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International Children's Rights day: Urgency Identity Africa highlights "phantom children"

More than 1 in 3 children worldwide have no legal existence. This is the reason why Urgency Identity Africa and BENIN ODD TV co-produced a video highlighting the importance of having a legal identity

Brussels, Paris, Cotonou, 19th of November — Urgency Identity Africa has partnered with BENIN ODD TV to produce a video highlighting the issues related to birth registration in Africa. The announcement of this collaboration comes at a time when the world is celebrating the International Day of the Rights of the Child on 20 November, as well as the 31st anniversary of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an opportunity to remind everyone that children still face many difficulties as a result of not being legally registered, a notable one is access to citizenship which gives them access to basic fundamental rights.

For Urgency Identity Africa, this co-production is in line with its commitments towards children in Africa. Indeed, the fund campaigns for a change in mentalities with the aim of reaching the target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) established by the United Nations, aiming that “by 2030, provide legal identity for all, including free birth registrations”.

For Mr Abdoulaye Harissou, co-founder and President of the Urgency Identity Africa fund, this day helps to highlight a phenomenon relatively ignored in the media: phantom children. "On this day of 20 November 2020 devoted to the rights of the child, we insist on the need to make the fight for universal access to legal identity an absolute priority. The unprecedented and constraining health context in which we currently live must not lead us to isolation, nor to give up, but on the contrary to be a source of emulation for an active human solidarity". As a reminder, these children, who are people without rights in their own country, constitute a major risk in political, economic, social and security terms because they are subject to the worst kind of abuses (early and/or forced marriage of young girls, illegal adoption, sexual violence, child prostitution, child soldiers...).

According to Tayon Ulrich LAVINON, Managing Director of BENIN ODD TV, this collaboration with Urgency Identity Africa underlines the importance that BENIN ODD TV attaches to children and the problems they encounter in Africa. "Children are the regeneration of the community, the rising force to whom future challenges devolve. Africa cannot therefore aspire to enjoy lasting peace, development and a better world with children who still lack a formal legal identity. Let's guarantee every child the right to belong to a society. Let's reinvent the future for our children", he said. Through the video co-produced with Urgency Identity Africa fund, the media intends to continue to fulfil its mission to inform Beninese populations on issues relating to the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The said video will be broadcast this Friday, November 20 on the social media accounts of Urgency Identity Africa and BENIN ODD TV, to highlight phantom children.

ABOUT

- **Urgency Identity Africa fund**

The Urgency Identity Africa fund is a non-profit organisation of general interest, placed under the auspices of the King Baudouin Foundation. Urgency Identity Africa aims to increase the number of birth registrations in Africa by raising awareness and carrying out or financing local actions to reduce the number of children without legal identity.

For more information, visit www.uiafrica.org

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- **BENIN ODD TV**

BENIN ODD TV is a thematic WEB television in the Republic of Bénin that highlights local initiatives in sustainable development, carried out by/with grassroots communities in both rural and urban areas in an approach that takes into account evaluation and accountability.

For more information, visit www.beninoddtv.bj

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