Statelessness Worldwide

There are an estimated 10-15 million stateless people worldwide whom no country recognizes as a citizen. Because they are not recognized, stateless people often do not appear in official statistics. UNHCR has gathered data on approximately one-third of the estimated global population (3.9 million). There are 93 countries where stateless populations are known to exist; 15 of these do not have reliable data on the stateless numbers.

Primary risk factors and causes include inheritance of status, conflict in nationality laws, state succession, discriminatory nationality laws, birth registration, and armed conflict.

There are an estimated 10-15 million stateless people worldwide. A new stateless child is born every 10 minutes.

Statelessness contributes to cycles of poverty and vulnerability, reducing household income by one third.

*The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has a formal mandate to prevent and reduce statelessness around the world, as well as to protect the rights of stateless people.

Data are not complete and include estimates; may include persons with undetermined citizenship.

Statelessness contributes to cycles of poverty and vulnerability, reducing household income by one third.

Counted within refugee statistics for protection reasons is another category of stateless persons—stateless refugees. Some of these people are not recognized as citizens by their country of origin or last habitual residence. The largest groups of stateless refugees are listed in alphabetical order below, and displayed on the map by their country of residence.

Notable stateless refugees

Some of these people are not recognized as citizens by their country of origin or last habitual residence. The largest groups of stateless refugees are listed in alphabetical order below, and displayed on the map by their country of residence.

- Black Mauritians
- Palestinians
- Bhutanese
- Rohingyas
- Kurds
- Sahrawis
- Mixed Eritrean-Ethiopians
- West Papuans

Categories:

- Stateless population of 70,000 or more
- Statelessness contributes to cycles of poverty and vulnerability, reducing household income by one third.

Names and boundary representation are not necessarily authoritative

Sources: UNHCR, UNICEF, Department of State, Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, Norwegian Refugee Council, Kingston University of London

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