



MOZAMBIQUE

A statistical profile
of birth registration

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This data brief presents the latest available survey data on current levels of birth registration and certification in Mozambique. It also includes trends in prevalence over time and projected levels of birth registration in the future under different scenarios. This publication is part of a series of data briefs on birth registration produced for a subset of countries, selected on the basis of data availability and targeted for strategic action to strengthen birth registration systems.



1. CURRENT LEVELS
OF BIRTH REGISTRATION
AND CERTIFICATION



2. ASSESSING PROGRESS
AND LOOKING AHEAD



TECHNICAL NOTES



1. CURRENT LEVELS OF BIRTH REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

FIGURES

STATISTICS ON CHILDREN
UNDER 5 / UNDER 1

1.1 Percentage of children under age 5 and infants under age 1 whose births are registered



1.2 Percentage distribution and number of children under age 5, by registration status



1.3 Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, by province



1.4 Percentage of children under age 5 with a birth certificate, by background characteristics



1.5 Percentage distribution and number of infants under age 1, by registration status



1.6 Percentage of infants under age 1 whose births are registered, by province

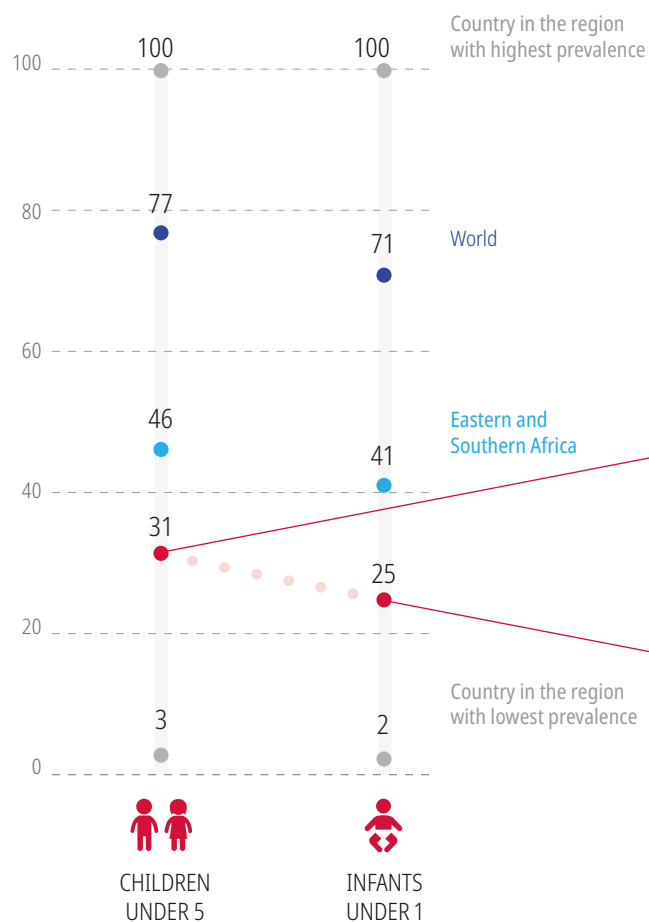




Levels of birth registration in Mozambique are below global and regional averages

FIGURE 1.1

Percentage of children under age 5 and infants under age 1 whose births are registered



MOZAMBIQUE



31%
CHILDREN
UNDER 5



25%
INFANTS
UNDER 1



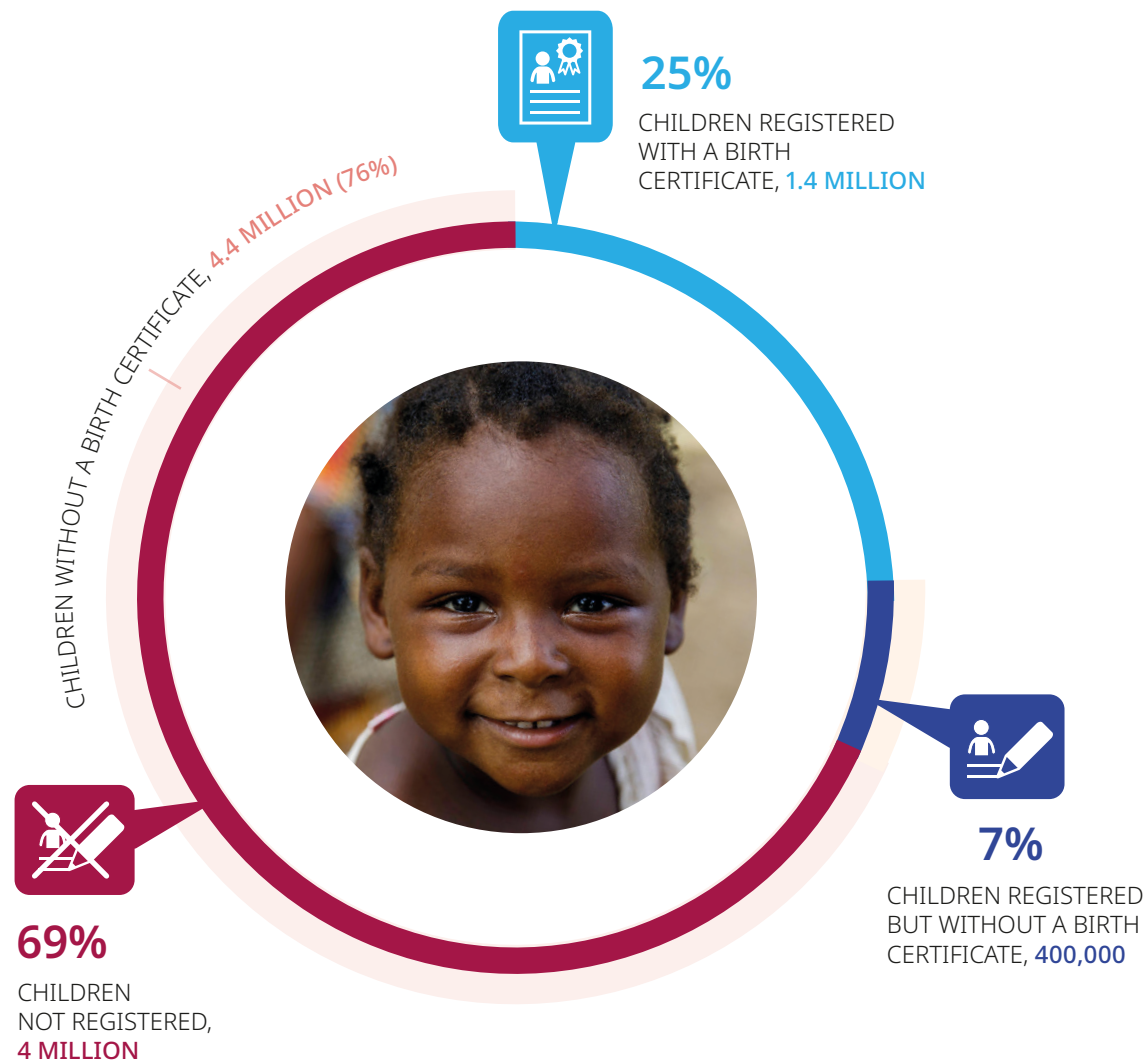
Mozambique is home to over 4 million children under 5 without a birth certificate. This includes 4 million unregistered children and just under half a million children whose births are reported as registered but who do not have a birth certificate

The births of around 7 in 10 children are not registered; nearly 8 in 10 lack a birth certificate

FIGURE 1.2

Percentage distribution and number of children under age 5, by registration status

Note: The total does not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

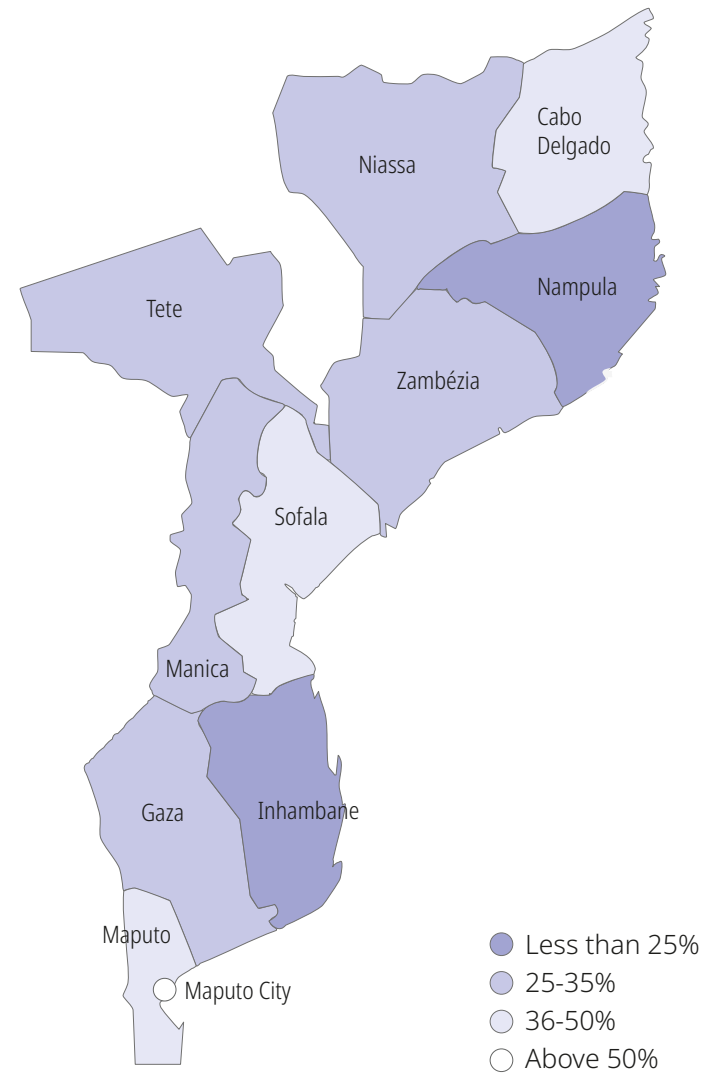




Levels of birth registration are lowest in Inhambane and Nampula provinces

FIGURE 1.3

Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, by province

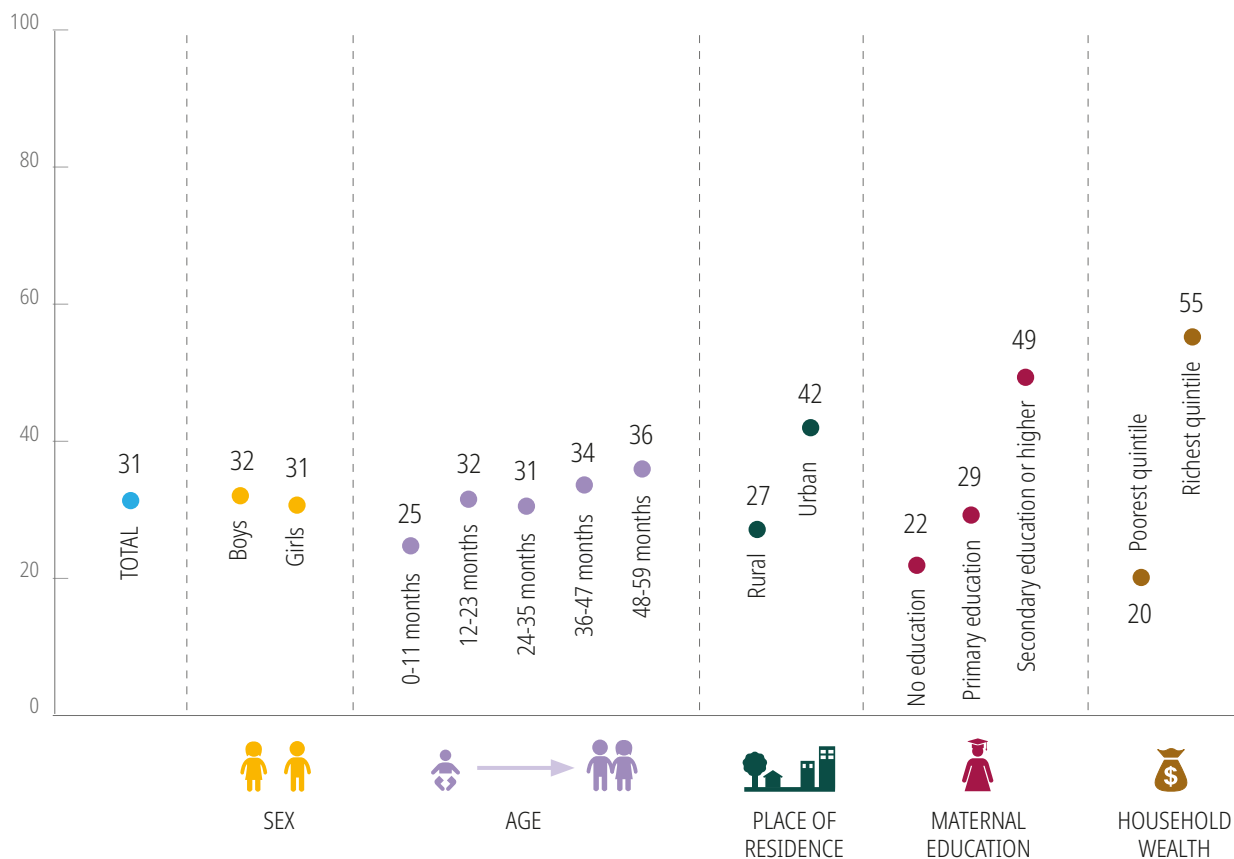




Children are less likely to have their births registered when they live in rural areas, are from the poorest households or have mothers with no formal education

FIGURE 1.4

Percentage of children under age 5 with a birth certificate, by background characteristics

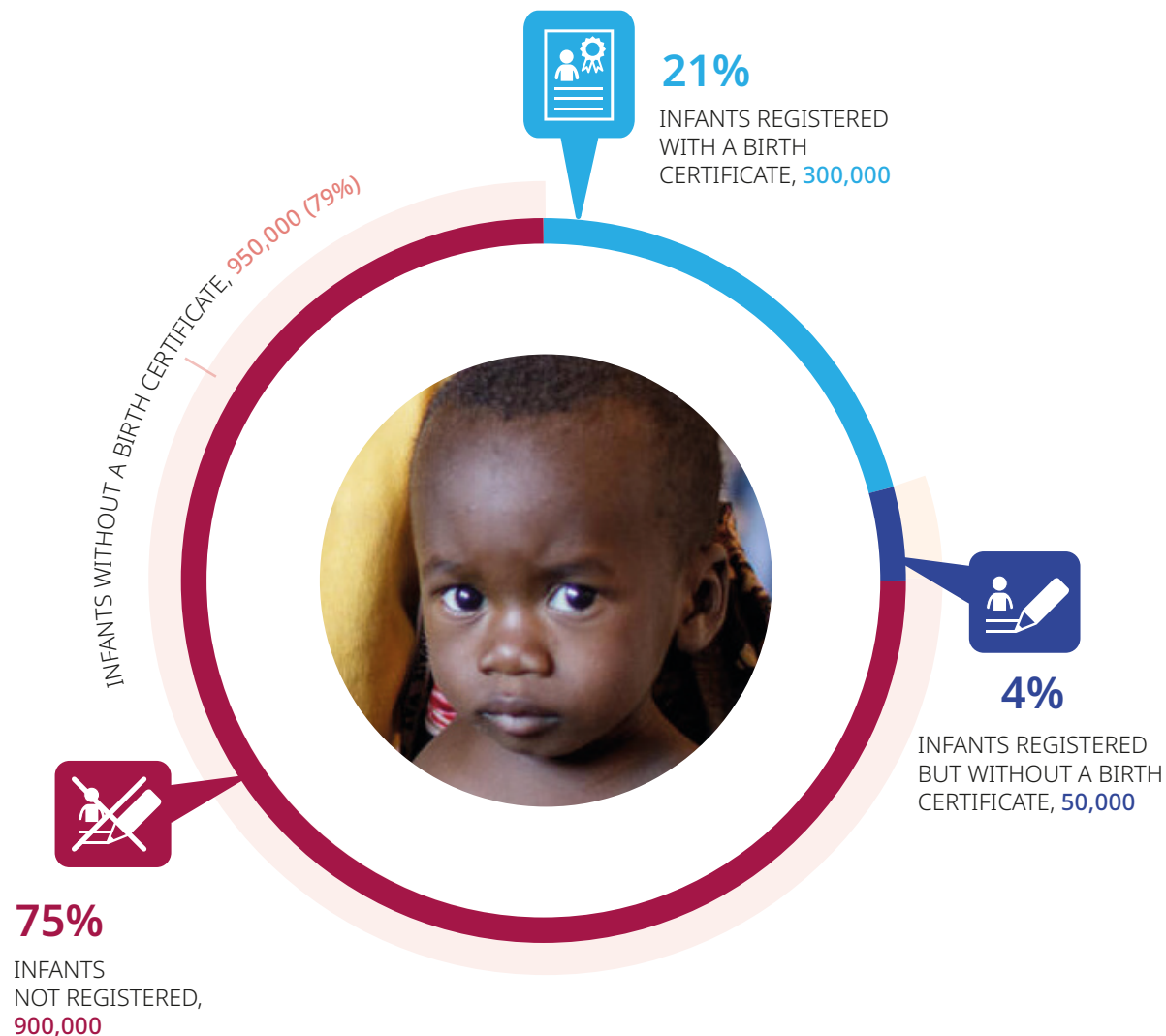




Nearly 8 in 10 infants in Mozambique (just under 1 million) lack a birth certificate

FIGURE 1.5

Percentage distribution and number of infants under age 1, by registration status

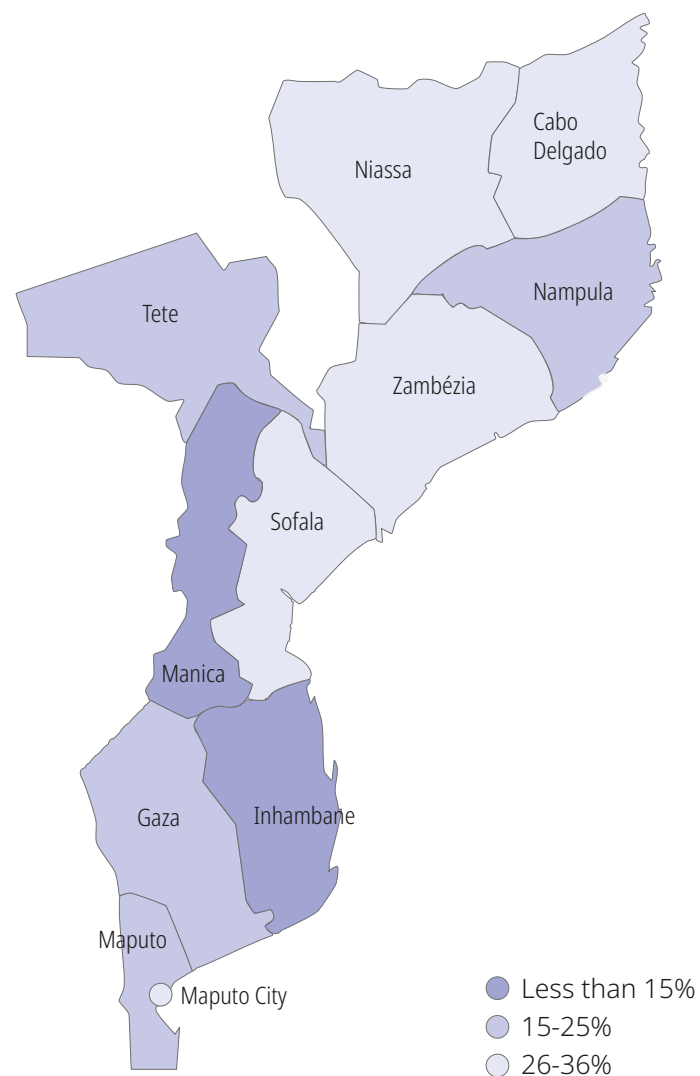




In every province, fewer than 4 in 10 infants have had their births registered

FIGURE 1.6

Percentage of infants under age 1 whose births are registered, by province





2. ASSESSING PROGRESS AND LOOKING AHEAD

FIGURES

STATISTICS ON CHILDREN UNDER 5

2.1 Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, observed and projected



2.2 Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, by household wealth quintile



2.3 Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, by place of residence



2.4 Average annual rate of change (%) in the percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, observed and required to achieve universal registration by 2030, by province



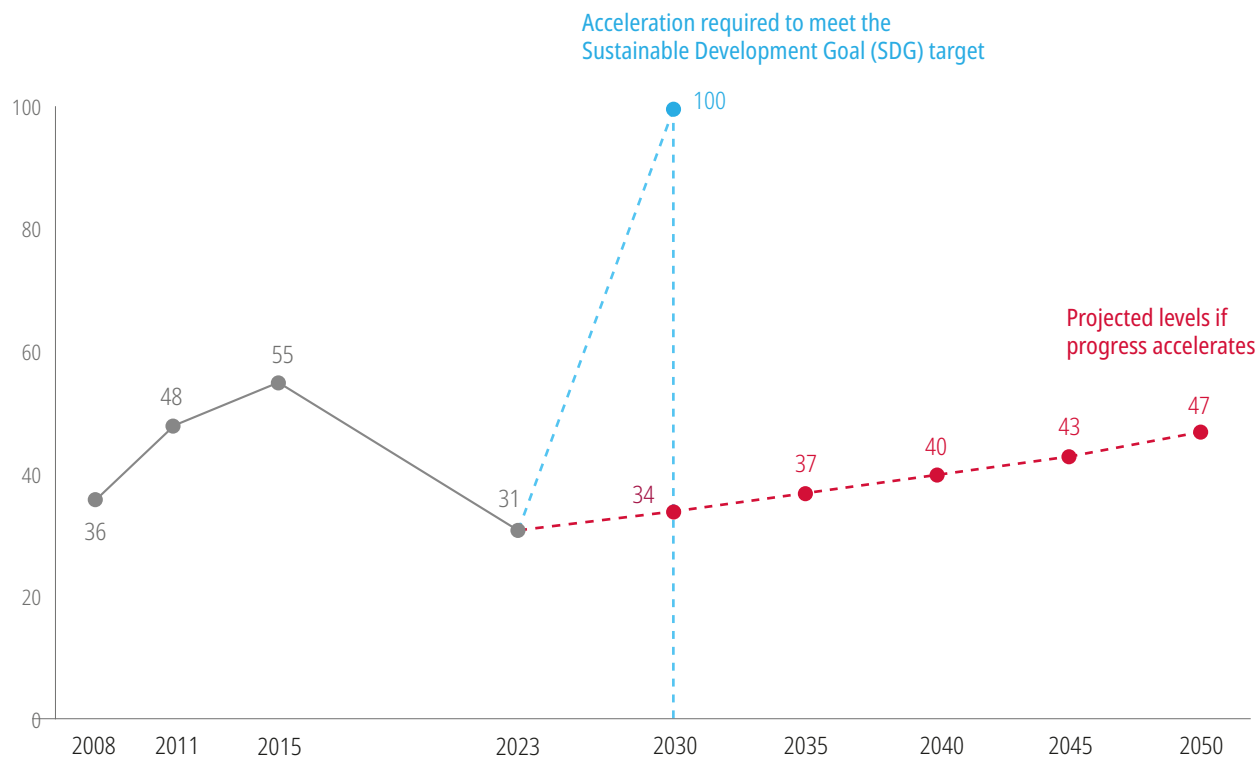


Mozambique needs to correct course: Available data point to a declining level of birth registration

Even reversing the observed trend, however, and accelerating progress to match that seen in countries with increasing birth registration, would still only result in slowly rising registration levels over the coming decades

FIGURE 2.1

Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, observed and projected



HOW TO READ THE PROJECTIONS

The projection scenarios build on existing trends. They show expected levels of birth registration in the future if different conditions are met:

Acceleration required to meet the SDG target: This scenario shows the progress that is required to meet universal birth registration by the 2030 target.

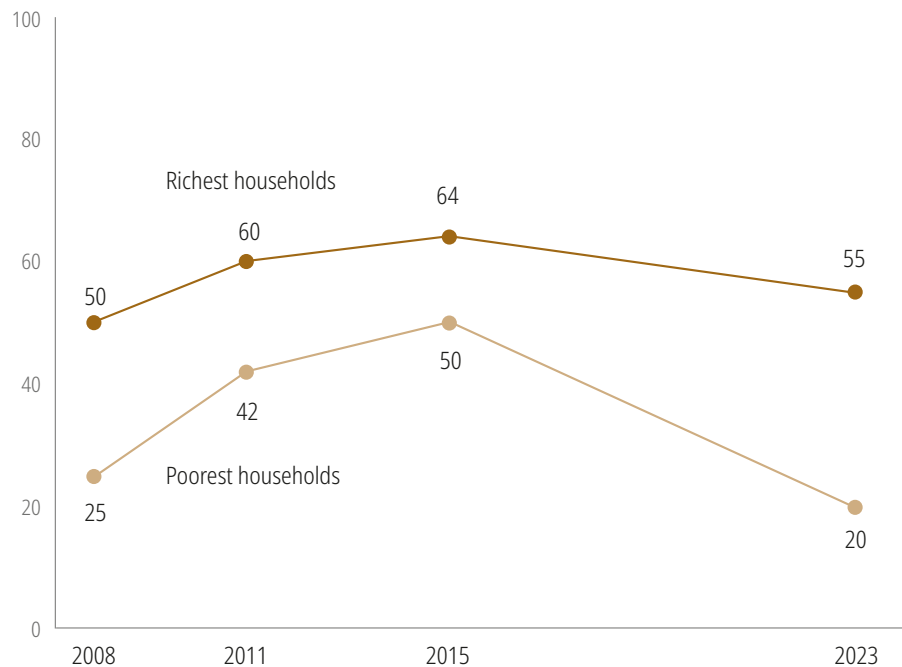
Progress accelerates: This scenario shows what could happen if the country were to accelerate to match the average level of progress among all countries globally with a positive rate of change. This scenario takes into account the slowing effect that occurs as countries near universal coverage of birth registration, in light of observed challenges in completing the 'last mile'.



While the level of birth registration among children in the poorest households has always been lower than that of children in the richest households, both groups benefited from improvements in coverage until 2015. Prevalence then dropped dramatically, particularly among children in the poorest households

FIGURE 2.2

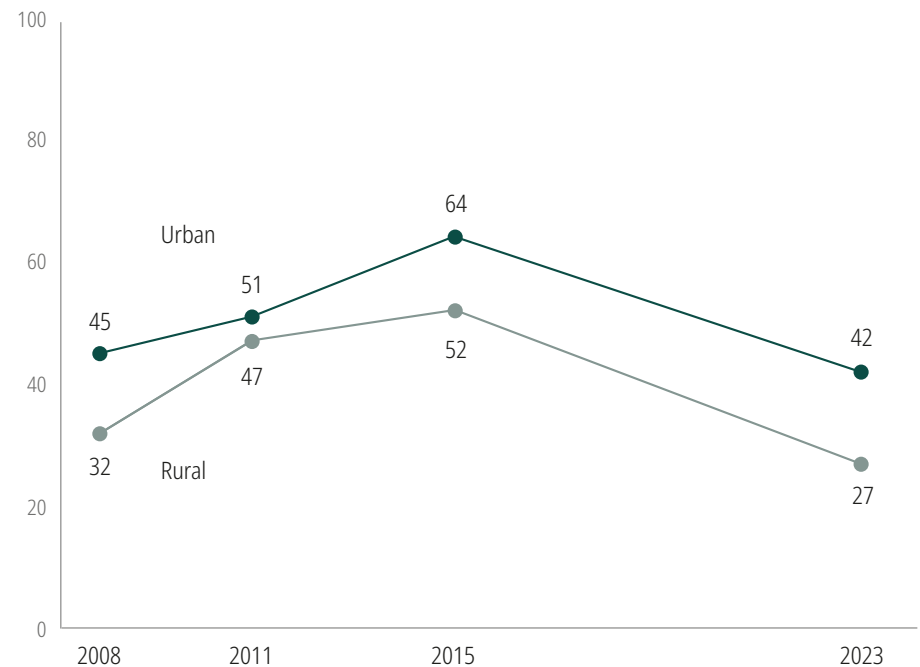
Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, by household wealth quintile



Birth registration levels have witnessed a similar decline among children living in both urban and rural areas after 2015

FIGURE 2.3

Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, by place of residence





All of the country's provinces need to reverse course and accelerate progress dramatically, even in the city of Maputo, in order to register the births of all children by 2030

FIGURE 2.4

Average annual rate of change (%) in the percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered, observed and required to achieve universal registration by 2030, by province





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TECHNICAL NOTES

Data sources

The analysis of current levels of birth registration and certification in Mozambique is based on the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2022-2023. This was the latest officially endorsed data source for global monitoring and reporting on SDG indicator 16.9.1 at the time this profile was produced. In the DHS 2022-2023, two selected enumeration sites in rural areas of Cabo Delgado and Zambézia provinces could not be visited during fieldwork due to security concerns, but this did not affect the representativeness of the estimates for these two provinces.

Data for other countries are from UNICEF global databases, 2025, based on Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), DHS, other nationally representative surveys and civil registration systems. For detailed source information by country, see <data.unicef.org>. Demographic data are from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects 2024*, Online Edition.

Methods for trend and projection analysis

Since 2008, a total of four household surveys in Mozambique (MICS 2008, DHS 2011, AIDS

Indicator Survey or AIS 2015, and DHS 2022-2023) have collected data on birth registration. For the purpose of assessing trends at the national level, these four surveys were used since these sources are broadly comparable in the way in which information on children's possession of a birth certificate and birth registration status was collected. A final point in the trendline for 2023 corresponds to the latest available estimate from 2022-2023, since this is the most recent survey.

Given that the country has observed a decline in the prevalence of birth registration when comparing the two most recent data points in the trendline, only two projection scenarios are depicted in this profile. These illustrate what levels of birth registration could be in the coming years, building upon observed trajectories and how they might accelerate. The first scenario illustrates the acceleration of progress required to achieve the SDG target of universal birth registration by 2030. The second depicts an acceleration of progress matching the average level of progress among all countries globally with a positive rate of change, accounting for slowing effects in light of available evidence.

Such evidence suggests that progress slows as levels of birth registration approach 100 per cent, and that additional gains and improvement become more difficult to achieve in this 'last mile'.

Figure 2.4 shows the average annual rates of change (AARC) that have been observed over an 8-year period (that is, between 2015 and 2023) and the AARC that would be required to meet the SDG target of universal birth registration by 2030. For statistical purposes, 'universal birth registration' is defined as a prevalence of 99.5 per cent or higher.

General notes and map disclaimer

Key message titles were developed taking into account confidence intervals. Thus, in cases where the title indicates a difference among demographic or population groups or between districts, it has been confirmed as statistically significant.

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