical records. This certifies that the identity was confirmed. This procedure must be monitored by the mother. The mother and child must leave the hospital wearing their bracelets. The "Right to Identity" document noted that the use of these devices differs between provinces, although most use fingerprints and bracelets. The Autonomous City of Buenos Aires enacted a specific law in 2003; in recent years, some provinces (Tucumán, San Juan) have created the concept of "identifiers" with the specific role of ensuring this identification of the mother-child pair.

24 RENAPER makes the ID cards.

25 Citizen Power. 2010, p. 15: "Among the births that occurred in the first half of 2003, 2.9% of newborns (4,184 out of 143,306 cases) were registered after the year of birth. In the second semester the late registration was 1.4% (1,846 cases out of 134,426). For the total of the year, 6,030 children out of a total of 277,732 were registered a year after their birth, representing 2.2%."

26 In the case of births occurring outside medical institutions without the intervention of a medical professional, the general management may, by reasoned disposition or resolution, allow registration where there are justifiable causes up to the maximum period of one year, after the intervention of the Attorney General's Office. See Citizen Power (2010), which describes the situation in detail (p. 31).

27 Citizen Power. 2010.

In 2009, the federal government issued Decree PEN No. 90/2009. It set up an administrative regime, on an exceptional basis and for one year (which could be extended for a second year), for registering the births of children aged 1 to 12. Under this decree, all birth registrations that take place during the term of the decree are exempt from fines to guarantee free access to the ID. In 2015, it was estimated that this decree had made it possible for more than 500,000 children to have access to the right to their identity.[28]

In 2019, a new decree[29] extended the possibility of creating a birth registration record and issuing a birth certificate as well as an ID card for individuals up to 18 years of age whose births had never been registered through administrative proceedings. These processes are exempt from any fines.[30]

These administrative measures avoid judicial proceedings, which are costly and time consuming for individuals, their families, and the public sector. The measures include advice to persons who are going through a legal process to register their births in any registry office in the country. This means any Argentine child or adolescent is included in the registration system. That approach allows progress towards the goal of guaranteeing universal access to a DNI and a way for people to exercise their rights fully.

1.3.2 Specific actions to ensure access to birth registration and ID

One of the most important transformations in the period analyzed is the development of a new identity card, the DNI. In turn, adding the use of technology, as well as the standardizing and streamlining of procedures to get the DNI, ensures better levels of document security. A public policy of identity and identification management is beginning to take shape. It addresses the administrative aspects of registration and is based on the guarantee of rights. This approach shaped the actions that were developed, regardless of how successful they have been in ensuring universal access.

A process to upgrade the DNI and the processing system for it had an impact on RENAPER and the provincial civil registries in 2008 and 2009. Until then, the enrollment process was done manually. This caused a major bottleneck in issuing (the old) DNIs: in some cases, the wait time was 6 months to 2 years. By Decree No. 1501/2009, RENAPER was authorized to use digital technologies in the identification of national and foreign citizens and in the issuing of the national identity document. The New DNI (Resolution 1800/2009) was created, in principle, in a notebook format (along with a credential). As of 2012, the ID was issued in credential/card format.[31]

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28 Ministry of the Interior and Transport, Institute of Political Training. Undated. A New State, a New ID.

29 Decree 185/2019.

30 Requirements: the negative birth registration report, where it is recorded that the person has not been registered in any civil registry; the medical certificate with the date and place of birth; the presence of a father or mother with ID or, if absent, the presence of two witnesses with ID. RENAPER will guarantee the first ID for free.

31 It includes computer technologies in the production process: biographical data and footprints in digitized databases and fingerprint verification processes using computer tools. This reduces the possibility that data in the document can be modified. The new ID is valid for 15 years.

To implement the upgrade, RENAPER employees were retrained, a new credential (DNI) manufacturing plant was set up, and free software[32] with national state resources was developed. Digital capture of biographic and biometric data meant the data created at each enrollment position could be sent automatically to the RENAPER central database and card production facility to validate the information and signature and to print the DNI. This speeds up the printing of the new DNI, which the applicant receives by mail to their home within 10 to 15 days.

Another democratizing action was the creation of new ID processing facilities. These included placing RENAPER satellite offices in large shopping centres[33] and Rapid Documentation Centres[34] — also called Digital Offices — for digital processing of DNIs and passports. According to public documents, the increase in demand for IDs by the public was around "5,000 to 25,000 IDs per day, with a growth projection of up to 40,000."[35] Mobile document units with digital communication and processing systems were also put in place.

At present, in the documentation operations that RENAPER is responsible for, the DNI is managed and delivered free of charge. When these operations are the responsibility of the provincial civil registry, the ID is not always free, since the provinces claim they do not have the financial capacity to do this. In some cases, they set a fee, although the amounts are affordable. This shows the disparities in the country's federal structure that affect universal access to legal identity.

Another significant policy is the *Gender Identity Act*[36] (Law No. 26743/2012), which enables intersex (transvestites and transsexuals) and transgender people to register with the name and gender of their choice in their personal documents. It also allows the non-inclusion of sex on the birth record or birth certificate and ID. The current legal framework provides that the words "female/male" or "male-male/female" do not appear in these documents, but this has not yet been fully implemented. The sex continues to be recorded on both the birth certificate and DNI.[37]

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32 The government emphasized at the time that the Argentine state owned the software. No usage licences were paid to private companies.

33 The formalities could be done during extended hours, from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., every day of the year.

34 The number of these centres varies by province. For example, Santa Fe has around 300 and Santa Cruz has 19. The centres were jointly organized between RENAPER and the provincial civil registries: RENAPER provided the equipment and the registries operated the centres. These computerized positions also include a computer, a digital camera, a pad to digitize the signature, and a fingerprint scanner.

35 Data recorded in a document prepared by the Ministry of the Interior and Transport, Institute of Political Training: A New State, a New ID (undated).

36 It allows you to modify personal data in the civil registry and change the name, photograph, and registered gender. The procedure is free. No agent or lawyer is needed. A letter must be filed to request changes to the birth certificate and the new ID card, and to indicate the name chosen to be registered (the ID number is not changed).

37 www.pagina12.com.ar/153664-me-sacan-de-las-casillas

This law is specific about the self-perception of gender identity, but ideological and institutional resistance and traditional practices are hindering its application. In many cases, official documentation requires the sex to be recorded as a statistic, giving rise to different interpretations of what criterion should prevail.

Specific considerations for Indigenous peoples were also generated under the rights guarantee approach. Mobile documentation operations were set up to address documentation and under-registration issues for these populations. In 2015, RENAPER and the Secretariat of Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism signed an agreement to ensure that all citizens of the country's Indigenous communities[38] access their ID. The National Institute of Indigenous Affairs (INAI), under the Secretariat, is the link between Indigenous communities and RENAPER for implementing these operations. INAI also works with the National Social Security Administration[39] to ensure access to social security for members of Indigenous communities.

Another initiative to improve access to birth registration and documentation is the "State in Your Neighborhood" program. The program, which launched in 2015, brings services to neighbourhoods using mobile operations. The procedures and services that are provided include:

- Processing the ID;

- Advice on family allowances;

- Advice on the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection (AUH); and

- Processing of the transport card and the social tariff.

In line with this initiative, the province of Buenos Aires implemented the Guarantee Your Identity program. Since it began in May 2017, the program found that approximately 50,000 children attending school had no ID. The RENAPER and the Provincial Register of Persons program, which runs in neighbourhoods and schools, is delivered in about 800 locations. It opened offices in national hospitals and provincial and municipal clinics, where officials completed around 10,000 registration procedures during out-reach campaigns, and 4,000 registrations in the offices.

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38   There are around 1,600 Indigenous communities across the country. Based on the most recent census (2010), the Indigenous population is around 955,032.

39   ANSES, the National Social Security Administration, is a decentralized body that was created in 1991. It is responsible for administering national social security services in the Argentine Republic. Its tasks include granting and paying for retirement and pensions; paying family allowances to active workers, the unemployed, retirees, and pensioners; managing and liquidating unemployment benefits; and managing and settling the Universal Child and Pregnancy Allowances for Social Protection, among others.

1.4 Synergies between social protection policies and access to legal identity

The last 15 years show steady progress toward a rights-based approach in Argentina in the design of legal identity management policies and social protection policies. This convergence is explicit in that most of the social policies base their design on the surveying and mapping of households and people in poverty or destitution; build patterns of potential beneficiaries of social programs; and set objective criteria for selecting recipients of social benefits based on needing identity or identification documents to receive social benefits.

People who are not registered and do not have identity documents cannot access social benefits provided by the state, since beneficiaries of social programs must provide some kind of documentation. This gap aggravates their exclusion and social vulnerability. "The absence of an identity document implies being invisible for state records, a situation that results in exclusion, deepening and perpetuating the conditions of poverty and vulnerability."[40]

There is a contradiction here: social policies require identity accreditation to access benefits, but this requirement — which is a basic right — cannot be fully met. We could then say that sectoral policies require greater communication efforts and synergies to ensure access to rights. These include, as the first essential step, the right to a legal identity.

A review of guidelines for social protection policies in the period under review — and their effects or bridges with legal identity policies — is helpful.

In the last two decades, the Conditional Income Transfer Programs[41] emerged as a dominant set of policies and projects aimed at reducing or overcoming poverty throughout Latin America. This was also the case in Argentina. These programs aim to "provide a minimum income to poor and destitute families with the aim of ensuring basic levels of consumption, human capital development and the asset development of the most vulnerable families."[42]

In Argentina, the first such program was the Families for Social Inclusion Program. It was created in 2002 as a result of the economic and political crisis of 2001, which caused poverty levels to include almost 50 percent of the population.[43] It was meant for families living in poverty and destitution with dependent children under the age of 18 and pregnant adolescents who did not receive other allowances. The program provided an economic subsidy for each child — up to five children per household — and pregnant women. Mothers

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40 UCA Observatory. 2012, p. 3.

41 "These are actions financed by the general budget, under the principle of solidarity, with resources from direct or indirect taxes, public enterprises or international cooperation (in the case of the poorest countries)." ECLAC. 2019, p. 15.

42 Fabian Repetto. 2010, p. 53.

43 This was first called Income for Human Development. It emerged as a reformulation of the Vulnerable Group Care Program, created in 1996, with Inter-American Development Bank funding. It is co-responsible for revenue transfer and health and education.

were the holders of the benefit. It set out counter-conditions or co-responsibility on the part of the holders: children and pregnant women had to have health checks, and children had to stay in the education system.

One of the requirements to receive the benefits of the program was that the holder and the child or adolescent had to have their birth certificate or ID card. The identity of the children and that of the parent or guardian by blood relation or affinity, by means of ID or birth certificate, was also required. In the preparation phase for possible beneficiaries of the program, there were documentation problems:

◉ Children did not have their birth certificates (this did not necessarily imply that they had not been registered); or

◉ In some cases, mothers who were potential beneficiaries did not have their ID (due to lack of documentation or loss), and therefore could not become beneficiaries despite their poverty or destitution status.

Program data showed that about 15.5 percent of persons who were potential beneficiaries had difficulty proving their identity. In some cases, this was due to a complete lack of documentation. The difficulties were linked to the processing of the ID, such as doing a registration of birth by judicial proceeding, or getting a copy of a birth certificate or ID. These procedures required paying fees and tariffs that vulnerable families could not afford. They also took a long time: in some provinces, getting a copy of a document could take two to three years.

This problem revealed a rigid institutional-organizational structure and a poor physical and technological infrastructure. The result was that potential beneficiaries of the program, because of their poverty indicators, could not access the benefit. They lacked the documents proving their identity and the mother-child relationship, and were left on waiting lists for the social benefits they were eligible for.

Between 2005 and 2009, the program underwent several changes in its design. This led to the creation of the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection, under the National Social Security Administration, or ANSES (Decree PEN No. 1602/09). Its aims were to provide a minimum income to families living in poverty and destitution with underage children who were not receiving any formal income.

At that time, two strategies were put in place. First, in 2007, RENAPER was modernized. The ID card and the physical and technological infrastructure for identity management were transformed. Also, changes were made to the legal and technical-administrative frameworks to facilitate late registrations and regularize the various documentation problems to include families that could benefit from the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection. An example of this is Decree No. 90/2009, which increased the age for late birth registrations to 12 years and so expanded the number of regularizations of identity documents.[44]

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44 UCA Observatory. 2012, p. 6.

Over the years, this program has undergone changes based on the population's socio-economic needs. It was a form of family wage for the informal workers sector and the main program of income transfers to vulnerable families with children and adolescents.

Argentina's social income protection system includes contributory and non-contributory transfers. Formal workers receive family allowances;[45] informal workers, the unemployed, private home employees, and so on with children up to 18 years of age, receive non-contributory transfers, such as the Universal Child Allowance.[46] In other words, over time, new types of beneficiaries were added, but they were always required to have proof of their identity. This forced many families to get ID documents for their children to access the benefit.

This policy has a broad scope. The initial coverage of the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection was 3.5 million children[47] (2010). As of 2019, it is 3,924,734 children, with 2,207,723 holders (mothers/parents), 96.6 percent of whom are women.[48] As the data show, this is one policy that was kept with the change in government in 2015, which in this case expanded its coverage.

Second, RENAPER, through the provincial civil registers, continued to do specific actions to improve the coverage of identity and identification services. Because of difficulties in the Argentine economy in recent years,[49] resources have decreased. This has made it harder to replace equipment in documentation centres, among others.

By doing an integrated analysis of the policies mentioned, the changes in RENAPER, and the regulatory frameworks of access to the birth registry and the national identity document (DNI), we can observe a number of objectives aimed at social inclusion. The social policies described have promoted and focused on the need to ensure access to identity and identification as a requirement and as a primary right, and to produce a positive synergy between social policies and legal identity management policies.

At the same time as the Families Program emerged in 2002 and was later transformed into the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection, other public sector instruments helped to place access to legal identity on the agenda as a requirement for getting social services. One of these was the Birth Plan,[50] which aimed to improve health coverage and the quality of care for pregnant and postpartum mothers and for children under the age of 6 who did not have

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45 The Family Allowance Scheme is under Law No. 24.714. It is for private sector workers and other private schemes for workers in the national, provincial, or municipal public sector.

46 And other provincial money transfers or the Universal Allowance for a Child with a Disability.

47 Girls made up 49 percent; boys made up the remaining 51 percent. Children under the age of 6 received 18.8 percent of benefits; those under 12 accounted for 37.7 percent of benefits. In 2019, gender-based distribution is being maintained, since 49 percent are girls and 51 percent are boys.

48 Social Security Observatory. AUH Monthly Universal Child Allowance Bulletin. Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection.

49 The Argentine economy is experiencing high inflation, fiscal deficits, devaluation, and recession with the resulting increase in poverty due to very low income.

50 It was created in 2004 and is under the Ministry of Health.

access to social welfare.[51] In 2012, it was expanded and reconfigured in the SUMAR Program. This program is for children and adolescents aged 6 to 19 years and for women up to the age of 64.

It was promoted with the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection, which as of 2011 included unemployed or informally employed pregnant women. It established the Pregnancy Allowance for Social Protection to provide "protection to women in circumstances of socio-economic vulnerability during pregnancy," and worked at "decreasing maternal, perinatal, neonatal and infant mortality rates associated with problems in access to health services."[52] With the help of SUMAR, the current government promotes Universal Health Coverage (CUS),[53] which is one of 100 flagship policies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The government intends to promote the allocation of populations to specific health facilities. These include the nominalization of people (from their ID), their georeferencing, and the formation of health teams tailored to the needs of the reference population.

Within the framework of these policies, an integrated approach was proposed by creating cross-incentives: the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection, the Birth Plan, and the SUMAR-CUS made showing ID a requirement for accessing benefits. In the case of newborn children, a child could be enrolled using the DNI of the parent or guardian until the child obtained their own ID. This example is central to our analysis, because it shows how a social inclusion approach to public policy design can make it easier to obtain identity and access social services provided by the state.

The SUMAR Program is still in place. New public policy actions also contribute to objectives for improving access to social services:

◉ National Early Childhood Plan under the Ministry of Social Development and Health; and

◉ National Early Childhood Strategy, which is an inter-ministerial strategy.

The National Early Childhood Strategy proposes to increase the number of early childhood spaces (there are around 1,860 daycare centres throughout the country) that provide comprehensive care, containment, and stimulation to children from 45 days to 4 years of age.[54] It defines a strategic objective relating to the identity of children in their first years of

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51 The program developed public health insurance for the maternal and child population without social welfare benefits. It used a results-based financing model that respects the country's federal organization. The program introduces a structure of monetary and non-monetary incentives aimed at provinces and health teams working in institutions.

52 Ministry of Health, Latin American Social Sciences Institute (FLACSO), IECS. 2013, p. 7: "Analysis of the Institutional Process of Generating a Social Policy of Multisectoral Impact: The Birth Plan and the Universal Allowance per Child and per Pregnancy. Study of the Sequential Approach of the Integration of Social Programs and their Results in the Population." Nacer-SUMAR Plan.

53 Universal Health Coverage aims to close gaps in access to health services between jurisdictions and between types of coverage (public, private, and social security), so that all people get the same level of quality care no matter where they live or what their socioeconomic status is.

54 This program is part of the Ministry of Social Development of the Nation, through the National Directorate of Maternity, Children and Adolescents and the National Secretariat for Children, Adolescents and Families.

life: the proposal is to ensure access to ID for all children at birth by providing them with a certificate of live birth, a birth certificate, and a national identity card.[55] The program plans to sign collaboration agreements with RENAPER and the National Social Security Administration (ANSES) to address the strategic objectives linked to legal identity.

Another relevant initiative is the Child and Youth Protection Project. It began in 2016[56] to improve the design and scope of social protection programs as a means to reduce inequities. The project collected and added missing information for 1.5 million children to see whether they were eligible for Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection benefits. This information is key because it makes it possible to link every child or adolescent to a family or home. At the same time, it was used to incorporate or assess the situation of 537,000 children who were not receiving benefits because of a lack of evidence that they were meeting the counter-conditions (going to school or getting health checks).

This process showed that the RENAPER database had some outdated information. This can be explained by old technology or lack of adequate equipment in some provinces, the lack of harmonization of procedures, or the political situation,[57] where differences between provincial governments and the federal government make it difficult to share information.

The results cannot be understated. Thanks to this project, 1 million children were registered and identified. Of this number, around 25 percent were from households that were eligible for benefits from the Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection because they were found to be socially vulnerable (through work done by RENAPER and the provincial civil registries).[58] Also, 370,000 children and adolescents were added as new family allowance beneficiaries. In 2018, extra support was approved to bring 250,000 more children into the eligibility process for social protection programs by 2020.

Finally, the Single Social Welfare Window (VUS), under Decree No. 339/2018, was created. Its aim is to improve the citizen's experience in managing procedures related to social security and social welfare[59] benefits throughout the lifecycle. This is done by centralizing interactions in a single public body. The National Social Security Administration,[60] which is responsible for administering national social security benefits and services, requires the constant updating

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55 In Argentina, most maternity wards in the public system have these offices in the provinces' capital cities. For the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, all hospitals in the public network have them.

56 Through a $600 million loan from the World Bank. bancomundial.org/es/news/press-release/2016/06/30/argentina-world-bank-child-allowance-additional-15-million-children-youth

57 Mid-term election campaigns, voting on labour reform laws, forecasts, or other key issues in the National Congress.

58 Their participation was key because they are the generators of identity data, in charge of birth registrations and processing of IDs.

59 Under the new system, people will be able to deal with the social welfare agency for programs run by government ministries, including Education, Employment, Energy and Mining, Health, Interior, Public Works and Housing, Social Development, Social Security, and Transportation.

60 This agency has a network of around 460 offices or delegations and around 2,000 mobile care points. It uses technology that prevents processing from being done in fragments and information requests from different public entities being duplicated.

of the beneficiary data that RENAPER administers. This initiative expands ID access points[61] and the regularizing of documentation issues, both of which are needed for people to access social benefits.

1.5 Some reflections by way of conclusion

Before detailing the conclusions of the analysis, it is important to restate that the objective of the study was not to establish evaluative assessments regarding the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of the policies described. The focus was on building some hypotheses, based on the information collected, about the aspects of social protection policies and legal identity which facilitate synergies around social inclusion objectives in situations of poverty and social vulnerability.

The analysis revealed signs that a positive convergence between social protection and legal identity policies does indeed exist in Argentina. This is evidenced by the fact that the social policies studied promoted access to legal identity, as long as proof of identity was a basic requirement to access benefits. In turn, the identity and identification of individuals became the organizing element for developing patterns of potential beneficiaries of social programs and allocating benefits.

At the same time, identity management policies improved legal and operational mechanisms to ensure access to identity and identification. The aim was to improve access to social benefits for people who are socially vulnerable and to make such access transparent.

There is no doubt that these policies exist: significant levels of poverty and social inequality demand direct action by states at various levels to provide social protection to disadvantaged groups. This has led to changes in the structure of policies, legal frameworks, and the requirements for granting benefits. Over the last 15 years, a model linking legal identity and social protection has been maintained, despite turbulence in the country's political and economic context.

This link helped to solve the challenges arising from the documentation problems of populations living in poverty by improving access to social services, as shown by the way social programs extended coverage to more people.

The synergy between legal identity and social protection policies also led to greater transparency in allocating benefits to individuals and families. Objective criteria were created (based on identity data and critical social indicators); these have tended to replace old client practices[62] in allocating social program benefits.

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61 It also intends to move to a unique identification number. In the initial phase, 40 RENAPER offices were expected to be installed at ANSES offices and RENAPER processing terminals.

62 See Laura Rawlings and Gloria Rubio. 2005. Evaluating the Impact of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs. Oxford University Press on behalf of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

The chronology and policy guidelines we have analyzed show that the synergy between them is always conditioned by the

◉ favourable and unfavourable cycles of the economy: stages of growth and income redistribution versus stages of crisis and retraction of public spending and social investment; and

◉ state of relations (friendlier or more confrontational) between the federal government and provincial governments that result from democratic changes in political leadership.

All of this shows the complexity of policy management in a country when

◉ policy orientations and meanings are not shared between different levels of government; and

◉ institutional capacities are not always equivalent or aligned for putting these policies in place.

These capacities have different effects in different provincial contexts.

In conclusion, it can be said that in Argentina, innovations in the set-up of the social protection system over the last 15 years have made legal identity a requirement for access to social benefits. From now on, legal identity is a basic requirement for access to services. Benefits are made viable through social policies and are one of the tools that governments have put in place to make it easier for people to access better living conditions.

Given its importance in creating this new architecture of social protection policies, it would be worthwhile to promote evaluation processes that allow us to know its real impact. This, in turn, will contribute to the management of knowledge in this field.

Acronyms

ANSES	National Social Security Administration
AUH	Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection
CUS	Universal Health Coverage
DNI	Documento Nacional de Identificación (National Identity Document)
EDSA	Argentina Social Debt Survey
ID	Identity Document
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
INAI	National Institute of Indigenous Affairs
NBI	Unmet Basic Needs
RENAPER	National Register of Persons
SENNAF	National Secretariat for Children, Adolescents and Family
UCA	Universidad Católica Argentina (Catholic University of Argentina)
VUS	Single Social Welfare Window

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Case Study 2

CHILE

Why a Comprehensive Identity Management System is Important for Inclusive Development

Iván Arcos Axt

Contents

Figures

2.1 What is a comprehensive identity management system?

A comprehensive identity management system is the seamless integration of civil status records, civil identification, and the issuing of official identity documents.[1] The main aim of this approach is to ensure quick and effective access to important benefits and civic and social rights through the trustworthy verification of a person's identity. This system requires communication among the institutions involved. It must

- be fluid and effective;

- have a similar degree of development; and

- draw on technological advances that make it easier for the user to relate to the institution, and thus improve the user's experience.

To understand how this system works in Chile, we need to know what the institutions do. The Civil Registry and Identification Service (or SRCeI, the Spanish acronym) is a public service under the Ministry of Justice. Its main goal is to ensure an identity management system that is comprehensive, integrated, secure, and efficient.

Before presenting conclusions and assessments about this system, we will describe and analyze the main advances and changes in the Civil Registry and Identification Service during its history. We will then highlight initiatives that show better delivery and access, such as

- assigning a unique password; and

- replacing the Social Protection Form with the Social Registry of Households, an integrated system for providing social benefits.

This report identifies four key messages:

- Even though the Chilean model has been improving for decades, and will continue to do so, institutional design is country specific. There is no one way to design it, and it must be seen as a process.

- The best way to make the greatest use of technology is to have a reliable institutional framework to certify a person's unique legal identity with a high degree of confidence.

- To ensure institutions are accountable and inclusive of all people at all levels, every citizen and resident of a country needs a legal identity.

- We cannot speak of inclusive development, social inclusion, or financial inclusion if we cannot guarantee a basic human right, such as the right to a name.

In presenting Chile's policies, we show how technological advances mean making the institution stronger: together, these are key pillars for advancing public services. Finally, we assess whether this design can be used in other contexts.

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1   Harbitz, M. et al. 2015. National Identity Policies. Conferencia llevada a cabo en la International, Identity Management Conference. Inter-American Development Bank. Seoul, South Korea.

2.2 The civil registry of Chile: Institutional framework

Chile's Civil Registry and Identification Service was established more than 100 years ago. It has been modified several times, taking on more and more responsibilities. On 18 June 1868, a Civil Registry bill was presented for the first time in the Chamber of Deputies. Sixteen years later, in July 1884, under the government of Don Domingo Santa María and with Don José Manuel Balmaceda as Minister of the Interior, the *Law on Civil Registry* was published. With it, the position of Civil Registry Official was created. This role is entrusted with making copies of the Birth Register, the Marriage Register, and the Death Register. These data used to be registered by the Catholic Church.[2] The new registries captured the data of these three vital events that are related to the legal constitution of the family, the nucleus of Chilean society.
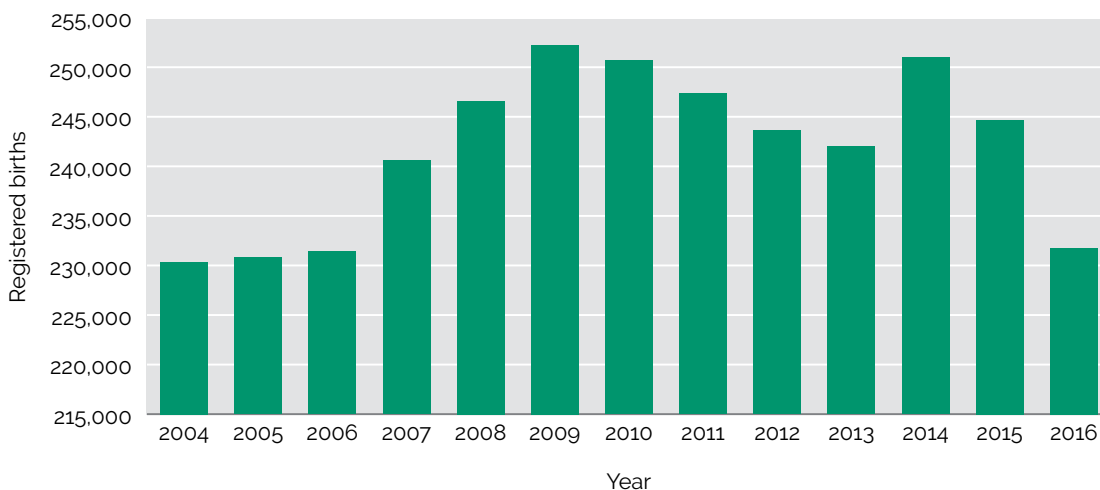
Figure 2.1: Number of registered births in Chile by year.

Source: Author

Data: National Institute of Statistics.

Note: The variation across time is correlated with changes in the birth rate.

The *Civil Registry Law*, which is part of the so-called secular laws, was ahead of its time. It developed the fundamental spaces of a modern organic law by looking at the functional and territorial structure of the Civil Registry and Identification Service. Also, it created norms related to employees, monitoring, and inspection. Other functions have been added to the Civil Registry and Identification Service over its 135 years of existence. Today, these form a set of strategic functions for carrying out some of the government's most important aims. These include capturing links between families, the makeup of the family, and the identities of family members.

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2   Irarrázaval Gomién, A. 2014. *Los inicios del registro civil de Chile: ¿Ruptura o continuidad con las antiguas partidas eclesiásticas?* Revista de estudios histórico-jurídicos, (36), 315-341. dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0716-545520140001000110

With the state's role expanding into economic, social, political, and cultural life, the Civil Registry and Identification Service had to take on new functions of great relevance. Here are some highlights:

1925 The General Registry of Convictions was created. It stresses the need to establish a trustworthy and unique legal identity for citizens and to record their family ancestors. This is highly relevant to developing the Civil Registry – not only for the individualized records of people's lives, but also because it meant a technological advance. For the first time, biometric instruments, such as fingerprint ID, were used.

1930 On 10 February 1930, a new *Civil Registry Law* was enacted (No. 4,808, which is still in force today). It aims to more rigorously regulate information related to births, marriages, and deaths.

1930 On 28 August 1930, the Decree of Law No. 2,128 was published. It approved the Organic Regulation of the Civil Registry Service, which is still in force. The regulation sets out the functions that civil officers must fulfill, the requirements for creating or dissolving their jurisdictions, the way registrations should be done, and the different registries, among other things.

1943 The Civil Registry Service began a long period of reform. It absorbed the tasks of the Identification Service, which had been under the civil police.

1980 The complex reform process was finalized. The Identification offices and Civil Registry offices were merged and are now called Civil Registry and Identification offices.

1982 The identity (ID) number was introduced. The first computer systems were launched, full use of technology was encouraged, and internal processes were redesigned to reduce the time needed to deliver products. The focus was on improving user satisfaction.

Today, the Civil Registry and Identification Service is responsible for all records related to the civil family and personal development of each individual:

◉ Birth records (1885);

◉ Marriage records (1885);

◉ Death registers (1885);

◉ General Registry of Convictions (1925);

◉ Records of fouls (1925);

◉ Production and issuance of identity cards (1925);

◉ Passport registration (1925);

◉ Cadastre of arrests, detention, and preventive prevention (1960);

◉ Register of Professionals (1981);

◉ National Registry of Motor Vehicles (1985);

◉ National Registry of Drivers of Motor Vehicles (1985);

◉ National Registry of Disability (1994);

◉ National Registry of Intrafamily Violence (1994);

◉ National Register of Land Freight Transport (2003);

◉ National Registry of Effective Possessions (2003);

◉ National Register of Wills (2003);

◉ National System of DNA Records (2004);

◉ Registration of garments without displacement (2011);

◉ Registration of legal entities (2012); and

◉ Civil Union Agreement (2015).

Between 1997 and 2002, the Civil Registry and Identification Service was one of the best-rated public services in Chile because

◉ it adopted state-of-the-art technologies;

◉ it set up an extensive computer network; and

◉ it put in place modern customer service systems.

This approach was based on a broader policy to modernize public administration.

In 1994, the Interministerial Committee for the Modernization of Public Administration was created. It focused on the most overlooked area of state modernization: management. The Committee has led the process of modernizing public management since then. Based on a policy of ongoing reform, it has supported change in the management of public services in the areas defined in the Strategic Modernization Plan:

◉ Human resources;

◉ Service quality;

◉ Transparency;

◉ Strategic management;

◉ Information technology; and

◉ Institutional reform.

Today, 475 offices are connected to Chile's corporate data network across the country. The Civil Registry and Identification Service interoperates with most of the public administration, and it is beginning to offer biometrics services to the private sector (the police already have this service).

The Civil Registry and Identification Service looks after more than 20 registries. Many of them are related to goods, not people, such as the motor vehicle registry. All of them are interoperable and use the National ID number to verify an identity across the different databases.

2.3 Better delivery and access

The Civil Registry and Identification Service is constantly being improved. New policies allow it to continue to respond to the needs of users and the changes that are part of the dynamics of any society. Adding new technologies is always an important step. Two examples are the fingerprint recognition system, to verify identity in public and private services, and digital databases that increase access to the information.

This section will review two policies that have recently been applied in Chile. They seek to improve service delivery and access to social benefits and services:

◉ Unique password; and

◉ Social Registry of Households.

It is worth highlighting two issues related to these policies.

◉ They are based on seeing all citizens as individuals, so both use the unique identity number administered by the Civil Registry and Identification Service.

◉ Their design responds to two basic questions:

   • How can we improve user access to public services?

   • How can we improve the delivery of social benefits?

These questions assume that there is already a functional and centralized structure in place, such as a way to verify the individual through the unique identity number and a more efficient and accessible public service.

These policies do not only lead to better services for end users, but also improve workflows for public institutions.

2.3.1 Unique password

The unique password – *ClaveÚnica* in Spanish – allows the person who owns it to interact electronically with several public institutions. This makes procedures easier and faster for users. This key is granted to any person who requests it and is linked to their ID number. More than 3 million citizens (up to 20 percent of the adult population) have applied for it, and up to 198 public procedures can be done online with it.

This initiative was set up through Presidential Instruction No. 2 of 17 August 2012,[3] which provides guidelines on how to simplify and reduce public procedures. It was based on the "single sign-on" initiatives of other countries, such as Canada, and adapted to the Chilean reality of a civil registry service. In this instruction, President Sebastián Piñera decided to

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3   Oficio Gabinete Presidencial N° 0002, *Imparte instrucciones sobre Simplificación y Eliminación de Trámites Públicos.* 17 de agosto de 2012.

launch the "Chile without Paperwork" program. It aims to improve the rationalizing, simplifying, and digitizing of public procedures – especially those that have a greater impact on people's lives and those that make it easier to develop activities that contribute to the growth of the economy.

To reach these objectives, the government encourages people to use e-government services as much as possible. This allows them to choose how they interact with the government – in person or online. In this way, they can get access to updated information and public services that are organized simply and consistently. The instruction recommends that government institutions use the *ClaveÚnica* when online services need to verify a person's identity.
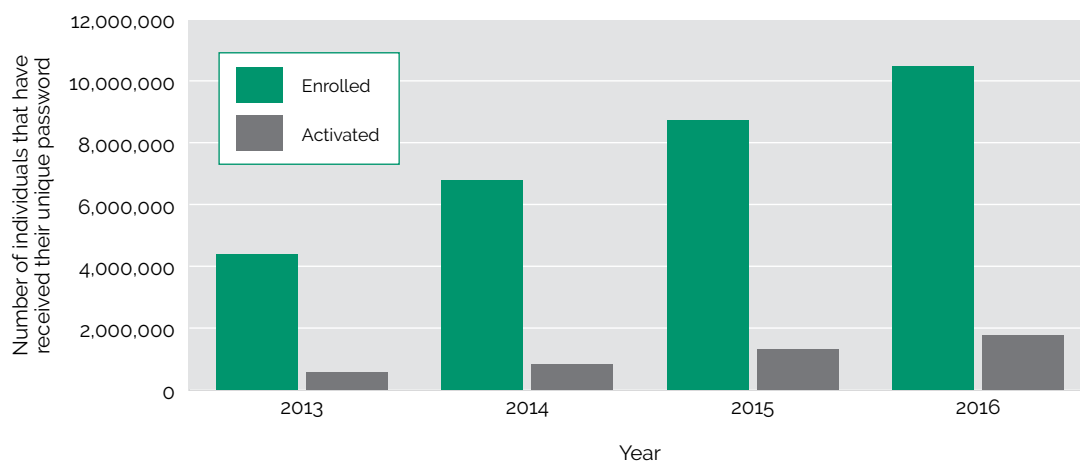
Figure 2.2: Annual uptake of unique passwords in Chile (2013–2016).

Source: Author.

Data: National Institute of Statistics.

◉ To get their unique password, applicants must go in person to a Civil Registry office. They must prove their identity by showing their national identity card. Also, a biometric verification (fingerprint analysis) is done to provide a high degree of security for the person requesting the password.

◉ Once verified at the Civil Registry office, the Civil Registry gives the user a voucher with the account activation code. When entering the activation code, the user is told about the scope of the *ClaveÚnica* and the safeguards that must be kept in place so it is used properly. The user must agree to these terms electronically.

◉ Then the user enters the code on the institution's website. The user must enter the following information: ID card number, full name, and email address.

◉ Once this is done, the system asks the user to create and enter a password, which will be their unique password. When creating the password, the user accepts the terms and conditions for using it. The user is responsible for keeping the password safe and not sharing it with anyone.
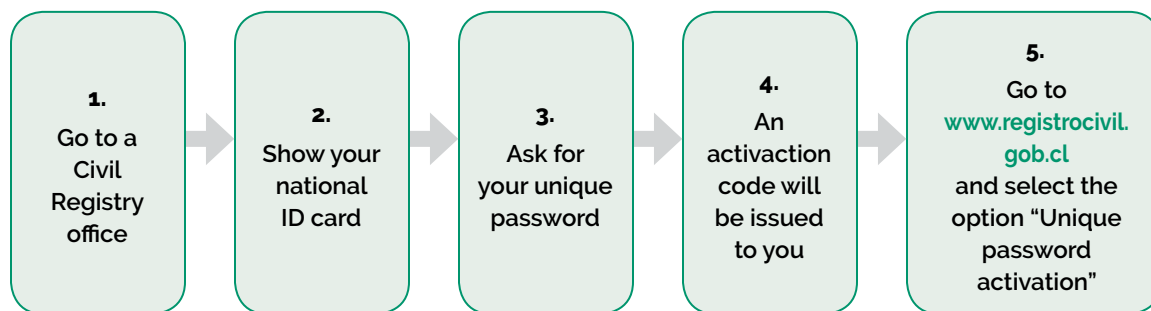
ClaveÚnica is a technological solution (End-Point OpenID) that allows two or more public institutions to interconnect securely. This gives them access to government organizations automatically and directly connects with the Civil Registry and Identification Service if the password is authenticated. In this way, the personal key (password) is known only by this institution.

The Ministry General Secretariat of the Presidency communicates with and coordinates the use of this key among the different government organizations. To set up secure mechanisms for communicating and coordinating, the Ministry provides ClaveÚnica to user institutions free of charge.

In Chile, government organizations can do administrative procedures electronically (Article 19, Law No. 19,880). These can be sent to people electronically, with an electronic signature, if they have expressly consented to this form of communication (Art. 8, Law No. 19,799 and Art. 53, DS No. 181/2002). The legal nature of ClaveÚnica is that of an electronic signature. Article 2f) of Law No. 19,799 defines the electronic signature as "any sound, symbol or electronic process that allows the recipient of an electronic document to formally identify its author." The concept of "electronic signature" is very broad. It is a process that formally and safely identifies the person who is making an application or doing a legal act electronically.

Article 3 of Law No. 19,799 sets out the principle of functional equivalence between the paper document and the electronic document. Acts and contracts granted or entered into by natural or legal persons and signed electronically are as valid as – and produce the same effects as – those done in writing and on paper. Acts and contracts are considered writings where the law requires that they be stated in that way, and in all cases where the law provides for legal consequences when they are recorded in writing. Also, in keeping with the above provision, any type of electronic signature is seen as a handwritten signature for all legal purposes as a general rule.

The possibility of using an electronic signature with government institutions is set out in Law No. 19,799. Title II of that law refers expressly to "Use of Electronic Signatures by the State Bodies," and Article 6 says that state bodies may execute or perform acts, enter into contracts, and issue any document, within its area of competence, by electronic signature. Article 7 adds that the acts, contracts, and documents of state organizations, signed by electronic signature, will be valid in the same way and will produce the same effects as those issued in writing and

on paper, as long as they do not constitute a public instrument or have their own effects. In such cases, they must be signed using an advanced electronic signature.

Article 8 of Law No. 19,799 notes that persons may interact with state bodies electronically and using an electronic signature, as long as they comply with the procedure described by law and the techniques and means used are compatible with those used by state bodies.

As an electronic signature, *ClaveÚnica* meets these constitutional standards:

◉ It does not unjustifiably restrict access to the services provided;

◉ The principles of publicity and transparency in carrying out the public function are adequately respected; and

◉ It does not cause arbitrary discrimination.

Without prejudice to the general rule noted above, two exceptions apply:

◉ The following activities, records, or contracts may not be carried out electronically:

  • Those actions for which the Political Constitution or the law requires a solemnity that cannot be fulfilled by an electronic document or requires the personal concurrence of the authority or official who should intervene in them. In general, solemnities that are not made in writing cannot be done through electronic documents;

  • Those in which the law requires the personal agreement of any of the parties; and

  • Those related to family law.

◉ Individuals cannot use *ClaveÚnica* in cases where the law expressly requires the use of an advanced electronic signature. Because the Civil Registry and Identification Service certifies that the key corresponds to a certain person, the *ClaveÚnica* is a "simple" electronic signature. For an advanced electronic signature, an Accredited Certification Service Provider must certify it.

The general rule is that the acts and contracts granted or subscribed to by natural persons are valid if they are signed using a simple electronic signature. This criterion has been confirmed by a recent opinion of the Comptroller General of the Republic. It states that individuals can use simple electronic signatures for executing legal acts with state administration bodies.

2.3.2 Social Registry of Households

The Social Registry of Households is a social protection policy that aims to reduce poverty and vulnerability. Social protection policies can cover different types of public policies or programs. In the case of Chile, this refers to all those that are able to respond to problems faced mainly by households that are economically unstable. The goal is to ensure social security, which can be extended, based on the will and capacity of each government, to the rest of the population.[4] Chile is one of the pioneer countries in this area in Latin America: it was
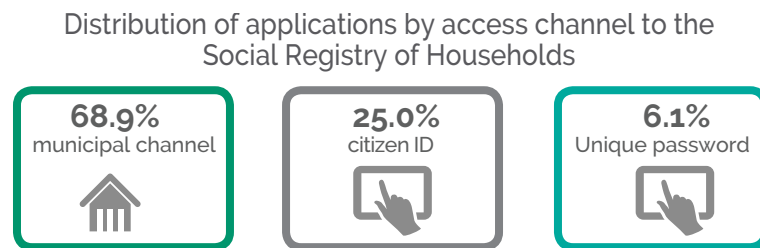
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4   Robles, C. 2013. *Sistemas de protección social en América Latina y el Caribe.* Chile. División de Desarrollo Social de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). Santiago, Chile.

one of the first to launch programs and policies to improve the quality of life of its citizens and reduce the indices of poverty.
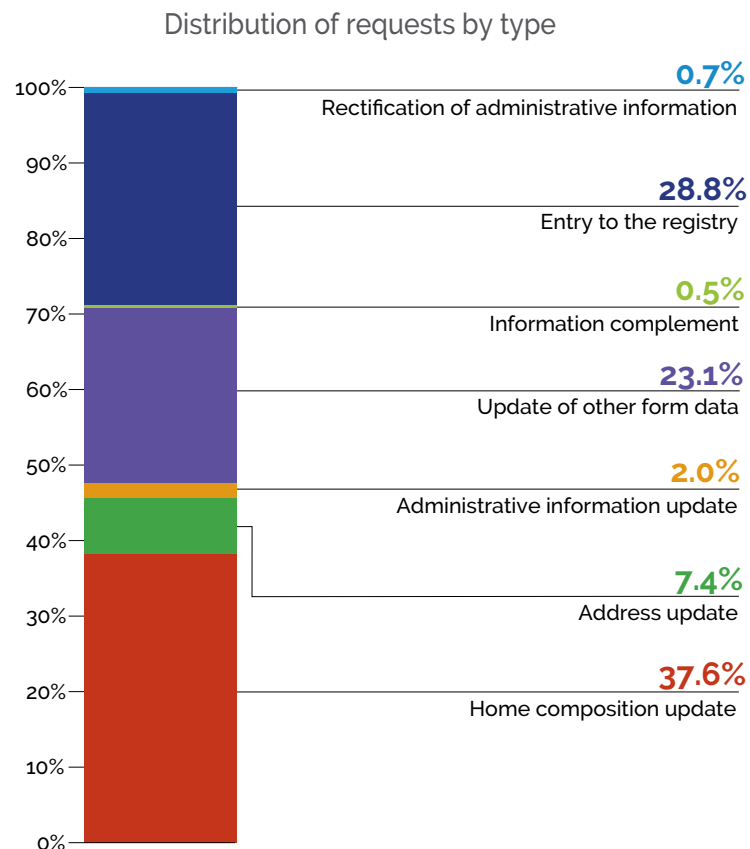
This work can go in several directions, depending on the political party that is governing. In Chile today, there are two different dynamics:

◉ Progress is made towards creating social policies based on the population's needs and their scope over these groups; and

◉ Progress is made towards creating policies that focus on social protection and promotion.[5]

Distribution of applications by access channel to the Social Registry of Households

68.9% municipal channel

25.0% citizen ID

6.1% Unique password

Distribution of requests by type

0.7% Rectification of administrative information
28.8% Entry to the registry
0.5% Information complement
23.1% Update of other form data
2.0% Administrative information update
7.4% Address update
37.6% Home composition update

5   Robles, C. 2011. *El sistema de protección social de Chile: Una mirada desde la igualdad.* División de Desarrollo Social de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). Santiago, Chile, p. 9.

Since 1979, Chile has used different instruments to measure the socioeconomic status of its population. It uses these tools to design and put in place social policies for the poorest classes. In 2015, the Ministry of Social Development (MIDESO) designed the Social Registry of Households. This system replaces the Social Protection Form. The Social Registry of Households is used to place individuals and their families in socioeconomic terms and to assign social benefits to those who are seen as vulnerable.

The Social Protection Form emerged in 2006. It made it possible to identify vulnerable people and families so they could access benefits. This was done via a survey carried out in homes by a municipal official. Based on the answers in the survey, each family got a score and was placed in one of five quintiles: the lower the score, the lower the quintile. They could then apply for certain benefits for their quintile.[6] The main problem with this approach was that many people lied on the survey and to the municipal official so they could get more benefits. This meant the instrument and the information it was based on were not trustworthy, and benefits were not shared fairly.

In 2014, MIDESO was given the mandate to replace the Social Protection Form. The aim was to "mov[e] towards allocating monetary transfers by excluding higher income sectors. In this way, the government assumes the responsibility of identifying and selecting, not the citizen."[7]

Faced with this scenario, in 2015 MIDESO ran 49 citizen forum dialogues nationwide, with more than 4,000 people taking part. Through these dialogues, the government collected observations and proposals about the factors to consider when assessing households, making procedures simpler, and so on.

These consultations led to a set of proposals. One was to create the Social Registry of Households. This is a system that improves the socioeconomic status of households, gives citizens transparent information, and coordinates social benefits from different institutions. It is based on a well-defined baseline, and can easily verify the identities of beneficiaries so they get efficient access to and delivery of services. Although the Social Protection Form had collected information from the homes of the most vulnerable families for many years, some aspects needed to be improved:

⊙ Some people felt it was no longer working and that the form was arbitrary, unfair, and not very transparent;

⊙ People did not understand how the score was calculated; and

⊙ It was not clear which households were entitled to certain benefits and which were not.[8]

6   Rivas, F. 2015. *Familias ya pueden actualizar datos para integrarse al Registro Social de Hogares*. Bio Bio Chile. www.biobiochile.cl/noticias/2015/11/02/familias-ya-pueden-actualizar-datos-para-integrarse-al-registro-social-de-hogares.shtml

7   Ministerio de Desarrollo Social. 2017. Registro Social de Hogares. Festival Internacional de Innovación Social. Presentación en Laboratorio de Gobierno, Santiago, Chile.

8   Ministerio de Desarrollo Social. 2017. Registro Social de Hogares. [Cinta de audio]. Presentación MIDESO FIIS. Laboratorio de Gobierno, Santiago, Chile.

22.7%
Rejected

11.6%
Abandoned

65.7%
Approved
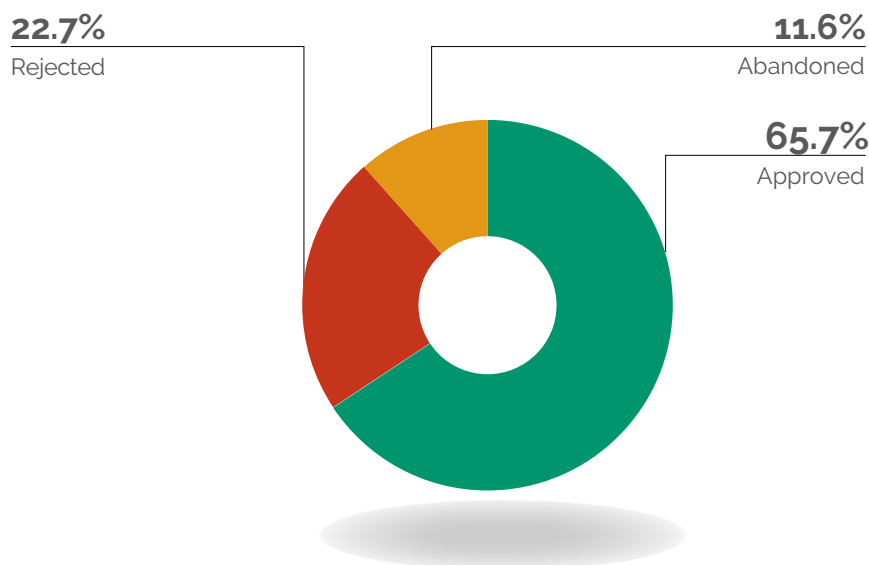
The Social Registry of Households is an innovative solution that

◉ improves the socioeconomic qualification of households (data);

◉ gives citizens transparent information (access); and

◉ advises different public services on allocating benefits (coordinates with programs being offered).

These elements make up an integral service that was awarded first place in the 2016 National Contest of Public Innovation Works. It began to be used in January 2016; by the end of 2017, 12.9 million people (73.6 percent of the national population) were registered. To keep increasing the number of people registered and benefiting, MIDESO added two new tools to the web platform in November 2017. Because the Social Registry of Households has centralized the information by managing different administrative bases, citizens can

◉ access the history of benefits they have received since 2013 (benefits granted); and

◉ find out what benefits they can access if they meet certain requirements (potential benefits).

One of the main innovations of the Social Registry of Households is that it depends less on information declared by citizens and more on administrative records. For example, if household members do not record income information in the government's databases, the income values reported by the household member who applies for entry into the Social Registry of Households are taken into consideration. Also, this record is made per household, not for an individual. This is where the role of the Civil Registry and Identification Service is key, since it verifies the makeup of a formal family.

The Social Registry of Households prefers to use data the government has about individuals and households. This registry integrates 19 databases in the following institutions, among others:

◉ Civil Registry and Identification Service;

◉ Internal Tax Service;

◉ Ministry of Education;

◉ Social Security Institute;

◉ Superintendence of Health; and

◉ Unemployment Fund Administrator.

The information collected is used to get a socioeconomic rating in sections of households. This replaces the Social Protection Form score. The socioeconomic rating recognizes that in the first section relating to 40 percent of the most vulnerable population, it is not possible to distinguish one household from another using only income information. Other variables were added.[9] The socioeconomic rating is the percentage rank for households based on effective income, the number of people in the household, and their characteristics. Also, to represent the socioeconomic level of households adequately, access to the following goods and services is evaluated:

◉ Total value of the vehicles owned by members of the household;

◉ Total value of real estate owned by members of the household;

◉ Value of the monthly payment to the educational institution where one or more members of the household are enrolled; and

◉ Value of the health contributions agreed on with the health institution.

Another innovation is that users can review the information that the Social Registry of Households has about them by entering their *ClaveÚnica* on its website. Also, users can ask for procedures to be done online. This is possible because the Registry collects a large part of its information from verified information of other public institutions. The information on each person can be collected and unified in the Social Registry of Households thanks to each person having his or her ID number; users can access this information online using the *ClaveÚnica*.

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9   MIDESO. 2017.

2.4 Final remarks

Although governments seeking to improve their civil registration and social protection services can use the Chilean model as an example, institutional design is country specific. There is no single way to design it, and it must be seen as a process.

The Chilean model has been evolving and improving for decades, and is firmly established in society and the public sector. Models for social development that international organizations propose must take into account specific features of each country and its social dynamics. A single institution does not need to be in charge of these processes in a central way: what is important is to have the right administrative procedures in place.

Technology is a key factor. The best way to make use of technology's full potential is to have a developed institutional framework with a high degree of reliability to certify a person's unique legal identity with confidence.

Civil registration is key to social development: that is why it is part of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 16 is to "build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."[10] To do this, every citizen and resident of a country needs a legal identity. Chile was already ahead in this area. But it was not nearly enough. The legal identity does not ensure effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions: that's where the Social Registry of Households comes in. The possibility of a trustworthy system of multiple interconnected databases that can assign social benefits fairly is real, and not only in a negative Orwellian way. It can be used for the benefit of the people, and is being used that way, but it must be developed and implemented carefully, ensuring privacy and efficiency for users.

Also, when processes for civil registration, civil identification, and the issuing of identification documents are being designed, the right incentives need to be put in place. The government supplies certificates and ID documents, but also requires them; this encourages the private sector to require them as well. That is how Chile managed to produce a cultural change: everyone registers vital events and gets ID documents because everyone knows that certificates and ID documents are going to be requested for different procedures.

We cannot speak of inclusive development, social inclusion, or financial inclusion if we cannot guarantee a basic human right such as the right to a name. But we must be careful not to overthink this. At some point, knowledge must become policy. Without guaranteeing the right to a name, we are left only with statistical information, which is important but clearly not enough.

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10 United Nations. 2019. Sustainable Development Goal 16: Progress of Goal 16 in 2019. sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16

Acronyms

ID   Identity

MIDESO   Ministry of Social Development

SRCeI   Civil Registry and Identification Service

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The Synergy Between Civil Registration and Social Protection: A Case Study of Namibia

**Anette Bayer Forsingdal
and Tulimeke Munyika**

Contents

Figures

Tables

3.1 Introduction

Thirty years after Namibia's independence, the new civil registration system is playing a key role in helping the country recover from the injustices that the apartheid government's civil registration policies created. Before independence, registration of vital events was voluntary for Black people and was largely inaccessible in rural areas. This practice has had far-reaching consequences for many individuals and their families. Some waited for years to be documented. Others have remained trapped in poverty because they do not have documentary proof of their existence and of their family's origins to prove nationality or get access to government social services and programs. Over the years, it has become more difficult to seek employment, access banking services, and get public or private insurance without a birth certificate and a Namibian identity document (Namibian ID). However, the universal health program makes health services available for all in the public sector.

When the Namibian Constitution came into force on 21 March 1990, it became a right of children born within the territory to have a name and nationality from birth.[1] This was in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified by Namibia that same year. Recognizing that civil registration ensures access to rights, benefits, and basic services, the Government of Namibia launched a series of programs to redress past injustices and improve civil registration coverage.

Poverty reduction has a central role in reaching Namibia's Vision 2030. Vision 2030 was launched in the early 2000s to lead Namibia towards being a just, moral, tolerant, and safe society that has legislative, economic, and social structures in place. The aim of these structures is to eliminate marginalization and ensure peace and equity between women and men, diverse ethnic groups, and people of different ages, interests, and abilities by 2030.[2]

The current and fifth National Development Plan sets out a roadmap for achieving improved living conditions for all in 2017–2022 through

◉ achieving inclusive, sustainable, and equitable economic growth;

◉ building stable and healthy human resources;

◉ ensuring a sustainable environment and enhancing resilience; and

◉ promoting good governance through effective institutions.

Identity for all from birth is one of the indicators under the good governance pillar. The aim is to reach 95 percent birth registration immediately after birth by 2022.

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1   Namibian Constitution, Article 130.

2   In a statement to the Namibian Cabinet in January 1998, former and founding President Sam Nujoma urged the development of a national vision that could take Namibia from the present to the future: "A vision that will guide us to make deliberate efforts to improve the quality of life of our people to the level of their counterparts in the developed world by the year 2030."

The National Agenda for Children 2012–2016 was a call to action for the constitutional rights of children. It also stressed the importance of birth and death registration to alleviate poverty. The Agenda closely linked poverty reduction to issuing cash grants to vulnerable and orphaned children.[3] One of the five priority commitments was for all children to have an adequate standard of living and legal identity. This was to take place through

- a comprehensive national social protection system;

- access for all vulnerable children to grants;

- registration of all children at birth; and

- access to the deceased parent's death certificate, if needed.

One of the instruments chosen to fight poverty is e-governance. The National Population Register[4] is a cornerstone of Namibia's e-governance policy.[5] This policy states that e-governance will play a key role in attaining the country's development goals, including eradicating hunger, poverty, and child mortality, and improving health. Another key strategy document is the five-year strategic plan on civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS).[6] Following the 2012 resolution for all African countries to do comprehensive assessments and draft strategic plans for their CRVS systems, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (MHAI) and the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) agreed to reform the wider civil registration system in Namibia.

In 2014, a technical working committee for CRVS was set up. The committee, which included all key stakeholders, laid the foundation for a more holistic and collaborative approach to comprehensive registration of vital events in Namibia. In doing this, it reached far beyond the mandate of the Department of Civil Registration in the MHAI.[7] This was the first strategy on civil registration and vital statistics, where all stakeholders sat around the table, collectively agreeing on to how to improve the systems and agreeing to the strategy's significance.

Finally, in 2016 a complete and interoperable National Population Register became a strategic objective in the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare's Blue Print on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication, signaling that welfare for all relies on universal civil registration.[8]

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3   Namibia's National Agenda for Children. sisternamibiatest2014.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/namibias-national-agenda-for-children.pdf

4   The National Population Register records all vital events (birth, marriage, divorce, and death), including data used for issuance of ID cards, under one demographic profile.

5   opm.gov.na/documents/108506/113906/2E-Governance_Policy_Final.pdf/9904df6f-eecc-4653-81fd-f134e0b23f9b

6   Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration and Namibia Statistics Agency. Comprehensive Assessment of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System in Namibia. 2014. cms.my.na/assets/documents/CRVS_Comprehensive_Assessment_Report_Final.pdf

7   Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration, Ministry of Health and Social Services, Namibian Police, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, and Namibia Statistics Agency.

8   info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/NAM/Blue%20Print%20on%20Wealth%20Redistribution%20and%20Poverty%20Eradication%20%20PDF.pdf

The purpose of this paper is to

◉ document the synergies between the health, civil registration, and social protection systems in Namibia;

◉ showcase how Namibia has systemically built its civil registration and vital statistics systems since independence; and

◉ show how this is improving more equal access to social services.

3.2 The national legal and institutional framework

3.2.1 Right to birth registration: The Namibian Constitution

Article 15 of the Namibian Constitution states that children have the right from birth to a name and a nationality. The article also guarantees such rights as protection from economic exploitation and from preventative detention for children under age 16.

Article 4 provides a detailed set of criteria for Namibian citizenship by birth, descent, registration, marriage, and naturalization. Civil registration and various citizenship issues intersect with these criteria.

3.2.2 Births and adoptions

The *Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act, 1963* (Act No. 81 of 1963) regulates the registration of births, deaths, and marriages. Like the name suggests, this covers the registration of vital events.

For adoptions, the *Child Care and Protection Act, 2015* (Act No. 3 of 2015) applies. This Act, which is administered under the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), provides for an adoption register. A registrar is appointed for the register, which is not under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety & Security (MHAI&SS).[9] The MHAI&SS obliges the clerk of the Children's Court that grants the adoption order to transmit the order to the Minister of MHAI&SS. The Minister must then alter the birth register to reflect the adoption.

◉ Where the adoption is for a child whose birth was registered in Namibia, the MHAI&SS must note the adoption.

◉ Where the adoption is for a child whose birth is recorded outside Namibia and who is adopted by a person living in Namibia, the MHAI&SS registers the birth and notes the adoption.

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9   The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration merged with the Ministry of Safety and Security to become the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety & Security in March 2020.

3.2.3 *The Aliens Act, 1937* (Act No. 1 of 1937)

Among the only three surviving provisions from the Aliens Act is Section 8 which provides for name changes.

3.2.4 Identity documents

The *Identification Act, 1996* (Act No. 21) regulates the issuing of identity documents and the creation and maintenance of the National Population Register. Namibian citizens and permanent residents who attain the age of 16 must apply for and be issued an identity document.

3.2.5 Marriages and divorces

The solemnizing of marriages, designation of marriage officers, and revocation of these designations are regulated by the *Marriage Act, 1961* (Act No. 25 of 1961). This Act applies only to civil marriages. After a marriage is solemnized, it is registered in terms of the *Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act, 1963*. Only the High Court can dissolve a marriage. When a divorce order is granted, the order needs to be transmitted to the MHAI&SS so the divorce can be recorded in the population register.

3.2.6 Deaths

Deaths that occur in hospitals and other health centres are first recorded by health or medical personnel, who electronically notify the MHAI&SS of the death. The family registers the death with the MHAI&SS, which then certifies it by issuing a death certificate. For unnatural deaths, the *Inquests Act, 1993* (Act No. 6 of 1993) applies. The inquest involves both the police and the Magistrates Court.

The CRVS legislative environment is evolving to keep up with changing technology. A Civil Registration and Identification Bill is being written to consolidate laws relating to civil registration and identity management. A new Marriage Bill will also be passed soon. It will repeal the current *Marriage Act*.

3.2.7 Vital statistics

The *Statistics Act, 2011* (Act No. 9 of 2011) created the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) and mandated the development of the national statistics system. The NSA has statutory power as the central repository for all statistics produced in Namibia. It is mandated to collect, produce, analyze, and disseminate official and other statistics in Namibia. The NSA is also responsible for official vital statistics that relate to civil registration.

3.2.8 Social protection

As this paper discusses the benefits of linking the population register and the social protection sector, it is fitting that it also puts forth the framework for social protection.

The *National Pension Act, 1992* (Act No. 10 of 1992) provides for a national pension. This includes any basic state pension, blind person's pension, disability pension, or allowance payable under that Act. The Act is administered by the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare. The Act further states that the pension is payable to Namibian citizens and permanent residents. This makes civil registration a key part of facilitating positive identification for beneficiaries.

The MGECW also administers various cash grants related to the *Child Care and Protection Act, 2015* (Act No. 3 of 2015). These include

- state maintenance grant;
- child disability grant;
- foster parent grant;
- short-term emergency grant; and
- assistance in kind.

Beneficiaries must provide positive identification for this purpose. They must provide proof, if orphaned, and therefore rely on a functioning civil registration system.

The same is true for veterans of the liberation struggle and their children who receive assistance from the Veterans Fund under the *Veterans Act, 2008* (Act No. 2 of 2008). Also, the live/dead status needs to be verified to ensure that there are no ghost beneficiaries under the social protection nets.

Table 3.1:
Overview of
applicable
legislation and
institutional
frameworks.

Source: Authors

	Key applicable legislation	Responsible	Institutional framework
Births	*Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act, 1963* *Aliens Act, 1937* (for change of surname)	Health professionals (MoHSS) MHAI&SS	• MoHSS birth occurs in a health facility or happens at home but is later reported to a health facility. • MHAI&SS verifies, registers, and certifies.
Adoptions	*Child Care and Protection Act, 2015*	MGECW MHAI&SS	• Adoptions are facilitated by MGECW; Children's Court grants adoption order; MHAI&SS is notified (not yet electronic) and registers. • *Child Care and Protection Act, 2015* places a legal obligation on the clerk of the Children's Court to transmit court orders to MHAI&SS.
Marriages	*Marriage Act, 1961* *Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act, 1963*	MHAI&SS Marriage officers (magistrates and some ministers of religion)	• (Civil) marriages are solemnized in terms of the *Marriage Act*. Solemnization is done by a magistrate acting *ex officio* or a minister of religion who has been designated as a marriage officer by the Minister of Home Affairs. • After solemnization, registration is done in terms of the *Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act.*
Divorces	*High Court Act, 1990* and Rules of the High Court	High Court MHAI&SS	• Only the High Court has jurisdiction to dissolve a marriage. When a divorce order is granted, the High Court should notify MHAI&SS. This notification is not yet electronic. • MHAI&SS registers the divorce in the Population Register.
Deaths	*Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act, 1963* *Inquests Act, 1990*	MoHSS NAMPOL (Namibian Police Force)	• MoHSS (medical personnel) notify MHAI&SS electronically about deaths occurring in health facilities. • MHAI&SS registers the death and issues a death certificate. • The police handle unnatural deaths in terms of the *Inquests Act* and notify MHAI&SS electronically.
Issuing of ID	*Identification Act, 1996*	MHAI&SS	• Registration for ID cards is done at the regional and sub-regional levels. • Biometric validation and production of cards is done at the national level.

3.3 Early reform initiatives

3.3.1 Improving registration rates

In the first decade after independence, Namibia embarked on mass registration of its population to address the apartheid government's systematic discrimination against Coloured and Black people. The main objective was ensuring equal access to rights and government benefits. By law, registration of vital events (births, marriages, and deaths) was compulsory only for Whites and the Coloured population before independence. Births and deaths were recorded in separate manual registers according to racial groups. It is estimated that at the time of Namibian independence, approximately 75 to 80 percent of the population had not had their birth registered.

An identity card system based on biometrics was introduced in 1979. This was the South West African Administration's attempt to control the movement of various population groups and their differentiated rights to services. The South West African Identity (SWA ID) card's 13-digit number contained a 2-digit "racial code" and biometrics. This identity number enshrined the apartheid era ideal of racial registration, control of movement, and access to resources. It resembled the South Africa Identity Number and was brought into effect by the *Population Registration Act, 1950* which identified ethnic groups by two digits.[10] The law seems to indicate that the SWA ID was a resident card for all persons living permanently in the territory, but it is not clear what process was followed to grant permanent residence. In many cases, there is no evidence of permanent residence permits issued in terms of the *Aliens Act, 1937*. SWA ID cards were issued to around 600,000 persons over the age of 16 by 1990.[11]

The institutional footprint at the time of independence was limited. In smaller towns, clerks at the Magistrates Court registered births and deaths under the Ministry of Justice. The organizational structure of civil registration authorities was not expanded until 2010 when a new, enlarged structure was approved to improve access to civil registration and ID card services. The new structure now consisted of new sub-regional and hospital-based offices. The 2010 structure was reviewed again in 2017, and more positions were added in high-volume offices.[12]

In the 1990s, in an effort to provide registration services across Namibia, mobile units were dispatched annually to all regions in the country. The goal was to register all eligible citizens in urban and rural areas. These mass enrollment campaigns were a clear sign of the Namibian government's political will to ensure registration for all. The mass campaigns focused on birth registration and enrollment in the identification system (for issuing Namibian IDs).

In some regions, the responsibility of birth registration was delegated to the local councillors (lowest political unit) and teachers. From a civil registration perspective, the registration environment was highly complex due to the various credible "source documents" in

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10 thoughtco.com/south-african-apartheid-era-identity-numbers-4070233
11 Statistics from the Namibia National Population Register.
12 Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration. Operational Framework 2012–2013.

circulation. Some persons had birth certificates only, while others had SWA IDs. Many only had baptism cards, while returnees from exile had repatriation forms issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Others had multiple records (passports issued by the UN, repatriation forms, and baptism cards). Sometimes the personal information didn't match. A large group was undocumented. Where no documentation existed, two witnesses older than the applicant would vouch that the person was born in Namibia.

The mass campaigns reduced the enormous backlog of unregistered persons. Hundreds of thousands of persons of all ages were registered with birth certificates and new Namibian IDs. A new *Identification Act* that governed the issuing of Namibian identity cards came into force in 1996, replacing the various pieces of legislation on identification and identity management that existed before independence. These documents gave all citizens broader access to social services and paved the way for better management of public and private services and rights by the Namibian government.

The large mobile enrollment campaigns were a necessary investment. They laid the foundation for a new, modern society with equal access to rights and services and thus redressed past injustices. People now needed documents to access the many new social grants. Despite the high costs, it was an efficient method to reduce the massive backlog of unregistered and undocumented Namibians and residents. Namibia today has one of the highest birth and identity card registration rates in Africa. This is partly due to ongoing efforts to improve access to registration services since independence.

Yet the outreach methodology for reducing civil registration backlogs has led to legal and operational challenges over the years. These included low integrity and effectiveness of the civil registration system, and individuals' access to services being blocked due to discrepancies in the records. The key challenge was that a large number of persons were issued multiple birth certificates: in some cases, these did not correspond with the identity information on their South West Africa Identity record, which is linked to their biometric record. The mismatch between birth and ID records meant that for a long time, many people were unable to convert their old SWA ID card to a Namibian ID card: their applications were rejected when their biometric information was checked. Biometrics are verified and ID cards are produced centrally at the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAI&SS) headquarters.

In hindsight, some of the long-term challenges with multiple issued records could have been mitigated by setting up validation processes. As part of a nationwide initiative to phase out the SWA ID cards in 2016, the MHAI&SS set up new procedures. It waived amendment fees to effectively manage the amendment of thousands of records. Cabinet endorsed the initiative. To calculate the number of citizens who had only the SWA ID, the National Statistics Agency included a question about this point in the inter-census survey in 2016. The survey showed that 0.8 percent of the population still had only a SWA ID.[13]

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13   Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey, 2016 Report, p. 55.

To address the lack of evidence of birth details for the notification, an inter-ministerial agreement was set up for maternity wards to issue proof of birth in the early 2000s. This brought together the two manual systems. Birth details, such as date and place of birth and the mother's identity, were now validated, and no longer based on verbal statements by parents or caregivers. Before this system was introduced, no supporting documents to verify date of birth, place of birth, or the mother's identity were required when a birth was registered. This resulted in a high number of errors, which still exist today. These errors hamper the Ministry's improvement efforts, as thousands of persons claim that their date of birth, surname, and names were registered with errors.

The validation of birth and ID records on mobile campaigns remains a challenge for the Ministry. However, the digital and integrated National Population Register, which was introduced between 2010 and 2014, has led to massive improvements in authenticating identification and validating documents.

3.4 Mid-term reform initiatives

3.4.1 Strengthening the system

In 2008, the Department of Civil Registration under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAI&SS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), launched several standalone initiatives to improve the rate of timely birth registration by strengthening the system. This was a response to the 2006 Namibia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), which estimated that only 73.7 percent of children under the age of 5 were registered, while 57.6 percent of children were registered before their first birthday. This late registration rate showed major regional disparities.[14] The low birth registration rate was a key barrier to increasing cash grants for children, especially in the northern parts of the country.

One key intervention was the opening of hospital-based birth registration facilities in high volume maternity wards. From 2008 to 2011, 21 hospital-based facilities were opened, along with new sub-regional offices in rural communities. At first, only birth registration was offered in the hospitals; death registration was added later.

A cash grant for children who had lost one or both parents was introduced in 2000 to address the financial woes of thousands of children orphaned by the raging HIV epidemic. The DHS 2006 also exposed a strong correlation between wealth and birth registration (Figure 3.1). The higher a child was on the wealth quintile, the higher the likelihood that the child was registered before turning 5. Many orphaned children from the lower wealth quintile group were not eligible for registration because their parents were undocumented.

14 Namibia Health and Demographic Survey, 2006–2007.

Figure 3.1:
Birth registration and wealth quintile in Namibia (2006).[14]
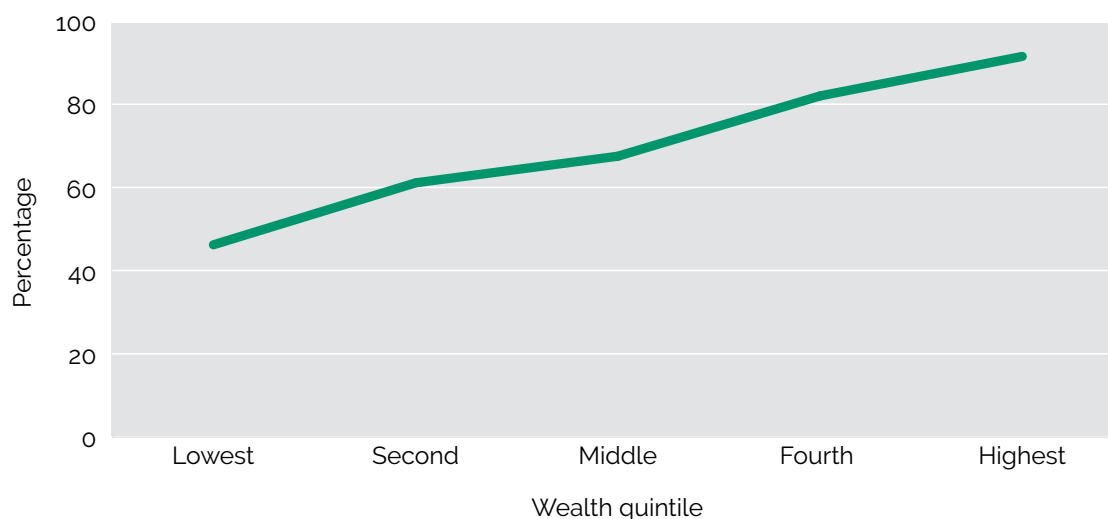
The strengthening of the birth registration system was the single most significant factor for the successful implementation of the cash grant system for children that the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) manages, as a birth certificate is required to get the grant. A 2010 study on the effectiveness of the child cash grants provided evidence of this early assumption: caregivers receiving grants were more likely to have an ID document than eligible caregivers without an ID document (95 percent compared to 80 percent). In the Kavango regions in the northeast part of the country, this was even more pronounced: 93 percent compared to 56 percent, respectively. A child's birth was not registered if the parents were undocumented.[16]

Only a handful of hospitals have kept their old maternal registers prior to 2000. Most other hospitals have discarded the records, unaware that they should be regarded as permanent records. That means unregistered persons may land in administrative limbo, unable to prove their affiliation to Namibia. The fact that a higher number of births took place at home at that time makes it difficult to determine the correct date of birth. Finding the date depends on approval of the person's social footprints. According to the Namibia DHS 2011, around 85 percent of all births occur in health facilities.[17]

3.4.2 Collaboration with the social protection system

Over the past 10 years, close collaboration between MHAI&SS and MGECW has had a positive impact. It has improved coordination at the lowest administration levels for children who were abandoned by their biological parents or were orphaned and, having no extended family to care for them, were placed in the state's care. In 2010, there was no noteworthy collaboration between these two ministries. State social workers were highly unsatisfied with the services

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15 Unregistered children are more likely to come from low-income households. Source: Namibia Demographic and Health Survey 2006.

16 Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare. "The Effectiveness of Child Welfare Grants in Namibia," p. 12.

17 Namibia Demographic and Health Survey 2011.

that the MHAI&SS provided. In some regions, it was nearly impossible to register children who were in the care of the state, which led to children being excluded from being placed in foster care or for adoption. Some children were detained in prisons because they had no proof of their age. The social workers complained about standing in endless queues and not having clear guidelines for getting birth certificates for abandoned children.

Based on consultations and a number of outreach trips to orphanages in Windhoek, requirements were created to accommodate undocumented children who were placed in the care of the state. To improve collaboration at the regional level, all regional registrars of births and social workers were brought together to discuss the challenges and propose new procedures. Then each region came up with its own action plan on future collaborations. Since then, the number of complaints has dropped. At the national level, this initiative was strengthened when the MHAI&SS was included as a permanent member of the Permanent Task Force for Orphans and Vulnerable Children.

These first steps later resulted in including strengthening the civil registration system as a strategic objective for eliminating poverty in the Blue Print on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication in Namibia in 2016. For the first time, civil registration was recognized on paper as an important driver of social protection and poverty reduction. Today, the MHAI&SS is a member of a task force to reform the social protection system. The Ministry took part as a key stakeholder for developing the new integrated social protection system. The system was developed by the Office of the Prime Minister and will soon be interfaced with the National Population Registration System (NPRS).
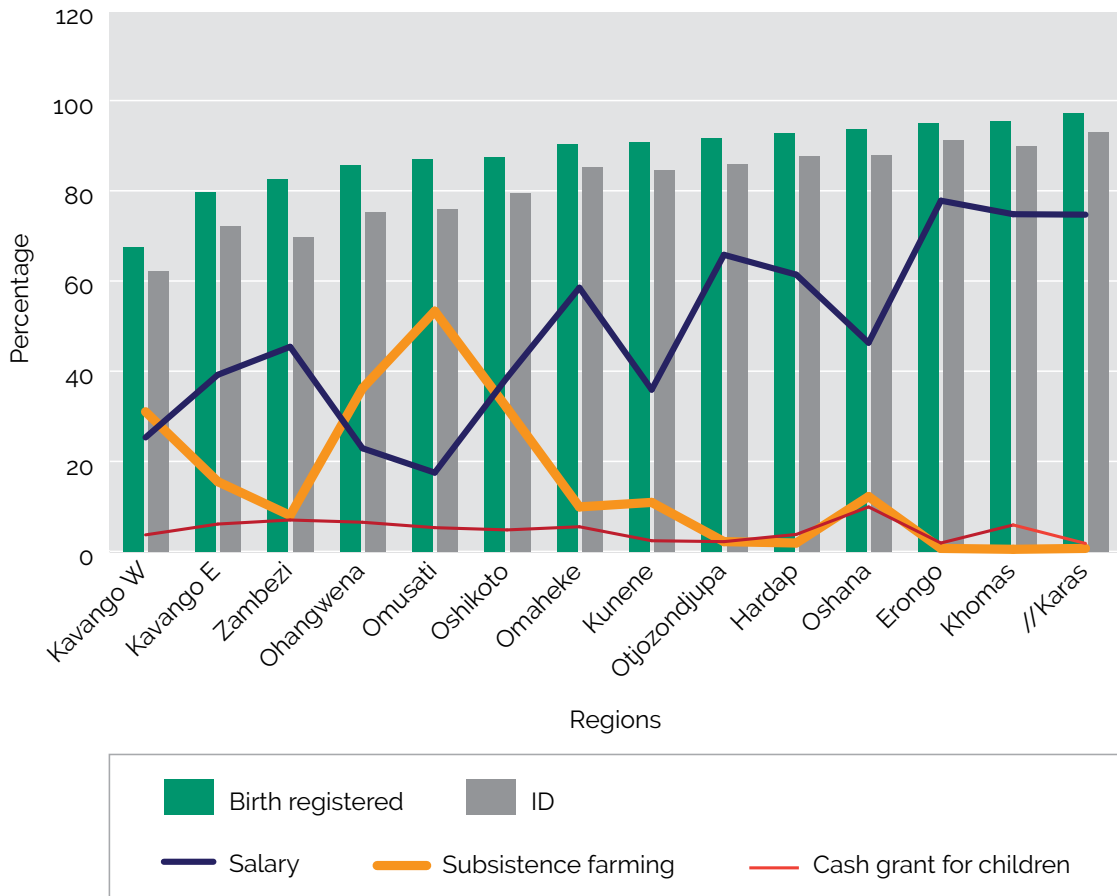
The consultations on the blueprint also led to new ideas and consensus on how to create incentives for previously disadvantaged population groups. Statistics showed that there was a strong correlation between low birth registration and low registration for cash grants in some regions. Figure 3.2 is based on statistics from the inter-census survey. It compares birth registration, ID registration, and three main sources of livelihood and survival. The graph shows a correlation between salary as the main income of survival and level of documentation. The regions of Karas, Khomas, and Erongo have the highest numbers of persons with a salary as their income. They also have the highest numbers of birth registrations. In Namibia, a person must produce an ID to get formal employment and open a bank account.

The MHAI&SS has two regional offices, two sub-regional offices, and four hospital-based offices in the two Kavango regions. These are spread out over 350 km along the Kavango River. According to the inter-census survey, 89,313 people live in Kavango West and 148,466 live in Kavango East.

To address the low birth registration rates in Kavango West and East, a new outreach model was designed in August 2018. Its aim is to improve timely birth registration and cash grant registration of children at the same time. This model builds on the local health workers' in-depth knowledge of rural communities. For delayed birth registration, the greatest challenges are the lack of, or inadequate, proof of the biological relationship between mother and child and the place of birth when there is no notification from a hospital. These are key factors for determining citizenship by birth. If this information cannot be verified, the child may not be able to be registered.

The two Kavango regions border Angola, separated only by the Kavango River. The communities on both sides of the river are ethnically intertwined. With few basic services provided on the Angolan side, many people living on the Angolan side tap into health and educational services in Namibia for low fees or no fees at all. To complicate matters, many Namibians are without documents, so it is difficult to distinguish who qualifies and who does not. To break this vicious generational cycle of poverty and despair, the government needs to make sure that more members of the eligible population can access welfare benefits.

Health workers' regular contact with and knowledge of the local communities is very important. In Namibia, regions are divided into health districts. On a weekly and regular basis, health staff from hospitals and health centres provide basic health care in the different villages.

The basic concept is that an outreach team two registrars of birth, a grant registration officer from MGECW, and a police officer is based at the health centre for one week. Through the Office of the Councillor, the teams visit different villages on certain days to register births and grants for children under the age of 10.

18   Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey Report 2016.

Here are the steps for registration:

1. The nurse validates the birth details.

2. The police officer takes a statement under oath, if needed.

3. The MHAI&SS assistant registrar validates whether a birth entry already exists, then registers the birth legally.

4. The MGECW case worker checks to see if the child is eligible for a child grant.

This approach turned out to be very successful in terms of the number of birth registrations and grant registrations. However, what motivates parents to register a child's birth remains unanswered and should be answered through further qualitative and quantitative research.

3.4.3 Digitization of the civil registration system

To achieve the government's e-governance vision, digitizing the National Population Register became a top priority in 2008. Today, the register is seen as the cornerstone of the interoperability framework, starting with the notification of births by health facilities.

Digitization of the civil registers

Alongside opening the hospital-based facilities in 2010, the MHAI&SS started a major digitization project. The aim was to digitize all civil events under one biographical profile, including allocating a unique system-generated control number that links all civil events and family relationships. The project included scanning and capturing all historical records dating back to 1980. This new system, known as the e-National Population Registration System (e-NPRS), was built by the Directorate for Solutions Architecture in the Department of Public IT Service Management, under the Office of the Prime Minister. It was built on the existing ID registration platform. The system contains data as far back as 1979, when the first identity card was introduced. As of 2014, the online and integrated e-NPRS was fully functional: it is installed in 95 percent of all offices across the country. The integration of the civil registration system and identity system is covered in the *Compendium of Good Practices in Linking Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) and Identity Management Systems*.[19]

However, the system did not address the ongoing challenge of under-registration or the inability to compile accurate vital statistics, because the numbers of live births and deaths were not available. An electronic interface between maternal registers in the maternity wards and the NPRS was essential to ensure that all births were accounted for and later registered.

The assessment of the CRVS system and the five-year strategic plan paved the way for a better understanding and knowledge of the broader civil registration landscape by all stakeholders involved. When processes, institutional roles, and responsibilities were mapped out, it became clear that strong collaboration was a key success factor for building a well-functioning civil registration and identity management system that could identify and recognize every individual in society through registration of all vital events right after they

19 The Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems. International Development Research Centre. 2019. See: crvssystems.ca/sites/default/files/assets/files/CRVS_Compendium_e_WEB.pdf

occurred. Although details were sketchy at the time, the idea to develop the e-birth and e-death notification systems was essentially accepted and drafted on paper.

e-Birth notification system

The e-birth and e-death notification systems were launched in 2016. At that time, the design, development, and implementation of the systems was a project under the Harambee Prosperity Plan. It was led by a technical working group chaired by the Office of the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the MHAI&SS.[20] Two and half years later, in December 2018, the e-birth registration notification system was fully rolled out. It deservedly won the Radiant Launch Award in Bangkok, Thailand that month.

The overall aim of the e-birth notification system is to notify the NPRS electronically when a birth has occurred at a hospital. This secures the birth details of the child, verifies the identity of the mother, and collects accurate data about all children born in Namibia. This is the first step in establishing a child's legal identity.

The system also supports ongoing efforts to reduce late registration of birth: the collected data can be used to pinpoint population groups or areas where non-registration is common. Just as important, the data collected will enable the government to meet the United Nations' standards for compiling vital statistics.

It is the responsibility of the nurse who attended the birth to record the birth details for each child. Only a few pieces of data about the child's health are captured; this is to minimize the administrative burden for nurses. When the birth is registered, all the data captured in the e-birth notification system are extracted using the reference number generated by the system or the mother's ID.

Parents later submit more information to the civil registration office. This office is responsible for establishing the child's first name(s), surname, citizenship, and paternity. As soon as the registrar has captured all the data, an electronic printed birth certificate is issued. The process takes less than five minutes.

The e-birth notification system has been implemented in 51 maternity wards at health centres and 19 clinics across the country. Clinics will only attend deliveries of births in cases where the women will not be able to reach a hospital. When this system was introduced, the MHAI&SS and the MoHSS signed a new memorandum of understanding. By March 2020, notifications were made for more than 137,995 births since the system launched. In 2019, a total of 69,232 birth notifications were captured, only 70 being home births. Police notified the system of five dead infants, presumably live home births where the mothers abandoned the babies shortly after birth. Nurses can notify the system of births as long as they can medically validate that the mother presenting the baby has given birth to the baby. It is common practice that mothers giving birth at home will visit a health facility for a post-natal medical check and to get the child vaccinated.

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20 Harambee Prosperity Plan 2016/2017–2019/2020: Namibian Government's Action Plan Towards Prosperity for All. Launched by President Hage Geingob.

The 2019 birth notification data is an accurate count of the number of births occurring in Namibia. Figure 3.3 shows the number of live births in Namibia reported by health authorities per health facility to the e-birth notification system. The graph shows that most births occur in the major urban centres: Ondangwa, Oshakati, Rundu, Windhoek, and the two coastal towns, Swakopmund and Walvis Bay.
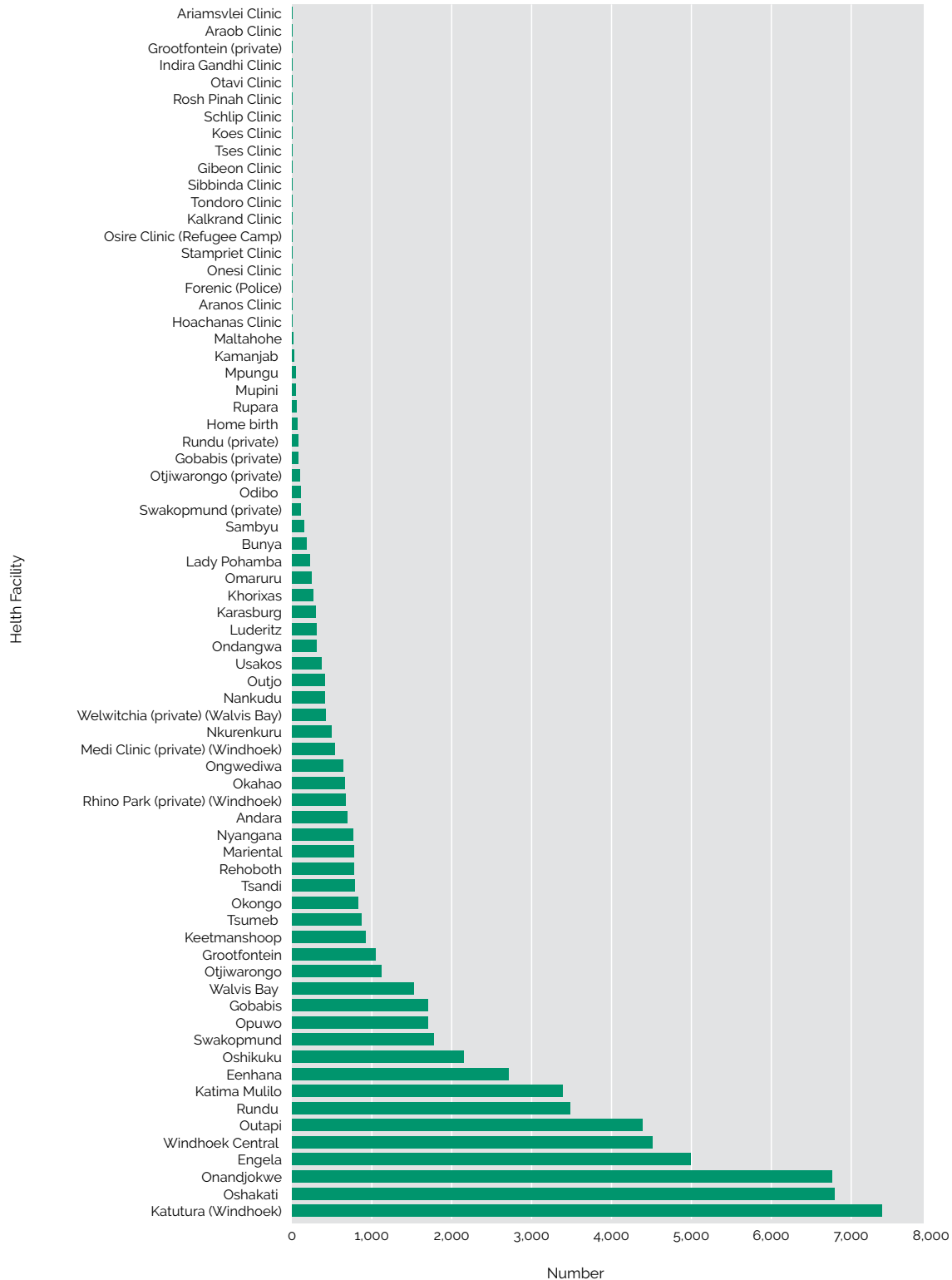
Figure 3.3: Live births reported electronically by the MoHSS in Namibia in 2019.

Source: National Population Registration System (NPRS)

The NPRS ensures that the same event cannot be registered more than once. The real-time connection also allows registrars to verify that the identification credentials that parents present are authentic. Also required is a marriage certificate or an affidavit giving parental consent for each parent not present. Non-citizens or permanent residents must present their immigration status documents and their passport. This new process has made the registration of a birth much quicker, as the registrars only need to capture a few extra pieces of data.

e-Death notification system

Namibia has almost reached universal death registration. According to the Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey 2016 Report, 93.5 percent of deaths were registered in a timely way in 2016.[21] This paper will later look at how the demand side is facilitating the high death registration rates. Capturing accurate data about death details is important for managing government social databases, demographic statistics, and elections.

In June 2018, after an extensive consultation process, the development of the e-death notification system was concluded. The system was piloted in the two state hospitals and at the police mortuary in Windhoek. With a fully functional information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure, the Namibian Police Force swiftly deployed the system to 14 mortuaries across the country. The staff are required to collect information on all deaths occurring outside of the hospital and to notify the government. The system is being rolled out in stages to the hospitals. Inter-ministerial teams from the police, the MoHSS, and the MHAI&SS are leading the training of registrars, nurses, morticians, and doctors.

The purpose of the e-death notification is for all health facilities and police mortuaries to notify the NPRS electronically right after a death has occurred. This is to verify the identity of the deceased at the time of notification, and to limit the issuing of fraudulent death certificates. The data captured in the e-death notification system, including cause of death, will be linked with data about the deceased in the NPRS at the point of death registration. This allows for operational statistics as well as comprehensive vital and mortality statistics to be produced in a timely manner.

Lastly, this new process improves the turnaround time for issuing a death certificate. To prevent delays in registering and certifying deaths, notification can be done without filling in the cause-of-death section. This gives the health practitioner time to determine the cause of death and gives the trained coders time to finish the coding. After the coding is done, the data is saved in the profile of the deceased. This data is not viewable by civil registration staff; a cause-of-death certificate is issued only upon request by the health facility or the police mortuary. The coding is now done in accordance with ICD11, the International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision. MHAI&SS has stopped issuing death certificates that indicate a cause of death.

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21   Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey Report 2016, p. 83.

In Namibia, only the courts are responsible for determining the manner of unnatural deaths through inquests. An application has been designed to allow the manner of death to be captured by the magistrates' courts as soon as the ruling has been made.

Once the notification of the death has been done, the informant must report to an MHAI&SS office to register the death. The death certificate, and a burial order that is simultaneously issued together with the death certificate, allows the relatives to have the body released for burial. In cases where no one claims the body, the police complete the registration.

3.4.4 Improving service delivery: The turnaround initiative

Largely inspired by the improvements at the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa, the MHAI&SS launched a high profile 18-month turnaround project for all MHAI&SS services in May 2014. The key aim was to improve all ministry services and reduce the turnaround time for issuing documents. All ministry processes, including administrative and management processes, were reviewed. Bottlenecks were addressed, and new management tools were introduced. The turnaround strategy was largely a success. Service delivery improved overall through better management of queues and service times.

3.5 The nexus between civil registration and social protection systems

Economic inequality and poverty in Namibia have declined in recent years with support from government policies and heavy investment in social safety nets. The government is spending around 2 percent of GDP annually, one of the highest levels in the African region. This is up from 1.2 percent in 2009–2010. Combined with a decade of robust economic growth, social spending has contributed to a decline in poverty from close to 60 percent at independence, to 28.8 percent in 2009–2010, to 17.4 percent in 2015–2016. However, child poverty remains higher. Economic inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, has also declined: from 0.58 in 2009–2010 to 0.56 in 2015–2016. Still, Namibia is one of the most unequal countries in the world.[22]

- Fifty percent of the increase in direct transfer spending went to the old age pension from 2009–2010 to 2015–2016. All Namibians aged 60 and over qualify, no matter what their income. This pension reduced poverty by 19.1 percent and inequality by 2 percent; it costs 1.3 percent of GDP and covers more than 60 percent of spending in direct transfers.

- In 2019, about 180,000 children accessed direct cash transfers. Data from the Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2015–2016 suggests that more than 170,000 poor children are not benefiting from the grant. The reasons for this are not mentioned.

22   Namibia. 2019. Article IV Consultation. Press release and staff report.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), child poverty declined from 34 percent in 2009–2010 to 20.6 percent in 2015–2016. The IMF concluded that the overall fiscal policy in Namibia significantly reduces poverty and inequality, but the degree of effectiveness of different fiscal instruments varies widely. Direct cash transfers, such as those for foster parents and disability grants, are seen as very progressive, while the veterans' grant is the least progressive direct transfer. Interestingly, the decline in poverty coincided with increases in the birth registration rate.

3.5.1 Birth registration

Government and private medical plans are strong incentives for parents to register the birth of their child in a timely way. A birth certificate is required within 24 hours of birth to settle the hospital bill. This extends to women working in the formal sector who can claim maternity leave benefits from the Social Security Commission, a government maternity pool fund to which all workers contribute. Sadly, for most of the population, few incentives exist to register within the legally set timeframe.

Early reform of the birth registration system was closely linked to enhancements of the child grant system that were introduced in 2000. Birth registration rates for children under 5 years increased from 73.7 percent in 2006 to 88.4 percent in 2014 according to the Demographic Health Surveys published in 2006 and 2014. In the same period, child welfare grants increased by 40 percent.[23] This suggests that efforts to help more people access social protection services by expanding civil registration offices were largely successful. Still, more research is needed to document whether the child cash grants system has encouraged people to register births.

The inter-census data from 2016 shows a slightly different picture. It noted that only 78.1 percent of children are registered before the age of 5. The 2006 and 2014 Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) show that children from low-income households are more likely not to be registered but are likely to be eligible for grants.

3.5.2 Death registration

In the past, poor rural communities did not have the funds or resources to bring a body to the mortuary. Their only option was to bury the body as soon as possible. Now, Namibia has almost reached universal death registration coverage, with 93.7 percent of all deaths within its borders being registered (Figure 3.4). In 2019, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAI&SS) reported 19,109 deaths.

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23 National Planning Commission. The Root Causes of Poverty, p. 41.
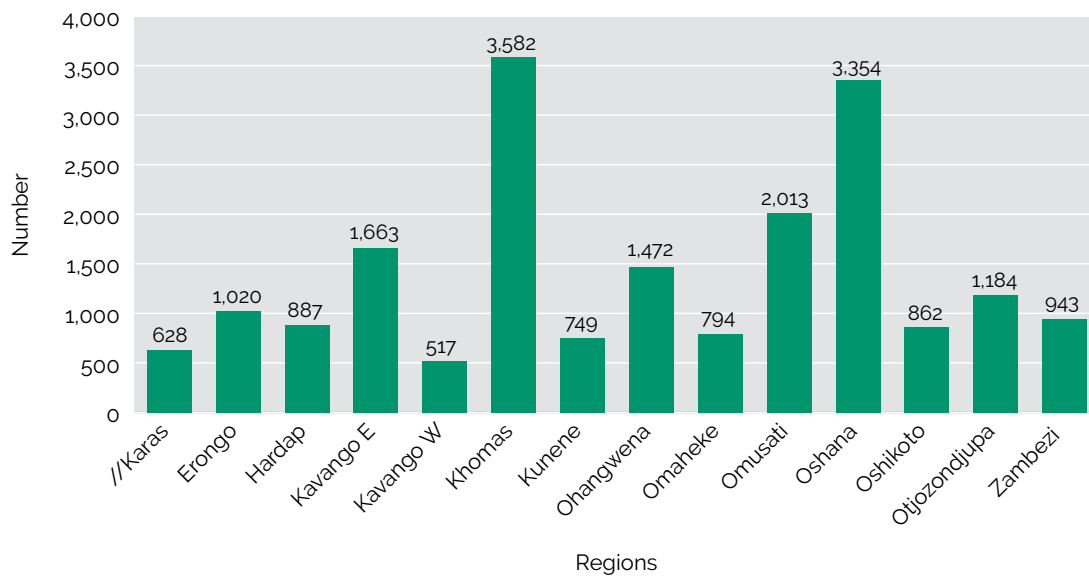
The high death registration rate in Namibia most likely relates to two key factors:

◉ Demand is very strong. Many public and private death benefit plans exist, and the claimant's government issued ID and the death certificate are required for a claim to be processed. The policies or plans that contribute to the high death registration rate are funeral benefits for pensioners and registered veterans of the liberation struggle, the Social Security Commission, and the Motor Vehicle Fund. The Namibian Social Network, which covers different groups of society, requires civil registration and an ID card to register. Also, the *Social Security Act, 1994* (Act No. 34 of 1994) provides for maternity benefits, sick leave, and death benefits.

◉ Identification of the deceased is not required at the time of death registration if no ID exists. However, it is an established procedure that biometrics are always taken to check if a record of the deceased exists in the NPRS. In almost all cases, a body cannot be released from the mortuary without a death certificate. If the body is not collected within a certain period, penalties are enforced.

The death registration rate is expected to increase further: the police have implemented a new policy that obliges mortuary police to collect bodies where the death occurred outside of a hospital, such as at home. In the past, police would typically not collect bodies if a crime was not reported.

Although no research exists to directly prove that there are correlations between access to civil event certificates, identification documents, and poverty reduction, one can safely assume that strengthening civil registration has indirectly contributed to lower poverty rates. In the same way, emphasizing proof of identity to take part in social benefits created a demand for civil registration that greatly contributed to the high registration rates.

3.5.3 Issuing of identity documents

All citizens and permanent residents of Namibia must apply for an identity card at the age of 16. Because of the high demand for positive identification by the public and private sectors, 82.9 percent of people have an ID card. The lowest rate of coverage is among persons aged 16 to 19 (41.3 percent), suggesting that many young people delay registration until there is an immediate reason to get it (Figure 3.5).[24] In Namibia, an ID, often presented along with a birth certificate, is required for most private and public services, such as passport, driver's licence, banking services, permits, direct cash transfers, and job seeking. Public health services are universal and do not require an identity document.

Figure 3.5:
Possession of ID cards in Namibia by age group.

Source: Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey 2016 Report.

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24 Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey 2016 Report, p. 55.
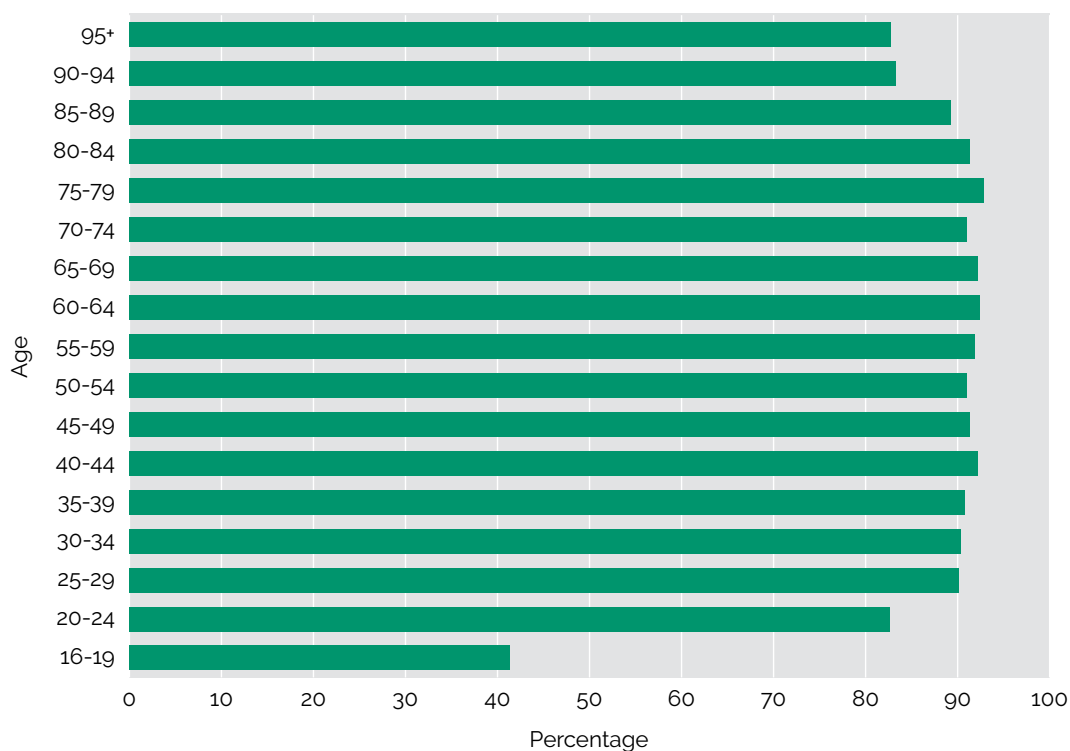
3.6 Latest developments

As noted at the beginning of this paper, the National Population Registration System (NPRS) is seen as the cornerstone of Namibia's e-government policy. Using a new interoperability framework, data can be shared securely between government functional databases. The NPRS will authenticate all identity data entered in other functional databases and push relevant data on death registration.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAI&SS) has signed its first collaboration agreement with the Ministry of Health and Social Services, where the two ministries agreed to collaborate in areas of mutual interest. A similar agreement has been signed with the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare. Similar agreements are pending with other key stakeholder offices, ministries, and agencies, such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Ministry of Veterans Affairs, and Electoral Commission of Namibia. The aim is to enable the institutions to authenticate all identities at the point of database entry, share essential information (such as death details), and improve the management and validity of the stored data.

The *Identification Act, 1996* (Act No. 21 of 1996) empowers the Minister of Home Affairs to share relevant data in the NPRS with some institutions for the purposes of conducting business. Still, the Namibian government has recognized the need for a data protection framework. This is being drafted under the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology. Moreover, legislation reform is underway to enable the private sector to verify identities using the NPRS.

Also, the Office of the Prime Minister, along with key stakeholders, is developing an integrated Social Register that is built on the same principles as the NPRS. This new register will validate identities at the point of entry and receive notification of the death of members. At this time, multiple user ID cards are linked to the service issued, such as a pension, social security card, orphan and vulnerable child card, or veteran's card.

3.7 Continuing barriers to civil registration

The low birth registration rates in the border regions is largely believed to be linked to statelessness and unauthorized or irregular migration across the borders. This situation has had devastating effects on these regions' social indicators, leading the statistics on stunting, unemployment, and school dropouts. Over the years, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAI&SS) has tried to find a legal solution for the large community of Angolans and their descendants who settled in Namibia before independence. They were given South West Africa ID (SWA ID) cards, indicating that they were born in Angola, but had no official documentation issued by Angola.

The new Namibian ID is issued only to citizens and holders of a permanent resident permit. Article 4 of the Namibian Constitution provides requirements for citizenship by birth, descent, marriage, registration, and naturalization, which a number of SWA ID holders do not meet. As they do not have the option of renouncing their Angolan citizenship, which many cannot prove they have, the application for naturalization cannot be finalized. This has also affected their descendants and has become a generational problem.

For birth registration, all children are registered and issued with certificates. In many cases, citizenship and family relationships are determined at a later stage. Officials are obliged to investigate all cases where parents claim to have been born in Namibia, but no official documentation exists. This is done through an on-the-ground investigation by immigration officials. The officials will, among other things, visit the village where the person claims they were born to do interviews.

Another factor that can lead to delayed registration or non-registration of birth relates to the father of the child. For cultural reasons, the mother may delay registration if the father denies paternity or is absent, as the child must be registered with the father's first name or surname. In most Namibian cultures, the father gives the name, usually after the birth. The *Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act* requires that for a man to be registered as father of the child, he must declare paternity in person or submit a statement under oath if he is not married to the child's mother. The majority of children in Namibia are born outside of marriage. According to the UNICEF Situation Analysis, a high number of children grow up with one parent.[25] The MHAI&SS is addressing this issue by encouraging mothers to register their children without the father's details. The details of the father can be added later at no charge. Or, if the mother is in contact with the father, she can ask him to declare paternity under oath in writing and present it at the point of registration.

3.8 Conclusion and key lessons learned

Over the past 30 years, the Namibian civil registration and ID production systems have been strengthened as part of a national strategy to have a more equal society with access to key government and private services. Since independence, poverty has been reduced from almost 60 percent to less than 20 percent. There is little doubt that strengthening the civil registration system has played an important role in giving citizens improved access to direct cash transfers, and thus reducing poverty. Namibia has yet to obtain complete civil registration coverage, but the country has created a solid foundation for its Vision 2030: to be a just, moral, tolerant, and safe society that has legislative, economic, and social structures in place to eliminate marginalization and ensure peace and equity.

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25 unicef.org/namibia/resources_14066.htm

Some of the main lessons learned from Namibia follow:

◉ **The health sector plays a key role in the timely and accurate registration of births and deaths.** This has ensured that Namibia today has one of the most well-functioning and advanced civil registration systems in sub-Saharan Africa. As of 2019, the Namibia Statistics Agency has been able, through an interface, to extract all this data in an anonymized format. If everything goes according to plan, the Namibian government should be able to produce accurate and comprehensive vital and mortality statistics, including causes of death, by the end of 2020.

◉ **There are mutual benefits to interlinking the civil registration and social protection systems.** Civil registration is needed to verify identification to manage entry to social protection databases and facilitate placement of children in foster care and for adoption. Access to social protection systems creates a need for civil registration and strengthens the demand for civil registration documents. An integrated social protection system, inter-operable with the National Population Registration System (NPRS) through the national interoperability framework, is a result of the stronger collaboration between key institutions responsible for cash grants.

◉ **The National Population Registration System was built step by step.** It was a long process with various obstacles: fragmented systems, taboos, cultures, and practices that needed to be taken apart and rebuilt to address the socio-cultural reality of a diverse Namibia. But, as shown in this paper, small projects can have a major impact and can lead to the formation of the next block. The impact of the e-birth and e-death notification systems has yet to be proven and documented. If these systems are used based on the set procedures, it is estimated that 90 to 95 percent of children will have records that were created from birth. This will ensure that they can establish their legal identity and access rights, privileges, and services.

◉ **The validation of people's identities through comprehensive, well-considered, and standardized business processes from the start is extremely important.** This helps to avoid incorrect registrations. In an emergency situation like the one Namibia went through in the 1990s with extremely low registration, it is tempting to lower the requirements for validation. But, as shown above, this can have long-term consequences for individuals and authorities. It is important that all recognized source documents are listed and standard procedures for each case scenario are mapped out for consistent decision-making. A centralized database with remote access is a must to ensure that each person has only one record with one unique identifier. Outsourcing a crucial government responsibility such as civil registration cannot be recommended, as the risk of mishandling the records and procedures becomes higher.

◉ **The assessment and national strategy for civil registration prompted a more holistic and coordinated approach to strengthening the civil registration, vital statistics, and identity management systems in Namibia.** A number of reform initiatives have been launched over the years; just a few of them are highlighted in this paper. The legislative frameworks are also under review: policies, processes, and operational guidelines have been developed over the years to ensure solutions for all recurring case scenarios.

◉ **To a large extent, Namibia has addressed procedural bottlenecks in the system by reviewing and reformulating business processes within the parameters of the law.** This has been done to accommodate persons with double identities, discrepancies in documents, abandoned and orphaned children, and so on. The new legal framework is expected to be presented in Parliament in late 2020; it will examine and strengthen the legislation to ensure that all legal barriers to birth registration are addressed.

◉ **Finally, but often overlooked, is the importance of strong governance and administrative systems within the institutions responsible for civil registration and the production of IDs.** As with any organization, various resources are needed to carry out the mandate: solid human resources management, IT support to maintain the systems, central distribution of secure standardized forms and certificates, the purchasing of office equipment, and so on. In 2014–2015, MHAI went through a huge turnaround project for 18 months, reviewing all processes to improve service delivery. This review also covered MHAI&SS' financial and human resources mechanisms and processes. This has no doubt also contributed to a better functioning civil registration system.

Acronyms

CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
DHS	Namibia Demographic and Health Survey
ID	Identity Document
MGECW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
MHAI&SS	Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security
MoHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
NAMPOL	Namibian Police Force
NPRS	National Population Registration System
NSA	Namibia Statistics Agency
SWA ID	South West Africa Identity Document
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Resident Registration System for Social Protection in South Korea

Hee Joon Song

Contents

Figures

Tables

4.1 Introduction

Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems play a critical role in ensuring individual rights as well as access to justice and social services. By law, these systems provide a universal, ongoing, permanent, and mandatory recording of a person's vital events. Using a comprehensive and efficient resident registration system, South Korea reached universal birth registration several decades ago. This tool makes possible universal coverage that leaves no one behind.

Korea's CRVS systems are made up of three elements:

◉ Family Relationship Registration;

◉ Resident Registration (RR); and

◉ Population Change Survey.

The Family Relationship Registration system confirms family links between individuals. It refers to activities to verify and record vital events such as birth, death, marriage, divorce, and adoption.

The *Resident Registration Act* and Population Change Survey Regulation under the *Statistics Act* were legislated in 1962.

◉ RR is a national identification system that aims to confirm people's residential status and the migration of the population by registering residents living in a certain place for more than a month.

◉ The Population Change Survey Regulation is the main instrument for compiling monthly changes of the population. After the Korean War ended in 1953, South Korea faced an urgent policy need to control social instability caused by threats and infiltrations by North Korea. Also, the government needed to manage the mass migration of the labour force: the launch of the consecutive Five-Year Economic Development Plans meant workers were moving from rural agricultural areas to urban industrial areas.

The Population Change Survey is a national statistics survey. Every month, it collects data on births, deaths, marriages, and divorces from the Family Relationship Registration system, where citizens must report individual changes.

Since they began, the CRVS systems have kept evolving through institutional and technological transformations. These CRVS systems are managed by three authorities. They are subject to different laws, but their operations are closely interrelated. Information on vital events is shared in real time through exclusive government networks. Figure 4.1 shows the birth registration process, which

◉ creates information on Family Relationship Registration, Resident Registration, and the Population Change Survey at the same community service centre of the local government;

◉ delivers medical services to a mother and her newborn infant; and

◉ has the medical expenses of the healthcare institution reimbursed by the National Health Insurance Service.
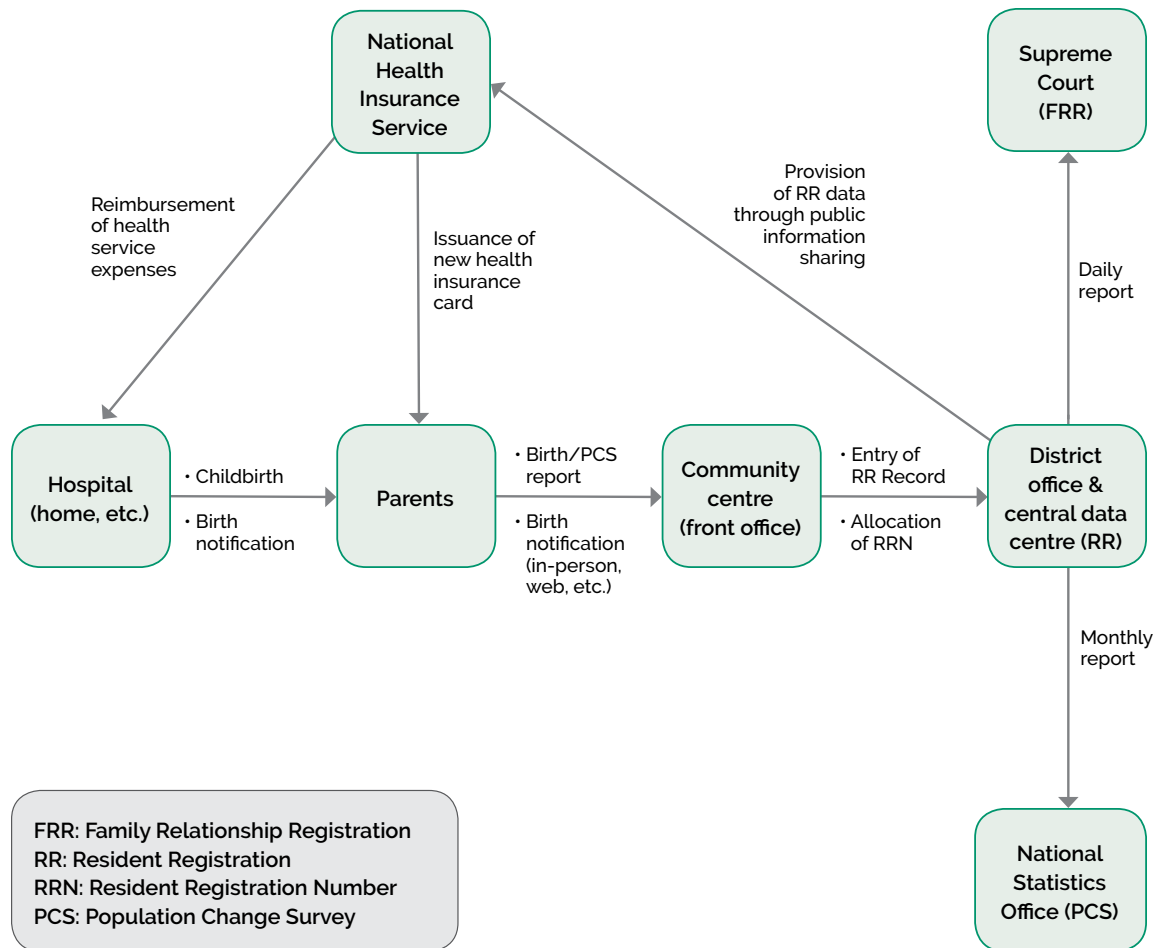
Parents must register their child within 30 days of the birth with a certificate of live birth, or birth notification, issued by a doctor at the community service centre for the birth address (the parents' current address). When a birth report is entered into the Family Relationship Registration system, the infant receives a unique and permanent Resident Registration Number (RRN) and is recorded as a household member of the parents in the regional Family Relationship Registration and RR databases. The information is transmitted through the exclusive government networks and backed up in the national databases of the Supreme Court, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, and the National Statistics Office. The Ministry runs GOV24 (upgraded from Minwon24), a nationwide web portal for integrated civil services related to RR information. Other vital events, like death, marriage, and divorce, are processed in similar ways. Once the RRN is allocated to a person, it serves as the person's unique identification number for life.

The government operates the registration system for aliens who intend to stay for more than 90 days from the date of entry, based on the *Immigration Act*. The Regional Immigration Service issues an Alien Registration Certificate with a 13-digit Alien Registration Number to the alien who files for registration. The Alien Registration Service is processed through the integrated e-Government service.[1] An alien with granted status of stay as an employed person is eligible for the National Health Insurance Service and other social programs, using his or her Alien Registration Certificate and Number.

4.2 Identification for social protection

4.2.1 Changing the purposes of the Resident Registration system

Since 1962, the primary purpose of the Resident Registration (RR) system has shifted flexibly to meet policy needs. The original purpose of the RR system in the 1960s was to control social security and monitor the migration of rural and agricultural populations to urban and industrial areas.

In the 1980s, the main function of the RR system changed: the goal was now to efficiently manage the RR affairs that were fundamental to other administrative tasks. In 1987, the government started national priority databases like RR, real estate, automobile, and finance to streamline and automate the administrative processes. For example, developing national databases made it possible to enforce transactions of commercial banks with customers under their real names and register real estate under an actual titleholder's name. This helps to prevent financial crimes and enhance administrative transparency.

In the 2000s, the government became able to provide personalized services to residents at any time, in any place, through e-Government systems. The RR information linked to social welfare programs is essential when it comes to quickly identifying needy residents in welfare blind spots and delivering the proper services to them. The purpose of the *Resident Registration Act* (Article 1) changed from "to manage administrative affairs properly and simply" in 1968 to "to promote convenience in the lives of residents and to properly manage administrative affairs" in 1997.

Figure 4.2 shows the changes in the RR system's policy purposes. The primary goal has shifted from controlling national security and monitoring the rural labour force's migration in the 1960s to making government administration more efficient through building key national databases in the 1980s. When the government began to develop nationwide eGovernment systems in the 2000s, the RR information became the prime object of sharing among institutions so they could provide Internet-based integrated services. The RR system is now a primary tool for providing various social welfare services to citizens in a seamless way.

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1   Hi Korea. E-Government for foreigners. hikorea.go.kr
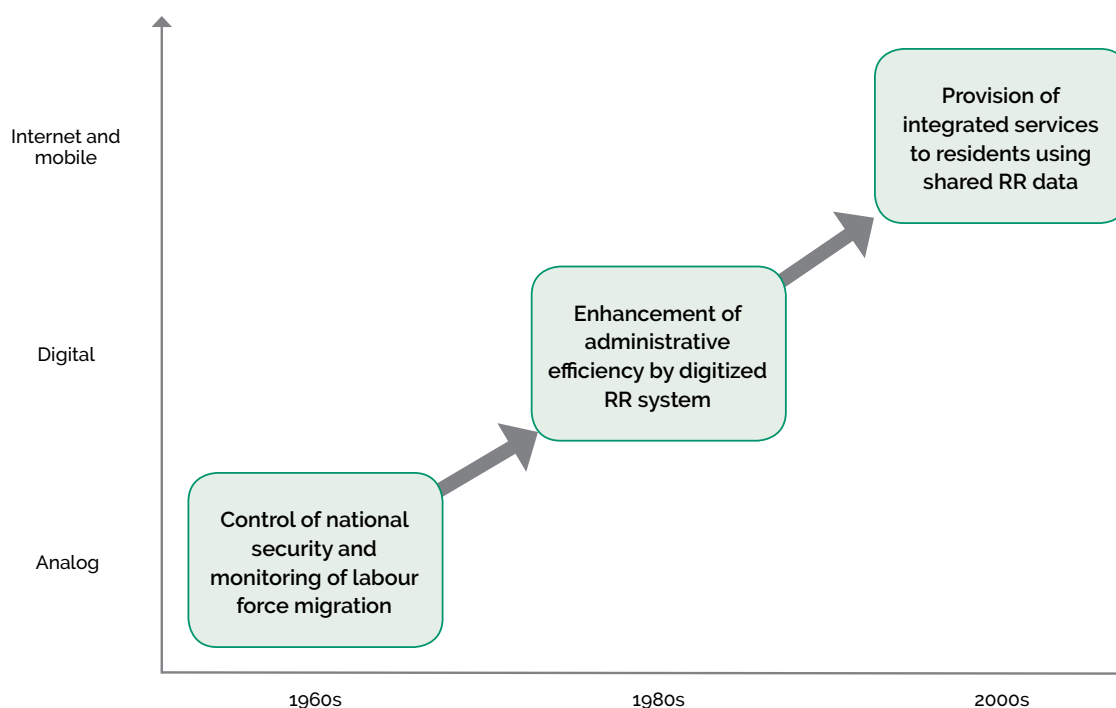
4.2.2 Life-cycle protection from cradle to grave

Once a new birth is registered and the person is given a Resident Registration Number (RRN) in the Resident Register, he or she receives various public services using RR information throughout the life cycle, from childhood to the senior years. Local government pays a number of childbirth subsidies and childcare benefits. The GOV24 system provides people with convenient access to one-stop services for all births. Here are a few examples of administrative activities and public services linked to the RR system:

- Newborns: RRN, birth subsidies, and benefits;

- Children: Vaccination notices for infants, childcare fees support, notice of elementary school enrollment (age 7);

- Teenagers: Notice of middle and high school enrollment (age 13), National ID card (over age 17);

- Youth: Permission to vote in elections (over age 19), opening of bank accounts and mobile phone subscription, transmission of high school records to colleges;

- Adults: Employment (health insurance, pension, employment insurance, etc.), notification of taxes owed, house leasing for the poor; and

- Seniors: Payment of national pension, medical care service, free transit pass.

Parents with preschool-aged children receive notices about these services from the local government that has jurisdiction over their RR data. Parents of school-aged children (primary

and secondary school) receive these notices from the local education office. Adults (ages 20 and up) receive them from the local government.

Life-cycle services end when

◉ a death is registered to the Family Relationship Registration system of the relevant community centre; or

◉ a cohabiter or caretaker reports the death within a month after learning of it, using a doctor's death notification or a post-mortem examination certificate.

The local government must make the relevant addition, correction, and deletion on the RR records after receiving a report of a resident's death via the Family Relationship Registration system. The information on the death is sent online to all agencies in charge of inheritance, social insurance, commercial transactions, and so on.

4.2.3 Education

Under the compulsory education system of elementary and middle schools, the local government sends elementary school entrance data in the region to the National Education Information System (NEIS) of the Local Education Office. It also sends admission notifications to parents with children at the age of 7 by mail and other communication channels. Figure 4.3 shows the role of students' RRNs in the processes of elementary and middle school education through the NEIS. The RR information is needed for college students to apply for grants, scholarships, and loan programs that the government runs.
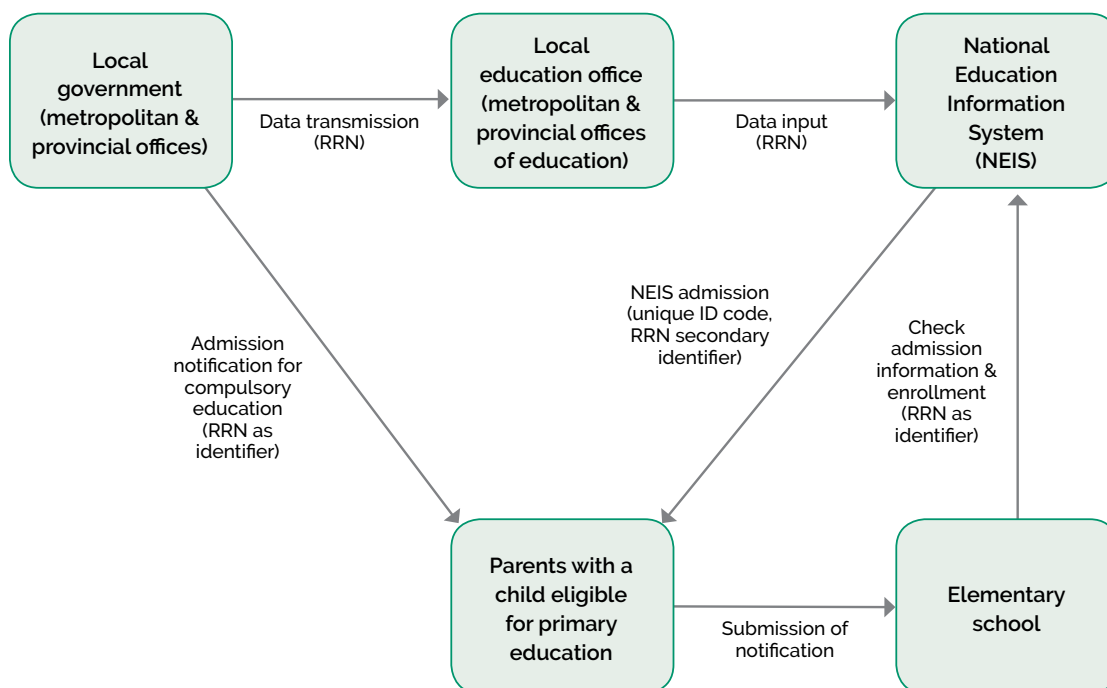
Figure 4.3: The RRN system and elementary and middle school education.

Source: Author

Parents must submit the admission notification they get from the local government to the school their child will enter. The school checks admission and enrollment information that is stored in the NEIS. The child's RRN is a digital identifier for all activities and processes related to the NEIS. Parents can access the home page of the NEIS and ask for information on their children. The NEIS provides information on physical education, school meals and nutrition, medical checkups, and vaccination to parents. It also provides academic grades and records of high school students to universities that need to screen their admission.

4.2.4 Social security services

The Korean government has three kinds of social security services, including four types of social insurance, public assistance, and other social security programs. With the rapid economic growth since the 1960s, the central and local governments have introduced various welfare programs (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1:
Korea's social security system.

Source: National Health Insurance Service.[2]

Category	System
Social insurance	• Health insurance, long-term care insurance for the elderly • National pension • Unemployment insurance • Industrial accident compensation insurance
Public assistance	• Basic living security system • Medical benefit
Social security	• Welfare of the aged • Welfare of the disabled • Child and female welfare • Medical, psycho-social assistance

Every citizen who works no less than 15 hours a week at a workplace with more than one employee is required to register for four compulsory kinds of social insurance to get

◉ medical treatment from the National Health Insurance Service;

◉ income after retirement from the National Pension Service;

◉ medical treatment and income for workers who have had industrial accidents; and

◉ post-layoff re-employment opportunities from the Korea Workers' Compensation and Welfare Service.

An employee is insured as of the first day of work. The employer must report the worker's employment information to the relevant institutions through information systems within 14 days.

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2   nhis.or.kr/static/html/wbd/g/a/wbdga0301.html

The National Pension Service is a social insurance program that guarantees a stable lifetime source of income for seniors and retirees when they reach the eligible age. (They must have fulfilled their 10-year contribution payment after enrolling in the National Pension Service between the ages of 18 and 60.) Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance compensates for a worker's industrial accident and promotes his or her rehabilitation and return to society. Under this program, persons who are unable to work due to an industrial accident or disease are eligible for government assistance for as long as they need it. To prevent unemployment and facilitate employment, the government provides Employment Insurance that increases the worker's vocational skills development, strengthens occupational guidance, stabilizes his or her life, and promotes job seeking by providing the benefits unemployed workers need.

The four compulsory social insurance systems have a single portal: Social Insurance Information System. It shares information resources among systems operated by three social security organizations – National Health Insurance Service, National Pension Service, and Korea Workers' Compensation and Welfare Service – and improves social security services for customers.[3] Services that the Social Insurance Information System provides include

- electronic submission of an application or claim form;

- registration query on the common web portal;

- one-stop receipt of common online forms a worker uses to declare they are entitled to benefits; and

- information sharing through the database systems that are commonly used in the four insurance systems.

The RRNs of people who are insured offer key data for the four social insurance services. The services share common information and process the customers' business.

4.2.5 Health insurance

The National Health Insurance offers universal coverage for the whole population. Health insurance policyholders (employee insured and self-employed insured) or their dependents are eligible for National Health Insurance. Every person has a right to receive health insurance benefits and a duty to pay contributions.

Every member of the population – employee insured, self-employed insured, and their dependents – has his or her own unique RRN. This RRN is used to certify the person's identity in every process of health insurance service between the insured, the National Health Insurance Service, the Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service, and healthcare institutions, such as hospitals and pharmacies (Figure 4.4). All health insurance policyholders must pay insurance premiums to the National Health Insurance Service and pay their portion of the insurance payment as co-insurance to the medical service provider.

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3   Social Security Information System (SSiS). 2016. 4insure.or.kr/ins4/ptl/Main.do
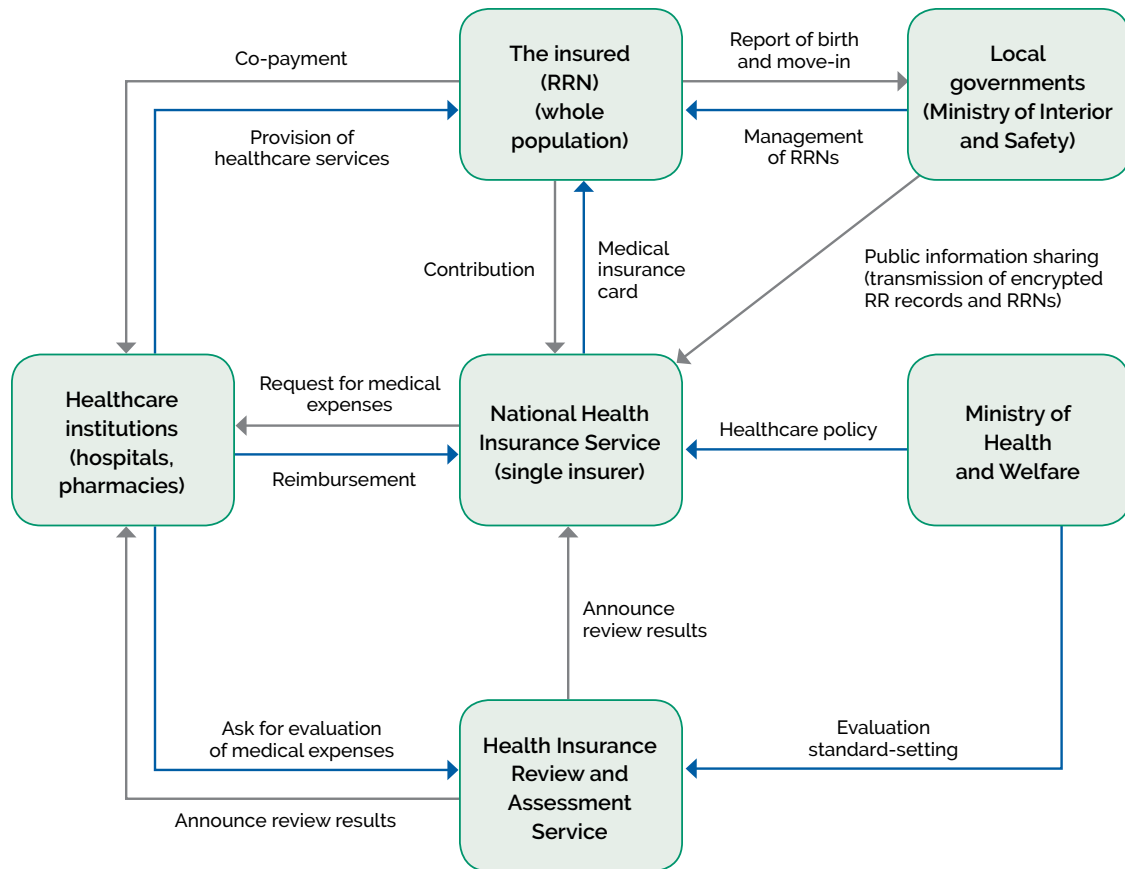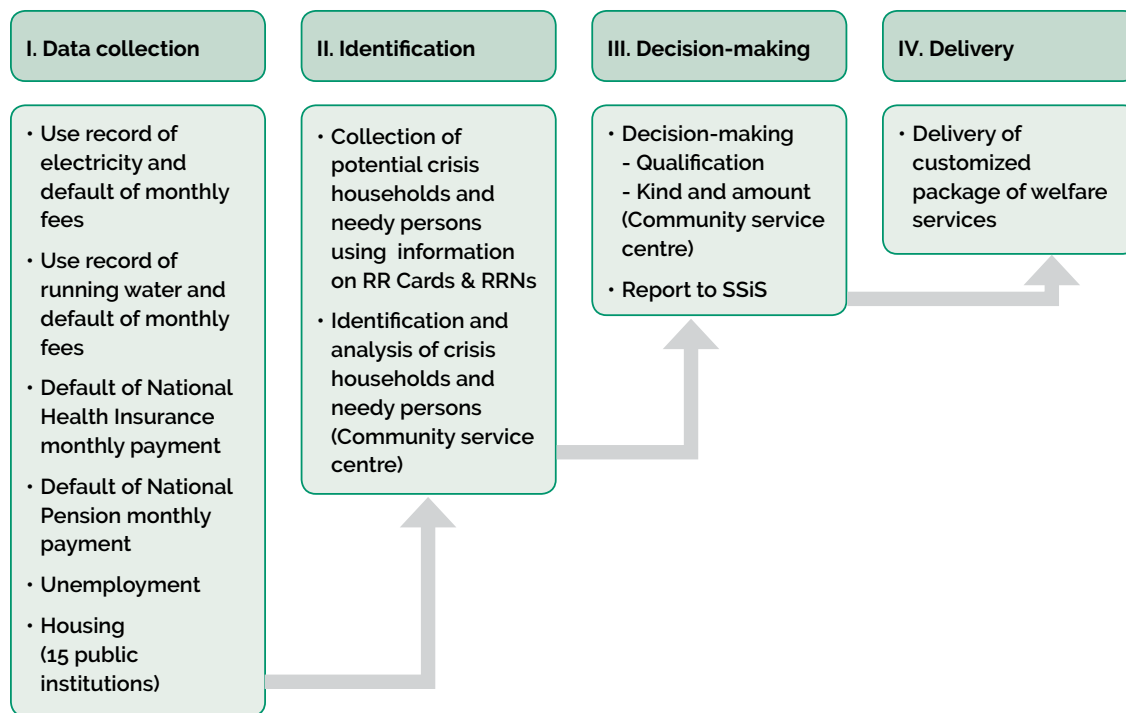
As the single insurer, the National Health Insurance Service makes sure that insurance policyholders and their dependents are eligible for benefits. It also imposes and collects all insurance premiums and manages insurance payments to medical service providers. Local government provides the updated data on the encrypted RR records and RRNs of the insured to the National Health Insurance Service through the Public Information Sharing Center. The National Health Insurance Service sends a new medical insurance card to the insurance policyholder as soon as it receives information on the RRN and RR Record of a newborn baby through the Public Information Sharing Center. The National Health Insurance Service also makes insurance payments after the Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service reviews and assesses the proper costs. The Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service determines healthcare service costs and assesses whether the costs are adequate based on the standards the Ministry of Health and Welfare sets. Around 90,000 healthcare institutions throughout the country provide services to patients after checking their RRNs, then ask the National Health Insurance Service to pay medical expenses.

The National Health Insurance Service and Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service use RR data to confirm the insured, deliver notices, and apply for health services. However, information on the individual RRN of the insured person is not sent to the Ministry of Health and Welfare. The Ministry uses only aggregated data to create health policy.

4.2.6 Public assistance and social security

A series of family suicide cases in the 2010s, where family members were greatly distressed because of poverty and other hardships, led to much public concern. People urged the government to create measures to tackle social welfare blind spots across the country.

The first measure was to launch the emergency monitor and identify crisis households in blind spots between multiple welfare programs. The government analyzed about 27 kinds of data held by 15 public institutions in charge of electricity, water resources, liquefied natural gas, catastrophe, housing, and more. Officials and social workers of the community service centre reviewed the list of households, using information on households that have not used electricity, running water, and liquefied natural gas, and/or have defaulted on monthly premium payments of health insurance and other kinds of social insurance for several months. By using the RR system, officials and social workers analyzed collected data and identified crisis households. Next, they did an on-site review and decided whether the household qualified for support, what kind, and what amount. Finally, recipients got a package of services tailored to their needs. Figure 4.5 shows the process of identifying welfare blind spots and providing government services.

I. Data collection	II. Identification	III. Decision-making	IV. Delivery

• Use record of electricity and default of monthly fees
• Use record of running water and default of monthly fees
• Default of National Health Insurance monthly payment
• Default of National Pension monthly payment
• Unemployment
• Housing (15 public institutions)
	• Collection of potential crisis households and needy persons using information on RR Cards & RRNs
	• Identification and analysis of crisis households and needy persons (Community service centre)
		• Decision-making
		  - Qualification
		  - Kind and amount (Community service centre)
		• Report to SSiS
			• Delivery of customized package of welfare services

Figure 4.5: Process of identifying welfare blind spots.

Source: Author

The government used the emergency monitoring system of low-income households to identify hundreds of thousands of persons in welfare blind spots in winter, then gave them the assistance they needed, such as heating, electricity, and clothing.

Period (November–February)	Persons identified in welfare blind spots, in thousands	Persons assisted by the government, in thousands
2016–2017	532.0	343.0 (64.5%)
2017–2018	599.0	357.0 (59.6%)
2018–2019	685.0	423.0 (61.8%)

Second, to meet increasing social needs since the 2000s, all levels of government launched a number of welfare programs. Because they were not coordinated, there was some overlap. In 2016, ministries of the central government provided about 300 welfare programs and 243 local autonomous governments ran about 6,000 other programs.[4] This situation urged the government to close loopholes in welfare budgets due to duplicate applications and illegal recipients on the one hand, and to identify welfare blind spots on the other hand. The Social Security Information Service reported that it recovered $1.66 hundred million between 2014 and 2017 by cracking down on illegal and duplicate welfare benefit payments.[5] The Social Security Information Service provides integrated information to central and local governments, social service institutions, social welfare facilities, health institutions, and others. It then supports the implementing of social welfare policies and customized welfare policies.[6]

4.3 Structure and functions of the Resident Registration system

4.3.1 Components of the Resident Registration system

The Resident Registration (RR) system, which the above identification system for social protection relies on, consists of three elements:

- the RR Record;
- a 13-digit RR Number (RRN); and
- a RR Card (National ID card).

When all or some members of a household change their address, the person obligated to report the new address must report it to the community service centre within 14 days of moving in. A resident's move-in report is seen as his or her move-in report for military service

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4   Social Security Information Service (SSiS). 2018. Republic of Korea. *The Stepping-Stone Brochure* ssis.or.kr/eng/lay1/bbs/S6T33C35/F/22/list.do;jsessionid=TQ7XFawofaN31qGi3jCnrs8sDVE4C1B Sf3i1iMkA4x0cVT3dycFIsg799w9ajUfo.CAPP02_servlet_WWWEng2

5   Social Security Information Service (SSiS). Republic of Korea. Major Performance. ssis.or.kr/eng/lay1/S6T1066C1067/contents.do

6   Social Security Information Service (SSiS). Republic of Korea. ssis.or.kr/eng/index.do

(notification of conscription and call-up), civil defense, national basic living security, National Health Insurance, and the welfare of disabled persons, including emergency monitoring for social assistance.

The local government prepares, keeps, manages, and preserves the RR Record for each individual and each household along with a logbook by household in RR databases. While the individual RR Record card contains information on 11 items – such as the head of household's name and relationship with the individual, move-in and move-out dates, and reason for the move – the household RR Record card includes eight items, such as the head of household's name, household number, and cohabiter. The databases are sent to the central database system for permanent backup, which is done by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety.

The 13-digit Resident Registration Number (RRN) is a unique registration number that the government issues to a resident. The RRN contains information on certain physical characteristics, like date of birth, gender, and region of birth or registration. It has description, verification, and authentication functions to validate a person's identity, because no two persons have the same RRN.[7] The RRN is valid for life; it can be changed only in exceptional cases.

As with the national identity card, the RR Card verifies that a person is a resident who is registered in a specific local government area. The local government issues an RR Card to every person in the area who is at least 17 years old. It contains the person's name, RRN, address, identification photo, and right thumbprint. Submitting information on blood type is optional. When a resident applies for the RR Card, 10 fingerprints are collected and stored in the databases of the National Police Service. Some non-governmental organizations opposed the collection of 10 fingerprints, which might infringe upon human rights. The Constitutional Court, however, ruled that "fingerprint is neutral bio-information that does not represent personal characteristics since it cannot be used to determine and judge the personality, physical attributes or socio-economic status of an individual" and, therefore, "the collection of ten fingerprints for criminal investigation only does not infringe a person's right of self-determination regarding personal information protection."[8]

Public agencies, social organizations, and business entities use the RR Card to verify a person's identity when receiving a civil petition, issuing a certificate to recognize the qualification of a person, or verifying a person's identity for any other reason. When arresting a criminal or performing his or her judicial duty, any police officer may demand that a person show his or her RR Card if it is needed to verify his or her identity or place of residence. For convenience, it is recommended that residents carry their RR Card with them. If a person loses the RR Card, his or her RRN and other sensitive information may be leaked. In contrast, instructions on the Social Security Card in the United States, for example, say "do not carry this card with you" and "keep it in a safe place."

7   Song, Hee Joon et al. 2007. A Study on the Development of Resident Registration Systems (Korean version), Research Report, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, p. 54.

8   Constitutional Court, 26 May 2005 and 28 May 2015.

4.3.2 Resident Registration system and e-Government

Since the 2010s, South Korea has been known for keeping its leading edge in e-Government readiness, according to the United Nations e-Government Survey. The Korean government developed information systems in four steps:

◉ First, the government left ministries and agencies to introduce their own computer systems within their jurisdiction from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. This led to numerous "islands of automation," which limited horizontal collaboration and information sharing.

◉ Second, the government began to launch the first National Basic Information System Project in 1987. It aimed to develop six priority databases for public administration: the RR, real estate, automobile, employment, statistics, and the Population Change Survey in the early 1990s. As high-speed broadband networks became available, the government launched automated CRVS tasks linked to all levels of government.

◉ Third, the government started key e-Government projects that provided front-office services online in the early 2000s. Minwon24, upgraded to GOV24[9] in 2017, was set up as a government-wide portal that provided online services, including about 5,300 kinds of guides, 3,000 kinds of applications, and 1,000 kinds of issuance through public information sharing systems that were linked to the websites of public institutions. Also, the government developed the National Health Insurance and Social Security Information systems since the 2000s.
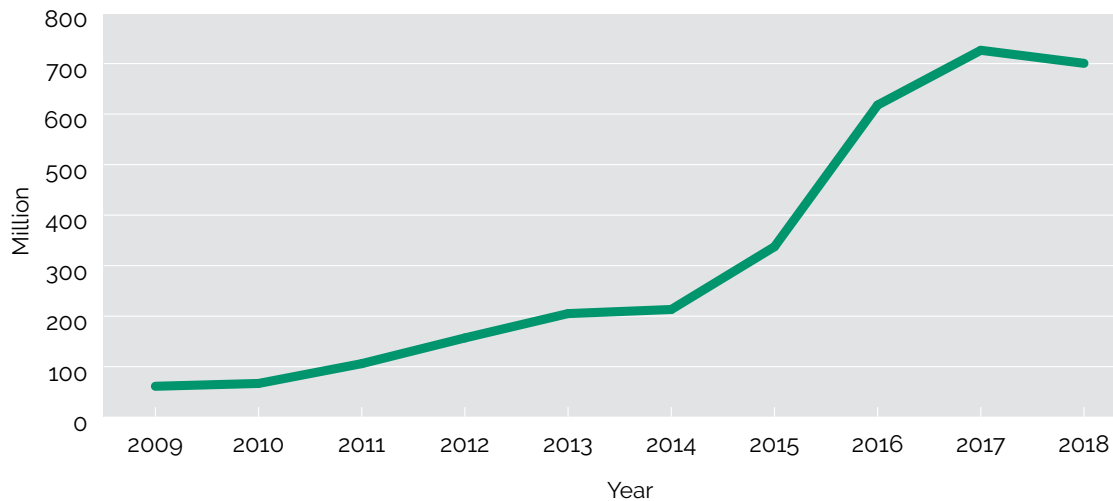
The Public Information Sharing Center is the outcome of the whole-of-government approach to e-Government. Data-owning and data-using agencies share legally designated public data in an encrypted format through the Public Information Sharing Center. In this case, a personal information controller has a duty to safely keep RRNs using encryption so they are not lost, stolen, divulged, forged, or altered. Figure 4.6 shows a rapid increase in residents' use of the Public Information Sharing Center for their civil applications for 10 years. In 2018, the Public Information Sharing Center (726 million) was used around 12 times more than in 2009 (61 million). The RR Record, Family Relationship Registration,[10] building and house registration, land registration, and local tax are ranked as the top five among 166 kinds of shared information between 35 data-owning agencies and 744 data-using agencies.[11] An increase in the use of the Public Information Sharing Center means fewer paper documents are needed to check that an applicant is eligible by identifying his or her residential, familial, and financial information. When a using agency shares administrative information that contains personal information through the Public Information Sharing Center, it must obtain the applicant's prior consent so he or she knows the purpose, object, and scope of sharing information. If an applicant does not consent

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9   GOV24. Official portal of the Korean government. gov.kr

10 The Supreme Court provides an online guide to Family Relationship Registration through the GOV24 portal and issues Family Relationship Registration certificates online through the electronic Family Relationship Registration System, not through the Public Information Sharing Center, to separate legislative, administrative, and judicial powers. efamily.scourt.go.kr

11 Public Information Sharing System. share.go.kr/main_www_2018.jsp

to the service agency using the Public Information Sharing Center, he or she must file, in person, relevant paper documents to the agency, which is a waste of time and money. Every citizen has the right to request access to the records of the using agency and to know the purpose, object, scope, and time of sharing his or her personal information through the Public Information Sharing Center to prevent data leaks and abuse by irrelevant agencies.

Figure 4.6: Annual changes of numbers using the Public Information Sharing Center system. (Unit: use case)

Source: www.index.go.kr/potal/main/EachDtlPageDetail.do?idx_cd=1025

◉ Finally, the government recognizes the rapidly changing environments of e-Government, such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, big data, 5G networks, and so on. The government plans to use these hyper-connecting technologies to provide personalized services to residents and reduce welfare blind spots.

To avoid abuse of the RRN and other personal information by public institutions, user agencies should get the prior consent of the RRN owner so he or she knows the reason for sharing the information. Also, any person has the right to request access to information on the user agency, the reason for sharing the RRN, and when the information is shared.

4.3.3 The RRN as sensitive personal information

The RRN is classified as sensitive personal information. It is personally identifiable information whose use is strictly limited by Acts concerning the RR system. The RRN was, however, a convenient tool for digital identification in the 2000s, as e-Government and e-commerce in society rapidly expanded. Figure 4.7 shows a contrasting pattern of the primary usage of the RRN between the public and private sectors. While the most frequent use in the public sector is to comply with legal duties (62.8 percent), personal identification (57.5 percent) is the most frequent use in the private sector.
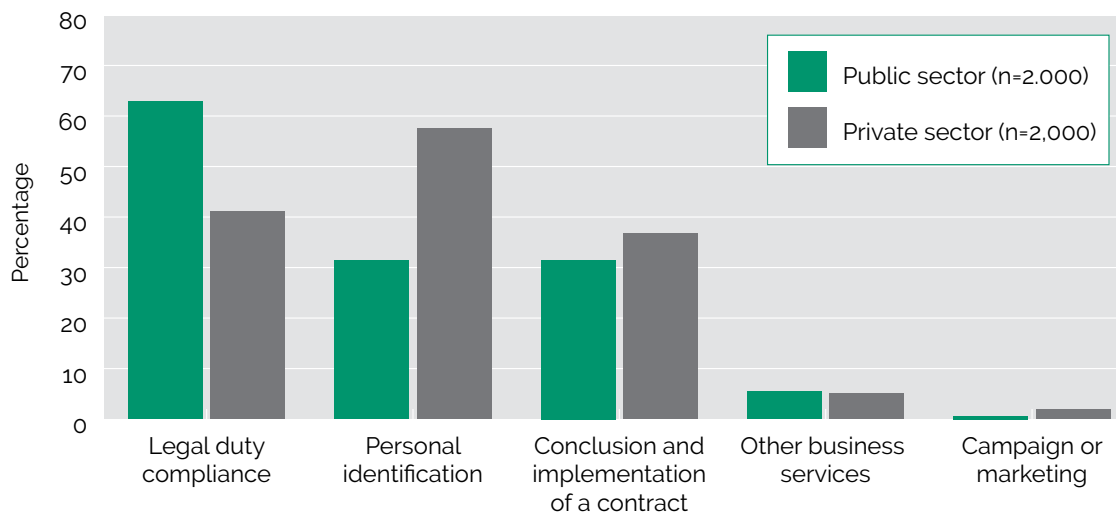
An RRN contains information that describes a person's biological characteristics, such as age and gender. It is used to verify his or her identity by combining a unique name and specified address. It provides the authentication function of the person that verifies his or her unique and exclusive identity online. Because of the RRN's functions, illegal or improper collection and use of RRNs that were not under the government's strict regulation caused frequent financial frauds and crimes, raising serious concerns among the public. The government revised all Acts containing RRN-related information in the 2010s in a way that restricts the use of RRNs in order to strengthen personal information protection in the public and private sectors.

First, the *Personal Information Protection Act* introduced a new Article 24-2 to strictly limit the processing of RRNs. A personal information controller should not process any RRN, except in any of the following cases: (1) where any Act and Presidential Decree require or permit the processing of RRNs in a concrete manner; or (2) where it is deemed explicitly necessary for protecting from impending danger, the life, body, and property of a data subject or a third party.

Second, although the RRN usually used to be valid for life, the newly revised RR Act (Articles 7-4 and 7-5) now permits the local government to promptly change the applicant's RRN – through the examination and resolution of the Committee for Change of RRNs – when he or she receives the application of a person who suffers or is likely to suffer any danger or injury to safety, health, or property due to revealing his or her RRN. Around 1,100 persons of 1,770 who requested the change of their RRNs due to voice phishing, theft, and abuse of RRNs, injury to safety, or damage to property, were permitted to do so during the last three years.[12]

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12   Resident Registration Number Change Committee. rrncc.go.kr/frt/main.do

Third, the *Act on the Promotion of Information and Communications Network Utilization and Information Protection* states that except for the following cases, a provider of information and communications services is not permitted to collect and use users' RRNs:

1. where the provider is designated as the identification service agency;

2. where collection and use of users' RRNs is authorized by statutes; and

3. where the Korea Communications Commission makes a public announcement for the provider of information and communications services who inevitably collects and uses users' RRNs for his or her business purposes.

Even where the collection or use of users' RRNs is authorized, an alternative identification method must be provided. The private sector uses the following items as the preferred means of authentication: mobile phone number (62.5 percent), email address (35.3 percent), and digital certification (I-PIN) (20.2 percent). The public sector uses the I-PIN (71.3 percent), mobile phone number (66.4 percent), and accredited certificate (16.3 percent).[13] See Figure 4.8.
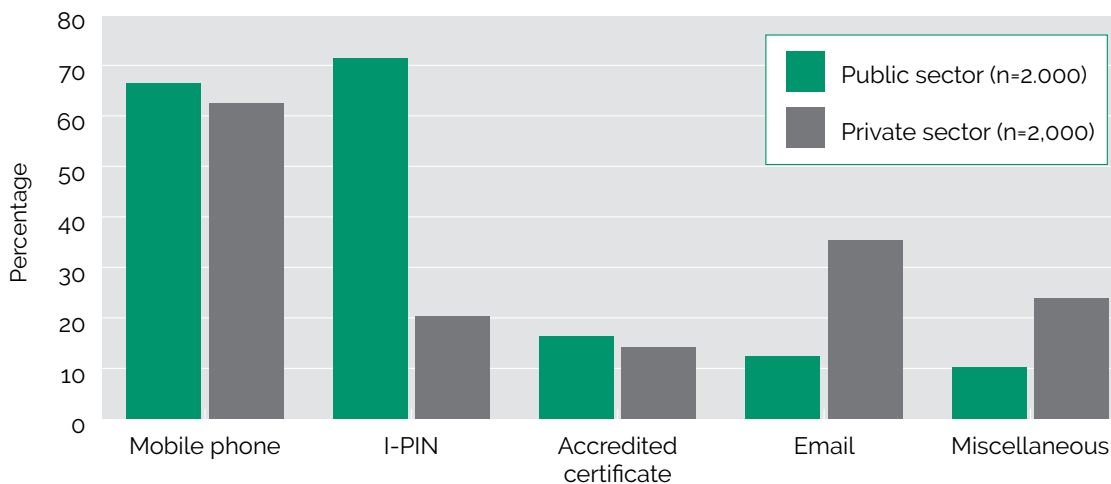
Figure 4.8: Alternate methods of digital authentication (percentage).

Source: Personal Information Protection Commission, 2019.

13 Personal Information Protection Commission. 2019. 2018 Personal Information Protection Survey Report, p. 43. pipc.go.kr/cmt/main/english.do

4.4 Policy implications

4.4.1 Resident Registration system with universal coverage

The Resident Registration (RR) system of Korea is a national identification system. It offers universal, ongoing, permanent, and compulsory recording of vital events of the whole population. While the basic structure of the RR and work processes between agencies remain almost unchanged, its main purpose has been transformed to meet administrative and social needs: from controlling and monitoring residences and migration of the labour force to national security in the 1960s; to the pursuit of efficiency in RR administration in the 1980s; to providing integrated health and welfare services to residents in the 2000s. As a unique number for each person, the Resident Registration Number (RRN) is valid for life and can be changed only in exceptional cases as stated in the related Acts.

With the *E-Government Act*, the government adopted the principles of e-Government that each administrative agency must observe:

◉ digitizing public services and making the process more convenient for citizens;

◉ ensuring that information systems are secure and reliable;

◉ protecting personal information and privacy;

◉ sharing administrative information; and

◉ preventing duplication of investment and improving interoperability.

Nationwide e-Government systems make it easier for public agencies to use the RRN as a key digital authentication tool for sharing information between agencies. This enables the government to reduce duplication and unnecessary paperwork. Hundreds of data-owning and data-using agencies share legally designated public data, such as the RRN, in an encrypted format through the Public Information Sharing Center. This helps them provide integrated services to residents.

4.4.2 Identification tool for social protection

At present, the government of Korea uses the RR system as a prime tool to provide universal services such as health care and social insurance to the whole population. It also uses the RR system to detect, monitor, and protect vulnerable residents in welfare blind spots.

When a new birth is registered in the household's RR Record, the person receives various government services throughout the life cycle, from childhood to the senior years. When a person goes on to the next stage of education, the government assesses his or her qualification for benefits using the RR information. Front-office officials and workers examine and determine a person's eligibility, benefits, and contribution payment using the RRN information. It is linked to all workplaces for four compulsory social insurance systems, including the National Health Insurance System.

Also, e-Government systems strengthen central and local governments' ability and opportunity to prevent welfare budgets from being wasted by duplicate applications and illegal beneficiaries. These systems also identify social welfare blind spots by monitoring low-income households using aggregated RRN data. The Public Information Sharing Center is a valuable system that facilitates complicated inter-agency processes conveniently and simply.

4.4.3 Protection of personal information

In 2016, the Korean government introduced strict legal, administrative, and technological countermeasures to protect personal identification information and attributes. Any person who uses another person's RRN, or any person who shares information about another person's RRN to seek profit, violating the Resident Registration-related Acts, is to be punished by imprisonment or a fine. Public agencies with appropriate legal authority can use RRNs only for strictly limited purposes. The private sector can collect and use RRNs only under even stricter conditions. Since 2015, government officials in charge of Resident Registration, the Public Information Sharing System, and other tasks related to personal information must take special training on protecting personal information. These measures have greatly contributed to reducing infringements on RRN information.[14] The Korean government is now preparing for a legislative measure to respond to the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation, which came into effect in May 2018.

14   Korea Internet and Security Agency, *2018 Korean Internet White Paper*, p. 96.

Acronyms

CRVS   Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System

IoT   Internet of Things

NEIS   National Education Information System

RR   Resident Registration

RRN   Resident Registration Number

SSiS   Social Security Information Service

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The Impact of Civil Registration on the Social Protection System: A Case Study of Tunisia

Fourat Dridi

Contents

Figures

5.1 Civil status registry and legal identity

The *Code du Statut Personnel* (Personal Status Code), enacted on 13 August 1956, was the first step in radical reform by the Tunisian civil status system: it prohibited polygamy and regulated marriage and divorce procedures. Before this law came into effect, a husband could easily break the bonds and obligations of marriage. All he had to do was make a simple declaration before a notary or two witnesses, with a mere notification to the repudiated wife. A wife, on the other hand, had to overcome huge legal and social hurdles to divorce her husband.

Over the past six decades, the civil status system in Tunisia has gone through a number of changes. Today, it forms part of the foundation for the social protection system.

Women's rights are better protected since the law entered into force on 1 January 1957:

- Both spouses must be of legal age and express their mutual consent to marry;
- If they separate, one spouse or both spouses must begin divorce proceedings; and
- The judge is the only one who can make a decision and set the conditions of separation (such as custody of children and alimony).

Law No. 57-3 regulating civil status was enacted on 1 August 1957. It created a genuine Tunisian civil registration system one week after the Tunisian Republic was proclaimed and the hereditary monarchy was abolished. The law reorganized one of the foundations of the new state: the modernizing of the civil status system. It became secular and uniform, applying to all, no matter what their ethnic or religious background. Declaring births and deaths, which had been optional for Tunisian nationals, became mandatory. People who did not register births and deaths faced criminal penalties.

5.1.1 Organizational arrangements

The registration of civil events (births, marriages, divorces) has since begun to be systematic and subject to strict legal rules. The registration of deaths was instituted by Article 76 of Law 75-33, dated 14 May 1975. A medical certificate must be presented to register a death and to get a burial permit by the same municipal services.

Until 2016, the whole civil registration system in Tunisia was managed by the Ministry of the Interior, through its General Directorate of Local Government. That office was in charge of all municipal affairs. By government decree No. 2016-365 (18 March 2016), the Directorate was transferred to the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment.

The *Code des Collectivités Locales* (Code for Local Communities), enacted on 9 May 2018, increased the number of municipalities from 264 to 350 to cover the whole territory. Today, the civil registration system is more decentralized. It includes:

- A civil registry bureau in 350 principal offices attached to local government offices;
- 170 subsidiary offices, annexes, and mobile units; and
- 85 Tunisian consular missions or diplomatic posts with a registration office.

At the same time, the system is under the authority and control of the Ministry of Justice through a tribunal of competent jurisdiction for each district (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Institutional map of the Tunisian civil registry system.

Source: Author
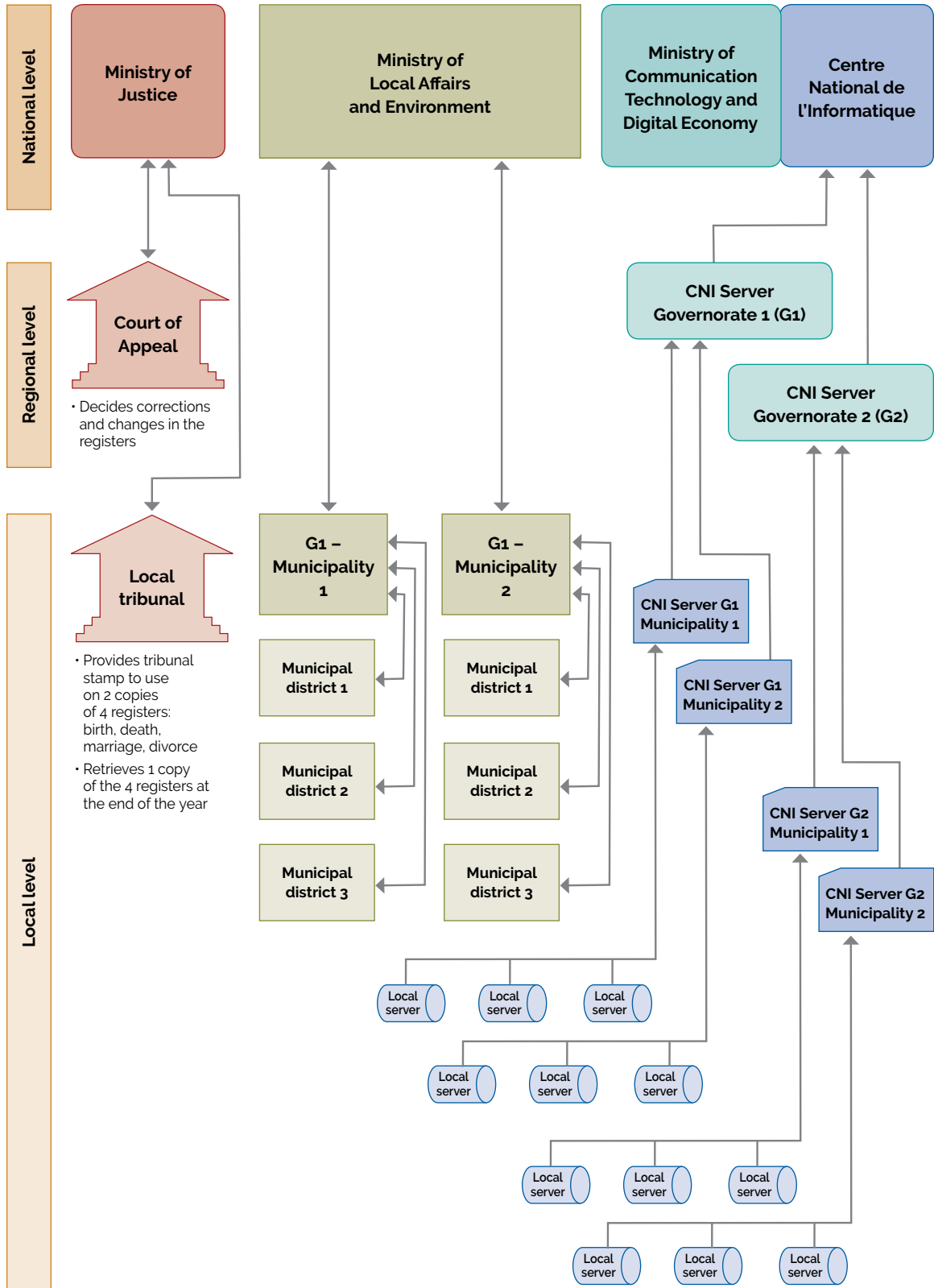
At the beginning of the year, the court gives all municipal districts a dry stamp, which is affixed to each page of the two copies of the four civil status registers (birth, death, marriage, and divorce).[1]

◉ The civil status event is handwritten on both copies of the corresponding paperback register.

◉ At the end of the year, the court of competent jurisdiction gets one copy of each of the four vital event registers for archiving. The second copy is archived in the municipality.

The same procedure applies to vital events registered in Tunisian consulates abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs processes both copies of the four civil status registers with the dry stamp of the court, then sends them to each diplomatic or consular office at the start of the year. At the end of the year, one copy of each register is sent back to Tunisia to be archived.

The Court of Justice intervenes in matters of civil status to

◉ allow marriage when at least one of the spouses is under legal age;

◉ grant a divorce;

◉ decide to register a birth or death after the legal period expires;

◉ correct a factual error in the drafting of a civil status document or modify a last name or first name (or both), based on the legal options; and

◉ verify and file all civil status certificates.

5.1.2   Notification and registration of birth

The mother is admitted for delivery of her baby to a health facility after the information from her national ID card, including her husband's name, is recorded. After childbirth, she is given a paper notification that contains information on the sex of the newborn and the date and time of birth.

When the birth takes place at home (0.3 percent of births in 2018)[2], the attending physician or midwife provides a birth notification with the same information. The civil status officer in the municipality requires this notification, along with the father's and mother's birth certificates, to register the newborn. Births are to be reported to municipalities within the 10-day period permitted by law, free of charge. After this deadline, birth registrations require a decision from the Court of Justice.

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1   The notaries officiating in the court's area of jurisdiction are given two copies of one register. The notary records by handwriting certain official documents in his registers, such as donations, recognition of debts, and marriages that take place at home or in private spaces. The registers are replaced once they are fully completed: one copy is archived in the court and the second copy is archived in the municipal borough.

2   INS-UNICEF, MICS. 2019. Rapport final des résultats (PR.1.1, p. 101). mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws. com/MICS6/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa/Tunisia/2018/Survey%20findings/ Tunisia_2018_MICS_SFR_French.pdf

Since 2001, the rate of birth registrations within the legal deadline is about 99.9 percent[3] for the whole national territory. The main omissions or delays are related to marriages abroad that are not reported to consular offices or that took place in countries where Tunisia has no diplomatic representative.

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3   INS-UNICEF, MICS. 2019. Rapport final des résultats (TM.6.1, p. 206). mics-surveys-prod.
     s3.amazonaws.com/MICS6/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa/Tunisia/2018/Survey%20
     findings/Tunisia_2018_MICS_SFR_French.pdf

According to Law 98-75 of 28 October 1998, and Law 2003-51 of 7 July 2003, a child born of parents who are not married (about 0.48 percent each year) is registered by the mother, who hands on her (given) name to the newborn (matrilineal kinship). She can ask the court to do a paternity test; if the test is positive, the child receives the biological father's first name, even if he does not recognize paternity. When the birth occurs less than seven months after the official date of marriage, the civil status officer registers the newborn's birth under the mother's given name. A judge can decide to amend the child's birth certificate after paternity is formally recognized.

For adoption, there are two legal options (Law 27 of 4 March 1958) related to civil status. These are based on the adoptive parents' choice:

◉ The adopted child is registered with the name of the adoptive parents (entire adoption); or

◉ The adopted child keeps his original kinship name ("kafala").

5.1.3 Death registration

A medical doctor must be involved in registering a death. Article 76 of Law 75-33 of 14 May 1975 states that the "burial may take place only after obtaining an authorization issued by the president of the local authority concerned and the presentation of a medical certificate certifying the time and date of death." Burial is not possible without a permit issued from the municipal office.

The legal deadline for registering a death is three days. This is the maximum period in Tunisia for a burial to take place. Deaths abroad are recorded at the consulate. The rate for death registration is just under 99.5 percent.

The doctor who has recorded the death completes and signs the two parts of the death certificate. This medical certificate of death is strongly inspired by the international model recommended by the World Health Organization.

According to the Institut National de la Statistique (INS), the country's national statistics institute, about 70 percent of causes of death are reported. However, the Ministry of Public Health considers only 40 percent of death certificates to be reliable for statistical treatment of causes of death, even though it does training and awareness campaigns with physicians in the public and private sectors.

The Ministry is considering testing, implementing, and generalizing the reporting of causes of death using an online platform. It is now using version 10 of the International Classification of Diseases and has started training sessions to move to version 11.

5.1.4   Digitizing the civil registry system

Tunisian law has focused more and more on improving the civil registration system by making it easier for users to access their civil status documents by

◉ introducing the family booklet (June 1967) that is given to couples at their wedding;

◉ standardizing the civil status certificate form (September 1985); and

◉ regulating the giving of first and last names to abandoned children (October 1998).

Civil registries started to be digitized in the 1980s. Forty or so major municipalities have created software applications to computerize civil records. In 1996, the government decided to create a national computerized civil registry system. It used a single operating system that allows municipalities to work in a local mode. In 2000, a campaign was launched to enter all the data from the civil registers since they were created. The choice was made to enter all data manually from the first page of the national civil records, and not to scan them.

In 2003, some municipalities started using the computerized civil registration system. In March 2005, all the data of 100 percent of civil registers were entered and recorded in the database. This centralized all facts of civil status that took place in Tunisia and for Tunisian nationals abroad. By April 2005, the computerized system and its database were fully operational, linking all municipalities.

After the civil registration system was digitized, handwritten registers were not removed. Events are still recorded manually in each of the two copies of the register and then transcribed into the computer software. Only the version recorded in the paper registers has probative force: if there is a material error in the handwritten registers, only a judge can authorize that it be corrected. An error in transcription to the computer record is corrected by the officer of the civil status.

Since 2003, all civil registration offices have had interconnected computer systems. New civil status offices in the recently created municipalities also have the necessary equipment and connections.

All municipalities have access to the civil registry portal, *Madania*, through a uniform information system. The system links different levels of networks to enhance data sharing between offices. In this way, it provides a central database of civil status for all Tunisian nationals and for foreigners who have civil status in Tunisia. The civil status facts are directly recorded in the database by the registrar and are accessible the next morning throughout the national territory. Users no longer have to travel to the place of their birth to get a document: any civil status officer in their municipal district simply prints and certifies it in real time when the user gives their last name, first name, and date of birth.

Certificates are first issued in Arabic. The French version of the certificate is printed upon request after it is transcribed into that language. In most cases, the certificate takes only a few minutes to get. Today, it costs 0.700 Tunisian dinars (about US$0.25) for either language.

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Civil status certificates do not offer any guarantee of authenticity, beyond the specific form of the certificate and the registrar's stamp and signature. Fraud in the form of fake certificates does occur. A call for tenders has been sent out to include a QR code in the certificates within a year.

The Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment has contracted the Centre National de l'Informatique[4] (CNI or national centre of informatics) to be the technical and technological interface of the municipalities:[5] hosting the vital statistics database, activating the network, and providing services to the municipalities as users. The National Agency for Computer Security periodically audits and validates the security system for the centre's servers that host the civil status data.

A birth certificate is required as proof of life as well as proof of marriage or non-marriage and proof of divorce. For this reason, the certificate is valid for only up to three months after being issued. Each time a proof of birth/life is required, people need to get a new certificate. To protect private data, a person can only get her or his own documents; parents can get those of their children.

5.1.5   Identification system and issuance of ID cards

A birth certificate is required for enrollment in the national ID process and to get the Carte d'Identité Nationale, the national ID card. The card was created by law in July 1968 when a unique identification number was introduced. The Direction Générale de la Sureté Nationale (the directorate for national security) is in charge of implementing the national ID system. To enroll, people must apply in person at the police station (for those who live in cities) or at the Garde Nationale station in the district of their current residence (for those who live outside cities).

From the age of 18, all Tunisian nationals — men and women — living in Tunisia must have a national ID card. The card is the only legal document that certifies an individual's identity. People who don't have a birth certificate and need to apply for the national ID card must first get a birth certificate by documenting their identity through a court judgement. For some institutions, the national ID is equivalent to nationality and birth certificates. Many institutions still rely on the birth certificate along with the national ID card.

In March 1993, a law began to require the print of the right thumb and the digitized reproduction of a photo ID in a rigid plastic format. The thumb is inked by a police officer and the print is reproduced on a cardboard form and sent to a central office to be photographed, digitized, and added to the national ID card. The thumbprint on the national ID card is therefore not biometric.

4   The CNI is a governmental body under the Minister of Communication Technologies and Digital Economy. Its mission is to provide support to the public structures of the administration in realizing, deploying, and operating information systems.

5   See Figure 5.1, Institutional map of the Tunisian civil registry system.

Documents required to enroll in the national ID system are:

◉ Birth certificate;

◉ Proof of residence provided by the same police office when a person presents certain documents;

◉ Proof of nationality from the Ministry of Justice when a person presents their birth certificate;

◉ Photos; and

◉ Work or occupation activity.

The cost of the tax stamp for the national ID card is 3 Tunisian dinars (US$1). It costs 25 Tunisian dinars (US$8.50) to renew the card in case of loss, damage, change of address or profession, and so on.

The ID card gradually became essential for all transactions in Tunisia. Citizens must present it when a legal authority asks for it. No administrative procedure may be done without the card being shown, and a photocopy of both sides is often required. The national ID card's hold on the daily lives of citizens has reinforced the social acceptance of registration of civil status by almost the entire population.

For the general population — including women, girls, and persons belonging to vulnerable groups — having a proof of civil status and ID is essential for many things, such as

◉ accessing health and social services;

◉ going to school;

◉ looking for a job;

◉ working;

◉ receiving social security;

◉ opening a bank account;

◉ getting credit or a loan;

◉ owning a business;

◉ voting;

◉ claiming property rights or an inheritance;

◉ receiving retirement benefits; and

◉ getting alimony (for divorced mothers).

There is no discrimination against women when it comes to accessing their civil status documents or any administrative procedure.

Printed information on the face of the card, all in Arabic characters:	
Front side	**Back side**
• Republic of Tunisia • National Identity Card - Flag and emblem of Tunisia • National Identity Number (CIN) • Family name • Given name • Given names of father and grandfather • Date and place of birth • Digitized ID photo	• Name and given name of mother • Profession/occupation • Address • Name of husband • Date of issuance of CIN • Digitized reproduction of right thumb with its sequential number • Stamp of authority that issued it • Barcode

Normally it takes 8–10 days in all cases to issue a new ID or to renew it.

5.2 National statistical system

The Institut National de la Statistique (INS), the national statistics institute, was created in 1969. The INS and the Central Bank are at the core of the Tunisian statistical system. The system, which is made up of 48 public statistical structures, is coordinated by the Conseil National des Statistiques, the national statistics council. More than 100 public and corporate databases also contain private data.

The INS is involved in different aspects of the country's economic activity and social situation, notably:

◉ Monitoring of employment, and evaluation of consumption, living conditions of households, and poverty. A National Household Survey on Budget, Consumption, and Standard of Living is done every five years;

◉ Business statistics through managing the national business register, conducting surveys of enterprises in the formal and informal sectors, and developing short-term indicators for monitoring the economic situation;

◉ National accounts statistics (annual and quarterly) using data from the INS, other public statistical structures, and administrative sources (such as financial statistics and state budget);

◉ Business statistics through developing indicators to monitor the economic situation using direct surveys and administrative documents; and

◉ Regional statistics in various economic and social fields.

To complete the scope of information, the INS does other demographic, social, and economic surveys and statistical analysis, such as:

◉ National Survey on Citizens' Perceptions of Security, Freedom, and Local Governance (2017);

◉ National Child Labour Survey (2017);

◉ Survey of the Economic Activities of Micro-Enterprises (2016);

◉ Annual Report on Infrastructure Indicators (2017); and

◉ Characteristics of Civil Servants and their Salaries (2012–2016).

For social protection policies, the INS offers a lot of help in setting poverty indicators and scores for allocating social assistance. All poverty indicators in Tunisia are gathered through the INS's work — especially the National Household Survey on Budget, Consumption, and Standard of Living.

In 2018, the INS, working with UNICEF, did the Tunisian Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS). The surveys

◉ provided quality data for assessing the situation of children, teens, women, men, and households in Tunisia;

◉ provided the data needed to monitor progress towards national goals as a basis for future actions;

◉ collected disaggregated data to identify disparities and inform policies for the social inclusion of the most vulnerable;

◉ validated data from other sources and the results of targeted interventions;

◉ generated data on national and global indicators for Sustainable Development Goals; and

◉ generated internationally comparable data to assess progress in various areas and increase efforts in areas that need further attention.

Since 1970, the civil registration system has allowed the INS[6] to have privileged but regulated access to vital statistics data. This enables the INS to compile statistics and develop analyses on topics related to demographic aspects of the country. Every month, municipalities are asked to provide the INS with vital registration data using forms or CD-ROM. After the data is processed, it is published in the monthly bulletin of the INS. Through a new agreement to be finalized with the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment, the INS will have access to download all anonymized data from the National Civil Registry every quarter.

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6   Institut National de la Statistique (INS). 2015. Note conceptuelle sur le système d'enregistrement des faits de l'état civil et les statistiques vitales en Tunisie. ins.nat.tn/sites/default/files/pdf_actualites/note_03.pdf

5.3 Interoperability and the unique identifier

At first, the Tunisian identity ecosystem had different identity programs and registers. These had been running for several years and served different purposes. Each program created its own identification system. Identifier numbers were not interoperable and did not use the same logic or standards.

Many public actors were interested in using the same standards and language for citizen identification procedures. In 2011, these institutions began to consider creating a Citizen's Unique National Identifier Number (Citizen's UNIN). The roadmap resulting from various diagnostic and benchmark studies recommended setting up a universal identification system but also building on previous successes. A ministerial council in 2015 approved this approach and chose three strategic orientations:

- Create the Citizen's UNIN, to be assigned from birth;

- Make the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment responsible for the Citizens' UNIN file; and

- Adopt the Estonian approach[7] as a model and reference for interoperability.

The other public operators set up their own identification number system related to their users. Identification numbers can be made public or not, depending on the operator. Each operator remains the sole owner of the information in its database. This means that the same person has, from one public operator to another, several different identifiers, including the UNIN and the ID card number. Having a large number of identifiers has two advantages:

- It allows operators that have an identification system in place to avoid building a new one; and

- It limits managers of a public operator from accessing the personal data of users related to other public operators without permission.

The Identifier Management Unit of the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment coordinates all activities related to identity management by Tunisian public bodies. The unit arranges interactions between different repositories (in the service-oriented architecture language) so a unified identity system can emerge using virtual tools. The unit's main task is to create lookup tables for different identifier numbers set up by those using the system, so they can do transactions and share data when needed.

System operators can set up an agreement via the Identifier Management Unit to access vital statistics or data belonging to other operators from time to time. They may also arrange one-time transactions to any public operator. For each request, the unit creates a lookup table between the identifier numbers of the two operators to open access to data. If problems arise, a technical team meets to find a solution quickly.

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7   Vassil, Kristjan. 2016. Estonian e-Government Ecosystem: Foundation, Applications, Outcomes. World Development Report. pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/165711456838073531/WDR16-BP-Estonian-eGov-ecosystem-Vassil.pdf

The UNIN for each citizen and resident in the country is very useful: it links different databases and unifies the interaction of many organizations with the same individual throughout his or her life. This raises the issue of protecting the privacy of citizens and how they can control their personal data and prevent misuse.

The *Constitution and Organic Law No. 63-27 of July 2004* (Chapter VI) created a privacy commission, the Instance nationale pour la protection des données personnelles (INPDP). As the national authority for the protection of personal data, the INPDP acts as a legal partner and advisor to the Identifier Management Unit in all matters related to identification systems and personal data. The INPDP is also responsible for monitoring and regulation in these areas.

The protection of personal data is provided for by Article 9 of the Constitution of 1 June 1959 and confirmed by Article 24 of the new Constitution of January 2014. The law currently in force is the *Organic Law No. 63 of 27 July 2004*. Tunisia ratified Organic Law No. 42 on 30 May 2017 and signed the Convention 108+ of the Council of Europe for the Protection of Individuals with regard to the Automatic Processing of Personal Data and the Protection of Personal Data in November 2017. A draft of a new Tunisian law on the protection of personal data was submitted in March 2018 to the Tunisian Parliament to replace the 2004 law. When adopted, it will allow Tunisia to comply with the provisions of the European General Regulation 2016/679 on the protection of personal data.

The entire national identification system is under the supervision of a national steering committee. The committee is made up of members representing ministries and organizations involved in the Citizen's UNIN system, as well as representatives of the INPDP.

Citizens' UNIN should help to make the administrative work more efficient. It should also eliminate losses due to identity fraud that happen when identity programs don't cross-check and link IDs. This is particularly true for social protection programs, which need to go beyond the individual and set up unique households to target for social assistance.

5.4 Social protection policies

Improving living conditions and reducing poverty have always been at the core of the Tunisian government's concerns. It devotes more than half of its budget to social sectors.[8] Given the country's financial problems and the limited available resources, the government's budget for social protection does not allow it to cover more than 8.3 percent of households in Tunisia.

Until 1986, social protection programs were mostly

- direct assistance (aid in kind, mainly food and cash);
- support actions (protection of the elderly who have no support and people with disabilities); and

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8   Ministries: Social Affairs; Women, Family and Childhood; National Education; Public Health; Higher Education, Vocational Training and Employment.

◉ regional programs of integrated development (Productive Family Program, Assistance to Small Farmers Program, and development of activities that generate jobs and income).

In 1986, the Programme National d'Aide aux Familles Nécessiteuses (PNAFN), or national program for families in need, was launched to assist families in need. Its aim was to support the implementation of the Economic Stabilization and Structural Adjustment Program under the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The obvious goals were to

◉ reduce the social effects of Structural Adjustment Program measures;

◉ minimize the impact of price liberalization measures and the state's gradual withdrawal from the Caisse Générale de Compensation (a general compensation fund); and

◉ support energy and essential goods, and avoid the kind of social anger that broke out in 1984 (the bread riots).

The PNAFN was not a new principle of social protection, since there was already permanent protection to poor households for 30,000 families. But it was new in its scale — the way it looked ahead at the effect on the possible social impacts of the Structural Adjustment Program, and in the way it put in place a policy of social protection.

The Ministry of Social Affairs did questionnaire surveys of families eligible for assistance. The list of eligible families was then submitted for approval by a regional commission. The commission was supposed to take into account the eligibility criteria and the quota system the Ministry set.

The PNAFN allocates permanent financial aid to families that are deemed needy and destitute. It also gives them access to health care through a totally free medical care type 1 (Assistance Médicale Gratuite-AMG1) in public facilities. The number of families receiving benefits from the program has increased over the years:

◉ 78,000 in 1987;

◉ 100,000 in 1990;

◉ 118,000 in 2010;

◉ 176,000 in 2011;

◉ 235,000 at the end of 2015; and

◉ more than 280,000 in 2019.

The monthly amount of financial aid increased as well:

◉ US$5.20 in 1990 (about 4 daily Salaire Minimum Agricole Garanti [SMAG]— the legal minimum daily wage for agricultural workers);

◉ US$12.50 (about 5.50 daily SMAG) in 2000;

◉ US$19.50 (about 6.50 daily SMAG) in 2010;

◉ US$51.50 (about 11 daily SMAG) in 2015; and

◉ US$61.70 (about 14.50 daily SMAG) in 2019.

By paying a fixed symbolic annual fee of US$3.50 (10 Tunisian dinars), many families have free access to health services at public health facilities under the Access to Care Program: Assistance Médicale Gratuite-2 (AMG2). There were

◉ 558,000 beneficiary families in 2010;

◉ 603,000 in 2015; and

◉ 623,000 in 2019.

In 2007, the Ministry of Social Affairs launched a program to help children of poor and disadvantaged families to receive schooling. The program provides monthly financial aid to educate children in families that receive benefits from the PNAFN. In 2019, families received US$3.50 per month per pupil (up to three pupils), reaching more than 90,000 school-aged children.

The popular uprising that ended the previous regime and led to a political transition in January 2011 helped to focus on socio-economic inequality in Tunisian populations. These are even more striking in the western border regions.

More specifically, it turns out that:

◉ The two programs, the PNAFN and the Access to Care Program, provide coverage to only 10 percent of the poorest in the population. They send about 73 percent of their resources to only 30 percent of the poorest population targeted by these two programs.

◉ The poorest areas in the country are the least covered by social workers: only a small presence of social workers is in areas where the numeric incidence of poverty is highest. The errors of exclusion are higher in the governorates (north-west and central-west) that have low coverage by social workers.

◉ Allowances benefit a very small proportion of Tunisian children (2 percent), even though one-fifth of Tunisian children live in poverty (21.1 percent in 2016, compared to 12.8 percent for the adult population).

◉ Twenty percent of those who have been receiving the PNAFN benefit since the revolution are in the 40 to 59 age group, which is seen as an active group in the labour market.

The conclusion reached is that the current design of the Tunisian system cannot overcome poverty and exclusion. It cannot greatly reduce segregation between regions and between social categories, and thus meet social protection needs adequately. A new social program, called Amen Social, is intended to replace the PNAFN. This change will avoid a scattered approach and will create a more fair and inclusive social protection system. It is designed as part of the National Social Protection Floor, which seeks to guarantee

◉ access to universal care for the poor and vulnerable;

◉ minimum income for all those who do not have it;

◉ income for the elderly who are without resources and for persons with disabilities; and

◉ income for children.

5.4.1 Amen Social program

According to the law that created the Amen Social program (January 2019), those in the "poor" and "limited income" categories are individuals or families whose lack of resources affects their income, health, education, access to public services, and living conditions.

Two institutions will be set up under this program:

◉ Higher Council for Social Development, chaired by the President of Tunisia, aiming at inclusive development; and

◉ National Agency for Integration and Social Development, whose mission is to update the social register with a) information on the different aspects of poverty and deprivation for current and potential beneficiaries, and b) the list of people receiving social assistance using a social identifier that makes it easier to share data with other databases.

The first strategic orientation of the Amen Social program was to develop and implement a Social Identifier Number (SIN) at the national level. This will allow all the administrative databases attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs to be connected — a key condition that had to be put in place before starting to reform the protection system. The Ministry of Public Health recently decided to assign that same SIN to patients using public health facilities. This makes sense, since the two departments are already fully linked through the health insurance and social security management systems.

The Amen Social program aims to reach adults who are in the civil registration system but do not have a national ID card. In 2014,[9] 300,000 people were in this group, but a large majority of them live abroad and mainly do not need Tunisian identification documents. Getting a monthly allowance through the Amen Social program may be another incentive for poor and marginalized families in Tunisia to apply for the ID card.

Managing information systems around the SIN should achieve the aims of social protection policies to better target programs and to reduce errors when it comes to who is included and excluded. The SIN is intended to link and combine the many programs that the Ministry of Social Affairs manages, such as:

◉ National program for families in need (PNAFN);

◉ Access to Care Program;

◉ Children without family support;

◉ Social action in schools;

◉ Social protection for all categories with special needs;

◉ Integration programs in schools for pupils with a disability;

◉ Training;

◉ Employment and income earning; and

◉ Physical and digital accessibility for people with disabilities.

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9   Statement of the President of the High Authority of Elections.

The SIN also makes cross-checks between administrative databases (data cross-checking) possible. The mechanism that targets families who are deemed to be poor and vulnerable has automated access to administrative databases. It can now verify crucial information that people who receive aid have given to social workers and that has been recorded in the social survey. Cross-checks are made with other data banks created by the

◉ social security funds;

◉ health insurance fund;

◉ Ministries of Agriculture; Education, Employment and Vocational Training; Finance; Public Health; and Transport;

◉ STEG (national energy utility);

◉ SONEDE (national water utility); and

◉ others.

The database for deprived and low-income families will soon be finalized. The Amen Social program targets 900,000 families, or almost one-quarter of the total population (24.5 percent). Of these, about 285,000 families already benefit from the PNAFN and Assistance Médicale Gratuite-1 program (AMG-1), and 620,000 families benefit only from the Access to Care Program (Assistance Médicale Gratuite-2).

The procedure for registering potential beneficiaries to the Amen Social program is based on the proxy means test (scoring). This gives a score to each family visited, then classifies them based on their level of poverty and the possibilities of rising out of poverty.

A large-scale communication campaign[10] is underway. It aims to inform and encourage potential applicants to open a social file by visiting their nearest local unit to apply for social assistance. (There are 350 of these units.) The Ministry of Social Affairs trained 1,500 social work specialists to increase and develop information about the program and to collect information on demographic and socio-economic features of households. This information covers a number of aspects of poverty and deprivation for current and potential beneficiaries:

◉ Location;

◉ Household size;

◉ Age;

◉ Sex;

◉ Marital status;

◉ Education level;

◉ Breadwinner's job;

◉ Living conditions; and

◉ Presence of chronic illness or disability.

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10 Informational video (in Arabic) related to the campaign to register in the Amen Social program:
    youtube.com/watch?v=a0TCZBkjgjk

In phase 1, the social work specialist and the applicant (head of the household, either man or woman) fill out an online application. Questions are asked about economic activities, health, owning of real estate, vehicles, and so on, for each member of the household.[11] If the person is already in a social assistance program, the existing file is retrieved and completed. Birth certificates of household members are no longer required, as the platform allows the Amen Social program to access civil status documents via a web service. Only the national ID card is compulsory for household members who are 18 years and over. A SIN is then assigned to the head of household and to each family member.

Phase 2 is a field survey that the social work specialist completes and verifies with material and visual data, such as

◉ number of water points;

◉ roofing material;

◉ number of persons living together per room; and

◉ verifiable state of health.

The use of electronic tablets allows data from social surveys to be processed almost in real time, including photos.

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11   The household is defined as family members living under the same roof and sharing meals.

Questionnaires for phases 1 and 2 include about 170 items related to the head of household that may also affect each member of the household. Any information added to the Amen Social program's databank is strictly protected as private data. Servers and computerized applications are hosted at the Ministry of Social Affairs' Data Centre.

Phase 3 of the survey takes place in the local unit. It is more focused on household income and verifying information that was collected in the past.

At the end of the process, the income of applicants for the Amen Social program is cross-checked with other databases: tax administration, social security, medical insurance, and more. The household is given a score based on data audited by the social work specialist's supervisor and by cross-checking. The household score is then compared to the eligibility threshold that was set.

Eligibility for benefits or social services (or both) is verified using the data gathered during the application and social survey. Cross-checks ensure that selected households and people really need social assistance at that time. The final decision is made by a regional commission. Selection is based on objectivity and fairness. It takes into account the principle of positive discrimination for households with special needs and for priority regions and areas, as shown by regional development indicators.

Of the 900,000 families that the Amen Social program targets, 630,000 have already submitted a registration file. Of these, 419,000 are recorded in the database and are now at one of the stages of the social survey.

Candidates who are not accepted can appeal the decision. All payments are collected through a monthly postal order and withdrawn in cash when the recipient presents their national identity card. Access to health care in public health centres is given when a person presents a free or reduced-fee family card issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs, along with the national identity card or the civil status certificate (or both).

5.5 Synergies and challenges

The civil registration and legal identity systems are very long-established and rooted in Tunisian society and in the different administrations' way of work. Their linkages and impact on social protection programs are not explicitly reflected. What is of interest in the Tunisian experience lies more in developing these systems within e-government and interoperability procedures for identification numbers created by different public operators.

Here are some ways to improve the process that are worth thinking about:

1. The UNIN concept and its interoperability platform should allow ministries and public agencies to use available databases and cross-check them. This would ensure that all categories of the population are monitored so they can exercise their rights and receive the social protection they need to help them claim their rights. That means detecting situations such as

- children who are not vaccinated on time, are out of school, or are having difficulties with their schooling;

- pregnant women who miss the required schedule of prenatal exams; and

- divorced fathers who do not pay court-ordered child support and need to be located.

2. Statistical processing and cross-referencing of data using the new Citizen's UNIN for vulnerable groups — underemployed persons, first-time job seekers, women working at home, informal sector workers, seasonal workers, and others — should set up other levels of support, help, and subsidies. These could include programs such as

- vocational training or apprenticeship programs;

- microcredit;

- income-generating activities; and

- microenterprises or cooperatives.

These categories should go beyond material needs for survival and include needy groups based on a broader definition of poverty. This includes the ability to take part in economic activities. Even though people are in need, they can be integrated into productive economic activities if they get support at the start. If they are left behind, they risk falling with their families below the poverty line.

3. Thanks to the Citizens' UNIN and the data flows it allows, the Institut National de la Statistique (INS), or national statistics institute, has access to a vast amount of data. The crossing, processing, and analysis of this data will help the government create informed policies for all aspects of national development. This situation invites the INS to advance its practices in analyzing and interpreting statistical data.

4. The main problem in registering candidates for social assistance has to do with the legal identity of members of the household. There can be many errors in the transcribing of their names when issuing birth certificates, with variations of names within a single family.

This is a problem of national interest, given that in some cases, the same national identification number has been given to more than one person. Having a Citizen's UNIN attached to the birth certificate and having the ability to cross-check using the interoperability platform makes it possible to overcome these limits. It can be difficult to clarify birth registration procedures and to make sure registrars rigorously apply them. The same procedures must be created and applied for transcribing birth certificates into French, which is essential for creating passports and all legal documents to be used abroad.

5. A discussion is underway to decide on ways to stop duplicating civil status records in paper registers and registers that use a computer application. Ending the use of paper registers should lead to major savings of resources and labour. This approach will also be more efficient: it will allow the main actors (courts of justice, registry offices in municipalities, and consular offices) to play a direct role in sharing data across the territory and abroad.

6. The interoperability platform poses a potential threat to protecting personal data. This risk has been minimized in Tunisia using these measures:

   - The data that the platform gives access to is data that stakeholders could get directly from the users of their services. The platform saves time, means economies of scale for administrations and lower costs for citizens, and greatly reduces the chances of fraud.

   - Requests for data from other operators of the platform must be authorized by the data owner and the Identification Number Management Unit. When these operators have concerns, a technical committee makes a decision. The Instance nationale pour la protection des données personnelles (INPDP), or national authority for the protection of personal data, is involved in this committee and in the platform's steering committee.

   - Private data that could be accessed by stakeholders of the platform — including operators of the Identification Number Management Unit — is anonymized.

7. A bill to create an electronic identification card was modified by the Tunisian Parliament but was suspended after negative comments from civil society. The INPDP was concerned about the lack of guarantees for protecting personal data.

   The Ministry of the Interior still wants to create a new identity card based on international standards for electronic identity documents. It would have a secure electronic chip containing the photo and electronic print of the cardholder's right thumb, along with other data that is available only to national security officers who are responsible for identity verification. It would also include

   - storage of the data visible on the identity card; and

   - optional data such as the first and last name of the spouse, blood group, and authorization for organ donation.

A new bill on an electronic identity card may soon be presented to the Tunisian Parliament. It will include measures and guarantees on giving citizens the legal ability to access the data in the chip of their ID card and, if needed, remove data or modify it.

Acronyms

CIN	Carte d'identité nationale (national identity card)
CNI	Centre National de l'Informatique (national centre of informatics)
INPDP	Instance nationale pour la protection des données personnelles (national authority for the protection of personal data)
INS	Institut National de la Statistique (national statistics institute)
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
PNAFN	Programme National d'Aide aux Familles Nécessiteuses (national program for families in need)
SIN	Social Identifier Number
SMAG	Salaire Minimum Agricole Garanti (legal minimum daily wage for agricultural workers)
UNIN	Unique National Identifier Number

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