

Photo story on Reduction and Prevention of Statelessness in the Kyrgyz Republic March 2015



In June 2014, UNHCR, jointly with its governmental and non-governmental partners, launched a pilot registration and documentation exercise in Osh city, Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Chui provinces.



Iwenty-eight mobile multifunctional teams comprising NGO-hired lawyers, self-governance officials, and passport desk officers worked in the designated areas to provide legal aid, and to assist beneficiaries in filing for citizenship determination or acquisition.



The target groups of beneficiaries include Soviet passport holders, foreigners with expired passports, and persons without birth certificates.



Following the successful completion of the 2014 pilot project phase, in 2015 the work continues in Bishkek city, Batken, Talas, and Chui provinces.



A majority of persons at risk of statelessness in Kyrgyzstan are holders of Soviet passports, documents that ceased to be valid more than decade ago. After the break up of the Soviet Union these persons failed to obtain new documents.



The next large group of persons at risk of statelessness is women from Uzbekistan who married Kyrgyz nationals. These women hold expired Uzbek passports and are unable to extend their documents in Kyrgyzstan. Thanks to recent changes in Kyrgyz legislation these women may apply for Kyrgyz citizenship in a simplified manner.



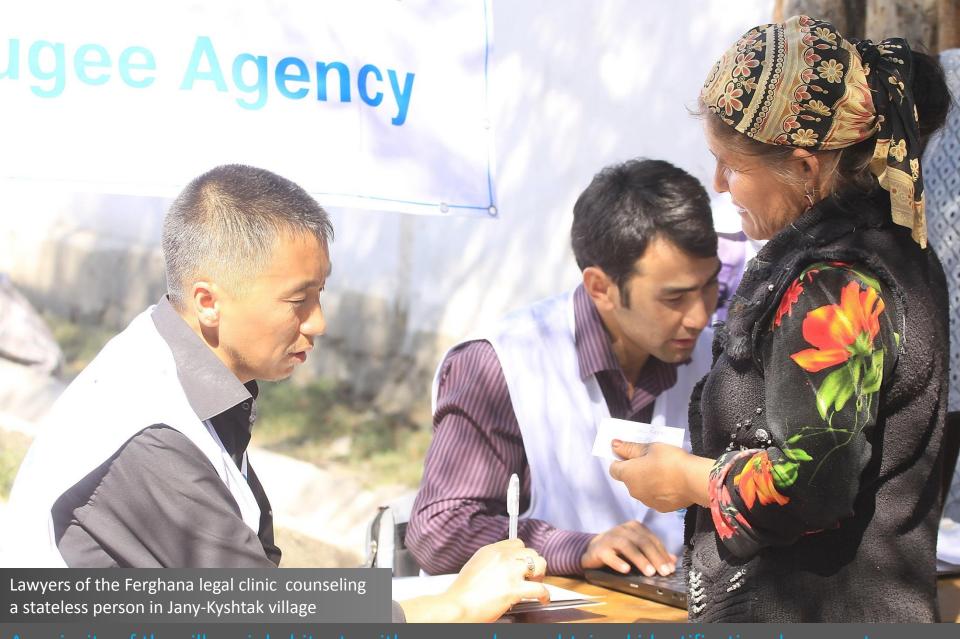
Many persons at risk of statelessness carry expired Soviet passports. Residing away from population centers they face difficulties in accessing public services, including receiving documentation.



The registration and documentation project spearheaded by UNHCR presents a unique opportunity for the persons of concern. Without leaving their places of residence, these persons may obtain personal documents.



Media representatives visited the mobile clinic in Jany-Kyshtak village, Osh province, where the ethnic Domari minority resides. Domari people remain socially marginalized and face great difficulties in obtaining documentation.



were holders of Soviet passports. The lack of valid documents greatly restrict these persons' access to many basic social services.



In 2013-2014, the legal clinic assisted more than 700 ethnic Domari persons with obtaining birtle certificates or passports.



This young woman has never received a passport or other proof of identity or nationality. She is mother to six children, none of whom were registered at birth.



The origin of statelessness in this village is not just the collapse of the USSR. The problem has also been exacerbated over the years by a simple lack of awareness among the public about the importance of obtaining documentation.



On 30 October 2014, stateless persons and holders of Soviet passports of Alamudun district, Chui province received documentation as a result of the work of conducted by the mobile multifunctional teams.



By March 2015, more than 6,000 beneficiaries were registered under the campaign, of which around 3,000 obtain documents that are vital if they are to live a normal life in Kyrgyzstan.