



**Statelessness & legal identity in the
context of mobility**

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Key Concepts

Stateless person

“not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law”

Persons at risk of statelessness

- Undocumented Persons
- Persons of undetermined/unrecognized nationality
- Person unable to prove nationality

Legal Identity

Basic characteristics of identity (name, DoB, etc.) conferred through registration



Nationality!

Statelessness & Mobility – there is a link



“In Situ”

long-established ties to the countries where they live, in many cases, the countries of their birth.

Migratory context

...lost ties to their country of origin after migrating

Risks of statelessness in a migratory/mobility context

- Barriers to universal birth registration
- Lack of civil documentation
- Children born in exile who cannot acquire a nationality
- Difficulties to prove nationality
- Loss of nationality and discrimination



Actions to End Statelessness:

- **Resolve** existing situations of statelessness;
- **Prevent** new cases of statelessness;
- **Identify** stateless persons
- **Protect** the stateless persons



GAP 2.0 contains 11 more specific actions for states

Legal Identity for All – statelessness as a development issue

- Imperative to achieve SDGs (16.9 & others)
- Granting nationality to stateless persons has a socioeconomic impact on individuals and societies
 - UNHCR & World Bank study on Shona community in Kenya
 - Financial inclusion surged (from 30% to 97%) after the Shona gained Kenyan nationality
 - Access to documents
- Embed statelessness-related goals and actions within national development plans



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The Transformative Power of Citizenship:

Findings from the 2024 Socioeconomic Study of the Shona Community in Kenya



Universal birth registration to prevent statelessness

- Helps prevent statelessness. Helps prove links to a State through descent or birth on the territory
 - Helps identify stateless children so their status can be resolved
 - Specific challenges for children born outside the country of their parents (incl. migrants, refugees, x-border populations etc.).
- Often part of the last mile to reach 100% birth registration
- Measures to address specific barriers faced in context of mobility/migration/displacement



New ID management systems? Opportunity to address statelessness

- National ID systems to be inclusive - also cover stateless persons.
- Include stateless persons with adequate status.
- Inclusion is just the start - systems should also help **identify, prevent, protect**, and where possible, **resolve** statelessness/undetermined nationality.
- Data protection & privacy are essential
- Due process is best guarantee for inclusion of **marginalized groups** such as stateless people



Collective action to end statelessness

- Work together with people with lived experience of statelessness
- Join the **Global Alliance to End Statelessness** (>140 members, including in Africa: 4 inter-governmental organizations; 5 Governments and at least 15 civil society and stateless-led organizations).
- Work with regional organizations (e.g. AU, ECOWAS, SADC, ECOWAS, ICGLR etc.)



THANK YOU!