



NEWSLETTER

Issue 2

ADVANCING LEGAL REFORM AND INCLUSIVE DOCUMENTATION

October – December 2025

Prepared by: EANN Secretariat



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1. Editor's Note

Welcome to Issue 2 of the EANN Newsletter. Following our inaugural, inward-looking launch edition, this issue turns outward to highlight key regional developments and member priorities that shaped efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness in the last quarter of 2025.

Across the region, advocacy continues to focus on removing legal and administrative barriers to nationality, strengthening civil registration systems, and ensuring an inclusive transition to digital ID. At the same time, efforts are underway to reinforce EANN's coordination and communications by supporting joint learning, amplifying members' work, and promoting effective reporting on statelessness, while ensuring the meaningful participation of persons with lived experience.

2. Highlights at a Glance

In this issue:

- AU Protocol on Nationality momentum continues, with members aligning national advocacy to continental standards (see Sections 3.1).
- Continental policy process advances through Pan-African Parliament consultations on the Draft Model Law (see Section 3.2).
- Kenya legal reform proposals highlight pathways for stateless persons and the need for practical documentation procedures, alongside ongoing litigation concerning Maisha Namba (see Section 3.3).
- Rwanda guidance continues to reference a statelessness-based pathway while inclusion in identity systems remains a live priority (see Section 3.4).
- South Sudan case renews attention to due process and remedies in nationality decisions (see Section 3.5).
- Network engagement and learning: ACERWC side event, GRF Progress Review, journalist training, and policy briefs (see Section 4).
- Lived experience leadership, visibility products, and sustainability steps strengthened.

3. Regional Snapshot

This section summarises key developments shaping nationality and statelessness work across Eastern Africa and the continent. It highlights regional legal and policy momentum, and country-level updates that affect access to documentation and pathways to nationality.

Members are encouraged to share verified updates for future issues, especially where changes in law, policy or administrative practice have a practical impact on affected communities.



3.1 Regional: African Union framework on nationality and statelessness

The adoption of the AU Protocol on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa (February 2024) continues to shape regional advocacy and reform priorities. In 2025, renewed engagement by African human rights bodies and civil society further underscored the Protocol's value as a practical tool for prevention and reduction of statelessness, especially for children and communities facing documentation barriers. EANN members are increasingly aligning national advocacy with the Protocol's standards, including on safeguards against arbitrary deprivation of nationality, access to documentation, and stronger protection for children at risk of statelessness.

3.2 Continental: Draft Model Law on nationality and eradication of statelessness

In November 2025, the Pan-African Parliament, in partnership with UNHCR, advanced consultations on a Draft Model Law on the Right to Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness. EANN participated in the Continental Consultation Meeting held in Centurion, South Africa. The meeting brought together key stakeholders to review and strengthen the model law aimed at addressing statelessness across Africa. Discussions highlighted the law's potential to close gaps in citizenship frameworks, promote equality, and safeguard against statelessness, while emphasising the need for strong implementation, political will, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. The engagement provided an important platform for sharing experiences, building partnerships, and advancing collective efforts to eradicate statelessness on the continent.




EANN's Janemary Ruhundwa (Left) with colleagues from our sister Network SANN during the Continental Consultation Meeting on the Model Law on the Right to Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Pretoria.



3.3 Kenya: Advancing Legal Reform on Statelessness and Challenging Exclusion in Digital ID Systems

In Kenya, sustained advocacy by UNHCR and EANN members, in collaboration with a supportive Member of Parliament, has yielded tangible progress, with the proposed amendment to the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act, 2011 reflected in the Kenya Gazette Supplement (National Assembly Bills, 2025). The proposed amendments seek to strengthen pathways to nationality for stateless persons, including the removal of time-bound limitations on the registration of stateless individuals under Section 15 of the Act, and the establishment of a formal register of registered stateless persons.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT - FIFTH SESSION (2026)
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

IN THE MATTER OF ARTICLE 118(1) (b) OF THE CONSTITUTION
AND
IN THE MATTER OF CONSIDERATION BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF:
(1) THE REGISTRATION OF PERSONS (AMENDMENT) BILL (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 52 OF 2025); AND
(2) THE KENYA CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 53 OF 2025)

INVITATION TO SUBMIT MEMORANDA

WHEREAS, Article 118(1) (b) of the Constitution of Kenya requires Parliament to facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other business of Parliament and its Committees, and National Assembly Standing Order 127(3) requires House Committees considering Bills to facilitate public participation;

AND WHEREAS, the **Registration of Persons (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No. 52 of 2025)** and the **Kenya Citizenship and Immigration (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No. 53 of 2025)** were read a First Time on 4th March 2026 and referred to the **Departmental Committee on Administration and Internal Security** for consideration and reporting to the House;

IT IS NOTIFIED that—

(1) The **Registration of Persons (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No. 52 of 2025)** is a Bill **Co-sponsored by Hon. Carol Omondi, MP and Hon. Wanjiku Muhia, MP** which seeks to amend the Registration of Persons Act, Cap. 107 to require the establishment of a national programme for the registration of students eligible for the issuance of identification cards in secondary schools and to provide for the issuance of identification cards to the students, without charge, either at their school or a designated collection point.

(2) The **Kenya Citizenship and Immigration (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No. 53 of 2025)** is a Bill sponsored by **Hon. Owen Yaa Baya, MP** which seeks to amend the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act, Cap. 170 to remove the time limit that govern applications for citizenship by stateless persons and migrants. The Act currently only allows a stateless person who has habitually resided in Kenya since December 12, 1963 and has enforceable claim to citizenship of any recognized State to apply for citizenship.

NOW THEREFORE, in compliance with Article 118(1) (b) of the Constitution and Standing Order 127(3), the Clerk of the National Assembly hereby invites the public and stakeholders to submit memoranda on the **Registration of Persons (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No. 52 of 2025)** and the **Kenya Citizenship and Immigration (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No. 53 of 2025)** to the **Departmental Committee on Administration and Internal Security**.

Copies of the Bills are available at the National Assembly Table Office, Main Parliament Buildings and on www.parliament.go.ke/the-national-assembly/house-business/bills.

The memoranda may be forwarded to the **Clerk of the National Assembly, P.O. Box 41842-00100, Nairobi**; hand-delivered to the **Office of the Clerk, Main Parliament Buildings, Nairobi**; or emailed to cna@parliament.go.ke to be received on or before **Tuesday, 24th March 2026** at **5.00 p.m.**

S. NJOROGE, CBS
CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
10th March 2026

"For the Welfare of Society and the Just Government of the People"

A newspaper cutting of Kenya's National Assembly inviting memoranda on a bill seeking to amend the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act to remove time limit for application for citizenship by stateless persons.



These legislative developments mark an important step forward even as stakeholders continue to underscore the urgency of translating legal reforms into practice. This includes ensuring accessible and non-discriminatory documentation processes, particularly for birth registration, clarifying administrative procedures, and promoting consistency and accountability in decision-making.

A court hearing in an ongoing case filed by a member of EANN in Kenya challenging the roll out of a digital ID popularly known as Maisha Namba is set to continue in March 2026 at the Kenyan High Court. The case raises serious concerns that the system could deepen exclusion by denying access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and social protection to individuals unable to meet registration requirements. Those most at risk include persons without foundational documents, stateless individuals, and other marginalised communities. Additional barriers such as limited digital literacy, weak infrastructure, and potential system errors may further restrict access, effectively locking out vulnerable populations. The proceedings remain ongoing, with the court's decision expected to have far-reaching implications for the inclusivity and accessibility of digital identification in Kenya.

3.4 Rwanda: Nationality procedures and inclusion in identity systems

Rwanda's nationality framework continues to include procedures for acquisition of nationality on grounds of statelessness, and public service guidance still references this pathway. At the same time, policy discussions on identity systems and access to registration highlight the importance of ensuring stateless persons and children at risk are not left out of national identification and registration processes. For EANN and other stakeholders, the priority remains ensuring that procedures are clearly communicated, accessible in practice, and implemented in ways that reduce exclusion and documentation gaps.

3.5 South Sudan: Right to nationality affirmed in a continental decision

In January 2026, we highlighted calls for implementation of remedies following an African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights finding of arbitrary deprivation of citizenship, with corrective action required within a specified compliance period. The case reinforces the importance of transparent procedures, access to review and remedy, and implementation of regional human rights standards in nationality decision-making. EANN in conjunction with other stakeholders continue to call for the full implementation of the decision. See more about the case here: <https://www.ihrda.org/2025/09/african-commission-on-human-and-peoples-rights-affirms-right-to-nationality-for-south-sudanese-former-member-of-parliament-in-high-profile-matter/>

4. Network Updates

EANN continued to strengthen coordination through the Steering Committee, Secretariat and working groups, while supporting member learning and joint engagement across key regional and global moments.



Key engagements during this period included:

ACERWC (Maseru, Lesotho | 26 November 2025): The Eastern Africa Nationality Network (EANN) attended the 49th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) in Maseru, Lesotho, and participated in the side event “Advancing the Right to a Nationality and Ending Childhood Statelessness in Africa” on 26 November 2025. The side event was co-convened by the Southern African Nationality Network (SANN), with Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), the Centre for Human Rights (University of Pretoria), and the Centre for Child Law.



Participants during the 49th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in Maseru, Lesotho. Andrew Ochola (extreme right, standing) represented EANN at the convening.

The event was attended by civil society organisations and statelessness-focused regional and global networks (including the Global Movement Against Statelessness (GMAS)), state representatives, civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) actors, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), AU/ACERWC officials, persons with lived experience of statelessness, academia, and child-rights experts, among others. The convening situated the right to nationality and birth registration within the ACERWC’s broader child-rights mandate and continental priorities and featured lived-experience stories illustrating how childhood statelessness affects access to education, health, and belonging.

A central focus of the discussions was the African Union Protocol on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa, including a dedicated segment on “10 ways” the Protocol benefits children and what ratification would mean in practice for children and families across Africa.



The panel discussion examined how childhood statelessness is compounded by intersecting issues such as gender discrimination, disability-related barriers, migration-related protection gaps, and climate displacement. EANN was represented by Andrew Ochola (in person) and Yasah Kimei (virtually), who shared reflections from across Eastern Africa and drew on lessons from the Nubian Children decision to inform the discussion.

The side event concluded with the launch of the #RatifyR2NAfrica campaign, providing advocacy tools for policymakers and civil society, and reinforcing a collective call for stakeholders to accelerate the ratification, domestication, and meaningful implementation of the AU Protocol.”

GRF Progress Review (Geneva, Switzerland | 15–17 December 2025): During the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review, held from 15 to 17 December 2025 in Geneva, EANN actively engaged in high-level discussions with national, regional and global statelessness stakeholders to assess progress on existing pledges and advance durable solutions.



Andrew Ochola (back, third Left) represented EANN at various convenings at the GRF in Geneva, Switzerland.

EANN participated in several side events co-hosted by members of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, focusing on multistakeholder collaboration, equal nationality rights, effective participation of persons with lived experience, and inclusive identity systems. Alongside other regional and global networks, EANN held strategic engagements with UNHCR leadership to discuss how to sustain and scale statelessness work amidst funding constraints. The meeting explored practical ways to maximize resources for 2026, including joint fundraising and stronger engagement with UNHCR Regional Bureaus, maintaining visibility at upcoming global events, and ensuring accountability in resource use. At the Speakers’ Corner, powerful lived-experience voices took centre stage, including Nosizi Dube from Kenya’s Shona community, who highlighted the transformative impact of grassroots advocacy in resolving statelessness.



Journalists' Training (Mombasa, Kenya | 31 December 2025): In December 2025, the Eastern Africa Nationality Network (EANN) convened a one-day training for journalists in Kenya to strengthen informed, accurate and ethical reporting on statelessness and its impacts. The training enhanced participants' understanding of statelessness and its impacts and strengthened reporting accuracy by clarifying relevant legal and policy frameworks and how these apply in practice.



A section of Kenyan Journalist during a training on accurate, evidence-based and ethical reporting on statelessness held in Mombasa, Kenya.

The workshop facilitated peer learning by linking journalists with community paralegals and lived-experience voices, supporting an exchange of practical reporting approaches and lessons to improve the quality of coverage. It also promoted ethical, people-centred reporting grounded in lived experience and a do-no-harm approach

Policy Brief on Nationality Legislations: EANN commissioned a policy brief comparing the nationality laws of Kenya, Rwanda and South Sudan with the AU Protocol on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa. The Policy brief assesses areas of alignment and gaps between national legislation and the Protocol and is intended to serve as a mobilisation and advocacy tool to support reforms that bring domestic laws closer to the Protocol's standards and strengthen the case for ratification.

The document will be used to support domestic and regional advocacy for ratification and, where relevant, to inform amendments aimed at better preventing and addressing statelessness. EANN intends to expand this analysis by publishing similar comparisons for additional countries within the region.

Members are encouraged to continue sharing verified updates, opportunities and learning points for inclusion in future issues and for coordinated action where cross-border collaboration adds value.

Looking ahead

EANN is working with SANN and UNHCR to convene a Global Alliance Network Lab in 2026 to mobilize stakeholders toward signature, ratification and implementation of the AU Protocol on the right to a nationality and eradication of statelessness in Africa.



5. Priorities for 2026

- Enhancing the visibility of the Network and our members through a strengthened web and social media presence, supported by a robust communications strategy.
- Production and dissemination of practical IEC and advocacy materials, including newsletters, policy briefs, and statelessness indices, among others.
- Building the capacity of members, especially impacted-led organisations and affected communities, in regional advocacy and community-driven action, positioning the leadership and expertise of people with lived experience in Eastern Africa at the forefront.
- Strengthen the capacity of key stakeholders, including the media and governments, through targeted workshops and webinars on preventing and eradicating statelessness.
- Strengthen engagement with African Union and UN frameworks to drive reforms, ensure accountability, and accelerate action against statelessness.

6. Member Spotlight

This issue spotlights a lived-experience-led initiative that is contributing to movement building and change leadership on statelessness.

Member: Shamiri Sisterhood Initiative | Kenya (Kenya Shona community)



Nosizi Dube
Executive Director - Shamiri Sisterhood Initiative

Shamiri Sisterhood Initiative is a women- and youth-led community organization based in Kenya dedicated to advancing the rights, inclusion, and socio-economic empowerment of communities with lived experience of statelessness. The organization works at the intersection of advocacy, community development, and economic empowerment, with a particular focus on supporting women and young people affected by statelessness and documentation challenges. Through research, policy advocacy, leadership development, and livelihood initiatives such as entrepreneurship and skills training, Shamiri Sisterhood Initiative seeks to address systemic barriers to identity, opportunity, and participation. The organization also collaborates with local, national, and regional partners to promote durable solutions and long-term inclusion for stateless and at-risk populations across East Africa, contributing to broader regional efforts led by networks such as the East African nationality Network (EANN).



7. Note on Lived Experience Participation and Change Leadership

EANN is keen to prioritise lived experience participation that goes beyond storytelling to include real influence over priorities, strategies and decisions. Members are encouraged to support impacted persons and impacted-led organisations to co-design activities, co-lead advocacy, and shape how evidence is collected and used, so participation is not extractive, tokenistic, or limited to sharing personal experiences.

In practice, this can include agenda-setting and facilitation roles in meetings and webinars; representation in working groups and governance spaces; involvement in developing advocacy messages and policy asks; leadership in community-driven action and peer support among others. Participation should be safe, voluntary, and supported through accessibility measures, clear roles, and, where possible, fair compensation.

8. Upcoming Events and Opportunities for EANN's members participation.

Confirmed / planned (dates subject to confirmation unless stated):

- **Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum 2026 (DRIF 2026)**, 14–16 April 2026, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, focusing on building inclusive and resilient digital futures.
- **RightsCon 2026** – Human rights in the digital age, Lusaka, Zambia and online, 5–8 May 2026.
- **ID4Africa Digital Public Ecosystems (DPEs)**, 12–15 May 2026, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire – exploring how identity becomes the cornerstone of inclusive, trusted ecosystems that drive digital transformation across Africa.
- **May 2026 - SANN-EANN / Global Alliance Network Lab: Mobilizing Towards Signature, Ratification and Implementation of the AU Protocol on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa.** Proposed timing.

9. Get Involved / Submissions for Issue 3

Submission window: Rolling (Secretariat will confirm the Issue 3 deadline) | Submit to: EANN Secretariat | Focal point: Secretariat team

What to submit (choose any):

- 80–120-word member update (include dates/locations and the 'why it matters')
- 1 photo with caption + confirmation of consent/permissions
- Upcoming opportunity/event (training, consultation, deadline)
- Short resource/publication link
- Working group update (120–200 words)



Content submission and approvals: Submit drafts to the Secretariat ahead of the agreed deadline. Routine updates can be published once checked for accuracy and safeguarding. Sensitive content and joint statements should follow the agreed internal clearance process.

Minimum quality checklist:

- Clear dates and locations
- Correct names/titles (verify before submission)
- Safeguarding/consent confirmed for any stories/images
- No sensitive personal data shared

10. Contacts and Socials

EANN Secretariat: info@eanationalitynetwork.org

Website: <https://eanationalitynetwork.org/>

X: <https://x.com/EANationality>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EANationalityNetwork>

