

Forced Migration, Statelessness, and Conflict in Africa: Legal Frameworks, Institutional Gaps, and Policy Pathways

*Emmanuel Owosanni**

Abstract

Forced migration and statelessness constitute significant yet often underexamined structural drivers of conflict affecting peace and security across Africa. While frequently framed as humanitarian challenges, both phenomena generate profound governance, legal, and socioeconomic implications capable of intensifying instability where institutional protection mechanisms remain weak. This essay clarifies core concepts relating to forced migration, internal displacement, refugee protection, and statelessness, and evaluates the effectiveness of international, regional, and subregional legal frameworks, including the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions, the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Refugee Convention, and the 2009 Kampala Convention on internally displaced persons. Through doctrinal legal analysis and comparative case studies drawn from the Lake Chad Basin, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Sudan–South Sudan context, the study demonstrates how exclusion from nationality, weak civil registration systems, and inconsistent policy implementation contribute to grievances capable of reinforcing conflict dynamics. Evidence suggests that large-scale displacement may initially intensify competition over resources and heighten communal tensions, particularly where legal identity systems and socio-economic inclusion mechanisms are insufficiently developed. However, inclusive legal frameworks and coordinated governance approaches may generate stabilizing effects, including economic participation and strengthened social cohesion. The essay identifies key policy gaps including securitization of migration, political resistance to nationality reform, and limited institutional coordination among regional actors. It concludes that strengthening nationality protection, civil registration systems, and regional legal harmonization constitutes an important preventive peacebuilding strategy capable of reducing structural vulnerabilities associated with forced migration and statelessness in Africa.

Keywords: Forced migration; statelessness; refugee law; internal displacement; peacebuilding

1. Introduction

Forced migration and statelessness increasingly shape the peace and security landscape across Africa. Although often framed primarily as humanitarian concerns, both phenomena possess significant legal, political, and socio-economic implications capable of influencing conflict dynamics

* Author: Emmanuel Owosanni, LLB; Legal Research Associate at University of Benin, Nigeria; Visiting Researcher at Queen's Law, Canada; Lead Researcher at Ajowa Research Institute; ORCID ID Number: 0009 0005-8924-7492; Contact at emmanuel.owosanni@law.uniben.edu | emmanuel.owosanni@queensu.ca

and governance stability. Displacement and exclusion from nationality affect access to rights, institutional legitimacy, and social cohesion, thereby creating structural vulnerabilities that may intensify instability where protection systems remain weak. Where individuals lack recognized legal identity or citizenship status, barriers to political participation, employment, education, and justice may reinforce marginalization and generate grievances capable of undermining peacebuilding processes.

International and regional legal frameworks provide normative foundations for addressing these vulnerabilities. Core instruments such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions, and the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement establish standards concerning protection, nationality rights, and safeguards against arbitrary displacement.¹

Within the African context, the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention expands the refugee definition to include persons fleeing events seriously disturbing public order, reflecting the continent's distinctive conflict realities.²

Similarly, the 2009 Kampala Convention represents a significant regional commitment to addressing internal displacement through obligations relating to prevention, protection, and durable solutions.³

Empirical evidence demonstrates that large-scale displacement may influence conflict trajectories through multiple pathways. Competition over land, water, and employment opportunities may intensify tensions between displaced populations and host communities where governance responses are insufficient.⁴ Climate variability in the Lake Chad Basin has contributed to communal violence associated with resource scarcity and population mobility.⁵

¹ Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 28 July 1951, 189 UNTS 137 (entered into force 22 April 1954); Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, 31 January 1967, 606 UNTS 267; Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 28 September 1954, 360 UNTS 117; Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 30 August 1961, 989 UNTS 175; UN Commission on Human Rights, *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, UN Doc E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2 (11 February 1998) (Deng Principles). See also UNHCR, *Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons Under the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2014), https://www.unhcr.org/ch/sites/ch/files/legacy-pdf/CH-UNHCR_Handbook-on-Protection-of-Stateless-Persons.pdf.

² Organization of African Unity (OAU), Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 10 September 1969, 1001 UNTS 45 (entered into force 20 June 1974), art 1(2); see also Platform on Disaster Displacement, "UNHCR Legal and Protection Policy Research Series: The 1969 OAU Convention and Disaster Displacement" (2016), <https://disasterdisplacement.org/resource/unhcr-legal-and-protection-policy-research-series-the-1969-oau-convention/>.

³ African Union, Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), 23 October 2009 (entered into force 6 December 2012), <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-africa>.

⁴ VAST BC, "The Trauma of Displacement and Refuge: An Overview in the Global Context" (2021), <https://www.vastbc.ca/articles/the-trauma-of-displacement-and-refuge-an-overview-in-the-global-context>; see also Nicola Daniele Coniglio, Vitorocco Peragine and Davide Vurchio, "The Effects of Refugees' Camps on Hosting Areas: Social Conflicts and Economic Growth" (2023) 168 *World Development* 106273, doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2023.106273.

⁵ Refugees International, *Climate-Fueled Violence and Displacement in the Lake Chad Basin: Focus on Chad and Cameroon* (Washington DC: Refugees International, 2022),

Nationality disputes have also played a role in political instability, as illustrated by identity documentation controversies linked to conflict in Côte d'Ivoire,⁶ and legal uncertainties affecting nationality status following the separation of Sudan and South Sudan.⁷

These examples illustrate the relationship between legal identity governance and broader questions of political inclusion and stability.

Institutional responses to forced migration involve complex interaction among international organizations, regional bodies, and national authorities. UNHCR and IOM perform central roles in refugee protection and migration governance, while the African Union and Regional Economic Communities contribute to policy coordination, albeit with overlapping mandates and capacity constraints. Variations in national legal frameworks further contribute to uneven protection standards, with some states adopting progressive refugee legislation permitting employment and mobility rights, while others lack comprehensive asylum or nationality regimes.⁸

This essay argues that forced migration and statelessness should be understood not merely as humanitarian outcomes of conflict, but as structural factors capable of shaping conflict dynamics themselves. Strengthening nationality protection, improving civil registration systems, and harmonizing regional governance frameworks may therefore contribute to conflict prevention by reducing structural inequalities associated with legal invisibility. Through examination of legal frameworks, institutional practices, and selected regional case studies, the analysis seeks to demonstrate how legal and policy strategies addressing displacement and nationality gaps may support more sustainable peacebuilding outcomes across Africa.

2. Definitions and Scope

Understanding forced migration and statelessness as structural drivers of conflict requires conceptual clarity regarding the legal and policy categories through which displacement is governed. Forced migration broadly refers to movements undertaken under conditions of compulsion rather than genuine choice.

<https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports-briefs/climate-fueled-violence-and-displacement-in-the-lake-chad-basin-focus-on-chad-and-cameroon/>.

⁶ Citizenship Rights in Africa Initiative, "ID Wars in Côte d'Ivoire" (27 September 2024), <https://citizenshiprightsafrika.org/id-wars-in-cote-divoire/>; Mirna Adjami, *Statelessness and Nationality in Côte d'Ivoire* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2016) (a study prepared for UNHCR, available via Refworld at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/58594d114.html>).

⁷ Open Society Foundations, "Nationality Laws Leave Many at Risk of Statelessness in the Two Sudans" (2011), <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/newsroom/nationality-laws-leave-many-risk-statelessness-two-sudans>.

⁸ See generally Refugees International, "The New Refugee Act in Kenya and What it Means for Refugees" (2022), <https://www.refugeesinternational.org/perspectives-and-commentaries/the-new-refugee-act-in-kenya-and-what-it-means-for-refugees/>; Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (2023), <https://www.statelesshub.org/region/africa>.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), forced migration includes movements driven by conflict, persecution, disasters, environmental degradation, and other circumstances that compel individuals or groups to leave their habitual residence.⁹

Unlike voluntary migration, forced migration reflects failures in protection systems and governance structures that prevent individuals from exercising meaningful agency over mobility decisions.

Within international refugee law, the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside their country of nationality and unable or unwilling to avail themselves of its protection.¹⁰

Recognizing the distinctive displacement dynamics within Africa, the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa expands this definition to include individuals compelled to flee events seriously disturbing public order, including civil wars, insurgencies, and generalized violence.¹¹

This broader formulation reflects the complex political and socio-economic realities shaping mobility patterns across the continent.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) constitute another key category within the forced migration framework. IDPs are defined as individuals or groups forced or obliged to flee their homes for reasons similar to those affecting refugees but who remain within the internationally recognized borders of their state.¹²

Despite not crossing an international border, IDPs frequently experience comparable vulnerabilities, including loss of livelihoods, limited access to public services, and exposure to violence. The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement provide normative guidance concerning protection standards and state responsibilities toward IDPs, emphasizing prevention of arbitrary displacement and provision of humanitarian assistance.

Mixed migration movements further complicate governance responses to forced mobility. Mixed flows typically involve individuals travelling together through irregular routes for diverse reasons, including persecution, economic hardship, trafficking risks, and environmental pressures.¹³

The convergence of humanitarian and economic drivers creates classification challenges for policymakers, as legal categories do not always reflect the lived realities of migrants whose motivations are multidimensional.

⁹ International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Key Migration Terms* (Geneva: IOM, 2019), <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms> (defining "forced migration" as encompassing movements driven by persecution, conflict, disasters and other compelling circumstances).

¹⁰ Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (n 1), art 1A(2). See also UNHCR, *Handbook and Guidelines on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, HCR/1P/4/ENG/REV.4 (Geneva: UNHCR, 2019).

¹¹ OAU Convention (n 2), art 1(2); Platform on Disaster Displacement (n 2).

¹² UN Commission on Human Rights, Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (n 1), Principle 2.

¹³ IOM, *World Migration Report 2022* (Geneva: IOM, 2022) 21–22, <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/> (discussing mixed migration flows and the convergence of humanitarian and economic drivers).

Statelessness represents a distinct yet closely related phenomenon within the broader displacement context. The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons defines a stateless person as an individual who is not considered a national by any state under the operation of its law.¹⁴

Absence of nationality results in legal invisibility, often preventing access to fundamental rights such as education, employment, healthcare, political participation, and legal protection. Stateless individuals frequently lack identity documentation, increasing vulnerability to exploitation, exclusion, and protracted marginalization.

Evidence indicates that stateless populations in Africa remain significantly under-documented, with reliable statistical data available in only a limited number of states, suggesting that the scale of statelessness may be considerably underestimated.¹⁵

This study adopts a broad analytical scope encompassing both internal displacement and cross-border refugee movements, recognizing that mobility patterns often intersect with nationality status and identity recognition. The analysis also considers mixed migration flows where they interact with conflict dynamics, particularly in contexts where individuals displaced by environmental pressures or governance fragility fall outside traditional legal classifications. By situating forced migration and statelessness within a shared conceptual framework, the essay highlights their relevance as structural conditions capable of influencing peace and security outcomes across African regions.

2.2 Legal Frameworks

Legal responses to forced migration and statelessness in Africa operate within a multi-layered normative system composed of international, regional, subregional, and domestic legal instruments. These frameworks establish the rights of displaced and stateless persons, define the obligations of states, and provide standards for protection, documentation, and durable solutions. Collectively, they reflect the recognition that legal identity, nationality, and protection from arbitrary displacement are central components of peace, stability, and accountable governance.

At the global level, refugee law, human rights law, and international humanitarian law provide foundational principles governing protection of individuals affected by conflict, persecution, and displacement. Complementing these instruments, African regional frameworks demonstrate an effort to adapt international norms to the continent's particular historical, political, and socio-economic realities. Regional Economic Communities further contribute to governance responses through mobility protocols and cooperative policy initiatives, although their mandates often intersect with broader development and security objectives.

Despite the existence of these legal regimes, implementation across national contexts remains uneven. Differences in ratification patterns, legislative incorporation, and administrative capacity continue to shape protection outcomes for displaced and stateless populations. The

¹⁴ Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (n 1), art 1(1). See further UNHCR, Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons (n 1).

¹⁵ Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (n 8); Refugees.org, "What is Statelessness? Causes, Impact, and Solutions" (2024), <https://refugees.org/what-is-statelessness/>; USA for UNHCR, "Five Things to Know About Statelessness" (2023), <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/five-things-to-know-about-statelessness/>.

interaction between international obligations and domestic legal systems therefore plays a significant role in determining the extent to which legal frameworks contribute to conflict prevention, social inclusion, and long-term peacebuilding.

2.2.1 International Instruments

Africa's countries are party to core international instruments: the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (and its 1967 Protocol) sets baseline refugee rights (non-refoulement, legal status, etc.), including the expanded OAU refugee definition.¹⁶

The 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and the 1954 Convention on Stateless Persons establish international standards to prevent and protect stateless persons. Although these statelessness treaties have far fewer African signatories than global treaties, African states have increasingly acceded in recent years.¹⁷

The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998) — while non-binding — are widely referenced; they define IDPs and affirm rights such as protection and humanitarian assistance.

Key international instruments are summarized in Table 1. The table includes both Regional and International Refugee Conventions (1969/2009 and 1951/1967 respectively), the 1954/1961 Statelessness Conventions, and the UN Guiding Principles on IDPs. All obligate signatories to respect basic rights and to collaborate but offer limited enforcement mechanisms.

Table 1: Key Legal Instruments on Displacement and Statelessness

Instrument	Type	Date	Scope / Notes	Key Provisions	AU State Parties
1951 Refugee Convention (with 1967 Protocol)	International treaty	1951 (1967 Protocol)	Global refugee definition; durable solutions.	Refugee rights (non-refoulement, legal residence, identity docs); refugee status criteria.	Many African states are signatories; defines 'refugee' narrowly by persecution grounds.
1969 OAU Convention on Refugees	AU Regional treaty	1969	Specific to Africa.	Expanded refugee definition: includes fleeing 'external aggression, occupation, foreign domination, or events seriously disturbing public	All AU members; supersedes 1951 where more favourable.

¹⁶ Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (n 1); Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (n 1); OAU Convention (n 2).

¹⁷ Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (n 1); Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (n 1); UNHCR, Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons (n 1) 1–3.

Instrument	Type	Date	Scope / Notes	Key Provisions	AU State Parties
				order.' No safe third-country requirement.	
UN Guiding Principles on IDPs	UN non-binding framework	1998	Global IDP framework.	IDP definition; rights to safety, humanitarian assistance, return, and restitution. Principle 28+: States' duty to protect IDPs.	Referenced by Kampala Convention and national policies; not legally binding but authoritative.
AU Kampala Convention (IDPs)	AU treaty	2009 (in force 2012)	Africa-specific IDP convention.	Obligations: prevent arbitrary displacement; protect IDP rights; assist returnees; remedy harms. Arts 11–12: resolve IDP land/housing/property disputes.	Ratified by ~30 AU states; the only binding continental IDP instrument.
1954 Statelessness Convention	International treaty	1954	Defines stateless persons; basic rights.	A stateless person is 'not considered as a national by any State.' Provides for travel documents and legal status.	Only ~10 African states party — major gaps.
1961 Statelessness Convention	International treaty	1961	Preventing statelessness.	Ban on depriving nationality, especially from birth; <i>jus soli</i> safeguards for children.	~10 African signatories.
AU Draft Protocol on Statelessness	AU treaty (not yet in force)	2024 (agreed)	Will be unique statelessness instrument in Africa.	Entitles every child to nationality; prohibits gender/ethnic discrimination; mandates SDPs and reform.	Signed by AU Assembly (Feb 2024) — awaiting ratification.
ECOWAS Protocols (Freedom of Movement)	Regional agreement	1979/1985/2017	West African free movement.	Visas abolished within ECOWAS; residence permits on arrival.	All ECOWAS members.

Instrument	Type	Date	Scope / Notes	Key Provisions	AU State Parties
IGAD Protocol on Free Movement	Regional protocol	2012	East African free movement.	Visa-free arrangements among member states.	IGAD members.
SADC Protocol on Movement	Regional protocol	2005	Southern African movement.	States reaffirm commitment to international refugee conventions.	SADC members.

Sources: UN treaty databases; AU Commission; UNHCR; scholarly analyses.

2.2.2 African Union and Subregional Instruments

Regionally, the landmark 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees (now under the AU) explicitly broadens the refugee definition to include those fleeing "events seriously disturbing public order".¹⁸

This covers persons escaping civil war, occupation, or large-scale violence (common in Africa) thus granting de facto asylum to conflict-displaced people not captured by 1951 Convention criteria. The 1969 OAU Convention remains binding on all AU members and has no geographic limitation, giving Africa a continent-specific refugee framework that complements global law.

The 2009 AU Kampala Convention on IDPs is the first binding continental treaty on internal displacement.¹⁹

It incorporates the Guiding Principles and specifically addresses African contexts (e.g., armed conflict, natural disasters, development projects). Key provisions include State duties to prevent arbitrary displacement, and to protect IDPs' rights.

Notably, Kampala mandates that States establish "simplified procedures" for resolving IDP land/property disputes, and to "restore the lands of communities with special dependency and attachment" upon return.²⁰ It also requires effective remedies (compensation or reparations) for harms suffered due to displacement.²¹

In practice, Kampala's focus on remedy rather than automatic restitution reflects Africa's complex land tenure systems.²²

In February 2024, the AU Assembly agreed on a Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Right to a Nationality (an "AU Statelessness Protocol") aimed at

¹⁸ OAU Convention (n 2), art 1(2).

¹⁹ Kampala Convention (n 3). See Brookings Institution, "What Does the Kampala Convention on Internal Displacement in Africa Mean for Housing, Land and Property Restitution?" (2013), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-does-the-kampala-convention-on-internal-displacement-in-africa-mean-for-housing-land-and-property-restitution/>.

²⁰ Kampala Convention (n 3), arts 11–12; Brookings Institution (n 19).

²¹ Kampala Convention (n 3), art 12(2); Brookings Institution (n 19).

²² Brookings Institution (n 19) (discussing the tension between restitution and compensation approaches under Kampala given complex African land tenure arrangements).

eradicating statelessness.²³ If ratified, this treaty would guarantee children's right to nationality and ban statelessness by descent.

This marks a major step, after over a decade of advocacy, in framing statelessness as a rights issue in Africa.²⁴

At the subregional level, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have relevant norms. ECOWAS (West Africa) has deep free-movement protocols (1979, 1985, 2017) enabling visa-free travel for citizens within the region, which facilitate mobility but do not specifically address forced displacement. ECOWAS has also endorsed humanitarian charters calling for collective responsibility for refugees and IDPs. IGAD (Horn/Northeast Africa) developed a Regional Migration Policy Framework (2019) and holds periodic ministerial declarations on durable solutions for refugees and displacement. SADC (Southern Africa) has a Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons (2005) recognizing commitments to refugee protection. Each REC's instruments create platforms for harmonization and burden-sharing, though often lack strong enforcement.

2.2.3 National Laws and Gaps

Many African states rely solely on the 1951/1967 Refugee regime; only a handful have comprehensive asylum laws.

Notable national refugee laws include Uganda's Refugees Act (2006) and Kenya's Refugees Act (2021). These statutes grant refugees the right to work, move freely, own businesses, and access education/healthcare — far more than most countries.²⁵

The 2021 Kenyan Act is particularly progressive: it explicitly affords freedom of movement, work rights and bank access,²⁶ and envisions transforming camps (Kakuma, Dadaab) into integrated settlements to benefit local economies.²⁷

Other countries with legal asylum frameworks include Ethiopia (2019 Refugee Proclamation), South Africa (Refugees Act 1998), Ghana (Refugee Law 2016), Rwanda (Refugee Law 2018), and Botswana (Refugees Act 1968).

Few states have laws on internal displacement. Nigeria's 2012 National Emergency Management Agency Act touches on IDPs, and several countries have drafted IDP policies, but statutory IDP rights are rare.

Equally, there is virtually no African national legislation on statelessness determination or children's right to nationality (except a few constitutions). Liberia's 2019 Citizenship Law forbids

²³ African Union Assembly, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa, AU Doc Assembly/AU/Dec.869(XXXVII) (Addis Ababa, 17–18 February 2024); Citizenship Rights in Africa Initiative, "At Last A Treaty to Protect Citizenship Rights and End Statelessness in Africa" (18 February 2024), <https://citizenshiprightsafrica.org/at-last-a-treaty-to-protect-citizenship-rights-and-end-statelessness-in-africa/>.

²⁴ Ibid; see also UNHCR, "#IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness" (ongoing), <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/>.

²⁵ Refugees Act 2006 (Uganda), ss 28–30; Refugees Act 2021 (Kenya), ss 30–35; see Refugees International, "The New Refugee Act in Kenya" (n 8).

²⁶ Refugees Act 2021 (Kenya), ss 30–35; Refugees International, "The New Refugee Act in Kenya" (n 8).

²⁷ Refugees International, "The New Refugee Act in Kenya" (n 8) (discussing the Kalobeyei model and the plan to transform camps into integrated settlements).

discrimination and grants nationality to children who would otherwise be stateless; Sierra Leone (2017) and Madagascar (2017) amended laws to remove gender discrimination. But most states have nationality laws with gender or ethnic biases.²⁸ Gaps are stark: per UNHCR, half of African countries provide no guaranteed citizenship to children born on their soil if they cannot get it by parentage.²⁹

In summary, Africa's legal landscape is a patchwork. Where national laws are absent or inadequate, states often default to applying the 1951/1967 Conventions (if parties) or the 1969 OAU Convention by principle. This uneven legal coverage creates vulnerabilities: refugees or displaced persons in "legal limbo" (or stateless persons without rights) face heightened risk of exploitation and marginalization.

3. Institutional Actors and Coordination

Multiple international and regional actors operate in Africa's migration-displacement arena. UNHCR leads refugee and statelessness protection: it registers asylum-seekers, assists with camp management or urban support, and advocates legal reform (e.g., gender-equal nationality laws). UNHCR also monitors statelessness through its Global Data Service, and launches identification and legal aid campaigns (e.g., the #IBelong statelessness campaign).³⁰

IOM (UN Migration Agency) focuses on migration management (border control, mobility schemes) but increasingly engages with forced displacement, climate migration, and returns. A recent UN Global Compact on Migration gave IOM a formal global leadership role, overlapping UNHCR's refugee mandate in mixed flows. Coordination between UNHCR and IOM can be challenging: for instance, who provides humanitarian assistance to IDPs or climate-displaced populations is not always clear, leading to "institutional turf" disputes.

Within the African Union, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peace and Security Council address displacement as a peace-security issue. The AU Commission's Social Affairs Directorate engages on refugees/migrants, and the Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum-Seekers and IDPs provides monitoring and recommendations. However, AU implementation capacity is limited by political sensitivities: member states may resist AU pressure on migration issues due to sovereignty concerns.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) play a role. ECOWAS and SADC have free-movement frameworks and have sometimes mobilized regionally for refugee crises. IGAD has hosted refugee summits and created a Somali refugee framework. The East African Community (EAC) has drafted common refugee legislation to harmonize practices. However, RECs often lack dedicated institutional capacity or funding specifically for forced migration.

Coordination challenges include mandate overlap between IOM and UNHCR in mixed migration or climate displacement; governments prioritizing national security over refugee

²⁸ Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (n 8); Bronwen Manby, "Nationality, Migration and Statelessness in West Africa: A Study for UNHCR and IOM" (June 2015), <https://www.unhcr.org/54d5f5f89.pdf>.

²⁹ UNHCR, "Ending Statelessness" (referencing UNHCR Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024) cited in USA for UNHCR, "Five Things to Know About Statelessness" (n 15); Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (n 8).

³⁰ UNHCR, "#IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness" (n 24).

protection; funding silos between humanitarian and development donors; fragmented data and information-sharing; and weak enforcement of regional agreements across borders. Building effective partnerships through mechanisms like the AU's Continental Early Warning System or joint donor frameworks can help align efforts, but political will and resources are essential.

4 Forced Migration, Statelessness, and Conflict: Causal Links

Displacement and statelessness both emerge from conflict and governance failures, but they can also drive conflict by creating grievances, straining resources, and fueling instability. The causal mechanisms include:

a) Resource Competition and Tension: Large inflows of refugees/IDPs can overwhelm scarce resources (land, water, jobs) in fragile host areas, provoking social friction. A 2023 World Bank/UNHCR study found that the establishment of refugee camps in Africa led to increased protests and local tensions for the first two years, though not sustained deadly violence.³¹ However, these tensions may subside as camps become economically integrated. The study concludes that over time "increased socioeconomic interactions" and diffusion of camp-generated economic activity eased host-refugee relations.³² Nonetheless, poorly managed camps can drive conflict. Kenyan refugee camps, previously run under a restrictive "encampment policy," had degraded surrounding lands and water, and research noted that "environmental damage ... has also acted as a catalyst for conflict between host and refugee communities".³³

b) Militarization and Militancy: Armed groups may exploit refugee or IDP populations. In the Horn of Africa, some UN reports and analyses suggest that refugee camps (e.g., in Dadaab, Kenya) were infiltrated by militant recruiters for Al-Shabaab. Conversely, forced return of combatants (with weapons) into communities of origin can reignite conflicts. Large-scale IDP camps can also become de facto military recruitment grounds if not demilitarized.

c) Statelessness and Political Exclusion: Stateless groups or those with unclear citizenship often lack legal voice or rights. A stark example is Côte d'Ivoire: political elites stoked identity exclusion (the ideology of "Ivoirité") to bar northerners from citizenship. The ensuing identity crisis — literally a "war for papers" — was a central trigger of the Ivorian civil war in 2002–2011.³⁴ Rebel leaders openly framed their insurrection as a campaign to gain IDs and rights for stateless northerners.³⁵ Similarly, after South Sudan's 2011 independence, incompatible nationality laws in

³¹ Coniglio, Peragine and Vurchio (n 4); Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC), "The Effects of Refugee Camps on Hosting Areas: Social Conflicts and Economic Growth — Literature Review" (2023), https://www.jointdatacenter.org/literature_review/the-effects-of-refugees-camps-on-hosting-areas-social-conflicts-and-economic-growth/ (reviewing the 2023 World Development study).

³² Coniglio, Peragine and Vurchio (n 4) (finding that increased socioeconomic interactions between camp populations and host communities produced economic spillovers that eased tensions over time).

³³ Refugees International, "The New Refugee Act in Kenya" (n 8) (noting environmental degradation in and around Kenyan encampments and its role in fuelling host-refugee tension).

³⁴ Citizenship Rights in Africa Initiative, "ID Wars in Côte d'Ivoire" (n 6); Mirna Adjami, Statelessness and Nationality in Côte d'Ivoire (n 6).

³⁵ Ibid; Open Society Justice Initiative, "People v. Côte d'Ivoire" (describing rebel leaders' framing of the insurrection as a demand for identity documents and citizenship rights), <https://www.justiceinitiative.org/litigation/people-v-c-te-divoire>.

Khartoum and Juba risked making long-resident southerners stateless, feeding mistrust between the new states.³⁶ In Darfur and South Kordofan, groups denied Sudanese nationality have cited statelessness as a factor in secessionist conflicts.

d) Governance Vacuum: In areas of weak state authority, displaced or stateless populations may become ungoverned. For instance, refugees returning to a conflict zone can tip the balance. During the Rwandan genocide, millions of Hutu refugees streamed into eastern Zaire (now DRC); the refugee settlements later became bases for armed groups (Hutu militias), which helped precipitate renewed war in Rwanda and beyond.

e) Human Rights Abuses: Large-scale displacement often comes with protection crises that undermine social cohesion. Sexual and gender-based violence in camps, land dispossession of IDPs, and xenophobic violence undermine trust. The trauma and grievance from such abuses can radicalize communities.

4.1 Empirical Case Studies

a) Lake Chad Basin: Over 3 million people have fled Boko Haram violence in Nigeria/Cameroon/Chad. Climate change has exacerbated this: drought shrank Lake Chad, intensifying farmer-herder conflict. In 2021, severe water scarcity triggered communal clashes in Cameroon's Far North (Logone Birni), prompting approximately 60,000 mostly Muslim pastoralists to seek refuge in Chad.³⁷ Aid organizations note that "competition for land, water, and food ... has led to an uptick in intercommunal fighting and displacement", illustrating how climate stress, conflict and displacement form a vicious cycle.³⁸ Horn of Africa: Repeated Somali civil wars and Ethiopian-Ogaden conflicts generated millions of refugees to Kenya, Ethiopia, and beyond. Long-term displacement contributed to urban slum growth and, by some accounts, provided fertile ground for recruitment by extremists.

b) Great Lakes/Central Africa: In the DRC, decades of war displaced populations and blurred citizenship lines. Rwanda's genocide sent 2.5 million refugees into DRC;³⁹ subsequent conflict in eastern DRC was fueled by genocidaires among them. Conversely, Burundi saw refugee repatriation without full reconciliation fuel the 1993–2005 civil war dynamics.

c) Central African Republic (CAR): Repeated coups and sectarian violence (2013 onwards) produced over 1 million IDPs.⁴⁰ Militia groups exploited refugee flows and fighters abducted villagers. Violence in CAR is closely linked to cross-border displacement with Chad/Sudan.

³⁶ Open Society Foundations, "Nationality Laws Leave Many at Risk of Statelessness in the Two Sudans" (n 7).

³⁷ Refugees International, Climate-Fueled Violence and Displacement in the Lake Chad Basin (n 5) (reporting on the 2021 displacement of approximately 60,000 pastoralists from Cameroon's Far North region to Chad following severe water scarcity).

³⁸ Ibid (quoting aid organisation assessments of intercommunal fighting driven by competition for land, water and food in the Lake Chad Basin).

³⁹ UNHCR, *The State of the World's Refugees: A Humanitarian Agenda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) ch 2 (on the 1994 Rwandan genocide and mass displacement into Zaire/DRC).

⁴⁰ UNHCR, "Central African Republic Emergency" (UNHCR Global Focus, 2023), <https://reporting.unhcr.org/car> (reporting over 1 million IDPs as of 2023).

d) Sudan/South Sudan: Contested nationality after partition risked statelessness. Darfur's conflict (from 2003) generated 2.5 million IDPs;⁴¹ many Darfurians felt their marginalization by Khartoum's Arab-dominated regime was a continuation of chronic statelessness and discrimination, fueling rebellion. Ethnic conflicts in Southern Sudan (before and after independence) were likewise entangled with citizenship issues among cross-border tribes.

e) Mozambique: The current insurgency in Cabo Delgado (N. Mozambique) has displaced over 800,000 people. While this conflict's drivers are complex (economic and Islamist), displaced Muslim communities (often marginalized by Christian-majority state) face both statelessness risks and recruitment by insurgents.

These cases suggest that displacement and statelessness are more than byproducts of conflict: they can become structural drivers when grievances of the uprooted are unaddressed. Conversely, research also shows that well-managed refugee situations can spur local development: one study found that, over time, refugee camps boosted the built-up areas of host communities, indicating potential "win-win" outcomes.⁴² The key is how policies channel migration and citizenship issues – toward peace or conflict.

5. Legal and Policy Interventions

Given the above, robust legal and policy measures are needed at multiple levels:

- a) Prevention of Displacement:** Address root causes (conflict resolution, human rights, climate adaptation). Strengthening inclusive governance (citizenship equality, rule of law) prevents crises that displace people. For statelessness, reforms to nationality laws (e.g., granting *jus soli* or removing discriminatory clauses) prevent new statelessness.⁴³
- b) Protection of Refugees and IDPs:** Ensure legal safeguards and assistance. At borders, uphold non-refoulement. Once admitted, states should provide rights (education, health) as per Kampala/Refugee laws. Uganda's practice (refugees free to work and own land) is a model.⁴⁴ Protection includes basic humanitarian aid (shelter, food, healthcare) coordinated via UN clusters. For urban refugees and IDPs, municipalities need capacity-building to integrate newcomers (e.g., land for housing, social programs) to reduce informal settlements.
- c) Durable Solutions:** Promote return, local integration, or resettlement. The Kampala Convention urges post-conflict governments to help IDPs return or locally integrate, with

⁴¹ United Nations, "Darfur Crisis" (UN Department of Safety and Security, 2023), <https://www.un.org/en/africa/darfur>; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), *Global Internal Displacement Database — Sudan Profile* (IDMC, 2023), <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/sudan>.

⁴² Coniglio, Peragine and Vurchio (n 4) (documenting growth in built-up areas of host communities attributable to refugee-camp economic activity over time).

⁴³ UNHCR, *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2014), <https://www.unhcr.org/54621bf49.pdf> (Action 4 on preventing statelessness through law reform, including *jus soli* safeguards).

⁴⁴ World Bank, "An Assessment of Uganda's Progressive Approach to Refugee Management", Working Essay No 107235 (World Bank, 2016), <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/259711469593058429/pdf/107235-WP-PUBLIC.pdf> (citing the 2006 Refugees Act and 2010 Refugees Regulations as exemplary models).

remedies for lost property.⁴⁵ For stateless persons, states should enact statelessness determination procedures (SDPs) following UNHCR Guidelines and grant legal status to confirmed stateless individuals, leading to eventual naturalization.⁴⁶

- d) Legal Identity and Documentation:** A key intervention is universal birth registration and ID issuance. UNHCR's Global Action Plan highlights birth registration as critical to prevent statelessness.⁴⁷ States must ensure all children in camps or displaced get birth certificates. They should provide identity cards or nationality documents to at-risk groups. For example, Rwanda introduced biometric IDs in post-genocide recovery to resolve "papers" issues.⁴⁸ Similarly, national ID drives in Somalia and Sudan/South Sudan can regularize status. Documentation also aids service delivery (schools, voting) and distinguishes genuine refugees from others, facilitating targeted assistance.
- e) Land and Housing Restitution:** Following Kampala's lead, governments ought to set up special Land Commissions to adjudicate IDP property claims.⁴⁹ For instance, Liberia's post-war Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended restoring land to displaced populations, and Kenya passed a Land Act (2012) with mechanisms for displaced people. Transitional justice measures (truth commissions, reparations) should explicitly consider displacement.
- f) Inclusion and Social Cohesion:** Gender-sensitive measures are crucial: women and girls face higher risks (sexual violence, trafficking) in displacement, and many nationality laws still bar mothers from transmitting citizenship.⁵⁰ Legal reforms should eliminate all gender-based nationality discrimination, as urged by UNHCR.⁵¹
- g) Transitional Justice and Accountability:** Addressing atrocities and injustices linked to displacement can defuse cycles of revenge. Tribunals or truth commissions (e.g., Sierra Leone's TRC) should include chapters on IDP abuses. Holding perpetrators accountable signals that violations (e.g., ethnic cleansing of a group) will not be repeated. Justice measures can also facilitate reconciliation: for instance, including former rebel-turned-displaced persons in peace talks ensures their needs (land, citizenship) are heard.

6. Best Practices and Lessons Learned

⁴⁵ Kampala Convention (n 3), art 11; Brookings Institution (n 19).

⁴⁶ UNHCR, *Guidelines on Statelessness No 1–4* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2012–2014), <https://www.unhcr.org/statelessness-guidelines.html>; UNHCR, Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons (n 1).

⁴⁷ UNHCR, Global Action Plan to End Statelessness (n 43) (Action 7 on ensuring universal birth registration and nationality documentation for all children).

⁴⁸ Republic of Rwanda, Law No 17/1999 of 28 October 1999 on Immigration and Emigration as subsequently amended; see also Human Rights Watch, *Ituri: "Covered in Blood": Ethnically Targeted Violence in Northeastern DR Congo* (HRW, 2003) (noting Rwanda's post-genocide efforts to standardize documentation and resolve identity status).

⁴⁹ Kampala Convention (n 3), art 12(1)–(2); Brookings Institution (n 19).

⁵⁰ Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (n 8); UNHCR, Global Action Plan to End Statelessness (n 43) (Action 3 on removing gender discrimination from nationality laws); Bronwen Manby, *Citizenship Law in Africa: A Comparative Study*, 3rd edn (New York: Open Society Foundations, 2016).

⁵¹ UNHCR, Global Action Plan to End Statelessness (n 43), Action 3; USA for UNHCR, "Five Things to Know About Statelessness" (n 15).

Several African initiatives illustrate effective strategies:

a) Uganda's Open-Door Policy

Uganda's 2006 Refugee Act and 2010 Refugee Regulations are often cited as among the world's most progressive. Uganda grants refugees freedom of movement, work, and land access, and integrates them into communities. The outcome is largely positive: higher education enrollment among refugee children, and booming markets in refugee-hosting districts. However, challenges remain (tension with host poor communities, funding shortfalls), showing that even good policies need constant support.⁵²

b) Kenya's Kakuma/Kalobeyei Model

Kenya's new 2021 Refugee Act and the Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement plan show a shift from camps to towns. Hosting over 50,000 refugees, Kalobeyei is co-managed with Turkana County government and development partners, aiming to serve both refugees and local people.⁵³

Early results include new businesses, schools, and joint water projects. The Kenyan law's recognition of refugee contributions (a 3% local GDP boost, per one report) and its abolition of encampment mark a significant policy shift.⁵⁴

c) Ethiopia's IDP Policy and Refugee Law

Ethiopia's 2019 Refugee Proclamation allows temporary residence, work, and education for refugees, and even possibilities for eventual naturalization. Ethiopia also piloted a national IDP policy that outlined government roles for IDP response, drawing on Kampala. Ethiopia's Omo-Turkana cross-border peace dialogues show how local mediation can reduce displacement triggers.

d) National Initiatives on Statelessness

Liberia's 2019 law and subsequent implementation program stand out. By granting nationality to stateless children and removing literacy/nativity tests, Liberia set an example of legal reform to end statelessness. Senegal (2013) launched a countryside birth registration campaign, dramatically increasing documented citizenship. In Côte d'Ivoire, post-conflict reforms included regularizing nationality for disenfranchised groups.

e) Lessons from Best Practices

Progressive legal frameworks (especially granting rights, not just camps) improve outcomes.⁵⁵ Integration of refugees in local economies can boost development.⁵⁶ Addressing statelessness requires both law reform and political will, including ending gender discrimination.⁵⁷

⁵² World Bank, "An Assessment of Uganda's Progressive Approach to Refugee Management" (n 44) (describing the 2006 Act and 2010 Regulations as embodying freedom of movement, right to work, and land access for refugees).

⁵³ Refugees International, "The New Refugee Act in Kenya" (n 8).

⁵⁴ Ibid (reporting a 3% local GDP contribution by refugees in Kenya according to cited research).

⁵⁵ World Bank (n 44); Coniglio, Peragine and Vurchio (n 4).

⁵⁶ World Bank (n 44) (documenting economic contributions by refugees in Uganda including agricultural surpluses and small business activity).

⁵⁷ Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (n 8); UNHCR, Global Action Plan to End Statelessness (n 43).

Finally, inclusive planning (involving local authorities and communities) tends to forestall hostilities, whereas isolation of displaced groups (segregated camps, denied rights) increases risks of conflict.

7. Gaps, Barriers, and Risks

a) Political Barriers

Some governments view refugees/IDPs through a security lens, limiting rights out of fear of insurgents or overburdening resources. Xenophobic or nationalist politics often scapegoat migrants, hindering protective policies. For instance, South African politicians have at times instrumentalized anti-immigrant rhetoric to win votes⁵⁸, leading to violent xenophobic attacks (669 deaths of migrants since 1994).⁵⁹

b) Legal and Policy Gaps

Many states have not yet enacted essential laws. A majority of AU states are still not party to the statelessness Conventions.⁶⁰

National asylum and IDP laws are absent in much of Africa, leaving gaps in eligibility criteria and rights. The Kampala Convention, though pioneering, has been ratified by only approximately 30 of 55 AU states, and few countries have aligned national law to it.⁶¹

c) Resource Constraints

Humanitarian aid and development budgets are insufficient for the scale of need. Donor fatigue is a real risk. Many African host countries are themselves low-income, with limited fiscal space to support large displaced populations. Capacity shortages (lack of trained lawyers, judges, or land registrars) also delay legal reforms and claims processing.

d) Securitization of Migration

The trend to treat migration as a security threat reduces rights. Some governments, fearing infiltration by terrorists, have resisted hosting refugees or labeled migrants as "invaders." The Kenya "Dadaab hot pursuit" case illustrates this tension. Overemphasis on security leads to militarized borders and pushes displaced populations into informal (and unprotected) exile.

e) Social Barriers and Xenophobia

Host community resentment (over jobs or aid) can spiral into ethnic tension. The South Africa case is extreme, but localized xenophobia appears elsewhere. Stateless minorities live under discrimination. Lack of social cohesion programs makes cohabitation fraught.⁶²

⁵⁸ Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, "Xenophobia: A Pervasive Crisis in Post-Apartheid South Africa" (2022), <https://gija.georgetown.edu/human-rights-development/xenophobia-a-pervasive-crisis-in-post-apartheid-south-africa/>.

⁵⁹ Ibid (citing statistics on migrant deaths linked to xenophobic violence in South Africa since 1994).

⁶⁰ Stateless Hub, "Africa Region Overview" (n 8).

⁶¹ African Union, "List of Countries Which Have Signed, Ratified/Accessed to the Kampala Convention" (AU, 2024), <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-africa>.

⁶² Georgetown Journal of International Affairs (n 58).

f) Data and Legal Barriers

A practical risk is lack of data and civil documentation. Many displaced people, especially IDPs, are uncaptured in censuses and surveys; stateless persons by definition lack records. This invisibility means policies may not reach them. Without legal documents, people cannot claim rights or prove nationality, perpetuating statelessness across generations.

8. Recommendations

To address forced migration and statelessness as drivers of conflict, the following actions are recommended for key stakeholders.

a) African Union and Continental Level

In the short term (1–2 years), the AU should finalize ratification and entry into force of the AU Statelessness Protocol⁶³ and encourage all member states to ratify the Kampala Convention.⁶⁴

The AU should also issue a model law on statelessness, launch a continental free birth-registration campaign, and establish an AU Migration Observatory. In the medium term (3–5 years), the AU should integrate forced migration into PSC agendas, develop continent-wide guidelines on IDP law harmonization, launch an African Network on Statelessness, and mobilize regional financing for durable solutions. In the long term (5+ years), forced migration governance should be embedded in Agenda 2063 and successor frameworks.

b) Regional Economic Communities

RECs should map member states' asylum and statelessness laws to identify gaps and draft region-wide refugee status regulations. They should convene ministerial working groups on durable solutions, create dedicated migration and displacement coordination units, formalize inter-REC cooperation, and ultimately develop binding regional treaties addressing climate-induced displacement.

c) National Governments

Governments should ratify core treaties, enact or update asylum, IDP, and nationality laws, and issue executive orders for temporary protection in crisis situations. In the medium term, they should establish or empower national refugee and integration agencies, train judges and officials in humanitarian law, invest in refugee education and vocational training, create land rights programmes for IDPs, and include displaced populations in national development plans. In the long term, they should promote social inclusion through naturalization pathways, reform constitutions to eliminate gender and ethnic discrimination in nationality law, and build climate resilience to reduce future displacement.

d) International Partners

International partners should provide seed funding and technical assistance for law drafting, support AU and REC secretariats, and fund immediate refugee-hosting needs. In the medium term, they should scale up development cooperation in refugee-hosting regions, assist in statistical

⁶³ AU Statelessness Protocol (n 23).

⁶⁴ Kampala Convention (n 3).

capacity-building, and encourage diaspora and private-sector investment in displaced-host communities.⁶⁵

9. Implementation Roadmap

A phased roadmap sequences these recommendations into short-, medium-, and long-term priorities. In the near term, legal harmonization and institutional set-up are critical; in the medium term, the focus shifts to programmatic integration and reform; in the longer term, to structural transformation toward stability. Coordination bodies (the AU, RECs, and national task forces) must monitor progress and adjust timelines. Funding should be matched to phases: emergency response now, development projects later. Capacity-building underpins every stage.

Continental actions prioritized in the near term include ratification of the Kampala Convention⁶⁶ and AU Statelessness Protocol,⁶⁷ the launch of a universal registration campaign, and the establishment of an AU Migration Observatory. At the national level, the enactment and updating of asylum and IDP laws, the creation of statelessness determination procedures, and civil registration overhauls should precede longer-term integration programmes and gender-equality reforms in nationality law. International support should front-load funding mechanisms and technical legal assistance, transitioning over time to sustained development financing, data collection, and long-term resilience investments.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

A robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is essential to track progress. Key indicators should be both quantitative and qualitative, spanning the following domains:

- (a) Ratification and legislation:** number of African states ratifying the Kampala Convention,⁶⁸ the AU Statelessness Protocol, or enacting national asylum and IDP laws; presence of SDPs in domestic law.
- (b) Coverage:** percentage of births registered (baseline versus target); number and percentage of displaced children in school.
- (c) Solution outcomes:** numbers of refugees voluntarily repatriated, resettled, or locally integrated per year; numbers of IDPs returned or settled locally; speed of refugee status determination (RSD) decisions.
- (d) Legal resolution:** number of statelessness determination claims processed and granted; number of land restitution cases adjudicated.
- (e) Capacity:** number of staff trained in asylum and displacement law; national budget allocations for refugee and IDP response.
- (f) Coordination:** frequency of regional meetings or joint plans on displacement; existence of national displacement strategies.

⁶⁵ See World Bank, "Refugee-Related Forced Displacement Overview" (World Bank, 2024), <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/forced-displacement>.

⁶⁶ Kampala Convention (n 3).

⁶⁷ AU Statelessness Protocol (n 23).

⁶⁸ Kampala Convention (n 3).

- (g) Protection metrics:** incidence of gender-based violence in camps; access to health services — drawn from humanitarian agencies and national surveys.
- (h) Social indicators:** surveys of host-community attitudes to detect xenophobia trends; rates of conflict incidents in host areas.

Periodic evaluations (at 3–5-year intervals) should assess not merely legal compliance but actual outcomes: are displaced people and former refugees effectively integrated, or is conflict recurring? All data and progress reports should be made publicly available through AU, REC, or UN portals. Success stories should be highlighted to build political support, while shortcomings must be candidly reported.

11. Conclusion

Addressing forced migration and statelessness in Africa demands a multi-layered legal and policy response. By clarifying rights, strengthening institutions, and promoting inclusive solutions, stakeholders can mitigate these structural drivers of conflict. The measures recommended in this essay (from treaty ratification to community integration, land restitution, gender-equal nationality law, and robust M&E) echo lessons drawn from best practices across the continent and aim to close critical gaps. Restoring security and social cohesion in Africa requires recognizing displaced and stateless people not as problems, but as rights-holders and contributors to Africa's future.

Abbreviations

AU – African Union
CAR – Central African Republic
DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC – East African Community
ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States
IDPs – Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOM – International Organization for Migration
M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation
OAU – Organization of African Unity
PSC – Peace and Security Council
RECs – Regional Economic Communities
RSD – Refugee Status Determination
SADC – Southern African Development Community
SDPs – Statelessness Determination Procedures
TRC – Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN – United Nations
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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