

Outline for Birth Registration Counselling

Beirut, 05 December 2012



Birth Registration Counselling for Children Born in Lebanon of Syrian Parents

Step 1 – Explain why birth registration is important

- Without an official birth certificate a child will not have evidence of their name, relationship with their parents, or date and place of birth.
- In Lebanon, without at least a birth notification document from the hospital or an authorized midwife, a child will have difficulties signing-up for UNHCR and accessing assistance such as food, education and healthcare. A birth notification document is also required to complete the next steps in the birth registration procedure.



*Failure to register
birth can increase
the risk of stateless
for a child*

- When the time comes for voluntary return to Syria, without an official birth certificate a child may not be able to prove their Syrian nationality, obtain Syrian ID, and may have problems accessing rights such as healthcare and education. In addition, without an official birth certificate a child may have difficulties obtaining Syrian ID and may therefore not be able to cross the border to Syria legally.

Step 2 – Explain the official procedure for birth registration of foreigners in Lebanon

- Birth notification document from the hospital – Pregnant women registered with UNHCR can have 85% of the hospital fees for delivery covered (or 100% on assessment of vulnerability). They should be referred to a local primary healthcare clinic where they will be counselled on pre-natal care and referred to an appropriate hospital. When the woman attends the hospital for delivery she should ask for the birth notification document and later return to UNHCR with this document to register the child.
- Birth certificate from the mokhtar – It is then necessary to visit a local mokhtar with the birth notification document and identification documents to acquire the birth certificate. The procedural requirements are set out in the Q&A.

- Registering the birth with the Personal Status Department (PSD) – It is then necessary to visit the PSD in the mohafazat of the birth with the birth certificate and identification documents. The procedural requirements for registering the birth with the PSD are set out in the Q&A.

Step 3 – Explain that the above steps should be completed within one year

- The birth certificate from the mokhtar can only be obtained within one year of the birth. The same is true for registering with the PSD. After this period it is necessary to resort to court to register the birth and this procedure can be expensive and lengthy.

Step 4 – Explain that this will assist in later registering the birth in Syria

- When the time comes for voluntary return to Syria, having the Lebanese birth certificate will allow your child to register in Syria, prove their Syrian nationality, and acquire Syrian ID.
- The child will not be entitled to Lebanese nationality if the birth is registered in Lebanon. When conditions permit a safe return to Syria, having the Lebanese birth certificate will allow the child to prove his or her Syrian nationality and obtain Syrian ID.

Step 5 – Further counselling

- If required, the family can approach UNHCR to request further information or assistance with birth registration.