

TOOLKIT GLOSSARY

Key terms and definitions	
Stateless person	A person who is “not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law” (article 1, 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons).
Nationality	A legal bond between an individual and a state. It is a form of membership that results in rights and duties (e.g. the right to vote or the duty to pay certain taxes). In some countries, the term “citizenship” is more commonly used to refer to this legal bond.
Refugee	A refugee is a person who has fled his or her country owing to well-founded fear of persecution, for instance on the basis of race, religion or political opinion (article 1, 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees). He or she often has a nationality, but is not safe in that country. However, some refugees are also stateless and the definition of a refugee under international law also allows for this possibility.
Internally Displaced Person (IDP)	A person who has been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their home or place of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who has not crossed an internationally recognised state border.
Undocumented	A person who does not have any documents to demonstrate identity or nationality. The inability to provide proof of nationality does not make a person stateless. Yet, without identity documents it becomes more difficult for a person to establish his or her bond with a State, which can leave him or her at risk of statelessness. The term “undocumented” is also used in some contexts to describe a person who is in a country without permission / legal residence (also described as “irregular”).
At risk of statelessness	The situation in which a person or group is vulnerable to being left without a nationality, for instance due to difficulty proving entitlement to nationality. The term helps to identify where preventative action is needed to protect people from actually becoming stateless.
Acquisition of nationality	Process by which a person becomes a national of a country. This may be automatic or upon application; and can occur at birth or later in life.
<i>Jus soli</i>	Nationality law rule by which nationality is acquired by virtue of birth on the territory of the state.
<i>Jus sanguinis</i>	Nationality law rule by which nationality is acquired by virtue of birth to a parent who is a national of the state.
Loss of nationality	Automatic withdrawal of nationality, by operation of the law, following the satisfaction of certain conditions.
Deprivation of nationality	Withdrawal of nationality at the initiative of the state – i.e. following a decision by the competent authority.
Birth registration	The official recording of a child’s birth by the State. It is a permanent and official record of a child’s existence.

Arabic Terminology

<i>Ajanib Kurd</i>	Stateless Kurd registered as a ‘foreigner’ in the 1962 Syrian Jazira census
<i>Bidoon</i>	A word that literally means ‘without’ and refers to a group of stateless persons who live predominantly in the Gulf region
<i>Isbat Nasab</i>	Recognition of Lineage – a document given by a Sharia judge that confirms the parentage of a child
<i>Itilaf</i>	Syrian Opposition Council
<i>Kafala</i>	Individual who “sponsors” another individual to help them obtain a residence permit
<i>Ketb Al Ktab</i>	Islamic Marriage Contract
<i>Maktoum</i>	An individual not present in the Syrian records
<i>Maktoum Kurd</i>	Stateless Kurd not registered in the 1962 Syrian Jazira census or in any records
<i>Mokhtar</i>	Local Mayor
<i>Sheikh</i>	A religious leader in a Muslim community

Abbreviations

1951 Refugee Convention	1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
1954 Statelessness Convention	1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons
1961 Statelessness Convention	1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
ICLA	Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance
ITS	Informal Tented Settlement (Lebanon)
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
MENA	Middle-East North Africa Region
MOI	Ministry of the Interior
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PRS	Palestinian Refugees from Syria
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SDP	Statelessness Determination Procedure
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East