7 Legal identity and birth registration for all

Universal birth registration and robust legal identity for all will help people secure their rights and provide a foundation for delivering the 2030 Agenda to those who are furthest behind.

🛡 Prevent

Legal identity and birth registration help protect human rights and reduce the risk of violence and abuse.

🔁 Renew

Digital identity systems allow governments to provide better quality public services.

⠿ Involve

Legal identity reduces marginalization and increases social, economic, and political inclusion.

Legal identity and birth registration allow people to claim their rights within their communities and societies and provide data that is essential for the planning and provision of services.

People who are deprived of proof of identity are excluded from formal markets and are vulnerable to violence, abusive practices such as child marriage, and discrimination. People with disabilities and non-citizens are especially disadvantaged in the registration process.

More births are now being registered, with some countries showing major improvements can be made in a decade with sufficient political will and investment.

Increasingly, countries recognize the need for birth registration not to be seen in isolation, but to be considered as part of a civil registration and vital statistics system that also records deaths and causes of deaths, and other events such as marriage and divorce.

Recent years have seen a wave of innovation in legal identity, as countries have moved from paper-based to digital identity systems and have begun to use mobile technology.

This allows more people to participate in their societies and economies. Governments have also used the new systems to provide cash transfers and increase access to public services, and to make their programs more targeted and less wasteful.

1. Strengthen civil registration systems so they provide quality data on births and other vital statistics, as part of a strategic approach to national health data systems for the delivery of the SDGs.

2. Use the Roadmap for Health Measurement and Accountability (2015-2030) to support national leadership and ownership, and to provide a platform for international support where appropriate.

3. Drawing on the Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Scaling up Investment Plan (2015-2024), mobilize the additional finance from international sources needed to finance progress towards universal coverage in 75 priority countries.

4. Support the delivery of inclusive, robust, and cost effective universal digital identity systems, building on the Identification for Development initiative, and other partnerships and platforms, agreeing principles, minimum standards, and legal and regulatory frameworks for identity management.

5. Use digital identity systems to strengthen the social safety net, increase access to services, and improve governance, making a broad contribution to the implementation of the SDGs.

6. Manage risks posed by identity systems, using the Principles on Identification for Sustainable Development to ensure systems are universal, accessible, robust, secure, responsive, and sustainable, and they protect privacy and user rights.

7. Strengthen capacity to analyze and use data from registration systems for policymaking and monitoring purposes.