

**20 | WORLD CONFERENCE
24 | ON STATELESSNESS**

**SETTING A
SHARED AGENDA FOR
THE STATELESSNESS FIELD**

**KEY
TAKEAWAYS**

REFLECTIONS, AMBITIONS & INITIATIVES

Solidarity
Knowledge
Change
World
Conference
on
Statelessness
2024
Malaysia

Dhulhai
2024



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This report draws on the key takeaways of the 2024 World Statelessness Conference, to present an emerging shared agenda for the statelessness field over the next few years by:

Picking out some of the most insightful reflections and observations from the conference,

Highlighting joined-up ambitions and objectives that emerged from conference discussions, and

Providing an overview of the key initiatives that were launched or announced at the conference.

This report is complemented by a 'Synthesis Report' which provides an overview of the Conference, and by audio-visual and written outputs, available online.

**A SHARED AGENDA FOR CHANGE:
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KNOWLEDGE . SOLIDARITY . KNOWLEDGE . CHANGE

SOLIDARITY

CHANGE

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**AS YOU THINK
OF OTHERS FAR AWAY,
THINK OF YOURSELF
(SAY: "IF ONLY I WERE
A CANDLE IN THE DARK")**

From the poem "Think of Others"
by Mahmoud Darwish

A SHARED AGENDA FOR CHANGE: MOBILISING KNOWLEDGE, SOLIDARITY AND JOINT ACTION TO ADDRESS STATELESSNESS

The learnings, insights, aspirations and commitments expressed at the conference, offer a shared agenda for change, that is rooted in the principles of collective action, solidarity and resilience. Here are the main takeaways in this regard:

Our Shared Agenda for Change must emerge through those impacted by statelessness and discriminatory nationality laws, to meet their needs, interests and aspirations. Civil society spaces must centre, be led by and accountable to stateless people and their communities. This requires creating, sharing and ceding space, voice and resources; journeying with, supporting and strengthening the skills and resilience of stateless people and their communities.

Resourcing the field is of crucial importance, with the biggest priority being the sustainable resourcing of stateless-led groups. We must continue to engage donors to raise awareness about statelessness, push for its prioritisation and mainstreaming, and encourage them to allocate more funding. We also need to hold donors accountable, to ensure that funds are accessible to stateless-led groups that face so many structural barriers to accessing funding.

The statelessness sector has undergone a remarkable evolution over the last decade, with significant growth, a more sophisticated understanding and coherent strategies and approaches to addressing the issue. We have many successes to celebrate. We are also seeing the beginnings of a meaningful transformation of a 'field' into a 'community'. This comes with recognition that we need each other and must actively invest in each other, and in strengthening our solidarity, community and trust, to ensure we build our resilience and sustainability.

It was never adequate or accurate to describe statelessness as exclusively or largely a legal or technical issue. It is a multi-disciplinary challenge with significant social, economic, political and personal implications. It is also an intersectional issue which cuts across all social-justice fields and identity groups. The research and change agenda must reflect this, and move beyond mere 'legal' solutions, including those which focus only on securing nationality status. This requires engaging with political narratives of 'othering', addressing structural discrimination and connecting with other social justice movements to build solidarities across borders and issues.

We see the emergence of shared values and objectives, which we must foster, protect and pursue. The Manifesto of the Global Movement Against Statelessness articulates many of these values. While we won't always agree, we must pursue change in ways that acknowledge our different roles and priorities, while grounding ourselves in shared values and principles, including those of equality, solidarity, respect, dignity and empowerment.

The arts are an important vehicle through which to build and share knowledge, strengthen solidarity and pursue change. We must collaborate meaningfully with artists and centre working through the arts to achieve change.

A vibrant statelessness ecosystem is emerging, with key players including the Global Movement Against Statelessness, Global Alliance to End Statelessness, Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, various Regional Statelessness Networks and Coalitions, global actors like the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, academic institutes such as the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness, UN actors including UNHCR and OHCHR, national and grassroots groups. At the centre, are many stateless-led groups that are working at local, national, regional and global levels. There needs to be even stronger collaboration between these different groups, to drive forward a more impactful research agenda, create spaces for solidarity and drive our shared agenda for change.

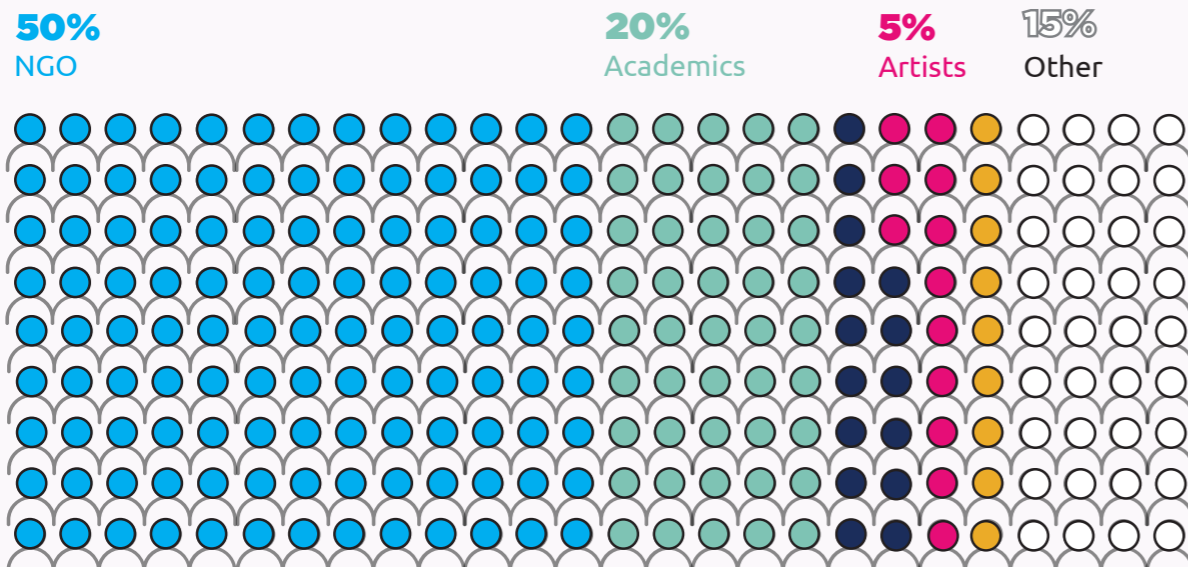
The genocide of the Palestinian people and previously, the Rohingya, are sobering reminders of how statelessness is integrally connected to the worst atrocities that humans inflict on each other. As a field, we are dutybound to highlight these connections and articulate why statehood and nationality are essential to securing liberation and justice. We must also continue to stand in solidarity with the victims of apartheid, crimes against humanity and genocide, and those in entrenched situations of statelessness, demanding accountability, justice and peace.

Further thematic takeaways on '**knowledge**', '**solidarity**' and '**change**' are set out at the end of this report.

CONVERGING FOR CHANGE: A GLIMPSE INTO THE 2024 WORLD CONFERENCE ON STATELESSNESS

The [World Conference on Statelessness \(WCS\)](#) was convened at [Taylor's University](#) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 26 to 29 February 2024. It was organised by the [Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion](#) (global), [Nationality for All](#) (Asia-Pacific), [Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas](#) (Malaysia) and [Family Frontiers](#) (Malaysia), and supported by the [Human Rights Commission of Malaysia](#) (SUHAKAM). The Conference ran over three and a half days. The programme focused on the three themes of SOLIDARITY, KNOWLEDGE and CHANGE, and was consultatively developed to respond to the interests and needs of the field.


450 in person participants **77** sessions over 3 days




218 
Participants supported to attend the conference

30% 
Participants with lived experience
**self-identified through voluntary survey*

50+ 
Countries, representing all continents of the world

100+ 
Viewers joined to watch the conference online

80+ 
Dedicated support team, including Safeguarding, Well-being, First Aid, Language & Immigration support

SIMPLY PUT, THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON STATELESSNESS WAS EASILY THE BEST CONFERENCE I HAVE PARTICIPATED IN ACROSS TOPIC, FORMAT AND PEOPLE, OVER THE COURSE OF MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE. I ATTEST TO BEING IN OTHER SETTINGS THAT WERE AS INSPIRING; PARTICIPATING IN OTHER SESSIONS AS INFORMATIVE, INTELLECTUALLY STIMULATING AND RIGOROUS; AND, IN MORE LIMITED NUMBER, BEING PRIVY TO OTHER ARENAS THAT WERE AS ELECTRIC. THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON STATELESSNESS SURPASSED THESE IN SCALE, INTENSITY, SUSTENANCE AND COHERENCE OF PURPOSE.

Prof. Joshua Castellino
Executive Co-Director, Minority Rights Group International
& Professor of International & Comparative Law, University of Derby, UK



AT THE CENTRE OF THIS VITAL MOVEMENT ARE PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCES OF STATELESSNESS. IT'S YOUR EXPERIENCES, YOUR GOALS, THAT MUST SHAPE OUR COLLECTIVE AGENDA FOR ACTION. THIS CONFERENCE WITH ITS ETHOS OF INCLUSIVITY, IS A MUCH-NEEDED PLATFORM FOR LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER. ITS THEMES OF SOLIDARITY, KNOWLEDGE, CHANGE ARE AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE IMMENSE POWER WE EACH DERIVE FROM THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCES AND INSIGHTS, AND FROM BROADENING OUR CONNECTIONS. AS WE MOVE FORWARD IN ADDRESSING STATELESSNESS WE MUST GO BEYOND UNDERSTANDING AND STRENGTHENING WHAT IS ALREADY WORKING, TO DEVELOPING NEW INVENTED ROOTS FOR DELIVERING CHANGE.

Volker Turk
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INTROSPECTION, SHARING, STRATEGISING AND CELEBRATION

Through the Conference, we explored as a global statelessness field and community, how we can better:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Organise ourselves | Centre stateless people and their communities, be led by them and accountable to them |
| Produce, consume and disseminate knowledge | Resource our work and make our field more sustainable |
| Recognise and address inequalities, injustices and inefficiencies within our | Take care of ourselves and each other |
| Identify, understand and play our different | Better coordinate efforts and strengthen cooperation |
| Create space so we may challenge and learn from each other | Raise awareness and strengthen messaging on our issue |
| Build solidarity and trust among each other | Build partnerships with key stakeholders |

These learnings will enable us to ultimately be more effective in achieving real world change in advancing equal nationality rights for all, protecting the rights of stateless people and pursuing justice on their behalf.

Key to these conversations was creating the space for meaningful engagement between those of us involved in different global, regional and national initiatives, that must relentlessly seek ways to improve dialogue, coordination and collaboration. These conversations happened both during conference sessions, but also in the margins, during breaks, over meals and informally. The conference provided the space for this community building, by creating an open and welcoming atmosphere, and encouraging participants to make time for each other. We will no doubt continue to find out the many ways in which the connections sparked during the conference bear fruit over the coming years.

”

The personal is political within the statelessness sector too. How do we build an inclusive statelessness movement, when our most important members are structurally excluded by our societies? How do we centre stateless people when they are denied the resources to engage on equal terms? How do we build solidarity when we sometimes don't fully trust each other's intentions...? How do we organise a global conference, when so many of us cannot travel across borders? How do we create a space for belonging, when we don't share a common language and may have different ideas and perspectives on what belonging means?

From "The Personal and Political"
A Message from the Conference Co-Organisers



CHANGE IS INEVITABLE AND CANNOT BE STOPPED. BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT CHANGE CAN BE MANIFESTED... WE ALL TALKED ABOUT DELIBERATE CHANGE THAT WE WANT A POSITIVE CHANGE AND IT IS INEVITABLE WHEN SO MANY PEOPLE DREAM ABOUT THE SAME CHANGE THAT IT DOES MANIFEST. WHEN THERE IS SO MUCH POWER IN THE ROOM, LET US ALL BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF MANIFESTING POSITIVE CHANGE.

Neha Gurung
Co-Lead, Global Movement Against Statelessness

ART AS ADVOCACY: THE 'THINK OF OTHERS' ARTS PROGRAMME AT THE HEART OF THE CONFERENCE

The 'Think of Others' Arts and Culture programme was an integral component of the conference. Aligned with the broader conference objectives, it aimed to:

Cultivate empathy and a deeper understanding of statelessness among participants through immersive artistic encounters.

Create a personal connection between participants and the stories, experiences and activism of stateless individuals.

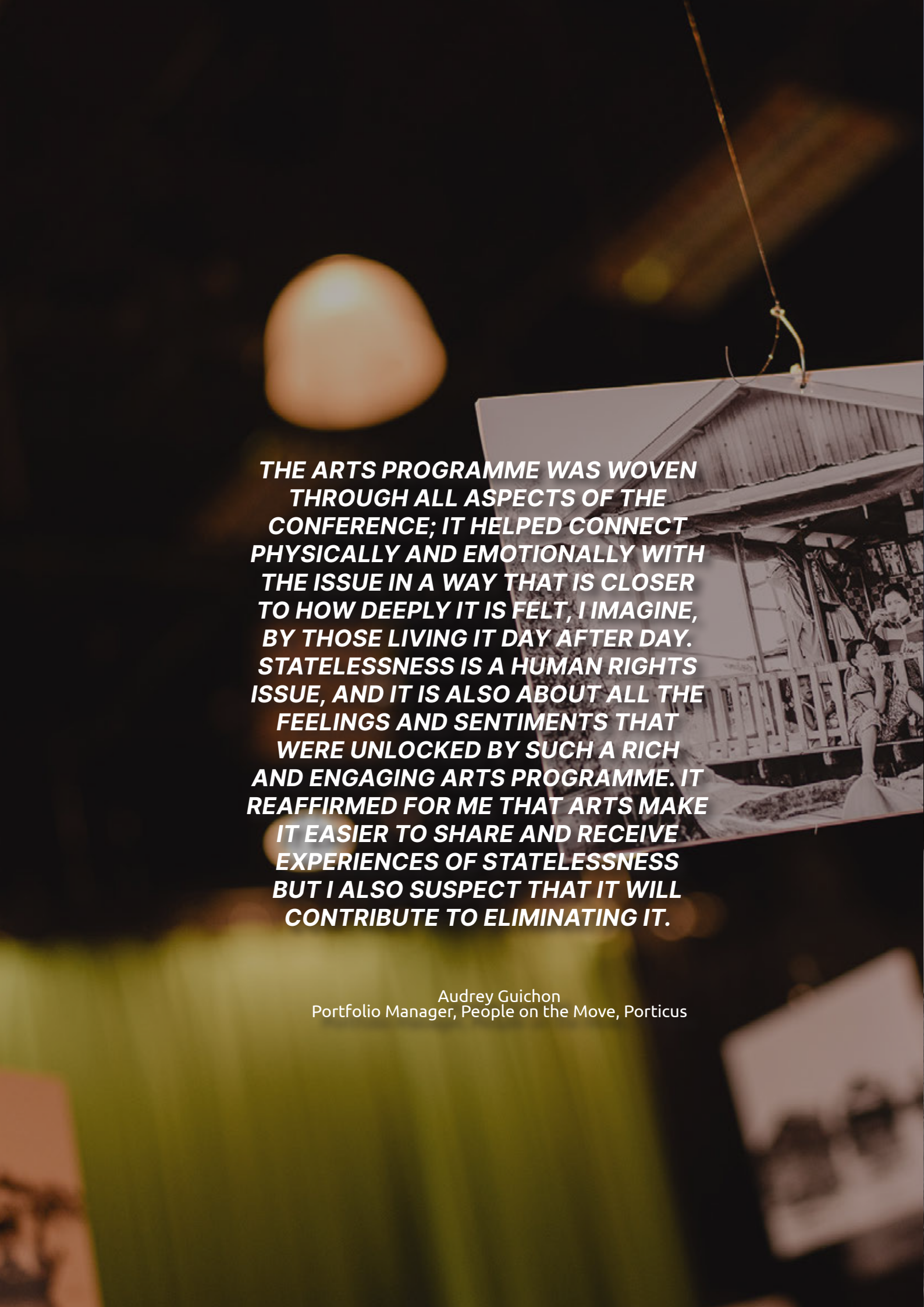
Facilitate open and informed discussions about statelessness, its complexities, and potential solutions, using art as a catalyst for dialogue and change.

Think of Others consisted of arts workshops, film screenings, visual arts exhibits, performances of poetry, theatre, music, and dance, immersive experiences and artists speaking on panels. See also, the [Think of Others Arts Catalogue](#) and [Compilation of Poems](#).



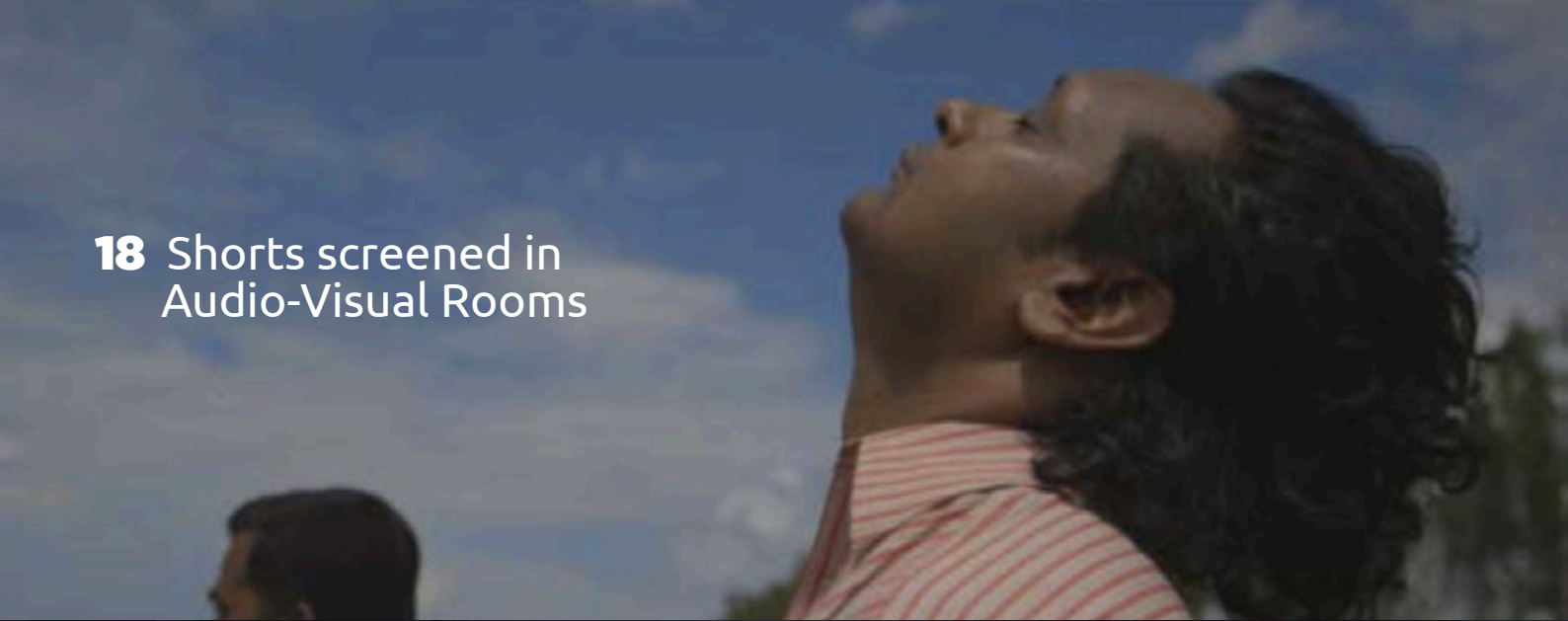
12 Visual Arts exhibits






THE ARTS PROGRAMME WAS WOVEN THROUGH ALL ASPECTS OF THE CONFERENCE; IT HELPED CONNECT PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY WITH THE ISSUE IN A WAY THAT IS CLOSER TO HOW DEEPLY IT IS FELT, I IMAGINE, BY THOSE LIVING IT DAY AFTER DAY. STATELESSNESS IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, AND IT IS ALSO ABOUT ALL THE FEELINGS AND SENTIMENTS THAT WERE UNLOCKED BY SUCH A RICH AND ENGAGING ARTS PROGRAMME. IT REAFFIRMED FOR ME THAT ARTS MAKE IT EASIER TO SHARE AND RECEIVE EXPERIENCES OF STATELESSNESS BUT I ALSO SUSPECT THAT IT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO ELIMINATING IT.

Audrey Guichon
Portfolio Manager, People on the Move, Porticus




18 Shorts screened in Audio-Visual Rooms



10 Short Feature Films
3 Feature Film Screenings with Discussion



THINK OF OTHERS
The Arts and Culture Experience



4 Poetry Readings & Poetry Catalogue featuring **32** poems



**CREATING SPACE FOR PROGRESS:
KEY INITIATIVES TO DRIVE OUR SHARED AGENDA FORWARD**

Milestones for the statelessness field at the conference - Initiatives launched and announced:

STATELESSNESS AND
DIGNIFIED CITIZENSHIP
COALITION - ASIA PACIFIC

LAUNCH ANNOUNCEMENT
OF THE GLOBAL
STATELESSNESS FUND

STATELESSNESS ASIA
PACIFIC RESEARCH
NETWORK

GLOBAL MOVEMENT
AGAINST STATELESSNESS


The [Global Movement Against Statelessness](#) is a community of stateless people, activists and civil society allies dedicated to the eradication of statelessness, the achievement of equal nationality rights for all and the human rights of all stateless people. The Movement centres and is led by people directly impacted by statelessness, nationality deprivation and discriminatory nationality laws and works to increase solidarity in the field. It aims to bring the statelessness field closer together to strengthen collaboration and achieve positive change.





**THROUGH THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT
WE CAN CHALLENGE AND TRANSFORM
OURSELVES, TO DISRUPT HOW WE
WORK, TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT
STATELESS PEOPLE ARE THE LEADERS
OF THE FIELD, THE PEOPLE WE NEED TO
BE ACCOUNTABLE TO... FOR 75 YEARS,
THE RIGHT TO NATIONALITY HAS BEEN
SIDELINED. A BIG REASON FOR THIS
IS THAT THE PEOPLE WHO FEEL THE
DEPRIVATION OF THIS RIGHT MOST
ACUTELY, HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED FROM
THE DISCOURSE ON HOW TO ENSURE
EVERYONE'S RIGHT TO NATIONALITY IS
FULFILLED. THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT IS
ABOUT CHANGING THAT.**


Amal de Chickera
Co-Director,
Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion

Publications and Resources launched at the conference:

STATELESSHUB.ORG -
a global online library and
database on statelessness 

Special Issue of **STATELESSNESS
& CITIZENSHIP REVIEW** on
early career scholarship on
statelessness 

Special issue of **CITIZENSHIP
STUDIES** on legal identity
under insurgencies and
unrecognised states 

Second edition of the
**STATELESSNESS
ENCYCLOPAEDIA
ASIA PACIFIC (SEAP)** 

Edited collection
STATELESSNESS IN ASIA
(Cambridge University Press) 



**THE ECHOES OF INJUSTICE
HAVE BECOME MY PEN,
AND THE CRIES OF THE STATELESS
HAVE BECOME MY INK**

From the poem "Child of darkness"
by Shahd Qannam

KNOWLEDGE

We celebrated and shared advances in research and promising practices, unpacked emerging challenges to find new pathways and synergies to address statelessness, and interrogated the politics of knowledge production and consumption within the field. As we learned together and from one another, we also considered how to shape a new agenda for producing, valuing, sharing and using knowledge. We explored how we can do more to level the playing field; value and centre lived experience; go beyond data and break down knowledge hierarchies; be more creative and innovative; and strengthen the use of knowledge to support solidarity and change. Here are some key takeaways:

Lived experience is expertise and one of the most crucial forms of knowledge that must be centred, platformed and supported. Stateless individuals and communities are key agents of knowledge and partners in knowledge production. Extractive practices in relation to the knowledge they hold, must be exposed and challenged; and hierarchies which privilege some types of knowledge (academic scholarship for example) must be broken down. Those with lived experience must be recognised as research collaborators and not just research subjects, and they must be supported to strengthen their knowledge production and dissemination capacities.

“

It seems as if we have understood that we need to work together and that we also have to learn and build knowledge as to how this standing together could actually then result in action and then also result in change.”

Christiana Bukalo

Multidisciplinary approaches should be adopted, to ensure a more robust, nuanced and comprehensive understanding of statelessness. Statelessness impacts people in a multitude of ways and mixing forms of knowledge in our approaches to knowing statelessness, can create results that are greater than their contingent parts. This requires recognising the legitimacy and place of different forms of knowledge production, and facilitating ways for them to speak to each other. Storytelling, oral histories, quantitative methods, intersectional approaches are all important. While there is extensive legal study into statelessness, further studies from other perspectives – socio-economic, feminist, political, sociological etc. - must be encouraged and strengthened.



Peer learning is very powerful because it helps to expand the arsenal of knowledge and tools that a person can deploy in their work. As the conference went on, there were panels and discussions in which people were citing examples from other countries that they have learned about to help them explain the issues that matter to them.

“

After all the people I met here, I can really say that I've met the world, and I've been exposed to the world [...] my experience or my horizon has expanded, and I think and I will fight better.”

Abdikadir Mohamed

Knowledge is a driver of change and must be used towards positive outcomes. Research, training and tools should not only be about providing information, they also need to actively break down stigma and misconceptions. They need to strengthen solidarity and change agendas, and counter misinformation and the misuse of knowledge as a weapon of exclusion (see below). Academic outputs and legal analysis on statelessness should be curated and made more accessible to civil society organisations, states, and persons with lived experiences.

“

Knowledge is really so vital because we've also come to a stage where there's a wall and we want to know how to penetrate through that and the knowledge here from all the experts is going to help us.”

Bina Ramanand

Knowledge can also be used to cause harm and structural violence, driving processes of othering and socio-political exclusion. Further, through structural exclusion, the 'knowledge' of some groups is not regarded as 'knowledge', which results in their expertise and experience being dismissed. We need to focus on debunking myths, challenging stereotypes and 'conventional wisdom' in various contexts.

“

In Assam, knowledge was created that these people do not belong here, they are not our citizens, they do not have any right to be here. And then there was another level of dehumanisation and constructing them as a threat, that if you do not attack them they are going to attack you. This is a pattern throughout the world... You will also see how the knowledge of certain people is systematically not accepted as knowledge. In the Foreigners Tribunal in Assam, the testimonies of these people are not accepted. A father will testify 'this is my son', but the Tribunal will say 'no we can't trust you'. This is a form of epistemic violence.”

Abdul Kalam Azad

Accessibility of knowledge: Serious consideration must be given to the ways in which knowledge may be exclusionary. Information on statelessness must be made accessible to stateless people and communities, civil society organisations, states, and other actors. Knowledge should be circulated beyond academic and legal spheres. Language accessibility must be prioritised. Courses on statelessness can also be introduced to schools and universities, emphasising the importance of those with lived experience informing course design.

Urgent scholarly focus is required on emergency and evolving contexts such as pandemics, climate change, and armed conflicts, which can aggravate existing statelessness concerns and create new concerns. These contexts also provide an opportunity to look at statelessness through different lenses and through them, raise awareness about the statelessness challenge.





**LEND ME SOME STRENGTH FRIENDS
LEND ME SOME FALSE HOPE**

From the poem "Every day on the calendar is Nellie"
by Abdul Kalam Azad

SOLIDARITY

We created space for honest and reflective conversations about the challenges, lessons learned, and good practices of building solidarity in the statelessness field that shape our pursuit of knowledge and determine our change priorities. With stakeholders holding and exercising unequal levels of power, building multi-stakeholder solidarity that challenges existing power structures and aims to transfer power to persons with lived experience of statelessness, requires clarity of the context-specific roles of different stakeholders. As part of this process, participants were requested to think about what solidarity means to them, why building solidarity is important, and what can be done better to strengthen solidarity in the statelessness field. Here are some key learnings from the conversations and reflections surrounding 'solidarity':

The lived and learned experience dichotomy should be contextualised, understood and constantly revisited. Currently, the statelessness field is not led by persons with lived experience of statelessness, but concerted efforts are being made to centre stateless people in the field. This requires building trust and solidarity and acknowledging positionality and privilege on the part of all actors. It also requires us to find ways to ensure we are not boxed in and limited by the identifiers 'lived' or 'learned' experience, but that we recognise the legitimacy and importance of our roles, as well as the multi-faceted and fluid natures of our identities and perspectives. Importantly, the field needs to create and foster safe and brave spaces for open dialogue, for questions to be asked and answered, for trust to be built and for reciprocal vulnerability.

“
The real change I have observed since I've been working on statelessness since 2010, but particularly in this conference, is the voice of people with lived experience being amplified, the opportunity provided and equal dignity and respect given. In the past there was willingness but there was no platform. So I think coming here and then seeing that voice being given, and people of lived experience being considered as equal partners, I think this is a big change and is going to change more.”

Parsu Sharma-Luital

Solidarity can be an immense source of strength and courage, amounting to an act of collective self-care that helps to reinvigorate the belief that change can be achieved. Solidarity in the form of empathy in action also creates a sense of community among people who constantly face othering and the denial of their belonging and place in the world. In that sense, without true solidarity, we won't achieve sustainable change.

“
The world is busy dividing people. We don't do that here, we are all the same. I don't feel alone in this statelessness movement... we are all together and that is strength.”

Conference participant



Solidarity is an act of resistance against the systemic violence that creates and perpetuates statelessness, and is essential if we are to achieve meaningful change. By coming together and showing we care for each other and will stand by each other, we send a powerful message to actors who 'win' by isolating us.

“
I'm here today, not just as a former stateless person, but also as a symbol of resistance of human rights and hope and solidarity for all stateless individuals who are still fighting for their rights. My message is quite simple, freedom is to be fought for, we must not ask for their sympathy and mercy. I believe one must rise and resist. We have an obligation to help our fellow human beings in their struggle, and let us work together to ensure that no human should fall into statelessness. Together we must fight.”

Wong Kueng Hui

We must ensure wellbeing and safety, and address risks faced by stateless activists. Many stateless activists cannot openly engage in work to address statelessness because of safety concerns. Ensuring safety and addressing the risks they face is key to strengthening solidarity and creating a more effective, resilient and sustainable field. We must also promote wellbeing and address the isolation that is often felt in the field.

Artistic and cultural expressions are vital tools for building solidarity. The many facets of the Think of Others arts and culture programme, created spaces to build solidarity through encountering the experiences and feelings of other human beings, as fellow humans. Poetry, theatre, photography, film, art and installations are all invaluable vehicles through which we can build empathy and solidarity, and as a field, we can challenge ourselves to use these methods more effectively.



Expressions of solidarity between affected communities are powerful and profound, as exemplified at the conference by the solidarity extended by Rohingya to Palestinians. More needs to be done to cultivate such solidarity by strengthening connections between groups and raising awareness of the challenges they face. Spaces such as the Global Movement Against Statelessness, for communities from all over the world to express their solidarity with each other can strengthen the overall solidarity of the statelessness field.

We need to build solidarity with others and we need their solidarity. The statelessness field is small and under-resourced, even though the statelessness challenge is significant. Further, the statelessness field can feel isolated, even though the statelessness issue intersects with so many other global challenges. As a field and movement, we need to extend our solidarity to those pursuing justice and rights on intersecting issues. We also need the solidarity of funders, UN agencies and other key allies.

“

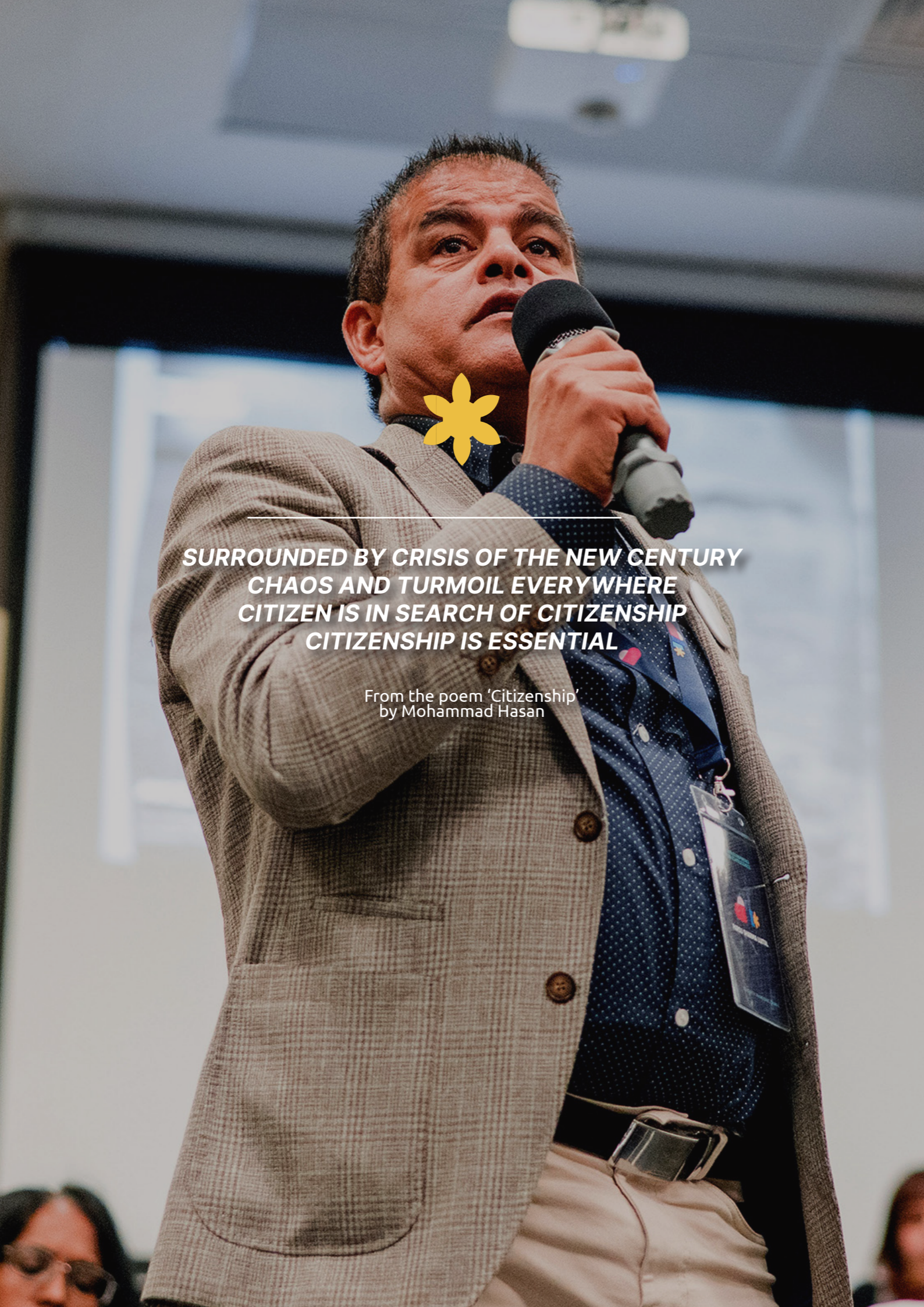
Solidarity is to be willing to be vulnerable without being in a position of defensiveness. Coming from a place of humility and willingness to listen. Knowing that I don't know everything, but I know something.”

Hafsar Tameesuddin

“

The three themes of the conference definitely align with the vision and the mission of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, which is forging a united collective coalition to work towards ending statelessness and upholding the rights of stateless people... We need collaborative action to achieve progress. Only by centring stateless individuals and change makers, can we actually have progress and achieve eradication of statelessness.”

Marin Roman



**SURROUNDED BY CRISIS OF THE NEW CENTURY
CHAOS AND TURMOIL EVERYWHERE
CITIZEN IS IN SEARCH OF CITIZENSHIP
CITIZENSHIP IS ESSENTIAL**

From the poem 'Citizenship'
by Mohammad Hasan

CHANGE

We ultimately focused on how we can achieve change in the field of statelessness. We created space for discussions around how our field has historically viewed change, whose 'vision' of change has been prioritised and pursued. Conversations were framed around questions such as: How can we ensure that the change we pursue is what stateless people want and is meaningful and sustainable? What change have we achieved and can be celebrated? How can we be more accountable to stateless communities? We also considered techniques and strategies for change, barriers to change and how to build and sustain campaigns. Further, we explored how we can pursue change in solidarity, document and build knowledge around meaningful and sustainable change, and what role the arts can play in imagining and pursuing the change we seek. In summary, here are the key insights gathered from the dialogues on 'change':

Impacted people should be centred in the change agenda. Centring impacted people in initiatives to create change is not just an ethical consideration but a strategic one. When affected people are at the forefront of developing and implementing advocacy strategies, they are more likely to identify the change their communities want, and find successful ways to achieve it. Allies must create space, offer protection and support through accompaniment, capacity development and journeying together with stateless communities.

Change work must be adequately resourced, and the donor community needs to step up to meet this challenge. We need to change our attitude to resourcing from a 'scarcity' mindset, to a 'growth' mindset and tell donors to "fund us like you want us to win", with the required resourcing, flexibility and other support. The Global Statelessness Fund, announced at the conference, which will provide unrestricted funding and accompaniment support to stateless-led groups, has potential to have a significant impact on the field.

"We have managed to disrupt systems of power to the extent where previously, those engaged in the work (of addressing statelessness) were mainly unaffected individuals in positions of power. Today, we see participation from affected individuals, some of whom have started their own organisations like United Stateless, Statefree and Apartheid Network, independent of us. We're pleased with this progress."

Liesl Muller

"Today, we had a session with donors where they came forward to (openly) say they are supporting (statelessness) work. Before, it wasn't like that where those working on the issue had to hide statelessness under something else to secure funding."

Felix Lore

Change isn't necessarily 'accomplished' with securing a legal status. The change that stateless communities seek, ultimately relates to the space to lead dignified lives, as equal persons before the law and in the eyes of society. Citizenship status alone does not secure this, particularly when considering the cumulative impact of intergenerational disadvantage and discrimination. Conceptualising change as "dignified citizenship", as has been done by the newly formed Asia-Pacific coalition, is a useful and important framework to consider.

"Statelessness often takes a long time to cure. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that acquiring a nationality doesn't mark the end of the story. Decades or generations of discrimination cannot be undone with a simple administrative act."

Radha Govil



One size does not fit all to create change. Each national context and sometimes each statelessness problem within the same national context requires a distinct approach and strategy to address the problem. National and local groups need to have a more prominent role in determining the right approach to addressing statelessness in their respective contexts because ultimately change happens at the national level.

Creative, innovative, and multidisciplinary approaches must be used to pursue change. We need to think beyond conventional forms of advocacy and learn from other social movements. In particular, we need to build the skills and strategies and seek collaborations to more effectively use the arts, storytelling and social media as key advocacy tools for change. Further, building solidarity with other social justice movements and pursuing intersectional approaches to achieve change, is crucial.

The importance of reflexivity. It is important for us to constantly reflect on our work, the change we are helping to create, the ways in which we are helping achieve it, and to share these reflections and learnings. Creating the space for such sharing builds knowledge and solidarity as essential ingredients to change.

It is crucial to mentor, nurture, and support young and emerging leaders and activists. We need to invest in identifying and developing the skills, connections and capacities of the new generation of leaders and activists who will drive the change agenda. Spaces such as the Global Movement Against Statelessness will play an essential role in this regard.

“

The initial change must begin from the ground up, which will impact the work we do as we go on. Personally, as someone who works with children, I think the way to change lies in working with children. Children represent the future generations, who will shape the future. Instilling values of humanity, ethics, compassion and love in them, and having them grow up with principles, will have a profound impact on what the future holds.”

Tahera Hasan

We should constantly revisit the existing international framework related to statelessness, and ask how it can be improved so that it can respond to the demand for equal rights, dignity and justice. Strengthening the implementation of the right to nationality through enhancing awareness of related international law norms and principles, is essential. The creation of a new UN Special Procedure on the Right to Nationality and Statelessness may be an important step in this regard. Further, we need to continue to promote stronger, human rights based interpretations and applications of the UN Statelessness Conventions. The ambiguity surrounding legal identity and statelessness should be addressed, in accordance with key international legal norms including the right to nationality, equality before the law and freedom from discrimination.



CHRONICLING AND DOCUMENTING THE CONFERENCE

We invited several participants to document and chronicle the conference from their perspective, and to produce various reflective and creative outputs inspired by what they experienced and observed. We are delighted to share several of these outputs with you!

ZAHRA MARWAN, an artist and storyteller, created the booklet [“Formal Presence of a Stateless Person”](#), combining her whimsical artwork with the words of conference participants and her own reflections.

JOSHUA CASTELLINO, an academic and NGO practitioner, wrote the reflection [“Setting new standards? The 2024 World Conference on Statelessness”](#).

Videos of some theatre performances at the conference, created by the Statelessness Action Group under the dramaturgy and direction of **RUWANTHIE DE CHICKERA**, can be found here:

[“My warrior mother and the Prime Minister”](#), written by Neha Gurung and Ruwanthie de Chickera

[“Grief unanswered”](#), written by Areej Al Shammiry and Shahd Oannam.

Conference in the media

[Subin Mulmi interview for ABC Radio National](#)

[Volker Turk statement at the 2024 World Conference on Statelessness, OHCHR](#)

[Presidenta de Directorio del SJM participa en Conferencia Mundial de Apatridia e Inclusión](#)

[Yusra Herzi, Global Gathering on Statelessness Proves Eye Opening](#)

DIWAKAR CHETTRI, a cartoonist and teacher, created a [series of cartoons](#) depicting different conference scenes, themes and characters. How many participants can you identify?

Activist and advocate **BINA RAMANAND**, shared the [“Reflective Piece on the 2024 World Conference on Statelessness”](#).

Videographer and documentary film maker **ELROI YEE** and his group **UNTITLED KOMPENI** produced three videos capturing different elements of the conference:

[2024 World Conference on Statelessness Highlights](#)

[2024 World Conference on Statelessness Highlighting the Work of Partners in Malaysia](#)

[Yasah Musa at the 2024 World Conference on Statelessness](#)

Poet and activist **MAYYU ALI** wrote the poem [“Statelessness: a Burden Imposed”](#), inspired by the conference.

SAM GOH and his group **WAY STUDIOS** photographically documented the conference, creating the following archive:

[Opening day](#)
[DAY 1 Knowledge](#)
[DAY 2 Solidarity](#)
[DAY 3 Change](#)

As we receive more outputs, we will post them on the [conference webpage](#), where we will maintain a repository of conference related (and inspired) materials.



Front and back cover artwork by Diwakar Chettri