



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

18 February 2011

### NGA103690.FE

Nigeria: The birth registration rate; whether a birth certificate is required to enrol in an elementary or secondary school; other identity documents that can be used to enrol in school or to obtain travel documents; the appearance of an affidavit that accompanies the Certificate of Origin and the information in it  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

An article published on 7 June 2010 in *Vanguard*, a Lagos daily, reports that a representative of the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) was concerned about the "poor" birth registration rate in Nigeria. The UNICEF representative noted the "two per cent birth registration coverage of under five children" in Nigeria (*Vanguard* 7 June 2010). According to UNICEF statistics updated on 2 March 2010, between 2000 and 2008, approximately 30 per cent of births were registered in Nigeria. These statistics show that in the urban centres, the registration rate is approximately 50 per cent, while in rural areas, the registration rate is approximately 21 per cent (UN 2 Mar. 2010). A document published by UNICEF in 2007 indicates that approximately 70 per cent of the 5 million children born each year in Nigeria are not registered at birth (UN 2007).

In an article published on 29 August 2010 by the news magazine *Nigerian Newsworld*, a representative of the National Population Commission (NPC) states that the NPC was constrained by resources and the lack of government political will. The NPC has been responsible for registering births and deaths in Nigeria since 1988 (Nigeria n.d.a). Information on the birth registration rate among the general population could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

### School enrolment

According to an article published on 21 June 2010 by the *Lagos Daily Champion*, the Chairman of the NPC said that a child must present a birth certificate in order to enrol in school. An article published in *Nigerian Newsworld* indicates that a birth certificate is required to enrol in school (29 Aug. 2010). Neither source indicates whether this applies to elementary school or secondary school enrolment. According to an article published on 6 January 2010 on the Nigeria Universities Updates website, which provides information on accredited Nigerian universities (Nigeria Universities Updates 26 June 2009), they often require prospective students to present a birth certificate when they apply for admission.

### Alternative documents

An article published on Nigeria Universities Updates explains that students who do not have a birth certificate must present an affidavit of age declaration (6 Jan. 2010). In addition, according to the website of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS),

in order to apply for a standard passport, applicants must submit either an age declaration or a birth certificate, among other documents (Nigeria n.d.b). The Consular section of the website of the Embassy of Nigeria in Budapest states that Nigerians who do not have a birth certificate must obtain an "attestation" from the NPC in Nigeria; however, a description of this attestation was not provided (Nigeria n.d.c). The attestation must be authenticated by the Consular and Legal Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abuja (ibid.).

Information on the appearance of the affidavit attached to the Certificate of Origin and the information contained in it could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

*Daily Champion* [Lagos]. 21 June 2010. "Nigeria: Population Commission Tasks Citizens on Birth Registration." (AllAfrica.com)  
<<http://allafrica.com/stories/201006210889.html>> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2011]

Nigeria. N.d.a. National Population Commission (NPC). "About NPC."  
<<http://www.population.gov.ng/index.php?id=2>> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2011]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.b. Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS). "Passports."  
<<http://www.immigration.gov.ng/passportypes.htm>> [Accessed 3 Feb. 2011]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.c. Embassy of Nigeria in Budapest. "Consular Services."  
<[http://nigerianembassy.hu/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=18&Itemid=27](http://nigerianembassy.hu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=18&Itemid=27)> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2011]

Nigeria Universities Updates. 6 January 2010. "2009/2010 Online Clearance for New Students." <<http://nigeriauniversitiesupdates.com/?m=201001&paged=2>> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2011]

\_\_\_\_\_. 26 June 2009. "About Us." <[http://nigeriauniversitiesupdates.com/?page\\_id=2](http://nigeriauniversitiesupdates.com/?page_id=2)> [Accessed 7 Feb. 2011]

*Nigerian Newsworld*. 29 August 2010. Kenneth Azaham. "Apathy over Birth/Death Registration." <<http://www.nigeriannewsworld.com/content/apathy-over-birthdeath-registration>> [Accessed 7 Feb. 2011]

United Nations (UN). 2 March 2010. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). "At a Glance: Nigeria." <[http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/nigeria\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/nigeria_statistics.html)> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2011]

\_\_\_\_\_. 2007. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Nigeria. "Birth Registration." <[http://www.unicef.org/nigeria/children\\_1930.html](http://www.unicef.org/nigeria/children_1930.html)> [Accessed 7 Feb. 2011]

*Vanguard* [Lagos]. 7 June 2010. Chioma Obinna. "Expert Laments Poor Birth Registration." <<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2010/06/expert-laments-poor-birth-registration/>> [Accessed 7 Feb. 2011]

## **Additional Sources Consulted**

**Oral sources:** Attempts to reach representatives of the Embassy of Nigeria in Brussels, Ottawa and Washington, D.C., as well as the National Population Commission (NPC), were unsuccessful.

**Internet sites, including:** Afrik.com, Agence de presse sénégalaise (APS), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), *Daily Trust* [Abuja], *The Guardian* [Lagos] *Jeune Afrique*, *National Daily* [Lagos], *The News* [Lagos], *Newswatch* [Lagos] - Federal Ministry of Education, *Nigerian Compass* [Isheri], *Nigerian Tribune* [Ibadan], Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Organisation suisse d'aide aux réfugiés (OSAR), PANApres (PANA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States - Department of State, The World Bank.

**The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.**