



I BELONG

No longer invisible.
No longer stateless.

Top events and news

- The President of **Kenya** has announced that the government will start a process to recognize the stateless Pemba people as citizens of Kenya.
- A civil society network on statelessness was established in the **Philippines**.
- In **Ukraine**, 602 applicants have been recognized as stateless persons since the establishment of the statelessness determination procedure in 2021, and 465 of them have so far been granted temporary residence permits.
- Events were held around the world to commemorate the 8th anniversary of the launch of the #IBelong Campaign (November 2023).



Laila Rashidi, member of the stateless Pemba community in Kenya, collects a birth certificate for her 5-year-old son. The President of Kenya announced in December that a process will be started to recognise the Pemba as citizens of Kenya. © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

Implementation of the Global Action Plan

Action 1: Resolve existing major situations of statelessness

On 12 December, during **Kenya's** 59th Jamhuri Day (Independence day) celebrations, President Dr. William Ruto announced that the Government will “initiate modalities to recognize the Pemba people as citizens of Kenya”. This important step follows year-long advocacy from a group of Members of Parliament, affected communities, UNHCR and civil society, as well as a 2020 public petition calling on the government to recognize the Pemba as Kenyan. UNHCR will provide technical and operational support to the government and other stakeholders to ensure that this announcement is translated into effective access to Kenyan citizenship and the issuance of nationality documentation to the Pemba community.

To operationalize the presidential decision to naturalize the Pemba people, UNHCR and its partner organization the Haki Centre are supporting the Pemba people in creating a community self-register to map their family trees in order to prove their claim to Kenyan nationality. To finalize the self-register, UNHCR provided a training on the Citizen Generated Data framework to staff from the Haki Centre, paralegals from the Pemba community, and community representatives.

On 15 December, UNHCR convened a meeting between the Governments of the **Philippines** and **Indonesia** to discuss the registration and confirmation of nationality of Persons of Indonesian Descent (PIDs). The meeting was an opportunity to provide updates on the remaining PID cases, which total nearly 8,800 people, and to identify ways to resolve their situation. The Governments agreed that those PIDs who still want to process their birth certificates will have until the end of the first quarter of 2023 to do so. The Governments also discussed cases of Persons of Philippine Descent in Indonesia and the efforts being made by the Government of Indonesia to ensure their protection.

In 2022, UNHCR and its partner organizations registered 33 persons at risk of statelessness in **Azerbaijan** and started providing legal counselling and assistance to them. These individuals were identified and referred to UNHCR by the State Migration Service as a result of awareness-raising campaigns aimed at preventing statelessness. UNHCR also continued providing legal counselling to 73 persons at risk of statelessness who were identified before 2022. Out of the total number of 106 persons at risk of statelessness receiving legal counselling from UNHCR, 13 persons were naturalized in 2022, with 12 acquiring citizenship of

Azerbaijan and one acquiring citizenship of another country. This leaves a current total of 93 individuals registered as being at risk of statelessness.

Action 2: Ensure that no child is born stateless

In 2022, in **Chile**, the Legal Clinic of the Alberto Hurtado University, a partner organization of UNHCR, identified and provided legal assistance to 22 people who had been registered as “children of foreigners in transit” in order to have their Chilean nationality confirmed. For many years, children born to parents with irregular migratory status were registered as children of foreigners in transit, which prevented them from acquiring Chilean nationality. The Department of Migration and the Civil Registry addressed this issue in 2014, but many children are still affected. UNHCR is working with the National Civil Registry and Identification Service to review birth registrations from previous years to identify and amend those registered as children of foreigners in transit. The Legal Clinic also provided legal assistance to 34 children born in Colombia to Venezuelan parents, and who since moved to Chile, in order to have their Colombian nationality confirmed.

Action 6: Grant protection status to stateless migrants and facilitate their naturalization

In **Ukraine**, from the rollout of the statelessness determination procedure in 2021 until November 2022, 1,011 applications have been received by the State Migration Service. A total of 602 applicants were recognized as stateless persons, and of those, 465 have been granted temporary residence permits so far. 50 applications were rejected because it was determined that the applicants were nationals of other countries, and 7 applications were suspended because it was determined that the applicants were citizens of Ukraine. The remaining applications are still to be evaluated.

A number of States in West and Central Africa made steps towards establishing a statelessness determination procedure in the fourth quarter of 2022. On 24 October, the National Assembly of **Benin** adopted a law on the status of refugees and stateless persons which regulates the protection of stateless persons and provides for the creation of

a national body in charge of the to-be-established statelessness determination procedure. The next step will be publication of the law in the Official Gazette and adoption of the implementing decree.

On 26 October, the Ministry of Justice of **Niger**, with the support from UNHCR, organized a workshop to discuss and validate a consultancy report on an asylum reform and the establishment of a statelessness determination procedure.

The Governments of **Burkina Faso** and **Guinea** held workshops with experts to review and validate draft legislation on the establishment of statelessness determination procedures. The draft legislation will next be submitted for adoption in both countries.

The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) of **Nigeria** held a three-day [meeting](#) to review the draft standard operating procedures on the statelessness determination procedure. The meeting was attended by representatives from relevant government agencies, UN agencies and NGOs and resulted in a communique from various stakeholders calling on the NCFRMI to promptly establish a statelessness determination procedure.

On 14 October, UNHCR and its partner NGO ASCALA held an entrepreneurship fair in the **Dominican Republic** for stateless people as part of a livelihoods program. 29 people from San Pedro de Macoris showcased their products and services and the ten with the most promising proposals received seed capital to support their businesses. Selection was also based on a consideration of the proposals' impact at community and household level.

Action 7: Ensure birth registration for the prevention of statelessness

On 3 September, the Ministry of Justice of **Ukraine** adopted Order No [3734/5](#) which introduced a new procedure for birth registration in areas where access to civil registration offices is terminated. Parents in these areas are to approach the civil registry office of the South-Western Interregional Department of the Ministry of Justice via email. As of November 14th, 59 persons have benefited from the procedure, including 41 from Kherson, 11 from Zaporizhyya and 4 from Kharkiv region.



Paralegals from Haki Centre assist stateless people and people at risk of statelessness during a mobile birth registration exercise in Kwale County, Kenya © Haki Centre Organization/Andrew Ochola

On 13 December, a ceremony was held in Zamboanga, **the Philippines**, to hand over birth certificates to Sama Bajao people. The event was organized by the Department of Justice, the local government of Zamboanga, UNHCR and UNICEF. In 2022, around 500 Sama Bajaus in Zamboanga City were provided with birth certificates. The birth registration project is part of the UNICEF-UNICEF Joint Strategy to End Childhood Statelessness in the Philippines, which aligns with the country's National Action Plan to End Statelessness.

From 14 to 18 November, in **Kenya**, UNHCR's partner organization Haki Centre and the Civil Registration Services conducted a five-day mobile birth registration exercise in five locations in Kwale County assisting over 2,000 stateless individuals and at-risk populations. UNHCR joined the exercise to monitor the implementation and get feedback from the communities on service delivery.

Also in **Kenya**, from 28 November to 2 December, UNHCR, Haki Centre and the Civil Registration Services consulted with the stateless Pemba and Rundi communities in Kwale and Kilifi counties to understand the challenges they encounter in accessing late birth registration. Their feedback and recommendations are meant to inform policy changes in late birth registration to ensure that stateless persons can access these procedures.

UNHCR and the civil registry authorities of **Sudan** continued birth registration campaigns in eight states of the country and issued birth certificates to more than 5,000 individuals at risk of statelessness, including returnees, internally displaced people, refugees, and individuals from host communities. The eight states include North, West and South Kordofan, North, East and Central Darfur, Gedaref and Khartoum.

From October to December, UNHCR supported the Government of **Burkina Faso** in issuing over 40,000 civil status and identity documents to around 4,000 refugees, 20,000 internally displaced persons and 16,000 members of host communities. Additionally, the digital *icivil* birth registration tool was deployed in the commune of Karangasso-Vigué, Hauts-Bassins region, which facilitated the issuance of close to 600 birth certificates to persons at risk of statelessness. In the same period 60 new secondary civil registration centers were opened.

In **Algeria**, UNHCR carried out awareness-raising sessions on the importance of birth registration during refugee registration and reception activities from October to December. During this period, several individuals were identified and referred for legal assistance to access late birth registration services or to correct their birth certificates.

UNHCR provided legal assistance to displaced families in **Yemen** to facilitate effective birth registration of their children, through close collaboration with the Civil Status and Civil Registry Authority. From October to December, lawyers of UNHCR's partner organizations supported the birth registration of almost 2,500 children. Additionally, UNHCR and its partners continued to identify unregistered children and make referrals to the Civil Status and Civil Registry Authority.

UNHCR and the Civil Status and Civil Registry Authority in Sana'a (CRA) signed a joint action plan to improve access to civil status documentation. The plan aims to ensure prompt access to birth registration for refugee and asylum-seeking children, through a combination of joint awareness-raising, capacity development, provision of equipment to improve the operational capacity of the CRA and mapping administrative obstacles related to the provision of civil documentation for IDPs and refugee and asylum-seeking children.

Action 8: Issue nationality documentation to those with entitlement to it

On 26 October, Resolution No. [1202](#) came into force in **Ukraine** which provides for the extension of the validity of documents proving identity or special status, in case validity lapsed after 24 February 2022. This resolution also extended the validity of residence permits of stateless people.

Also in Ukraine, Resolution No. [1201](#) came into force on 14 November, which regulates the issuance of identity cards to facilitate the return to the country of Ukrainians and stateless people who have been removed to the Russian Federation and lost their documents. The resolution allows the State Migration Service to issue these documents upon application by the person's relatives or by the Ministry of Reintegration, if the person's information is recorded in the demographic register or SMS information systems.

On 10 December, a bill was passed in **Japan** to amend the civil code and other relevant laws which is expected to facilitate access to nationality documents for Japanese people who currently lack proof of Japanese nationality, although more efforts are needed to completely resolve the issue.

In 2022, UNHCR and its partner the Catholic University of Mozambique, in cooperation with the Government of **Mozambique**, supported the issuance of identity documents to 8,619 internally displaced persons and members of the host community in Cabo Delgado Province. In Nampula Province 7,482 identity documents and 7,884 birth certificates were issued and in Zambezia province, 2,873 identity documents and 5,593 birth certificates were issued.

UNHCR supported more than 4,000 people to access national ID cards and other identification documents in **Yemen**. UNHCR continued to conduct awareness raising and to provide counselling and support for the issuance of civil status documentation.

Action 10: Improve quantitative and qualitative data on stateless populations

On 19 October, the study "Statelessness and Risks of Statelessness in **Malawi**" was validated at a stakeholders' meeting in Lilongwe, Malawi, and will soon be published. The study was commissioned by the Government of Malawi and UNHCR.

On 28 October, the Government of **Angola** and UNHCR released a study on statelessness which was shared with government authorities, embassies, UN agencies and other relevant parties. The study identifies the following groups as being at risk of statelessness: former Angolan refugees returning to Angola, abandoned children, street children, nomadic communities in southern Angola, populations living in disputed border regions, irregular foreign migrants and long-term refugees.

Mobilizing governments and civil society

UNHCR and its partner organization Participación Ciudadana held an event on 19 October in the **Dominican Republic** to launch a [study report](#) on the implementation of Law 169-14. Law 169-14 was enacted to mitigate the impact of a 2013 Constitutional Court judgment (Judgment 168/13) that retroactively denied Dominican citizenship to those born in the country since the year 1929 to parents with a “non-resident” or irregular immigration status. The study identified obstacles that persons affected by Judgment 168/13 have experienced in obtaining nationality documentation.

The Ministry of Interior Federal Affairs and Reconciliation of **Somalia** held a stakeholder consultation from 2 to 5 October on improving civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) in the country. The meeting resulted in several agreed action points, including the capacity building of civil registration officials, the establishment of local registrar offices in five districts within each Federal Member State and the development of a costed CRVS plan for the next five years.

UNHCR held a roundtable in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** on 6 December with government actors at national and sub-national level (Republika Srpska) to discuss the resolution of statelessness for the remaining 18 former refugees from the Republic of Croatia, who have been staying in Republika Srpska for a long time without documents or residence status. The meeting resulted in an agreement to pursue existing legal avenues for legalizing their residence in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

From 7 to 9 November, UNHCR organized a [study visit](#) on statelessness in **Georgia** for government representatives from Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). The visit provided participants with practical knowledge on prevention and reduction of statelessness from a country with a similar background, and good practices on accession to the UN Statelessness Conventions, establishment of a statelessness determination procedure, and strengthening birth registration. The visit was organized in collaboration with the Public Services Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice of

Georgia and supported by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

UNHCR and the Public Services Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice of **Georgia** organized on 20 December, an event to highlight the achievements of the #IBelong Campaign, the implementation of pledges, and progress made in addressing statelessness in Georgia. The event was attended by the First Deputy Minister of Justice, the Head of the Public Services Development Agency, representatives of other ministries and the Parliament of Georgia, the Office of Public Defender of Georgia as well as local and international NGOs. During the event, the government also presented its plans to address statelessness in the remaining two years of the #IBelong campaign.

The Working Group on Statelessness under the State Migration Commission of **Georgia** approved on 14 December the 2023 National Action Plan on Ending Statelessness in the country. The plan is renewed on an annual basis to reflect any gaps and specific actions for the year. The 2023 Action Plan includes measures to facilitate naturalization for stateless persons, initiate *ex officio* procedures by the Public Services Development Agency (PSDA), improve data on stateless persons in the PSDA database, ensure access to state education grants for stateless persons, and extend the right to free legal aid to stateless status applicants.

Malawi held a consultation meeting on accession to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness on 21 October which convened representatives of various ministries, including the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the National Human Rights Commission. The meeting resulted in a recommendation by the stakeholders for the country to accede to the convention.

A [workshop](#) on “Citizenship in **Greece**: Legislative Framework and Administrative Practices” took place in Athens on 30 November, co-organized by the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) and the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) and supported by UNHCR.



Representatives of civil society organizations in the Philippines signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a civil society network on statelessness which will serve as a platform to foster cooperation on statelessness. © UNHCR/Jori Pamintuan

UNHCR and the **Greek** Ministry of Interior organized a study visit in Athens on 8 and 9 December for officials from the Ministry of Interior of **Serbia** to learn about good practices in naturalization procedures for stateless persons. This visit followed a 2021 visit by Greek government officials to Belgrade.

UNHCR organized a [study visit](#) to **Kazakhstan** for governmental officials working on statelessness in **North Macedonia** from 29 November to 1 December. Representatives from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of North Macedonia learned about the experience of the Kazakh authorities in addressing statelessness, with a particular focus on birth registration of children whose parents lack documents, the identification and documentation of persons who hold former USSR documents, and safeguards to prevent statelessness at birth and in the process of renunciation of citizenship.

On 3 November, UNHCR organized a seminar in Stockholm, **Sweden**, on the theme “Statelessness in Sweden: Guaranteeing the right to nationality for every child”. Panelists included representatives from UNHCR, the Swedish Ministry of Justice, FARR, the European Network on Statelessness, and the Swedish Organisation Against Statelessness. The event brought together over 30 participants, including human rights activists, local NGOs, stateless persons and government representatives. The seminar focused on safeguards for the automatic acquisition of Swedish nationality for all otherwise stateless children born in Sweden, as well as barriers to naturalization for stateless children not born in the country.

The organization Vital Strategies convened a meeting on civil registration and vital statistics and statelessness in Bangkok, **Thailand** on 12 October. UNHCR gave a presentation on its work related to civil registration in the region and how efforts to enhance access to civil registration can help eliminate statelessness. The meeting convened approximately 50 participants from 17 countries.

In the **Philippines**, 17 civil society organizations signed a memorandum of understanding on 19 December establishing the Civil Society Network on Statelessness (CSNS). UNHCR, UNICEF and the Commission on Human Rights signed the memorandum as observers. The network will serve as a platform to share knowledge on statelessness, empower stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness, foster cooperation and collective action, including advocacy, and supplement and support the Government of the Philippines in addressing statelessness.

In North Sulawesi, **Indonesia**, UNHCR organized on 27 and 28 October, a multi-stakeholder focus group discussion on challenges and opportunities in preventing and reducing statelessness in the North Sulawesi province. The event was attended by government counterparts from North Sulawesi province and Bitung City. Outcomes of the discussion included a proposal to develop a standard operating procedure to address the issue of foreign nationals with undetermined nationality, the need to conduct activities to raise awareness among the community and to identify persons of undetermined nationality by local governments to resolve their situation.



UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection hands over the recently published Japanese translation of UNHCR's Handbook on the Protection of Stateless Persons to the Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice of Japan. © UNHCR Japan

UNHCR and UNICEF held a workshop in October in **Myanmar** with humanitarian and development actors during which they developed a joint strategy and workplan on birth registration and access to naturalization in Rakhine State (Central). The strategy identifies the major challenges in accessing civil documentation and acquiring citizenship and outlines an action plan to address these issues with a long-term perspective. The workplan for 2023 includes activities to increase awareness about existing processes for birth registration and acquiring citizenship, as well as efforts to enhance local coordination and partnerships.

In **Japan**, UNHCR and the Parliamentary League for UNHCR organized a study session on statelessness for members of parliament, government officials, and NGOs to discuss how to address the risk of statelessness among Persons of Japanese Descent in the Philippines. At the event, the Japanese version of the UNHCR Handbook on the Protection of Stateless Persons along with Guidelines 4 and 5 was also launched, which UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection handed over to the Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice of Japan, Mr. Yasuhiro Takami, during a courtesy visit.

In Tehran, **Iran**, a meeting was held on 13 December to review and recommend revisions to the Draft Bill on the Establishment of the National Migration Organization, organized by civil society

organizations, experts and researchers. The bill is currently under review by Parliament and includes provisions related to foreign nationals including refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons on entry, residence, access to services and deportation. The meeting resulted in a comprehensive list of suggestions and recommendations including on asylum procedures, stateless persons, and access to services. The meeting also raised concern on a provision in the draft bill to annul the 2019 amendment of the nationality law that enables Iranian mothers married to non-Iranian men to confer nationality to their children.

The Ministry of Homeland Security of **Malawi** held a stakeholder workshop from 19 to 21 October that resulted in a draft national action plan on statelessness for the implementation of the government's pledges submitted at the 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness and Global Refugee Forum. The plan has been submitted to the Minister of Home Affairs for validation.

In **Cameroon**, UNHCR held an [information session](#) on statelessness in December for parliamentarians, members of the Senate and relevant ministries, with the goal of securing the commitment of parliamentarians in supporting the government's efforts to eradicate statelessness. The session focused on initiatives that require the support from parliamentarians, such as accession to the

UN Statelessness Conventions. As a result of the session, parliamentarians issued a communique inviting the government to finalize accession to the conventions as soon as possible and implement their provisions. The parliamentarians also committed to passing laws to promote the inclusion of people at risk of statelessness in Cameroon.

UNHCR, in collaboration with government counterparts, held a workshop on 25 and 26 November in **Liberia** that resulted in the updating of the national action plan to eradicate statelessness, which was first developed in 2015. The national action plan is currently awaiting validation by all relevant experts before it is submitted to the cabinet for endorsement.

To mark the 8th anniversary of the #IBelong campaign, on 13 December, the Ministry for Public Administration and Local Government of **Serbia**, the Ombudsperson office, and UNHCR organized a conference to review the progress made since the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the three organizations and to discuss upcoming activities, including efforts to find solutions for around 2,000 people at risk of statelessness living in informal Roma settlements across the country. The event featured speeches by the Minister, Ombudsperson, and UNHCR Representative, as well as a video featuring Serbian actress Branka Katić that highlighted the challenges faced by people at risk of statelessness and encouraged Roma community members to approach the authorities to resolve problems with personal documents. The three organizations also released a [joint press statement](#), and the news agency Tanjug published an [article](#) about the event.

In **Mozambique** UNHCR and its partner for legal documentation and assistance activities, the Universidade Católica de Moçambique (UCM), organized and co-facilitated a workshop from 5 to 7 December, on statelessness in Pemba. The workshop convened key officials from seven government entities who could be potential advocates and allies in the effort to end statelessness. The workshop raised awareness about the international and national legal frameworks related to statelessness and nationality, and examined the risks of statelessness in the Mozambican context. Recommendations were made

on measures to reduce statelessness by improving access to birth registration and identity documents. The workshop also advocated for changes to the Mozambican nationality law and processes to align them with the 1954 and 1961 Conventions, which Mozambique has already ratified, and to resolve conflicts between the nationality law and several provisions in the Mozambican Constitution.

The Issam Fares Institute at the American University of Beirut and UNHCR brought together on 10 November, 18 local and international organizations working on statelessness in **Lebanon** to share information about their work and explore opportunities for collaboration to address statelessness in the country. This event was the first such meeting, and further meetings are planned for 2023 in an effort to establish a local network, share ongoing work on statelessness, including research and advocacy efforts.

UNHCR, in partnership with the Helsinki Committee, the Arab Institute for Human Rights, and the Faculty of Legal, Political, and Social Sciences of **Tunisia**, held from 28 to 30 November, a regional seminar in Tunis focused on both international protection and the prevention of statelessness in the North Africa region. Legal actors including lawyers and judges, members of academia and legal clinic directors from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia participated in the meeting. During the seminar, a study on statelessness in Tunisia, which was prepared jointly by UNHCR and the Arab Institute for Human Rights, was presented. The seminar also opened up opportunities for strengthened partnerships between UNHCR and legal clinics and the creation of a regional network of legal clinics.

In an [event](#) held on 30 September and moderated by the **Kazakhstan** Commissioner for Human Rights, the Government of Kazakhstan, UNHCR, and NGOs discussed the country's progress towards resolving statelessness. During the event, the Commissioner for Human Rights and UNHCR signed a memorandum of understanding to establish and maintain relations in the field of international protection and humanitarian assistance for forcibly displaced and stateless people, as well as to expand cooperation to improve compliance of the legislation of Kazakhstan with international legal standards.

Training and awareness-raising

On 1 October, in **Montenegro**, UNHCR and UNICEF organized a training on birth registration for case workers of the Ministry of Interior and municipal centres for social care. The workshop aimed to strengthen cooperation between the two entities in the area of birth registration and was convened in the framework of UNHCR and UNICEF's joint strategy to prevent childhood statelessness in Montenegro. The Government of Montenegro has pledged at the 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness to strengthen birth registration.

In October and November, UNHCR, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of **Croatia**, held three trainings on statelessness for case workers of the Ministry of Interior who specialize in nationality and status issues and who work in police administrations with the highest numbers of reported stateless and people at-risk-of-statelessness. The goal of the trainings was to familiarize the staff with the international legal framework relating to statelessness and provide context-specific case study exercises.

From October to December, in **Myanmar**, UNHCR organized a series of trainings for civil society partners to enhance their understanding of the existing legal framework and procedures related to acquisition of citizenship and to strengthen their skills and capacity to implement activities aimed at promoting access to birth registration and nationality.

On 12 and 13 October, in **Chile**, UNHCR provided a two-day training to increase the capacity of staff at the Refugee Department to undertake statelessness determination.

From 24 October to 9 November, in **Sweden**, UNHCR and the Swedish Organization Against Statelessness organized a photo exhibition entitled "We Belong: Global Faces of Statelessness" at Folkuniversitetet in central Stockholm. On 3 November, an opening event of the exhibition was held to highlight the issue of statelessness at a global level, the progress of the #IBelong campaign, and the impact of statelessness on the daily lives of stateless people in Sweden.

In November, the Government of **Cameroon** introduced a course on statelessness and nationality in the curriculum of the National School for Local Administration (NASLA), which will be effective as of the 2023 academic year. NASLA is responsible for training future civil servants in charge of issuing civil documentation. Their enhanced understanding on statelessness will contribute to addressing some of the administrative barriers to birth registration in the country.

In November, in **Sudan**, UNHCR organized a large awareness campaign on the consequences of statelessness and the importance of birth registration through music and theatrical performances, as well as information sessions. Several news outlets reported on the campaign, including [Sudan Daily News](#) and [Aagil News](#).

On 4 November, UNHCR organized its third [Regional Youth Competition on Statelessness](#) in **Central Asia**, inviting youth in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to submit written, visual or audio-visual works that explore the issue of statelessness. The winners were announced on 10 December, Human Rights Day. The initiative sought to help youth to understand the gravity of statelessness and engage them in exploring solutions to end statelessness.

In **Armenia**, UNHCR and its partner organization Mission Armenia organized from 11 to 13 November, the 11th "Refugee Law School" in Dilijan, where around 30 law students from different universities learnt about statelessness and worked on statelessness case studies.

On 14 November, the State Migration Service of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** and UNHCR started a one-month awareness raising campaign to invite documented stateless people to apply for naturalization. Door-to-door informational sessions were held in Baku and seven other regions (Yevlakh, Shaki, Ganja, Lankaran Aghsu, Khachmaz, Shirvan). These efforts are in line with the government's pledge announced at the 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness.

On 14 and 15 November, UNHCR held a [workshop](#) for members and staff of the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) of **Mali** to enhance their capacity on statelessness and identify areas of collaboration and assess possibilities for formal collaboration between UNCHR and the CNDH. A draft memorandum of understanding is pending finalization and signature by both parties.

On 15 November, UNHCR provided a full-day in-person training session to the **UK** Home Office's team in charge of the statelessness determination procedure. The training covered the main causes of statelessness, the #IBelong Campaign and its achievements, and practical decision-making tools for statelessness determination caseworkers.

From 17 to 24 November, in **North Macedonia**, the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, in collaboration with UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior, organized a series of trainings for regional units of the Ministry of Interior to promote a unified implementation of the amended law on citizenship among the regional offices. The Amended Law on Citizenship allows all persons who lived on the territory of North Macedonia until 8 September 1991 to apply for citizenship with one document no later than 8 August 2024 (Article 7 of the law on citizenship). The attending officials from the regional units received instructions to facilitate application and proof of identity with a notarized statement from two witnesses. This is expected to reduce the total number of persons without citizenship in the country.

On 24 and 25 November, UNHCR supported the Ministry of Justice in **Guinea** to strengthen the capacity of 30 civil registrars and the National Office of Civil Status on the prevention of statelessness and the crucial role of civil registrars in eradicating statelessness.

On 13 and 14 December, UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior of **Thailand** organized a training for government registrars on the effective implementation of legislation and policies on granting legal immigration status and facilitating the grant of nationality to ethnic minority groups. The training specifically targeted civil registrars working in the provinces of Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son, where large numbers of stateless people reside.

On 14 and 15 December, the **Gambian** Commission for Refugees and UNHCR held a workshop on nationality and statelessness for 25 government civil registration experts, civil society, and immigration officers. During the workshop, participants discussed existing opportunities to implement the nationality and citizenship provisions in the 1997 Constitution and to introduce a safeguard in the nationality law regarding foundlings and other children who would otherwise be stateless in order to fulfil one of The Gambia's commitments made at the 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness.

In **Angola**, UNHCR created an online digital learning platform on statelessness for government counterparts, lawyers, judges and other organizations. The platform contains several modules on topics such as the causes of statelessness, the national, regional and international legal framework on statelessness, a comparison of laws and practices across the region, efforts to eliminate statelessness, and possible solutions for Angola to prevent and resolve statelessness.

The **Jordanian** Civil Status Department, in partnership with UNHCR, conducted a training for government employees in various governorates. The training focused on the importance of civil documentation in preventing statelessness.

In **Hungary**, UNHCR and the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing, the authority in charge of conducting the statelessness determination procedure, organized a workshop on the issue of determining statelessness. The event was an opportunity for participants to share experiences, practices and challenges in statelessness determination as well as to identify gaps. The workshop brought together some 30 case officers and was held as part of the bilateral cooperation agreement between UNHCR and the government on quality assurance of the statelessness determination procedure.

#IBelong Campaign in the Media

Media engagement to mark the 8th year of the #IBelong Campaign

UNHCR in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** shared the story of **23-year-old Eldin** from Sarajevo who was at risk of statelessness and finally received his nationality document in 2022. The video was reposted by a number of local media outlets. On 12 December, the media portal factor.ba published an [article](#) on statelessness in the country. Media outlets also shared the documentary [Nihada - Invisible Dreams](#), which focuses on a person at risk of statelessness living in Sarajevo. These media interventions sparked interest among local media and the general public in statelessness and the subject of the short documentary, leading to a TV reportage produced by [Al Jazeera Balkans](#) in November and a comprehensive article on statelessness in Bosnia and Herzegovina published on 20 December by [Radio Free Europe](#).

UNHCR **Thailand** published on 4 November, a [web-story and video](#) on how Thailand's grassroots organizations are working to end statelessness.



Eldin, a 23-year-old man from Sarajevo was one of 76 persons at risk of statelessness who got their documents in 2022 with the support of UNHCR's partner Vaša Prava BiH. © UNHCR/Vanes Pilav

UNHCR and Amnesty International held a press conference on statelessness in **Benin** on 4 November, which was attended by 29 journalists. Several news outlets, including [ODD TV](#), [Crystal News](#), [Matin Libre](#), and [Esae TV](#) reported on the event. In addition, a motorized caravan took place in three cities (Cotonou, Ouidah and Parakou) to spread awareness about statelessness. Mayors and other government officials took part in the commemorative activities, during which the importance of birth registration and documentation was emphasized.

UNHCR **Armenia** posted a [video](#) on the impact of being at risk of statelessness.

In **Montenegro**, UNHCR, in close collaboration with local authorities, displayed visuals of the #IBelong Campaign on billboards across the country and on buses in the capital city of Podgorica to raise awareness on statelessness in Montenegro.

On 29 November, [K1 TV](#) aired a [19-minute interview](#) with a UNHCR Protection Officer and the Protection Officer of a partner organization on statelessness and undocumented people in **Serbia**. On 2 December, the weekly magazine Nedeljnik published a long [feature](#) on statelessness.



#IBelong Campaign visuals are displayed across Montenegro to raise awareness on statelessness. © UNHCR/M. Bajramspahic

Staff from the partner NGO “Right and Prosperity” in **Tajikistan** discussed in a [podcast](#) in November, the implementation of the amnesty law enacted in 2020. The amnesty law allowed for stateless people to regularize their status in the country. UNHCR and its partners also published a [success story](#) about a family that received documentation with the support of the NGO. The story was shared on [social media platforms](#) and a [video](#) was created showing the family receiving their documentation in order to raise awareness about the Amnesty Law.

In **Uganda**, UNHCR published a short [video](#) about the stateless Benet community, who have strong and longstanding ties with Uganda dating back to before independence but are still not recognized as an indigenous community of Uganda, denying them citizenship

In **Kenya**, UNHCR issued a [press release](#) on the presidential pronouncement that the Government of Kenya will initiate modalities to recognize the Pemba people as citizens of Kenya.

UNHCR supported the Government in **Burkina Faso** in November and December, in organizing two debates on the importance of birth registration in the context of forced displacement, which were broadcasted on national radio and television. The objective of the shows was to raise awareness among the audience and encourage government actors to take action to reduce the risk of statelessness in these contexts.

UNHCR worked with community-based and local radio stations in the Maradi region of **Niger** from 28 November to 31 December, to disseminate information about statelessness and raise awareness of risks of statelessness, the importance of systematic birth registration, and procedures to

obtain civil status documents in cases of late birth registration. The messages will be broadcast in French and local languages until January 2023.

The Director of the Law Centre of Advocates, a partner of UNHCR in **Moldova**, appeared on the live TV show “Points of Reflection” on 10 December on the media outlet “Vocea Basarabiei” to discuss statelessness.

Public Services Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice of **Georgia** produced a [video](#) about its door-to-door campaign which aims to identify and document undocumented individuals. The video demonstrates some successful cases resulting from the campaign and shows how granting citizenship can change the lives of people.

In September, UNHCR in **North Macedonia** posted a [web story](#) about the story of a young stateless man who finally received Macedonian citizenship after a 12-year legal struggle, with the support of UNHCR and the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association. Several news outlets reported on the story, including [Radio MOF](#), [Vidi Vaka](#), [Deutsche Welle](#), [4News](#), and [Libertas](#).

On 10 December, on the occasion of International Human Rights Day, the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, along with UNHCR and UNICEF, issued a joint statement on the importance of advancing gender equal nationality rights in the Arab region. The statement acknowledged the progress made in the area of gender equal nationality rights and stressed the importance of continuing these efforts to achieve gender equality, protect children’s rights and well-being, promote sustainable development, and prevent statelessness. The statement is available in both [English](#) and [Arabic](#).

Campaign Resources

Want to support the Campaign? Take a look at our [#IBelong website](#) and post a digital banner on your website, mobilize your social media contacts by sharing one of our posts, download and post our

Twitter cards or embed a short video that explains statelessness. Videos, photo essays and web stories can be found on our [#IBelong stories page](#). Legal resources are available on [Refworld](#).