



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



A mobile field team operating in Jalal-Abad province.

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.



A mobile field team lawyers examining the documents of a Soviet passport holder.

Twenty-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.



Jalal-Abad villagers examining a project information stand.

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



The Osh project coordinator discusses individual cases with an Osh City passport desk official.

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



A lawyer of a mobile field team assisting a Soviet passport holder in Osh province.

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 Osh project coordinator providing a consultation to a foreign spouse who has been living in Kyrgyzstan for 20 years with an expired passport.

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.



A mobile field team operating in Chui province.

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.





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Ак менгүлүү аска доолор талаалар,  
Элибиздин жаны манат барабар,  
Сансыз кылым Ала-Тоосун мекендеп,  
Саяктап келди биздин ата-бабалар.  
Кайырма: Алгалай бер, кыргыз эл  
Азаттыктын жолунда,  
Врхундай бер, өсө бер,  
Өз тагдыр жашоолунда.  
Байыртадан  
Досторук  
Бул ыңкы  
Бажут  
Кайы  
Атка  
Жел  
Бил  
Ыны

Ж.САДЫКОВА Ш.КУЛЧЕВДИКИ  
ЖУЛМА Н.ДАВЛЕТОВА  
Ж. МОЛДОБАСАНОВА  
Высокие горы, долины, поля,  
Родная, заветная Ала-Тоо,  
Отцы наши жили среди Ала-Тоо  
Всегда свою Родину с  
ПРИДЕЛ: Вперед, к  
Пути сво  
Взростаю  
Свою суд  
Извечно наро  
Единство  
Земля  
Лучше

WESA lawyer consulting a Soviet passport holder in Chui province.

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.



Azizbek Ashurov, Director of "Ferghana Valley Lawyers without Borders" legal clinic gives an interview to journalists

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.



Refugee Agency

Lawyers of the Ferghana legal clinic counseling a stateless person in Jany-Kyshtak village

A majority of the village inhabitants either never have obtained identification documents or were holders of Soviet passports. The lack of valid documents greatly restrict these persons' access to many basic social services.



An ethnic Domari approaching the Ferghana legal clinic in Jany-Kyshtak village, Osh province

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



An ethnic Domari family in Jany-Kyshtak village, Osh province.

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



An ethnic Domari woman presents her documents to a lawyer.

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.



Eldiyar Ubaliev, Deputy Chairman of the State Registration Service hands over a document during the launch of UNHCR Global Campaign to End Statelessness.

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.



Johann Siffointe, UNHCR Representative in Kyrgyzstan congratulates a project beneficiary during the passport handover ceremony in Jalal-Abad.

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.