

#IBELONG
CAMPAIGN



Marking the 6th anniversary of the
campaign in Southern Africa

Acknowledgements

Several key activities were conducted in the region with the support of Claire Lewis, Goodwill Ambassador Program; Rosie Vanek, DER; and Amina Rai, PSRF, Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes.

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Child playing in Namibia, © UNHCR/Brendan Bannon



Live Talk Show with good will Ambassador Leanne Manas, RBSA Deputy Director, and Sihle, a stateless man

Southern Africa

“In 2014, statelessness was characterized as one of the most forgotten human rights crises. Today, six years after the launch of the #IBelong campaign, States in Southern Africa have shown leadership and commitment to ending statelessness. I am confident that together we can eradicate this scourge by 2024.”

Valentin Tapsoba, RBSA Director, extract of press release

Talk Show

UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Leanne Manas and presenter of the popular news and current affairs programme, Morning Live on the national broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation, interviewed the RBSA Regional Deputy Director, Ms. Angele

Dikongue-Antagana, on the concept of statelessness, the occurrence, causes and consequences in southern Africa. Ms. Dikongue described statelessness as a scourge against humanity, calling upon all stakeholders to unite efforts in order to end it. The interview was preceded by the account of Sihle Nxumalo, a young stateless man describing the impact this has had on his life, depriving him of access to education, the right to work, as well as opportunity to develop his potential and fulfil his dream. Sihle, born to a South African mother, now deceased, never had his birth registered, and for the last 15 years, he has attempted, to no avail, to regularise his situation and obtain ID documents. The Department of Home Affairs called Leane during the programme and committed to assist Sihle. Since then, DHA contacted him several times, and is actively working towards a solution. UNHCR is closely monitoring developments. Find [here](#) the link to the talk show

Press release

The campaign global press release, as well as an overview focusing on *Statelessness in Southern Africa* highlighting both the commitments and the achievements by countries in the region, were sent to the international and national media on 11 November. It was also shared by country offices with their national media. The overview on statelessness in Southern Africa can be found [here](#)

Social Media

RBSA actively posted on its social media platforms, [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), video clips, photos, the SABC Morning Live interview, Press Release and various content highlighting the #IBelong campaign.

Media package

[Multi-media stories](#) of two stateless individuals and their families at risk of statelessness in South Africa has been posted on the global website. The stories show how lack of birth registration is impacting the lives of ordinary South Africans who want to be recognized as citizens and practice their rights. Other multi-media packages are scheduled for the next months in order to maintain the momentum on statelessness in the region. Focus will be given to the nexus between birth registration and statelessness in the Republic of Congo and the nexus between gender inequality and statelessness in Eswatini.

South Africa

“This week marks the 6th anniversary of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness. UNHCR launched this campaign in 2014 with the aim of ending statelessness in ten years. As signatories to the open letter, we support this campaign because we believe every child has the right to be seen, to be heard and to belong.”

Trevor Noah Foundation

Open letter

An ‘Open Letter to South Africa’ highlighting the importance of universal birth registration as a means to end statelessness, was signed by 24 signatories, amongst which renowned academics, high level personalities including good will ambassadors, and civil society representatives. The letter targeted decision makers and the general public. It was placed in the Mail & Guardian on Friday 13 November. The link to the letter can be found [here](#). The letter was also posted on the Trevor Noah Foundation [online platform](#).

Signatories to the letters include:

Michael Clements, Acting National Director, Lawyers for Human Rights
 Nersan Govender National Director, Legal Resource Centre
 Dr. Fatima Khan Associate Professor + Director of Refugee Rights Unit University of Cape Town
 Siya Kolisi, South Africa Rugby Team Captain, United Nations Global Advocate.
 Piyushi Kotecha, CEO of the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation
 Penny Learmonth Executive Director, Future Families
 Leanne Mannas SABC Presenter and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador
 Dewa Mavhinga Southern Africa Director, Human Rights Watch
 Nomzamo Mbatha, Actor and Producer and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador
 Steve Miller, CEO, Save the Children South Africa
 Sindisiwe Moyo Advocacy for Children’s Rights, The Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town
 Ethel Munyai, Programme Manager, Social Services and Migrant Support Unit, The Outreach Foundation
 Karabo Ozah, Director, Centre for Child Law, University of Pretoria
 Ann Skelton, Professor of Law, University of Pretoria, Member: UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
 Tim Smith, Regional Director Southern Africa, Jesuit Refugee Services
 Valentin Tapsoba Director, Regional Bureau for Southern Africa
 Archbishop Bhuti Tlhagale Southern African Bishops Conference
 Hanif Vally Executive Director Foundation for Human Rights/

Shalene Yeun CEO of the Trevor Noah Foundation
Leonard Zulu, Representative, UNHCR South Africa

Media

Representative Leonard Zulu of the South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO) conducted two interviews with national media, focusing on causes and consequences on statelessness in South Africa. These include SABC radio news - <https://iono.fm/e/954856> and eNCA - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sg6ukaSnkis>



MPs in Eswatini, and UNHCR SAMCO staff member © Ministry of Home Affairs, Eswatini

Eswatini

Mobilizing Parliament

UNHCR and the Ministry of Internal Affairs organized a round table with members of the parliament on 11-12 November. The objective of the event was to raise awareness about the goal of #Ibelong campaign and the efforts by the government to end statelessness, as well as to advocate for the swift implementation of the High-Level Segment pledge on gender equality in nationality legislation

Partnering with media

UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior trained 20 journalists on 13 November. The training focused on the concept of statelessness, the causes and consequences of statelessness in Eswatini, the mandate of UNHCR, and the actions taken by the government to address statelessness. The training also included a session on how journalists can report knowledgeably and sensitively on statelessness.

Visibility in media

UNHCR published a press release in Eswatini to increase visibility of the #Ibelong Campaign in the Kingdom. The press release highlighted that Eswatini is the first country in the region to develop a comprehensive national action plan to end statelessness, now approximately a year old.

Madagascar



UNHCR implementing partner, FOCUS, organised a panel on statelessness at the university of Antananarivo on 11 November. Panel members included academics, civil society representatives, a stateless person and, Jaojoby, a famous singer, who is also the campaign's High Level Supporter in Madagascar. The event aimed to sensitise academics, students and the public in general about the relevance of statelessness in Madagascar, its causes and consequences, and called upon the authorities for a more robust response to end statelessness in Madagascar,

The recorded event is streamed on the Joajoby's social media platform:
<https://www.facebook.com/JiabyGasy/videos/772557353600914> (original version)
<https://www.facebook.com/JiabyGasy/videos/1310368189298739> (with English subtitles)

Republic of Congo



Hand over of register @UNHCR/Banga

To commemorate the 6th anniversary of the #IBelong Campaign, UNHCR officially handed over 2 000 birth certificate registers to support to the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization. The handover is to facilitate the implementation of a pledge, made by Congo in the High Level Segment of the EXCOM in 2019, to regularize the registration of all individuals found without birth certificate on its territory. The event was largely covered by local media.

Zambia

“UNHCR praises the Zambian Government, but calls for more efforts to ending statelessness”

Lusaka Times

UNHCR in Zambia placed in the media an Open Letter, based on the model used in South Africa, highlighting the nexus between lack of birth registration and risks of

statelessness. This initiative is of particular importance in the country with the lowest birth registration rate in Southern Africa, and one of the lowest in the continent. Find the link to the letter in the Lusaka Times can be found [here](#)