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UNHCR – UN High Commissioner for Refugees (Author)

UNHCR applauds Liberia for removing gender discrimination from its nationality law

In a major development to prevent statelessness, Liberia has amended its nationality law to grant women and men equal rights to confer nationality to their children.

The President of Liberia signed into law an act to amend the Aliens and Nationality Law on 5 August, removing gender-discriminatory provisions which prevented children from acquiring the nationality of their mother.

“We applaud Liberia’s historic move breaking the gender barrier to conferring nationality. Gender discrimination in nationality laws remains a primary cause of statelessness among children, and this development speaks to Liberia’s commitment to tackle this issue,” said Gillian Triggs, the UN Refugee Agency’s Assistant High Commissioner for Protection.

Liberia is the third country to reform legislation in granting women and men equal rights in passing on their nationality to their children since the [#IBelong Campaign to end Statelessness by 2024](#) was launched in 2014, following Madagascar and Sierra Leone.

UNHCR will continue working with governments to end statelessness and address its root causes. There remain some 24 countries in the world today that continue to have gender discriminatory provisions in their nationality laws regarding a mother’s right to pass on nationality to her children.

Statelessness affects millions of people worldwide. Without a nationality, they are often denied legal rights and access to documentation and critical services, including education, health care and vaccinations. Their lack of nationality can negatively impact all aspects and phases of their lives, from birth to death.

In West Africa, there are at least 1.6 million stateless people or people of undetermined nationality, according to government figures.

Liberia amends nationality law to grant women and men equal rights to confer nationality to their children

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