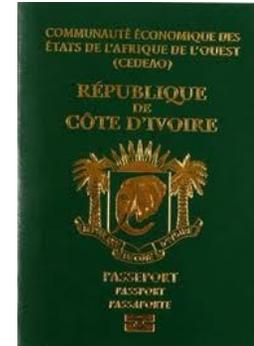


Ivory Coast in action to legalize the situation of stateless people

Failures in the nationality law left lots of inhabitants of Ivory Coast without any nationality. Today, the Government enables historic migrants that have been on the territory since independence, along with their children, to finally get Ivorian nationality. Following the adoption of the Law on the acquisition of nationality by declaration, on 1 April 2014, the Government launched its

program of acquisition of Ivorian nationality by individuals meeting certain criteria laid down there in.

This program, divided in two phases, will take place over two years. After a slow start, a big awareness campaign has sped up the process in recent months. More than 22,000 people have submitted their files and first decisions will be taken by the end



of the year. Observations of the first phase will be useful to improve the continuation of the process.



Measuring statelessness in Ivory Coast

Mirna Adjami is currently carrying out a study on statelessness and nationality in Ivory Coast. For several weeks, she spoke to the most affected people: historic migrants and their descendants, abandoned children, and people who can not get any identity documents due to lack of proof of nationality. She also met ministerial, judicial and prefectural authorities to discuss the program of acquisition of nationality, procedures to acquire official documents, birth registration and Ivorian

civil status. Mirna is currently completing her report and her recommendations both to the Ivorian Government and UNHCR.

Barbara Hendricks meets stateless people in Ivory Coast

The world renowned opera singer Barbara Hendricks went on a statelessness-related mission to Ivory Coast. She talked to some of the 700,000 stateless people in the country, who shared their daily difficulties. She also assisted in the delivery of birth certificates to children with the aim of preventing further cases of statelessness. The regularization of their situation has provided them with a new source of ambition; now they dream of

becoming architects or historians. In concluding her mission, Barbara Hendricks spoke to the Ministers of Justice and Solidarity who reaffirmed the Ivory Coast's commitment to the fight against statelessness.

The opera singer reiterated UNHCR's call to end statelessness by 2024, given the scale of the problem and its severe effects on people's lives. This huge challenge must be addressed by increased collaboration with governments.



Two new accessions to the UN Conventions on Statelessness

We commend The Gambia and Guinea for their commitment to the fight against statelessness, which they demonstrated recently by acceding to both UN Statelessness Conventions. These ratifications prove that States are now aware of the magnitude of statelessness in West Africa and acknowledge the need to take action against it. To date, almost half of the 15 ECOWAS Member States have acceded the Conventions.



Undocumented talibés in Senegal

UNHCR has embarked on a study to gauge the impact of the absence of documents among talibé children begging in the streets of major cities in Senegal. The first interviews and field visits conducted in Dakar and St Louis confirmed that almost all talibés have no form of identification documents. Originally from remote rural areas in Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and The Gambia, the majority of talibés have no birth certificates. While the immediate consequences of this situation are not severe, the long-term impacts can be very serious. Once out of Koranic schools, the talibés



and citizenship. A short documentary will feature testimonies from former talibés and will be made available along with the study report in the weeks to come.

(who by then have become young adults) encounter difficulties proving their identity

Finding durable solutions for stateless people on Ile aux Oiseaux

The territory was formally returned to Benin following the resolution of the dispute between Niger and Benin, but



difficulties concerning the nationality of inhabitants remain unsolved. A first mission measured the impact of the resolution of the boarder dispute on populations living on the island, while considering solutions to regularize the situation of undocumented groups and prevent new cases of statelessness.

As governmental action is essential to achieving such change, a second mission was conducted jointly with UNHCR, civil society and government officials in Benin. They met with the Mayor of Karimama to discuss durable solutions and cooperation in order to resolve statelessness on Ile aux Oiseaux.



Strong international mobilization for the first Global Forum on Statelessness

Sixty years after the adoption of the first Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons, the first Global Forum on statelessness was held from 15-17 September in The Hague, as part of a partnership between the University of Tilburg and UNHCR. 300 people mobilized for three days, including government officials, NGO representatives, academics, lawyers, UN officials, and stateless/former stateless people. They shared information on the situation of statelessness in the world and on efforts needed to curb the phenomenon.

Several participants represented West Africa, including representatives



of the Ministry of Interior of Benin, the Ministry of Justice of Senegal, Mali's National Commission on Human Rights, and a Senior Correspondent from Nigeria. Recent developments in the fight against and prevention of statelessness in West Africa were also discussed during a special workshop on Africa.

Migration & Statelessness in West Africa

Following field visits in five countries – Ivory Coast, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal – Bronwen Manby completed her



study on the nexus between migration and statelessness in West Africa. She stressed the situation of people at increased risks of statelessness, including the children of migrants and their descendants, foundlings, and nomads. Bronwen elaborated on her findings during the Global Forum, but a more substantial presentation of her study will take place during the upcoming West Africa Ministerial Conference on Statelessness.

Postponement of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Statelessness

As a consequence of the uncertain situation created by the Ebola epidemic, the regional ministerial conference on statelessness has been put off to early 2015. It is co-organized by ECOWAS and UNHCR and was originally scheduled for 20-22 October 2014.

Statelessness in the News

The consequences of statelessness in West Africa: *Statelessness = invisibility in West Africa*

New laws on the acquisition of nationality in Ivory Coast: *New Ivory Coast citizens no longer "live like ghosts"*

Global Forum on Statelessness: *UN to launch bold plan to end statelessness in a decade*

Op-Ed by Barbara Hendricks: *Hendricks commends efforts to end statelessness in Côte d'Ivoire*

Statelessness in Nigeria: *There are many stateless people in Nigeria and the UNHCR says it wants to help*

Interview with Romuald Likibi: *Stateless people are the victims of a double injustice (in French)*

