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**Civil registration in humanitarian contexts:
Building on experience gained during
the coronavirus disease pandemic**

Civil Registration in Humanitarian Contexts
**Recommendations and operational guidelines for member States
of the African Union**

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Executive summary

Emergencies infringe on many individual basic rights, including access to a name and a nationality. In almost all emergencies, including armed conflicts, natural disasters and human-made hazards, vital event registration systems become dysfunctional and, in extreme cases, they collapse entirely, archives may be destroyed, and documents are lost. Civil registration and vital statistics systems are also affected by large-scale epidemics and pandemics due to restrictions on movement and the disruption of service delivery. In addition, where movement and migration occur, access to civil registration services may be hampered by laws and policies that exclude certain groups.

The provision of civil registration services is even more of a challenge in humanitarian contexts, with many African countries struggling to achieve complete and universal registration coverage. Across the continent, millions of children remain unregistered at birth¹ and mortality statistics systems do not exist or are largely incomplete.² Restoring registration activities and registries and clearing backlogs is a complex and costly exercise requiring specific legal and policy provisions.

Despite the many challenges, maintaining access to basic registration services during emergencies, including for population groups that are displaced or otherwise affected, is of utmost importance to protect human rights and ensure effective State-building and good governance. In view of the above, during the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, held in Côte d'Ivoire in February 2015 and in Mauritania in December 2017, the Ministers took note of the challenges that African countries faced in providing basic registration services and called for support from the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Regional Core Group to develop guidelines and recommendations to improve civil registration in emergency settings (see annex).

Under the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, the United Nations Children's Fund, in consultation and collaboration with other members of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Core Group, has led the process of developing recommendations towards improved resilience of systems and services to ensure continuous, permanent and universal registration of births and deaths in crisis situations and emergencies. The recommendations and guidelines that were developed reflect the outcomes of the various meetings, with the objective of providing operational guidance to Member States and development partners in maintaining the delivery of civil registration and vital statistics services in humanitarian contexts.

Final recommendations have been developed in four categories. The first category addresses the creation of an enabling environment, in particular laws and policies, to ensure that registration is free of charge, with simplified procedures to reduce the burden imposed by the humanitarian context. The second category relates to the institutional arrangements that need to be put in place to ensure continued service delivery in humanitarian contexts, with a special focus on coordination mechanisms and interoperability. The third category outlines measures to allow secure storage, the protection of records and the reconstitution of registers, including, but not limited to, the digitalization of systems. The fourth category addresses

¹ United Nations Children's Fund, *Birth Registration for Every Child: Are We on Track?* (New York, 2019).

² United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa, "Improving mortality statistics in Africa: technical strategy 2015–2020", ministerial statement at the third session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, Yamoussoukro, 12 and 13 February 2015.

humanitarian mechanisms and coordination among partners, including the integration of civil registration and vital statistics in national disaster preparedness and response mechanisms and plans; the strengthening of evidence; and the facilitation of cross-regional forums for the exchange of experiences and good practices.

I. Background and rationale

1. Everyone has the right to be recognized as a person before the law, as enshrined in article 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and several international human rights instruments.¹ The recommendations and operational guidelines in the present document build on United Nations principles and standards, which define civil registration as the universal, compulsory, continuous and confidential recording of the occurrence of all vital events.² The recording of such events is essential for the regular compilation of comprehensive statistics. Civil registration and the compilation of vital statistics are considered to be critical functions of government, as they establish the existence of a person under the law. While civil registration refers to the registration of all vital events, the focus of the guidelines herein remains on the registration of births and deaths.

2. The term “humanitarian context” in the present text is inclusive of emergencies, conflict, displacement, major epidemics and pandemics. These are all situations in which the continuity of civil registration services is challenged as systems become dysfunctional or, in extreme cases, are destroyed or collapse entirely. During or in the aftermath of an emergency or a crisis, families often lose birth, death and marriage certificates and entire archives may be destroyed. When people migrate or are displaced, they are often unable to access civil registration services owing to a lack of physical access or to procedural or financial barriers or laws or policies that exclude them from registration.

3. Emergencies in Africa are numerous and diverse. The capacity of States to meet their obligation to assist and protect citizens is affected by situations such as protracted emergencies that persist despite peace agreements, conflicts that result in cross-border and internal displacement, natural disasters and public health emergencies. The capacity of often underfunded and under resourced civil registration entities to provide high-quality services at the desired scale is often weakened further during emergencies, as civil servants depart en masse, supplies run short and opening hours are reduced. Marginalized population groups are particularly affected. Furthermore, administrative systems fail or may not have the capacity to record and register vital events, leading to a backlog of unregistered births, marriages and deaths and an absence of reliable cause-of-death information. When population displacement occurs and is linked to an increase in the number of births, services are often not flexible enough or are unable to deal with the growth in demand. Furthermore, in recent years, State institutions have increasingly become the target of non-State armed groups, which have been seen attacking civil registration centres –the main entities representing the State in many rural areas –as a way to prevent any official recording of future vital events and to systematically destroy old records and archives. In this way, parties to an armed conflict not only expose the local population to serious risks, including the risk of statelessness, but they can also manipulate the ways in which legal identity is recorded to institute demographic change.³

¹ 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, articles 6 and 15; 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, articles 25 and 27; 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, articles 25 and 27; 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, articles 1–4; 1965; 1969 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, article 5(d)(iii); 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 24;; 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, articles 7 and 8; 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, article 29; 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 18.

² Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, United Nations, 2014.

³ Katharine Fortin, “To Be or Not to Be?: Legal Identity in Crisis in Non-International Armed Conflicts” *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 43, February 2021.

4. Pandemics and epidemics have a severe impact on the delivery of all basic government services, including civil registration services. In response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, many countries introduced lockdowns and restrictions that lead to the closure of registration points or a reduction in core service hours and the number of staff members present. Since the onset of the pandemic, birth and death registrations dropped in several countries and, consequently, the backlog of unregistered births and deaths has increased. In countries where civil registration services functioned without interruption, there was a significant increase in the number of registered deaths.⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic has furthermore demonstrated the critical importance of statistics on deaths and their causes as a means of understanding a pandemic.⁵

5. The provision of civil registration services is even more of a challenge in humanitarian contexts, with many African countries struggling to achieve complete and universal registration coverage. Across the continent, millions of children remain unregistered at birth⁶ and mortality statistics systems do not exist or are largely incomplete.⁷ Restoring registration activities and registries and clearing backlogs is a complex and costly exercise requiring specific legal and policy provisions. Despite the many challenges, maintaining access to basic registration services, including for population groups that are displaced or otherwise affected, is of utmost importance to protect human rights and ensure effective State-building and good governance.

6. During the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, held in Côte d'Ivoire in February 2015 and in Mauritania in December 2017, the Ministers took note of the situation and called for support from the civil Registration and Vital Statistics Regional Core Group to develop guidelines and recommendations to improve civil registration in emergency settings. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Office for West and Central Africa was requested to lead the development of the guidelines.

7. UNICEF applied the following methodology in developing the guidelines, in consultation and collaboration with other members of the Regional Core Group:

(a) In 2018, it reviewed civil registration principles and practices in emergencies related to public health, migration, displacement and armed conflict;

(b) The same year, it held a regional technical meeting on civil registration in emergencies in Africa, which was attended by representatives from Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, the Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Uganda and development partners;

(c) It conducted in-country technical consultations in Uganda (2019), Cameroon (2020) and Mali (2020).

⁴ Srdjan Mrkić, "Civil Registration: Maintaining International Standards in Emergencies", in *Compendium of Good Practices: Harnessing Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in Conflict, Emergencies, and Fragile Settings*, Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, (Ottawa, Ontario, 2021).

⁵ World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund, *Health Sector Contributions towards Improving Civil Registration of Births and Deaths*, (Geneva, 2021).

⁶ United Nations Children's Fund, *Birth Registration for Every Child: Are We on Track?* (New York, 2019).

⁷ United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa, "Improving mortality statistics in Africa: technical strategy 2015–2020", ministerial statement at the third session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, Yamoussoukro, 12 and 13 February 2015.

8. These recommendations and guidelines in the present document reflect the outcomes of the various meetings and products developed to provide operational guidance to Member States and development partners to assist them in continuing to deliver civil registration services during emergencies to ensure the universal registration of vital events.

9. The second section of the document presents the recommendations. The primary objective of these is to provide for increased State ownership, technical guidance, coordination and collaboration with partner organizations, as well as for more resilient systems and services to ensure continuous civil registration in humanitarian settings. The third section of the document presents guidelines towards the development of well-designed and well-managed national civil registration systems that are inclusive and universal, with clearly defined preparedness and response plans to ensure continuity in humanitarian contexts.

II. Recommendations

10. The following recommendations should be considered in order to improve the availability and accessibility of civil registration services in emergency and humanitarian situations. The recommendations are addressed to States in particular to guide country strategies, but also, as appropriate, to development partners to guide the support that they provide.

A. Enabling environment

11. To promote an enabling environment for civil registration services:

(a) Laws and policies should be in place in each country to ensure that all vital events occurring in the national territory are recorded without discrimination, including in humanitarian contexts, in accordance with international law;

(b) Laws and policies should allow free registration, irrespective of the origin or nature of registration. National recovery plans should always include a waiver of fees for late registration during and in the aftermath of emergencies;

(c) The legal framework governing civil registration and administrative procedures should have provisions to simplify registration processes as much as possible during and in the aftermath of emergencies, including extensions to registration deadlines;

(d) The legal framework should include simplified procedures for refugees, internally displaced persons and non-documented migrants to register and obtain a certificate. It should include temporary solutions and support for the retrieval of documents, since the identity documents of such persons are generally not available. States must have such measures in place to fulfil their commitment to preventing statelessness.⁸

B. Institutional arrangements

12. With a view to creating the necessary institutional arrangements:

⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. No. 14458.

(a) Guidelines or standard operating procedures should be in place to ensure the continuous registration of vital events in humanitarian contexts, including a proactive role for health authorities in birth and death registration;⁹

(b) National humanitarian coordination mechanisms, including clusters (when activated), should ensure the continuity and inclusiveness of registration services, especially for marginalized populations, and with special consideration for remote areas;

(c) Guidelines should address registration at or notification from health facilities and community notification during emergencies, as well as the establishment of auxiliary registrars. Health staff should be declared auxiliary registrars and receive comprehensive training, since health services are classed as essential services. This delegation of authority is crucial to ensure continued service delivery;

(d) Memorandums of understanding should be in place with relevant ministries to formalize institutional collaboration and roles and responsibilities during emergencies;

(e) To address cross-border migration, bilateral agreements should be signed between neighbouring countries to address the mutual recognition of birth certificates, birth notifications and any other proof-of-birth documents, such as the mother-and-child health card when a child's birth could not be registered before repatriation. Consular services play an important role in this regard.

C. Storage and reconstitution of registers

13. To ensure adequate storage and that registers can be reconstituted if necessary:

(a) Laws and policies should provide for adequate storage conditions. Specifically, records should be properly protected and there should be alternative archiving methods and locations to secure civil registration records at all times. For areas prone to natural disasters, a backup system with paper or electronic records should be maintained at headquarters, regional offices or any other safe place;

(b) Duplicates of original records should be used so that any lost or destroyed originals can be replaced easily. Irrespective of the format of the records – paper records, an e-database or certified scans – duplicates should be produced and stored in a secure place. A mechanism should be in place for obtaining access to the certificates or to copies that are generally available from other government agencies (e.g. health records, education records, national identification documents, passports);

(c) Secure data storage and backup systems, including online and/or electronic systems, are required to ensure permanent archiving of civil registration records;

(d) Clearly defined standards and internationally recognized procedures for the reconstitution of lost, damaged or destroyed civil registers should be in place.

D. Humanitarian mechanisms and coordination among partners

14. To develop the necessary mechanisms and foster coordination among partner entities in humanitarian contexts:

⁹ “Maintaining Civil Registration and Vital Statistics during the COVID-19 pandemic” (2020).

(a) Efforts and investments should be directed at modernizing and developing resilient, permanent and universal civil registration systems;

(b) Civil registration should be made a core component of national disaster preparedness and response mechanisms and plans;

(c) Cross-regional forums for the exchange of experiences and good practices in civil registration in emergencies should be considered, with existing technical and high-level initiatives being utilized;

(d) Research should be conducted with relevant partners to generate evidence on and disseminate knowledge of the most effective strategies for maintaining civil registration services during emergencies;

(e) Partnerships should be strengthened, including with the private sector nationally and internationally, to create more resilient civil registration systems, in particular through enhanced digitalization.

III. Operational guidelines

15. The guidelines presented in this section build on the recommendations in the previous section to support the development of national civil registration systems that are inclusive and universal, with clearly defined preparedness and response plans to ensure continued service delivery in humanitarian contexts.

A. Enabling environment

16. Various barriers exist to the universal registration of vital events, including direct and indirect fees, urban-rural divides, and discriminatory laws and policies that prevent certain groups, including women, ethnic and religious minorities and non-nationals, from having access to registration systems. Although discriminatory policies and laws that prevent registration should always be eliminated, specific measures are needed in humanitarian contexts, in particular the following:

(a) Legislative and administrative provisions for registration of all vital events of non-nationals, including refugees and migrants, that occur within the national territory;

(b) Fee waivers in recognition of the difficulties that people may experience in accessing registration facilities during an emergency;

(c) Waiver of all fees related to the registration and certification of vital events during an emergency;

(d) Legal provisions to temporarily simplify registration processes as required by the emergency. This should include the delegation of registration and certification duties, especially in countries with centralized civil registration and vital statistics systems. Similar provisions should be adopted after the crisis to allow for rapid backlog clearance;

(e) Special processes or waivers for registration to be completed beyond the legal deadline and without discrimination when services have been closed due to the emergency.

Provisions should be outlined for keeping records in temporary books until registration has been completed in accordance with national laws;

(f) Special processes or waivers for those who do not have all the documents required for registration. Local officials (e.g. village executive officers and front-line health and community workers) are well positioned to identify and verify people born in a particular area, so their testimony and that of the family members and neighbours of applicants should be considered an alternative to missing documentation;

(g) Simplified certification of registry books, where relevant, and allowance for temporary use of alternative registration material when registry books are unavailable, unsafe to use or non-compliant with the legal certification;

(h) Social communication initiatives, including local media and community leaders, to ensure that information reaches the most vulnerable. Incentives such as providing transport and removing fees for the registration of adults should also be considered.

B. Institutional arrangements

1. Guidance note

17. A guidance note, service note or a similar document should be developed and disseminated by the national civil registration authority, in consultation with relevant ministries, to keep services operational to the extent possible, including in affected areas. The note should address changes in operating hours, places of operation, contact information, staff responsibilities and reporting instruments, coordination mechanisms, the number of people allowed at the service points, and health and safety measures. Specific measures should be considered to protect staff, in particular front-line registration staff and community-based registrars, in the event of widespread insecurity, armed conflict or a public health emergency. In the event of a public health emergency, World Health Organization guidelines should be followed.¹⁰ The necessary resources should be provided to implement the instructions in the note and to ensure that staff members are familiar with those instructions.

18. Death registration generally remains low and is particularly restricted in humanitarian contexts. Special measures should be put in place to identify and record causes of deaths, since it is critical information, in particular in a public health emergency, in which death records are an important tool for monitoring where and to what extent disease has spread. Electronic notification is important not only to speed up the registration process, but also to produce vital statistics, including the causes of death. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how the participation of the health sector strengthens the civil registration system and improves the quality of the vital statistics that are used for monitoring health outcomes.

2. Memorandums of understanding

19. A comprehensive memorandum of understanding, in which the roles and responsibilities of key ministries have been well delineated, can be instrumental in improving the continuous delivery of civil registration services and ensuring that temporary provisions comply with national laws. A memorandum of understanding should address the roles of the relevant ministries, in particular:

¹⁰ See <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/guidance-for-schools-workplaces-institutions>.

- (a) The role of health workers in collecting and issuing birth declarations, in particular in areas where civil registration services are closed, under attack or otherwise not functioning;
- (b) The roles and responsibilities of health workers, including community health workers, related to birth registration, as well as the procedures for their appointment and their training needs;
- (c) The transfer of notification records or registers from local to central authorities;
- (d) Legal provisions for temporary registration procedures.

20. Bilateral and multilateral memorandums of understanding among neighbouring countries should address the continuity of civil registration in the context of cross-border movement and migration. The memorandums should include measures to prevent statelessness.

3. Development of standard operating procedures

21. To provide a framework for temporary registration processes, standard operating procedures should be developed and disseminated across the affected areas and service points, with a view to standardizing service delivery. The standard operating procedures might focus on the following:

- (a) Temporary relocation of civil registration services to allow for continuous registration and protection of records;
- (b) Inclusion of birth and death notification among the operating procedures at health facilities. Health systems and services can offer an important entry point for maintaining formal registration activities, including for refugees and internally displaced persons, since they tend to continue functioning during conflicts and emergencies or are quickly re-established after those situations have ended. Where civil registration services become dysfunctional and health workers do not have the authority to issue certificates directly, the medical records they collect can be transcribed into civil registers at a later date;
- (c) Screening children when they start school to identify those whose births were not recorded and coordinating with civil registration authorities for routine catch-up registration of school-aged children;
- (d) Systematic transmission of information about causes of death from health facilities to civil registration entities to improve mortality statistics, preparedness and responses to public health emergencies;
- (e) Referral mechanisms that allow traditional and religious leaders who work in the local administration to temporarily record and provide notifications of births outside health facilities;
- (f) Special procedures for the timely procurement of civil registers and other essential items;
- (g) Community outreach and engagement to inform the public about birth registration processes and requirements during and in the aftermath of an emergency and targeted support for vulnerable groups, including refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons.

4. Coordination mechanisms

22. Establishing or strengthening coordination around civil registration in emergencies includes setting up a national coordination mechanism body that brings together relevant stakeholders involved in registration, statistics, the health sector and humanitarian mechanisms.

23. The national coordination body should be responsible for overseeing the implementation of standard operating procedures to ensure universal coverage and improve registration completeness, especially for marginalized populations and in remote areas. If the scale of an emergency exceeds national capacity to respond and clusters are activated, protection and health clusters should support the coordination of registration.

5. Restoring service delivery

24. As the delivery of civil registration services are re-established in the aftermath of an emergency situation, restoring routine registration services becomes a priority. The number of vital event registrations can be expected to increase as the emergency draws to an end, depending on the context in the country.

25. Children who were not registered during the emergency or humanitarian situation must be reached as soon as possible, and their late or delayed registration must be free of charge. Staff availability and capacity for core registration tasks should be strengthened and a preparedness plan should be developed and implemented (as warranted) to address the backlog of registrations.

26. In communities that have been disproportionately affected by an emergency and are therefore likely to have the lowest registration coverage levels, various entry points, such as immunization campaigns, the reopening of schools, and social protection measures (e.g. cash transfer programmes), should be used to conduct registration outreach in communities.

27. Immunization campaigns offer an effective way to clear the backlog of unregistered children after an emergency. Birth registration services can be coupled with vaccination outreach activities to identify unregistered children and refer their cases to the civil registry. Priority should be given to the reestablishment of routine service delivery to avoid further backlogs.

28. The reopening of schools might present another opportunity to catch up on the registration of children whose birth was not registered, including as a measure to reach out-of-school and dropout children in the school catchment areas.

C. Storage and reconstitution of registers

29. Laws and policies should provide for standards and procedures that specify where civil registration records should be stored and archived, in what format, and how duplicates are stored. In emergency contexts and when civil registration records that have been lost or damaged are replaced, State-led procedures must be used to the extent possible. Individuals should not be held accountable for re-establishing records lost owing to an emergency.

30. When the security situation or an emergency poses a threat to permanent record-keeping, measures such as the following may be necessary:

(a) Archives may need to be temporarily or permanently moved to safe areas – either the nearest safe place or the capital city;

(b) Where the security situation does not allow archiving at civil registration centres or local courts, State agencies other than civil registration authorities can be mandated to store and archive records safely in a decentralized manner;

(c) Registers should, to the extent possible, be reconstituted using duplicate copies available in local courts, other original archives or scanned documents. Reconstitution methods should follow internationally defined and standardized procedures.

D. Humanitarian mechanisms and partner coordination

31. Representatives of institutions responsible for civil registration should be involved in developing and implementing national disaster preparedness and response mechanisms, to support planning that would allow registration mechanisms to function during and immediately after emergency situations. Coordination is required at the national and local levels. Humanitarian coordination mechanisms should also be included in any national-level coordination bodies governing civil registration or vital event registration during emergencies. Birth and death registration should be included in humanitarian reporting as a core indicator.

32. Contingency planning should be in place for timely and effective responses to humanitarian crises based on standard operating procedures. Pooled funding from implementing partners to support programmatic efforts towards the development of resilient civil registration and identity systems could be considered for more cohesive response planning.

33. Civil registration is multidisciplinary by nature and benefits from the generation of evidence across sectors and by multiple partners. Examples of relevant evidence-building include:

(a) Country and regional consultations with relevant stakeholders to formulate concrete recommendations and inform preparedness and response plans to maintain the delivery of civil registration services (including interim measures) during emergencies;

(b) The documentation and sharing of good practices and country recommendations for civil registration in emergencies to help inform country preparedness and response plans.¹¹

34. Lastly, training curriculum and preparatory training targeting all relevant stakeholders are essential to mainstreaming knowledge and building capacity for the implementation of temporary measures and provisions.

IV. Conclusion

35. The registration of all vital events in all contexts and situations is a necessary form of recognition of individuals and their human rights, but it is also a critical decision-making tool for public policy and development. Although the registration of vital events in humanitarian contexts is a challenging task for many countries, in particular those with already weak civil registration systems, it is also an opportunity to build systems that are more resilient and inclusive. While most African countries are in the process of reforming their civil registration

¹¹ For examples, see [CRVS & COVID-19 in Africa Series](#), Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and Economic Commission for Africa, 2021.

and vital statistics systems, it is essential that they include provisions for basic emergency preparedness and response mechanisms with an accompanying roll-out plan. This requires concentrated and coordinated efforts by governments and development partners and forward-looking and inclusive planning. The recommendations and guidelines in the present document describe priority actions and investments that lay the foundation for universal registration of vital events, including in humanitarian contexts.

Annex

African ministerial recommendations on civil registration and vital statistics

In various meetings since 2015, Member States of the African Union have issued recommendations and guidelines for actions that should be followed in the area of civil registration and vital statistics. Some of the major recommendations, drawn directly from statements adopted at relevant meetings, are reproduced below.

Ministerial statement, third session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration

Yamoussoukro, 12 and 13 February 2015

We, African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration,

...

Acknowledging the importance of civil registration and vital statistics in addressing the post 2015 development agenda on inclusive and sustainable development and Agenda 2063 which calls for a united, prosperous and peaceful Africa;

...

Cognizant that a number of African countries are in or emerging out of conflict situations, or have special circumstances and would need technical support;

...

Pursue actively the ideal of “leaving no country behind” and “leaving no one out” especially the vulnerable including the refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and stateless people as well as implement the General Comment on Article 6 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;

Support the development of guidelines and recommendations for maintaining and managing CRVS in conflict and emergency situations as well as special circumstances by making use of experiences from countries having gone through these situations.

Ministerial declaration, fourth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration

Nouakchott, 7 and 8 December 2017

The Conference,

...

Encourages Member States to include refugees, internally displaced persons and persons at risk of statelessness in civil registration and vital statistics systems and factor them into improvement strategies and scaling-up plans;

Ministerial statement, fifth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration

Lusaka, 17 and 18 October 2019

We, African Union Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration,

...

Request AUC, in collaboration with ECA, AfDB, CRVS Core Group, other partners, and the private sector to create a knowledge platform, where AU Member States can share experiences and success stories to strengthen their CRVS and identity management systems, particularly on registration of refugees, returnees, IDPs, and migrants in Africa;

Maintaining civil registration and vital statistics during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, United Nations Legal Identity Agenda guidelines, 2020

Civil registration should be considered an ‘essential service’ mandated to continue operations during a pandemic. Although some physical offices may need to be closed, or opening hours limited or staggered, operations should be maintained as far as possible, whether in-person, or virtual, during the crisis. Depending on the capacity, certain registration processes (such as legitimations) may be put on hold, but registration of births, deaths, foetal deaths and recording of causes of death, should continue as a priority.

Ministerial declaration, high-level political dialogue on birth registration, November 2020

We, African Union Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration and Identity Management,

...

Call upon all AU Member States to sustain their commitment for birth registration for all children including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those living in conflict zones by increasing financing of birth registration services and making birth registration an essential service in these times of COVID-19 pandemic.
