



# Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality





## Children and Statelessness

- **No exact numbers** on how many children stateless
- Globally estimated to be about **10 million** stateless persons
- Over **200 million** children worldwide that do not have a birth certificate

# Nationality and Child Protection

Statelessness can mean a child is **excluded** from



Healthcare



Education



Social Welfare  
and Protection

and can leave children **vulnerable** to:

- Exploitation and abuse
- Recruitment - into both unsafe labor and armed forces
- Early Marriage
- Reliance on smugglers and even traffickers in order to travel



# Stateless Children : The International Legal Framework

All rights enshrined in the Convention are to be respected without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (**Article 2**)

## Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 7

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, **the right to acquire a nationality** and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, **in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.**



# Stateless Children : The International Legal Framework

- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**
  - Every child's right to a nationality, registration immediately after birth (Article 24)
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women**
  - Ensure gender equal nationality laws (Article 9)
- **Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons**
  - Protection of stateless persons, including children – public education, freedom of education etc. ( Articles 22, 26 etc.)
- **Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness**
  - Prevention of statelessness amongst children at birth (Articles 1 – 4)
- **Regional Instruments**
  - African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam; American Convention on Human Rights etc.

# Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality

## **What is it?**

An International coalition of UN and NGO partners

## **Why create this Coalition?**

To raise awareness about and combat the hidden problem of childhood statelessness and to promote the right of every child to acquire a nationality.

## **What are the Coalition's key objectives?**

- Ensure that no child is born stateless
- Remove gender discrimination from nationality laws
- Ensure universal birth registration to end statelessness
- States' accession to the UN Statelessness Conventions

## **Guiding principle:**

Working together to prevent and end childhood statelessness and to better protect stateless children and ensure their enjoyment of their rights as guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Areas of Work

- Promoting **law reform and implementation**, to ensure safeguards in nationality laws to **prevent statelessness** amongst children.
- Promoting **law reform and implementation**, to ensure that women can **confer their nationality** to their children on an **equal basis of as men**.
- Promoting **universal birth registration** to prevent statelessness.
- Promoting accession to the **UN statelessness conventions**.
- Improving **the protection of stateless children** in key areas such as access to education and healthcare.





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## Activities

- **Advocacy** – making use of advocacy opportunities at regional and international events, bilateral/ multilateral meetings, engagement with human rights treaty body mechanisms.
- **UNCT awareness-raising and engagement** to leverage UN-system support for addressing childhood statelessness at a national level.
- **Technical and operational cooperation and coordination** including through regional/ country-level initiatives (e.g. SDGs, CRVS, mobile birth registration, CRC Monitoring)
- **Public Information and Communication** – publications, print and social media.





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## Membership of the Coalition

- Membership Open to NGOs and UN entities
- Initial Membership of over 15 NGOs + UNHCR and UNICEF
- Advisory committee members are:



Plan  
International



Lawyers for  
Human Rights  
(South Africa)



Norwegian Refugee  
Council



Global Campaign for  
Equal Nationality  
Rights



Center for Human  
Rights at the Diego  
Portales University  
(Chile)

- Advisory Committee led by UNHCR and UNICEF will rotate periodically and ensure geographical and organizational balance

# Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality

For **more information** and to **join** the Coalition, please consult the Coalition page on the UNHCR #IBelong Campaign website:

<http://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/unicef-unhcr-coalition-child-right-nationality/>

