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### Welcome to Issue 8 of the CERTIZENS Newsletter:

Welcome to CERTIZENS Newsletter #8. In this issue, we feature brief reflections from two of the CERTIZENS team members, and as usual highlight both a selection of news items sourced from various media, and a range of journal articles, books/ book chapters, reports and podcasts revealing the growing spectrum of in-depth attention being given to matters concerning IDs and related concerns. We hope you will enjoy this issue's choice of featured materials.

As for CERTIZENS itself, in addition to the ongoing research activities of team members, we have started the year actively connecting with one another and with other relevant researchers. In late January, almost all of us met for the Annual CERTIZENS Team Meeting in Kampala, where we were warmly hosted by the CERTIZENS Uganda Team. Among our activities during the week was a very enlightening research seminar at Makerere University bringing us into conversation with both academic staff and policy makers from key state certification/ registration authorities related to different national IDs in Uganda.

In January, CERTIZENS PI Amanda Hammar participated in a fascinating workshop at the University of Amsterdam on Legal Identity by AIP7 hosted by Dr Ineke Harbers who leads the ERC Project *CitizenGap*. Resulting from this, three PhDs attached to this project – whose PhDs are all focused on Asian cases – joined the five Africa-focused CERTIZENS PhDs in Copenhagen for an intensive PhD Workshop on 28 April. Among other things, this provides great scope for cross-regional, open comparativism and further collaborations.

All five CERTIZENS are in Copenhagen at present since our two Ghanaian and two Ugandan PhDs are on a research stay at the Centre of African Studies for three months (April – June 2023). Besides other focused activities during this period, they will be preparing their papers to present at a CERTIZENS-focused panel at the forthcoming European Conference on African Studies (ECAS) in Cologne at the end of May. The panel, entitled *Changing African ID systems and reshaped citizen futures* (Panel P012), includes all CERTIZENS members as well as several non-CERTIZENS researchers. (For more about the ECAS programme, see here).

As always, we welcome your comments and contributions to the CERTIZENS Newsletter.

Amanda Hammar, CERTIZENS Project Leader  
Copenhagen, April, 2023



Photo: CERTIZENS team at the Annual Meeting in Kampala, February 2023

## CERTIZENS Updates

### Recent reflections from CERTIZENS researchers



Photo (source: NIA (left), Satou Oteyeh), Births and Deaths Registry (right), Google Maps (Barbara Abougey)

**Fieldwork reflections: Studying the social life of 'global' ID policy**

Amanda Wendel Malm, one of CERTIZENS' PhD researchers, shares some of her fieldwork reflections on the discrepancies in prioritisation of and resource allocation to different spheres of citizen registration, namely National and Digital Identification (NDI) and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS). She draws on fieldwork in Ghana, New York and Washington DC. See [here](#).



**Universal connectivity by 2030, will Africa ever get there?**

Gifty Cuthbin, one of CERTIZENS' MPhil researchers, reflects on an online report: *Digital 2023: Global Overview Report* – recently published online by Kepios, a strategy consultancy addressing people's evolving digital behaviour. See [here](#).

## In the News

Here we present a selection of CERTIZENS-relevant issues in the press. To suggest a news report or feature for the next newsletter, please email: [certizens@teol.ku.dk](mailto:certizens@teol.ku.dk)

**Global Estimate For People Without ID Reduced To 850 Million**  
According to *The Independent*, ID4D has updated its dataset from 2021 to 2022 to reflect a new estimate for the number of people worldwide without "official proof of identity". From just under a billion in 2018, it has been revised to just under 850 million in 2021.

**Ghana: Electoral Commission faces resistance over new voter registration requirement**  
A proposed constitutional charge mandating the national identity card as the sole document for prospective voters to confirm their citizenship and register is being opposed on the grounds that it could leave many disenfranchised. Its introduction would replace a guarantor system where a registered voter can vouch for the citizenship of a potential voter says *The Africa Report*.

**NIRA, UNEB roll out mass registration, issuance of NINs to all secondary school learners**  
The exam body, UNEB and National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) in Uganda have decided to use national identification numbers as a tool for continuous assessment for students. While useful for recording scores, the nationwide registration exercise is also aimed at promoting access to other public services that require IDs. See more at *Nile Post*.

**Biometric ID card delays among reasons for Mali constitutional referendum postponement**  
Mailweb reports on delays with the constitutional referendum in Mali due to widespread lack of distribution of biometric IDs, demonstrating how significant national IDs are for political participation. See more at *Biometrics Update*.

**Kenyan government seeks to differentiate new national digital ID from Huduma Namba**  
Biometrics Update reports on a Kenyan government initiative to provide digital identity to all Kenyans by February, 2024. This will build on an existing central population database and interact with the National Information Management System to promote access to government services. As there is no ID card linked to it, the project differs from Huduma Namba.

**Identification and Civil Registration: A lifeline for displaced people in Mozambique – World Bank Blogs**  
World Bank Blogs interviews Tiago Peixoto, Senior Public Sector Specialist at the Bank's Governance Global Practice, and Lizardo Nunez, Mozambique, Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist to unpack a recovery project for internally displaced individuals in Mozambique, following the humanitarian crisis in the North.

**Zimbabweans urged to go for ID cards as catch-up registration drive imminent**  
Zimbabweans are being encouraged to obtain ID documents (birth certificates and ID cards) in wake of the upcoming general election. The issuing of these documents, like previous identification campaigns, will be free according to *The Herald*. See more at *Biometrics Update*.

**And more...**  
Kenya to clear backlog of biometric passports, new 'smart and digital ID' system coming. *Biometric Update*, 6 Feb 2023

South Africa's plans for integrated digital ID advance as cabinet approves dedicated bill. *Biometric Update*, 21 Feb 2023

The Gambia: Kenya country choose biometrics to identify, weed out absent public servants. *Biometric Update*, 23 Feb 2023

Tanzania suspends expiration dates for national identification cards – *The East African*, 23 February 2023

## What We're Reading

This section presents a selection of recent journal articles, books, reports and blogs on CERTIZENS-relevant themes. To suggest an item for the next newsletter please send a link to the work and a brief description of its relevance to: [certizens@teol.ku.dk](mailto:certizens@teol.ku.dk)

## Journal articles

**Citizenship Matters: Explorations into the Citizen-State Relationship in Africa**  
Henning Melber, Jesper Bjarnesen, Christiano Lanzano and Patience Mususa *Forum for Development Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2023

**In brief:** This article engages with the concept of citizenship and its associated challenges using cases from Sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing from policy, media reports and academic literature, the authors discuss the role of citizenship and its relevance in African societies. They explore social contracts, rule of law and governance to make a case for how African countries must reconfigure their relationships with their citizens and build trust.

**Denationalization in the Dominican Republic: Trapping Victims in the State's Administrative Maze**  
Wendy Hunter and Francesca Recek *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 57

**In brief:** This article sheds light on how the Dominican Republic (DR) retroactively stripped thousands of Dominican-Haitians of their Dominican citizenship over time, yet managed to defuse international human rights anger and critique. The authors offer compelling insight into the ways in which the DR state used administrative obstructionism to both hide the mechanisms of their assault on people's citizenship, and gradually wear down the legal and political actions against them.

**The invisible children: protecting the right to birth registration in South Africa**  
H Kruger *Journal for Juridical Science*, Vol. 47, No. 2, 2022

**In brief:** This article centres around the overarching question as to whether the legislative framework for birth registration in South Africa is optimal for achieving the UNICEF target of universal birth registration by 2030. Though relatively high, South Africa's birth registration rate has stagnated (2011-2016). The article explores challenges for non-registered children.

**Statelessness in Protracted Refugee Situations: Former Angolan and Rwandan Refugees in Zambia**  
Mazuba Muchindu *AHRI African Human Mobility Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2022

**In brief:** Many long-term Angolan and Rwandan refugees in Zambia are unable or unwilling to acquire national identity documents from their country of origin. Reasons include a fear of persecution by the government of their country, and nationality laws that do not automatically grant citizenship by birth. Lack of IDs affects their citizenship status, effectively rendering them stateless, and prevents local integration even after their refugee status ceases. The author argues that there is a need to extend the definition of statelessness to include de facto stateless persons.

## Reports and Analysis

**Digitalisation and Democracy: Is Africa's Governance Charter Fit for the Digital Era**  
Ernst Duminy and Lidia Tadese Shifraw *ECDPM Discussion Paper*, November 2022

This Discussion Paper explores the interlinkages between digital transformation, politics and governance. It addresses the various contradictions associated with fast-moving digital transition on the African continent, for example, enhanced communications and citizen rights alongside expanded surveillance. The paper focuses on the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), and recommends that the ACDEG includes stipulations on the diverse uses of digital technologies by state and non-state actors, particularly during electoral processes.

**Between visibility and exclusion: mapping the risks associated with the National Civil Identification system and the usage of databases by the police in Namibia**  
Bruno Bioni, Marina Garrote, Marina Meira and Nathan Paschoalini *The Data Privacy Brasil Research Association*

In June 2022, Brazil's Data Privacy BR research team finished the first phase of its research project, *Accountability and Digital Civil Identity*, which investigated the implementation of Brazil's digital identity system and its risks to citizens' rights. The final report recommends conducting data protection impact assessments to mitigate these risks, with a clear focus on social justice.

**Privacy International's International Election Observation: Kenya 2022**  
The Carter Center

In collaboration with the Carter Center, Privacy International presents key findings, observations and an in-depth analysis of the implications of the Kenyan Data Protection Act for Kenyan elections. It touches upon the technology used, the data security concerns and connections with the development of the Huduma Namba ID system.

**Uganda's Sine Qua Non National ID – Without Which, Not**  
Jaap van der Straaten *Civil Registration Centre for Development-CRC4D, Research Paper*, May 2022

In this short report, the author asks why Uganda's national ID which was launched in 2014 has not reached full coverage. In doing so, it explores institutional and system hurdles, the consequences of embedded exclusion and absent civil registration efforts for national ID coverage in vulnerable areas. The author also maps a way forward for full coverage by presenting recommendations and potential strategies for National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA).

## Books

**Fishing Nets, Kabila's Eyes, and Voter's Cards, Citizen-State Mediations in the DRC**  
Kaitlin Pyke, 2022  
Chapter 10 in *Everyday State and Democracy in Africa: Ethnographic Encounters*, Walter Adebawo (ed), 2022

This book chapter provides an ethnographic account of state-citizen relations in Kinshasa during the final eight years of Joseph Kabila's regime. It focuses on the introduction of two kinds of innovations in this period: the voter's card (carte électorale) and the installation of surveillance cameras all around the city. Both objects constituted building blocks of new relationships between Kabila and Kinshasa (inhabitants of Kinshasa), providing rulers and citizens new themes through which they could articulate their relationships with one another.

**Mainstreaming Surveillance Through the Biometrification of Everyday Life**  
Allen Munonyarwa and Admire Mare, 2022

In this chapter from their co-authored book, *Digital Surveillance in Southern Africa. Policies, Politics and Practices*, the authors explore trends in the use of biometric data collection for voting and immigration purposes in the SADC region. The chapter focuses on how selected countries in the region have latched onto the 'biometrics bandwagon' without putting in place adequate legal frameworks and oversight systems to protect data injustices, harms and abuses. It critiques the growing trend of biometrics-enabled surveillance regimes in the SADC region.

**Putting People at the Centre of Digital Policy: Mechanisms for Citizen Engagement in Nigeria**  
Joe Abah, Krista Baptista, Connor MacKenzie, Anand Varghese  
In *Africa-Europe Cooperation and Digital Transformation*, Chux Daniels, Benedikt Erforth, Chloé Tevian (eds), 2022

Many African countries have written or passed various national policies, regulations or laws related to the technology sector. This book chapter focuses on stakeholder engagement in Nigeria in four technology policy and regulatory areas: expanding internet access, data protection in the digital economy, free speech on social media, and digital identification. It concludes with recommendations on how actors and institutions, including the recently formed EU-AU Digital for Development Hub, can assist African countries in developing citizen-centric and inclusive digital policymaking processes.

## What We're Listening To

This section presents a selection of recent podcasts and audio material on CERTIZENS-relevant themes. To suggest an item for the next newsletter please send a link to the work and a brief description of its relevance to: [certizens@teol.ku.dk](mailto:certizens@teol.ku.dk)

**Cameron: when a state demands an ID it doesn't issue (ep. 10) ID4D.9**  
The ID4D.9 podcast takes an in-depth look at life without an ID under extreme conditions – in this case Cameroon, which is experiencing armed conflict and a humanitarian crisis particularly in the English-speaking region. The biometric national identity card (CN) is required for everything in life, from bank accounts, to internal travel, to employment, to being able to acquire any other credentials such as driving licenses. Hundreds of thousands of Cameroonian children are without a birth certificate and even greater numbers of adults are without national IDs, with a range of explanations for this situation and a host of problematic exclusionary effects.

**Lessons and Insights from Malawi's transition to digital ID registration systems | The Second part (ID4Africa LiveCast EP36, December 2022)**

In this LiveCast from ID4Africa (for the hour from 1:22 to 2:29 in the longer session of over three hours), Dr Joseph Atick discusses with various Malawian officials and others, the country's digital transformation effort. The country team in particular shares lessons learned from its journey from zero to total coverage of the adult population (from 2017 to the present) and its continued development of digital identity.

**ID4Africa's EP37 LiveCast: Civil Registration in Africa: Scaling for Impact**  
Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) together continue to be a major challenge for legal identity development in Africa. Despite notable progress around the continent, it is becoming clear that unless countries embrace new ways of doing business around these inter-related arenas, it will not be possible to meet SDG 16.9 by 2030. In its 37th LiveCast episode (lasting over 30 minutes), ID4Africa features three sets of presentations that address key challenges and opportunities. Section 1 reports back on the recent 6th Conference of Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration in Africa. Section 2 provides brief updates on various digitalization approaches to CRVS, while stressing the need to develop standardized systems and common assets for CRVS in Africa. Section 3 highlights a "range of promising solutions currently being deployed in Africa" that "include home grown solutions, commercial solutions as well as open source".

## Upcoming

To suggest an entry for the next newsletter's Upcoming section, please send details of the conference, seminar or other relevant event to [certizens@teol.ku.dk](mailto:certizens@teol.ku.dk)

**ID4Africa 2023: The Augmented General Meeting to ACM**  
**23-25 May 2023 in Kenya, Nairobi / 07 and 21 June 2023 Virtual, LiveCast**  
ID4Africa's AGM is a platform for addressing identity matters in Africa. This year the event will focus on the theme "Digital Identity as Public Infrastructure". It aims to facilitate discussion on how to improve identity systems beyond registration to digital innovations. Deadline for registration: May 3, 2023.

**International Conference on AI and the Digital Economy, CADE 2023**  
26 – 28 June 2023 in Venice, Italy  
CADE aims to gather practitioners and researchers together to share and develop projects and ideas on the topics of 'Responsible AI, Digital Identity, Decentralised architectures & Web3.0, Net Zero/Sustainability, and Digital-Data-driven Supply Chains'. Deadline for registration: 2 June 2023. See more [here](#).

## Resources and Opportunities

We encourage you to submit announcements of relevant opportunities for the next CERTIZENS newsletter, including conference calls, calls for journal articles or book chapters, job openings, researching funding, or other opportunities. Please email: [certizens@teol.ku.dk](mailto:certizens@teol.ku.dk)

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