



CATCH-UP BIRTH REGISTRATION AND UNIVERSAL EDUCATION IN SENEGAL

AN EFFECTIVE MEDIUM-TERM SOLUTION TO GUARANTEE A LEGAL IDENTITY FOR ALL SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

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The Child Identity Protection (CHIP)* Team
Brussels, Dakar, Geneva and Lisbon
February 2024

"The birth certificate is not just a document,
but there are other issues at stake!"

Mr Cheikh Faye, Academy Inspector for Ziguinchor, December 2023

**This research was carried out by an independent team from Child Identity Protection (CHIP) composed of international experts - Laurence Bordier, Marine Braun, Mia Dambach, Mariama Diallo - and national experts - Ousmane Gueye and Mamadou Moustapha Thiandoum. The original report in French was translated into English by Mia Dambach and proofread by Daniel Prodigalidad. The original French report is the authoritative version. It is important to note that the opinions and proposals presented in this report do not necessarily represent the policies or views of UNICEF, nor those of the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Territorial Communities, Planning and Development and the Ministry of Justice of Senegal.*

1. See Appendix 2 for the names of the people consulted.

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Forewords

(UNICEF Senegal)

Birth registration is a fundamental right recognized in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, enabling access to other rights. It confers a legal existence and facilitates access to quality education. Children without birth certificates cannot prove their age, making them more vulnerable to violence, exploitation, the worst forms of child labor and child marriage. They may be deprived of routine vaccinations and other health care and prevented from benefiting from social assistance. Among young adults, an official identity document is also required to carry out basic but important transactions, such as opening a bank account, registering to vote and entering the formal job market. At a collective level, birth registration is an essential source of data for the proper planning of public policies.

Aware of the importance of registering the births of all children, Senegal is committed to international priorities including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16.9 to "guarantee everyone a legal identity, in particular through birth registration"; and Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/52/L.23 of April 2023 to "guarantee birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law". At regional level, Senegal has also joined the African Union's "Program for the Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Africa (APAI-CRVS)". For its part, UNICEF at global, regional and country level aligns itself with these commitments and supports Senegal's efforts to guarantee every child the enjoyment of this right, which constitutes a gateway to the realization of other principal rights. Senegal's progress in this area is salutary.

However, it should be noted that this denial of the right to identity, with all its consequences, still persists in Senegal. More than one in five children under the age of five, i.e. 21.3%, are not registered. So, beyond ad hoc responses, the Ministry of Education has collaborated with the Ministry of local government and the Ministry of Justice on the development and implementation of a "system for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates", integrating a digital platform into the Ministry of Education's information system, to be launched in 2020. Thanks to these efforts, in 2023, as this report shows, more than 76,000 students out of 152.752 identified to be without birth certificates had their births registered. This illustrates the effectiveness of this identification strategy within the education system.

This strategy, the subject of the present research initiated by the international NGO Child Identity Protection (CHIP) with the support of UNICEF, earned the country congratulations and encouragement from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in February 2024 during the presentation of its latest periodic reports. The Committee recommended that the project be scaled up nationally and replicated in other countries.

UNICEF congratulates the NGO CHIP and thanks the National Agency for Civil Registration, as well as the Ministries of Education and Justice, and all those at central and decentralized levels who have contributed to the deployment, ownership and sustainability of this mechanism, which brings hope to Senegal's children. UNICEF also thanks the governments of France, Canada and Spain for their support. UNICEF will continue to support the State of Senegal in its policy of promoting and protecting children's rights, and birth registration in particular.


Sylvia Danailov
Représentante UNICEF au Sénégal



(UN Committee on the Rights of the Child)

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, every child has the right to an identity including through birth registration and the right to an education. The international community has reinforced its commitment to these rights, through the Sustainable Development Goals 4 on universal access to education and SDG objective 16.9 on legal identity and birth registration. Both these rights contribute to the well-being and development of children, as well as act as pre-conditions to the achievement of many other rights in the Convention.

In addition, the African States, members of the African Union (AU), have declared 19 August each year African Civil Registration Day. Article 6 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child has been the subject of a general observation by the African Committee of Experts.

Despite all this legal arsenal and the various legal and political strategies, millions of children are still deprived of their identity and birth registration. These children are invisible and have no access to their most basic rights, and unfortunately this will have a lifelong impact.

We warmly Senegal's proactive efforts, which have enabled thousands of pupils without birth certificates to be regularised through supplementary judgments during the mobile courts. These efforts occur before the second stage, which would be transcription into the civil register to enable them to obtain their birth certificates.

We encourage Senegal to widely disseminate the protocol across the country to reach the remaining pupils without birth certificates including those in daaras. Every effort should be made to register children at birth within the prescribed deadlines so that all Senegalese children are registered.

We wish to reiterate our concluding observations and look forward to seeing the fruits of these pioneering solutions that will enable every child to fully enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Committee would like to express its deep gratitude to all its partners, such as UNICEF and Child Identity Protection (CHIP), for their cooperation and their support offered to Senegal to carry out this work.

Our thanks also go to Senegal through the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Territorial Communities, Planning and Development and the Ministry of Justice. Thank you to all those who, from near or far, have made their contributions, however modest, in the best interests of children. We hope that this research on the protocol can be used to inspire other countries to use this medium term solution to reduce the backlog of pupils without a birth certificate.



29 February 2024

Ann Skelton, Chairperson
UN Committee on the Rights of the Child



29 February 2024

Suzanne Aho, Member
UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Rapporteur for Senegal

Executive Summary

General context

In Senegal, in 2023, more than 76,000 pupils from CI to CM2² were registered out of the 152,752 detected as having no birth certificate. This was made possible by the "Protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates"³ dating from 2020 and widely disseminated since November 2022.

This protocol is the **temporary tool** used by Senegal to achieve, **in the medium term**, the objectives of its innovative strategy for **detecting and registering births through the education system**, which was born of close collaboration between **Senegal's Ministry of National Education (MEN)**, the **Ministry of Territorial Communities, Planning and Development (MCTADT)** and the **Ministry of Justice (MJ)**.

The protocol includes **an electronic platform (SIMEN)** to register and regularise all **pupils in pre-school, in kindergarten to end of primary school (i.e. CI to CM2, generally for children aged 5 to 12) enrolled in public schools and daara (Koranic schools)**. The protocol does not target children enrolled in an alternative education programme or children who have migrated to Senegal.

As the lead country for the **first regional symposium on civil status in French-speaking Africa, to be held in December 2023**,⁴ Senegal is positioning itself as a pioneer in the region by making substantial efforts to modernise its civil registration system through the **NEKKAL programme**,⁵ supported by Civipol and Enabel. Thanks to this catch-up birth registration strategy through the education system, Senegal is aligning itself with **international standards and the SDGs 16 on justice and 4 on education**. These standards promote the **rights to legal identity and universal education**. This **strategy was welcomed by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child** in its Concluding Observations of February 2024 dealing with Senegal's most recent periodic report.⁶

Research and methodology

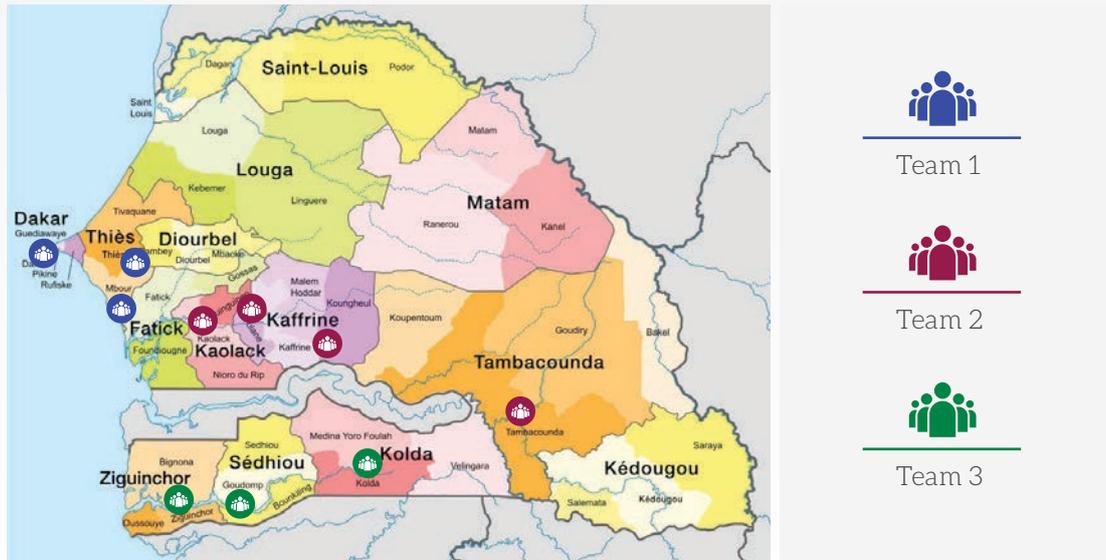
The current report is part of a research study conducted in 2023 by **UNICEF Senegal** in collaboration with an independent team from **Child Identity Protection (CHIP)**, in addition to an **internal evaluation of the protocol undertaken by the MEN** in November 2023.

The aim of the research was to **strengthen the implementation of the protocol** for regularising unregistered pupils in Senegal and to **identify the basic characteristics needed to establish such a protocol in other countries in the sub-Saharan African region**.

2. Initiation class (Cours d'initiation (CI)) to second year Middle school (Cours moyen deuxième année (CM2)).
3. MEN, Dispositif de détection et d'enregistrement à l'état civil des élèves sans acte de naissance (the protocol), available in paper and PDF versions, November 2020.
4. <https://decentralisation.gouv.sn/2023/12/11/le-ministre-modou-diagne-fada-a-procede-a-louverture-du-premier-symposium-sur-letat-civil-en-afrique-francophone/>.
5. [Support programme to strengthen the civil status information system and consolidate a national biometric identity file in Senegal](#).
6. [United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations on the sixth and seventh periodic reports of Senegal, February 2024, §17](#).

To this end, the research was carried out in **eight regions of Senegal** (Dakar, Thiès, Kaolack, Kaffrine, Tambacounda, Ziguinchor, Sédhiou and Kolda) by three teams of national and international experts, involving **54 interviews** based on **semi-structured questionnaires** with **138 stakeholders** at both central and decentralised levels, including organisations and individuals targeted by the protocol in the selected regions.

Senegal



The five stages of the protocol

The protocol is structured in **three stages**: detection and identification, registration, and registration follow-up. The research suggests the **inclusion of two additional stages** to ensure the success of the protocol. It additionally recommends **prerequisites** for a **cross-sectoral approach** in parallel with these stages, such as **institutionalised inter-ministerial coordination, sufficient resources, political will, a coordination and monitoring mechanism, interoperability** between different Ministry IT platforms, **a clear description of the stages of the protocol and the roles and responsibilities** of each actor involved, **cross-sectoral meetings** at central and regional levels involving various sectors, and the involvement of local players, etc.



Stage 0:

Describes the two levels of awareness-raising required, one aimed at parents and the community and the other targeting state actors through training.

Stage 1:

Stresses the importance of applying the protocol as soon as pupils start school, rather than when they move from CM2 to junior high school (i.e. 6th grade).

Stage 2:

Is devoted to the judicial regularisation of pupils without birth certificates through mobile court hearings.

Stage 3:

Focuses on monitoring the regularisation of pupils, which involves updating civil status information on the school system.

Stage 4:

Deals with the follow-up of pupils who have not successfully completed a stage of the regularisation process, as well as children who are not covered by the protocol, so that they are not left behind when it comes to civil status regularisation.

Research results

For each of these stages, the report highlights a series of **good practices**, such as the organisation of awareness-raising campaigns and training in the use of the protocol by both public and civil society actors. It also stresses the importance of the involvement of community and religious leaders, the support given to families by legal centres, the involvement of the daara in the use of the protocol, and UNICEF's support, particularly in the use of the SIMEN platform. The report likewise suggests **opportunities for overcoming the difficulties encountered by those involved in the protocol**. It advocates for providing sufficient resources and ongoing training, and establishing a 'civil status' focal point at school level and another focal point at Education and Training Inspectorate (IEF) level to ensure full monitoring of the pupil's file during the civil status regularisation procedure. It also calls for an eventual reduction in the use of mobile court hearings to prevent fraud and falsification of children's identity documents, the promotion of interoperability of digital platforms, the introduction of a unique identifier for children in all sectors, etc. The report also stresses the importance of transcribing civil status regularisation judgements into civil registers and having archives in suitable conditions, ideally in digital form.

For each stage, the report suggests "Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system" for any country wishing to reproduce a similar system. It explains **which situations should be replicated** (e.g. parents know where to obtain information, actors are trained, monitoring for all stages, civil status documents are digitised). It equally highlights what should **be avoided** (e.g. lack of continuous training for actors, mobile court hearings becoming the rule). The report also covers activities that should **be stopped** (e.g. regularisation involves fees that are too high, over-reliance on the protocol, which encourages late registrations and the protocol excludes children out of school).

The report concludes by stressing the importance of considering **the protocol as a transitional tool (i.e. a back-up plan)**. This is important as in principle, parents should register their children within the first year after birth, thereby complying with the legal deadlines. The report encourages **parents to take responsibility** for registering their children as a priority.

The **overall recommendations** focus on **reinforcing existing processes, training, and strengthening interministerial coordination and the tools available** for effective implementation of the protocol.

Both Senegal's strategy and UNICEF's research, are perfectly aligned with the African Union's objectives for the year 2024, dedicated to the education of African children. Capitalising on this momentum, all efforts, including those linked to the regularisation of **civil status registration**, should be deployed to **ensure that every child has universal access to a legal identity and is not left behind**. The report's findings and proposals are relevant to regional structures and actors, such as the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Discussions are underway with other countries in the region interested in developing a similar protocol. The potential solutions suggested open up prospects for integrating the remaining 70,000 unregistered pupils in Senegal, to ensure that they are not forgotten.

Having a birth certificate opens the door to other rights and protections. Every dream starts with having a name.⁷

7. This is also the message of the new '#MyName' campaign launched by UNICEF during the African Cup of Nations in Côte d'Ivoire, which aims to "mobilise the African continent in favour of universal birth registration, using the power of sport".

List of Abbreviations

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------|---|
| ACERWC (CADEDBE) | African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Comité africain d'experts sur les droits et le bien-être de l'enfant) | CODEPE | Collective of Pre-school Headmasters (Collectifs des directeurs de l'enseignement préscolaire) |
| AEMO | Open educational action (Action éducative en milieu ouvert) | CONEC | National Civil Status Committee (Comité national de l'état civil) |
| AJS | Association of Senegalese Jurists (Association des juristes sénégalaises) | CP | Preparatory class (Cours préparatoire) |
| AME | Pupils' Mothers' Association (Association des mères d'élèves) | CRC (CIDE) | Convention on the Rights of the Child (Convention internationale relative aux droits de l'enfant) |
| ANCTP | National Agency for Early Childhood and the Early Years Centre (Agence nationale de la petite enfance et de la case des tout-petits) | CS (EC) | Civil status (Etat civil) |
| ANEC | National Civil Status Agency (Agence Nationale de l'état civil) | DACS | Directorate of Civil Affairs and the Seal (Direction des affaires civiles et du sceau) |
| APE | Parents of Pupils Association (Association des parents d'élèves) | DD | Directorate of Daara (Direction des Daara) |
| ASC | Sports and cultural associations (associations sportives et culturelles) | DEE | Directorate of Primary Education (Direction de l'enseignement élémentaire) |
| BEXCO | Examinations and Competitions Office (Bureau des examens et concours) | DEMSG | Directorate of Secondary Education (Direction de l'enseignement moyen secondaire général) |
| BFEM | Certificate for end of middle school (Brevet de fin d'études moyennes) | DEPS | Directorate of Pre-school Education (Direction de l'enseignement préscolaire) |
| CDPE | Departmental Child Protection Committee (Comité départemental de protection de l'enfant) | DEXCO | Directorate of Exams and Competitions (Direction des examens et concours) |
| CE1 | 1 st grade (Cours élémentaire première année) | FC (CF) | Family Code (Code de la famille) |
| CE2 | 2 nd grade (Cours élémentaire deuxième année) | IA | Education Inspectorate (Inspection d'académie) |
| CFEE | Certificate for Final Primary School Studies (Certificat de fin d'études élémentaires) | IEF | Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspection de l'éducation et de la formation) |
| CGE | School management committee/council (Comité/Conseil de gestion d'école/d'établissement) | MCTADT | Ministry of Territorial Communities, Planning and Development (Ministère des collectivités territoriales, de l'aménagement et du développement des territoires) |
| CHIP | Child Identity Protection | MEN | Ministry of Education (Ministère de l'éducation nationale) |
| CI | Initiation class (Cours d'initiation) | MJ | Ministry of Justice (Ministère de la justice) |
| CM1 | First year Middle school (Cours moyen première année) | RNSE | National report on the education situation in Senegal (Rapport national sur la situation de l'éducation au Sénégal) |
| CM2 | Second year Middle school (Cours moyen deuxième année) | SDG (ODD) | Sustainable Development Goals (Objectifs de développement durable) |
| CODEC | Collective School Headmasters (Collectif des directeurs d'école) | | |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------------|---|
| SIMEN | National Education Management Information System (Système d'information et de management de l'éducation nationale) | UDAPE | Departmental union of parents' associations (Union départementale des associations de parents d'élèves) |
| SNEC | National Civil Status Strategy (Stratégie nationale de l'état civil) | UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund (Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'Enfance) |
| TI | Local court (Tribunal d'instance) | UNICEF WCARO | UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office (Le bureau régional de l'UNICEF pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest et centrale) |
| TGI | High Court (Tribunal de grande instance) | WHO (OMS) | World Health Organisation (Organisation mondiale pour la santé) |
| UCGE | Union of School Management Committees (Union des comités de gestion des écoles) | | |

List of Main Definitions⁸

- **Bajjenu goox**

The "bajjenu goox", which means "neighbourhood godmother" in Wolof, is a respected woman in her community in Senegal. She acts as a counsellor, mediator and support figure, particularly for women and children. She is often involved in monitoring children from the time of the mother's pregnancy, particularly in matters relating to civil status. She also takes part in events such as christenings and raises awareness of vaccination and pre- and post-natal care.

- **Birth declaration**

In Senegal, this is the obligation to notify the civil registrar of the birth of a child within the jurisdiction of the civil registry centre in order to have the event entered in the current register (Article 51 of the Family Code (FC)).⁹

- **Birth registration**

Birth registration is the continuous, permanent and universal recording of births and their characteristics in accordance with the national legal provisions in force.¹⁰

- **Civil registrar**

In Senegal, civil status records will be received by civil registrars in the main centres and in secondary centres attached to a main centre. In communes, the duties of civil registrars are performed by the mayor, a deputy mayor, a municipal councillor or a civil servant specially designated and delegated by the civil registrar (Article 31 of the Civil Code(CC)).

- **Civil status**

Civil status is considered to be the recording of major events and facts that occur in an individual's life, such as birth, marriage, divorce and death.¹¹ The importance of birth registration lies in the fact that it gives children an official legal identity, giving them access to other rights and to basic services such as health, education and social services. In addition, it helps to protect them from all forms of violence and exploitation throughout their childhood (UNICEF, 2016).¹²

8. The definitions are organised in alphabetical order, without following any logical structure other than this.

9. Definition taken from protocol, 2020, p. 10.

10. Definition taken from protocol, 2020, p. 10.

11. Definition taken from protocol, 2020, p. 10.

12. [UNICEF The State of the World's Children: Equal opportunity for every child, 2016, p. 91.](#)

In Senegal, all births, marriages and deaths are recorded in the form of an act in the civil status registers. (Article 30 of the FC).

Civil status can be defined as a public legal-administrative institution whose purpose is "to record in registers in a continuous and compulsory manner, to preserve and issue copies of information relating to events connected with civil status" (UNICEF, 2014).

- **Hearing (audience)**

In principle, hearings before a court or judge take place in the courthouse. This is the case, for example, for ordinary and special hearings in civil status matters of the local court (Tribunal d'Instance (TI)). However, a hearing may, by order, be held outside the walls of the courthouse. This is known as a mobile court hearing (audience foraine).¹³

- **Legal identity**

Legal identity is defined as "the basic characteristics of an individual's identity, for example, name, sex, and place and date of birth, conferred through registration and the issuance of a certificate by an authorised civil registration authority following the occurrence of birth. In the absence of birth registration, legal identity may be conferred by a legally recognized identification authority; this system should be linked to the civil registration system to ensure a holistic approach to legal identity from birth to death."¹⁴

In Senegal, "personality begins at birth and ceases at death. However, a child may acquire rights from the day of conception if he or she is born alive." (Article 1 of the FC).

- **Protocol**

The "system for detecting and registering children without birth certificates" is a document that has been drawn up by Senegal's MEN, in collaboration with the MCTADT and the MJ, with the aim of enabling children who have not been registered at birth to do so through the school system.

- **Regularisation**

Regularisation consists of enabling a person to have official recognition or identity in accordance with the legal procedures in force.¹⁵

- **Universal education**

Universal education refers to the idea that everyone, regardless of their origin, social situation, gender or other characteristics, has access to "inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4).¹⁶

13. Definition based on the protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates (the protocol), available in paper and PDF versions, November 2020, p. 10.

14. Economic and Social Council, Launch of the United Nations Legal Identity Programme: a comprehensive approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management, E/CN.3/2020/15 (United Nations 2019), § 4. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/2020-15-CRVS-E.pdf>.

15. Definition taken from protocol, 2020, p. 10.

16. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>.



Photo: © UNICEF

1

Introduction

1.1 Structure of the Report

The **'introduction' section sets** out the structure of the report, providing a general overview of the research context, in describing the birth registration strategy through the education system. It also sets out the research objectives and explores the applicable legal framework (international, regional and national levels). The research methodology sets out the approach, the phases and logic of the research, as well as the five-stages of the protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates and considerations for analysing the protocol.

The central part of the report, **"Catch-up birth registration of children - A five-stage approach"**, is subdivided into five stages: **Stage 0** Awareness-raising activities and training in the use of the protocol; **Stage 1** Early detection and identification of pupils without birth certificates; **Stage 2** Registration of pupils without a birth certificate; **Stage 3** Monitoring the registration of pupils without birth certificates; and **Stage 4** Follow-up for all pupils who fail to pass one of the preceding stages.

This section looks in detail at each stage in the process of regularising unregistered pupils through the protocol. **Each stage is examined in detail by analysing its specific activities. This has made it possible to identify good practice and to suggest possible solutions to the obstacles encountered by those involved in the protocol.**

Boxes, entitled **"Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system"**, are included at each stage of the process to **highlight situations to replicate, avoid and stop**, functioning like a traffic light with the colour code "green, amber, red." They provide a practical approach for other countries wishing to draw inspiration from the protocol to set up a similar temporary solution in their own country. This solution would enable children to catch-up with their civil status registration, if this has not been done by their representatives within the legal deadlines, as soon as they are born. The aim is to guarantee their right to a legal identity.

Situations to replicate (in green) highlight the most beneficial and recommended practices to follow in the context of catch-up birth registration. These situations can be monitored and streamlined throughout the country.

► **Situations to avoid (in orange)** highlight situations requiring particular caution. Although they do not constitute a danger, they involve potential risks or delicate aspects that need to be carefully considered when registering a child.

► **Situations to stop (in red)** highlight situations to be absolutely prohibited because of their proven negative impact on the birth registration process and the regularisation of unregistered children.

The report then ends with a brief **conclusion** and a series of **recommendations** aimed at improving existing processes, reinforcing good practice and mitigating the challenges identified. The aim is to ensure an effective catch-up birth registration strategy in Senegal.

Finally, the **Bibliography** lists the sources consulted for this study, while **the Appendices** include additional documents such as the interview questionnaire and the list of people consulted during the research.

1.2 Brief description of the context and research

A child's birth certificate, which is obtained through civil registration, is of vital importance both individually and collectively. At an individual level, civil registration is a fundamental right that gives access to other fundamental rights. It attests to the legal existence of each individual. On a collective level, civil status is an essential source of data for the proper planning of public policies.

Despite its importance, civil registration of children remains a constant challenge and a major concern for African states. According to UNICEF, in 2022, of the 164 million children under five in the world without a birth certificate, some 91 million live in Africa, a percentage of 56%.¹⁷ This is not a recent observation. As long as 10 years ago, in a report published to mark its 67th anniversary, UNICEF revealed that more than 230 million children under the age of five worldwide had never been registered at birth. The lowest birth registration rates were in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, with 37% of these children in the latter region.¹⁸

Consequently, the priority for the African continent is to modernise registration systems, in particular by adopting digital solutions, in order to achieve universal birth registration by 2030. This is in line with target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for which the following recommendation has been made: "By 2030, ensure legal identity for all, including through birth registration".¹⁹ A recent statistical analysis of countries in the sub-Saharan Africa region, published in 2022 by UNICEF HQ in partnership with the UNICEF Offices for West and Central Africa (WCARO) and East and Southern Africa (ESARO), shows that 12 countries in the region are on track to meet target 16.9.²⁰ These countries include Senegal, which has put in place various mechanisms to promote immediate (within the legal timeframe) or late (outside the legal timeframe) birth registration, particularly in the health sector²¹ and education²² (which is the subject of this report).

In June 2020, the African Union and UNICEF jointly launched the "My Name is Nobody" campaign to promote children's rights to a legal identity and access to essential services, including child-friendly justice.²³ At the time, this campaign was of crucial importance, as concerns were growing over the threat of a decline in birth registration due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the "Programme for the Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Africa (APAI-CRVS)" was launched in 2020.

17. UNICEF, Birth Registration for Every Child by 2030: Are we on track? UNICEF: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/birth-registration-for-every-child-by-2030/>, 2019.

18. UNICEF, *Every child's right at birth: Inequalities and trends in birth registration*, New York, 2013.

19. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/fr/peace-justice/>.

20. UNICEF, Division of Data, Analysis, Planning and Monitoring, "A statistical update on birth registration in Africa", New York, October 2022.

21. The government has launched the "Coin Etat Civil, Santé" (CECS) programme to promote birth registration.

22. Protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates, available in paper and PDF versions, November 2020.

23. [The African Union and UNICEF launch the "My name is nobody" campaign](#), UNICEF website.

The APAI-CRVS is aligned with UNICEF's ambition to conduct studies in the 22 West and Central African States, examining the feasibility of establishing partnerships in the education sector.²⁴ UNICEF's technical assistance is also in line with the recent Human Rights Council Resolution of April 2023, which calls on States to seek assistance from the United Nations in matters of birth registration.²⁵ In 2024, UNICEF WCARO, with leading football players and the private sector launched the "#MyName" campaign during the African Cup of Nations in Côte d'Ivoire,²⁶ which aims to "mobilise the African continent in favour of universal birth registration using the power of sport. This includes working with some of football's biggest stars to show how registration and identity have facilitated their journey to success."²⁷

As civil registration, enrolment and graduation conditions and data management systems are unique to each country, it is proposed that initially UNICEF with the relevant Ministries, identify 3-4 countries that would be conducive for being pilots for research on inter-operability with the education sector. Following these pilot studies the research could expand to cover the other countries in the region. UNICEF has identified Senegal because of the country's political will and the progress it has made in this area. Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire have also been identified.

In order to carry out this research in Senegal in 2022, the UNICEF WCARO regional office and the UNICEF Senegal office joined forces with the Senegalese Ministry of National Education (MEN), Ministry of Territorial Communities, Planning and Development (Ministère des collectivités territoriales, de l'aménagement et du développement des territoires (MCTADT)) and the Ministry of Justice (Ministère de la justice (MJ)) as partners, as well as Child Identity Protection (CHIP). CHIP is an international organisation, based in Geneva, Switzerland, committed to the protection of children's rights to identity including birth registration and family relations worldwide.²⁸

According to UNICEF, more than one in five children under the age of five (21.3%) in Senegal is not registered with the civil registry.²⁹ Senegal is aware of this situation and has made major efforts to address the lack of civil registration for both children and adults. In 2021, a number of actions were carried out. The government, in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA, launched a study on the socio-cultural determinants of non-registration of civil status in Senegal (see Table 1).³⁰ The aim was to understand the main reasons why births are not registered, with a view to overcoming them. The government has also launched the national NEKKAL programme, funded by the European Union and implemented jointly by Belgian cooperation agency Enabel and Civipol.³¹ This programme aims to improve the civil registration system and the regular production of vital statistics by digitising civil registers. In addition, Senegal's exemplary commitment to playing a leading role in improving civil registration was illustrated by the hosting of the first Civil Status Symposium in French-speaking Africa, on "the challenges of a civil status for everyone," which was held from 11 to 13 December 2023 in Dakar.³² This event brought together stakeholders from 26 countries in the region. Finally, numerous awareness-raising campaigns, including the African Civil Status Day,³³ and capacity-building initiatives have been launched. These initiatives are aimed at better informing the public and building the skills of local actors on the importance and operation of birth registration.³⁴

24. <https://apai-crvs.uneca.org/fr/propos-du-apai-crvs>.

25. [Human Rights Council, Resolution A/HRC/52/L.23 "Birth registration and the right of everyone everywhere to recognition as a person before the law", \(United Nations 2023\), §8. Economic and Social Council, Launch of the United Nations Legal Identity Programme: a comprehensive approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management, E/CN.3/2020/15 \(United Nations 2019\), § 4.](#)

26. <https://www.unicef.org/wca/media/9681/file/My%20Name%20Birth%20Registration%20Campaign%20-%20FR.pdf>.

27. <https://www.unicef.org/wca/media/9681/file/My%20Name%20Birth%20Registration%20Campaign%20-%20FR.pdf>. Footballers such as Sébastien Haller, Kalidou Koulibaly and Aliou Cissé in short videos show that, without birth registration, a child cannot fulfil their dreams, such as playing at these events.

28. <https://www.child-identity.org/en/>.

29. <https://www.unicef.org/senegal/recits/pourquoi-lenregistrement-des-naissances-est-vital-pour-les-enfants> or <https://child-identity.org/images/countryreports/senegal.pdf>.

30. Ministère de l'Économie, du Plan et de la Coopération du Sénégal, UNFPA and UNICEF, "Rapport qualitatif sur les déterminants socio-culturels de la non-déclaration des faits d'état civil au Sénégal", March 2021, word document.

31. [Support programme to strengthen the civil status information system and consolidate a national biometric identity file in Senegal.](#)

32. <https://decentralisation.gouv.sn/2023/12/11/le-ministre-modou-diagne-fada-a-procede-a-louverture-du-premier-symposium-sur-letat-civil-en-afrique-francophone/>.

33. <https://www.uneca.org/fr/stories/la-cinqui%C3%A8me-journ%C3%A9e-africaine-de-l%E2%80%99enregistrement-des-faits-d%E2%80%99%C3%A9tat-civil-et-des>.

34. [Child Identity Protection, Country report : Children's Right to Identity in Senegal, 2023.](#)

In addition to all the efforts being made for newborn babies, initiatives are being put in place for children who have not been registered with the civil registry within the legal timeframe. The protocol allows for catch-up birth registration through the school system.

Table 1

Some reasons why children are not registered at birth in Senegal

Research carried out by various stakeholders in Senegal in 2021³⁵ and interviews conducted as part of this 2023 research,³⁶ revealed the following causes including:

- Lack of resources and the remoteness of civil status registries.
 - Problems with the birth certificate, which is often not issued in cases of non-payment of hospital fees or home births.
 - Parents' belief that the delivery (or birth) certificate is equivalent to a birth certificate.
 - Even when births are registered at the registry office, the files (registers) can be lost, misplaced or incorrectly stored.
 - Birth registration procedures may not be finalised, may be late or contain material errors.
 - Families' ignorance or neglect of the importance of registering their children's births, particularly in rural areas.
 - The situation of single mothers, women whose husbands are absent and non-formalised marriages that do not wish to register the child, even if there are no legal obstacles to doing so.
- The phenomenon of migration in the border regions of southern Senegal (with Gambia, Guinea, etc.) gives rise to situations where parents do not have civil status documents and have no intention of obtaining them for their children.³⁷ In response, some parents choose to falsify their children's identity documents. These cases are taken very seriously and are closely monitored by the Senegalese MJ.
 - The forgery or falsification of identity documents is also practised in context of the CFEE, as it is restricted to children over the age of 14. To get around this age limit and keep their children in the school system, some parents resort to producing falsified identity cards or birth certificates showing a lower age, or claim that the child does not have a birth certificate - even though it had already been registered. Without passing this examination, the children are limited to apprenticeships in vocational schools, and there are too few of these schools to meet the demand.³⁸

1.3 Context of Protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates

Senegal has made significant efforts to improve the overall civil registration system and access to education for Senegalese children. Although many children are not registered, they can still be admitted to school. The fact that they do not have a birth certificate does not prevent them from attending pre-school onwards.³⁹ As a result, it is possible for many children without birth certificates to begin their schooling in the lower grades. This is reflected in the high enrolment rates for children.

35. Ministère de l'Economie, du Plan et de la Coopération du Sénégal, UNFPA and UNICEF, "Rapport qualitatif sur les déterminants socio-culturels de la non-déclaration des faits d'état civil au Sénégal", March 2021, word document.

36. Information reflected in all the interviews (55 interviews in total) (see Appendix 2).

37. Interviews 43, 44 and 45 (see Appendix 2).

38. Interviews 3 and 38 (see Appendix 2).

39. In Senegal, the birth certificate consists of 3 parts: part no. 1 of the birth certificate must be given to the parents, part no. 2 is sent to the high court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) by the civil registrar and part no. 3 remains in the initialled civil status register in the town hall's archive room.

For example, according to the national report on the state of education in Senegal for 2022,⁴⁰ girls' access and completion rates are predominant. Nationally, the gross enrolment rate is 18.10% at pre-school level - with 19.60% for girls and 16.17% for boys - and 83.80% at elementary level - with 91.10% for girls and 76.0% for boys. At higher education level, the parity index is constantly improving.⁴¹

However, the lack of civil registration (birth certificate) can have repercussions on these children's school careers. During the transition from primary to junior high school, children without birth certificates run the risk of not being able to sit the exam for Certificate for Final Primary School Studies (Certificat de fin d'études élémentaires (CFEE)) exam in CM2. It should be noted that the MEN regularly issues circular notes authorising these pupils to take part in the exams. In certain situations, children without birth certificates are sometimes regularised when the time comes to sit these examinations. For those who are not regularised at this stage, this can have a negative impact on the rest of their schooling.

This is reflected in the figures, as the total number of pupils without birth certificates has increased significantly. In just two years, from 2016 to 2018, this number has risen from 751,108 to 811,560 pupils, an increase of 60,452 pupils.⁴² For the 2019-2020 school year, there were 183,501 pupils without a birth certificate, including 14,813 CM2 pupils who were authorised to take part in CFEE.⁴³

In November 2020, the MEN, in collaboration with the MCTADT and the MJ, took the initiative of putting an end to the phenomenon in the education system by developing a "protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates."⁴⁴ The protocol, supported by both UNICEF Senegal and the UNICEF WCARO regional office, details the various stages of catch-up birth registration in the education system, including the stakeholders involved. In particular, it aims to help school headmasters (as well as other relevant actors, as will be explained later in this report) by clarifying their role in supporting families to complete the birth registration process. It applies to pupils in pre-school, Kindergarten (CI) to the end of primary school (CM2) in public and private schools and daara (Koranic schools).

As part of this protocol, the MEN has set up a digital platform, with the support of the National Education Management Information System (Système d'information et de management de l'éducation nationale (SIMEN)), accessible at <https://etacivil.education.sn/>. This platform will be connected to the NEKKAL programme, as will the data collection system for the daara (cf. 1.6.4). This platform facilitates online registration of pre-school and primary school pupils (CI to CM2), enabling real-time monitoring of the civil status of these children. It records data online or offline via Excel files, and generates data disaggregated by academy (16), education and training inspectorate (59) and school.

The main objective of this catch-up birth registration strategy, through the protocol, is to ensure that all pupils, from pre-school to CM2, are registered with the civil registry and can obtain a birth certificate. As a result, this approach can help strengthen pupils' access to fundamental rights, such as identity and education, and facilitate their school career. This is a temporary solution to deal with the situation of children who have not been registered within the required legal deadlines.

The figures for 2023 illustrate the effectiveness of this protocol. Of the 152,752 pupils without birth certificates, 76,376 have been regularised since the protocol was launched in November 2022 which represents around 50% of children in two years. This high rate of regularisation can also be explained by the high school enrolment rate in Senegal.

40. RNSE: National report on the education situation in Senegal (Rapport national sur la situation de l'éducation au Sénégal), 2022.

41. https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/cpd56_11apr_afternoon_senegal_fr.pdf.

42. Report by the Ministry of National Education (Elementary Education Department), "Dispositif de détection et d'enregistrement à l'état civil des élèves sans acte de naissance", November 2020.

43. Information collected through SIMEN's etacivil.education.sn platform.

44. Protocol for detecting and registering pupils without a birth certificate, available in paper version, November 2020.

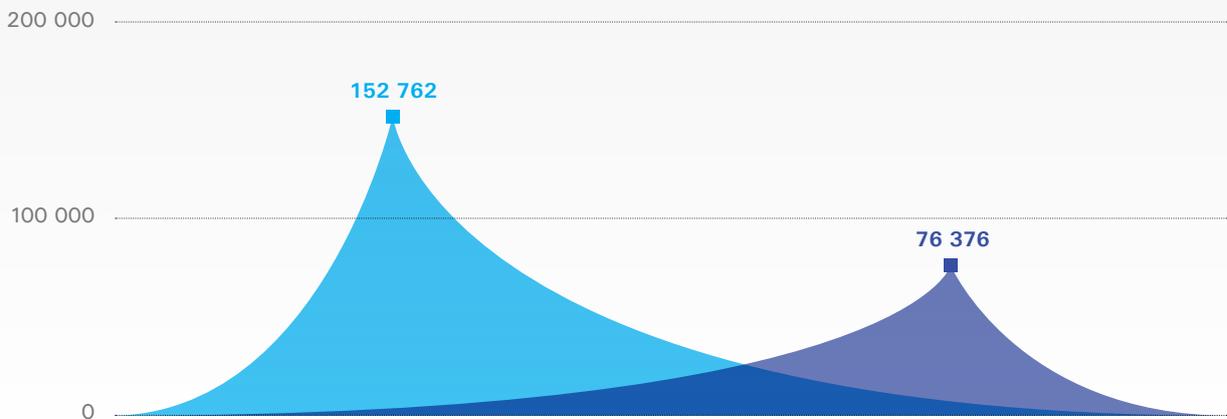
Situation by IA



Source: SIMEN Platform, MEN Senegal, table extracted on 11.01.2024

■ Pupils without civil status act ■ Pupils with regularised status

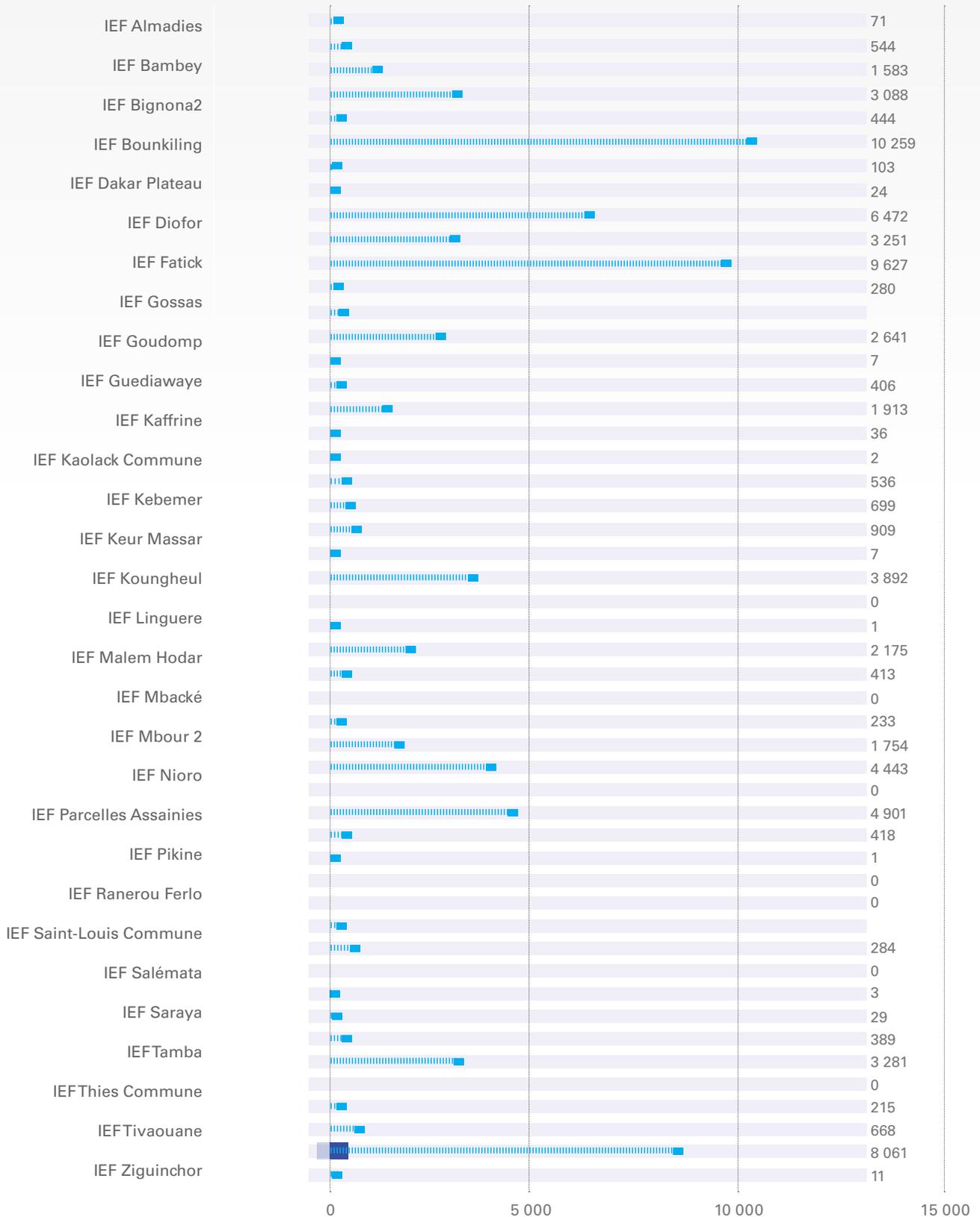
Overall Situation



Source: SIMEN Platform, MEN Senegal, table extracted on 11.01.2024

■ Pupils without a birth certificate ■ Regularised situations

Situation by IEF



Source: SIMEN Platform, MEN Senegal, table extracted on 11.01.2024

■ Pupils without a birth certificate ■ Regularised situations

In November 2023, the Ministry of Education carried out an internal evaluation of the protocol in order to learn lessons about how the protocol had been set up and how functional it was at the level of the Education Inspectorate (Inspection d'académie (IA)), Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspection de l'éducation et de la formation (IEF)), schools, civil status centres, magistrates' courts and at a community level. A workshop to review the results of this evaluation was held on 22 January 2024 at the MEN in Diamniadio. This initiative by the MEN illustrates a constant political commitment and will to monitor and improve birth registration rates through the protocol.

1.4 Research objectives

The main aim of the research is to analyse the implementation of the protocol with a view to improving it, disseminating it and applying it more widely, both in Senegal and in other sub-Saharan African countries.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. **Analyse the level of implementation of the protocol at all stages within each institution or by each actor involved**
2. **Identify the best practices developed by the actors involved in implementing the protocol**

What opportunities can be seized to strengthen policies and practices through better implementation of the existing or revised protocol?

3. **Identify areas for improvement of the protocol and measures to support the actors involved in its implementation**

Are adjustments necessary in the face of the difficulties observed to ensure better implementation of the protocol in this respect? What lessons can be learned from this research to inspire reforms of similar protocols in other countries in the region?

4. **Propose basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system, regardless of the country in which it is applied**

1.5 Legal framework applicable to the civil registration of children in Senegal

1.5.1 The international legal framework

In view of the importance of the declaration of civil status facts, the international community has recommended in the Sustainable Development Goals to 2030, in **target 16.9 of SDG 16 "Peace, Justice and Effective Institutions,"** which aims to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide Access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels," the following recommendation "By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration."⁴⁵

Senegal's protocol allows the registration of births to be regularised for pupils from CI to CM2, via the education system and by a judgement handed down by the President of the local court (Tribunal d'Instance). It also refers to targets 16.3 and 16.6 of SDG 16, which aim to respectively "Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and provide equal access to justice for all" and "Establish effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels." Moreover, in January 2024, the United Nations **Committee on the Rights of the Child** announced that it would shortly be publishing a **General Comment (No. 27) on children's rights to access to justice and effective remedies.**⁴⁶ The issue of civil registration and obtaining a legal identity for the child is crucial to enabling them to have access to justice.

45. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/fr/peace-justice/>.

46. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/draft-general-comment-no-27-childrens-rights-access>.

In the context of our research into the protocol, **SDG 16** must be read in conjunction with **SDG 4**, which aims to "**ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**"⁴⁷

The international legal framework for a child's right to civil status registration is set out in international instruments. Foremost among these is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),⁴⁸ ratified by Senegal in 1990.⁴⁹

Article 7 of the CRC states that "*1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents. 2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.*"

All the Articles of the CRC relate to the civil status registration of children and their right to an identity. This includes in particular the following Articles, such as the guiding principles of the CRC **Articles 2** (non-discrimination), **3** (the best interests of the child), **6** (the right to life) and **12** (the participation of the child), as well as **Articles 8** (the right to preserve one's identity), **10** (the right to family reunification) and **21** (adoption), which require the presentation of proof of identity from the civil register and the birth certificate. These rights must be considered in conjunction with **Articles 28 and 29**, which set out the child's right to education, and **Article 39**, which provides effective remedies for children to obtain redress for violations of their rights.

In its recent **Concluding Observations on Senegal's sixth and seventh periodic reports**, the **United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child** welcomed "the significant efforts to improve the civil registration system, the registration of students without birth certificates, including those in daaras, and the slight increase in birth registration" after examining in January 2024 these reports submitted by Senegal under the CRC and the two Optional Protocols to the Convention.⁵⁰

Other international instruments, including the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 15)**,⁵¹ the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 24)**,⁵² and the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Article 9)** also recognise the right of every child to be registered at birth, to acquire a name and a nationality, and emphasise the responsibilities of States to guarantee these rights,⁵³ prevent statelessness and prevent other violations of children's rights. The **International Convention for the Protection of Persons from Enforced Disappearance** contains safeguards for incomplete or falsified identity of the child and emphasises "family relations" (**Article 25**).⁵⁴

Finally, the recent **Human Rights Council Resolution of April 2023** commits States to seek assistance from the United Nations in matters of birth registration including recommending promotion of inter-operability between different sectors.⁵⁵

1.5.2 The regional legal framework

The **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** (African Charter),⁵⁶ ratified by Senegal in 1996, is the main regional instrument protecting children. **Article 6** of the African Charter deals with the identity of individuals.

47. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/fr/education/>.

48. [Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations, 1989.](#)

49. https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&clang=fr.

50. [United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations on the sixth and seventh periodic reports of Senegal, February 2024, §17.](#)

51. [Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, 1948.](#)

52. [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, United Nations, 1966, ratified in 1978 by Senegal.](#)

53. [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, United Nations, 1979, ratified by Senegal in 1985.](#)

54. [International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, 2006, ratified by Senegal in 2008.](#)

55. [Human Rights Council, Resolution A/HRC/52/L.23 "Birth registration and the right of everyone everywhere to recognition as a person before the law", \(United Nations 2023\), §8.](#)

56. [African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Organisation of African Unity, 1990.](#)

Other provisions of the African Charter include **Article 10**, which provides protection for privacy, and **Article 19**, which establishes the child's right to family relations. Similarly, **Article 25** stipulates that every child who is permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason has the right to special protection and assistance and to be reunited with his or her family.

In addition, the **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)** has published a **General Comment on the right to birth registration**, a name and a nationality (Article 6).⁵⁷ This General Comment details the standards and recommendations aimed at complying with Article 6 of the African Charter. ACERWC is currently drafting its next General Comment on Education, where it will be important that the issue of birth registration is considered as a protective factor to ensure universal access to education. In 2024, the Day of the African Child will be dedicated to universal access to education, which is also the African Union's theme for this year (cf. 1.2).

1.5.3 The national legal framework

In accordance with Article 7 of the Constitution, the national legal framework in Senegal guarantees the fundamental right to a civil identity. This constitutional provision stipulates that every individual has the right to a civil identity, including civil registration and nationality, and that no individual may be deprived of these rights. In addition, **Article 7 of the Constitution** emphasises the equality of all citizens before the law, without discrimination. **Articles 21, 22 and 23 of the Constitution** deal with the right to education. Article 22 states that all children have the right of access to school.

In the Senegalese context, the registration of children in civil status is governed by two main pieces of legislation: the **Family Code (FC)** and the **Nationality Code**. It is interesting to note that the Senegalese **Penal Code** contains a provision relating to offences relating to the civil status of children where failure to register a child is considered to be an offence.⁵⁸

The legislative provisions in force set out the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in the process of registering children with the civil registry. According to these provisions, it is the parents' responsibility (**Article 51 of the FC**) to declare the child's birth to a civil registrar. Specific procedures are provided for late applications (after the one-year deadline), and court judges are responsible for regularising late registrations.

The protocol put in place by the MEN to facilitate the regularisation of children who were not registered at birth involves the participation and responsibility of school headmasters, civil registrars, education and training inspectors and court judges, in collaboration with other stakeholders. These actors come under the MEN, the MCTADT and the MJ. They are specifically targeted in the research.

In 2022, Senegal adopted for the first time a National Civil Status Strategy 2022-2027⁵⁹ (Stratégie nationale de l'état civil (SNEC)) as part of the NEKKAL programme. It was financed by the European Union to the tune of CFA 18 billion and implemented jointly by CIVIPOL and ENABEL. Collaboration between ministries is facilitated by a multi-sectoral civil status coordination mechanism set up by Decree 86-535 of 9 May 1986, establishing the National Civil Status Committee (Comité national de l'état civil (CONEC)). More specifically, Directorate of Civil Affairs and the Seal (Direction des affaires civiles et du sceau (DACS)) is responsible for preparing draft laws and decrees relating to civil status, monitoring civil status and coordinating the organisation of national civil status mobile court campaigns. At the same time, an interoperability protocol was drawn up in 2023 to strengthen collaboration between the ministries involved.⁶⁰ The MEN is a user of the Civil Registry System: even though registration with the Civil Registry is not a prerequisite for enrolment in primary school (or pre-school), a copy of the birth certificate is in principle compulsory in order to apply for the 6th grade exam (CFEE) as explained above.

57. [ACERWC, General Comment on the right to birth registration, a name and a nationality, 2014.](#)

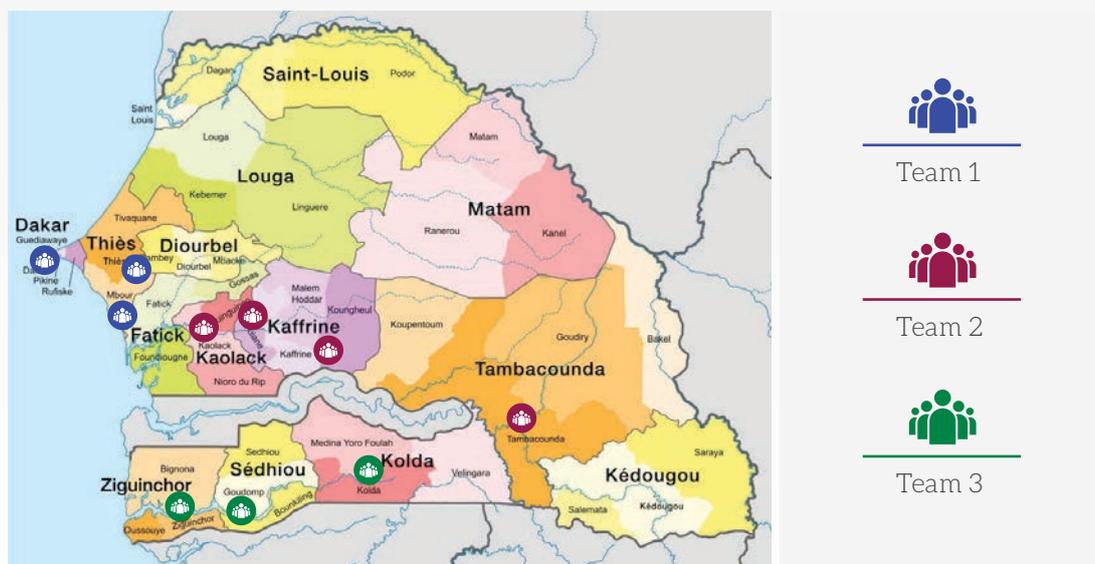
58. According to Article 339, "Any person who, having attended a birth, fails to make the declaration required by the civil status regulations, will be punished by imprisonment of between one and six months and a fine of between 20,000 and 75,000 francs".

59. Ministère de Collectivités territoriales, de l'Aménagement et du Développement des territoires, Direction de l'Etat Civil, Stratégie Nationale de l'Etat Civil 2022-2027.

60. Research report feedback workshop, 12 January 2024.

The NEKKAL programme has provided training for mayors and civil registrars, as well as equipment and assistance for 200 civil registry centres, with the aim of making them interoperable by 31 December 2023. All the country's centres should be connected by June 2024 (around 560 centres).⁶¹

Senegal



1.6 Methodology

1.6.1 Methodological approach and phases of the research

The research on the implementation of the "Protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates"⁶² in Senegal was carried out in three phases:

- **Phase 1: preparatory phase** (June to November 2023):
 - In-depth study of the documentation available concerning the protocol in question.
 - Analysis of data by assessing existing data management systems to understand how information is collected, recorded and used through SIMEN.
 - Remote interviews: Five individual interviews and focus groups were conducted with 12 key actors involved in implementing the protocol (cf. Appendix 2).
 - Drafting of the inception report, with a view to detailing the working methodologies.
- **Phase 2: exploration phase** (exploratory mission from 7 to 15 December 2023):
 - Meetings in Dakar and the following seven regions: Thiès, Kaolack, Kaffrine, Tambacounda, Ziguinchor, Sédhiou and Kolda. The choice of these regions takes into account UNICEF intervention zones, and zones without UNICEF intervention for which data on pupils without birth certificates are recorded in the platform.

61. Interview 7 (see Appendix 2).

62. PDF – November 2020.

Densely populated regions such as Dakar and Thiès were also selected, as well as less populated regions such as Kaffrine, Sédhiou, Tambacounda and Ziguinchor, in order to obtain an overview of the situation.⁶³

Three teams made up of three international consultants,⁶⁴ two national consultants, and three UNICEF Senegal project officers were deployed in the field from 7 to 15 December 2023 to conduct 49 individual interviews and focus groups with a total of 126 stakeholders from the departments, institutions and organisations or individuals concerned by the protocol in the selected regions (cf. Appendix 2 for the full list of stakeholders interviewed).

These interviews and focus groups were conducted using semi-structured questionnaires for each category of actor involved in birth registration (cf. Appendix 1). The sample of stakeholders the IA, IEF, Examinations and Competitions Office (Bureau des examens et concours (BEXCO)), planners, school headmasters, teachers, mayors and civil registrars, presidents of the local court (tribunal d'instance (TI)), court clerks, representatives of Parents of Pupils Association (Association des parents d'élèves (APE)), Pupils' Mothers' Association (Association des mères d'élèves (AME)) and School management committee/council (Comité/Conseil de gestion d'école/d'établissement (CGE)), as well as community stakeholders, such as neighbourhood representatives (délégués de quartier), community actors, village chiefs, bajjenu goox, and so on. The sampling included a selection by UNICEF Senegal of communes, villages and neighbourhoods.

- **Phase 3: validation phase** (from mid-December 2023 to the end of January 2024):
 - **Drafting of a post-mission report:** Compilation of progress made, achievements and challenges encountered in implementing the protocol, and any recommendations for improvement.
 - **Organisation of workshop:** Holding of a national workshop with key stakeholders to present the report and allow for in-depth discussions on 12 January 2024.
 - **Identification of priorities:** On the basis of the results obtained, the ministries concerned will identify the priorities to be taken into account to improve the implementation of the protocol.
 - **Identification of basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system,** regardless of the country in which it is applied.

1.6.2 Research logic

The logic followed in the research, and hence in this report, is to divide the process of the protocol into a number of stages and sub-stages in order to examine each stage in detail with a view to identifying good practice and opportunities for improvement, and to be able to make recommendations for its implementation. Section 2 of this report, below, details the five stages.

In addition, the discussions held with the stakeholders we met during the preparation phase (1) and the exploratory mission (2) gave us a concrete understanding of the reality on the ground as regards the implementation of the protocol.

1.6.3 Five-stage approach

The protocol is structured around three main stages:

1. Early detection and identification of pupils without birth certificates;
2. Registration of pupils without birth certificates; and
3. Monitoring the registration of pupils without birth certificates.

63. <https://www.ansd.sn/Indicateur/donnees-de-population>.

64. For information, the national consultants are the authors of the MEN protocol, commissioned by the MEN for this purpose. They were also part of the team of evaluators during the MEN's internal evaluation of the protocol in November 2023. By participating in this UNICEF Senegal research, they contributed their excellent expertise of the protocol and the national context to the analysis and drafting of this report, which benefited the CHIP team. Their participation was also crucial in ensuring that the recommendations were followed up after the report was circulated, with a view to strengthening the implementation of the protocol with the MEN and the other actors involved, in particular by circulating the report and providing training, supported by the MEN and UNICEF, at national and decentralised levels.

As part of this research, we propose to add:

** A cross-disciplinary approach that is applicable to all five stages*

- A stage 0 for activities to raise awareness of the use of the device; and
- A 4th stage, which involves monitoring all pupils who have failed to pass one of the previous stages.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of the protocol, it is advisable to take into account a cross-cutting approach that is transversal and applicable to all the five stages as listed below.

***A cross-functional and transversal approach to the effective implementation of the protocol**

- Enrolment rates high enough for the protocol to work in your country.
- Alignment with international instruments and standards, including SDGs 16 and 4.
- Institutionalised interdepartmental coordination, established for example via a MOU.
- Exhaustive mapping of actors and initiatives, such as the "Miniila" application.⁶⁵
- Availability of sufficient resources and political will.
- Mechanism for coordinating the protocol: designated coordinator and regular meetings.
- Interoperability between ministries and their IT platforms (civil status, education and justice).
- Clear definition of the stages in the process and the roles/responsibilities of each actor.
- Cross-sectoral meetings at central and devolved levels involving various sectors (education, justice, civil status, health, child protection, etc.) and local stakeholders (representatives of religious and customary authorities, parents' associations, civil society organisations): Focal point responsible for regular meetings with a monitoring mandate.
- At central and decentralised levels, a well-trained and well-equipped focal point to monitor all regularisation cases, from the detection of a pupil without a birth certificate to the parents obtaining the child's birth certificate.
- Regular monitoring of implementation by the ministry responsible and external evaluation by an independent team.

Reminder: The protocol should be a **medium-term solution**. Countries are encouraged to put in place a system to deal with exceptional cases of children who are not registered within the legal/normal reporting periods (e.g. using normal court procedures).



65. The "Miniila" app (<https://www.miniila.com/>), which lists all the actors and services available for unaccompanied children on the move

1.6.4 Considerations for analysing the protocol

- **Target audience**

The protocol is aimed at pre-school and primary school children in classes ranging from CI to CM2 in public schools. They are generally aged between 5 and 12, and may vary slightly depending on the pupil's date of birth and progress at school.⁶⁶

Initially, the protocol was not aimed at pupils enrolled in daara schools. The exact number of daara in Senegal is not yet known, although in January 2024 the government, through the MEN, counted 64 modern daara (32 public and 32 non-public)⁶⁷ and 527 traditional daara throughout the country.⁶⁸ However, it is estimated that there are several thousand daara throughout the country. The daara play an important role in religious education and learning the Koran for many children in Senegal. It should be noted that these schools are currently listed on another MEN platform called CODECO. However, it is planned that from 2024, daara pupils will also be able to be registered on the <https://etatcivil.education.sn/> platform. When this transition takes place, it will be an excellent opportunity to integrate the daara into the system covered by the protocol.

- **List of stakeholders involved in implementing the protocol**

Ministry of Education:

- Central level: members of the MEN technical team within the Directorate of Primary Education (Direction de l'enseignement élémentaire (DEE)), Directorate of Secondary Education (Direction de l'enseignement moyen secondaire général (DEMSG)), Directorate of Pre-school Education (Direction de l'enseignement préscolaire (DEPS)), Directorate of Exams and Competitions (Direction des examens et concours (DEXCO)), SIMEN, Directorate of Daara (la Direction des Daara (DD)).
- Decentralised level: Decentralised services of the MEN, IA at regional level and IEF at departmental level, planners, school headmasters, teachers, unions, APE, AME, Collective School Headmasters (Collectif des directeurs d'école (CODEC)), Collective of Pre-school Headmasters (Collectifs des directeurs de l'enseignement préscolaire (CODEPE)), CGE.

Ministry of Territorial Collectivities, Planning and Development:

- Central level: National Civil Status Agency (Agence Nationale de l'état civil (ANEC)), Members of the High Council of Local Authorities
- Decentralised level: mayors, civil registrars and agents

Ministry of Justice:

- Central level: Director of the DACS
- Decentralised level: presidents of local courts (judges), court clerks, law courts

Other actors:

- Parents, children's families, village chiefs, neighbourhood representatives, imams, bajjenu goox, serigne daara and ndeyu daara, civil society, and indirectly UNICEF, CIVIPOL and ENABEL.

66. Pupils targeted by the protocol:

- Pupils in CI are generally between 5 and 6 years old.
- Pupils in the Preparatory class (Cours préparatoire (CP1)) are generally aged between 6 and 7.
- Pupils in Preparatory class (Cours préparatoire (CP2)) are generally aged between 7 and 8.
- Pupils in 1st grade (Cours élémentaire première année (CE1)) are generally aged between 8 and 9.
- Pupils 2nd grade (Cours élémentaire deuxième année (CE2)) are generally aged between 9 and 10.
- Pupils in First year Middle school (Cours moyen première année (CM1)) are generally aged between 10 and 11.
- Pupils in Second year Middle school (Cours moyen deuxième année (CM2)) are generally aged between 11 and 12. Entrance examination in CM2 to 6th grade (junior high school), which requires a birth certificate (CFEE).

67. The Direction des Daara (DD) has chosen the term "non-public Daara" to avoid classifying these 32 non-public Daara as private schools.

68. Figures obtained by the MEN's Direction des Daara (DD), February 2024.

Table 2

Focus on UNICEF advocacy in 2022 to build knowledge and capacity on birth registration

- 25,992 people (17,275 women and 8,717 men) informed through community dialogue activities (talks, home visits and community dialogues)
- 2,069 community leaders (including 1,833 men and 236 women), in particular village chiefs, neighbourhood representatives and religious leaders, strengthened their capacities
- 213 service staff (190 men and 23 women) (mainly from the health and education sectors) have strengthened their skills
- 23,000 communication materials were produced (posters, leaflets, flyers, guides)
- A communication campaign is being carried out using video spots inside and posters on the Dakar Dem Dick buses that travel across Dakar and the other regional capitals.

- **Other actors involved in the protocol**

Within the Ministry of the Interior:

- The Departmental Child Protection Committee (Comité départemental de protection de l'enfant (CDPE)) is a body reporting to the prefect, which may act in parallel with the protocol. Although it is not directly listed as a actor in the protocol, the CDPE's actions may influence the civil registration of children, including the pupils targeted by the protocol.

Within the Ministry of Health:

- Doctors, midwives and carers can raise awareness of the protocol, in particular through the joint initiative with the MCTADT of "health status corners."⁶⁹

Within the Ministry for Women, the Family and Child Protection:

- The National Agency for Early Childhood and the Early Years Centre (Agence nationale de la petite enfance et de la case des tout-petits (ANCTP)), the facilitators who work to raise awareness among women and literacy operators can play a role in raising awareness and informing people about the protocol and the issues involved in registering children with the civil registry.

69. <https://www.seneplus.com/societe/coins-etats-civils-sante-social-une-opportunite-pour-les-parents>.



Photo: © UNICEF

2

Catch-up birth registration of children

- a five-stage approach

2.1 Awareness-raising activities and training in the use of the protocol

Stage 0:



This preparatory stage consists of informing, raising awareness and training the various target groups in the use of the protocol on late birth registration. It differs from the awareness-raising that needs to be done on birth registration from the time of pregnancy and before there is even any question of using the system.

- **Raising awareness of the need to register births within the legal deadlines**

It emerged from many of the interviews that parents are primarily responsible for declaring the birth of a child within the legal time limit of one year. Most of the people we met therefore felt it was essential to run awareness campaigns aimed at parents and families,⁷⁰ neighbourhood representatives or village chiefs,⁷¹ bajjenu goox⁷² and imams⁷³ on the importance of official birth registration from birth and the legal consequences of falsifying identity.⁷⁴

70. When a child is born, family and neighbours sometimes contribute financially by offering gifts to the parents to help celebrate the child's baptism. An amount could be set aside to cover the cost of the registrant's journey to the registry office, for example.
 71. As a civil registrar, the neighbourhood representatives or village chief may go with their notebook to the family where the birth took place and go to the town hall to declare the child's birth.
 72. Bajjenu goox and women's associations sometimes organise tontines (weekly/monthly contributions), which allow an amount to be deducted at the time of an event, such as the birth of a child, to declare the birth.
 73. In practice, imams assign a name to a child within 8 days of its birth and raise parents' awareness, inviting them to declare the child at the civil registry office. (Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).
 74. Interviews 21, 26, 29, 35 and 36 (see Appendix 2).

According to several school headmasters, awareness-raising should be carried out via television, community radio and social media in local languages.⁷⁵ In response, UNICEF has carried out a number of activities to meet this need for information and awareness-raising among the various stakeholders (see table 2).

To go further, the involvement of community actors (village chiefs, neighbourhood representatives, imams and bajjenu goox) should be considered, by giving them a greater sense of responsibility. This could include actively involving them in the birth registration process, and even granting them legal status as civil status auxiliaries. The intervention of such actors should be anticipated and ideally take place before the baptism ceremonies, which are generally celebrated before the child reaches the age of one.⁷⁶ The research also identified that since 2016, any person, whether a neighbourhood representative, imam or close family member, can declare a birth, provided they supply the required documents.⁷⁷

In fact, village chiefs often group birth declarations together every six months or every year, in order to avoid frequent trips to the civil registry office. It would therefore be beneficial to introduce a method for immediately notifying the civil registry authorities of births.⁷⁸ According to our interviews, particularly in Mbour 2, more use could be made of the village and neighbourhood notebooks given to village chiefs and neighbourhood representative, so that they can compile birth declarations within a year.⁷⁹

- **Raising awareness of late registration of births via the protocol**

With regard to informing, raising awareness and training the various stakeholders in the use of the protocol, it was clear from the interviews that not all the actors involved with the protocol have yet fully integrated it. A sustained information and training effort is needed to encourage wider adoption of the protocol. This applies not only to raising awareness among members of the community, including parents, but also to the training given to State representatives, such as school headmasters and registrars (cf. 1.6.4).

For example, the headmaster of a primary school noted a positive trend in recent years, with parents becoming more aware of the importance of birth registration. However, he also noted that he was overloaded with work (e.g. gathering parents and following up with them), despite the fact that the registry office is located close to the school.⁸⁰

2.1.1 **Best practices identified to raise awareness of the protocol among parents, children and the community.**

- **Initiatives by public bodies**

In addition to the initiatives mentioned in the protocol, there are other parallel awareness-raising initiatives such as the organisation of community forums, the provision of birth registration books by focal points and the organisation of regularisation campaigns, etc. There are also brochures aimed at parents, such as the one produced by the Civil Status Department, with the support of the Investing in the Early Years for Human Development project in Senegal. This initiative focuses more on the procedures for declaring civil status events but would also be a good way of raising awareness of the protocol.

The annual "National Week of Basic School" in schools is an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of civil status and to inform the community about the protocol's existence.⁸¹ This initiative targets pupils and their parents, as well as local, religious and traditional authorities, and often culminates in "African Civil Status Day" on 10 August.

75. Interviews 8, 12, 24, 35, 41 and 47 (see Appendix 2).

76. Interviews 1 and 3 (see Appendix 2).

77. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

78. Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).

79. Interview 20 (see Appendix 2).

80. Interview 17 (see Appendix 2).

81. Interview 1 (see Appendix 2).

In particular, the CDPE supported talks and community dialogue sessions with health workers, community leaders and the general public, as illustrated in Table 2. To illustrate, in Birkelane, the CDPE organised a public hearing followed by a ceremony to distribute part no. 1 of the birth certificates to the families of daara children who had been regularised.⁸² The research showed that several other awareness-raising campaigns are carried out to highlight the importance of identity documents, involving various actors such as CODECs, local authority representatives, mayors, APEs, etc.⁸³

According to an interview with the Thiès Est local council, the public is made aware of the mobile court hearings relating to the regularisation of children's civil status via the Internet, town criers or letters sent to chiefs/delegates, school headmasters and imams.⁸⁴ These means of communication and awareness-raising appear to be effective, as evidenced by the high number of cases handled by the presidents of the local court (TI) during these hearings.

Finally, the mixed hearings at the TI, which are held weekly, deal with both civil status cases and a variety of other subjects, such as tenancy disputes. These sessions are an ideal opportunity to raise awareness among parents, attracting a diverse audience including witnesses, families and close friends. In Dakar, these hearings are sometimes devoted exclusively to civil status issues.⁸⁵ Another opportunity to raise (future) parents' awareness of the need to register their (future) child(ren) with the civil registry could be their own wedding, as the marriage certificate forms part of the file required to obtain a birth certificate.⁸⁶

- **Civil society initiatives**

Ideally, this awareness-raising to regularise the situation of pupils should take place when the children enter pre-school. However, as the number of children enrolled in pre-school is very low, this possibility could only reach a limited number of parents and children.⁸⁷ According to various interviews, the AME are very well organised and could play a key role in raising awareness of the protocol among parents and the community.⁸⁸ The research also shows that the Association of Senegalese Jurists (Association des juristes sénégalaises (AJS))⁸⁹ has set up nine legal centres in seven regions which serve as reception centres offering legal advice and assistance to citizens, particularly on issues relating to civil status certificates.⁹⁰ The lawyers at the Kaolack legal centre offer free advice and guidance to parents wishing to regularise the status of their children, whether or not they attend school. They help with the preparation of applications and intervene in the procedure by contacting the various parties involved if problems arise.⁹¹ The 20 Homes of Justice (Maisons de Justice) in Senegal also inform people about their rights and duties, including relating to civil status.⁹² UNICEF has also supported the production, dissemination and training of stakeholders in the education sector (cf. table 2).

There are many awareness-raising initiatives about the importance of birth registration that could provide an opportunity to disseminate information about the protocol and the regularisation of the civil status of the pupils concerned, some of which are noted below.

82. Interview 35 (see Appendix 2).
83. Interviews 3 and 46 (see Appendix 2).
84. Interview 13 (see Appendix 2).
85. Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).
86. Research report feedback workshop, 12 January 2024.
87. Interview 8 (see Appendix 2).
88. Interviews 8 and 41 (see Appendix 2).
89. <https://femmesjuristes.org/>.
90. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).
91. Interview 40 (see Appendix 2).
92. Research report feedback workshop, 12 January 2024.

2.1.2 Best practices identified for raising awareness and training of central and decentralised government officials about the protocol

In addition to the initiatives mentioned in the protocol, our interviews revealed that various ministerial, administrative and judicial actors had been sensitised or trained by different authorities and civil society.⁹³

- **Awareness-raising initiatives by public bodies**

- The protocol was subject to political validation on 15 April 2021 by the MEN, the MCTADT and the MJ in the presence of the stakeholders involved in its development and implementation. In November 2022, the protocol was distributed to all the IAs and IEFs in Senegal.⁹⁴ Copies of the protocol were printed and distributed to every school nationwide, and the corresponding platform (SIMEN) was shared within the IAs and IEFs, designating focal points responsible for facilitating the protocol's deployment.⁹⁵
- Ceremonies were organised by mayors and IEFs with all the stakeholders in the municipalities (school representatives, neighbourhood representatives, imams, etc.) to raise awareness of the need to declare the child's birth at the civil registry during the baptism.⁹⁶
- In the Ziguinchor and Kolda regions, when a baby is born, school governments made up of pupils go to the newborn's home to raise parents' awareness of the importance of registering the birth.⁹⁷

- **Training and awareness-raising initiatives by civil society actors**

- Specific training was provided by the AJS to 15 civil registrars, district chiefs and a judge, focusing on birth registration procedures to improve the efficiency and compliance of registrations.⁹⁸
- Training sessions have also been organised by AJS for neighbourhood representatives and imams, who play a crucial role in communities by naming children. These training sessions emphasise the importance of registering births as soon as they occur and aim to correct the common practice of delaying registration for several years. These community actors are encouraged to keep records and follow up cases to ensure that all children are duly registered.⁹⁹ Training for imams and neighbourhood representatives should be provided more widely so that the documents needed for birth registration are ready at the time of baptism.¹⁰⁰
- Cosydep (Coalition of Organisations Defending Public Education (Coalition des Organisations en Synergie pour le Défense de l'Education Publique)) has 14 branches in the regions and has conducted various awareness-raising campaigns among parents, school headmasters and local authorities.¹⁰¹
- Amnesty International has raised awareness among parents, given notebooks to village chiefs and neighbourhood representatives, facilitated mobile court hearings and trained civil registrars.¹⁰²

2.1.3 Opportunities for overcoming the obstacles/difficulties observed

- **Education**

- **Lack of awareness of the protocol:** Some schools are not yet aware of the protocol.¹⁰³ One magistrate stated that he had not been informed of the existence of the protocol. Although he receives correspondence from school headmasters, he ignores it because of the large number of children involved, expressing a preference for ordinary hearings rather than mobile court hearings in order to regularise the situation of these pupils.¹⁰⁴

93. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

94. Interview 1 (see Appendix 2).

95. Interview 1 (see Appendix 2).

96. Interview 15 (see Appendix 2).

97. Interview 41 (see Appendix 2).

98. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

99. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

100. Interview 15 (see Appendix 2).

101. Interview 9 (see Appendix 2).

102. Interview 10 (see Appendix 2).

103. Interview 8 (see Appendix 2).

104. Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).

- **Technical problems:** Some schools do not have computers or tablets to implement the protocol.¹⁰⁵ In addition, there may be a weak internet connection used to access the SIMEN platform.¹⁰⁶ Some headteachers are not computer literate (lack of training).¹⁰⁷
- **Job rotation:** Teachers change schools and there is no transfer of knowledge about the protocol.

- **Civil status**

- **Lack of training:** Despite the fact that all civil registrars will have been trained by 2023 by the NEKKAL programme thanks to the training plan (cf. 1.5.3), it emerged from several interviews that civil registrars lack specific training on the protocol. In practice, they sometimes tend to request additional documents not stipulated by law, such as certificates issued by mosques, which unnecessarily complicates and adds to the administrative procedures for parents. It should be noted that numerous manuals and resources on civil status are available to guide officers in their work.¹⁰⁸
- **Opportunities:** In order to tackle these problems, teachers, head teachers and registrars need in-service training provided at local level. In addition, online training and a tutorial that is available at all times and regularly updated could be a solution. This could be along the lines of the online training course "Using the health sector to strengthen civil registration of births and deaths" developed by the WHO and UNICEF.¹⁰⁹

2.1.4 Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system

Stage 0.1:

Raise awareness among the general public of the importance of birth registration at birth or later via the protocol

Situations to replicate:

- ▶ Expectant parents are made aware of the importance of birth registration even before the child is born. This must be incorporated into prenatal health checks and at the time of delivery (via the health sector).
- ▶ Birth registration is made easier (for example, by making it possible to carry out these procedures in hospital, by involving community actors - imams and village chiefs, or by appointing neighbourhood representatives as civil registry auxiliaries).
- ▶ Arrangements are in place to help parents declare births and to provide advice, support and guidance throughout the process.

Situations to avoid:

- ▶ There are no activities to raise parents' awareness of birth registration before they enrol in school.
- ▶ Awareness-raising materials are not available in national or local languages, or in child-friendly versions.

Situations to stop:

- ▶ There is a birth registration fee, even though it is carried out within the legal time limit.
- ▶ The procedure is unnecessarily complex, particularly in terms of documentation, geographical location and the time required.
- ▶ Headteachers have excessive responsibilities and limited resources.

105. Interviews 8, 12, 17 (see Appendix 2).

106. Interviews 2, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40 (see Appendix 2).

107. Interviews 20, 29 and 39 (see Appendix 2).

108. Interviews 4, 21, 29 and 39 (see Appendix 2).

109. <https://learning.vitalstrategies.org/course/view.php?id=322&lang=fr>.

Stage 0.2:

Introduce/train government bodies authorised to apply the protocol

Situations to replicate:

- ▶ Individuals such as doctors, teachers, religious representatives and village chiefs are trained, they are in direct contact with parents.

Situations to avoid:

- ▶ Communication between central and decentralised levels is not operational.
- ▶ While training is available, it does not include an institutionalised system of training the trainers and ongoing training. The latter is missing particularly for new arrivals and existing training has not reached all the various levels of the actors involved. Without these efforts, the sustainability of the protocol is compromised.

Situation to stop:

- ▶ There is no rigorous monitoring to ensure that information reaches all the relevant levels.

2.2 Early detection and identification of pupils without birth certificates (cf. protocol, pp. 14 - 20)

Stage 1:



The first stage is to detect and identify pupils without a birth certificate at an early stage. This is a two-stage process. Firstly, detection takes place at school level and within the community. Then, this detection can be followed up later via the SIMEN platform, at local level by the IEFs, IAs and in Dakar by the MEN.

2.2.1 Detection

School headmasters identify pupils without a birth certificate. Detection of a pupil's situation begins as soon as they enrol in the school system. In principle, each teacher identifies pupils without birth certificates in their class, and the head teacher then centralises the information.

It is important to emphasise that what is implemented in elementary education is not yet systematised in middle and secondary education, although the problem of non-registration may extend through the different school cycles. According to a number of interviews, the detection of pupils without birth certificates is becoming critical during the examinations (CFEE) for the transition from CM2 to junior high school. Traditionally reserved for children between the ages of 10 and 14 who have attended pre-school, these examinations exclude pupils without birth certificates. Recently, the MEN relaxed the age requirement, allowing parents, on request, to postpone registration with the civil registrar until the secondary school leaving certificate.¹¹⁰ Testimonies from Tambacounda, Kaffrine, Birkelane and Kaolack indicate that these pupils take the examinations without a birth certificate "so as not to penalise the pupil." However, complications often arise at the BFEM or BAC exams, as their situation is sometimes not regularised.¹¹¹

110. Interview 3 (see Appendix 2).

111. Interviews 8 and 39 (see Appendix 2).

The deferment measure seems to have simply shifted the problem to secondary education, and although parents undertake to regularise the situation in writing, this commitment is often neglected.

According to the Director of the DACS,¹¹² it is essential to anticipate this problem and identify these pupils earlier than the exam period. This approach will ease the pressure on judges and other staff during the regularisation periods in April and May and allow more time for regularisation (cf. 2.3 stage 2).

2.2.2 Identification

At the various schools, the headteachers collect information about each pupil without a birth certificate and draw up a list of these pupils by name. It is also important to check with the registry office that the child has not previously been registered before issuing a certificate of non-registration.

In this process, different stakeholders have specific roles and responsibilities. The IEF plays a central role by initiating the process and coordinating actions. The IEF communicates with school managers (headmasters and principals) to identify pupils without birth certificates. The IEF focal point is also responsible for checking that the children identified are not already registered with the civil registry.

As already mentioned, various tools are used in the detection and identification process, such as the census books kept by the village chiefs, the CS identification forms made available to school headmasters and parents, and the digital platform www.etatcivil.education.sn (SIMEN). The SIMEN manager is able to monitor in real time the information entered by head teachers and can intervene if it is found that a school has not provided all the necessary information. The matrices are then checked and consolidated by the MEN, making it possible to provide physical lists of pupils without birth certificates.

The SIMEN platform registers pupils with a unique identifier that remains valid throughout their school education. If a pupil already has a birth certificate at the time of enrolment at the school, or if their situation has already been regularised, this will be automatically indicated in the system by a green dot next to their name. On the other hand, if this is not the case and the pupil's situation needs to be regularised, a red dot will appear next to the pupil's name, meaning that follow-up is required so that the pupil can be registered at a later date. The IEF then shares this information with IT, mayors and parents to obtain their support in the regularisation process.

2.2.3 Good practices identified in addition to those already mentioned in the protocol

- **In the education sector**

- **Technical and logistical support:** UNICEF Senegal has made a considerable contribution to developing and improving the SIMEN platform. According to the IEF in Ziguinchor, the SIMEN platform works well on paper and is consulted daily by the departmental service. In the event of delays or difficulties in entering information, school headmasters are contacted immediately by the IEF.¹¹³ It would appear that in Dakar, few problems are reported, as children generally go to school with an extract from their birth certificate.¹¹⁴

- **Support for parents:** Primary schools headmasters detect - at more or less regular intervals - children without birth certificates as soon as they enter school by collecting information from parents. They transmit this data to the IEF via the SIMEN platform using their mobile phone, offline after downloading the templates on a USB key, or in writing. They then help the parents to regularise their situation.¹¹⁵ Other players, such as BEXCO and CODEC members, are there to help parents with the application process, but not to replace them, except in exceptional cases, such as when the parents are absent (cf. 2.5, stage 4).¹¹⁶

112. Interview 6 (see Appendix 2).

113. Interview 44 (see Appendix 2).

114. Interview 3 (see Appendix 2).

115. Interviews 17, 31, 41 and 44 (see Appendix 2).

116. Interviews 29, 46 and 48 (see Appendix 2).

- **Daara commitment:** The director of the Louly Sindiane daara (82 children aged 4 to 18), trained by PAQUET (Programme for improving the quality of education and transparency set up by the World Bank), has been made aware of the importance of birth registration.¹¹⁷ He detects children without birth certificates at the start of the school year, summons the parents, compiles the files and forwards them to the civil registry.

2.2.4 Opportunities for overcoming the obstacles/difficulties observed

- **In the education sector**

- **Inter-ministerial coordination for training:** There remains a major challenge linked to the lack of coordination between the various ministries in the implementation of the SIMEN platform.¹¹⁸ Some headteachers have been grouped together to receive training in using the platform.¹¹⁹ However, to date, not all head teachers have been trained so their information is not always up to date.¹²⁰ If they have any difficulties, they are encouraged to contact the IEF or the MEN.¹²¹
- **Existence of a civil status focal point in schools:** Even though, in principle, each teacher detects pupils without birth certificates in their class, it emerged from an interview that one head teacher found himself unable to do so because of the large number of pupils at the school, forcing him to concentrate mainly on those going on to 6th grade. The importance of having a civil status focal point at the school was therefore essential, enabling the head teacher to be assisted in his work as well as more personalised follow-up with families, particularly for certain parents requiring further explanation.
- **Parents' perception:** It should also be noted that for some parents, a simple summons to come and present documents at the school is not enough.¹²² They are sometimes reluctant to produce the documents needed to compile the file (for example, their own identity document because they fear it will be used for other purposes).¹²³ They also think that providing information about the fact that their child does not have a birth certificate will prevent them from continuing their education or taking exams when, in fact, the opposite is true.¹²⁴
- **Conditions of access to examinations and age limits:** To counter inaccurate age declarations and the falsification of identity documents, some stakeholders recommend re-examining the conditions of access in relation to age for the CFEE. This would ensure that all children, whatever their age, could compete on an equal footing. Removing the age restriction could also make a significant contribution to reducing identity document forgery.¹²⁵ For example, cases of duplicate birth certificates have been reported, where a child's identification number is usurped, preventing them from taking examinations or competitions.¹²⁶
- **Alternative educational pathways:** Children over the conventional examination age are often excluded from the regularisation process. It would be appropriate to randomly study the possibility of creating alternative educational pathways for them so that they can follow appropriate training.

117. Interview 16 (see Appendix 2).

118. Interview 3 (see Appendix 2).

119. Interview 8 (see Appendix 2).

120. Interview 15 (see Appendix 2).

121. Interview 2 (see Appendix 2).

122. Interview 12,17 (see Appendix 2).

123. Interview 41 (see Appendix 2).

124. Interview 45 (see Appendix 2).

125. Interviews 3, 21 (see Appendix 2).

126. Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).

2.2.5 Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system

Stage 1:

Early detection and identification of pupils without birth certificates

Situations to replicate:

- ▶ The child needing birth registration is detected as soon as they are born, thanks to the involvement of religious and customary authorities.
- ▶ A unique identification number exists for each child, making it easier to monitor the child's situation in various areas such as health, education and civil status.
- ▶ The period of school at which the birth certificate becomes compulsory is clearly identified, so that the protocol can be implemented (for example, from preschool onwards, on entry to compulsory school, when moving on to secondary school, or when registering for examinations and competitions).
- ▶ A focal point for civil status is identified within the schools.
- ▶ An IT platform for identifying and training managers has been set up and is operational.
- ▶ A hotline dedicated to the platform to offer assistance and advice has been set up and is operational.
- ▶ The detection and identification of children without birth certificates is now required to be carried out in compliance with the data protection rules.

Situations to avoid:

- ▶ Ongoing information and training sessions are not organised for stakeholders.
- ▶ There are no user manuals or tutorials on how to use the device.
- ▶ Institutions and schools only have individual identifiers for each user/manager and not a single identifier to access the IT platform.
- ▶ A digital coordinator is not identified and equipped within each school to facilitate the use and management of the protocol and the platform.

Situations to stop:

- ▶ Detection does not begin when a pupil without a birth certificate starts school.
- ▶ There is a lack of resources to support school headmasters in their task of detecting children without birth certificates and providing the relevant training.

2.3 Registration of pupils without a birth certificate (cf. protocol, pp. 19 - 24)

Stage 2:



This second stage consists of regularising the situation of pupils by legal means, aiming to obtain a birth certificate, i.e. transcribing the judgements into the civil status registers. The president of the local court (TI) is at the heart of this stage and takes the decision to regularise the situation by judgement.

The IEF focal point plays a central role in this stage. They are responsible for centralising the pupil's information and ensuring communication between the various actors involved at the different stages of the process.

2.3.1 Certificate of non-registration

In order to have their situation regularised, pupils, through their parents, must provide proof that they have not previously been entered in the registers. Mayors are responsible for issuing certificates of non-registration. These are obtained on the presentation of "certificate of giving birth" or in the presence of two witnesses, which will form part of the file to be submitted to the court at a later date with a view to a ruling allowing the pupil to be subsequently registered in the civil status register.

2.3.2 Compiling pupil's files

In each school, teachers and headteachers, in collaboration with parents who must provide the relevant information, compile files for pupils without a birth certificate. The IEF focal point then collects all the files compiled by the schools and checks them before forwarding them to the court. The IEF takes the case to local court and makes representations to the relevant authorities (the president of the TI, the administrative authorities, the mayors, the Union of School Management Committees (Union des comités de gestion des écoles (UCGEs)) and the Departmental Union of Parents' Associations (Union départementale des associations de parents d'élèves (UDAPE)). The IEF accompanies the hearings and the school headmasters can take part in transcribing the judgements.

2.3.3 Ordinary, special and mobile court hearings

Children who are not yet registered with the civil registry have the opportunity to regularise their situation through three types of hearings. Ordinary hearings and special hearings take place within the court and are distinguished by the fact that the judge takes all types of civil status files (registration of births, marriages, deaths) or just one type of file. Mobile court hearings, on the other hand, are organised when the president of the court visits the population. The protocol provides that mobile court hearings are set up with the specific aim of facilitating catch-up birth registration of pupils at the civil registry office. This process is initiated by correspondence sent by the MEN to the ministries concerned, namely the MCTADT and the MJ. These ministries then send letters to their departments in the various regions of the country, indicating the obligation to organise mobile court hearings with a view to applying the protocol. This procedure is repeated annually.¹²⁷

The President of the local court (TI) may also organise mobile court hearings at the request of the population (IEF, mayors, etc.) without having received an invitation from the central authority.

Children's files are submitted to the TI by the IEF, and a timetable is posted for the hearings. In rural areas, communities are informed of the hearings by messages from the town hall via community radio, announcements from imams via loudspeakers or "jakarta men" (motorbike taxi drivers).¹²⁸ As far as possible, these hearings are held close to the parents, so that they do not have to travel and can overcome their reluctance to go to court.¹²⁹

School headmasters, teachers, EMCs and PTAs play an essential role in accompanying and informing the parents and witnesses concerned about these hearings.¹³⁰

Once the hearings have been held, the court issues a judgement in which it decides whether or not to authorise the regularisation of the pupils' civil status and the issue of their birth certificates. Some interviews revealed that in the case of mobile court hearings, given the large number of judgements to be handed down and in order to speed up the process, the court calls on volunteer teachers to draft the judgements.¹³¹

127. Interview 1 (see Appendix 2).

128. Interviews 13, 30 (see Appendix 2).

129. Interview 18 (see Appendix 2).

130. Interviews 12 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

131. Interviews 30 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

Finally, it emerged from some interviews that judges also hold special hearings or use ordinary hearings to regularise the situation of pupils without birth certificates.¹³² These hearings have the advantages of a formal and regular framework.¹³³

2.3.4 Transcription of judgements in birth registers

Once the court has handed down the rulings authorising registration, they are transcribed into the birth registers by the civil registrars (including the mayor), possibly with the assistance of school headmasters and teachers if necessary.¹³⁴ The administrative authorities, particularly through the development committees, also play a role in providing guidance to communities and local authorities to support the regularisation process.

2.3.5 Physical possession of birth certificates

Once they have obtained a court decision for their children, parents must go to the civil registry centre to register the child in the birth register and eventually obtain "part no. 1" of their birth certificate. In some cases, the school's civil status focal point is responsible for collecting all part no. 1s of the birth certificates for pupils who have been regularised.¹³⁵ In some towns, the CDPE centralises the documents and collects part no. 1 of the birth certificate and gives them to the parents, even though the CDPE has no specific role in the protocol.¹³⁶ This is the case in Goudomp, for example, even though the CDPE has no knowledge of the protocol.¹³⁷ In other situations, announcements are made by the town hall via community radio, imams via loudspeakers and "jakarta men" (motorbike taxi drivers).¹³⁸

2.3.6 Good practices identified in addition to those already mentioned in the protocol

- **At community level**

- **Publication of hearing dates:** The dates of mobile court hearings are announced in the AJS legal centre. Once the dates have been announced, the legal centres can help families gather the necessary documents (cf. 2.1.1).¹³⁹
- **Community support and contribution:**
 - a. In Birkelane, the CDPE - even though it is not involved in the protocol - can monitor the cases filed with the court and, once the judgements have been procured, prepares the dispatch note for the prefect, who then forwards it to the town hall.¹⁴⁰
 - b. It emerged from several interviews that judges have a margin of discretion. In the absence of witnesses who can attest to the child's birth, particularly when the parents do not have a birth certificate, the neighbourhood representative, the APE or CGE representative, the village chief or village elder can testify. Their testimony is accepted, given that they have known the families for several generations.¹⁴¹
 - c. In some municipalities, secondary civil registry centres have been set up close to the population in order to combat geographical barriers or territorial discontinuity (at departmental level).
 - d. In Birkelane, the Prefect (i.e. State representative in the department) ensures that judgements are entered in the registers.¹⁴²

132. Interviews 5 and 6 (see Appendix 2).

133. Interviews 5 and 38 (see Appendix 2).

134. Interviews 30, 34 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

135. Interviews 30 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

136. Interviews 35 and 50 (see Appendix 2).

137. Interview 50 (see Appendix 2).

138. Interview 30 (see Appendix 2).

139. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

140. Interview 35 (see Appendix 2).

141. Interviews 12, 13, 21 and 38 (see Appendix 2).

142. Interview 33 (see Appendix 2).

- **In the education sector**
 - **Involvement of teachers and head teachers in compiling files for pupils without birth certificates:** Their active participation in compiling files is proving effective, thanks to data entry on the SIMEN platform or the transmission of lists to IEF planners. By acting as the main point of contact, they significantly improve the assistance provided to pupils and their parents.¹⁴³ Parents can also contact the IEF or Registrar's Office directly for assistance. There is no cost involved. The school headmaster can attach a school attendance certificate to the file to prove that the child is attending school.¹⁴⁴
 - **Committee dedicated to raising parents' awareness:** Before the strikes in 2023, each school had a committee that raised parents' awareness and coordinated with the school headmasters to forward the files to the IEF inspectors. In turn, they would apply to the Registrar's Office to obtain a certificate of non-registration, which was needed for the files to be regularised by the judge during the mobile court hearings, with all the parties involved being fully involved.¹⁴⁵
- **In the justice sector (mobile courts)**
 - **Publication of mobile court dates:** The dates of mobile court hearings are announced in the AJS legal centres. Once the dates have been announced, the law shops can help families gather the necessary documents (cf. 2.1.1).¹⁴⁶
- **In the civil status sector**
 - **Technological improvements:** Civil status management software is currently being tested in several civil status centres, along with applications designed to ensure the digitisation of records thanks to the NEKKAL programme, and to digitise the regularisation process.¹⁴⁷ (Cf. 1.5.3.)
 - **Organisation of mobile court hearings:** Thiès Est Town Hall has hired around forty people, students and teachers, to ensure the smooth running of mobile court hearings, including the transcription of minutes of judgements into the civil register in the days following the hearing.¹⁴⁸

2.3.7 Opportunities for overcoming obstacles/lessons learned

- **At cross-sectoral level (education, justice and civil status)**
 - **Reticence and questioning of the protocol:** Some IEFs and judges have reservations about the policy of regularising births, particularly through mobile courts. They advocate stepping up efforts to register children as soon as they are born to make parents more responsible arguing that mobile court hearings are open to abuse and create risks for school headmasters to become involved in cases of deception regarding the relationship between the adult declaring the child and the child. They suggest that the system be streamlined, advocating for more awareness-raising campaigns to register the child at birth and encourage parental responsibility.¹⁴⁹
- **In the education and civil registry sectors**
 - **Document management and computerisation, improving the information system:**
 - a. The lack of computerisation presents a number of risks. On the one hand, the archiving and conservation of registers is precarious due to incompatible premises in town halls, bad weather and termite damage.¹⁵⁰ Secondly, it is possible to obtain several certificates of non-registration by visiting several civil registry centres, which are not interconnected.¹⁵¹ Progress is being made in computerising documents thanks to the NEKKAL programme (cf. 1.5.3).¹⁵²

143. Interviews 3, 12 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

144. Interview 12 (See Appendix 2).

145. Interview 3 (see Appendix 2).

146. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

147. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

148. Interview 13 (see Appendix 2).

149. Interviews 13, 19, 28, 36 and 38 (see Appendix 2).

150. Interviews 45 and 47 (see Appendix 2).

151. Interviews 5, 6, 8 and 19 (see Appendix 2).

152. Interview 7 (see Appendix 2).

- b. The lack of interoperability between the SIMEN (education) and NEKKAL (civil status) systems sometimes prevents regularisation from being monitored.
 - c. It is necessary to configure the SIMEN platform to allow IEFs to know the total number of pupils regularised over a year. This information is extracted at national level, but it may be useful for IEFs to be able to track this data more effectively for the areas they are responsible for.¹⁵³
 - **External factors hindering the implementation of the protocol:** In 2023, the implementation of the protocol was hindered by civil registry strikes, which led many individuals to provide schools with old birth certificates while waiting for the strikes to end.¹⁵⁴ No solutions have been identified to overcome this type of obstacle.
 - **Follow-up of regularisation by the IEF:** It is crucial to maintain a focal point at the IEF level to register pupils and relay the file between the school, the court and the civil registry. This focal point should also be responsible for following up the file after registration until the child obtains an identity document (cf. 2.4.4).¹⁵⁵
- **In the justice sector**
 - **Cost and financial expenses:** The mobile court procedure, including the transcription of records and obtaining an extract by supplementary judgement, represents a significant cost, currently amounting to CFA 5,600,¹⁵⁶ which can be a major obstacle for families.¹⁵⁷ The civil registries (via the mayor) and IEFs coordinate the holding of mobile court hearings, but the process of transcribing these hearings incurs costs. In 2016 and 2017, the government reduced the cost to parents from CFA 4,600 to CFA 1,000.¹⁵⁸ The costs are sometimes covered by NGOs, such as Amnesty in Kolda and Bakel.¹⁵⁹
 - **Absence and complexity of legal procedures:** In some regions of Senegal, the absence of mobile court hearings for many years and the complexity of legal procedures, combined with the difficulty of gathering the necessary documents, hinder citizens' access to justice.¹⁶⁰
 - **Fraud and falsification:**
 - a. An increasing number of abuses have been reported during mobile court hearings. Judges find it extremely difficult to identify **falsified documents**, particularly in the absence of a certificate about giving birth (certificat d'accouchement), making the process of verifying birth declarations particularly vulnerable to fraud.¹⁶¹ Many of the interviews we conducted mentioned the recurring problem of parents wanting to **reduce the age of their child**, in order to keep the possibility of passing the CFEE.¹⁶² The Director of the DACS mentioned the possibility of judges requesting the child's presence at the hearing in order to ensure that the facts are true.¹⁶³
 - b. According to several interviews, **children from Koranic schools are** forced to lower their age in order to attend state schools. According to one mayor, school rules should be adapted to reality and include these children without them having to lower their age.¹⁶⁴ An interview with a school headmaster revealed that he adds a certificate of school attendance to the child's file sent to the court, in order to prove the child's place of residence, school attendance and the fact that he knows the child.¹⁶⁵
 - c. **Unauthorised intermediaries** known as "brokers" specialise in fraudulently obtaining civil status documents; they are frequently present at hearings and identify their new "clients" in this way.¹⁶⁶ A judicial measure could be envisaged to limit the presence of brokers at these hearings, in order to prevent manipulation and fraud.¹⁶⁷

153. Interview 48 (see Appendix 2).

154. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

155. Interview 1, 12 (see Appendix 2).

156. Interview 6 (see Appendix 2).

157. Interview 3 (see Appendix 2).

158. Interview 6 (see Appendix 2).

159. Interview 10 (see Appendix 2).

160. Interview 4 (see Appendix 2).

161. Interviews 5, 38 and 45 (see Appendix 2).

162. Interviews 5, 6, 8 and 38 (see Appendix 2).

163. Interviews 6, 14, 29, 30 and 38 (see Appendix 2).

164. Interviews 13 and 20 (see Appendix 2).

165. Interview 12 (see Appendix 2).

166. Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).

167. Interview 5 (see Appendix 2).

- **Management and administrative problems:** There is a procedure for cancelling extracts with the High Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance (TGI)) in the event of duplication, this can occur when children are regularised through the protocol and through the support of the CDPE, outside of the protocol.¹⁶⁸

2.3.8 Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system

Stage 2:

Registration of pupils without a birth certificate

Situations to replicate:

- ▶ Civil status procedures and registers are computerised.
- ▶ A focal point within the community is identified for the preparation of the application.
- ▶ Child protection professionals play a role in implementing the protocol.
- ▶ A sufficient number of civil registrars are responsible for entering births in the registers.

Situations to avoid:

- ▶ Mobile court hearings are held in the absence of the necessary resources.
- ▶ The cost of regularising birth registration is too high.
- ▶ Mobile court hearings are the rule when they should be the exception. Any catch-up birth registration should in principle be dealt with at ordinary hearings.
- ▶ Following the judgement, the parents are not informed of the need to go and have the judgement transcribed at the registry office and to obtain the birth certificate.
- ▶ Solutions to facilitate data collection have not been found (computer equipment, filling in data on a mobile phone or tablet, sharing the connection via the mobile to a computer, etc.).
- ▶ Once the judgement has been entered in the register, the civil registrar does not sign the birth certificate.

Situations to stop:

- ▶ There is no system in place to prevent abuses such as the use of mobile courts for other purposes.
- ▶ Intermediaries act with financial interests and/or fraudulent intentions (e.g. "brokers" who produce fictitious deeds, reduce the age of children, etc.).
- ▶ NGOs are not supervised or coordinated under the protocol act, which means that cases may not be monitored.
- ▶ Registers of birth certificates are not signed and initialled by the competent authority and are not available in sufficient numbers to record all births.

168. Interviews 18 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

2.4 Monitoring the registration of pupils without birth certificates (cf. protocol, p. 24)

Stage 3:



This stage consists of updating information on pupils who have been regularised by the various authorities, including the civil registry, as well as in the school system. The IEF focal point plays the main role.

2.4.1 Archiving and securing documents

To ensure that records are archived and secure, a number of measures have been taken and implemented by school headmasters. These include adding copies of birth certificates to the pupil's file,¹⁶⁹ entering the document numbers on the pupil's identification form in the SIMEN system, and updating the database of pupils who have already been regularised. However, they often fail to do so, due to; forgetfulness, lack of time or lack of resources. In addition to this, head teachers record the birth certificate numbers of all pupils in the school's matriculation register. They are also responsible for the secure archiving of data in schools and colleges.

As a reminder, the birth certificate consists of 3 parts: part no. 1 of the birth certificate must be given to the parents and part no. 2 sent to the TGI by the civil registrar's dispatch note,¹⁷⁰ and part no. 3 remains in the initialled civil status register in the civil registry (town hall's archive room).¹⁷¹

2.4.2 Follow-up

At school level: The focal point will be responsible for monitoring all documents filed with the court in conjunction with the IEF and the civil registry (town hall's civil status department). The focal point must ensure that all petitions are filed, that extracts from the court records are filed, that part no. 1 and, if necessary, a birth certificate are issued, and that the certificate numbers are transcribed into the school's matriculation registers. The focal point can also organise visits to check that parents have their birth certificates (part no. 1).

At court level: As part of their monitoring and supervisory role, the President of the Court of First Instance checks the birth registers for the current year and ensures that they are properly kept by the civil registrar.

At IEF level: The IEF inspector may, as part of their task of monitoring the school, check the accuracy of the entry of birth certificates in the matriculation register.

At community level: Village chiefs, APEs and sports and cultural associations (associations sportives et culturelles (ASC)) can organise themselves to ensure that documents are properly transmitted.

2.4.3 Good practices identified in addition to those already mentioned in the protocol

In the education sector: School headmasters deal directly with the court and then assist parents with the transcription phase of the civil status registry.¹⁷² In Kaffrine, the headmistress of Ecole 5 has photocopied all her pupils' civil status records and keeps them in lockers high up so that they are not damaged by the recurrent floods.¹⁷³

169. Interview 31 (see Appendix 2).

170. Interviews 30, 38, 45, 46, 47 (see Appendix 2).

171. Interviews 26, 32 and 34 (see Appendix 2).

172. Interviews 12, 22 and 30, 42 (see Appendix 2).

173. Interview 32 (see Appendix 2).

In the justice sector: The chief clerk of the Thiès court of first instance said that the transcription of judgements had to be checked by the judge. The judge receives a “dispatch note” from the civil registry with the transcription numbers.¹⁷⁴ The school headmasters also receive this “dispatch notes,” which enables them to inform the pupils and their parents and, if necessary, to collect the birth certificates themselves.¹⁷⁵

2.4.4

Opportunities for overcoming obstacles/lessons learned

- **Intersectoral (education, justice and civil status)**

- **Transcription of judgements:** The interviews revealed that mayors did not always transcribe the judgements handed down at mobile court hearings for various reasons. Some of the reasons given included long transcription times¹⁷⁶ and a lack of deadline required for transcription. According to the chief clerk of the Thiès local court, sanctions may be imposed on those in charge of the civil status centre if judgements are not transcribed (art. 88 FC).¹⁷⁷ The director of ANEC noted the unwillingness of civil registrars (mayors) to transcribe these judgements. He suggested that judges should use their power to impose penalties on recalcitrant civil registrars. A second solution would be to call the mayors before an additional mobile court hearing to check that all the judgements have been transcribed.¹⁷⁸
- **Better information for parents:** Another factor is that parents believe that the judgement is sufficient to regularise the situation. According to the director of ANEC¹⁷⁹ and other interviews, judges should better inform parents during hearings. Mayors could call families and/or village chiefs to inform them of the non-transcription so that they can follow up. Schools should also raise awareness and follow up with parents (cf. 2.1.1).
- **Computerisation and collaboration between ministries:** Given the existence of different platforms for collecting data on children, the lack of an overview of the number of children to be regularised or that have already been regularised is a challenge. To remedy this, it would be necessary to ensure interoperability between the SIMEN (MEN) and NEKKAL systems so that regularisation is automatically recorded in SIMEN. Each school would then have an overall view of the regularisation of pupils including numbers of judgements transcribed and numbers of part no. 1, that have been transferred to the families.¹⁸⁰
- Given that parents do not systematically succeed in fulfilling their commitment to regularise their child's education after the CFEE, it is imperative to introduce a follow-up mechanism to ensure that the written commitments made by parents when registering for the exams are honoured.

- **In the education sector**

- **Monitoring by the MEN:** In 2023, the MEN carried out an evaluation after two years of operation of the protocol to check its effectiveness and compile an evaluation report. This current research report, written by an independent technical team, could also contribute to the MEN's monitoring mission (cf. 1.3).
- **Follow-up by the IEF:** The IEF is often unaware of the results of hearings and judgements, which are sent to the civil registries to be inscribed (town halls). The protocol provides for the IEF to be informed of the results of the regularisation, but the court clerks do not specifically pass on information relating to applications filed by the IEF with the TI. A taskforce should be set up within the IEFs to be responsible for monitoring and evaluating these pupil regularisation files at all levels (IA/IEF/schools/CGE).¹⁸¹

174. Interviews 14, 46 and 47 (see Appendix 2).

175. Interviews 12, 14, 20 (see Appendix 2).

176. Interviews 20 and 26 (see Appendix 2).

177. Interview 14 (see Appendix 2).

178. Interviews 5, 6, 7 and 8 (see Appendix 2).

179. Interviews 5, 6, 7 and 8 (see Appendix 2).

180. Interviews 39 and 41 (see Appendix 2).

181. Interviews 44 and 45 (see Appendix 2).

2.4.5 Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system

Stage 3:

Monitoring the registration of pupils without birth certificates

Situations to replicate:

- ▶ Judges, IEFs and civil registrars regularly exchange information on the number of judgements handed down at ordinary, special and mobile hearings.
- ▶ Information is sent by the registrar to the schools concerning pupils who have been regularised and who have obtained a birth certificate.
- ▶ The school has system where it can automatically update information about the pupil.
- ▶ Judgements are transmitted by official means using a document that provides proof of transmission and archiving (e.g. dispatch notes).
- ▶ Civil status documents are digitised and computerised (e.g. registers are centralised or the data from the various sectors is at least interoperable).
- ▶ Once the pupil's situation has been regularised, the head teachers enter the birth certificate number in the IT platform.

Situations to avoid:

- ▶ The maximum time limits for parents to collect their child's birth certificate are not clearly defined.
- ▶ The platform is not updated by the school following the regularisation of pupils.

Situation to stop:

- ▶ The copy of the birth certificate is not sent to the competent authority (for Senegal, this is part no.2 sent to the TGI).

2.5 Follow-up for all pupils who fail to pass one of the preceding stages

Stage 4:



This stage concerns pupils who have not been detected or identified by teachers and headteachers, either inadvertently or due to the possession of a falsified birth certificate.

It also covers cases where pupils have been identified but have not received the necessary support to complete the regularisation procedure, including situations where files have not been compiled and when parents do not have their own birth certificates. In addition, this stage concerns pupils who have started the regularisation procedure but have received an unfavourable ruling on their regularisation.

2.5.1 Good practices identified in addition to those already mentioned in the protocol

- **In the education and community sector**

- Follow-up by headmasters or teachers:

- a. There is always the possibility of regularising the pupil's situation, with the help of the teacher and the school headmaster, to put the file in order and hope to pass the case at a future mobile court or ordinary hearing.¹⁸² For example in Thiès, the IEF focal point calls the directors to follow up this type of case.¹⁸³ The headmaster of a primary school told us that he had followed up on 5 of the 13 pupils who had not been regularised following the mobile court hearings, through the regular hearings.¹⁸⁴
- b. However, one of the interviews revealed that these cases were extremely complex and that it was sometimes difficult to organise additional "mobile court hearings" and that ordinary hearings were costly.¹⁸⁵

- Financial support and assistance:

- a. The fees charged to parents can be an obstacle. In Thiès, the French association "Pommiers-Baobabs" covered these costs.¹⁸⁶
- b. The director of the Louly Sindiane daara (82 children aged 4 to 18) told us that he had paid the registration fees for the mobile courts (cf. 2.2, stage 1).¹⁸⁷

- Initiatives for pupils outside the education system: For pupils who are not at school (daara, learning workshops, street children, migrants, migrants, transhumance (seasonal movement of livestock) etc.). UNICEF is setting up bridging classes to catch-up on their schooling, but also to ensure that they can have a birth certificate.¹⁸⁸

- Role of the CDPEs: The CDPEs also play a role in monitoring the files of children who have not been regularised.¹⁸⁹

2.5.2 Opportunities for overcoming the obstacles/difficulties observed

- **At community level**

- Role of legal centres: The legal centre play the crucial role of facilitator, either by directing the parents or forwarding the complete file to the court, with which they have a privileged relationship, thus ensuring a smooth and unhindered registration process (cf. 2.1.1).¹⁹⁰

- Supervision of NGO activities: The MEN and others we met noted the presence of numerous NGOs involved in civil status issues in certain localities, which can create confusion as they do not always operate in accordance with the regulations.¹⁹¹ Cases are filed but not regularised. The activities of NGOs in the field of civil status should be supervised and accredited by an official body.

- **Intersectoral**

- Absence of parents from the procedure: If the parents are not involved, the school headmaster can take action on their behalf if the child's situation has not been regularised. For example, they can use the school attendance certificate and testify about the child's identity at the local court with the neighbourhood representatives (Cf. 2.3.4 and 2.3.5).¹⁹² In Thiès, the President of CGE can also testify.¹⁹³

182. Interview 1 (see Appendix 2).

183. Interview 15 (see Appendix 2).

184. Interview 17 (see Appendix 2).

185. Interview 41 (see Appendix 2).

186. Interview 15 (see Appendix 2).

187. Interview 16 (see Appendix 2).

189. "Bridging classes have been deployed in Senegal as a solution to enable out-of-school or drop-out children aged 9 to 12 to catch up on their schooling through accelerated learning programmes, with a view to guiding or redirecting them into the formal education system or into vocational training."

189. Interviews 47 and 50 (see Appendix 2).

190. Interviews 4 and 40 (see Appendix 2).

191. Interview 8 (see Appendix 2).

192. Interviews 12 and 13 (see Appendix 2).

193. Interview 15 (see Appendix 2).

- **Additional investigations:** If the pupil's files are incomplete, the judges may also ask the police to carry out investigations. This option does not appear to be suitable for cases presented at mobile court hearings.¹⁹⁴
- **Managing civil status documents:** Another issue is helping families to keep civil status documents at home once they have been obtained.

2.5.3 Basic characteristics for catch-up birth registration through the education system

Stage 4:

Follow-up for all pupils who fail to pass one of the preceding stages

Situations to replicate:

- ▶ A focal point at the school is clearly identified, which ensures that children who have not been able to have their birth certificates regularised are given a second option.
- ▶ Appropriate solutions tailored to the local context are available to support families facing these challenges, particularly in rural areas.
- ▶ Ratification of the Conventions of the International Commission on Civil Status (ICCS), which enable cooperation between States and automatic recognition of civil status records.

Situations to avoid:

- ▶ Children at risk of being left behind particularly migrant children, nomadic children and pupils in Koranic schools, are not targeted by the protocol.

Situations to stop:

- ▶ Children not attending school are not covered by the protocol.
- ▶ Birth records are missing, spanning several generations.
- ▶ The use of the protocol is becoming the norm, encouraging registrations outside of the legal limit.
- ▶ Embassies are not involved in implementing the protocol or monitoring foreign pupils without birth certificates.

194. Interview 14 (see Appendix 2).



3

Conclusion

Senegal's catch-up birth registration strategy for pupils via the education system - from pre-school through to the end of primary education (C1 to CM2) and even secondary education - represents a **significant step towards a society in which children's rights to legal identity and universal education are fully recognised**. Senegal's efforts move towards greater compliance with international standards and the **SDGs, in particular SDG 16 on justice and SDG 4 on education**. It also stands out for its innovative nature and its effective **interoperability between the different sectors of civil status, education and justice**.

The report stresses the crucial importance and effectiveness of this **transitional approach as a medium-term solution**. The report emphasising that the protocol is not a substitute for civil registration from birth, in accordance with the legal deadlines. It also highlights the need to raise parents' awareness of the importance of registering their children from birth. The protocol only concerns some of the country's children, those attending public schools (from pre-school to primary school) and in principle excludes those outside the school system, such as children in learning workshops or those who have migrated.

The protocol involves **efficient collaboration between Senegal's MEN, in conjunction with the MCTADT and the MJ**, mobilising a wide range of players at different levels. School headmasters and teachers, as well as IAs and IEFs, who have been entrusted with a mission of the utmost importance in detecting and supporting these children and their families, play a central role in this process. Similarly, judges are the only people empowered to regularise the situation of pupils without a birth certificate by means of judgements, while civil registrars are responsible for transcribing judgements, registering children, issuing certificates and archiving registers.

By emphasising **shared responsibility**, this protocol mobilises community actors and local authorities, giving them a vital role in raising awareness and registering births. This involvement even raises the question of whether it would be appropriate to give greater recognition to, or even legally formalise, the role of community actors such as imams and bajjenu goox as birth registration auxiliaries. This decentralised approach aims to be inclusive and adapted to the specific realities of the country, thus ensuring that every child, regardless of where they live or their educational background, is fully registered.

This report **analysed the level of implementation of the protocol at all its stages**, while also proposing a reflection on the **prerequisites for a cross-disciplinary approach** in parallel with the stages - *in line with the first specific objective of the research* (cf. 1.4). It highlights **good practice and potential solutions** for **effective implementation of the protocol** *in line with its second specific research objective* (cf. 1.4) such as community involvement, support for families, and the willingness and astuteness of the various actors to apply the protocol as effectively as possible. It highlights the need for effective coordination, strong leadership from the MEN, and collaboration between the ministries involved to ensure that the strategy is monitored and sustained. It stresses the need to train the actors involved, in particular those in education and civil registrars. It also identifies **opportunities for improvement**, *in line with the third specific objective of the research* (cf. 1.4), relating to administrative or judicial procedures, the information relayed, the computerisation of data and digitisation of civil status records, and the coordination and monitoring of the process proposed in the protocol. Finally, and *in accordance with the last specific objective of the research* (cf. 1.4), the report proposes **the basic characteristics** that such a tool should have, through **situations to be replicated, avoided and stopped**, and offers a **model system likely to inspire other countries and encourage similar solutions on an international scale**.

The research proposes **potential solutions** for integrating the remaining **70,000 pupils** who have not yet been regularised, ensuring that they are not forgotten. In the future, this research will help to **extend the implementation of the protocol** by the various ministries in Senegal, particularly for **children in daara schools**, as well as for **children who are not attending school**, such as those in bridging classes or learning workshops. This extension will also include **other regions of Senegal** not yet covered by the protocol.

Finally, this report encourages us to consider this **protocol as a driving force for a more just and responsible society**, while recognising the challenges to be met to ensure its effective implementation. The support expressed in February 2024 by **the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child** for Senegal's efforts, as set out in its Concluding Observations on the last periodic reports,¹⁹⁵ reinforces this recommendation. **We encourage other countries to consider implementing such a system to address the problem of non-registration of births outside the legal deadlines**. To this end, discussions are currently underway with other countries in the region interested in developing a similar system. The results of the research will be shared during a **webinar in 2024**, and steps are being taken to collaborate with the **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child**, given the importance attached to the education of African children for the year 2024. Building on the dedicated efforts of Senegal, it is hoped that this research can contribute to every child achieving their dreams, which starts with having a name and legal identity.¹⁹⁶

195. [United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations on the sixth and seventh periodic reports of Senegal, February 2024, §17.](#)

196. This is also the message of the new "[#MyName](#)" campaign launched by UNICEF during the African Cup of Nations in Côte d'Ivoire, which aims to "mobilise the African continent in favour of universal birth registration, using the power of sport".



Photo: © UNICEF

4

Recommendations

With a view to optimising the processes for registering the births of school-age children and ensuring the effective implementation of the protocol, the following recommendations are made, focusing on: **reinforcing existing processes, training the actors involved in the protocol, and strengthening inter-ministerial coordination and available tools.**

- 1. Raising awareness of the need to register births with the civil registry** (by normal declaration of birth within the one-year time limit or later, by judgement) **at community level:**
Encouraging the timely declaration of live births from the earliest age.

- A. Monitor pregnancies** in neighbourhoods and villages with a view to "normal" declaration of births (within one year) and capitalise on the role of community actors (bajjenu goox, neighbourhood representatives, village chiefs, imams, etc.).
- B. Raise people's awareness of civil status** through a **mass communication campaign** to better match specific needs and local realities (distances, daara, lack of mobility and connectivity, etc.): invest in **programmes to make parents more responsible and to raise their awareness**, in close collaboration with the CDPEs, in particular by identifying **civil status champions** within the community (young people, women) who would be godparents to another person to help them through the process; raise people's awareness via creative programmes on **community radio**.
- C. Draw up a detailed intervention and awareness-raising plan for daara and imams.**
- D. Raise awareness of the protocol among decision-makers** at central and decentralised levels (mayors, prefects, etc.).

- 2. Stakeholder training:**

Strengthening the capacity of stakeholders in civil status and the use of the platform

- A. Invest in a series of training courses for headteachers and teachers, as well as a digital referent for the school/establishment**, to help them get to grips with the IT tool and master the various stages of the protocol, including practical training in the use of the SIMEN tool - train at least 2 people per school to avoid a skills drain.

- B. Clearly identify the **SIMEN platform's IT managers**.
- C. Develop a **user manual and tutorial** in paper and video format.
- D. Plan a series of **training sessions for trainers** in each department and region.
- E. Organise **group data entry days** led by the IEF to record data in the SIMEN platform, particularly in rural areas.

3. Reinforcing the protocol's operational efficiency:

- A. Guarantee that the protocol applies **as soon as the child enters the CI, in all schools**.
- B. Integrate/merge **the protocol** with the **Child Protection** component from central to devolved level, to limit parallel approaches and strengthen the integration of the system with a view to making it more operational (with reference to the role of the CDPE).
- C. Formalise the appointment of a "**civil status focal point**" for each actor and detail their **roles and responsibilities**: civil status, court, IEF, APE, CGE, CDPE, daara representatives (serigne daara and ndeyu daara), imams, neighbourhood representatives, village chiefs - strengthen **inter-sectoral collaboration**.
- D. Institutionalise **regular coordination meetings throughout the year**, starting in October at the start of the school year. These meetings, which would encompass the various administrative levels (national, regional, municipal), would involve the participation of all the focal points identified. The coordination of such meetings could be entrusted to the IEF or the CDPE (under the supervision of the prefect).
- E. **Link up the various civil status platforms** so that birth registration can be handled holistically, and assign a unique identifier to the child that can be used in the various sectors, such as civil status, education, health, etc.
- F. **Harmonise the methods used to collect data** from schools so that they can use the same format.
- G. **Give priority to ordinary hearings** and limit the use of mobile court hearings.

4. Monitoring/Evaluation of the protocol:

- A. Ensure the **effective transmission and management of information** between the central and devolved levels and the implementation of a **monitoring and surveillance mechanism** at local level (neighbourhood, village, commune, department).
- B. Include **an item relating to civil status records** in the **performance indicators** for headteachers and teachers, and encourage a recognition mechanism for headteachers who show concrete efforts at school level.
- C. Organise regular **2-day forums on civil status** in the various regions to take stock of the implementation of the protocol. The forum should bring together **all the actors involved in the protocol** and result in an **(annual) action plan** for implementing the protocol. The **conclusions of these forums** could be **broadcast on the radio**.

5. Archiving/Preservation:

- A. Develop a **culture of conservation** and secure archiving of civil status documents.
- B. **Improve the archiving of** pupil's birth certificates.



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- Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations, 1989.
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, 2006, ratified by Senegal in 2008 .
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- Law 61-55 of 23 June 1961 on civil status.
- Law 65-60 of 21 July 1965 on the Criminal Code.
- Article 108 of Law 2013-10 of 20 December 2013 on the General Code of Local Authorities.
- Decree No. 2004-427 of 14 April 2004 amending and supplementing Decree No. 2003-292 of 8 May 2003 on the organisation of the Ministry of the Interior.
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- RNSE: National report on the education situation in Senegal (Rapport national sur la situation de l'éducation au Sénégal), 2022.

Useful links:

- <http://www.etatcivil.education.sn/>
- <https://www.child-identity.org/fr/>

- <https://www.unicef.org/senegal/recits/pourquoi-lenregistrement-des-naissances-est-vital-pour-les-enfants>
- <https://child-identity.org/images/countryreports/senegal.pdf>
- <https://www.uneca.org/fr/stories/la-cinqui%C3%A8me-journ%C3%A9e-africaine-de-l%E2%80%99enregistrement-des-faits-d%E2%80%99%C3%A9tat-civil-et-des>
- <https://www.ansd.sn/Indicateur/donnees-de-population>
- <https://femmesjuristes.org/>
- <https://learning.vitalstrategies.org/course/view.php?id=322&lang=fr>
- <https://www.allodocteurs.africa/le-senegal-veut-augmenter-son-nombre-de-naissances-declarees-7201.html>
- <https://crvssystems.ca/country-profile/senegal>
- <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/senegal-mobile-courts-deliver-birth-certificates-to-children-living-in-rural-areas/>
- <https://www.senepius.com/societe/coins-etats-civils-sante-social-une-opportunit%C3%A9-pour-les-parents>
- <https://www.miniila.com/>
- <https://www.unicef.org/wca/reports/myname-birth-registration-campaign>
- <https://www.unicef.org/wca/media/9681/file/My%20Name%20Birth%20Registration%20Campaign%20-%20FR.pdf>



Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for individual interviews or focus groups

Questions for those involved in the collaboration between the Department of Education, Civil Status and Justice for the implementation of the **Protocol for detecting and registering pupils without birth certificates** in Senegal

For each stage, please describe how it works, promising practices and areas for improvement.

| | Questions for: | | | |
|--|---|-----------|--------------|---------|
| | All | Education | Civil Status | Justice |
| Birth registration and context | <p>National level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-cultural determinants identified: main reasons why children are not registered at birth? Why was there an upsurge in the number of children without birth certificates from 2016 to 2018 (cf. protocol, Nov. 2020)? In 2020: 187,767 pupils without birth certificates according to SIMEN. When is the detection and regularisation process put in place at pre-school and elementary level?¹⁹⁷ Why were the three regions where the protocol was initially set up chosen: Kolda, Louga and Kaffrine? Are there any other regions involved since 2020?¹⁹⁸ Which regions to target and how <p>Regional level (IA) and departmental level (IEF):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are regional workshops organised and run? | | | |
| Responsible for implementing the protocol | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the information campaign on the importance of birth registration in 2022 take place?¹⁹⁹ What progress has been made in digitising civil registry offices? Is the RAPIDPRO app being used? By whom and how? Could it be used outside health centres?²⁰⁰ <p>National level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education: Elementary Education Department ? How is the protocol being rolled out from central to local level? <p>Department level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IEF (Education and Training Inspectorate) Actors involved: CODEC (Collectif des Directeurs d'école) and CGE (Conseil de gestion d'établissement) and heads of structures. Is this correct? Role of the Departmental Child Development and Protection Committees? <p>District/Structure level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the Regularisation Committee? Role of village chiefs and neighbourhood representatives (authorised to record births for the current year and submit them to the civil registrar, who is authorised to receive all declarations: p. 14) | | | |

197. Ministère de l'Economie, du Plan et de la Coopération du Sénégal, UNFPA and UNICEF, "Rapport qualitatif sur les déterminants socio-culturels de la non-déclaration des faits d'état civil au Sénégal", March 2021, word document: 8% of children without a birth certificate in the pre-school population, 18.9% of elementary school pupils.

198. Other regions involved: Kolda, Tambacounda, Kaolack, Saint-Louis and Dakar (Report by Senegal's Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Cooperation, UNFPA, UNICEF, March 2021) and Sédhiou, Bounkiling and Goudomp (UNICEF Report, March 2023).

199. Ministère de l'Economie, du Plan et de la Coopération du Sénégal, UNFPA and UNICEF, "Rapport qualitatif sur les déterminants socio-culturels de la non-déclaration des faits d'état civil au Sénégal", summary report 2022.

200. <https://crvssystems.ca/country-profile/senegal>.

For each stage, please describe how it works, promising practices and areas for improvement.

| Questions for: | | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| All | Education | Civil Status | Justice |

| Preparatory phase | | National level (Education): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters to IAs (Education) situation of pupils without birth certificates Letters from the Ministry of Local Authorities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayors for the certificate of non-registration Ministers of Justice (after the letters to the magistrates' courts concerning mobile court hearings) How is the preparatory phase for the protocol being rolled out from central to local level? Department level (Schools: IEF, head teachers, teachers): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters to schools (IA to IEF and after IEF to schools)? How is it organised (at what level: district, department, region)? What does training involve for headteachers, who are key actors at every stage?²⁰¹ What have been the biggest obstacles to headteacher training? What are the responses to these obstacles? Structure-school level (Parents): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When and how should they enrol their children at school? How do they receive information about enrolling at the school, and what information? When are parents informed about the protocol? Is the lack of information and/or documents required to enrol at the school an obstacle at this stage? Is there a need for a campaign to raise awareness of the protocol? Do the same obstacles apply to exam registration? Roles of mothers' associations and parents' associations? | |
|-------------------|---|--|---|
| 1. | Detection and identification of pupils without birth certificates | a Setting up a regularisation committee with CODEC, civil registrars and the CGE | Departmental level (IEF): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you tell us more about how the Committee was set up and its role? IEF sends a letter to the people in charge of the structures (school headmasters), with a collection matrix: effectiveness of the process? Collection and input by directors: difficulties (see notebook, form and platform)? Examination planners and managers: efficiency? What is the role of civil registrars during this phase? |
| | b Collect information and draw up a list of the names of pupils who do not have a birth certificate | Structure level (Regulation Committee): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detection on registration Census of pupils without a birth certificate Consolidation of information gathered at school on marital status Parent/teacher dialogue | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verification at the civil status centre |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of school/establishment data (structure) Data consolidation (IEF) Transmission of data to mayors for non-enrolment certificates (IEF)? Are there any problems with mayors issuing certificates of non-registration? |

201. Collection, consolidation and entry on the platform (Etatcivil.education.sn), transmission of lists and support for civil registrars in transcribing judgements onto the register.

For each stage, please describe how it works, promising practices and areas for improvement.

| Questions for: | | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| All | Education | Civil Status | Justice |

| 2. | Regularisation of pupils without birth certificates (five stages) | | |
|----|---|--|--|
| | a | Preparing pupil's files | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compiling the file with the families: How is the file compiled and who is responsible for it? • Role of each stakeholder: Parents, teaching team, registrars, court of first instance, regularisation committee and health structure? • Census or collection of files: IEF responsible, carried out by the Regularisation Committee? |
| | b | The negotiation and organisation phase of the mobile court hearings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence to the TI: IEF responsible, civil status focal point (location of this focal point?) • Submission of files to the District Court: IEF focal point (location of this focal point?) |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sent by IEF to the District Courts for agreement in principle (for the holding of mobile court hearings) • Posting of hearing schedule ? • Can you describe the role of the President of the Tribunal? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organises mobile court hearings, - delivers judgements and - follows the transcription in the current year's birth registers? • Can you describe the procedure for organising hearings in detail? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - actors (civil status focal point, village chiefs, neighbourhood representatives and parents) - content of the file |
| | c | The transcription phase for registration authorisations on the birth registers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which focal point (IEF?) receives from the local court (TI) the files processed with the mention of transcription authorisation? • Authorisations for entry in birth registers are sent by IEF to the various civil status centres concerned. Is this correct? • Would there be a way of transmitting these authorisations directly from the Court to the civil registry offices? |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three components: parents, pupil file and SIMEN? • How could the drafting of these three sections be made easier? |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the volume of birth certificates to be transcribed from the civil registers, teachers may be called in to help civil registrars with the transcription. What resources are available? |
| | d | The birth certificate collection phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of the extracts, handing over of the vouchers to the parents, filing in the pupil's file: Role of the school and Civil Registry focal point? Role of the actors involved at each stage: parents, structure managers, CGE? |
| | e | The document archiving and security phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers: parents and facility managers? • Can you describe the role of the facility manager, who hands over sections 1 and a copy of the birth certificate, places the copy in the pupil's file, enters the certificate number in the pupil's identification form and records the birth certificate numbers in a national register? • Percentage of parents in possession of the deed at the end of the procedure? |

For each stage, please describe how it works, promising practices and areas for improvement.

| | | Questions for: | | | |
|-----------|---|---|-----------|--------------|---------|
| | | All | Education | Civil Status | Justice |
| 3. | Regularisation phase for pupils excluded in previous phases? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is responsible for monitoring pupils who have been excluded at one of the above stages? What procedures are in place for a second catch-up? | | | |
| 4. | Regularisation phase for pupils excluded in previous phases? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile registration units appear to have been used in six departments in rural areas and to have registered more than 900 children, often from Koranic schools:²⁰² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were these units set up after 2018? - Has the protocol been used in these schools? - What about nomadic or transhumant children? Could mobile units be a solution? | | | |

202. <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/senegal-mobile-courts-deliver-birth-certificates-to-children-living-in-rural-areas/>.

Appendix 2: List of people consulted during research

Remote interviews conducted by the CHIP team

1. Remote interview MEN (DEE), 16/06/23: Sy Papa Demba, Direction enseignement élémentaire Coordinator of the national civil status team (HP); Mor Dioum, national technical team, Inspector head of schooling division (PC); Mme SowSow, Coordinator member of the national civil status team and Agent at the DEMSG; Serigne Ndiaye, Head of Schooling Division; Ibrahima Diahm, Computer scientist, SIMEN and UNICEF Senegal developer, Massamba Diouf.
2. Remote interview MEN, 23/06/23: Ibrahima Diahm, IT specialist, SIMEN developer.
3. IEF remote interview, 26/09/23: Mr Ndiaye, national education inspector, IEF manager; Mr Djiba, IEF planning officer, Bounkiling Department; Mr Diallo.
4. Remote interview NGOs, Schools and Civil Status, 19/10/23: Alassane Gano, ATD Fourth World; Coumba Gueye, Executive Secretary and President of the Association des Femmes Juristes (AJS), Mr Lo, Director of the Patte-d'oeie Grand Yoff HLM school in Dakar and Mr Diouf, Civil Status Officer at Grand Yoff town hall in Dakar.
5. Remote interview on 01/11/23 with Cyr Gomis, a former judge at the Tribunal d'Instance in Dakar and Saint-Louis.

Interviews during fieldwork in Senegal (7 to 15 December 2023)



Team 1

Dakar

6. Interview MJ (DACS), 7/12/23: Ibra Samba Yoro Diop, Director DACS.
7. ANEC interview, 8/12/23: Aliou Ousmane Sall, Managing Director ANEC HLM.
8. Interview MEN, Direction de l'enseignement élémentaire, 8/12/23: Papa Demba Sy, IEF Coordinator; Abdoulaye Ndao, SIMEN Software Engineer; Ibrahima Coly, DEPS; Moustapha Ndao, Médiateur pédagogique; Momar Bassine Sarr, Head of School Exams Division, Anna Sow, DEMSG and Aissatou Lo and Massamba Diouf, members of UNICEF Senegal.
9. Cosydep interview, 13/12/23: Dr M. Diop, Abdou Diaw, Project Manager.
10. Amnesty International interview, 13/12/23: Moustapha Diagne, Programme Officer.
11. Interview with the Swiss Embassy, 14/12/23: Sarah Valentina Fall, Human Security and Human Rights Programme Officer.

Thiès

12. Interview Kaba Sall elementary school in Thiès, 11/12/23: Omar Diakhaté, Headmaster; Mamadou Mar Ndiaye, Neighbourhood representatives; Mbaye Seck, President of the CGE; Thierno Bassirou Bocoum, Civil status consultant, former civil registrar.
13. Interview at Thiès-Est Town Hall, 11/12/23: Samba Faye, Civil Registrar; Gueye Mor, Municipal Secretary.
14. Interview local court (TI) of Thiès, 11/12/23: Ousseynou Sarr, Head of Registry.
15. Interview IEF Thiès Ville, 11/12/23: Gora Faye Ndiaye sg/IEF, Wolty Gueye Gender Officer; Aliou Badji, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer; Mbaye Diouf, Planner.

Mbour

16. Interview Daara Louly Sindiane, 12/12/23: Mr Moustapha Sene, Director and teacher.
17. Interview Louly Gang elementary school, 12/12/23: Abdou Karim Diémé, Headmaster; Doudou Dieng, CGE Chairman.



Team 2

18. Interview local court (TI) Mbour, 12/12/23: Ibrahim Sy, Chief Clerk.
19. Interview Mbour Town Hall, 12/12/23: Bayaty Babou, Deputy Mayor and civil registrar.
20. Interview IEF Mbour 2, 12/12/23: Serigne Fall, Inspector; Abdou Sambou, Planner; Fatou Ndiaye, Examinations and Competitive Examination Officer.

Tamba

21. Interview IEF/IA Tamba, 10/12/23: Malick Diatta, Inspector, IA; Ousmane Fall, Inspector and General Secretary, IEF; Sambou Oualy, Representative of the CGE, LD School; Bouraima Diatta, General Secretary, UDAPE.
22. Interview with Tamba Prefect, 11/12/23: Alioune Badara Mbengue, Prefect.
23. Interview IEF Tamba, 11/12/23: Souleymane Badji, Planner, IEF; Boubacar Sané, Examinations Officer, Bexco, IEF; Coumba Tandian, Head of Gender Office, IEF.
24. Interview IA/IEF Tamba, 11/12/23: Babacar Diack, Inspector, IA; Mikaila Diop, IEF.
25. Interview Daara Tamba, 11/12/23: Nassirou Diack, Director, Daara Ridallah.
26. Interview with Tamba civil registrar, 11/12/23: Sambou Oualy, civil registrar, 8th deputy mayor; Tidiane Diagne, data entry officer, Town Hall.
27. Interview with Tamba District Delegate, 11/12/23: Adama Ndiaye, District Delegate, Medina Coura.

Kaffrine

28. Interview IEF/IA 1 Kaffrine, 12/12/23: Doudou Fofana, IEF; Abdoulaye Wade, IA.
29. Interview IEF/IA 2 Kaffrine, 12/12/23: El Hadji Babou Dramé, President, APE EE El Hadji AE Cissé; Ibrahima Loum, Planner, IA; Ibrahima Dieye, Bexco, IA; Babacar D Seck, Bexco, IEF; Babacar Sarr, Human Resources Manager, IEF; Ibrahima Sarr, Secretary General, IA.
30. Interview local court (TI) Kaffrine, 12/12/23: Mamadou Sow, Chief Registrar, Tribunal d'instance.
31. Interview School 5 Kaffrine, 12/12/23: Ndiémé Ndao, Headmistress, School 5.
32. Interview Kaffrine, 12/12/23: Jean Pierre Diatta, Civil Registrar, Town Hall; Oumar Ndiaye, Municipal Secretary, Town Hall; Moustapha Faye, Chairman of the Education Commission, Town Hall.

Birkelane

33. Interview with Birkelane Prefect, 13/12/23: Tiguida Wagué, Prefect; Babacar Ndiaye, CDPE focal point; Mamadou Sankhare, CTR member.
34. Interview Birkelane Town Hall, 13/12/23: Falou Fall, Mayor.
35. Interview CDPE Birkelane, 13/12/23: Bismi Faye, Codsypdep focal point; Diabel Cissé, Association des serignes daara, 1er deputy mayor; Alioune Badara Ndao, CTR member, Head of sports department, CDPE; Awa Gueye, Bajjanu Goox, President; Babacar Mbaye, Head of SDAS; Maimouna Fall, President, Relais communautaire.
36. Interview IEF Birkelane, 13/12/23: Papa Moussa Sene, Planner; Sampy Sankharé, Bexco; Barham Diassé, IEE; Al Ousseynou Ba, IEF; M. Ka, Communications Officer, civil status focal point at the IEF.
37. Imam interview, 13/12/23: Imam Bousso.

Kaolack

38. Interview local court (TI) Kaolack, 14/12/23: Birame Sene, President of the TI; Mariama Cissé, AEMO.
39. Interview IA/IEF Kaolack, 14/12/23: Malick Ba, IA Planner; Alassane Ndow Fall, IEE at the IEF; Sadia Badji, IEF Planner; Thierno Cissé, IEE at the IEF; Aissatou Diom, Bexco IA; Mamadou Diouf, Bexco IEF; Siaka Goudiaby, IA.
40. Interview with Kaolack Legal Centre, 14/12/23: Mame Sèye Gueye, Coordinator; Fatou Gueye, Consultant.



Team 3

Ziguinchor

41. Interview at Mamadou Bayo elementary school in Ziguinchor, 10/12/23: Abdoul Salam Ba, Headmaster; Soulaymane Diawan, EMC Chairman; Adama Coly, EMC Vice-Chairwoman; Cheikha Sakho, EMC Treasurer; Aissatou Ba, AME Director; Ibrahima Ba, Assistant Neighbourhood representative.
42. Interview Ziguinchor Prefecture, 11/12/23: Cheikh Hamet Tidiane Thiaw, Prefect.
43. Interview IA of Ziguinchor, 11/12/23: Cheikh Faye, Academy Inspector.
44. IEF interview in Ziguinchor, 11/12/23: Ibrahim K. Sakho, IEF Inspector; Tidiane L. Camara, Bexco; Mohamadou M. Diallo, Planner.
45. Interview TGI of Ziguinchor, 11/12/23: Abdourahmane Diallo, President of the TGI; Papa Ismaël Diallo, Prosecutor of the TGI.
46. Interview local court (TI) of Ziguinchor, 11/12/23: Sabassy Faye, Chairman TI.
47. Interview Ziguinchor Town Hall, 11/12/23: Boucari Badji, Director of the Civil Registry; Mamadou Malick Baldé, Assistant Archivist.

Goudomp

48. Interview IEF Goudoump, 12/12/23: Cheikh Diarra, Inspector; Urbain Bathé, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer; Mor Mbaye, Bexco; Jean C. Sané, Civil Status Focal Point; Arouna Sadio, Planner.
49. Interview Goudomp Prefecture, 12/12/23: Abdou Diop, Prefect.
50. Interview at Goudomp town hall, 12/12/23: Mamadou Lamine Badji, 2ème Deputy Mayor; Mamadou Ndiaye, Registrar, Ibrahima Sané, CDPE Focal Point.

Kolda

51. Interview IA of Kolda, 13/12/23: Samba Diakhaté, Inspecteur d'Académie; Aliou Touré, Secrétaire Général, Mohamed Baldé, Planificateur.
52. Interview with the local court (TI) of Kolda, 13/12/23: Seringue Fallou Faye, President of the TI
53. Interview Kolda Prefecture, 13/12/23: Mbassa Sene, Prefect.
54. IEF interview in Kolda, 13/12/23: Birane Tine, IEF Inspector.

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