

Evaluation of PRM-Supported Initiatives to Prevent and Reduce Statelessness

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ACRONYMS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency Thailand
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
COP	Country Operations Plan
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAS	Deputy Assistant Secretary
DIP	UNHCR's Division of International Protection
DOS	Department of State
DRL	Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia-Pacific region
EQ	Evaluation Question
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
FWLD	Forum for Women, Law and Development
GAP	Global Action Plan
GCENR	The Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights
HLS	High-Level Segment on Statelessness of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program (ExCom)
HRC	Human Rights Council
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISI	Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion
MCE	Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSF	Open Society Foundations
PMES	Performance Management and Evaluation Services
PRM	Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
PRP	PRM Office of Policy and Resource Planning
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SURGE	Supporting UNHCR Resources on the Ground with Experts on Mission
TOR	Terms of Reference
U-FE	Utilization-Focused Evaluation
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSG	UN Secretary-General
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
U.S.	United States

USG	United States Government
WHA	State Department Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PRM WORK ON STATELESSNESS

The United States Government (USG), through the Department of State (DOS) Bureau of Population, Migration and Refugees (PRM), supports the identification, prevention, and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons. As the single largest donor to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), PRM's funding contributes to UNHCR's core work on statelessness as well as its implementation and monitoring of the 10 actions of the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness: 2014-2024 (GAP) and the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness (#IBelong Campaign). PRM also funded the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights (GCENR) at the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) and research on statelessness. Funding is complemented by bilateral and multilateral diplomacy.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The Evaluation of PRM-Supported Initiatives to Prevent and Reduce Statelessness, hereafter referred to as "the evaluation," seeks to inform PRM's statelessness strategy through the end of the #IBelong Campaign in 2024 and beyond. PRM contracted Resonance, through the Performance Management and Evaluation Services (PMES) Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) mechanism, to carry out the evaluation. The evaluation report includes findings and conclusions from the evaluation research, which serve as the basis of recommendations for PRM. Findings are organized around the three main evaluation questions (EQs), to present (1) evidence of how PRM's statelessness strategy is implemented through its funding and diplomacy, (2) an assessment of the effectiveness of the strategy and its contributions to the GAP, and (3) an overview of PRM's monitoring strategy and remaining gaps.

EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The scope of this evaluation includes: (1) PRM's funding in support of UNHCR's statelessness mandate from 2014 to the present; (2) the effectiveness of the UNHCR GAP and the #IBelong Campaign; (3) PRM-supported U.S. multilateral and bilateral diplomatic engagements on statelessness from 2014 to present; (4) the effectiveness of PRM staffing levels and monitoring mechanisms for statelessness; and (5) the GCENR. Over a period of 10 months (July 2020-April 2021), a three-person Evaluation Team engaged a total of 165 people in the data gathering phase and close to 200 people through virtual interviews, workshops and focus group discussions (FGDs). The evaluation was conducted using a utilization-focused evaluation approach (U-FE), coupled with qualitative methods and outcome harvesting.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Multiple informants lauded the effectiveness in raising awareness of statelessness of both the GAP and the #IBelong Campaign, to which PRM contributes funding and diplomatic support. The 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness (HLS), an event to secure pledges on statelessness by country governments and other actors as a part of the #IBelong Campaign, was a particularly effective tool in raising awareness of statelessness and securing specific pledges from countries and organizations, although many countries with major situations of statelessness did not pledge.

The Group of Friends of the #IBelong Campaign (Group of Friends), a group of UN Member States including the U.S., has been effective in supporting United Nations (UN) human rights mechanisms on statelessness such as through the Universal Periodic Review and Human Rights Council Resolutions. These mechanisms, however, have not had much impact in effectuating change at the country level. Awarding a Nansen Refugee Award to a stateless activist and nominating regional finalists for the award was also rated as highly effective in raising awareness.

The evaluation evidence demonstrated that the GAP was underfunded and under-resourced by UNHCR, with only a slight increase in the budget for GAP activities in many countries. Most informants stated that, while UNHCR's engagement on statelessness has improved, the issue is still not prioritized within UNHCR. This evaluation found that statelessness, while part of UNHCR's core mandate, is not funded in proportion to the needs, in part because of UNHCR's demanding mandate to address refugee and humanitarian crises, for which the agency is always underfunded. The UNHCR Statelessness Section has done great work in issuing guidance on statelessness, but its position of relative low priority within the agency (as a Section

rather than a Division or Service) means that its influence on country operations is indirect and often overshadowed by higher level Divisions and Services. UNHCR Representatives are sometimes siloed and under pressure to deliver on immediate, humanitarian emergencies with very limited funds and few opportunities to share best practices on statelessness.

There are concerns that the regionalization of UNHCR operations will further reduce statelessness staffing and programming within the agency, although UNHCR's creation of Regional Statelessness Officer positions is a positive step. As well, multiple informants expressed concerns that UNHCR's statelessness work will lose what momentum has been achieved during the #IBelong Campaign when it transitions in 2024 to the structures established as part of the Global Compact on Refugees. (The Global Compact on Refugees is a worldwide framework to achieve solutions for refugees, displaced persons, and stateless populations).

The evaluation highlighted a strong and close relationship between PRM and UNHCR at the global and country levels. The PRM Statelessness Focal Point based in Washington DC has been critical to the successful relationship between PRM and UNHCR but can only devote 25 percent of her time to statelessness work, which limits her capacity to support PRM's engagement with Embassies, the broader Department, and other agencies. There is also the perception that PRM's statelessness strategy has been mostly focused on eliminating gender discrimination in nationality laws, and its work with the GCENR, which aligns with GAP Action 3. While this focus led to important achievements, there is also a need for more attention focused on helping to address some of the other major causes of statelessness such as racial and ethnic discrimination. There is a lack of engagement from other donors on statelessness which could benefit from PRM and UNHCR urging them to do more.

PRM support for UNHCR at the global level through multilateral diplomacy, such as the Group of Friends, is not replicated at the country-level, where PRM's Refugee Coordinators (RefCoords), with notable exceptions, were more focused on supporting UNHCR with its refugee and humanitarian caseloads. In general, RefCoords asked for more guidance from PRM Washington on how to best support UNHCR on statelessness. Some RefCoords spent as little as 10 percent of their time per month on non-refugee statelessness. More effort is also needed by PRM to work with other parts of the USG to address statelessness as a cross-cutting issue.

The evaluation revealed a vibrant civil society in many countries that lacked support, coordination, and funding to work on statelessness. Many civil society organizations (CSOs) conduct advocacy, awareness-raising, strategic litigation, provide legal aid and influence public opinion on the highly politicized issue of statelessness. Many informants stressed that funding to CSOs will be critical to ending statelessness.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

An updated PRM statelessness strategy could:¹

- Advocate elevating statelessness within the implementation of the **Global Compact on Refugees**.
- **Elevate the PRM Statelessness Focal Point** role and dedicate it entirely to statelessness.
- Urge UNHCR to replace the "Statelessness Section" with a "**Statelessness Division**" or "**Statelessness Service**."
- **Encourage UNHCR** to give adequate and appropriate attention to its statelessness mandate to achieve "mandate equality" with its refugee mandate and address concerns that regionalization is weakening the prioritization of statelessness.
- **Provide a contribution to UNHCR country operations** to identify and fund local CSO work on statelessness. Priority should be given to country operations that demonstrate they will use PRM funding to create or expand activities past 2024.
- **Educate other DOS bureaus** on how statelessness is a cross-cutting development, human rights, and democracy issue.
- **Resume funding** to the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights.











¹ For a full list of recommendations, see Section 7 and Annex B.

DESCRIPTION OF STATELESSNESS STRATEGY

Statelessness is a priority issue of concern to the Department of State (DOS) Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) because of its lead authority within the United States Government (USG) to support the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).² Working to address statelessness supports PRM's Functional Bureau Strategy Goals including to (1) save lives, ease suffering, and promote human dignity, through efficient and effective humanitarian assistance, (2) promote and provide durable and interim solutions for populations of concern through U.S. assistance and collaboration with the international community and (3) advocate for the protection of vulnerable populations and exert leadership with the international community.

In 2014, UNHCR launched the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness: 2014-2024 (GAP) and the #IBelong Campaign to End (#IBelong Campaign). The purpose of the #IBelong Campaign is to galvanize international support around the goal of ending statelessness in 10 years. The GAP consists of 10 Actions for country governments to achieve the ambitious goals of eradicating statelessness by 2024 (see Table 1). To support the #IBelong Campaign, the diplomatic community created the Group of Friends of the #IBelong Campaign (Group of Friends). UNHCR also hosted a High-Level Segment on Statelessness (HLS) as part of its 2019 Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (ExCom) to obtain pledges in line with the 10 GAP Actions to be implemented in the second half of the campaign, as well as track and report on progress.

Table 1: The Global Action Plan (GAP)

	Action 1: Resolving existing major situations of statelessness
	Action 2: Ensuring that no child is born stateless
	Action 3: Removing gender discrimination from nationality laws
	Action 4: Preventing denial, loss, or deprivation of nationality on discriminatory grounds
	Action 5: Preventing statelessness in cases of state succession
	Action 6: Grant protection status to stateless migrants and facilitate their naturalization
	Action 7: Ensuring birth registration for the prevention of statelessness
	Action 8: Issuing nationality documentation to those entitled to it
	Action 9: Acceding to the UN Statelessness Conventions
	Action 10: Improving quantitative and qualitative data on stateless populations

Against this background, PRM's statelessness strategy seeks to support UNHCR in the fulfilment of its mandate, support the achievement of the goals of the GAP and, through diplomacy and funding, work towards eradicating statelessness. PRM's strategy³ focuses on:

- Contributing funding to UNHCR in support of UNHCR's statelessness activities at a level commensurate with the United States' overall level of support to UNHCR operations at the global, regional, and country levels.
- Being a partner to UNHCR to ensure the timely implementation of the #IBelong Campaign and GAP.
- Ensuring that mainstreaming of statelessness activities takes place across the United Nations (UN) system.
- Serving as a leader through multilateral diplomacy to raise awareness about statelessness and pushing for action through bilateral diplomacy, funding, and commissioned research.
- Eliminating gender discrimination from nationality laws, including through funding GCENR and through diplomatic engagements.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND SCOPE

As the #IBelong Campaign and GAP approach the end of their 10-year plan, this evaluation seeks to inform PRM's future statelessness strategy. PRM contracted Resonance, through the DOS Performance

² Through a series of resolutions, the UN General Assembly gave UNHCR the formal mandate to identify stateless people, prevent and reduce statelessness around the world, and protect the rights of stateless people. GA Res. 3274 (1974), 31/36 (1976) and GA Res. 50/152 (1995).

³ The Evaluation of PRM-Supported Initiatives to Prevent and Reduce Statelessness' Desk Review/Inception Report lays out PRM's working statelessness strategy in detail.

Management and Evaluation Services (PMES) Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) mechanism, to carry out the evaluation. The evaluation report includes findings and conclusions from the evaluation research, which serve as the basis of recommendations for PRM included in Annex B.

The evaluation's scope included reviewing and assessing (1) PRM's financial support for statelessness work from 2014 to present, with a focus on its funding to UNHCR; (2) PRM-supported U.S. diplomatic engagements, including multilateral and bilateral, on statelessness from 2014 to present; (3) UNHCR's implementation and PRM's support for the GAP and #IBelong Campaign; (4) The GCENR; (5) PRM's staffing and monitoring of statelessness; and (6) all of the above-cited aspects via in-depth research at the country level on three countries (Thailand, Nepal and the Dominican Republic) to determine the effectiveness of PRM-supported initiatives.⁴ Over a period of 10 months, the evaluation's phases included: An Inception/Desk Review Phase (July–October 2020); a Data Gathering and Analysis Phase (November 2020–February 2021); and a Validation and Reporting Phase (March–April 2021). The report is organized around three (EQs):

- **EQ1:** To what extent are PRM investments in statelessness initiatives—both financial and diplomatic—contributing to the prevention and reduction of statelessness and to the protection of stateless persons?
- **EQ2:** To what extent have PRM efforts supported progress toward achieving the goals of UNHCR's GAP?
- **EQ3:** What changes or updates need to be made to PRM's statelessness strategy to strengthen the ability of statelessness initiatives to prevent and reduce statelessness, including PRM monitoring of statelessness activities overseas?

EVALUATION DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

EVALUATION DESIGN

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability of the Evaluation Team to travel as originally planned, the Evaluation Team pivoted to carrying out all data collection fully remotely, explained in greater detail below. The evaluation design includes an overarching utilization-focused evaluation (U-FE) approach, which is based on the principle that an evaluation should be judged by its usefulness to its intended users. Primary-intended users, namely PRM and UNHCR, were consulted through structured and participatory virtual workshops and engagements, including Inception Meetings, an Inception Workshop, Validation Meetings following each virtual field visit with UNHCR country teams, a UNHCR Feedback Workshop and a PRM Validation Workshop using tools such as Zoom, Teams, Miro and Jamboard. The purpose of the feedback and validation meetings was to share learnings from data collection, coordinate on evaluation design, validate initial findings and collect feedback on recommendations.

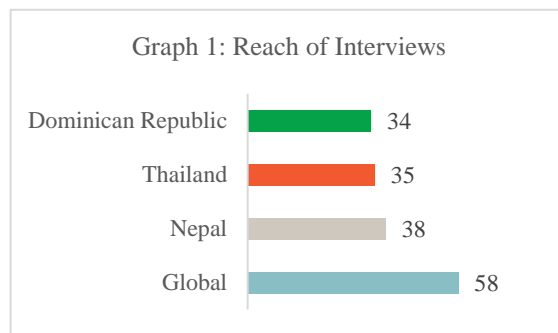
The Evaluation Team applied qualitative methods, including individual interviews, group interviews, participatory workshops, a focus group discussion and a survey. For the work on the three countries, the Evaluation Team used an outcome harvesting methodology through the identification of a series of “outcomes” and “milestones” in each country's journey to eradicate statelessness. Interviewees were queried around these to uncover trends in what and who contributed to driving the changes that led to the outcome or milestone. As a key part of this, the Evaluation Team conducted a desk review and organized a statelessness expert roundtable with academics and researchers to identify outcomes that would be used in “harvests.” From this roundtable, the desk review and the global interviews, the Evaluation Team constructed a general theory of change for a country's journey to eradicate statelessness (Annex A). This framework was used to map actors working on statelessness, identify how they were supporting change in the country, assess the extent to which their actions can be linked to an outcome or milestone and assess where linkages could be made to PRM-supported initiatives.

⁴ Initially, the SOW contemplated two countries for in-depth research. In light of COVID-19 and the move to completely remote fieldwork, the evaluation expanded to three countries.

DATA COLLECTION

The Evaluation Team collected primary data from November 2020–February 2021. Due to COVID-19 international travel restrictions, the team conducted data collection virtually over Zoom or Microsoft Teams, with group facilitation assisted by other technology solutions, including SurveyMonkey, Miro, and Google Docs. Snowball sampling and purposive sampling from document reviews was used to identify interviewees and, during the data gathering phase, the Evaluation Team interviewed or engaged a total of **165 individuals**, with the breakdown of the total interviews highlighted in Graph 1, below.

Informants represented a wide range of stakeholders, including those who were both directly funded by PRM and some that were linked to PRM funding. Individual and group interviews included PRM, UNHCR, members of the UN family, U.S. Embassy staff, Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC), development actors, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), and civil society actors (CSOs). A list of the organizations interviewed or engaged in global interviews is included in Annex J.



The only government official interviewed was in Thailand. In all three countries, the Evaluation Team interviewed stateless or formerly stateless persons. In addition, in December 2020 the Evaluation Team facilitated a virtual Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis with UNHCR’s Statelessness Section in Geneva. The Evaluation Team also administered an (anonymous) online survey to PRM’s Refugee Coordinators (RefCoords), which was accompanied by an online focus group discussion (FGD).

The Evaluation Team recorded and transcribed all the evaluation primary research to ensure accuracy and in accordance with the evaluation’s design and analysis approach. In each interview, evaluators obtained informed consent orally. In cases when an interpreter was engaged, such as in Thailand and Nepal, the interpreter signed a non-disclosure agreement.

Following data collection, all interview transcripts were uploaded to Dedoose (a qualitative research software) for analysis. The Evaluation Team conducted content and thematic analysis to identify patterns, as well as sentiment analysis to determine key perceptions and to find areas of concurrence across interviewees. Findings were organized by EQs and are presented by EQ in the next sections of this report.

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation’s main limitations are related to: (1) conducting a fully remote and virtual evaluation; (2) reporting bias and (3) generalizability. Despite the pivot to a fully remote evaluation, the Evaluation Team did not face major challenges engaging CSOs or stateless people through remote means in each of the three countries, which was raised as a concern during the Inception Phase. However, the inability to travel and ‘see’ programming in action or contexts is a limitation of a fully virtual evaluation. The Evaluation Team had to instead rely on descriptions and explanations of programming and challenges, which is sufficient but does not allow for participant observation. Reporting bias is a concern for evaluations that place a heavy emphasis on consulting with implementing partners, as they can be “incentivized” to share positive outcomes only. The potential bias was mitigated by the Evaluation Team engaging with a wide array of organizations and stakeholders, including those outside of PRM’s scope of influence (i.e., academics, CSOs, stateless persons, non PRM funded INGOs, etc.). Reporting bias was also limited through the evaluation’s methodologies, including outcome harvesting and participatory workshops that focused on building consensus, as well as through qualitative analysis coding of all interviews using a standard approach. The limitation to the evaluation around generalizability is that the countries selected are unique and programming strategies are not consistent across the board. The evaluation also faced some challenges assessing bilateral diplomatic efforts, given the sensitivity of statelessness in some contexts and the inability

of the Evaluation Team to speak with a wide array of actors “doing” diplomacy, particularly high-level diplomacy. However, in the Dominican Republic, with PRM’s support, the Evaluation Team was able to access current and former diplomats engaged in high-level diplomacy.

DATA AND FINDINGS

EQ1: TO WHAT EXTENT ARE PRM INVESTMENTS IN STATELESSNESS INITIATIVES—BOTH FINANCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC—CONTRIBUTING TO THE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF STATELESSNESS AND TO THE PROTECTION OF STATELESS PEOPLE?

5.1.1 Funding

The U.S. is the largest single donor to UNHCR. PRM funding supports the prevention and reduction of statelessness and identification and protection of stateless people primarily through earmarked and unearmarked contributions to UNHCR's appeals. PRM has also funded the GCENR through the WRC, supported projects without a specific statelessness focus that worked on related issues (birth registration and civil documentation) and commissioned research studies on statelessness.

Unearmarked funding.

UNHCR’s budget is organized around four Pillars: refugees, stateless persons, reintegration (of returning refugees) and IDPs. The proportion of UNHCR’s overall expenditures allocated to Pillar II (stateless persons) stayed between less than 1 percent to roughly 1.2 percent of UNHCR’s budget since the launch of the #IBelong Campaign. Over the period of the evaluation there appeared to be a decrease in Pillar II funding from 1.2 percent in 2014 to 1 percent in 2020.⁵ Most UNHCR country programs do not allocate funds under Pillar II; of the three focus countries for this evaluation, only the Dominican Republic used Pillar II. Funding from other budget pillars is also used by many UNHCR country operations to address statelessness (e.g., in countries where stateless people are also refugees), so it is difficult to discern how much funding is actually allocated for statelessness; however, it is clear that funding for statelessness is far less than for other populations of concern. The Pillar system will be phased out of UNHCR’s practice and, in the future, all populations of concern will be assisted out of the same protection budget.

In PRM’s contribution letter, PRM strongly encourages UNHCR to spend an amount on statelessness commensurate with its overall allocation. Discussions with UNHCR management revealed that they felt strongly about keeping the same funding arrangement with the U.S. However, through interviews UNHCR’s management staff acknowledged that UNHCR needed to rethink their overall fundraising strategy for their work on statelessness, as illustrated through the sentiments expressed by one high-level UNHCR staff in Box 1.

Box 1: Unearmarked Funding

“I can’t say earmarked [funding] is something we can really consider in UNHCR. We are always saying we don’t want to earmark funds so we cannot start now by saying that.... What we need to do is fundraise more specifically for statelessness. We don’t want the US to change the way they do their funding, but we should seek more funding for specific projects.”

In 2014, at the launch of the #IBelong Campaign, there were insufficient human and material resources dedicated to work on statelessness within UNHCR. The budget for the campaign came from the existing budget. The limited resources available have led to a perception that statelessness is the “*poor step-cousin, in terms of UNHCR’s refugee mandate,*” as put by one high-level UNHCR staff.

PRM Earmarked funding for statelessness. Only a small amount of U.S. funding to UNHCR is earmarked for statelessness activities. In 2020, PRM provided \$571,053 in earmarked funding to support stateless programming to maintain the momentum created by the global HLS (discussed at greater length later in this report). In 2019, the HLS marked the midpoint in the #IBelong Campaign. There were a series of regional convenings that brought together government, UN, and civil society actors, who collectively committed to over 360 pledges towards statelessness eradication. The earmarked PRM funds are aimed at providing small amounts to targeted UNHCR country operations to assist governments in implementing

⁵ Information on budgets by pillar between 2014-2020 can be found at Financials | Global Focus (unhcr.org)

their HLS commitments. PRM has not previously provided earmarked support to UNHCR for statelessness activities at the country level.

Germany and Denmark contributed to the #IBelong Campaign for both global communications and operations work. In 2019, the German government provided direct funding to the #IBelong Campaign, which was used by the communications team for campaign content, web development, visibility material, and other activities. In 2020, the Danish government also provided funds for storytelling production. Germany and Denmark have also provided earmarked funding for UNHCR's operational budget for the statelessness campaign and the Danish government provided funding for Seeds for Solutions, a program within the UNHCR Division of Resilience and Solutions Department, dedicated for specific projects including work on statelessness issues. Between 2014-2015, Thailand, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kenya benefitted from this funding for statelessness work. UNHCR's criteria for providing this funding to Thailand included a demonstrated commitment to the issue, the presence of a statelessness staff person, the identification of a large stateless population and the creation of a pilot project on statelessness with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).⁶ Seeds for Solutions funding was considered an impactful way to dedicate funds to address statelessness issues.

The European Union and Japan have provided earmarked funding to UNHCR for statelessness activities. Sweden and Denmark made pledges at the HLS to change their own nationality laws to prevent statelessness but did not commit any funding to statelessness activities.

Box 2: Donor's Point of View

"We found the appeal to be not super-effective because it repackaged their global appeal, so we did not feel that earmarking was going to be supplementary for us."

UNHCR attempted to fundraise through a special appeal on statelessness in 2017–2018 for \$47 million to target activities in eleven countries hosting major stateless and at-risk populations. As explained by one informant in Box 2, PRM saw these efforts as ineffective largely because the fundraising approach did not demonstrate the appeal's added value. At the same time, as explained by one individual in Box 3, below, earmarked funding at the country-level is particularly needed and effective.

Beyond that one appeal, UNHCR has not made efforts to fundraise through its donor relations department or through other online targeted fundraising.

The Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights. From 2014–2019, PRM supported the GCENR to end gender discrimination in countries with nationality laws that discriminate based on gender. The GCENR's Steering Committee members include UNHCR, Equality Now, Equal Rights Trust, the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI), the Women's Learning Partnership, and WRC.

Box 3: Fundraising for Statelessness

"We don't go to donors asking for money specifically for statelessness. This means there is a finite amount of money, just as the goals are getting bigger. [Results in statelessness work are] far too slow to get the real [funding] commitments needed at the country level."

The GCENR has co-sponsored global events at the UN Commission on the Status of Women and was also involved in the 2016 Human Rights Council (HRC) Resolution (discussed in greater detail below). The GCENR works actively with civil society actors, including in Malaysia, where they provided technical and financial support for their work.⁷

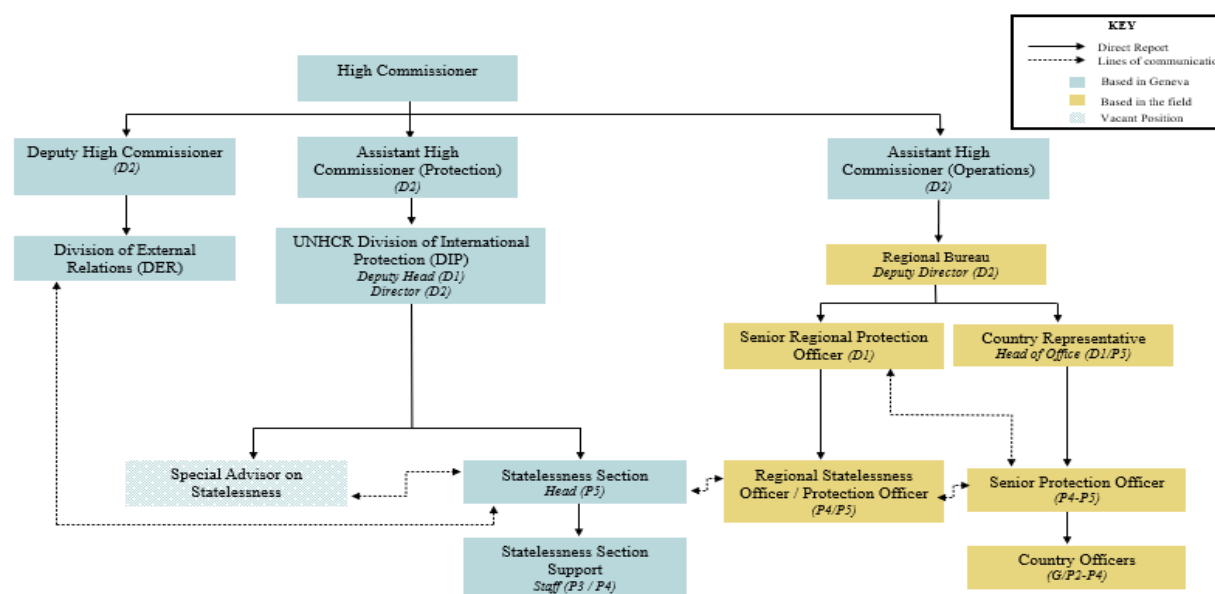
PRM funding for the GCENR for one full-time Campaign Manager and implementation of priority activities at the national, regional, and international levels was approximately \$300,000 per year, from 2014 until 2019, after which the funding was not renewed. Since then, the GCENR made efforts to obtain funding from other donors with support from PRM. For instance, in 2019 PRM helped set up a meeting between the GCENR and the Group of Friends to discuss potential funding opportunities. Although new funding

⁶ UNHCR Global Focus website, Thailand, Year End Report, 2015.

⁷ A \$30,000 subgrant from PRM funds was also included.

has not been provided, the GCENR has been able to continue some activities through an existing grant to the WRC that ended in March 2021. Since the 2014 establishment of the GCENR with funding from PRM, WRC sought to diversify funding and has also benefited from in-kind support from UNHCR and the Open Society Foundation (OSF) for country and regional-level workshops. Overall, informants found the GCENR to be effective in raising awareness of gender discrimination in nationality laws.

UNHCR Statelessness Staffing at Headquarters and the Role of Regionalization. As highlighted in the graphic below,⁸ the Statelessness Section sits in UNHCR's Division of International Protection (DIP) and is headed by a statelessness expert who works along with a small staff based in Geneva. The graphic provides an approximation of the staffing grades of selected UNHCR international staff working on statelessness, which range from the P2 introductory grade to the high-level, D2 (director) grade. The graphic highlights the relative lack of clout of the Statelessness Section within the agency. Under regionalization, country-level protection staff report to the Regional Bureaus, while the Statelessness Section remains in Geneva and serves only an advisory role. Within UNHCR, a Section has less clout than a Division or a Service, making it hard for statelessness to get the attention it needs within an agency that is full of competing priorities.



The Statelessness Section works closely with the Division of External Relations, which has supported the communications aspects of the #IBelong Campaign. Support for the communications side of the campaign has not been consistent, as staff were hired in the outset of the campaign for a temporary period, followed by a gap for a few years, and finally in 2019 a dedicated Communications Officer was hired to work on the #IBelong Campaign full time. In 2018, a Special Advisor on Statelessness was appointed to prepare for, run and conduct initial follow-ups to the HLS at the 2019 Executive Committee meeting, but that Advisor has since departed.

The Statelessness Section regularly engages the Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service, which funds the position of the Campaign Communications Manager out of its regular budget. The Statelessness Section also engages with the Global Data Service on statelessness statistics, the Division of Resilience and Solutions on livelihoods and economic inclusion, and the Division of Strategic Planning and Results on monitoring and planning of statelessness activities. Apart from the Global Data Service, this evaluation was not able to gather much feedback on the effectiveness of these engagements between the Statelessness Section and these Divisions and Services.

⁸ This graphic is provided as a general, simplified guide to the parts of UNHCR's staffing structure that deal directly with statelessness. It is not an accurate representation of all UNHCR staffing.

UNHCR Statelessness staffing at the Regional and Country Levels. There are seven Regional Statelessness Officers based in the regional Bureaus who were recruited between 2012–2014. All UNHCR core protection staff are expected to work on statelessness according to the needs, although it is worth noting that the Terms of Reference (TOR) for protection staff prioritize skills and knowledge relating to other populations of concern, such as promoting international refugee law principles, coordinating the cluster approach for internally displaced persons, and intervening in cases of refoulement.⁹ There are, however, staff with statelessness as the majority of their role in multiple countries.

Box 4: Benefits of SURGE

“The distinctive thing about SURGE was that it came on top of the resources the [Country] Representative already had. In practice, it was used to get resources that otherwise do not get prioritized. It was supposed to be short-term but, in the end, we would get a statelessness SURGE support [staff person] for over a year because we kept calling for extensions. You really realized this support was useful. The SURGE deployment often ended up resulting in the recruitment of a dedicated UNOPS person or UNV.”

Other dedicated statelessness staff come through various types of temporary appointments, such as through the now-terminated Supporting UNHCR Resources on the Ground (SURGE) Project implemented by the International Rescue Committee (see Box 4),¹⁰ the UN Volunteer program through the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UNHCR temporary expert consultancies and the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) contracts. At least one U.S.-funded Junior Professional Officer (JPO), an entry-level, two-year post to UNHCR that is paid for directly by donors, has been deployed to work on statelessness in the Dominican Republic.

In general, PRM has not used the JPO program to increase support to UNHCR for statelessness. Such temporary contracts are advantageous because they are less expensive to UNHCR as an organization than funding additional staff; but, with the exception of the JPO program, they come at a high cost to the country office, which must cover such contracts out of its country-level envelopes.

In the three countries there were very different staffing numbers, levels of expertise and types of contracts. These differences did not correlate to the size or needs of the stateless population in each of the countries. Interviews with UNHCR staff in the three countries found they all had some experience working on statelessness in the past and had undergone training and all country-level staff demonstrated a high level of commitment and knowledge of statelessness. As one individual in Nepal explained, the Representative “referred to herself as part of the UNHCR protection team.” At the same time, interviews revealed that Representatives have limited opportunities to share best practices and lessons learned on statelessness.

In Thailand, interviews found that the office benefitted from having an engaged Senior Protection Officer for the multi-country office. Both the Nepal and Thailand UNHCR offices also reported receiving helpful support from the Regional Statelessness Officer based in Thailand, as explained in Box 5. The Dominican Republic benefits from a robust eleven-person team dedicated to statelessness, many of whom are persons that were formerly stateless or at-risk of statelessness.

Box 5: Regional Statelessness Officers

“He is very hands on, responds very timely to requests, and has been particularly helpful on international legal comparisons. He has also offered very useful and relevant support to our national partner that he engaged with through his personal connections.”

Under the direction of an international P2 Associate Protection Officer and a very engaged P4 Chief of Mission, the eleven national staff carry out a large portfolio of statelessness identification and reduction work and in many ways mimic UNHCR’s staffing configurations for refugee work. The Americas does not currently have a Regional Statelessness Officer, but one is being assigned and will be based in the Dominican Republic. According to UNHCR staff, in comparison to the Dominican Republic, there are significantly fewer resources available for statelessness work in Nepal and Thailand.

⁹ Protection Officer Profile, UNHCR at <https://www.unhcr.org/570c9fa86.pdf>

¹⁰ All Associate Protection Officers, Protection Officers, and Senior Protection Officers at the P2, P3, and P4 level

Reports produced by the Statelessness Section. The UNHCR Statelessness Section has produced more than a dozen reports and policy guidelines since the launch of the #IBelong Campaign.¹¹ The section also published a series of “Good Practices Papers,” highlighting particularly successful reforms and projects all over the world. Most of UNHCR’s published guidance on statelessness focuses on legal and procedural reforms. UNHCR’s ExCom¹² also produces updates on statelessness, such as in 2017, when it updated member states on the progress made by the #IBelong Campaign. Recognizing that there was a need for more specific guidance by country, the Statelessness Section created the Global Strategy and Implementation Plan and the GAP Map, which consists of more detailed planning tables for each of the years covered by country operations. It was not clear, however, how much of this guidance is being used by country operations.

UNHCR and UNHCR-supported training for staff. The marginalization of statelessness within UNHCR can be seen in UNHCR trainings, where a separate training on statelessness is not mandatory for protection staff even though statelessness is part of UNHCR’s core mandate. UNHCR has incorporated statelessness as a topic into the Protection Learning Program and other optional trainings, including a separate, thematic module.¹³ However, one senior UNHCR staff remarked that these trainings have not been updated since 2011. There are also UNHCR subsidized courses through the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, the ISI in collaboration with Tilburg University in the Netherlands, the Université Catholique d’Afrique Centrale in Cameroon, and the University of Melbourne through the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness.¹⁴ These trainings benefit some UNHCR staff, government officials and CSOs. UNHCR also engaged well with CSOs as part of its annual NGO consultation, but could do more to focus these consultations on statelessness. In general, UNHCR could do more to increase knowledge of statelessness through trainings, both within UNHCR and with government and partners, including PRM.

5.1.2 Mainstreaming and Coordination

The UN Secretary General (UNSG) recognizes the need to mainstream statelessness throughout the UN and provided an updated Guidance Note in 2018 on the responsibility of all UN actors to address statelessness. The document, *Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on the United Nations and Statelessness*,¹⁵ stresses that “all UN entities system-wide have an important role to play in achieving these objectives and must increase their efforts to address this important issue.” Inter-agency coordination is considered important to advance the GAP goals, as explained in Box 6.

Box 6: Importance of Coordination

“I think we need far better coordination far better collaboration, and we don’t need to wait for the #IBelong Campaign to end. We can start now. We have the clear guidance from the UN.”

In practice, however, this evaluation found that UN coordination remains weak, both globally and at the country level, and UN partners continue to overwhelmingly see statelessness as an issue primarily for UNHCR. UNHCR needs USG and UN leadership to help improve coordination, including continued pressure from the UNSG.

UNHCR Coordination around Statelessness. The Coalition for Every Child’s Right to a Nationality (Coalition) is a joint global coalition between UNHCR and UNICEF to improve birth registration and reduce childhood statelessness that has wide participation at the global level from civil society groups and UN agencies, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the GCENR. Global-level funding for the Coalition supports two UNICEF staff that dedicate only a portion of their time

¹¹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness*, 3 November 2015, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/563368b34.html> [accessed 15 March 2021].

¹² UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, Standing Committee 69th meeting, Update on statelessness*, 7 June 2017, EC/68/SC/CRP.13, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/59a58d724.html> [accessed 15 March 2021].

¹³ See the Protection Starter Kit Refworld website at https://www.refworld.org/protection_kit.html#k3

¹⁴ See websites at: <https://iihl.org/event/course-on-statelessness-2/>, <https://www.institutesi.org/courses>, <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/centres/statelessness/engage/statelessness-intensive-course-2021> and <https://www.auf.org/nouvelles/appels-a-candidatures/appel-candidature-auditeurs-edition-2020-du-cours-droit-de-lapatrie-et-de-la-nationalite/>

¹⁵ UN GA Guidance Note of the Secretary General: The United Nations and Statelessness, 2018

to it. Their main tasks are to identify gaps through research, highlight case studies and share experiences among countries and regions. There is no funding for the Coalition at the field level and work carried out on birth registration by UNICEF only takes place through existing programs. In practice, this means that although activities are being carried out by both UNICEF and UNHCR on birth registration (Action 7), they are not always coordinated.

The UN established the Legal Identity Agenda (UNLIA) and Task Force in 2019 to support the right to a legal identity (to be recognized as a person before the law, to be registered by the government and to have identity documents including birth certificates.) The right to a legal identity is a key part of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.9.¹⁶ Supporting the right to a legal identity is critical to ending statelessness, but ending statelessness is not given much attention in the UNLIA, UNHCR is not a chair of the Task Force and the SDGs do not expressly promote ending statelessness as a goal. More effort is needed to ensure stronger linkages between the UN's work on the right to a legal identity and UNHCR's mandate to end statelessness and protect stateless people both globally and at the country level.

The Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement is a project between the World Bank and UNHCR. PRM contributes funding to the Joint Data Center through UNHCR and sits on its management committee. The Center is developing recommendations on statelessness statistics, in line with Action 10 of the GAP, to improve statistics on statelessness which UNHCR and other actors have identified as critical to advance progress on statelessness. One output of this project will be the proposed, forthcoming International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics for adoption by the UN Statistical Commission in 2022.

Memorandum of Understanding and Policies between UN Agencies. UNHCR also has coordinated bilaterally with other UN agencies, such as the OHCHR, with a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is aimed at increasing the attention paid to statelessness in the work at the HRC, Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and the treaty bodies, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In its workplan, OHCHR has agreed to work on statelessness in selected countries, including Côte D'Ivoire, the Persian Gulf Region, and the Dominican Republic. In 2020, UN Women and UNHCR also signed an MOU with the aim to ensure that communications are in sync on key issues, such as gender equality in nationality laws and other gender discrimination related to statelessness. These MOUs, however, do not appear to be very effective at country level, where UN partners continue to see UNHCR as taking not only a lead role on statelessness, but as primarily responsible for statelessness programming.

Regional Initiatives. A number of important regional initiatives came up in our research, including the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process) in Asia, which raises regional awareness of the consequences of smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime.¹⁷ The Bali Process recognizes that statelessness is an emerging factor in understanding human trafficking, smuggling, and irregular migration in the region.¹⁸ In Box 7, UNHCR's Regional Statelessness Officer explains how he supports the Bali Process, most importantly through the creation of the Bali Process Toolkit, which has emerged as a highly effective tool for countries in the region to prevent statelessness.

Box 7: The Bali Process in Action

"We have piloted [the process] in Thailand and are in the process of piloting in Pakistan and Vietnam. These are also activities that ultimately will benefit Thailand and Nepal. [We] have presented that process, for instance, at the UN Legal Identity Task Force in Nepal in a virtual session. I am providing regional background information to both countries on these processes. To a degree, the regional bureau is more actively involved in the national processes."

Promoting tools to mainstream statelessness into regional and global initiatives in cooperation with UNHCR is a highly effective way for PRM to make progress on statelessness.

¹⁶ See the UN Legal Identity Agenda webpage at <https://unstats.un.org/legal-identity-agenda/>.

¹⁷ Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons, and Related Transnational Crime, <https://www.iom.int/bali-process>

¹⁸ See the PRM-funded report on Thailand, The Nexus between Statelessness and Human Trafficking in Thailand at https://files.institutesi.org/Stateless-Trafficking_Thailand.pdf

The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) initiated the regional initiative “Get Everyone in the Picture” on civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS). CRVS goals are tied to SDG 16.9 on the right to a legal identity, discussed above. UNHCR and PRM participate at the ESCAP headquarters level, but this evaluation showed that many CRVS and legal identity projects are moving forward at the country level without adequate information about how they may impact statelessness.

Box 8: Statelessness as Political Issue

“[Statelessness] is a political issue that has been so sensitive [in Nepal]. We work together with the UN, we target the Parliamentarians, the women’s groups, and we have a common partner FWLD. We are all behind the CSOs as that is how best to work in Nepal and these coordination groups work well for that.”

National Level Coordination. Some of the UN structures that operate at the global level, such as the UNLIA Task Force, highlighted above, have been replicated at the national level.

For instance, in Nepal there is strong coordination between UNHCR and development partners on issues impacting persons without citizenship certificates (who may be stateless or at risk of statelessness), including in the Legal Identity Working Group.

This key coordination mechanism is officially co-led by UNHCR and UNICEF with the involvement of the UN Resident Coordinator, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN WOMEN and UNDP.¹⁹ Informants highlighted the importance of working in a coordinated and coalition-based approach to address statelessness (see Box 8).

In Thailand, UNHCR leads the Statelessness Working Group, which has been rated as highly effective by all participants, not only for information sharing but also for developing a statelessness lens for all UN and INGO member programming. There is no analogous working group in the Dominican Republic. As a result, the UN organizations in Dominican Republic appear to operate in silos. In Nepal, UNHCR has been successful at mainstreaming statelessness throughout UN Country Team (UNCT) planning, including the COVID-19 Country Preparedness and Response Plan to ensure that refugees and people without a citizenship certificate are integrated into the UN’s socioeconomic response framework. UNHCR in Nepal has also made sure that people without citizenship certificates are included on checklists for funding proposals offering good practice on coordination on statelessness issues. The UNCT is an appropriate forum for mainstreaming statelessness, given the cross-cutting nature of statelessness programming, however coordination on statelessness among UN actors could be more systematic at the country level.

5.1.3 PRM Staffing and Assistance

PRM staff time spent on statelessness. PRM created the role of Statelessness Focal Point in 2006. While the Statelessness Focal Point has been highly effective, less than a quarter of the Focal Point’s time is allocated to monitoring and supporting statelessness work. The position was created to provide minimal support to PRM’s regional offices as PRM envisioned that RefCoords would take on the majority of the statelessness monitoring, reporting, advocacy and diplomacy. Interviews with PRM staff, including RefCoords and the Office of Policy and Resource Planning (PRP), revealed the importance of increasing the capacity of PRM Washington to work on statelessness by significantly increasing the Focal Point’s time allocation to work on statelessness.

RefCoords, especially those working in humanitarian contexts, highlighted challenges in devoting sufficient time to statelessness issues. RefCoords interviewed in Thailand and Nepal spend less than five percent of their time on statelessness work and RefCoord Assistants estimated that they spent roughly 10 percent of their time on statelessness work—the equivalent of a few days per month. Their main tasks around statelessness included monitoring and reporting on the situation at their post, participating in working groups, meeting with UNHCR, bilateral meetings with host country on statelessness programming governments at the working level and meeting with civil society actors. Of the 12 RefCoords who filled out the evaluation’s survey, all indicated that they spent less than 10 percent of their time dedicated to statelessness.

¹⁹ In Nepal the group working on the UN Legal Identity Agenda is referred to as the Legal Identity Working Group.

RefCoord deployments are determined by PRM priorities and are in countries throughout the world based on the needs of refugee emergencies or refugee resettlement. Not every major situation of statelessness has a RefCoord at the Embassy. In these cases, a Political Officer, typically the Human Rights Officer, at the Embassy is usually assigned the humanitarian assistance portfolio. The RefCoord is dedicated PRM staff, which carries advantages of a direct relationship with PRM Washington. In Nepal, the RefCoord Assistant reported to the Global Strategy Officer who was following closely the geopolitics of the Tibet situation and statelessness portfolio. In the Dominican Republic, where there is no RefCoord, the role was assigned to the Human Rights Officer who helped ensure engagement on statelessness by the rest of the Embassy's staff in the Political and Economic section, including higher-ranking Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) that had political clout with the Ambassador and regular engagements in high-level diplomatic meetings.

Given their mandate, RefCoords' ability to leverage political clout through high-level diplomatic engagement depends heavily on their relationship with the U.S. Ambassador, as explained in Box 9 by a high-level PRM staff member. A good suggestion from the RefCoord survey included: *"PRM and [the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL)] collaborate to provide training to RefCoords and Human Rights Officers more broadly on statelessness issues, so a broader cohort of political officers know how to engage on this issue."*

Box 9: Advocating to the Ambassador

"I think that RefCoords, on their own, don't have the clout to bring about massive change. But if they have a good relationship with an ambassador, they could definitely be influential. I saw some Refugee Coordinators with very good relations with ambassadors."

Box 10: RefCoord Statelessness Training

"I've been in the foreign service for almost 18 years, and I can't recall ever having this come up in any kind of training capacity, except for the PRM 101 course that I took for this position. And you know, I've worked in political sections, I've been a public affairs officer.... it does strike me. What I know about statelessness is actually from my graduate schoolwork."

Training. RefCoords reported understanding and awareness of statelessness issues, mainly through the orientation provided by PRM, learning on the job and through a college or university course (see example in Box 10). Once RefCoords were at their Embassy post, most used strategies to learn more about statelessness issues such as desk reviews, engaging with UNHCR, briefings and support from Washington and engaging with civil society. Field resources shared from PRM Washington included monitoring checklists on questions that RefCoords should ask when engaging on statelessness issues in the field.

One RefCoord recognized the PRP Statelessness Focal Point as *"amazing and absolutely responsive and helpful,"* while also recognizing that statelessness is one of many things covered in the portfolio and felt that more resources were needed to adequately address statelessness from a Bureau perspective (see Box 11).

RefCoords interviewed said they were interested in more support from PRM Washington, more regular briefings and online training courses. A few RefCoords suggested the need for a clearer work plan—one that was tied to the goals of the #IBelong Campaign, including objectives, and that could be developed further with other monitoring resources. They also suggested that the Statelessness Focal Point from PRP should travel and support the field more.

A few RefCoords recognized the difficulty that PRM had in keeping a focus on the #IBelong Campaign, given the lack of priority of the U.S. administration to these issues. However, despite this perception, one of the RefCoords felt PRM had done a good job keeping statelessness on the agenda and felt hopeful that there would be more space to focus on the protection related issues in the future.

Box 11: Resources at PRM Washington

"The Bureau has a person who works on statelessness who is amazing and absolutely responsive and helpful... However, statelessness is one part of a lot of things that this person covers, and I can't imagine having the ability to promote statelessness at the level we need without more resources at the Bureau. I don't think that'd come as a surprise to anyone at the Bureau, but for such an important issue of 10 million potential stateless persons in the world, we certainly need a lot more resources."

Some RefCoords highlighted the desire to learn more about statelessness programming to engage and track advocacy efforts at the global and national level, to engage in discussions about statelessness and to tap into the global efforts to utilize these conversations with other actors. A majority of the RefCoords expressed

eagerness to go beyond engagement with humanitarian actors and wanted more training on how to engage better with political counterparts and government actors.

This evaluation found that PRM and FSO staff at country level should receive more guidance on the importance of PRM's statelessness mandate, more training, and clearer signals from Washington on how to better target their efforts on statelessness.

5.1.4 U.S. Diplomacy

Multilateral diplomacy. U.S. multilateral engagement related to statelessness has largely been through the Group of Friends, the HLS, the HRC, and other multilateral fora. The Group of Friends is made up of twenty-six members—key governments that work closely with UNHCR to assist in the implementation of the #IBelong Campaign.²⁰ There is a Core Group of five to six governments within the Group of Friends that rotates the chairmanship. The Group of Friends has been using strategic bilateral and multilateral pressure to meet the goals of the campaign. The U.S. was active in the Core Group from the campaign's inception in 2015, hosting the first meeting with the U.S. Ambassador to the UN in Geneva and the U.S. Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN HRC in Geneva. The most active U.S. engagement with the Core Group and the #IBelong Campaign coincided with the period when both Ambassadors worked closely together and carried out several statelessness-related initiatives until their tenure ended in 2017. In March 2019, the U.S. announced that it would leave the Core Group but has remained committed and engaged in the broader Group of Friends, including participating in regular meetings and activities. The U.S. announced its intention to rejoin the Core Group in February 2021.

Bilateral high-level diplomacy. Bilateral, high-level diplomatic engagements on statelessness evidenced through the evaluation include international missions by high-level DOS officials, including PRM's Front Office and Regional Bureau's Front Office, as well as Ambassadors and high-level diplomats from U.S. Embassies engaging the executive branch of country governments. High-level diplomatic engagements were very active in the Dominican Republic.

The range of these engagements since 2014 included international missions by then-Vice President Joe Biden, PRM Deputy Assistant Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries, Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and other high-ranking officials. The U.S. Ambassadors and Chargé d'Affairs were active on the issue throughout the period of evaluation. From 2014–2016, the “demand signals” from Washington to the Embassy in Santo Domingo featured the issue prominently and were coupled with close support to the Ambassador and high-level diplomats to engage and prioritize addressing statelessness, as described by one interviewee (see Box 12).

Box 12: Demand Signals from Washington

“The situation in the Dominican Republic got very ugly and I know that PRM was really monitoring that very closely and engaging in particular with WHA on the issue....I think we were trying very hard to coach the ambassador's diplomacy to ensure there was a smart humanitarian approach.”

In Thailand, following a high-profile, international incident, the “stateless boys trapped in a cave,” the U.S. Ambassador at the time, used the media attention which dominated headlines around the world for weeks to raise non-refugee statelessness with the Thai government, showing that media attention on the issue can play a key role in pushing international engagement, including from DOS. Aside from this event, in Thailand there was little evidence of high-level diplomacy on non-refugee stateless persons. However, a national staff member at the U.S. Consulate in Chiang Mai had contacts, deep knowledge and understanding of the issue, but was possibly underutilized and could be a resource for advocacy on the issue within the Embassy. Overall, however the Evaluation Team learned from interviews that non-PRM U.S. Embassy FSOs were largely unaware that non-refugee stateless persons are a part of PRM's mandate. Triangulation with information from the RefCoord survey supports this finding as one respondent shared in regard to non-PRM staff: “They don't know it's a real priority or their role.” Nepal did have some strong examples of

²⁰ The governments include Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Guatemala, Ireland, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, the United States, Uruguay, and Zambia.

U.S. high-level bilateral diplomacy related to PRM's mandate, but these were mostly focused on Tibetan refugees, who are also stateless. Interviewees shared about a congressional delegation to Nepal, through which the issue of legal identity for women was raised.

In discussions on using high-level diplomacy to advocate for nationality solutions for stateless populations, several informants emphasized that the sensitivity surrounding statelessness translated into a higher "spending of political capital" for Ambassadors and high-ranking FSOs. When "clear demand signals" are coming from Washington to lobby for solutions for stateless populations, Ambassadors and diplomats are more likely to raise the issue consistently even when there is a higher cost of political capital. When there are no clear demand signals to lobby for solutions, Ambassadors and diplomats must assess the political capital they are willing to spend against other priorities.

The Dominican Republic is an example of more effective diplomacy, as interviewees cited that while the demand signals from Washington were not as strong in later years, there was sufficient advocacy within the Embassy that the Embassy Political Officers and Ambassador chose to continue to prioritize focusing on statelessness in high-level diplomacy. The focus of the diplomacy centered on supporting UNHCR's legal assistance work for Dominicans of Haitian descent with existing nationality solutions and legal pathways towards nationality confirmation or naturalization. Informants shared that diplomacy focused on advocating for those without a nationality solution required a higher level of political capital than they were willing to spend. This led to less of a focus on this issue and a greater emphasis on supporting the process to confirm or naturalize Dominicans of Haitian descent considered at-risk of statelessness, as it was less controversial and real results could be seen.

Bilateral working level. Working-level bilateral diplomacy is a routine part of the RefCoords job, requiring them to engage bilaterally with government counterparts. In the conversations held with RefCoords, they said they routinely offered diplomatic support to UNHCR. In Thailand, the RefCoord attends the Statelessness Working Group and is planning to meet with government counterparts to discuss statelessness in 2021, a good example of synergy between UNHCR and PRM at the country level. One RefCoord reported that UNHCR asked the U.S. to consider advocating with various states and regional bodies on protection issues, including statelessness. Although she felt it in her power to do this, she felt the need to tie advocacy on statelessness to existing country and regional strategies established by PRM. The RefCoord survey and FGD did note that they could use greater guidance from PRM Washington on the "*tools available to them*" to advocate with country governments. There was a perception that PRM Washington focused a lot on coordination on statelessness at the global level and not as strongly on country or regional strategies. In the Dominican Republic, there is good evidence that coordination between UNHCR and the Political Officer on working-level diplomacy bore fruit. UNHCR kept the Political Officer apprised of the number of cases submitted for review to the government. In turn, the Political Officer raised and followed up on these cases in the various interactions with the government at the working level.

5.1.5 Mainstreaming and coordination efforts in USG

Within DOS. Within PRM, statelessness policy sits within PRP, which has the responsibility to coordinate the strategy on statelessness through other PRM offices, particularly the regional assistance offices and the Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations. The regional assistance offices monitor the regional portfolio and include statelessness in regional strategy decision documents. As one interviewee stated, "*because Program Officers are going out there on field visits, it needs to be an issue they're looking at as well.*" Statelessness is a major topic of PRM communications and strategy in the Dominican Republic. PRM's East Asia Regional Strategy has regional objectives related to statelessness and regularly mentions the stateless Rohingya population in Burma. The Strategy for South Asia (covering Nepal, India, and Sri Lanka) highlighted each year the Women's Nationality Initiative country strategy for Nepal, which included diplomatic and multilateral engagement, building the capacity of local NGOs to advocate for change and a public awareness campaign.²¹

²¹ For more information see compilation of statelessness excerpts from Nepal PPRCs (FY14-FY21)

Box 13: Addressing Cross-Cutting Issues

"I think there is an institutional challenge with this issue. The way DOS is structured, you have humanitarian issues, you have human rights issues, and you have offices for one and offices for the other...Cross-over issues become harder, there isn't a clear home for it when it has both the humanitarian and the human rights [aspect]. So, that's something that has to be thought through. If you're going to be effective on [statelessness] you have to figure out, how do you do that."

Statelessness is a cross-cutting issue that intersects with democracy, human rights and peace and security. Some DOS staff members have had discussions on whether the issue "fits" in PRM or in another bureau, such as DRL, as highlighted by one DOS interviewee in Box 13. For many reasons, this evaluation concludes that PRM remains the appropriate home for statelessness because of PRM's close relationship with UNHCR and PRM's knowledge of protection in general.

However, similarly to the way that UNHCR must coordinate across the UN family and with human rights groups to make progress on statelessness, PRM must do the same within DOS. Interviewees agreed, as expressed by one: *"I think that PRM remains the right place for the issue in the DOS, although I do think it would benefit from better cross-bureau collaboration."* Some examples of PRM-led cross-bureau coordination or mainstreaming include:

- A. In 2007, PRM worked with DRL editors to create a subsection dedicated to statelessness in the annual State Department Country Reports on human rights practices.
- B. In 2015, DRL's Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) Tom Malinowski and PRM's Assistant Secretary Anne Richard conducted a joint mission to Rakhine State to advocate through diplomacy on the situation of the Rohingya, approached through a human rights lens.
- C. In 2020, in the Dominican Republic, the DAS from WHA engaged in bilateral diplomacy on statelessness.

Although there is some evidence of cross-bureau coordination through diplomatic engagements on high-profile statelessness situations, there was less evidence of coordination efforts that resulted in complementary programming or aligning programs according to the strengths of different bureaus.

Across the USG. There is recognition of the benefits of cross-bureau collaboration within DOS, but statelessness as a cross-cutting issue is also relevant to development actors, particularly the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). As stated by one interviewee, *"There is a development dimension in the sense that individuals who are stateless actually have obstacles in accessing services – access to education, healthcare..."* The evaluation found no evidence that PRM had coordinated on statelessness programming with USAID or other USG agencies. PRM has made efforts, however, to raise the issue with Congress. For example, in 2016, the PRM Assistant Secretary testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee raising concern about gender discrimination in nationality laws in countries affected by the Syria crisis and about lack of birth registration and those at risk of statelessness,²² while PRM's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary also testified before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission in 2015.

EQ2: TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE PRM EFFORTS SUPPORTED PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF UNHCR'S GAP?

5.1.6 Perceptions of Informants on Effectiveness

The Evaluation Team found that effective progress on statelessness requires changes to nationality laws and procedures, as well as reforms to civil registration, that only governments can make. Changing the legal frameworks and improving civil registration in many countries, however, requires strong guidance and advocacy from UNHCR well beyond 2024. While UNHCR has issued a wide variety of excellent guidance on legal reform, making sure governments implement reforms requires a robust civil society, encouragement and assistance from other UN agencies and positive attention from the media, particularly to counteract root and systemic causes of statelessness like discrimination. Eliminating statelessness also requires that stateless people know their rights and that stateless communities have access to legal aid,

²² For more information, see https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/091416_%20Richard_Testimony.pdf.

protection, and their basic human rights. The following sections summarize views on what UNHCR and PRM are doing well and where there is room for improvement.

Statelessness prioritization in UNHCR. Despite statelessness being part of UNHCR’s core mandate, interviewees regularly noted that: (1) funding for statelessness has not increased significantly for the #IBelong Campaign and (2) the removal of the Pillar system may further deprioritize statelessness within UNHCR.

Box 14: Prioritization of Statelessness

“I think one of the takeaways is, statelessness has not been institutionalized in some ways, and perhaps because we don’t provide a lot of support to stateless people. Whereas, we have huge programs for assistance and protection of refugees, which is, people would say, our main mandate. But we actually have the mandate for stateless, and I think it’s a really important thing to point out.”

The evaluation’s sentiment analysis of informant responses revealed that, at the global level, 45 percent of all informants agreed that statelessness is “not prioritized” within UNHCR and not given enough funding, 51 percent viewed it as “sort of prioritized,” and only four percent percentage indicated high prioritization. Those with statelessness expertise were more likely to rank it as “not prioritized” than others at UNHCR, who were more likely to rank it as “sort of prioritized.” Box 14 highlights a common perspective on the issue.

Impact of regionalization on statelessness resources. The regionalization process that is ongoing in UNHCR was aimed at improving the speed and responsiveness of service delivery by shifting personnel and decision-making authorities closer to the field and beneficiaries to allow for a faster and more effective response and greater collaboration with host countries and development actors. Some informants were cautiously optimistic that as UNHCR continues to move toward regionalization, there will be more opportunities to better mainstream statelessness and give it the attention it deserves. Others expressed concerns that regionalization has not translated to greater resources for statelessness activities.

Box 15: Budget Cuts Impact Statelessness

“There was a national staff from Kenya who had been a dedicated resource on statelessness whose post was downgraded after a budget cut. I guess if you are a representative in Kenya the first thing you cut is statelessness staff. If it had been Côte d Ivoire or Central Asia it would have been different. But in Kenya no one expects that you have the bandwidth to address statelessness.”

Discussions with senior UNHCR acknowledged that regionalization is a high priority and an opportunity to ‘get it right’ in terms of ensuring that statelessness is more fully integrated into UNHCR’s work. Feedback from the Statelessness Section, however, revealed that since 2017 the Regional Statelessness Officer in the Middle East and North Africa region has not been devoted to statelessness 100 percent of the time; the position in the Americas was downgraded from a P4 to a P3 position and there appears to be an overall reduction in the amount of support for Regional Statelessness Officers and an ongoing lack of support staff.

Box 16: Deprioritizing Given Refugee Mandate

“[UNHCR] is seriously underfunded and under-resourced on statelessness. Just to give you an example, Thailand has at least 450,000 stateless persons, and so far, there is no exclusive statelessness officer on the international staff level, meaning P2, P3, P4 position. In other regions of the world, you have a dedicated P3 statelessness officer for far fewer people. I think they [UNHCR staff] are extremely skilled, eager, and really working hard on that. But at the same time, they are just under-resourced. That limits the potential really to resolve situations as smoothly and quickly as it might be possible with more staff.”

Deprioritizing due to budget cuts. Interviews with field staff highlighted the inherent challenges that statelessness will always have within an organization that is seen as mainly in charge of humanitarian emergencies, which put an enormous strain on UNHCR’s budget (see Box 15 above). Similarly, in Thailand and Nepal, the observations made by statelessness staff highlighted that despite the large numbers of stateless people, staff do not have sufficient time to focus on non-refugee statelessness. The lack of resources in Thailand is further described in Box 16.

Benefits of earmarked funding. As discussed above, PRM funding to UNHCR is usually not earmarked for statelessness activities, but evidence shows that earmarking funding for statelessness activities has been effective. One senior UNHCR official said that it would have been unlikely for UNHCR to make progress

on statelessness without it. The Seeds for Solution funding that was used for statelessness programming discussed earlier was considered impactful. One UNHCR Country Representative shared a preference for earmarked funding, highlighting the inherent challenge of prioritizing statelessness without it (see Box 17).

Box 17: Earmarking for Countries

"For our country programs I would probably rather have earmarked funding because we will always struggle in giving [statelessness] priority. The refugee needs obviously always must be met as well.... It would probably be useful to earmark something [at the country-level] just to ensure that something is done on statelessness."

Opinions of the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness. Many UNHCR staff accepted the GAP as the road map or path forward to eradicating statelessness. There were also critics who were concerned that the GAP is overly legalistic or that it does not put enough emphasis on addressing discrimination, especially against minorities (see Box 18). Discrimination as a cause and consequence of statelessness is dealt with at greater length later in the report. Our data shows that outside of the UN, the GAP is not widely known or understood, especially among actors at the country-level.

It was often confused with the #IBelong Campaign, or at least undistinguishable from it. Informants highlighted that little progress has been made on Action 1, as explained in Box 19, (for a list of the 10 GAP actions, see Table 1 on page 1).

A Gap in Statelessness Statistics and Data. The evaluation research revealed that there is a lack of data on the extent of statelessness in many countries. While the Joint Data Centre is a promising initiative to improve statistics on statelessness, the World Bank remains under-invested in addressing statelessness, due in part to the perception of World Bank staff that statelessness is not a major concern for country development.

Box 18: GAP's Link to Discrimination

"UNHCR is valuable as an actor, but how can we complement this with much more resources flowing into the ground level? I think this is the next battle to be waged. We now have a lot of standards. We have a lot of policies. We have a lot of ideas how to change laws. Now, it is about tackling the social underpinnings of statelessness at the country levels, particularly the discriminatory dynamics."

In part, this lack of investment is due to a perceived lack of data on statelessness, though PRM has funded a small study on the impact of statelessness on livelihoods.²³ It is not clear to what extent UNHCR is engaging with UNFPA and other development actors on statelessness to include statelessness in the census at country levels.

Box 19: Little Support for Action 1

"There's a lot of interest at improving data on statelessness which relates to Action 10 of the GAP. Less so -- but actions that are important— on Action 1, which relates to situations like in Myanmar where you've got large protracted stateless populations where a fix is needed to bring those numbers down. There was less support shown for those actions."

Without better data and statistics (and unless there are large numbers of people at risk), it is difficult to compel the World Bank, UNFPA and even UNICEF to prioritize the issue. Interviews with the World Bank exposed the view that evidence for statelessness as a cause of poverty is lacking, as is evidence that stateless people are poorer than other populations. As a result, the World Bank will not focus attention on statelessness without clearer evidence and, until then, would be disinclined to raise it as an issue with governments.

UNHCR lacks the capacity to conduct large-scale, complex statistical studies and, although the Joint Data Center is a good initiative, the World Bank has yet to make a major commitment to studying the intersection between statelessness and poverty.

There are big challenges in collecting data on stateless persons, especially in countries like Nepal, whose government does not accept that statelessness exists. Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) data estimates that in 2021 there will be 6.7 million people in Nepal without citizenship certificates, with an undetermined number among that group at risk of statelessness. Much of what UNHCR knows about statelessness statistics comes from countries like Thailand and Cote d'Ivoire, which have compiled statistics on statelessness through national census bureaus, sometimes with UNHCR assistance.

²³ Kingston University, "The Cost of Statelessness" (2011).

5.1.7 The #IBelong Campaign

Perspectives on the #IBelong Campaign to end statelessness.

There are mixed results from six years of implementation of the #IBelong Campaign, but most informants agree that it increased discussions on statelessness and raised awareness, particularly at the global level (see Box 20). Informants spoke of, “*having put statelessness back on the map*,” “*increased the cooperation with human rights*” and creating “*better links with development and conflict*.”

Box 20: #IBelong Succeeds in Awareness

“I think it's absolutely uncontroversial to say that the kind of the global visibility that the statelessness issue has now, is just at another level when compared to what the visibility was in 2014. It is not only because of the #IBelong Campaign, but it is largely because of the #IBelong Campaign. And I think it's really important to acknowledge that.”

Feedback from informants, including high level UNHCR staff, was that the #IBelong Campaign was overly ambitious in its goal to end statelessness within 10 years. A vast majority (84 percent) of informants who commented on the #IBelong Campaign indicated that it required changes in strategy or structure to turn awareness-raising into action. UNHCR plans to focus more attention on advocacy at the regional- and national-level between now and the end of the campaign. Informants rated certain activities organized as part of the #IBelong Campaign, such as giving the Nansen Refugee Award to a stateless activist in 2019, as highly effective.

Stakeholders from UN agencies spoke about increased coordination and mainstreaming in global reports. One UN staff member said, “*It has led to the UN Secretary General's developing global guidance on statelessness which I now use to develop my talking points*.” Statelessness has been mentioned in key global declarations, such as the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees. However, multiple informants stressed that statelessness is barely mentioned within the Global Compact on Refugees and expressed concerns that it will get lost within the Global Compact structure.

The strongest critics of the #IBelong Campaign and GAP are UNHCR staff, which is likely because CSOs and UN partners are less aware of the #IBelong Campaign and GAP. The collective view from within UNHCR is that there is a lack of understanding of what statelessness programming costs, which has made it difficult to project budgets, and a lack of sufficient funding for statelessness activities.

According to several informants, the way UNHCR communicates on statelessness is legalistic, which is one way of approaching the issue but not comprehensive, as highlighted by one individual in Box 21.

Box 21: Moving beyond Legal Guidance

“I think the hard part is really reorienting the work gradually [beyond legal guidance] or creating more enabling spaces beyond their [statelessness staff's] own comfort zone. They are comfortable with international standards, frameworks, international fora, etc.”

However, they are also directed toward governments and thus focus heavily on legal reform and procedural changes. The impression from some informants is that there needs to be a shift toward civil society and a focus on movement building, public awareness raising,²⁴ addressing systemic racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination, the empowerment of stateless persons and other ways of making progress on statelessness.

Box 22: UNHCR Cannot Do It Alone

“It's really unfair to expect UNHCR to be able to do all of this. It goes far beyond their mandate...A significant part of [the issue] is very much centered within UNHCR's mandate and UNHCR's expertise, but significant parts are outside of that. Expecting UNHCR to drive things forward with others playing supporting roles -- I don't think it's realistic.”

Many agreed that multilateral coordination was difficult but saw it as critical for working with governments, like Nepal or the Dominican Republic, where statelessness raises sensitive issues of national identity. UNHCR alone cannot address this complex issue. Informants felt that coordination on statelessness is important to making progress; however, there is not enough coordination between UN agencies working jointly on statelessness (see Box 22).

²⁴ To raise awareness, the #IBelong Campaign has employed high-profile celebrities through the UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Program. For example, see the keynote event between actress Cate Blanchett and stateless activist Maha Mamo at the High-Level Segment: <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5dd3b0647.pdf>. The effectiveness of the use of the Goodwill Ambassador program by the #IBelong Campaign was not looked at by this evaluation.

With UN partners, there is the view that, as the mandated agency, UNHCR should not only take the lead on statelessness, but also do the majority of the work.

An important finding based on the Evaluation Team’s analysis from interviews is that the #IBelong Campaign has been a catalyst for change within UNHCR. Some of these changes include:

- The need to move toward a more “campaign” or “advocacy” model, requiring stronger engagement with governments and civil society as highlighted by the informant in Box 23.
- Placing greater emphasis on global coordination, such through the Global Compact on Refugee structure²⁵, based on shared responsibility, funding, and expertise (such as UNICEF working on birth registration, UN Women working on gender discrimination in the law, UNFPA working on national population censuses and IOM on migration).
- The need for seed funding for specific projects.
- The need to move from doing statelessness training as a one-off activity to an approach where learning is more integrated into the work on a day-to-day basis.
- The need to make the UNHCR Bureaus more accountable on statelessness and make sure statelessness is not lost during regionalization.
- The need to strategically engage with the U.S. and other donor countries for diplomatic support, as in the Dominican Republic.
- The continued need to raise public awareness on statelessness and to highlight statelessness activists at the regional and country level.

Box 23: Advocacy Initiatives Limited

“There has been more of a focus [on broad statelessness advocacy], largely due to resources of the #IBelong Campaign for the global-level [advocacy strategy] rather than a country-level strategy... When it comes down to Campaign activities that are more around advocacy, changing the perspective of decision-makers, building political will, that's a different [kind of advocacy] and there isn't a great deal of experience with this [at UNHCR] ...It's quite different than either fundraising campaigns, for which we have quite good capacity and understanding of how to do that.

Box 24: Linking with Diplomacy

“Ideally, we could link the Under Secretary of Political Affairs and the US Ambassador to push these issues in each of the countries where it is coming up, or in his or her discussions with other ambassadors at a national level...[We need to] take it from a global issue [to a national issue], for which I think we have dedicated insufficient attention. We need to get very targeted on the main 78 countries [where statelessness is an issue].”

The #IBelong Campaign has helped UNHCR better understand how to equip itself to fulfill its statelessness mandate and how to engage better with partners. Interviews with senior UNHCR leadership recognized the need for much more strategic diplomatic coordination with the U.S. The lack of progress on Action 1, especially, puts a sharp focus on the need for more robust, strategic, and bilateral high-level diplomacy to effect change, especially in contexts where political will is lacking, as suggested by one UNHCR staff in an interview (see Box 24).

Perspectives on the High-Level Segment. Among the countries reviewed for this evaluation, only Thailand participated in the HLS and made pledges. Although both the Dominican Republic and Nepal sent delegations, neither made any pledges. Statelessness is a highly sensitive issue in both countries and the Dominican Republic has consistently emphasized that there are no stateless persons in the country. The attendance of both countries was notable. Feedback from a PRM staff member who attended the HLS noted a bit of friendly competition between those who attended: *“Almost like a bit of competition I saw it at the HLS. There was a group who were watching a video that was highlighting some legislation and then in a bilateral I overheard them talking about how incredible it was and I could hear them saying how they could do that too... It was amazing.”*

Overall, the HLS was considered a major success by UNHCR staff, PRM and others who were aware of it, although the majority of countries did not pledge, including the majority of countries hosting major

²⁵ The Global Refugee Forum is a worldwide framework to achieve solutions for refugees, displaced persons and stateless populations for more information see UNHCR - The Global Compact on Refugees

statelessness populations. *“If you look at the High-Level Segment and the pledges there, we actually have momentum on a platter that we’ve never had before. And new things will continue to happen over the next few years thanks to that and all of the lead-up work at the regional level that went into that.”*

A finding highlighted in Box 25 by one informant was the concern that too much attention might be focused on ticking boxes and following up on HLS commitments, thus diverting focus from stateless people.

The HLS also generated new pledges from the U.S., reaffirming diplomatic support to eradicate statelessness and gender discrimination in nationality laws abroad and to conduct a review of its statelessness activities.

Box 25: Attention Diverted to HLS

“It’s great that states pledge [at the HLS] to do certain things [on statelessness]. But it’s unfortunate if then all of UNHCR’s energy and attention is focused on following up on those pledges. If that’s where [UNHCR’s] attention goes, when the actual problems are happening to real people on the ground, in terms of their real lives, there won’t be the bandwidth.”

Perspectives on the Friends of the #IBelong Campaign.

PRM staff who were actively involved in the Group of Friends felt that it achieved concrete outcomes, especially between 2015-2017, when the U.S. was most involved.

Box 26: Effective action as a group

“We are part of 14 or 15 informal groups in the humanitarian field alone and from our perspective this group is the most successful. This is because the UNHCR Statelessness Section is behind the group, the group is behind the issue, and we have a very clear strategy. This is what makes this group successful.”

Interviews with members of the Group of Friends revealed that they felt they had achieved a lot as a group and attributed their successes to having a clear strategy, including engaging the HRC, sponsoring resolutions, releasing common statements into plenary at different governance boards and policy forums, and engaging with the UPR process of different countries. The Core Group of the Group of Friends engaged the Executive Committee meeting in 2017 with a joint statement and with the 2016 HRC Resolution (in which case, feedback from interviewees was that it would not have been passed without their engagement). As highlighted in Box 26, Core Group members all expressed satisfaction with the progress they had made in the group and the support they had received from the UNHCR Statelessness Section.

Thailand is a member of the Group of Friends, and while the evaluation found that the Group of Friends has helped to engage the Thai government at the national level, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it has been difficult to translate these engagements into change at the local level in Thailand. PRM could do more to push the Group of Friends members to make concrete improvements within their countries on statelessness, including UNHCR donor countries, many of which host stateless populations. Doing so will necessitate finding a way to bridge the gap between government ministries and agencies involved in foreign diplomacy and those responsible for changes to nationality laws and policies back home. There was concern that the U.S. stepping back in 2019 would weaken the Core Group. In the end, there were mixed consequences: on the one hand, it was positive because it gave other countries like Kenya and Brazil, more room to take more of a lead role; however, it also placed a greater burden on the UNHCR Statelessness Section to lead the group.

5.1.8 Perspectives on Human Rights Treaty Bodies

Perspectives on effectiveness of UN mechanisms. The sentiment analysis from interviews found that 81 percent of global respondents felt the UN mechanisms were useful advocacy- and awareness-raising tools but were more limited in translating into country-level changes. Respondents in Thailand and the Dominican Republic mirrored this trend. In Nepal, seven of eleven respondents felt they were useful, three felt it was effective at making change at the country-level and only one felt UN mechanisms were not effective at all.

Box 27: The UPR is important for Nepal

“I think the UPR is very effective lobbying document. It is also important right now because Nepal is a member of the Human Rights Council which means that the government will be more inclined to respect the human rights process. It also enables us as civil society network to engage people who are directly affected and give them a voice through our joint submission. The government is compelled to respond to them.”

Opinions of the Universal Periodic Review. The UPR is a mechanism by which UN member states give each other recommendations on human rights reforms. There was significant engagement on Nepal in the UPR session that took place in January 2021 including on gender discrimination in the law. Member states, UN Agencies and NGOs made multiple submissions, including separate submissions from UNHCR, FWLD, and the GCENR. A civil society actor who is very engaged on the citizenship issue in Nepal and utilizes international and national platforms, including CEDAW, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UPR, felt strongly that the UPR is very important to engage in, especially through multiple, joint submissions. Between 2018-2020 the Government of Nepal was a member of the HRC, which the civil society actor believed provided additional pressure on the government for their human rights record as highlighted in Box 27, on the previous page.

The U.S. is one of several countries that has issued recommendations to governments on statelessness, including Nepal, where the U.S. expressed concern about “provisions within the constitution on citizenship that may discriminate against women and increase the risk of statelessness.” The GCENR participated in joint UPR submissions with civil society groups and coordinated UPR advocacy with the U.S. mission. One key informant from Thailand noted that while the UPR had been used effectively by the Swedish government on other human rights issues in Thailand, no recommendations had been made by other countries to address statelessness in Thailand. The UPR can be an effective way for the USG and UNHCR to make change on statelessness, however it must be done as part of a joint effort with civil society.

Box 28: Engagement in Human Rights Council

“Prior to 2012 there had never been a significant Human Rights Council resolution on statelessness or on nationality rights. So PRM considered the 2012 Human Rights Resolution quite groundbreaking. In 2016 the main reason that the Human Rights Resolution was such a success was because it engaged so many countries. In the end, 107 states came on board including African countries that had discrimination in their nationality laws. By them signing it really opened an opportunity for advocacy to change their laws. Another positive outcome of the resolution was that a Special Rapporteur got seized on the issue and

Opinions of Human Rights Council Resolutions. In 2016, the U.S. co-sponsored Resolution 32/7 on women’s equal nationality rights in law and in practice that attracted 107 cosponsors, including the Group of African States. U.S. leadership on this resolution benefited from engagement with NGO advocates and coordination with UNHCR to craft strong language and mobilize support from HRC member states.

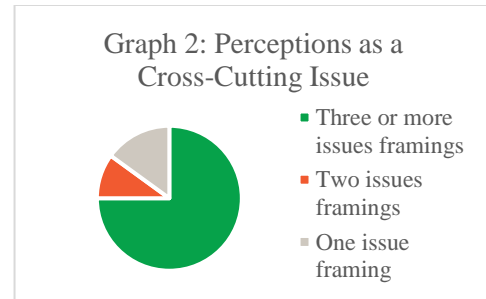
As mentioned above, the Group of Friends was also very engaged in helping to support the resolution, as highlighted by a PRM staff member (see Box 28). A U.S. diplomat recalled how much work had gone into getting the 2016 HRC together and felt it was a success at the time. *“I think there were a core group of states that made it a priority issue and when you have the right states making an issue a priority issue in the multilateral system then success like that is achievable.”* He highlighted the importance of follow through to make sure the resolution is used at the country level.

While in 2017 there was an expert workshop on best practices to promote women’s equal nationality rights in law and in practice,²⁶ it is not clear from this evaluation how much impact the resolution has had at the country level.

The U.S. left the HRC in 2018. While staying engaged, not being a member-imposed limitation on its effectiveness, such as not having a U.S. Ambassador in the seat at the plenary sessions and not being able to vote. In 2021, the U.S. rejoined the HRC, providing more opportunities to engage in the future.

²⁶ Eight experts and approximately 70 participants attended the workshop, including State delegations, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies and persons who had been affected by discrimination against women in nationality laws. One of the members of the working group on discrimination against women in laws and in practice also participated as an expert. For more information see <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/36/30>

A Statelessness as a cross-cutting issue. Informants spoke at length about the interplay of statelessness as a humanitarian, human rights, and development issue. Informants also raised the links between statelessness and gender, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination. As illustrated in Graph 2, most informants agreed that statelessness can be framed within three or more issue areas. In Box 29, one informant articulated how statelessness can be considered a development issue.



Box 29: Statelessness Is Cross-Cutting

“There is a development dimension in the sense that individuals who are stateless actually have obstacles in terms of access to services—access to education in some countries and whatnot. There is clearly a development dimension.... But citizenship is a right to have rights. If you turn that around, statelessness is the denial of rights and the denial of access to a whole variety of services but also opportunities.”

In Nepal, there was much agreement that statelessness could be framed as a gender, human rights, or development issue. There was a view that having such a large portion of the population undocumented and unregistered is a development issue, as stateless persons and undocumented individuals have limited possibilities to participate in the economic and social life of the country. Informants opined that development actors could take a greater role in resolving documentation challenges for those with nationality claims. It was also agreed that it was UNHCR’s role to take the lead on those considered stateless or at-risk of statelessness.

In the Dominican Republic, civil society firmly and unequivocally felt the need to emphasize statelessness as a human rights issue first, linked to colorism and racism, but felt that it ultimately affected the countries’ development trajectory, which can be a powerful talking point for diplomacy. As expressed by one FSO, *“In the Dominican Republic, the economic development argument makes the most sense with ‘non-believers.’*” In Thailand, multiple informants raised the link between statelessness and the right to own land, the need in Thailand for migrant workers and the need for young families to balance Thailand’s aging population. Stateless persons in Thailand also spoke movingly of the discrimination they have faced. Yet, the cross-cutting nature of statelessness is not well-addressed by either PRM or UNHCR, nor is discrimination, apart from gender discrimination, a major focus of either PRM or UNHCR’s strategies.

5.1.9 Links Between the GAP and PRM’s Strategy

The Evaluation Team’s analysis revealed that interviewees most frequently discussed activities related to Actions 1, 3, 8 and 10, likely due to the relevance of those actions to Thailand, Nepal and the Dominican Republic, and the focus on gender in PRM’s strategy, which led the evaluation to look particularly at Action 3. It is important to note that both Thailand and the Dominican Republic are Action 1 countries hosting major situations of statelessness. Action 8 on issuing documents is relevant in all three countries and Action 10 is particularly relevant in Nepal, where the extent of the statelessness problem is not known. Table 2 highlights key funding and diplomatic engagements at the global level and in the three countries and how they link to various GAP Actions.

Table 2: Funding and Diplomacy

Action	Activity
Action 1	High-level diplomacy to Dominican Republic Engagement of Thailand in the Group of Friends
Action 2 and 3	2012 and 2016 HRC Resolutions on gender discrimination and the right to a nationality UNHCR funding to FWLD for work in Nepal Coordination of the Group of Friends for advocacy on gender discrimination in the law UNHCR and GCENR submissions to the Nepal UPR (2016, 2021) U.S. Ambassador to the UN HRC in Geneva speaks at a high-level event organized and chaired by GCENR GCENR joint submission in 2018 to the CEDAW (Nepal).
Action 8	UNHCR Support to FWLD for legal aid in Nepal UNHCR provides legal aid to Groups A and B in Dominican Republic UNHCR supports ADRA for legal aid in Thailand, including with funding PRM pledged at HLS PRM Funding to Heartland Alliance in Dominican Republic to support legal assistance for Groups A and B
Action 10	PRM Funded Research in Nepal, Thailand, and Dominican Republic UNHCR in Dominican Republic conducts biometric identification of Group B2

H Work on Action 3. Building on the Women’s Nationality Initiative launched by the U.S. Secretary of State in December 2011, PRM has been committed to addressing discrimination in nationality laws and civil registration since before the launch of the GAP and #IBelong Campaign.

This commitment translated in PRM’s multilateral diplomatic efforts in support of Action 3 of the GAP and of the #IBelong Campaign to increase awareness and mobilize other leaders to join its work in raising women’s equal rights to nationality as a priority for multilateral and regional partners, including UNHCR. During 2014–2017, the Ambassador to the UN in Geneva initiated two women empowerment projects including “The Future She Deserves” and a leadership network called the International Gender Champions. The first person she successfully recruited to become a gender champion was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (see Box 30).

Box 30: GBV and Statelessness

“The Future She Deserves focused on gender-based violence. We tried to use that platform as a way to focus on what it means to women when they’re stateless and all the downstream effects. Through the International Gender Champions, we were trying to get the heads of diplomatic missions, the heads of international organizations, the heads of NGOs, basically all leadership, to make specific commitments on how they were going to promote gender equality within their organizations or through their programmatic work in the coming year.”

Box 31: Women’s Nationality Rights

“One thing that I would say that I’ve seen as being very effective and it sits alongside the Global Action Plan has been the very specific work around gender equality. And I know that PRM has also separately supported the Global Campaign so dedicated support to an initiative which is able to bridge civil society in the UN because the global campaign is the steering committee, I think it is. There are members from both the UN, so UNHCR and others and from civil society, but the global campaign itself also has its dedicated kind of funding and is able to implement its own activities. And I think that kind of environment has worked very well, and you see that in some respects more progress has therefore been made on the gender equality goal than some of the others.”

PRM’s funding to the GCENR aligns with Action 3, with a focus on ending gender discrimination in nationality law. The GCENR is also engaged in the work of the Coalition on Every Child’s Right to a Nationality, serving as a member of the advisory committee. The Coalition’s work is aligned to Action 3 as well as 2, 8, and 10. The GCENR’s work also complemented UNHCR’s work on Action 3 as highlighted by one informant (see Box 31).²⁷ Other work on Action 3 includes a joint publication with UN Women, UNICEF and UNHCR on gender discrimination in the law.²⁸ Additionally, UNHCR publishes a Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness every year and has published a Practice paper on Action 3.²⁹

²⁷ Since 2014, the GCENR has made over fifty submissions to UN human rights bodies, organized seven national/regional multi-stakeholder workshops, and published over a dozen publications and advocacy resources, in addition to other activities.

²⁸ For more information see <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/gender-discrimination-and-stateless-children/>

²⁹ For more information see <https://www.refworld.org/docid/604257d34.html>,

Table 3: Outcomes Evidenced in three countries on GAP Actions 1, 8 and 10




Country	Nepal	Dominican Republic	Thailand
Type of Outcome Evidenced	 Type 1, Type 2, Type 3	 Type 1, Type 2, Type 3	 Type 1, Type 2
Highlighted Example	<p>Actions 8 and 10: UNHCR's implementing partner FWLD has carried out research highlighting that 6.7 million people in 2021 are without citizenship certificates which is the most reliable figure available. In addition, FWLD carries out legal reform and legal assistance, and training with Parliamentarians</p>	<p>Actions 1 and 8: In 2020, President Medina issued a Presidential Decree to naturalize 750 cases of Group B individuals. This is the first in the available legal pathway to nationality for Group B2. Of these, 708 were supported by UNHCR and partners to compile documents. Advocacy from civil society and U.S. diplomacy were considered key catalysts for the decree.</p>	<p>Actions 1 and 8: Through UNHCR funding of its implementing partner, ADRA, thousands of stateless persons in the Chiang Rai region have been supported to access their citizenship documents despite a complicated and difficult to understand legal environment. Through engagement with the #IBelong Campaign, there has been consistent high-level attention to the issue.</p>

Table 3, above, highlights country-level outcomes on GAP Actions 1, 8, and 10 in the three countries. Action 8 featured prominently in all the countries. PRM's strategy through its implementation at the country level, is where the evaluation saw the most concrete outcomes. While in Nepal and the Dominican Republic there was limited engagement with the #IBelong Campaign and PRM's multilateral diplomacy, the Dominican Republic showcased the strength of U.S. bilateral diplomacy coupled with UNHCR's actions, while Nepal showcased how UNHCR can continue to make progress in a politicized environment. However, UNHCR has not made significant progress on these GAP Actions. Some common reasons for this lack of progress evident in the three countries are (1) CSOs are generally underfunded, both for legal aid and advocacy, which impedes progress on both Actions 1 and 8. On legal aid, UNHCR's reach in Thailand is in one region despite the scale of the problem and in Nepal CSOs are the only ones taking up the issue despite the huge needs. (2) Discrimination around race, caste, or ethnic minority status features heavily as a core underlying issue, particularly for Action 1, but there is little to no programming to address it. (3) Coalition-building and raising public awareness was considered critical to addressing statelessness but insufficient funding or diplomatic initiatives were evidenced to support this work. (4) There is little data on statelessness in Nepal and insufficient, independent data on statelessness in Thailand, impeding progress on Action 10.

Impact of COVID-19. Most informants highlighted the concern about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable stateless and at-risk of statelessness populations, given that they are not prioritized to access needed health support, relief, and social protection programs, nor is it clear that they will be vaccinated. Paradoxically, COVID-19 was seen as yet another emergency to be prioritized above the statelessness issue. In all the three countries, there was evidence of UNHCR, either on its own, through partners, or through advocacy with the government, providing stateless persons with short-term support such as hygiene kits or access to government programs.

Box 32: Other Governments' Involvement

"It is very rarely mentioned by other governments...For example, I just finished [meetings] with the German government and with the EU. During these, the word 'statelessness' was not on the agenda other than our opening [statements]... We had a lot of momentum coming out of last October but now that it's been 15 months, now that the Global Refugee Forum happened between the high-level segment, and this year with the pandemic...[governments] have completely changed priorities. I feel like it was a long time ago that we were having really substantive conversations with governments other than the US on statelessness."

Donors and other partners. Although the Evaluation Team did not conduct a full review of other donors, there seemed to be engagement on statelessness by other donor countries, but not much donor funding, as explained in Box 32 and in the section on PRM funding, above. There was also funding coming from private donors via donations to both CSOs and INGOs. Some examples include OSF, which funds and partners with CSOs in Nepal to work on legal identity and statelessness issues. In the Dominican Republic, the American Jewish World Service provides funding to grassroots CSOs, many of which also receive funding or support from UNHCR, and they have also advocated with PRM and DOS on the situation in the Dominican Republic. In Thailand, the Diakonia Foundation (Sweden) and PLAN International (which does receive some funds from governments) support local CSOs working on statelessness.

Both OSF and the ISI, which are funded by private foundations, also fund statelessness work in multiple other countries worldwide. The research also found that there was significant statelessness-adjacent programming by other actors, including UN partners that assist stateless populations without being specifically targeted towards statelessness. The Evaluation Team concludes that more donor government support for statelessness work beyond donating to UNHCR's Global Appeal and, indirectly, through donations to other UN agencies is needed.

EQ3: WHAT CHANGES OR UPDATES NEED TO BE MADE TO PRM'S STATELESSNESS STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN THE ABILITY OF STATELESSNESS INITIATIVES TO PREVENT AND REDUCE STATELESSNESS, INCLUDING PRM MONITORING OF STATELESSNESS ACTIVITIES OVERSEAS?

5.1.10 PRM monitoring of UNHCR

PRP and Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations (MCE) at PRM and UNHCR Headquarters. PRM managers meet with UNHCR senior managers twice per year for high-level discussions on the PRM-UNHCR Framework for Cooperation. During the meetings, PRM and UNHCR discuss mutual policy, program, and funding priorities for the year. Interviews with UNHCR senior management revealed that statelessness was not discussed significantly in the last year (see Box 33). However, UNHCR recognized that there is a need for a renewed coordinated diplomatic strategy with the U.S. This is important, given the level of U.S. influence on advancing statelessness goals and the momentum built to date.

Box 33: Global UNHCR Monitoring

"To be honest in the bilateral meetings I have had with the United States, which focused on protection, or the bilateral meetings with the United States at headquarters, the subject of statelessness did not come up to any significant degree. There also has not been much questioning about reporting on these issues either."

Headquarters working-level (Geneva–DC). Regular global-level monitoring takes place between PRP (the PRM Statelessness Focal Point) and the UNHCR's DIP Statelessness Section. The close relationship that has developed over the years is built on mutual respect and accountability. In the lead-up to the development of the GAP, advice and feedback was sought from PRM at the early stages. The organizations carry out quarterly calls for updates on funding, staffing, GAP Actions, and diplomatic opportunities and hold strategy sessions. They also have frequent discussions about actions taken between the Group of Friends.

Box 34: Ready to Support

" I will say that when interacting with PRM in Washington, it was always clear to me that if I had a question about statelessness, the people that handle statelessness were more than ready to jump in.... It's the Foreign Service, you're often thrown into a job and having to figure things out with a minimum of training. That's the deal in our organization, but we covered the big picture stuff [during trainings]. There wasn't any breakout though on, 'Here's how it works in your part of the world.' or anything like that."

Support to RefCoords from Washington. Sentiment analysis reveals that PRM RefCoords in Nepal and Thailand feel a moderate level of support from PRM Washington. They indicate some early orienting around statelessness but not consistent follow-up or ongoing support. Feedback from the previous RefCoord in Nepal showed that they knew support was there but did not have the time to take advantage of it given that the resettlement of Bhutanese refugees consumed the majority of his time (see Box 34).

All respondents in the Dominican Republic (who were all Political Officers rather than RefCoords) indicated a high level of support, particularly from the PRM Caribbean Program Officer and more generally from PRM Washington staff who took several field trips there. Despite the lack of formal PRM training or orientation on statelessness, the Evaluation Team found that the Political Officers were highly engaged on statelessness issues. The Political Officer's high level of commitment on statelessness was influenced by PRM Washington's engagement with them through field trips, that were seen as catalytic events that helped push activities forward in the Dominican Republic.

RefCoords based at regional/country level. Several of the RefCoords were in contact with the UNHCR Regional Statelessness Officers as a part of their monitoring and coordination activities. Most of those interviewed seemed very engaged with and knowledgeable of the #IBelong Campaign and the GAP. In one example, the monitoring focused on how UNHCR is cooperating with regional bodies, like the Economic Community of West African States³⁰ or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In another example, a RefCoord met with UNHCR to understand the larger policy issues and pledges made at the HLS for relevant countries in the region. RefCoords consistently observed a lack of available UNHCR resources for statelessness at the regional level, as expressed by one RefCoord in Box 35.

Box 35: UNHCR Monitoring

"Through our monitoring with UNHCR, I found that there is this goal to end statelessness, but there are not a lot of resources being dedicated to it. There have been a few isolated activities in the many different countries that I monitor - like some legal steps being taken -- but I do not see how these small piecemeal activities will concretely convert into ending statelessness."

5.1.11 Types of Monitoring and Results

Monitoring activities. PRM monitoring work was mostly done with formal and informal bilateral meetings at the country level. The Country Operations Plan (COP) survey was used as a monitoring tool by some RefCoords. One RefCoord said that the only time of the year that he heard about UNHCR's statelessness work was when he conducted the COP survey with UNHCR. This alone could be a good reason to expand the use of PRM's COP survey to ensure that statelessness monitoring is conducted more regularly. Also, it was unclear why it was used less often than other monitoring tools. In Thailand and Nepal, no program officer visits were reported to the Evaluation Team.

³⁰ Note that the Economic Community of West African States has done extensive work on statelessness, but the West Africa region was not included in this evaluation.

Quality of the relationship. In all three countries, PRM and UNHCR relationships were strong. In Nepal, there is a RefCoord Assistant and coordination support from a PRM Staffer working remotely from the Philippines who engage monthly with UNHCR for updates on the work (see Box 36). In Thailand, the RefCoord and a RefCoord Assistant engage regularly with UNHCR. Feedback noted that eight of 10 respondents cited a good, semiformal relationship, with scheduled calls, meetings, and reporting.

Box 36: Frequency of Engagement

"I do engage with UNHCR very often and every month we have a monthly call with them. In the past we used to have a monthly in-person meeting but now it's a pandemic and COVID, we have a monthly meeting. During that time, we try to update ourselves on what things are happening on our portfolio."

U.S. engagement in multi-organizational fora in Thailand was considered particularly valuable as an advocacy tool (see Box 37). In the Dominican Republic, four out of five interviewees cited that the UNHCR-Embassy Human Rights Officer was an open-door relationship. This finding is unsurprising, given the close coordination on the work and the frequent contact. *"I was in, I don't know if it was daily, but it was close to it, contact with the UNHCR head on the ground there in Santo Domingo."*

Box 37: U.S. Government Involvement

"I think, first of all, the fact that the U.S. government is present -whether it's the monthly Thailand Statelessness Working Group or this quarterly regionwide [meeting] is important. It's a format that we've begun to use more because the U.S. was usually the only government at the table. These fora help send a message to both our UN and NGO partners that we take it seriously."

Feedback from the RefCoord FGDs stated that monitoring visits included UNHCR providing an overview of their current work on statelessness and what they were doing to alleviate or mitigate it—either by assisting stateless persons or increasing their own capacity or government capacity to do those things, like registration or advocacy. Discussions during monitoring visits are largely centered around the ways that UNHCR staff address their resource constraints with remedies focused on building capacity of UNHCR staff or government actors through training.

PRM produces biennial strategy decision documents for each region, with annual updates reporting on progress against objectives in the strategies. Focusing on the three countries revealed a mixed level of depth in the information provided about statelessness issues. For instance, there was some information provided in the Nepal strategy, which referred to the Women's Nationality Initiative, including references to diplomatic and multilateral engagement and building the capacity of local NGOs to advocate for change, but the strategy did not change significantly from one year to the next. Annual updates centered around developments on the issue of gender discrimination in the law.

5.1.12 Gaps in PRM's Statelessness Strategy

USG and PRM staffing, funding, and diplomacy. Table 4 recaps the level of operational funding and staffing for UNHCR as well as PRM's prioritization and engagement of statelessness at the country level. As Table 4 shows, only in the Dominican Republic has UNHCR given support and attention to non-refugee statelessness that approaches meeting the needs, in keeping with its mandate. In both Thailand and Nepal, UNHCR has struggled to prioritize statelessness, despite the creation of Regional Statelessness Officer positions and the funding of a protection team in each country.

Table 4: USG and PRM Presence in Nepal, the Dominican Republic, and Thailand
















Country	Statelessness Funding for UNHCR	UNHCR Staff	U.S./PRM Support	Working Group Engagement	High-level diplomacy	Working-level diplomacy	USG prioritization
Nepal	 Low	 Medium	RefCoord Assistant at 10%	Only engaged in refugee groups	 Low	 Low	 Tibetan focus
Dominican Republic	 High	 High	Political-Economic Section at 20%	No stateless coordination group	 High	 High	 High
Thailand	 Medium	 Low	RefCoord at 5%	Very engaged in working group	 Low	 Medium	 Rohingya focus

Table 5, below, demonstrates how PRM's multilateral engagement, funding, and diplomacy interrelates demonstrating good coordination between PRM's different initiatives at the global level. There was especially good coordination with U.S. diplomacy on Action 3 as highlighted in Box 38.

Box 38: Gender Equality

"I did go back to some of the U.S. statements on the statelessness issue. In doing the High-Level Segment last year I remembered the U.S. delegation mentioned gender equality. I think that's one of the particular goals within the Campaign. I think that would also signify the importance that the U.S. [places on] and is trying to push for in some countries, the [issue] that nationality cannot be confer by the mother and all those gender aspects."

Another interviewee recognized PRM's support for the GCENR as complementary to the GAP. She said, *"One thing that I would say that I've seen as being very effective and it sits alongside the Global Action Plan has been the very specific work around gender equality. And I know that PRM has also separately supported the Global Campaign so dedicated support to an initiative which is able to bridge civil society and the UN because the global campaign is the steering committee, I think it is"*. However, with the possible exception of Action 3, the Evaluation Team identified a gap between efforts being made at the global level and work at the country level. In particular, the Statelessness Section lacks clout within UNHCR and plays only an advisory role at the country level. The evaluation also found similar gaps with RefCoords, as they lack guidance from Washington on how best to assist UNHCR on statelessness. There is also a gap in funding, as the very small amount of earmarked funding on statelessness means that funding must always come from the Global Appeal. As a result, statelessness always falls to the bottom of the priority list for country-level UNHCR staff dealing with budget shortfalls and urgent, humanitarian emergencies.

Table 5: Engagement, Funding, and Diplomacy

Multilateral Engagement	Funding	Diplomacy
Global Action Plan	PRM contribution to the UNHCR Global Appeal	Through the Group of Friends and bilaterally at country level
#IBelong Campaign	PRM contribution to the UNHCR Global Appeal	Through the Group of Friends and bilaterally at country level
Group of Friends	PRM introduced the GCENR to Group of Friends for possible support	Strong role from 2015–2017
HLS	Allotted \$571,000 to follow up on pledges for five projects.	Made statements on Action 3 and made pledges on diplomacy, funding, and gender discrimination in nationality laws and to review USG work on statelessness to date.

Within U.S. Embassies. The research from the three countries revealed gaps in mainstreaming and coordination between RefCoords with statelessness in their portfolio and other U.S. Embassy offices and missions, such as the Political-Economic Section or USAID mission. Although there was some information

sharing. Some Embassy staff in Thailand were well informed on non-refugee statelessness, but it was not clear whether the Embassy is using this knowledge for diplomacy or to inform activities. In Nepal, the Embassy staff expressed great respect for the work of UNHCR who they worked closely with on refugee issues. With regard to statelessness, the Human Rights Officer in Nepal was well informed about the legal framework and gender discrimination in the law and well versed on the FWLD population estimates of people without citizenship, since he is in charge of writing the DOS annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices. This information was included in the Statelessness Section of the report.

In 2020, the Embassy in Nepal sent two cables, coordinated with PRM—one about a recent legal change in the law and the other on the Supreme Court’s decision that ensured COVID-19 relief should be accessible to all. In the Dominican Republic, the Political Officer at the Embassy had input on key diplomatic engagements and served as the key contact in the Embassy to engage on statelessness issues, as is highlighted in Box 39, on the next page. In the Dominican Republic there were significant efforts to share information on statelessness work between USAID and the Political Officer.

Box 39: Inter-Embassy Coordination

“The number of memos that come to USAID for clearance or review from Eco-Pol when they meet with Dominican officials to touch on the issue of Dominicans of Haitian descent is a lot.... Eco-Pol has the advantage of being politically strategic while from USAID’s point of view, we can provide input from a long-term presence in the country and knowledge of operations.”

USAID foreign assistance funding also includes Dominicans of Haitian descent (for example, in its at-risk youth livelihoods programming). However, the Evaluation Team was unable to determine if this has been coordinated with PRM or with UNHCR to result in joint programming or linking youth reached with USAID funds to UNHCR services, which seems like a missed opportunity.

In the FGDs, RefCoords agreed that it made sense to engage USAID and support efforts to include reaching the population of concern in broader development assistance. One RefCoord highlighted having engaged USAID more broadly on refugee programming but had not yet had a real opportunity to discuss statelessness issues and coordinate on them. At the same time, the RefCoord survey revealed that, out of 14 respondents, eight have never engaged with the Political-Economic Section to raise the issue. As some RefCoords expressed *“Statelessness is a technical issue that U.S. diplomats don’t understand,”* and *“their role is not clear...I am not sure that our political officer colleagues see themselves as points of contact on this issue.”*

As a result, this evaluation identified a lack of coordination between PRM and other Embassy staff to be a gap impeding PRM’s effectiveness on statelessness, especially because of the cross-cutting nature of statelessness as discussed earlier.

Within DOS. Just as the evaluation has shown that UNHCR cannot do it alone, neither can PRM. There has not been as much cross-bureau work on statelessness within DOS to date, despite its relationship to other bureau mandates. As one DOS staff member remarked, *“the State Department itself is not set up to work well on these cross-cutting issues.”* Given the limited political will in the Dominican Republic, U.S. diplomacy is one of the few ways to effectively make progress on addressing statelessness there, which could be similarly effective in other situations. However, in order for U.S. Embassies to engage governments bilaterally on statelessness stronger “demand signals” are needed from Washington. To add to the weight of demand signals from Washington, it would be beneficial if additional DOS bureaus also supported statelessness advocacy and diplomacy.

At the same time, programmatically, there are opportunities to complement PRM and UNHCR’s mandate and strengthen programming overall. For example, media and public awareness-raising has been cited as a key intervention to combat root causes of statelessness. Complementary programming with DRL, for example, which provides funds to CSOs to engage media and work to change public perception, could complement UNHCR’s work. It would also support advocacy work on an area that may be difficult for UNHCR in sensitive political contexts. In Thailand, for example, the Evaluation Team found that the “boys in the cave” media attention led to increased knowledge of how individuals are affected by statelessness.

More coordination between PRM and other bureaus is needed for more effective change on statelessness at the country.

Overall challenges. The evaluation also uncovered major challenges stemming from the **geopolitical context around statelessness** and the relationship between statelessness and **discrimination**, with examples of both issues found in all three countries. In the Dominican Republic, the geopolitical issues center around its relationship with Haiti, in relation to the border and immigration. The Dominican Republic’s migrant regularization plan is frequently conflated by both authorities and the public with pathways to nationality for Dominicans of Haitian descent. There is a risk that this could confuse the issue and further politicize solutions for stateless and at-risk of statelessness persons. Being a small, unaligned country between China and India has sidelined a focus on Nepal to a significant degree. This issue is also made more complicated by the fact that the U.S. focus on Tibetan refugees, which leaves little bandwidth for focusing on statelessness issues in Nepal. Thailand’s relationship with Burma (Myanmar) has similarly impacted its efforts to address statelessness, as statelessness is linked to the issue of regional migration.

Discrimination is also a major cause and consequence of statelessness, as cited by multiple interviewees and highlighted throughout this report. Over three-quarters of the world’s known stateless populations belong to ethnic, racial, religious and/or linguistic minority groups. Since the beginning of the campaign, no country has amended its laws to remove provisions that permit denial or deprivation of nationality on discriminatory grounds based on race and ethnicity. In the three countries, discrimination was highlighted as a major factor in impeding progress on addressing statelessness. In 2017, the current Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues identified statelessness as a major priority for the mandate, given that an estimated 75 percent of stateless people are from minority groups. Given the strong link between discrimination and statelessness, the Special Rapporteur highlighted the lack of focus in the GAP on discrimination as a systemic cause of statelessness and recommended that greater efforts are needed to address this omission. The UN does not currently have a Special Rapporteur on Statelessness; however, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism also issued a report on racial discrimination in the context of nationality, citizenship, and immigration, with recommendations for governments on how to better address the link between racism, xenophobia, gender discrimination, and statelessness.³¹

In all three countries, discriminatory laws, policies, and practices remain the most serious barriers to move forward, as highlighted in Table 6. The evaluation has therefore identified that greater attention to looking at discrimination, as a cause and consequence of statelessness is needed and is a major oversight of both UNHCR and PRM’s approach.

Table 6: Cases of Discrimination in the three countries

Caste and Gender Discrimination in Nepal	Ethnic Minority Discrimination in Thailand	Race and Ethnicity Discrimination in Dominican Republic
<i>“The government says there is no discrimination and no problem. We all are equal. But in practice, on the ground, the Dalit are facing more discrimination, more violence. We are human being. We are impure in our society. We are untouchable. People in upper caste, people are not touch with us. That right of marriage is equal for all, but non-Dalit are not accept the Dalit girl”</i>	<i>“Her children were born in the village, but during those times, she didn’t have a birth certificate, so she went back and brought her child to get the birth registration. Finally, she got that. But finds later that they used the wrong spelling. She didn’t check before and found out when she went to the Civil Registration Office for the I.D. So, the spelling was wrong intentionally. To correct that, they had to pay more money and go more often. People in the village don’t want to go [to get documents] because they have to pay each time and go often. The officials will see the person’s village name, parent’s name, and make it more difficult. This is why some ethnic groups are not so willing to go get their documents.”</i>	<i>“For example, with the Civil Registry, the Dominican Constitution establishes the recognition as full Dominican to those persons whose parents were born of parents who have permanent residence. We have had cases where for the simple fact of being black, or having an accent, or being accompanied by the father who does not speak Spanish well, the official assumes you to be Haitian...Then he proceeds to declare his son, the son of this person who has his residence as Haitian. This son then is in limbo.”</i>

³¹ OHCHR, Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Report on racial discrimination in the context of nationality, citizenship and immigration, A/HRC/38/52 (2018).

CONCLUSIONS

The #IBelong Campaign and the GAP have been effective in increasing awareness on statelessness, but they have been less effective in advancing the goal of ending statelessness in 10 years. To make significant progress to end statelessness, the evaluation found that UNHCR needs to elevate statelessness within all programming to achieve “mandate equality,” whereby the statelessness mandate and the refugee mandate are treated as co-equal, although not necessarily identical in terms of funding or staffing. PRM should also support UNHCR to coordinate better with other actors, particularly UN partners and local CSOs. The evaluation’s findings highlighted that UNHCR staff are worried that the regionalization process will lead to fewer resources for statelessness. Staff have already observed a decrease in staffing resources, which they attribute to regionalization.

The evaluation findings highlighted that more strategic diplomatic support from the U.S. is critical for making progress on major situations of statelessness, as seen in the Dominican Republic. The relationship between PRM and UNHCR is strong, but there is the potential for the U.S. to take an even stronger leadership role in the future. The evaluation findings highlighted that the U.S. plays a leadership role in statelessness through its multilateral diplomatic engagements at the global level through the Group of Friends, the HLS and through engagements with UN mechanisms, but PRM should emphasize better coordination between UN actors in line with the UN Secretary General’s Guidance Note on Statelessness and work to ensure global initiatives translate into progress at country levels.

PRM’s funding and diplomacy were key to UNHCR’s implementation of the GAP and the #IBelong Campaign. PRM’s diplomacy and direct funding for the GCENR made a key contribution to Action 3 on ending gender discrimination in nationality laws. However, in Nepal, the Dominican Republic and Thailand, the GAP has been less effective in protecting and assisting stateless people, including supporting access to education, healthcare, livelihoods, and other basic human rights. These activities are more likely to be done through other actors and there is opportunity to adopt more robust protection activities following the model set by UNHCR in the Dominican Republic.

The evaluation found that the relationship between RefCoords and UNHCR staff is strong both at the global and country levels. Additionally, U.S. diplomacy plays a key role in advocacy with country governments, but there has not been enough emphasis placed on engaging with like-minded governments for joint advocacy on statelessness. RefCoords need guidance and support from PRM Washington to play a more effective role. RefCoords spend, on average, less than 10 percent of their time working on non-refugee statelessness issues. Further elevating statelessness in the work of the RefCoords is necessary, along with more training and resources to better engage with UNHCR and the U.S. Embassy at the country level.

The evaluation findings demonstrated how statelessness is a cross-cutting issue, where coordination with CSOs, UN agencies, INGOs, and other actors will be critical to success, but the GAP has not achieved this coordination. Findings highlighted that the GAP is directed toward governments and focused on legal reform and procedural changes. In Nepal, the Dominican Republic, and Thailand, UNHCR has struggled to engage constructively with CSOs in the field, stateless communities, and the public. In terms of greater accountability to stateless populations, the evaluation found that CSOs play a key role in advocating and holding governments accountable, however, they are underfunded. UNHCR has not done enough to engage with non-refugee stateless communities. There is little guidance or support for CSOs or focus on movement building, public awareness raising and engagement with the arts at the country level, the empowerment of stateless persons, or other ways of making progress on statelessness. Thus, the Evaluation Team’s recommendations are targeted towards addressing these gaps and updating PRM’s strategy on statelessness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Evaluation Team held virtual separate Feedback and Validation Workshops with PRM and UNHCR to gather input into the evaluation's recommendations and ensure they are tailored to PRM's goals. During the workshops the Evaluation Team shared conclusions, led a prioritization exercise, and workshopped high-priority recommendations. The following list includes recommendations that are directly linked to enhancing key aspects of PRM's statelessness strategy including funding, staffing, mainstreaming, and diplomacy developed based on PRM's inputs and feedback. A further comprehensive list of recommendations is included in Annex B for PRM's consideration.

OVERALL

1. The Evaluation Team recommends that PRM **update its statelessness strategy** to:
 - Encourage UNHCR to give adequate and appropriate attention to its statelessness mandate to achieve **“mandate equality”** with its refugee mandate by:
 - Elevating statelessness within the implementation of the **Global Compact on Refugees**;
 - Addressing concerns that regionalization is weakening the **prioritization of statelessness**; and
 - Replacing the “Statelessness Section” with a **“Statelessness Division”** or **“Statelessness Service.”**

STAFFING, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2. Elevate the PRM Statelessness Focal Point role so that it is fully dedicated to statelessness.
3. **Urge UNHCR** to enact the following **staffing reforms**:
 - **Advance temporary staff** with statelessness expertise into staff positions, create clear staff reporting lines on statelessness and highlight statelessness within the TOR for all protection staff.
 - **Make UNHCR statelessness training available** to RefCoords and urge UNHCR to make statelessness training mandatory for all protection, program, and external relations staff.
4. **Issue clear guidance** to RefCoords that statelessness is a high priority for PRM and reflect this through greater leadership and coordination by PRM Washington.
5. **Encourage UNHCR to add statelessness** as a standing agenda item for the annual global Representatives meeting and regional Representatives' meetings.
6. **Encourage UNHCR** to organize online, periodic, regional protection retreats for UNHCR protection staff to share best practices on statelessness.

MAINSTREAMING WITHIN DOS AND US EMBASSIES

7. **Raise awareness** among PRM regional offices and Department bureaus of the link between racism, ethnic, religious, and gender discrimination and statelessness. Addressing this root cause can help advance the GAP Action 1: “resolve existing major situations of statelessness.”
8. **Educate other Department bureaus**, including DRL and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons on how statelessness is a cross-cutting development, human rights, and democracy issue. This includes highlighting the link between access to citizenship and maintaining a stable and peaceful democracy. Consider joint planning between PRM and DRL.
9. **Encourage RefCoords and Embassy staff** with statelessness monitoring in their mandate to engage with the USAID mission at country level, raise awareness of the stateless population, and advocate including stateless populations as a part of social inclusion of vulnerable populations efforts within U.S. foreign assistance. Suggest encouraging RefCoords and UNHCR to facilitate UN Country Team engagement with USAID missions and their partners.

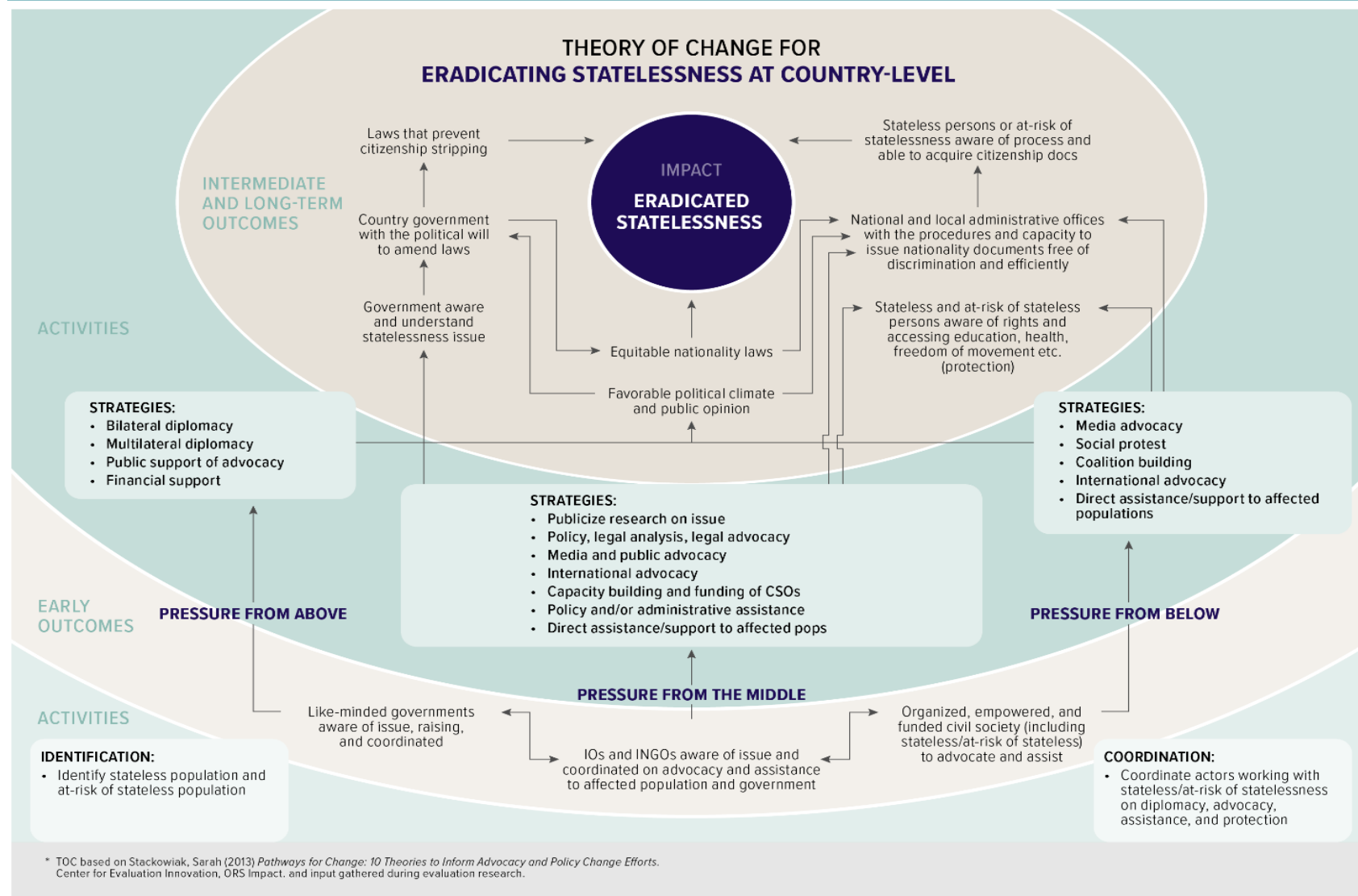
PRM FUNDING TO PARTNERS

10. **Provide contributions** to UNHCR country operations to identify and fund local CSOs to create momentum on statelessness before the end of the #IBelong campaign. The Evaluation Team's

suggestion is that priority should be given to country operations that demonstrate they will use PRM funding to create or expand activities that UNHCR will continue to support past 2024.

11. **Advocate with UNHCR** to create a pilot in three countries for direct assistance to stateless people. This direct assistance may include:
 - a. cash-based interventions and livelihoods support
 - b. COVID-19 humanitarian assistance, including access to vaccines
 - c. community services and legal assistance/protection activities
 - d. prevention of detention and deportation
 - e. case management, including the use of proGres, for both stateless people and those at risk
 - f. activities to raise awareness on discrimination as a driver of statelessness (using the Dominican Republic as a best practice)
12. Continue to urge UNHCR to **increase the percentage of its overall budget** that it spends on statelessness (currently around 1% annually).
13. **Resume funding** to the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, including funding for civil society capacity building.

ANNEX A: THEORY OF CHANGE FOR ERADICATING STATELESSNESS AT COUNTRY LEVEL



ANNEX B: ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following group of recommendations are supplementary to those presented in Section VIII of the Evaluation Report. These are considered lower-tier priority.

Coordination within the UN

This section contains recommendations on how PRM can support better coordination on statelessness between UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, and others.

1. Pursue dialogue with the UN on ideas to ensure statelessness remains a **priority within the Global Compact on Refugees structure** and consider **funding UN partners directly** for statelessness work, including UNICEF, possibly through the “Every Child’s Right to a Nationality Coalition.”
2. Organize briefings with senior DOS staff and **UN Special Rapporteurs and Experts on statelessness**, including the Special Rapporteur for minority issues, the Independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and the Working group on discrimination against women and girls.

Momentum on Gender and Statelessness

The link between gender and statelessness has been a real achievement of PRM in the past, but the gender focus must be maintained and continued into the future.

3. Continue the momentum of the Women’s Nationality Initiative by engaging within the Administration to get the issue of gender discrimination in nationality laws on the agenda of the newly established Gender Policy Council.
4. Encourage UNHCR to plan an **international conference on Action 3: gender discrimination** with UN partners, civil society, and the like-minded private sector actors to issue an action plan on ending gender discrimination in nationality laws worldwide.
5. Consider nominating a leader on gender equality in nationality laws for the **International Women of Courage Award**.

Bilateral and Multilateral Diplomatic Efforts

These recommendations pertain to high-level and working-level diplomacy by DOS high-level diplomats, the Ambassador, Embassy Political Officers, and RefCoords.

6. Support RefCoords or assigned Political Officer to host **roundtables and consultations with CSOs on statelessness at US Embassies** (emphasizing participation of Political-Economic Section, Refugee and Migrant Affairs Office, Front Office, and USAID).
7. Support RefCoords and/or Human Rights Officers to **bring embassies of other interested countries together** for information sharing and awareness-raising on statelessness, such as through regular “Group of Friends” meetings between embassies at the country level.
8. Create with UNHCR a **Statelessness Working Group for UN partners and INGOs** in relevant countries.
9. Encourage **IOM to include statelessness as a core vulnerability for migrants** in all relevant programming, acknowledging that stateless migrants are vulnerable, but also that migration can be a cause of statelessness.

10. Promote coverage of statelessness in the **national media** to support mindset shift in situations where political will is hampered by public opinion and discourse.
11. Urge the United States to continue to make recommendations on statelessness in the **Universal Periodic Reviews**.
12. Continue to support **high-level diplomacy on statelessness by other countries**, such as through the Group of Friends, including coordinating talking points.
13. Re-engage as a core member of the **Group of Friends**.

Supporting Reforms at UNHCR

Over the medium term, these are recommendations to PRM to explore and support reforms within UNHCR that will help make UNHCR more effective on statelessness.

14. Inform UNHCR of PRM's interest in **recruiting JPOs** to focus on statelessness and encourage country offices to request JPOs in countries with major statelessness situations.
15. Ensure that **Department of International Protection rosters** include statelessness experts.
16. Urge UNHCR to continue the **dedicated focal point in DER** for-statelessness media, communications and fundraising past 2024.

Statelessness research

This section includes recommendations for PRM to improve knowledge of statelessness with key actors.

17. Urge DOS to encourage the **World Bank** to increase the number of studies on the link between statelessness and poverty.
18. Increase engagement with **key US universities** on statelessness, including the development of statelessness curricula.

Capacity Building for Stateless People

19. Urge UNHCR to **include more stateless people and stateless-led organizations**, virtually or in-person where possible, in all high-level events and to link stateless persons and organizations with media training.

Capacity Building for Partners

These recommendations are for PRM to help the UN and UNHCR engage more effectively with other agencies in the medium term, beyond the end of the #IBelong Campaign.

20. Encourage UNHCR to create a **high-level, bi-annual award for a statelessness advocate** (modeled on the Nansen award) with partners such as OHCHR and/or through the Group of Friends.
21. In regions where statelessness is less politically sensitive, encourage UNHCR to create a series of **participatory meetings for government officials** working at the local and district level on civil registration to share best practices with officials from neighboring countries and create strategies to register cross-border populations.
22. Encourage the UN to create **concrete global standards for collecting statistics on statelessness** and continue to support nascent coordination functions like the Interagency Group on Statelessness Estimation (IGSE).
23. Urge all UN partners to mainstream statelessness throughout all **regional and global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) initiatives**.

24. Work with UNHCR and UNICEF to make the **UNICEF-UNHCR Coalition for Every Child's Right to a Nationality** effective at the field level.
25. Continue to encourage UNHCR to support stateless-led **NGOs and CSOs** at the global and regional levels, including within the United States.
26. Encourage UNHCR to raise awareness of statelessness with campaign-oriented organizations like **Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International**.

B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

This final group of recommendations are derived from the evaluation's findings but may be more challenging for PRM's mandate.

27. Support congressional proposals to **protect stateless people in the US**.
28. Urge the UN to **update Sustainable Development Goal 16.9** to include the prevention and reduction of statelessness and support UNHCR to integrate statelessness as a focus within CRVS and development programs with UNDP, UNFPA, the World Bank and other relevant actors.
29. Advocate within the UN through high-level diplomacy to create a **global, UN-wide coalition or steering committee** to mainstream statelessness throughout the UN and ensure statelessness remains a priority within the Global Compact on Refugees structure, building on the current Inter-Agency Working Group, UN System-Wide Strategy to Address Statelessness and Workplan, and the 2011 Guidance Note of the UN Secretary General on statelessness.
30. Explore ways to **engage journalists** on statelessness.
31. Encourage UNHCR to create **a statelessness sub-group** at the annual UNHCR NGO consultation.

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ANNEX D: VALIDATION APPROACHES

INTRODUCTION

Following the conclusion of data collection, the Evaluation Team held feedback sessions in line with a utilization-focused evaluation approach (U-FE) with each of the UNHCR field offices. UNHCR Feedback Workshop, and a PRM Validation Workshop using tools such as Zoom, Teams, Miro, and Jamboard were also held. The purpose of the feedback and validation meetings were to share learnings from data collection, coordinate on evaluation design, validate initial findings, and collect feedback on recommendations.

UNHCR VALIDATION MEETINGS FOLLOWING FIELD VISITS

Following the conclusion of data collection, the Evaluation Team held feedback sessions with each of the UNHCR field offices. Meetings were held between the UNHCR Protection Officer in Thailand, the UNHCR Representative in Nepal and with the Chief of Mission and the Associate Protection Officer in the Dominican Republic. Feedback on the findings in Nepal was also provided to the RefCoord Assistant and RefCoord staff member based in the Philippines.

The following validation tool was used as a guide and feedback was incorporated into the countries of focus, as relevant.

Validation Tool for Countries

1. Methodology
2. Overview of situational context
3. Findings
 - a. Question 1: Overview of UNHCR and PRM activities in each country
 - Identification, prevention, reduction, and protection.
 - PRM and UNHCR activities just providing the overview without qualification. This would include number of staff, how much time they spend and etc.
 - Types of diplomacy done, including meetings, cables, high level, working level and etc.
 - b. Question 2: What has been effective or not effective in addressing issues associated with statelessness?
 - Make links to global processes as relevant (GAP, IBELONG, HLS, UPR, HRC, and etc)
 - Level of mainstreaming of statelessness in UN CT, or among US Embassy staff and overall coordination on these issues
 - The various ways that statelessness has been framed
 - Progress made on the GAP actions and details of whether that was done through UNHCR programming or advocacy, and PRM programming or advocacy or through other actors?
 - Link with the GCENR
 - What has changed legal change, administrative change, new awareness, greater solidarity with the stateless population
 - Whether new donors or UN agencies or other actors are working on this issue
 - c. Question 3 What is the relationship between UNHCR and PRM including monitoring activities and what have been the overall gaps
 - UNHCR/ PRM relationship and monitoring activities

- PRM Washington link with Embassy and vice versa
 - PRM/USG coordination on the issue overall
4. Gaps highlighted throughout that prevent the eradication of statelessness
 5. Overall Conclusions
 6. Overall Recommendations
 7. UNHCR feedback on findings

UNHCR FEEDBACK MEETING

INTRODUCTION

On March 4, 2021, the Evaluation Team held a 90-minute session with the UNHCR Statelessness Section and all the Regional Statelessness Officers to share findings and get their feedback on recommendations to ensure that they were useful and realistic. The Evaluation Team presented findings, conclusions, and recommendations and gathered feedback through breakout rooms, whiteboarding, and other interactive means.

AGENDA

Introduction and Purpose of the meeting
 Overview of Virtual Field Work
 Summary of Key Findings
 Recommendations - Feedback and Discussion
 Breakout Groups
 General Feedback Session
 Gaps and Questions

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ✓ Are these phrased in the most optimal way?
- ✓ Do they make sense in the UNHCR context?
- ✓ Would you adapt or change any?
- ✓ Does anything look really unfeasible? UNHCR provided useful feedback on recommendations in terms of priority level, feasibility, and phrasing.

OUTPUTS

UNHCR provided useful feedback on recommendations in terms of priority level, feasibility, and phrasing. The Evaluation Team utilized this feedback to develop first round of recommendations that were later shared with PRM during PRM Validation Meeting.

PRM VALIDATION MEETING

INTRODUCTION

On March 17, 2021, the Evaluation Team held a 90-minute session with PRM to share findings and get their feedback on a range of issues with a focus on ensuring that recommendations provided are useful and realistic. The Evaluation Team presented findings, conclusions, and recommendations and gathered feedback through google sheets and Miro board making it very interactive.

AGENDA

Welcome and Introduction
 Evaluation Scope and Approach
 Presentation of Major Conclusions

Recommendations Review

Prioritization Activity

Workshopping Prioritized Recommendations

Open Discussion: What is missing?

Closing

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ✓ How would you change them to make each more actionable?
- ✓ What did you like about these group of recommendations?
- ✓ How would you change it to be more aligned to PRM's context, resources, and mechanisms?

OUTPUTS

PRM provided useful feedback on recommendations in terms of priority level, feasibility, and phrasing. Understanding what is feasible and how to best phrase will ensure a greater likelihood of implementation.

ANNEX E: STATELESSNESS EXPERTS ROUNDTABLE

On November 23, 2020, the Evaluation Team hosted a two-hour virtual roundtable with seven statelessness subject matter experts. The purpose of the roundtable was to collect information, recommendations, and feedback from statelessness experts as the Evaluation Team entered the evaluation's data gathering phase. The Evaluation Team identified the expert participants based on their contributions to the statelessness field (research and publications) and their specific knowledge of statelessness in the Dominican Republic, Nepal, and Thailand. To ensure impartiality, none of the experts consulted were current UNHCR or State Department staff.

OBJECTIVES

Specific objectives of the roundtable included:

1. Identify statelessness experts' opinions on key milestones and outcomes in focus countries' journeys towards eradicating statelessness.
2. Solicit statelessness experts' opinions around the effectiveness of UNHCR's Global Action Plan to End Statelessness.
3. Gather feedback around practical elements of the evaluation's virtual fieldwork.

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Overview of the PRM Evaluation
3. Countries of Focus– Milestones/Outcomes
 - a. *Interactive sticky note milestone identification activity in Miro*
4. Broader Discussion
5. Close and Wrap Up

OUTPUTS

The experts provided valuable insights and recommendations to conduct the focus countries evaluation research, including key contacts. The roundtable spent a significant amount of the time identifying and discussing milestones and outcomes relevant to statelessness in each of the context of the countries of focus. These milestones and outcomes were subsequently incorporated into the evaluation's outcome harvesting methodology and data collection approach.

ANNEX F: UNHCR STATELESSNESS SECTION WORKSHOP AND SWOT

INTRODUCTION

On December 2, 2020, the Evaluation Team hosted a two-hour workshop with UNHCR's Statelessness Section. The purpose of the workshop was to learn about the Statelessness Section's role within UNHCR, UNHCR's statelessness staffing, training and resources for non-statelessness staff, the activities led by UNHCR at a global level, the role of the Statelessness Section in the #IBelong Campaign and the GAP, as well as the staff's perceptions around the progress to date. In addition, the Evaluation Team led a participatory critical analysis of these different aspects.

OBJECTIVES

Specific objectives of the workshop included:

1. Inform the UNHCR Statelessness Section of learnings thus far and validate the Evaluation Team's interpretation and understanding.
2. Conduct a participatory Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with the team on the #IBelong Campaign and GAP.
3. Gather additional insights on the role of the Statelessness Section within UNHCR and its support to country operations.

AGENDA

1. Overview of Learnings
2. Participatory SWOT Analysis Activity
3. Discussion
4. Close and Wrap Up

OUTPUTS

The Statelessness Section staff provided critical insights on the role of the Statelessness Section within UNHCR and perspectives on the #IBelong Campaign and the GAP.

ANNEX G: INCEPTION MEETINGS

The Evaluation Team hosted a total of three virtual Inception Meetings during the evaluation's Inception/Desk Review. The purpose of the Inception Meetings was to (1) gather critical information to inform the focus country selection from a total of 12 country options, (2) validate the scope of the evaluation, and (3) define a common understanding of the three evaluation questions. The three Inception Meetings were organized as follows:

- A 1.5-hour meeting on September 10, 2020 for UNHCR field staff and PRM RefCoords covering the countries of Cote d'Ivoire, Burma, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, and Thailand.
- A 1.5-hour meeting on September 11, 2020 for UNHCR field staff and PRM RefCoords covering the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic.
- A 2-hour meeting on September 15, 2020 for headquarters staff, including PRM in Washington D.C., UNHCR in Geneva, and the GCENR lead.

FIELD-FOCUSED: SEPTEMBER 10 AND SEPTEMBER 11 MEETINGS

During the field-focused Inception Meetings, the Evaluation Team focused heavily on uncovering key aspects of each of the countries of focus, including substantive and practical elements. Through a facilitated exercise, the participants were prompted to share and discuss on the following aspects for each country:

- UNHCR's level of engagement on statelessness.
- The USG's level of engagement on statelessness.
- Key international donors and experts.
- The country government's focus (or not) on statelessness.
- The feasibility of engaging with stateless individuals, stateless-led groups, and/or civil society organizations.
- The feasibility of travelling within the period of the evaluation.
- The feasibility of virtual engagement with key stakeholders, and.
- The level of collaboration between UNHCR and the USG on statelessness.

The agenda for these two meetings was as follows:

- Introduction
- Overview of the PRM Evaluation
- Breakout Groups: Facilitated Country Information Gathering
- Close

HEADQUARTERS-FOCUSED: SEPTEMBER 15 MEETING

During the headquarters-focused Inception Meeting, the Evaluation Team focused heavily on country selection and validating the evaluation questions. The Evaluation Team incorporated the insights and information gathered from the field-focused Inception Meetings into the headquarter-focused meeting's focus country selection activity. The agenda for this meeting was as follows:

- Introduction
- Overview of the PRM Evaluation
- Evaluation Questions
 - *Breakout Groups: Understanding of Evaluation Questions*
- Presentation of Country Findings
 - *Country Selection Activity*
- Discussion

- Close

During the Breakout Groups portion, participants were divided into two groups where the Evaluation Team led a discussion on the purpose and understanding of the three evaluation questions, including the relevance of the Evaluation Team-developed sub-questions. The guiding questions for the discussion included:

- Will the sub-questions lead to gathering the right information to answer the main question? Are there any gaps?
- Do any of the sub-questions seem repetitive or redundant? Is there anything we may be missing?
- Would you rephrase any of the sub-questions? What is the proposed rationale for doing so? How will this give us better data?

For the Country Selection Activity, the Evaluation Team narrowed the 12 countries being considered down to seven countries. These seven countries were selected based on feedback and insights gathered during the field-focused Inception Meetings. The Evaluation Team led participants in a sticky note voting exercise using Google virtual collaboration tools. Participants were instructed to place green stickies on countries considered high priority (“Go” countries) and their rationale as to why this country should be prioritized. At the same time, participants were instructed to place red stickies on countries considered low priority (“No” countries).

OUTPUT 1: EVALUATION QUESTION DEFINITION AND NOTES

The Evaluation Team came away from the Inception Meetings with a clear definition of each evaluation question and the data required to answer them. Participants agreed that there were significant overlaps in evaluation questions 1 and 2 and simplifying would be useful to clarify intent. Based on this feedback, the Evaluation Team assigned the three short-hand questions to clarify the overall meaning and intent of the main evaluation questions.

- Evaluation Question 1: How was PRM’s statelessness strategy implemented?
- Evaluation Question 2: How effective was PRM’s statelessness strategy as implemented?
- Evaluation Question 3: What are the gaps in PRM’s statelessness strategy?

The sub-questions, which were used primarily to ensure the Evaluation Team was gathering the right data and information, were finalized as follows:

EQ1: PRM’s Strategy Implementation	EQ2: The Strategy’s Effectiveness	EQ3: Changes to PRM’s Strategy
1.1. How has PRM’s statelessness strategy addressed the identification, prevention, reduction, and protection-related activities that have been carried out to address statelessness?	2.1. How effectively is the Global Action Plan set up to achieve its goals, and what role has PRM played in that?	3.1. Where are the linkages between PRM’s funding and diplomacy, and in what ways has this contributed to outcomes?
1.2. How have PRM’s financial contributions contributed to these activities?	2.2. How does PRM’s strategy best align with the goals of the campaign, and which goals has PRM been the most effective in supporting?	3.2. How is PRM’s monitoring done? What is the goal, and how does it contribute to the end goal of strengthening statelessness initiatives? How can it be improved?
1.3. In what ways has PRM or the USG contributed to these issues diplomatically?	2.3. How effective have PRM’s funding and diplomacy been towards the goal of ending statelessness?	3.3. What is working well and should be expanded on, and where are the gaps?

OUTPUT 2: FOCUS COUNTRY SELECTION VOTING

The voting activity clearly identified the Dominican Republic as a front-runner to focus on. The MENA region and Thailand also emerged as potential candidates. The Evaluation Team reviewed the complementarity of the countries selected and recognized the aspect of gender discrimination in nationality laws was limited in the selected countries. Upon further review, Nepal was re-introduced as a potential candidate. While only two countries of focus were originally contemplated in the SOW, the Evaluation Team decided, with PRM's approval, to develop three countries of focus. The three ultimately chosen included the Dominican Republic, Nepal, and Thailand. The three selected countries allowed the evaluation to highlight a breadth of PRM-supported initiatives to prevent and reduce statelessness.

ANNEX H: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

INTRODUCTION

The main data collection tools used by the Evaluation Team included an Interview Guide, a Focus Group Discussion Guide, and a Survey Tool that are included below.

INTERVIEW GUIDE OVERVIEW

The Interview Guide summarizes the type of questions asked at the global and country level. Interviews were the main tool that targeted a range of stakeholders including five main groups including 1) PRM, 2) UNHCR, 3) Other UN agencies and WRC, 4) Experts, and 5) CSOs and Stateless Persons. All the interviews were centered around answering the three main evaluation questions that generally follow the line of questioning of understanding from the perspective of the interviewee: 1) what the situation is currently; 2) whether or not the approach so far has been effective or not; and 3) what are the main gaps in the statelessness strategy and how can they be addressed? Questions were adapted depending on who the target was and also became more specific as the Evaluation Team learned more.

Interview guides by Evaluation Question per target group	US-PRM government	UNHCR.	Other UN	Experts	CSOs & Stateless persons
EQ 1: What is PRM's Strategy?					
PRM Strategy					
1.1.a. How has PRM's statelessness strategy addressed the identification, prevention, reduction, and protection related activities that have been carried out to address statelessness?	X	X	X	X	
1.1.b What activities is UNHCR focused on by country? What is the focus of the activities of other organizations that PRM funds in countries?		X			X
1.1 c What does UNHCR do to support the work of stateless people in the country that they are operating in?				X	X
1.1.d. What issues do you work with UNHCR and how do you see the PRM/UNHCR with regard to their support to stateless people in a specific country and/or globally?				X	X
Funding					
1.2.a. How has PRM contributed financially to statelessness activities? Directly through Global Campaign and earmarked funds to UNHCR, and less directly through global contributions to UNHCR?	X	X	X	X	X
				X	X

1.2.b Which areas (identification, prevention, reduction, and protection) does PRM's funding impact the most directly and what is the evidence?					
1.2 c. How has the commissioned research been used to further statelessness goals?					
1.2 d. How has PRM's funding received differ with funding that UNHCR receives from other donors for statelessness work?					
Diplomacy					
1.3.a. In what ways has PRM or USG contributed to Statelessness issues diplomatically at the global and country level?	X	X	X	X	
How is the diplomacy being done at the global level coordinated to ensure that it can have an impact at the country level?	X	X	X	X	
How has PRM or the US government	X	X	X	X	
1.3.b. What do they see as US diplomacy around statelessness issues at the global, regional, and country level?					
1.3 c. How does PRM's multilateral diplomacy around statelessness? What does PRM's Bilateral diplomacy look like?					
EQ 2: What has been effective?					
Global Action Plan and IBelong Campaign					
2.1.a. How effective is the GAP set up to achieve its goals and what role has PRM played in that? What about the Ibelong Campaign?	X	X	X	X	
2.1.b What mechanisms used by the GAP and Ibelong campaign (HLS and Group of Friends) have been effective and for which countries and why?			X	X	
2.1 c How effective was the Global Action Plan and the #IBelong Campaign in meeting the needs of stateless persons. What was effective and what were the gaps?				X	X
2.1 d What milestones have there been around statelessness at the global level? What about at the country level?	X	X	X	X	X
UN Mechanisms					
2.2 a. What UN Mechanisms have been the most effective for addressing statelessness including HRC, UPR? What about Special Rapporteurs?	X	X		X	
2.2. b What situations are UN mechanisms most useful for? How does the work at the global level translate to the national level?					
Alignment of GAP goals to PRM strategy					
2.3. at How does PRM's strategy best align with the goals of the campaign and which goals has PRM been most effective in supporting?	X	X	X	X	

EQ 3: What are the gaps and how has the monitoring been done and what could improved?					
Linkages between Funding and Diplomacy					
3.1.a. Where are the linkages between the funding and diplomacy and in what ways has this contributed to the outcomes?	X	X	X	X	
3.1.b. 21. e What strategies does PRM use at the country level to carry out diplomacy What is working overall and What should be expanded on?	X	X	X	X	X
Monitoring					
3.2. at How is PRM's monitoring done? What is the goal and how does it contribute to the strengthening statelessness initiatives? Could it be improved in any way?	X	X			
Identification of challenges and gaps and next steps					
3.3a What are the gaps in the Statelessness response such as the GAP actions and the Ibelong Campaign?	X	X	X	X	X
3.3b. What role does PRM and UNHCR have in addressing the gaps? How can this be done with funding and diplomacy?	X	X	X	X	
3.4.a. What recommendations do you have for PRM?	X	X	X	X	X
3.4 b What recommendations to you have for UNHCR?	X	X	X	X	X

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH REFCOORDS

The Evaluation Team held a one -hour focus group discussion (FGD) with RefCoords on the 17 February 2021. Overall a total of 10 participated helping to broaden the understanding of the work, successes, and challenges in implementing PRM's Statelessness Strategy more broadly beyond the focus countries.

OBJECTIVES

Specific objectives of the one-hour session were:

4. RefCoords understanding and engagement with the PRM Statelessness Strategy
5. RefCoords engagement with PRM Washington, the Embassy at the country level on statelessness.
6. RefCoords engagement with UNHCR and the IBelong Campaign and GAP and how that translates at the country level.
7. Gather recommendations as to how PRM can support RefCoords to engage on statelessness more effectively in the future.

AGENDA

5. Introduction of Participants and Evaluation Team
6. Overview of Evaluation purpose and goal
7. Focus Group Discussion
8. Close and Wrap Up

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ✓ What do you see as your mandate as a Refugee Coordinator with regard to the statelessness portfolio?
- ✓ What does your interaction within the US Embassy (Political and Economic office and USAID) on the issue of statelessness?
- ✓ What does your interaction with UNHCR around statelessness look like? I.e., What is a typical conversation?
- ✓ How much direction is there from PRM in DC on statelessness and what more do you feel you need from them.
- ✓ Anything else to add? Any recommendations?

OUTPUTS

The RefCoords provided critical insights on their understanding and engagement in the PRM Statelessness Strategy, their awareness and understanding of the #IBelong Campaign, and GAP, their relationship with UNHCR, and how they engage with the Embassy at the field level and PRM in Washington. The Evaluation Team also asked for recommendations as to how RefCoords can more effectively engage the PRM Statelessness Strategy in the future.

SURVEY

The Evaluation Team sent an online survey through SurveyMonkey to PRM RefCoords and Deputy RefCoords on February 2 and closed on February 16, 2021. 12 respondents in total and were anonymous.

REFCOORD SURVEY QUESTIONS

I. Demographic questions

1. How long have you worked as a Refugee Coordinator for PRM?
 - ☐ Less than 1 year
 - ☐ 1-3 years
 - ☐ 3-5 years
 - ☐ More than 5 years
2. Please fill in the table below with the number of field missions, the length of time spent, and the type of stateless populations you worked on? (i.e., *Non-refugee stateless persons, stateless refugee, Both*)

Example

Number	Length (years)	Type of situation
First	X years	
Second	Y years	

3. Check the answer that best describes your situation:
 - ☐ I am the main contact in the US Embassy on statelessness matters.
 - ☐ I provide support to US Embassy staff in countries where statelessness is an issue.
 - ☐ Both 1 and 2 apply to my current situation.
 - ☐ I was the main contact in a prior US Embassy on the issue of statelessness.
 - ☐ I used to provide support to US Embassy Staff in countries where statelessness is an issue.
 - ☐ Both
 - ☐ Other _____
4. Please indicate whether this phrase represents your current or past situation: *In all the countries I support where statelessness is an issue, there is at least one person in the country's US Embassy designated to working on Statelessness issues as a part of their portfolio.*
 - ☐ Yes, that is true and highlight what role the person had within the US Embassy.
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Other _____

II. Knowledge, understanding, training, and orientation

5. Where did you learn about statelessness? (check all that apply)
 - ☐ Prior training through university or college
 - ☐ Through orientation provided by PRM
 - ☐ On the job because it is an issue in the country/countries I work on or have worked on
 - ☐ From a course provided by UNHCR
 - ☐ From a course provided by another organization
 - ☐ I don't have much of an understanding of statelessness
 - ☐ Other _____

6. What strategies did or do you use to help you understand the issue of statelessness in the countries you work on currently or in the past? *(check all that apply and elaborate as needed)*
- ☐ Briefings and support from Washington_____
 - ☐ Desk review/reviewing documents _____
 - ☐ Through working on the issue with UNHCR_____
 - ☐ Through my engagements with civil society_____
 - ☐ My briefings/engagements with my predecessor_____
 - ☐ My briefing/engagements with other people in the US Embassy_____
 - ☐ I don't have enough time_____
 - ☐ Other _____
7. What other type of support could better equip you to work on statelessness? *(check all that apply. For those you select, please elaborate what the support could entail)*
- ☐ Support from PRM Washington: _____
 - ☐ Online training or courses: _____
 - ☐ More regular briefings: _____
 - ☐ I have no extra time to learn _____
 - ☐ Other_____

III. Time

8. How much time do you spend in your current portfolio on non-refugee stateless populations? *(Check the situation that most describes your situation)*

A) It is an issue in my current portfolio and I dedicate:

- ☐ No time as I have too many other priorities
- ☐ 1-10 %
- ☐ 10-20 %
- ☐ More than 20%
- ☐ Other, please elaborate _____

B) It is not an issue in my current portfolio, but it was in the past. During that time, I spent

- ☐ No time as I have too many other priorities
- ☐ 1-10 %
- ☐ 10-20 %
- ☐ More than 20%
- ☐ Other, please elaborate _____

Please elaborate below:

IV. US Embassy Mission staff (non PRM)

9. What best describes the knowledge and understanding of US Embassy staff (including the Ambassador, Charge, Political and Economic section, USAID, and others) on the issue of statelessness in the countries that you work in or used to work in?
- ☐ They were generally knowledgeable/ interested
 - ☐ There was some understanding
 - ☐ There was very understanding
 - ☐ There was no understanding

Please elaborate below:

10. How would you describe the level of coordination around statelessness within the USG for the countries in your current portfolio (High Level)? (*select all that apply*)
- ☐ High-level officials (Ambassador or diplomats) are regularly appraised of statelessness issues but not a priority issue raised in bilateral or multilateral diplomatic engagements.
 - ☐ High-level officials (Ambassador or diplomats) are regularly appraised of statelessness issues and raise in high-level bilateral diplomatic engagements.
 - ☐ High-level officials (Ambassador or diplomats) are regularly appraised of statelessness issues and raise in high-level multilateral diplomatic engagements (for example, working groups with other donor governments).
 - ☐ There was not much coordination
 - ☐ Other please describe _____

Please elaborate below:

11. How would you describe the level of coordination around statelessness within the USG for the countries in your current portfolio (Working level)? (*select all that apply*)
- ☐ There is frequent information-sharing at the working level between offices and agencies such as the Refugee and Migration Office (if at Embassy), Political and Economic Section(s), USAID, and others
 - ☐ There is ad-hoc information-sharing at the working level between offices and agencies such as the Refugee and Migration Office (if at Embassy), Political and Economic Section, USAID, and/or others
 - ☐ There are joint strategies or programs around statelessness between the Refugee and Migration Office (if at Embassy), Political and Economic Section(s), USAID, and/or others
 - ☐ There is not much coordination between offices or agencies on statelessness
 - ☐ Other please describe _____

Please elaborate below:

V. UNHCR

12. Coordination between US Embassy and UNHCR What best describes your current relations with UNHCR and if different in past situations please elaborate below?

- ☐ Open door
- ☐ Frequent informal communication
- ☐ Standing formal communication
- ☐ Other

Please elaborate below:

13. What is your assessment of UNHCR's work with non-refugee stateless populations in the country or countries that you work? Scale from 1-5 with 5 high and 1 low.

- ☐ 5
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 1
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other_____

14. How would you rate your awareness/understanding of the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness from 1 to 5 with 1 low and 5 high?

- ☐ 5
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 1
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other_____

15. How would you rate your /awareness/understanding of the #IBelong Campaign from 1 to 5?

- ☐ 5
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 3

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 1
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other_____

16. How do you rate the job that UNHCR is doing to address statelessness issues in the country you are currently in? Scale from 1-5 with 5 high and 1 low.

- ☐ 5
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 1
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other_____

Please elaborate below:

17. What are the ways that you engage/monitor the work of UNHCR? (*check all that apply and elaborate*)

- ☐ Regular meetings → Indicate approximate frequency: _____
- ☐ Multilateral engagements such as participation in multi-agency and multi-donor working groups and/or UN/donor meetings
- ☐ Through the Country Operation Plan Survey
- ☐ Read project reports of their UNHCR partners
- ☐ Meet with civil society and UNHCR partners
- ☐ Engage with other UN agencies and development partners
- ☐ I don't do any activities to monitor/engage/ no time

Please elaborate below:

VI. Challenges and recommendations

18. What are the greatest challenges you face working on statelessness issues?

19. What are 2 to 3 recommendations as to how it could be more effective in addressing non-refugee stateless situations?

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)
Evaluation of PRM-Supported Initiatives to Prevent and Reduce Statelessness**

Nature and Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this task order is to obtain the services of a contractor to carry out an evaluation, lasting up to ten months of PRM-supported initiatives to prevent and reduce statelessness. The Department of State provides humanitarian assistance and engages in diplomacy to prevent and reduce statelessness and to protect stateless persons. The Department advocates on behalf of stateless people with foreign governments and civil society organizations and conducts field monitoring of the conditions and challenges that stateless people encounter. The United States is the single largest donor to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the U.N. agency mandated to identify and protect stateless people and to prevent and reduce statelessness. This evaluation will give particular attention to *UNHCR's Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024*, a 10-year plan that seeks to mobilize governments and other stakeholders to end statelessness by 2024.

PRM complements its support of UNHCR's statelessness activities with concerted diplomatic efforts to encourage governments to prevent and reduce statelessness in Burma, Cote d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Thailand, Ukraine, and other countries. PRM also supports the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights – a key effort to mobilize civil society to advocate for reform of nationality laws that prohibit women from transmitting their citizenship to their children on an equal basis with men.

To date, efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness have not been formally evaluated by PRM. This evaluation is intended to give greater insight into the progress since the launch of *UNHCR's Global Action Plan to End Statelessness* and provide concrete inputs to PRM on ways to tailor assistance and diplomacy aimed at preventing and reducing statelessness. It will consist of: (1) an analysis of relevant literature and reporting by PRM partners; (2) analysis of consultations with key individuals at the headquarters of selected partners as well as in the field; and (3) the consolidation of recommendations that will inform PRM's policy approach to statelessness and strengthen the ability of PRM-funded efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness.

The desk review, consultations, and analysis will focus on the following areas: (1) The ways in which PRM investments in statelessness initiatives contribute to the prevention and reduction of statelessness; (2) progress or challenges faced in relation to implementation of the overall strategic goals set out in UNHCR's Global Action Plan; and (3) how PRM can better support the ability of statelessness initiatives to prevent and reduce statelessness, including improving efforts to raise awareness on this issue.

The primary audience for the evaluation is PRM and UNHCR. Evaluation findings shall be targeted, concrete, actionable, and tailored to the work of PRM and its partners and the particular focus of the initiative. Unless doing so creates security risks or raises other concerns, the final evaluation report will be shared publicly and/or posted for external consumption.

Background and Current Status of the Effort

PRM's mission is to provide protection, ease suffering, and resolve the plight of persecuted and uprooted people around the world on behalf of the American people by working with other governments and international partners. This shares the burden of providing life-sustaining assistance and seeks durable solutions by working through multilateral systems to build global partnerships, ensure compliance with international norms and standards and promote best practices in humanitarian response.

A stateless person is someone who, under national laws, does not enjoy citizenship – the legal bond between a government and an individual – in any country. Without citizenship, stateless people have no legal protection and no right to vote, and they often lack access to education, employment, health care, registration of birth, marriage or death, and property rights. Stateless people may also encounter travel restrictions, social exclusion, and heightened vulnerability to sexual and physical violence, exploitation, trafficking in persons, forcible displacement, and other abuses.

Statelessness is a priority issue of concern to PRM because it is fundamentally an issue of protection, because it intersects with the needs of other populations of concern to PRM (especially refugees and vulnerable migrants), and because it is the mandate of UNHCR, one of PRM's primary partners. Working to address statelessness supports all three of PRM's Functional Bureau Strategy Goals: (1) Save lives, ease suffering, and promote human dignity through efficient and effective humanitarian assistance; (2) Promote and provide durable and interim solutions for populations of concern through U.S. assistance and collaboration with the international community; and (3) Advocate for the protection of vulnerable populations and exert leadership in the international community.

Key efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness include:

- Creating awareness of statelessness and identifying stateless populations.
- Advocating for adoption of the standards and safeguards set out in the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, which are the key standards with respect to the prevention of statelessness.
- Advocating for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, including gender discrimination, from nationality laws.
- Universal birth registration and other forms of civil documentation.
- Increasing access to naturalization or citizenship by:
 - Eliminating discrimination in nationality laws; and,
 - Building administrative capacity for civil registry and documentation.

As of the end of 2018, the UNHCR counted nearly 3.9 million stateless persons worldwide, but estimated that the actual number of stateless persons worldwide may be as high as 10 million. UNHCR's *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness* includes actions to resolve existing situations of statelessness; prevent new cases of statelessness from emerging; and better identify and protect stateless persons. The overall intent of the action plan is to bring an end to statelessness within 10 years by resolving existing situations and preventing the emergence of new cases of statelessness.

To assist countries in achieving the goals of the *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness*, UNHCR and partners:

1. Identify factors which may contribute to new cases of statelessness or which prevent resolution of existing situations.
2. Develop and implement National Action Plans to undertake relevant Actions.
3. Convene country-level roundtable discussions with governments, civil society, other UN Agencies and stakeholders, and undertake participatory assessments with stateless communities to inform the development of National Action Plans.
4. Provide technical advice and, where necessary, resources to support governments and stateless populations.
5. Promote the exchange of good practices in resolving statelessness.
6. Engage with the justice sector and the legal community for a strategic use of judicial processes.
7. Undertake sustained global awareness-raising and advocacy on statelessness, ensuring that the plight of stateless people is understood, and their voices are heard; and
8. Report on implementation of Actions every two years.

Through diplomacy and contributions to UNHCR's core budget, the United States supports the #IBelong Global Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024 and is a member of the Group of Friends of the campaign in Geneva, Switzerland. PRM monitors UNHCR's statelessness activities in the field to track progress toward its *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness*.

PRM uses diplomacy to mobilize other governments to prevent and resolve situations that leave people stateless. For example, PRM spearheaded the USG's introduction and sponsorship of two resolutions on statelessness in the Human Rights Council in 2012 and 2016 in Geneva, and we encourage other governments to support UNHCR's statelessness mandate.

In some cases, the United States funds non-governmental organizations to provide assistance and advocate on behalf of stateless people. PRM supported the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) to manage the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights. Launched in 2014 with UNHCR and other IOs and NGOs on its steering committee, the Campaign seeks to combat discrimination in nationality laws that prohibit women from transmitting citizenship to their children on an equal basis with men and that often results in statelessness. It aims to create awareness of the problem of gender discrimination in nationality laws and statelessness and mobilize local civil society efforts to persuade governments to repeal and amend nationality laws that discriminate against women. PRM is a founding donor of this Campaign and has provided a total of \$1,518,404 to WRC since FY 2014.

The project has been highly successful to date, with its national workshop in Madagascar resulting in reform of the country's nationality law in 2016, and significant momentum for reforms generated by workshops in Bahrain and Togo. In its year two efforts, this project organized the unprecedented meeting of the League of Arab States, which resulted in the Arab Declaration of Belonging and Identity. This declaration, hailed as groundbreaking, asserts that participating Arab states must adopt and uphold nationality rights that are equal in their application to men and women nationals of each respective country.

WRC has also maintained contact with its previous successes; notably in Togo, the project continues to work with Togolese government and civil society to help develop and maintain the nationality law reform efforts after their passage of the law.

WRC's 2019 project year built on 2018 accomplishments with a continued focus on eight target countries: Bahrain, Barbados, Kuwait, Liberia, Malaysia, Nepal, Qatar, and Togo. It intends to use the project's successes with the above Arab Declaration of Belonging and Identity and the soon-to-come Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa to continue its momentum with other regional partners and governments. Although in 2017 and 2018, WRC aimed to prove that discrete events and advocacy can effect change, it hoped to scale its efforts in year three to include an expansion of its advocacy to the international sphere by changing various countries' domestic law on naturalization. Some activities include WRC's Global Coalition Capacity Building and Advocacy Planning Workshop, hosted in Istanbul in April 2018 to streamline WRC's internal communications between all coalition partners. In June 2019, a member of the WRC's Global Campaign Steering Committee, the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, hosted the World Conference on Statelessness and Inclusion in The Hague.

In an effort to create awareness and increase knowledge of statelessness issues, PRM supported five research projects between 2010 and 2016 looking at statelessness issues.

1. An empirical study by Kingston University to examine the costs of statelessness in terms of household income/livelihoods, education, and health.
2. A Women's Refugee Commission study of the impact of discrimination against women in nationality laws in North Africa and the Near East.

3. Further research on the impact of discrimination against women in nationality laws and statelessness on women and their families, comparing the cases of Madagascar and Nepal, by the Equal Rights Trust.
4. A study by Tilburg University to investigate the relationship between statelessness and vulnerability to trafficking in persons.
5. Qualitative and quantitative research conducted by Johns Hopkins University in Cote d'Ivoire and the Dominican Republic to describe experiences of gender-based violence (GBV), vulnerabilities, GBV-related health outcomes and barriers in access to care among stateless populations.

UNHCR reports that since 2003, over four million stateless persons have acquired a nationality, and over 15 countries have reformed their nationality laws to address discrimination against women. UNHCR's High-Level Segment on Statelessness, held in conjunction with the first day of UNHCR's 70th Executive Committee Meeting on October 7, 2019, resulted in over 300 pledges from governments, regional organizations, and NGOs to take steps to address statelessness. With enough political will, this problem can be resolved.

Despite efforts to date, statelessness remains a protection concern requiring continued humanitarian community efforts focused on prevention and response.

Scope of Work

The contractor of this evaluation will report to and coordinate closely with PRM's Office of Policy and Resource Planning (PRP) and the Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations (MCE), as well as remain in contact with PRM's Humanitarian Affairs unit in Geneva for UNHCR headquarters engagement and PRM's regional Refugee Coordinators for field engagement, as needed. PRP is responsible for leading PRM's efforts on statelessness policy, assistance, and diplomacy and coordinates the evaluations that are undertaken within the Bureau. MCE manages the institutional relationships with PRM's multilateral and non-governmental partners, including UNHCR. The two offices work closely together, with a shared vision of protecting stateless persons. They will jointly support this evaluation to ensure it meets internal PRM needs and is of the highest quality possible.

Evaluation Questions

The intent of the evaluation is to assess PRM-supported efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness to develop recommendations that can be used to update PRM's statelessness strategy and strengthen diplomacy conducted by PRM and PRM partners. PRM seeks to better respond to needs of stateless individuals and maximize PRM investments working to end statelessness. This evaluation shall answer the following questions to help both PRM and its partners make the most of ongoing and future statelessness initiatives:

1. To what extent are PRM investments in statelessness initiatives – both financial and diplomatic – contributing to the prevention and reduction of statelessness, and the protection of stateless persons?
2. To what extent have PRM efforts supported progress toward achieving the goals of UNHCR's Global Action Plan to End Statelessness?
3. What changes or updates need to be made to PRM's Statelessness strategy to strengthen the ability of statelessness initiatives to prevent and reduce statelessness, including PRM monitoring of statelessness activities overseas?

Evaluation Design and Data Collection Methods

PRM expects that the evaluation will use a mixed method design involving both qualitative and quantitative methods covering the period from 2014 to the present. PRM will rely on the contractor to both propose and design the research methodologies that make the most sense and answer research questions in the best and most efficient way possible. It is anticipated that methods will include some combination of desk research/analysis, key informant interviews, group discussions (as relevant), and

collection of case studies to produce findings, draw conclusions, and present recommendations. Participation of beneficiaries (stateless persons) is required. It is essential that all research is conducted in line with ethical and safety standards and be done in a way that upholds PRM's commitment to professionalism. Any interviews with stateless persons must be sensitive to and designed to prevent traumatization and stigma. All data collection methods and tools shall be shared with PRM in advance and strive to get the richest and most useful information in the quickest way possible. This is in recognition of the limited time available and significant workload of PRM partners, particularly those that work in the field in ongoing humanitarian emergencies.

ANNEX J: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED – GLOBAL

Australian Mission to the UN Mission in Geneva
Balsillie School of International Affairs
Brazilian Mission to the UN Mission in Geneva
Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations
The Holocaust Museum
International Rescues Committee (IRC)
The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI)
James Madison College at Michigan State University
Melbourne Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Open Society Foundations
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR)
United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
The University of Melbourne
Washington and Lee University
Women's Refugee Commission (WRC)
The World Bank