



# **ACTION PLAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION (ICGLR) ON THE ERADICATION OF STATELESSNESS**

**2017-2019**



## 1. Context

Globally, millions of people including many in the Great Lakes Region are stateless or at risk of statelessness. They cannot enjoy the full range of human rights. Among the causes of statelessness in the Great Lakes Region are gaps in nationality laws and policies. Even though there is no regional legal framework to address these gaps, efforts have been made by Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to resolve this problem by, for example, acceding to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and/or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Furthermore, Heads of States and Governments adopted the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region on 24 November 2004 (known as the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration) and signed the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region on 15 December 2006 (modified in 2012), under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union. These two instruments address some dimensions of statelessness, like paragraph 68 of the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration in which States commit to “adopt a common regional approach for the ratification and implementation of the UN Conventions on Statelessness, harmonize national laws and standards, and provide refugees and displaced persons with identification documents enabling them to have access to basic services and exercise their rights.” The Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development, whose crowning achievement is the entry into force of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in June 2008, is a historical instrument and a milestone in the fight against statelessness in the Great Lakes Region. The Declaration was adopted during the first summit of Heads of States and Governments in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania from 19 – 20 November 2004 under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union.

In the spirit of the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration, the August 2006 ICGLR Regional Programme of Action on Humanitarian and Social Issues, entitled “Framework for Durable Solutions to Humanitarian, Social and Environmental Issues in the Great Lakes Region” translates the commitments of Heads of States and Governments into concrete actions in the areas of human rights protection and human security. It sets out support measures the ICGLR and UNHCR can provide to Member States, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 68 of the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration and point 4.1.1 of the Regional Programme of Action on Humanitarian and Social Issues relating to the respect of international and regional instruments on human rights, international humanitarian law, and the issuance of identity documents to internally displaced persons, refugees and stateless persons. It includes measures which the ICGLR will adopt in order to ensure follow-up for requests issued by Member States and national implementation monitoring mechanisms at the level of each Member State. The present Action Plan is adopted in accordance with these provisions.



## 2. Strategic objectives

### Strategic objective 1: Ensure compliance with legal, policy and institutional frameworks governing eradication of statelessness

ICGLR Member States recognize that the adoption of a common regional approach with a view to ratifying and implementing the UN Conventions on Statelessness; harmonizing corresponding national legislation and norms, and providing identity documents to refugees and internally displaced persons, enabling them to access basic services and enjoy their human rights, is a key element in the prevention and eradication of statelessness in the Great Lakes Region. Three (3) States have already acceded to the aforementioned Conventions, of which one State (Rwanda) is party to the 1954 and 1961 Conventions, and two others (Zambia and Uganda) are party to the 1954 Convention only.

The ICGLR, in collaboration with UNHCR and the African Union, will assist Member States in preparation for their adoption of the aforementioned UN Conventions on statelessness and their domestication into national legislation.

Objective 1.1: Accession to the international conventions on statelessness				
Activities	Performance Indicator	Responsible Parties	Source of Verification	Timeframe
1.1.1 Undertake sensitization and information campaigns in Member States on the need to accede to the International Conventions on Statelessness for government authorities, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.	# of campaigns organised	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR - Civil Society Organisations (CSO)	Workshop reports	Ongoing
1.1.2 Present a Memorandum to the ICGLR on the need for Member States to accede to the International Conventions on Statelessness.	Memorandum presented to the ICGLR Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC)	- Executive Secretariat	- Memorandum - Report of the Committee's meeting	June 2018
1.1.3 Accede to the UN Conventions on Statelessness and deposit the instruments of ratification.	- Acts of accession deposited - Instruments of ratification deposited	Member States (excluding Rwanda)	- ICGLR Secretariat - UN Secretariat	2019
1.1.4 Domesticate the UN Conventions on Statelessness into national legislation.	# of domestic nationality laws revised and	Member States with the support of ICGLR and	ICGLR Secretariat	Ongoing



	compliant with 1954 and 1961 Conventions	UNHCR		
<b>Objective 1.2: Develop a Regional Protocol for the prevention and eradication of statelessness</b>				
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
1.2.1 Draft a protocol on prevention and eradication of cases of statelessness.	Availability of draft Protocol	ICGLR Executive Secretariat	Draft Protocol	2019
1.2.2 Organize a meeting of experts to validate the draft legal instrument.	Expert meeting organized	ICGLR Executive Secretariat	Legal experts' meeting report	2019
1.2.3 Submit the draft legal instrument to the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee.	Presentation of the draft	ICGLR Executive Secretariat	Ministerial meeting report	2019
1.2.4 Submit the legal instrument to be adopted to the authorities of ICGLR Heads of States and Governments for signature.	Signature	ICGLR Executive Secretariat	Publication of the legal instrument in the official gazette of each Member State	2019

### **Strategic objective 2: Strengthen data management systems for effective response to the challenges of statelessness**

There is no complete data available on the causes of statelessness and the number and profile of stateless persons in the Great Lakes Region. Given the urgent need to obtain more concrete information about the sources of statelessness and obstacles to acquisition of nationality, as well as about potential 'at risk' groups, the ICGLR, in collaboration with UNHCR, will develop a standard framework for data collection that will help Member States to comprehensively document the situation of statelessness in their respective countries.



<b>Objective 2.1: Research, analysis and dissemination of data</b>				
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
2.1.1 Conduct a regional study on statelessness, assessing obstacles to acquisition of nationality, including birth registration, gender issues and access to proof of nationality by people residing in the country and outside the country.	- Study on obstacles conducted; - Technical meeting held; - Recommendations available	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	- Study published, - Recommendations report available	2018
2.1.2. Organize a meeting to validate the study.	Validation meeting held	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	Meeting report	2019
2.1.3 Develop a reference framework for national studies on statelessness.	Availability of reference framework	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	Reference framework for national studies	2018
2.1.4 Organize a meeting to validate the reference framework for national studies.	Validation meeting held	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	Meeting report	2018
<b>Objective 2.2: Institutionalize collection and dissemination of data on statelessness</b>				
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
2.2.1 Develop a standard methodology for data collection on statelessness including during national population censuses.	Availability of standard methodology	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	Standard methodology	2018
2.2.2 Organize a validation meeting.	Availability of validation meeting report	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	Validation meeting report	2018



2.2.3 Organize training of national statistics agencies on collection of data on statelessness taking gender issues into consideration.	# of training sessions organized; # of personnel trained	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR	Training report	2018
2.2.4 Integrate the conclusions and recommendations of the above study (Objective 2.1) into the national action plans on statelessness.	- Technical meetings organized at national level; - National action plans revised on the basis of the conclusions	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms - UNHCR	Revised national action plans	2019
2.2.5 Creation of a regional database on statelessness.	Database created and functional	Executive Secretariat	Database	2019

### Strategic objective 3: Establish strategic and operational monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

In order to assess progress and achievements in the implementation of the commitments made in the "Framework for Durable Solutions to Humanitarian, Social and Environmental Issues In the Great Lakes Region" (August 2006), monitoring and evaluation mechanisms involving all stakeholders engaged in the fight against statelessness will be put in place at the national and regional level. The ICGLR and UNHCR will support Member States through capacity-building measures and by sharing best practices.

#### Objective 3.1: Ensure that all States and key stakeholders have effective and operational focal points

Activities	Performance Indicator	Responsible Parties	Source of Verification	Timeframe
3.1.1 Designate Government Focal Points on statelessness and inform UNHCR and ICGLR by <i>note verbale</i> .	- Focal Points appointed; - UNHCR and ICGLR notified	National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms	<i>Note verbale</i>	2017
3.1.2 Develop terms of reference for the Government Focal Points.	- Technical meeting held;	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR	TORs	2017



	- TORs developed and shared with States			
3.1.3 Provide training on statelessness to the Government Focal Points.	- Annual training delivered; - # of focal points trained	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR	Training reports	2018
3.1.4 Convene regular meetings with the Focal Points to share best practices, strategies and policy measures and to assess progress.	At least two meetings conducted per year	- Executive Secretariat - National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms	Meeting reports	2018
3.1.5 Designate officially a structure/resource person within ICGLR as regional focal point on statelessness.	- ICGLR focal point appointed; - Member States and UNHCR notified	Executive Secretariat	<i>Note verbale</i>	2017
<b>Objective 3.2: Ensure that all States adopt and implement a plan of action on the eradication of statelessness based on harmonized methodologies</b>				
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
3.2.1 Develop standardized methodologies for the development and adoption of national action plans.	- Technical meeting held; - methodology developed and disseminated	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR - National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms	Methodology shared	2018
3.2.2 Deliver training on the design of national action plans for national focal points and national committees on the eradication of statelessness.	# of trainings delivered; # of countries where trainings took place	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR	Training reports	2018



3.2.3 Adopt national action plans.	# of countries that have adopted a national action plan	- National Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms	Publication of State policies	2018
3.2.4 Develop and maintain an online learning resource centre for Member States as a means of ensuring information-sharing and capacity-building.	Webpage available and updated regularly	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR	Webpage	2018
3.2.5 Develop specific methodologies in relevant areas in support of Member States' implementation of their action plans (in the areas of legislative reform and model laws, linkages between local services for efficient birth registration, determination of nationality in cross-border areas, etc.).	- Technical meetings held with focal points from ICGLR, UNHCR, and Governments; - # of methodologies developed and shared	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR	Methodologies shared	2018
<b>Objective 3.3: Institutionalize monitoring and evaluation mechanisms</b>				
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
3.3.1 Develop a reporting template on the implementation of national action plans.	- Technical meeting held; - Template developed and shared	- Executive Secretariat - UNHCR - ICGLR Member States	Template	2017
3.3.2 Convene a yearly follow-up conference to review progress made in implementing the Action Plan.	- Conference held; - # of participants	- ICGLR Commission in charge of Humanitarian and Social issues. - ICGLR Member States, - UNHCR	Outcome document	Ongoing on an annual basis



3.3.3 Create a repository of periodic reports on the implementation of the national action plans during the yearly follow-up conference.	# of reports issued by States; # of reports received	ICGLR Member States	Reports	Ongoing on an annual basis
3.3.4 Submit reports on nationality and statelessness to ICGLR parliamentary sessions twice a year	# of reports issued by States; # of reports received	ICGLR Member States	Reports	Ongoing on a bi-annual basis
3.3.5 Synthesize and analyse Member States' annual reports on implementation of the action plans and provide feedback and guidance for Member States.	- Analysis conducted; - Feedback provided	ICGLR (with support of UNHCR)	Analysis and comments/feedback report	Ongoing on an annual basis
3.3.6 Organize annual meetings to review reports of CSOs on statelessness	# of meetings organized	- ICGLR Commission in charge of Humanitarian and Social issues - UNHCR - Civil society	Reports	Ongoing on an annual basis
3.3.7 Organize meetings twice a year between UNHCR and ICGLR to evaluate implementation of the regional action plan on the eradication of statelessness.	# of meetings held	- ICGLR Commission in charge of Humanitarian and Social issues - UNHCR	Meeting reports	Continuously