

Nationality For All 2024 Annual Report



Message from the Executive Director

As we look ahead to 2025, I am deeply proud of the accomplishments and strides we made in 2024. It was a year of remarkable external-facing achievements, marked by our role in the second World Conference on Statelessness, the launch of the Global Movement Against Statelessness, Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition - Asia Pacific (SDCC-AP) and the second edition of the Statelessness Encyclopedia Asia Pacific (SEAP) report and website, and our continued commitment to supporting our partners across the Asia Pacific region. The momentum we have built will serve as a foundation as we further our work in the coming year.

In 2025, our focus will be to build on these successes by strengthening the regional civil society movement in the Asia Pacific. We are excited to continue our close collaboration with the SDCC-AP, and as NFA prepares to separate from SDCC at the end of the year, we look forward to supporting SDCC-AP in consolidating its position as a powerful force for change. This transition will be a pivotal moment in our journey and one that will require strategic focus and deep reflection.

Additionally, we are preparing to launch a first-of-its-kind resource on Digital Identity and Statelessness in the Asia Pacific as the third edition of the SEAP Report. We hope this will serve as a robust advocacy tool to address the growing challenges posed by digital exclusion for stateless communities. This is just one of the many areas where we will continue to collaborate closely with the Global Movement Against Statelessness, the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, and the Global Statelessness Fund to shape meaningful change.

As we continue to expand and strengthen our relationships with our partners, we will also focus on providing more targeted and nuanced support to them, empowering them to increase their impact. However, while we have made great strides externally, we recognize that 2024 was also a year for internal reflection. Having completed four years as an organization, NFA is entering a crucial phase of growth where we need to assess our impact, strengthen our internal priorities, and transition from a startup into a medium-sized non-profit.

The coming year will be one of reflection, adaptation, and scaling up. We are committed to fostering a more effective, sustainable, and impactful organization, ensuring that NFA remains a cornerstone in the global fight against statelessness.

I look forward to this new chapter and to the continued collaboration, innovation, and dedication that will propel us forward in 2025 and beyond.

SUBIN MULMI

Executive Director,
Nationality For All

Who We Are?

Nationality for All (NFA) is a regional non-profit organization dedicated to addressing statelessness in the Asia-Pacific region. Emerging from the Statelessness Network Asia Pacific (SNAP), NFA transitioned in October 2020 from a project hosted by the Malaysian NGO Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas (DHRRA) Malaysia to an independent organization registered in Australia. Our mission is to promote the rights of all people affected by statelessness in the Asia-Pacific region—including the right to a nationality—through strategic and long-term partnerships.

NFA operates on a bottom-up approach, emphasizing the empowerment of individuals with lived experiences of statelessness. We believe that sustainable solutions are achieved when affected communities lead the initiatives addressing their challenges. By fostering collaboration and trust, we aim to create inclusive spaces where the voices of stateless persons are amplified and their leadership is supported.

Our Team

NFA's team comprises dedicated professionals committed to the cause of eradicating statelessness. Our staff includes individuals with diverse backgrounds and expertise, working collaboratively to advance our mission.



Subin Mulmi
Executive Director



Shuchi Purohit
Research & Advocacy Coordinator



Sudir Silwal
Finance & Admin Coordinator



Melinda Anne Sharlini
Programme Coordinator



Jenna Biedscheid
Coalition Coordinator

Our Board

NFA's Board of Directors provides strategic guidance and oversight, ensuring the organization remains aligned with its mission and values. The Board comprises individuals with extensive experience in human rights, legal advocacy, and organizational leadership.



Christoph Sperfeldt



Mitra Khakbaz



Vivienne Chew

Key Highlights & Achievements of 2024

World Conference on Statelessness 2024

A key achievement for NFA in 2024 was the successful co-organization of the second World Conference on Statelessness, held from February 26 to 29 at Taylor's University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The conference brought together over 450 participants from more than 50 countries, with a significant increase in the representation of individuals with lived experience of statelessness. The event highlighted the importance of knowledge-sharing, solidarity, and change, featuring critical initiatives. This landmark conference underscored NFA's continued commitment to advocacy, collaboration, and raising awareness on statelessness across the region.

Launch of SDCC-AP

In 2025, the Steering Committee for the Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition - Asia Pacific (SDCC-AP) was formed, with representation from all five sub-regions and three impacted persons. SDCC-AP, officially launched in February 2024, has focused on strengthening its internal operations, including adopting a Constitution and safeguarding policy. The coalition also finalized its 2025-2027 Strategic Plan during a workshop in Nepal, outlining a collaborative approach to addressing statelessness.



SDCC members at the launch of the coalition in Kuala Lumpur in February 2024

Announcement and launch of the Global Statelessness Fund

In 2024, the launch of the Global Statelessness Fund marked a significant milestone in the global fight against statelessness. This new initiative aims to provide vital resources and support to stateless-led organizations worldwide, empowering them to advocate for the rights and dignity of stateless individuals. NFA played a crucial role as one of the members of the Steering Group of the Fund, contributing its expertise and advocacy efforts to ensure the fund effectively addresses the needs of stateless communities and strengthens global efforts to combat statelessness.

Launch of SEAP II

The second edition of the Statelessness Encyclopedia of the Asia Pacific (SEAP) was published in February 2024, with updates and expansions to the report's content. Launched at the World Conference on Statelessness, the report gained global visibility, and NFA showcased it through a booth that facilitated direct engagement with participants. To further accessibility, NFA developed an interactive website that houses SEAP editions, provides country-specific comparisons, and includes key resources such as Treaty Body Submissions and a list of regional stakeholders.

Malaysian amendment

In October 2024, Malaysia's Parliament passed the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2024, granting Malaysian mothers the equal right to confer automatic citizenship on their overseas-born children, aligning with the rights previously held by Malaysian fathers. Family Frontiers, a Malaysian civil society organization, has been at the forefront of advocating for the rights of these children. In supporting Family Frontiers' efforts, Nationality For All (NFA) provided assistance to strengthen their operations and collaborated with them on the civil society joint submission for Malaysia's CEDAW and CRC reviews.



Impacted Malaysian mothers at the Kuala Lumpur High Court during one of FF's litigation hearings

Strengthening Impacted Persons-led Organizations through Meaningful Partnership

NFA partners with a diverse group of stateless and impacted persons-led organizations across the Asia Pacific region to support their work in advocating for the rights of stateless and citizenship-affected communities. These partnerships, including those with the Council of Minorities (COM) in Bangladesh, the Citizenship Affected People's Network (CAPN) in Nepal, and Family Frontiers (FF) in Malaysia, are foundational to NFA's mission of advancing statelessness advocacy and strengthening impacted persons-led organizations. Through tailored support and capacity-building initiatives, NFA works alongside these organisations to strengthen their strategic capabilities, foster solidarity, and empower impacted communities. This collaborative approach, alongside peer-learning and mentorship opportunities, helps partners build resilience, overcome challenges, and pursue effective advocacy, with a shared vision of transforming the landscape of statelessness in the region.

Our Partners



Council of Minorities (CoM)

Based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, COM is led by those with lived experience of exclusion and discrimination. It serves as a platform, movement and community for the Urdu-speaking minority in Bangladesh. Through research, advocacy, capacity building and paralegal support, COM not only advocates for the rights of minorities in Bangladesh but also pursues avenues for their community to access justice, economic opportunities and a sense of belonging.



Citizenship Affected People's Network (CAPN)

CAPN is a community-rooted organisation dedicated to advocating for gender-equal nationality laws and the rights of stateless people in Nepal. CAPN's vision is to reform gender-discriminatory citizenship laws, practices and narratives in Nepal through legal and political advocacy, social mobilisation and activism. CAPN also serves to connect and empower stateless people in Nepal, to challenge negative attitudes and prejudices towards them, and to facilitate the flourishing of their true human potential. Their initiatives are led by affected individuals and are supported by allies.



Family Frontiers (FF)

FF is a community-rooted organisation in Malaysia that works on advancing, promoting and strengthening the family unit so that no family is left behind. It mobilises action for the Malaysian Campaign for Equal Citizenship, whose advocacy and litigation resulted in the 2024 Constitutional Amendment that recognised Malaysian women's equal right to confer automatic citizenship on children born overseas. FF employs a multi-pronged advocacy strategy. At the heart of its strategy, is working with impacted community members to strengthen their organisation and capacities to champion their cause,

Accompaniment Support to Partners

NFA's accompaniment and bilateral support to partners is a unique approach that offers tailored support to partner organisations based on their specific stages of the campaign and organisational needs. This approach is rooted in a previous successful experience in providing time-bound institution incubation support to CAPN.

NFA identified the need for continued tailored support during discussions with all three partners, recognising that each organisation has unique challenges and requirements. This approach allows NFA to provide targeted assistance that addresses the specific needs of each partner.

Here's how we supported our partner organisations in 2024:

CAPN

- NFA provided hands-on support towards a project implementation plan, project financial proposals and annual budgets. CAPN staff were provided ongoing mentorship and guidance throughout the process of setting up their organisation.
- Additionally, capacity-building and advocacy support were provided through an advocacy planning workshop that resulted in a comprehensive advocacy roadmap.
- NFA led the drafting of a civil society joint submission on the status of nationality rights and statelessness in Nepal for the country's CEDAW review in 2025.
- These areas of support played a significant role in strengthening CAPN's foundations and capacities both internally and externally.

Strategic Planning Workshop with the CAPN team

In 2024, NFA organized a two-day Strategic Planning Workshop for CAPN. The workshop brought together CAPN members to deepen their understanding of human rights advocacy, with NFA facilitating a focused session on the strategic use of advocacy tools to influence policy and public awareness. A key outcome of the workshop was the development of a comprehensive advocacy strategy tailored to CAPN's mission and priorities. The workshop also guided participants through the formulation of CAPN's annual work plan, aligning objectives with actionable steps and timelines. This workshop, along with NFA's support in CAPN's financial and budget planning, marked a critical step in building CAPN's organizational capacity and empowering stateless and citizenship-affected communities to lead the movement for change.



COM

- The primary support provided to COM was with their social media and website-related work. NFA did a comprehensive review of COM’s social media and website, aimed at improving their online visibility and outreach. As part of this, NFA conducted a capacity-building session on social media advocacy.
- NFA also initially provided COM with strategic planning support, which was later a collaborative effort between NFA and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion.

FF

- FF was provided support with drafting several crucial organisational policies —safeguarding policy, child protection policy and code of conduct—which was an urgent need for the organisation.
- NFA provided brief advice towards enhancing FF’s operational efficiency, which FF expressed was useful for optimising their financial processes. This was accompanied by support to implement a timesheet and reporting system, contributing to FF’s overall organisational efficiency.
- NFA also supported FF with their UN advocacy efforts by collaborating on the draft of the civil society joint submission for Malaysia’s CEDAW and CRC review led, alongside other global and regional organisations.

In addition to the bilateral meetings that NFA held with ISI as part of the joint partnership project, NFA also conducted separate bilateral meetings every month to discuss the bilateral support offered to them.





Partners at the in-person partnership retreat in September 2024

Peer-learning and Leadership Support Project

Having realised that we needed to provide more meaningful support to, and journey with, impacted persons-led organisations in the region, NFA and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI) collaborated to run an 8-month initiative, funded by the Oak Foundation, to incubate a peer-to-peer statelessness leadership platform to support each partner organisation's journey towards transforming into more strategic, sustainable, resilient and effective entities.

NFA and ISI deeply reflected on the journey with the partners, what worked and did not work, the effectiveness of our support, our positionality and how we can best show up for and journey with our partners. These reflections are shared in the form of a learnings report that can be found [here](#). We hope this gives you an idea of our experiment and lessons learnt, and that it might be, in some shape or form, useful for your own journey.

Below, you can find a brief description of project objectives and how we contributed towards achieving them:

1) Fostering greater solidarity and trust between the groups through online group kick-off and wrap-up meetings and an in-person partnership retreat

The in-person retreat, in mid-September 2024 in Kuala Lumpur, was the highlight of the partnership project. The retreat sessions were built around themes that had emerged as important throughout the partnership project such as leadership, organisation strategies and wellbeing. We also deliberately carved out unstructured space for participants to reflect, share and connect, AND fun relationship-building activities such as welcome dinner, journaling and a batik painting session in the city. Getting together in one space invigorated participants to learn from and with each other through peer-learning sessions.

NFA played a crucial role in leading the planning and implementation of the in-person retreat in Kuala Lumpur. Shouldering the logistical responsibilities, NFA ensured that the four-day retreat was a meaningful and enriching experience for all participants. The retreat's success can be largely attributed to NFA's meticulous planning and dedication to providing a seamless experience for all attendees, allowing them to fully immerse themselves in the retreat's activities and discussions.

2) Supporting capacities and strategic development

through strategy development retreats for each partner organisation in their respective home countries, in-person and virtual skills development workshops and monthly bilateral meetings.

The monthly bilateral meetings with partners were an incredibly meaningful tool to foster stronger relationships with the partners and understand them and their work better. Melinda, NFA's programme coordinator, facilitated the monthly bilateral meetings alongside ISI's programme coordinator. Together, they organised the meetings flexibly and openly, and the space fostered knowledge sharing, allowing us to stay updated on the partners' national contexts and development, discuss any upcoming project activities and beyond everything, creating a space to share victories, challenges and their thoughts.

As part of capacity-building efforts, four (4) workshops were conducted. During the in-person retreat in Kuala Lumpur, participants engaged in workshops on wellbeing and fundraising, focusing on self-care practices and effective fundraising strategies. Additionally, two online sessions were held on UN advocacy and research methodologies, providing guidance on engaging with UN mechanisms and equipping participants with research skills to support their advocacy work.

To provide strategic development support and get to know each of the organisations and their people better, we organised in-country visits to where they were based—Bangladesh, Malaysia and Nepal. These visits were aimed at facilitating a space for the organisations to reflect on how to be more strategic, what to be mindful of, and the necessary building blocks to create relevant and useful strategies. The in-country visits allowed us to better understand the specific contexts and challenges faced by each organisation, and support their strategic development effectively.



COM strategic planning scoping visit in Dhaka, Bangladesh



FF strategic planning meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



CAPN strategic planning meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal

3) Journeying with leaders

through one-on-one mentorship for current and emerging leaders of partner organisations.

At the heart of this project was the concept of "journeying with" the leaders of partner organisations. This entailed walking with them, learning from them, and sharing experiences. One-on-one mentorship sessions were conducted with both current and emerging leaders of these organisations, with the support provided by Amal from the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion and Subin from NFA respectively. The mentorship provided leaders with a safe and open space for discussions on leadership, organisational development, self-care, and personal aspirations. These sessions were highly valued by participants and contributed to their growth, introspection, and overall learning.

4) Learning from each other

through peer-learning sessions, monthly bilateral meetings and the compilation of a learnings report consolidating reflections of journeying with the partner organisations for 8 months.

Ultimately, the project was about learning from each other. Participants found that the most important element of the project was the peer learning element where they got to learn from each other, both virtually and in-person. These were informal spaces that encouraged open and candid conversations on selected topics such as leadership, paralegal work, social media advocacy, etc. Participants valued these sessions as they provided a platform to share their experiences, challenges, and successes, and to learn from each other's perspectives and approaches. The peer learning sessions fostered a sense of community, solidarity, and mutual support among the participants, and contributed to their professional and personal growth.

A reflection that we have had through the partnership-building effort is that NFA's regional proximity to partners has proven to be a significant asset. Being based in the region has fostered closer collaboration, enabling NFA to cultivate deeper relationships and trust with partners. This has facilitated open communication and a nuanced understanding of partner needs, leading to more responsive and relevant support. This proximity has allowed NFA to identify emerging needs in real-time and provide timely, on-the-ground support.



Batik painting session at the in-person partners' retreat in September 2024

Creating a Knowledge Hub on Statelessness in the Asia Pacific

NFA's Knowledge Building Program aims to bridge the significant gap in research on statelessness in the Asia Pacific region, which is home to the largest stateless population in the world. Through comprehensive research, NFA seeks to raise awareness about the scale, causes, and impacts of statelessness in the region. Central to this initiative is the creation of the Statelessness Encyclopedia of the Asia Pacific (SEAP), a pioneering resource that maps out the laws, policies, populations, and causes of statelessness across the region. Since its inception in 2020, SEAP has grown into a critical tool for advocacy and knowledge dissemination.

The second edition, launched in early 2024, was strategically unveiled at the World Conference on Statelessness, marking a significant milestone in raising awareness. As NFA embarks on the third edition of SEAP, the research team is venturing into new areas, including the impact of Digital ID systems on stateless populations, further expanding the scope of this vital resource. Despite challenges related to funding and a rapidly changing landscape, NFA remains committed to completing the final editions of SEAP and making the knowledge accessible to all stakeholders working to address statelessness in the Asia Pacific region.

SEAP Background & The First Edition

SEAP originated from an internal research project undertaken by NFA in the process of its early organizational development and strategic planning in 2020. It was decided that the breadth of information gathered through this process should be made public and accessible. The inspiration behind creating a regional encyclopaedia which assesses the law and policies related to statelessness came from the Statelessness Index developed by the European Network on Statelessness (ENS). The first edition of SEAP was published in May 2023 and was the first publication of its kind in the region. SEAP both filled a major gap in research on statelessness in the region and created a baseline structure for future updates and additions to the research.



SEAP II: Second Edition

The second edition of SEAP was drafted in the final months of 2023 and published in February 2024. In this edition, the information in the report was updated and expanded upon.

Strategically coinciding with the World Conference on Statelessness, the published report was publicly launched for the first time to a large, global audience. The Launch Event at the World Conference was pivotal to building awareness of SEAP as a comprehensive resource on statelessness in the region. Throughout the event, NFA hosted a booth which housed copies to disseminate to conference participants and provided participants an opportunity to both engage with the reports content and ask questions to the research team.

The SEAP website aligned the report with a major theme coming from the conference, which was the need to ensure that information on statelessness is accessible to all. While NFA recognized this success, it also reflected on the fact that with such a wide range of languages spoken in the Asia Pacific region, there is still a long way to go to ensure the information in the report is truly accessible to everyone in the region.

To that end, NFA developed an accessible website, which not only stores all editions of SEAP, but divides the research into separate sub-regions and allows for the user to compare the laws, population, and causes of statelessness of different countries. Building upon its knowledge base, the SEAP website also stores every Treaty Body Submission that NFA has undertaken with other stakeholders, as well as provides a list of stakeholders that work on the issue related to statelessness in the Asia Pacific region.

SEAP III: Third Edition

In the third edition of SEAP, the NFA research team has ventured into uncharted waters to include the emerging issue of Digital ID and inclusion, where the team aims to analyse the impact of CRVS and digital ID systems on 48 countries in the Asia Pacific. Through engagement with the Digital ID Coalition throughout 2024, the Research Advocacy Coordinator saw that there is an urgent need to produce a resource which highlights the impact of Digital ID systems on stateless persons in the Asia Pacific region. This innovative thematic addition to the report has brought unintended outcomes to NFA's work, including building awareness among adjacent fields, such as that of digital rights, of the issue of statelessness.

The novelty of this thematic expansion has also brought challenges, including the fact that there is no regional resource that analyses the impact of digital ID on stateless populations. With little secondary research to gain information from, the research team has employed collaborations with national organizations and organizations working on digital rights to try to fill the gaps in available information on the context felt on the ground. To that end, NFA has strengthened previous relationships with stakeholders and built new ones, where academics, law firms, and digital ID organisations have contributed to the edition, making it more multi-disciplinary. The management of stakeholders for this Edition is also being undertaken more extensively by mapping the security needs of our stakeholders and gauging their capacity and interest to review country factsheets of this Edition.

Currently, the research team is in the process of finalizing 2 sub-regions of the third edition: South Asia and the Pacific. The process of dissemination has been finalised, where the new Digital ID sections will be added to the website and the original sections are planned to be updated by the research team. The research team is actively fundraising to be able to do a more comprehensive website overhaul, where citations will be added and the Digital ID section will have their own pages. By doing this, we hope the website will become more inclusive and the information and sources more accessible. A major setback that the research team has been facing in the production of the third edition is the rapidly changing fundraising landscape and unanticipated funding cuts. As a result of the funding challenge, the report's timeline has been continually pushed back. However, the team is dedicated to ensuring the timely completion of the final three sub-regions (Southeast Asia, East Asia and Central Asia), despite funding uncertainties affecting whether they will be formally published.

SEAP

STATELESSNESS ENCYCLOPEDIA ASIA PACIFIC

(DETAILED VERSION)



NATIONALITY FOR ALL

Advancing the right to a nationality in the Asia-Pacific region

Comprehensive Mapping of
Statelessness in the **Asia Pacific**

Coordinating Global and Regional Coalition on Statelessness

In 2024, Nationality For All (NFA) played a pivotal role in the formation and strengthening of regional and global coalitions working to address statelessness.

- NFA was instrumental in the establishment of the **Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition - Asia Pacific (SDCC-AP)**, a regional coalition of civil society organizations and activists. The coalition, officially launched in February 2024, focuses on creating context-sensitive solutions to statelessness in the Asia Pacific. NFA functions as the Secretariat of the SDCC-AP, supporting its operational, strategic, and advocacy efforts, including facilitating workshops and adopting internal policies such as its Constitution and safeguarding framework.
- On the global stage, NFA's involvement in the **Global Movement Against Statelessness (GMAS)** has expanded, with NFA being appointed to the GMAS Secretariat in July 2024. This new role strengthens NFA's capacity to contribute to global advocacy and decision-making processes. NFA's active participation in high-level events and coalitions reflects its continued commitment to eradicating statelessness and ensuring dignified citizenship for all.

Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition, Asia Pacific (SDCC-AP)

Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition - Asia Pacific (SDCC-AP) is a regional coalition of civil society organizations and activists working to address statelessness in Asia-Pacific. The Coalition was officially launched on February 26, 2024, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during the Second World Conference on Statelessness after over two years of extensive stakeholder consultations, and the expression of commitment by organizations, activists, and experts dedicated to the cause of addressing statelessness in the Asia Pacific. NFA, as the founder of the Coalition, functions as the Secretariat of the SDCC-AP.

The Steering Committee was formed in January 2025. The seven member committee has three impacted persons with representation from all the five sub-regions.

Constitution Adoption and Safeguarding Policy

In its first year of operation, SDCC-AP has been focusing on strengthening its internal operations, which have included adopting a Constitution as well as a safeguarding policy for the Coalition. The Constitution by a consultative process with the Steering Committee members and was adopted by a voting process undertaken by all Founding Members.

Strategic Planning Workshop in Nepal

The Strategic Planning Workshop in Nepal was facilitated by NFA as the Secretariat in 2024, to finalise a three-year strategy for the coalition. The SDCC-AP Strategic Plan 2025-2027 lays out a comprehensive and action-driven approach to tackling statelessness in the Asia Pacific region. Through collaboration, advocacy, and capacity building, SDCC-AP aims to create a more inclusive and just society where every person has the right to nationality and dignity. The coalition invites stakeholders, donors, and partners to join these efforts to bring about meaningful and lasting change.

Formation of the Advisory Committee

To strengthen SDCC-AP's decision-making and for guidance, the Founding Members decided that there was a requirement to form an Advisory Committee. This process was undertaken through a nomination process, where 9 Founding Members applied for the position. The Steering Committee decided to have all 9 members as the Advisory Committee, which has been functional since September 2024.

Planned Activities for 2025

In 2025, the SDCC-AP plans to focus on five key approaches: peer learning and solidarity building, capacity strengthening, facilitating connections between members, mainstreaming statelessness, supporting member advocacy, and organizational development. In terms of organisational development, SDCC is working on strengthening institutional internal policies such as exploring registration of the regional coalition, and the formation of an Impacted Persons Advisory Group.



SDCC's Planned Activities

Peer Learning and Solidarity Building

SDCC will host an in-person meeting for Founding Members in 2025, emphasizing team building, knowledge sharing, and participation of individuals with lived experiences. Virtual meetings will also be regularly held to strengthen member relationships.

Capacity Strengthening

SDCC will focus on building the internal capacities of members and individuals with lived experience through initiatives like the Lived-Experience Fellowship. The Fellowship will collaborate with national organizations for placements, offering training and mentorship. SDCC will also host quarterly webinars on various topics related to statelessness and dignified citizenship.

Facilitating Member Connections

SDCC will host an in-person meeting for Founding Members in 2025, emphasizing team building, knowledge sharing, and participation of individuals with lived experiences. Virtual meetings will also be regularly held to strengthen member relationships.

Mainstreaming Statelessness in the Asia Pacific

SDCC will participate in regional and global forums to raise awareness of statelessness as a key human rights issue.

Supporting Member Advocacy

SDCC will support members' advocacy efforts through joint statements and submissions to UN mechanisms in collaboration with member organizations to amplify their advocacy efforts.



Global Movement Against Statelessness

Emerging from reflections during the 2019 Conference on how powerful collective action can be, the concept of a Global Movement on Statelessness was envisaged in March 2020 as the fruit of effective collaborations and partnerships inspired by a collective recognition that ‘we are stronger together.’ Key observations that led to this included power being hoarded in spaces where the voices of people with lived experience were absent or only included tokenistically, top-down approaches in the field which detriment trust, inclusion and solidarity, as well as the transformative potential of joint advocacy campaigns and collective engagement. Incubated by the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI), an Interim Core Group (ICG) was constituted in 2020 to pursue the development of the Movement.

Since 2020, GMAS has undergone multiple changes to its structure in pursuit of a structure that best coordinates the necessary actions of launching a Movement at a global scale.

NFA’s new role in GMAS

As the Movement grows, there is an increasing need for capacity within the Secretariat to support its evolving processes. Beginning in July 2024, NFA has been appointed to serve on the Secretariat of the Global Movement Against Statelessness (GMAS) to boost capacity as well as broaden the representation of the Secretariat team. NFA’s role in the Secretariat is to support Cluster 1 and the Advisory Group as well as support general Secretariat operations, such as planning in-person retreats, where capacity allows.

The GMAS In-person retreat in December 2024

In December 2024, the Interim Core Group (ICG), Mentors, and Secretariat met in person in Johannesburg, South Africa. While two members were unable to attend in person, their participation was facilitated by the Secretariat through a hybrid model for each session, where possible. This 4-day Retreat included sessions on the Movement’s values, priorities for risk & safety, team building, future strategy and objectives, activities for 2025, finances and fundraising, as well as community engagement. This was the first time the newly constituted ICG met in person, allowing the team to get to know each other on a more personal level and enhance the team’s ability to effectively work together. The retreat also offered an opportunity for consensus building on where the Movement should go in 2025. From the retreat, the Secretariat collated an updated list of objectives and priorities for each individual ICG role and cluster, which 2025 activity plans can be built from.



Engaging with Human Rights Treaty Bodies on Statelessness

NFA has been deeply engaged in international human rights mechanisms, actively contributing to key review processes such as the Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Through co-drafting submissions, facilitating direct engagement with committee members, and supporting national partners like Family Frontiers in Malaysia, NFA has played a pivotal role in advocating for the rights of stateless women and children. This includes participating in the 88th CEDAW session for Malaysia's review in May 2024 and co-submitting a joint submission for Malaysia's CRC review in October 2024. Additionally, NFA has contributed to six Universal Periodic Review (UPR) submissions across the Asia Pacific region, ensuring that the lived experiences of stateless individuals are highlighted and advocating for greater accountability from governments on nationality rights and gender equality. Through these efforts, NFA continues to amplify the voices of marginalized communities and work towards securing stronger protections for stateless women and children at the international level.

CEDAW Submissions and Engagement with CRC and CEDAW Committee Members

NFA was closely invested and contributed significantly to Malaysia's review by the Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Starting with the co-drafting of a joint global civil society submission alongside other regional and global organisations, NFA actively engaged throughout the review process.



This included direct participation in the CEDAW session for Malaysia's review at the 88th session in Geneva in May 2024. Our involvement included establishing and facilitating direct engagements with CEDAW committee members, and engagements during the formal NGO public briefing and private lunchtime briefing with the committee. Throughout this process, we supported our national partner, Family Frontiers, in their engagement in these processes. Our collective efforts culminated in securing strong concluding observations in June 2024.

In October 2024, NFA also contributed to and co-submitted a global joint submission for Malaysia's review by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

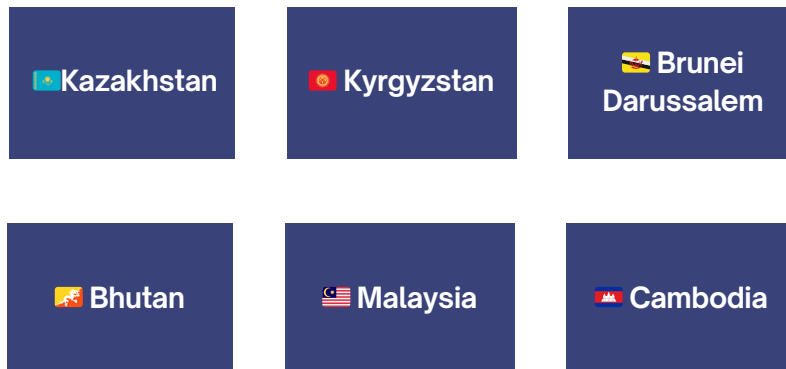
Through our participation in Malaysia's CEDAW and CRC review process, we contributed to generating increased attention to the issues of nationality rights and statelessness.

We believe that the CEDAW and CRC review processes are important opportunities to hold governments accountable for their commitments to gender equality and child rights, ensuring that the rights of women and girls are protected and promoted. As such, we believe there is a crucial need for us to ensure the lived experiences of women and girls who are stateless or denied equal nationality rights are highlighted in these processes.

UPR Submissions

NFA undertook 6 UPR submissions in the previous year. The UPR process is undertaken in partnership with stakeholders from the region, to ensure that the information submitted is most accurate.

We worked on UPR submissions for: Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan with Central Asia Network on Statelessness as well as SDCC-AP. In terms of East Asia, we took up UPR submissions on Brunei Darussalem, Bhutan, Malaysia, and Cambodia.



Click on the icons to access the full submission.



Strengthening Solidarity and Peer-Learning

2024 World Conference on Statelessness

From February 26 to 29, 2024, Nationality For All (NFA) co-organized the second World Conference on Statelessness at Taylor's University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This landmark event brought together approximately 450 in-person participants from over 50 countries, with an additional 100 joining online, making it the largest convening in the statelessness field to date.

Notably, around 30% of attendees who responded to a voluntary survey identified as persons with lived experience of statelessness, a significant increase from the 10% representation at the inaugural conference in 2019.

The conference was co-organized by the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI), Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas Malaysia (DHRRA), and Family Frontiers (FF), with support from the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM). Over three and a half days, participants engaged in six plenary sessions, 50 panel discussions, and 11 interactive workshops centered around the themes of Knowledge, Solidarity, and Change. A dedicated team of over 60 personnel ensured the well-being of attendees, providing safeguarding, first aid, language assistance, and immigration support.

The 'Think of Others' Arts and Culture program was integrated into the main conference agenda, featuring performances and artworks that highlighted the lived realities of stateless individuals. Additionally, conference booths operated by participating organizations offered publications, handicrafts, and other items, many produced by stateless-led and community-based groups.



The conference also served as a platform for launching several significant initiatives in the statelessness field:



Global Movement Against Statelessness

A civil society-led initiative aiming to unite individuals, activists, and organizations in the fight against statelessness.



StatelessHub

An online global library and database on statelessness, providing accessible resources for researchers, advocates, and affected individuals



Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition – Asia Pacific (SDCC – AP)

A regional coalition formed to address statelessness in the Asia Pacific, culminating from extensive stakeholder consultations and commitment from numerous organizations and experts.



Second Edition of the Statelessness Encyclopedia Asia Pacific (SEAP)

A comprehensive mapping of statelessness in the Asia Pacific, expanding upon the first edition with additional regional overviews and country factsheets.

- **Statelessness Asia Pacific Research Network (SAP Research Network):** A network established to foster research collaborations and knowledge sharing on statelessness in the Asia Pacific region.
- **Special Issues of Academic Journals:** Launches included a special issue of Citizenship Studies focusing on legal identity under insurgencies and unrecognized states, and a special issue of Statelessness and Citizenship Review highlighting early career scholarship on statelessness.
- **Edited Volume 'Statelessness in Asia':** Published by Cambridge University Press, this collection offers in-depth analyses of statelessness issues across the Asian continent.
- **Global Statelessness Fund:** An announcement regarding the establishment of a fund aimed at providing resources and support to stateless-led organizations worldwide.

The conference also highlighted the multifaceted nature of statelessness, recognizing it as not merely a legal issue but one deeply intertwined with social, economic, political, and personal dimensions. Participants underscored the need for interdisciplinary approaches and the importance of addressing structural discrimination and narratives of 'othering'.

Artistic expression was prominently featured, with the 'Think of Others' arts program showcasing performances and artworks that captured the lived realities of stateless individuals. These creative endeavors served as powerful tools for advocacy, fostering empathy and understanding among attendees.

In reflecting on the conference, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, stated:

"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."

The 2024 World Conference on Statelessness reaffirmed NFA's commitment to collaborative, inclusive, and innovative approaches in the fight against statelessness. The insights and initiatives emerging from the conference will undoubtedly inform and energize our efforts in the years ahead.



Peer Learning Exchange on Community Paralegals and Citizenship Rights

NFA had the privilege of co-organising the Peer Learning Exchange on Community Paralegals and Citizenship Rights, from 11 to 15 November 2024, in Kuala Lumpur, alongside Namati, the Grassroots Justice Network, and the Statelessness and Dignified Citizenship Coalition Asia Pacific (SDCC-AP).

This exchange served as a platform for participants to share their experiences and knowledge on citizenship and community paralegal approaches in the region. Together, we delved into the intricacies of designing and implementing paralegal programs. The enthusiasm of the participants and the depth of discussions fostered a sense of solidarity and learning. The exchange highlighted the immense potential of paralegal work in securing on-the-ground data and evidence, their critical role in driving systemic change, and their unique position as bridges between communities and justice systems.

Our program coordinator, Melinda, played a pivotal role in the on-the-ground coordination and implementation of the program, ensuring that all logistical arrangements were executed seamlessly, making the event a success.

NFA was also entrusted with the responsibility of leading participants on several site visits to initiatives in Malaysia working on legal empowerment. We organised five (5) site visits to the Malaysian Human Rights Commission (SUHAKAM) and other civil society organisations including Buku Jalanan Chow Kit, Yayasan Chow Kit, Parastoo Theatre, and Asylum Access Malaysia. They shared invaluable insights into addressing legal identity issues, including through paralegal initiatives, and how they drive change in Malaysia. These site visits were a valuable learning experience, showcasing the real-life impact of legal empowerment in Malaysia, inspiring participants with ideas on strengthening paralegal and legal empowerment initiatives in addressing citizenship and statelessness issues.



Mainstreaming Statelessness Regionally and Globally

Asia in Focus Seminar

In May 2024, Nationality For All's Executive Director, Subin Mulmi, delivered a presentation at the Asia in Focus Seminar organized by the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness. During this seminar, he presented key findings from the second edition of the Statelessness Encyclopedia Asia Pacific (SEAP) report. His presentation highlighted regional trends, emerging challenges, and critical gaps in the response to statelessness across the Asia Pacific. Emphasizing the importance of localized data and community-led research, Subin underscored how the SEAP report serves as a vital resource for advocates, policymakers, and researchers working to address and ultimately eradicate statelessness in the region.

Voice Project Wrap-up meeting

In July 2024, Nationality For All concluded its engagement in the Voice Project with a three-day wrap-up workshop held in Bali, alongside consortium partners Human Rights Working Group (HRWG) and Women Peace Makers (WPM). The workshop provided an important space for collective reflection on the project's outcomes and lessons learned. Together, the consortium conducted an outcome harvesting process, identifying and analyzing the changes the project contributed to in the lives of citizenship-affected communities and in broader advocacy spaces. The discussions also focused on mapping the impact created through community empowerment, policy engagement, and cross-border collaboration. As part of the forward-looking agenda, the partners explored strategic next steps to build on the progress made and ensure continued momentum for inclusive citizenship and rights-based advocacy in the region.



UNHCR NGO Consultations

SDCC-AP had four members from the Steering Committee and one Secretariat member represented at the UNHCR NGO Consultations, which took place from 12-14 June, 2024, marking the largest representation of the statelessness delegation from Asia Pacific in the UNHCR NGO Consultations till date. NFA, ENS, and UNHCR jointly organised a side-event on 'Inclusive Solutions towards Ending Statelessness' where Tahera Hasan, Steering Committee member, represented SDCC as one of the speakers.



Strategic Litigation Workshop

UNHCR and OSJI jointly published a new Guide on Strategic Litigation to Address Statelessness. The Strategic Litigation Workshop was an expert roundtable and brought together members of civil society organizations, stateless-led organizations, litigators, academics and UNHCR colleagues to discuss further elements to provide inputs into the draft guide, and discuss strategic litigation to address statelessness broadly. The guide, drafted and prepared by Dr. Brownwen Manby has a global focus. It sought to complement the Litigation Toolkit on Statelessness published by The European Network on Statelessness, together with the AIRE Centre which focused on European courts and mechanisms and is directed at legal practitioners operating in Europe.

The representation in this workshop by our Research and Advocacy Coordinator, Shuchi was not just a learning experience for NFA but an important space to highlight challenges from the underrepresented region of Asia Pacific. Strategic Litigation is an underutilized tool which can be used to obtain a remedy as part of a broader advocacy strategy to address statelessness. In the last 10-15 years, there were notable examples of successful cases that were shared from around the world that have not only brought relief to those directly affected by statelessness, but have also helped to lead to systemic change, benefitting many more who were not party to the litigation itself.

GCENR Youth Summit on Gender Equality in Nationality Laws

The first Youth Summit on Gender Equality in Nationality Laws was organised by the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights (GCENR) held in Istanbul from 10-11 July 2024. The summit brought together twenty-seven participants including youth activists from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America. Sixteen countries, including twelve with gender-discriminatory nationality laws (GDNL) were represented. The summit aimed to empower youth leaders to lead advocacy efforts for gender-equal nationality laws and brainstorm strategic plans for future youth network activities.

As the Asia Pacific Focal Point for GCENR, our Programme Coordinator Melinda, had the privilege of co-facilitating several sessions, sharing our experiences and learnings from the Asia Pacific region. One of the sessions she led focused on leveraging international advocacy for gender-equal nationality laws, sharing our experiences contributing towards the CEDAW review of Malaysia and our successful engagement with the CEDAW Committee. It was fulfilling to see how our regional efforts resonated with the global audience and sparked discussions on how to adapt similar strategies in their contexts. We also facilitated a collaborative exercise where participants developed ideas for youth-led campaigns advocating for gender-equal nationality law reforms in a fictional country. The energy and enthusiasm in the room were palpable as youth leaders from diverse backgrounds brainstormed innovative advocacy strategies.

One key highlight session was an envisioning exercise ‘Walk & Talk in the Park’ which was a guided impact envisioning exercise held at the park in Taksim Square, asking participants to imagine a world where gender discrimination in nationality laws has been fully eradicated, and to explore what that world looks like, and how the lives of impacted people and society as a whole have changed in this utopia. This inspired youth to think creatively about the impact of their advocacy, providing a hopeful and motivating perspective. This utopian vision highlights the transformative potential of gender-equal nationality laws, highlighting the importance of continued advocacy.

The Youth Summit was a success. It not only strengthened the GCENR Youth Network but also fostered meaningful connections among youth leaders passionate about gender equality in nationality laws. As a regional organisation based in the Asia Pacific, Nationality for All plays a unique role in these spaces, bridging the gap between local experiences and global advocacy efforts.



Legal Empowerment & Digital ID Learning Exchange

The Legal Empowerment & Digital ID Learning Exchange, hosted by Namati Kenya and Grassroots Justice Network, was an in-person exchange from October 7-18, 2024, where participants could share experiences on how legal empowerment approaches can support civil society and centre grassroots communities affected by exclusion in promoting inclusion in digital ID transitions.

The Exchange was successful in bridging understanding of contexts in different regions, particularly South and Southeast Asia and Southern and Eastern Africa, where participants were based. Participants came from diverse working backgrounds, from strategic litigation to community paralegal work to desk research. The breadth of experiences enhanced participants' understandings of not only how Digital ID systems are entrenching exclusion, but also the myriad of ways it is being addressed by civil society actors both in tandem with and in opposition to governments.

For NFA, this Learning Exchange provided a deep look into successful community-based solutions to exclusion through Digital ID. In particular, the work of community paralegals utilizing Namati's Legal Empowerment model provided context into potential grassroots solutions. NFA was also able to provide ample insights into the process of developing streamlined research on the topic which can vary widely from country to country.



High-Level Segment on Statelessness, 2024

In October 14, 2024, Nationality For All (NFA) participated in the High-Level Segment on Statelessness 2024, a landmark event where the Global Alliance to End Statelessness was officially launched. NFA played a key role in the lead-up to this moment, serving as a member of the Taskforce that helped shape the vision, structure, and priorities of the Alliance. The High-Level Segment brought together states, civil society organizations, UN agencies, and stateless leaders to reaffirm global commitments and chart a collective path toward ending statelessness. NFA's involvement reflected its continued leadership in global advocacy and its commitment to ensuring that stateless and citizenship-affected communities are centered in the international response to statelessness.



Regional Network Labs on Statelessness

Nationality For All participated in the first Global Alliance to End Statelessness Regional Network Lab (RNL), held in Geneva on October 15–16, 2024 following the High-Level Segment on Statelessness. Co-organized by UNHCR and the European Network on Statelessness (ENS), the RNL marked a historic moment as it brought together regional representatives from all seven global regions for the first time in a single forum. The overarching goal of the RNL series is to foster dynamic, interconnected regional networks capable of advancing context-sensitive solutions to statelessness.

NFA was represented by our Research and Advocacy Coordinator, Shuchi Purohit, who actively contributed to both days of the event. On Day 1, Shuchi co-presented alongside UNHCR Regional Bureau representative Amit Sen, sharing regional progress and challenges in the Asia Pacific in relation to UNHCR's Global Action Plan to End Statelessness. Positive developments included reductions in statelessness in Central Asia, pending legislative reforms in Malaysia and the Philippines aimed at eliminating gender-discriminatory nationality laws, and strong regional ministerial commitments to universal birth registration and legal identity. However, the presentation also highlighted key challenges, such as ongoing discrimination leading to nationality deprivation, barriers to accessing nationality, low rates of accession to international statelessness conventions, implementation gaps between legal frameworks and practice, the misuse of data to justify inaction, and resource constraints facing civil society organizations in the region.

On Day 2, Shuchi co-led the session on trans-regional exchange and knowledge-sharing with ENS. NFA presented its pioneering work on the Statelessness Encyclopedia Asia Pacific (SEAP), the only regional index of its kind in the Asia Pacific—the region home to the largest proportion of stateless people globally. The presentation introduced SEAP’s second edition and its evolution into a comprehensive regional database, highlighting its unique approach in mapping legal frameworks, causes of statelessness, affected populations, and relevant stakeholders across 48 countries. NFA also previewed the third edition of SEAP, which will explore the intersections between statelessness, digital identification systems, and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) frameworks. By sharing both successes and challenges, NFA contributed to deepening understanding of regional dynamics and strengthening collaborative approaches to changemaking on statelessness.



Cross-Regional Forum: Promoting Rights of People on the Move in East and Southeast Asia

In October 2024, our Programme Coordinator, Melinda Anne Sharlini, participated in the Cross-Regional Forum organised by Better Engagement Between East and Southeast Asia (BEBESEEA) in Taipei, Taiwan. The event brought together stakeholders from East and Southeast Asia to discuss the challenges faced by people on the move in the regions. The conference focused on intersectional human rights issues in both sub-regions relating to migration and displacement, examining both the causes of people's movement (such as economic inequality, political persecution, wars, and conflicts) and the consequences of migration and displacement (including labour exploitation, trafficking in persons, and discrimination).

We have often observed that there is limited attention given to nationality rights and statelessness issues in migration-focused spaces. Given that statelessness is a cross-cutting issue that intersects deeply with various human rights challenges, we felt it was important that we are in these spaces to highlight this.

The forum provided an opportunity for NFA to position statelessness and the right to nationality as critical issues in the Asia Pacific region. Through interventions in plenary and participation in focused co-learning workshops, Melinda highlighted the unique struggles faced by stateless individuals and those denied equal nationality rights. She emphasised the importance of incorporating nationality rights and statelessness as a focus area within the migration space and the need for cross-regional collaboration and knowledge exchange to address cross-border challenges. She also highlighted our expertise in global advocacy utilising UN mechanisms such as CEDAW, sharing practical tips and strategies that participants found valuable and applicable to their advocacy efforts.

As a regional organisation, we are thrilled that cross-regional spaces such as these exist. These platforms facilitate cross-regional dialogues, enabling us to position nationality rights and statelessness as priority issues in our region. We believe that cross-regional solidarity and collaboration are crucial for addressing these challenges effectively and we look forward to continuing our involvement in these spaces and working together to find solutions that will benefit all affected individuals and communities.

PILNet Global Forum

In November 2024, Nationality For All's Executive Director, Subin Mulmi, participated in the PILnet Global Forum, a three-day international convening of legal and civil society actors working to advance social justice through legal strategies. Subin served as a panelist in the session titled "Litigating the Right to Nationality in the Asia Pacific Region", where he emphasized the critical role of strategic litigation not only as a tool to advance legal reform but also as a powerful means of raising public awareness and building momentum for broader advocacy on citizenship rights. The session highlighted key regional cases and challenges, and coincided with the launch of the UNHCR Guide on Strategic Litigation on the Right to Nationality, adding an important resource for legal practitioners and advocates in the field. Subin's contribution reinforced NFA's commitment to using legal mechanisms as part of a comprehensive approach to combatting statelessness and promoting inclusive citizenship.



Beijing +30 Forum

In November 2024, Nationality For All's Executive Director, Subin Mulmi, participated in both the Youth Forum and the CSO Forum on Beijing +30, as well as the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Beijing +30. Throughout these events, Subin consistently highlighted the importance of addressing gender-discriminatory nationality laws in the region and their profound impact on gender-based violence (GBV). He underscored how such laws exacerbate the vulnerability of stateless women, leaving them at heightened risk of violence and discrimination. Subin also raised concerns about the emerging risks posed by digital identity systems, particularly how they could further marginalize stateless women and undermine their access to rights and services. His advocacy at these forums reinforced the urgent need for reforms to ensure equal nationality rights for women, with a focus on preventing GBV and securing the rights and dignity of stateless women in Asia Pacific.





NATIONALITY FOR ALL

Advancing the right to a nationality in the Asia-Pacific region

Copyright © 2025, Nationality For All (NFA)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Nationality For All
www.nationalityforall.org