Introduction

The Statelessness Programme was established at Tilburg Law School in 2011, with a view to fulfilling the need for a sustainable centre of expertise which is dedicated to research, training and outreach on statelessness and related issues. The programme aims to:

- Engage in and provide support for research on statelessness;

- Promote academic education and professional training on statelessness;

- Engage in public debate and inform policy development by international, governmental, advocacy and service organisations.

We continued to pursue these research, training and outreach objectives with a range of activities throughout 2013, as presented in this report. This was also a year in which the Statelessness Programme invested in strengthening the foundations for its future work. A key milestone was the signing of an official Memorandum of Understanding between Tilburg University and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for collaboration on activities that advance the application of academic research for the benefit of stateless people and those at risk of statelessness, in the Netherlands and globally. This has paved the way, among other things, for the establishment of a jointly administered, international incentive prize for student research in the field of statelessness, the ‘UNHCR Award for Statelessness Research’ (first presented in September 2013), as well as for the co-convening of the first Global Forum on Statelessness which will take place in September 2014 at the Peace Palace in the Hague. Furthermore, at the end of the year, the Statelessness Programme joined Tilburg Law School Centre of Excellence, INTERVICT (the International Victimology Institute Tilburg). This thriving, interdisciplinary research centre has a strong international reputation and an excellent global network. We hope that this new environment will help us to pursue a broader, more innovative and interdisciplinary research agenda on statelessness.

Should you have any questions about the information presented in this report, please do not hesitate to contact us at Statelessness.Programme@tilburguniversity.edu. For up-to-date information on our activities, please visit our website: http://www.tilburguniversity.edu/statelessness. Thank you for your interest in our work.

Dr. Laura van Waas
Founder and Manager of the Statelessness Programme
Tilburg, February 2014
Organisation

Staff

Dr. Laura van Waas
Manager and Senior Researcher of the Statelessness Programme

Ms. Zahra Albarazi
Researcher and coordinator of MENA Nationality and Statelessness study; Researcher for Nationality & Gender Discrimination Projects

Ms. Simone van den Driest
Coordinator of the 2013 edition of the Statelessness Summer Course

Ms. Stefanie Jansen
Coordinator of the Statelessness Regional Course for South East Asia; Researcher for European statelessness projects

Dr. Conny Rijken
Expert on Trafficking in Human Beings, collaborating with the Statelessness Programme on the 2012-2014 Research Project on Statelessness in Thailand

Dr. Martin Gramatikov
Expert on Subjective Legal Empowerment, collaborating with the Statelessness Programme on the 2012-2014 Research Project on Statelessness in Thailand

Ms Charlotte Nuijten
Marketing and communications for the 2014 Global Forum on Statelessness

Ms. Femke Bijleveld and Ms. Marijke van Schijndel
Secretarial support

Ms. Inge Horn and Ms. Hedwig van Harssel
Financial planning and reporting and overall admin support

Partners

The Statelessness Programme continues to work with a range of academic institutions, UN agencies, civil society organisations and government bodies on many of its projects. Some of the principal partners are shown below. Additional details of partnerships on particular initiatives are provided, as relevant, in the other sections of this report.
Gender Discrimination and Statelessness

Throughout 2013, we continued our engagement on the issue of gender discrimination in nationality legislation and practice. This was done through a variety of research and advocacy projects. Gender discriminatory laws, where mothers are unable to transmit nationality to their children on an equal footing as fathers, often lead to new cases of statelessness – which, in turn, results in severe consequences for individuals and families. In spite of clear international standards prescribing equal nationality rights for men and women, this problem persists in 27 countries worldwide. Nevertheless, interest in and action to remove gender discrimination from nationality laws has increased considerably in recent years. More comprehensive and up-to-date research can play an important part in highlighting the benefits for the remaining countries to amend their discriminatory laws soon and feed into relevant advocacy work.

“How I feel? I feel depressed, lost, and my children, I see them in front of me…my oldest son is 29 years old. Nobody is going to marry my children. Because it will only lead to problems. They refuse to marry anyway. They don’t have the same working opportunities as others, they cannot get married, education was a struggle, I had to pay for it myself and indebt myself, and they cannot get jobs that reflect their qualifications.”

Testimony of Um Chadi, a Jordanian woman whose children are stateless because the law does not allow her to transmit her nationality to them as recorded in our research for the report ‘Our Motherland, Our Country’.

Multi-country study on the impact of gendered nationality law: ‘Our Motherland, Our Country’

Commissioned by the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC), the Statelessness Programme undertook research in four countries in the Middle East and North Africa concerning the gender discrimination in their laws. Jordan and Kuwait were chosen as examples of countries where discrimination in the law continues to lead to new cases of statelessness, while Morocco and Egypt were researched to understand further the process of how reforms are implemented and the effects this has. The research began with a review of nationality legislation but was largely centred on a field assessment comprising individual interviews and focus group discussions in each country to understand further the impact of the respective laws on families. The research found that where statelessness is caused by this discrimination, it was putting a huge strain on family structures and endangering the development of a healthy family life. The testimonials gathered demonstrate how the law not only infringes women’s rights, but also has a detrimental impact on children’s rights, family rights and economic and social rights. It also showed that – although grappling with some remaining
problems in the implementation of the law – the two countries that had reformed the law had achieved a truly positive change for families. A report with extensive testimonials demonstrating the problems experienced was drafted and two short storytelling videos were produced to act as complementary advocacy tools. These materials were launched at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva in June 2013 and were then made available online, where the report was downloaded over 3,000 times in the first six months alone.

Dialogue on gender discrimination in Madagascar’s nationality laws

In December 2013, as part of UNHCR’s Roundtable Dialogues aimed at further mapping statelessness and its impact, we were commissioned to conduct meetings with affected women, civil society and government officials to explore the issue of gender discrimination in nationality laws in Madagascar. A two-day dialogue took place with the objectives of a) understanding how Madagascan law was contributing to new cases of statelessness b) collecting testimonials on the impact this was having on peoples’ lives and 3) facilitating a discussion amongst national stakeholders on potential activities to address these problems. A report of this Dialogue will be published in early 2014.
Outreach Outreach on women’s nationality rights

Much of our research on gender discriminatory nationality laws was geared towards strengthening the evidence base for advocacy efforts of national, regional and international stakeholders in support of legal reform. On the basis of our research findings, we were also directly involved in some outreach and advocacy activities during 2013. To disseminate and discuss the report prepared for the Women’s Refugee Commission on the impact of gendered nationality laws on families, ‘Our Motherland, Our Country’ we took part in a number of events in Geneva in June 2013. In addition to the official launch and presentation of the report at a side event to the UN Human Rights Council, we also discussed the research process and the findings during UNHCR’s annual global consultations with NGOs as well as in a specially convened briefing for selected Government missions. We then worked closely with the WRC again to produce and present a report for the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women about the problems caused by gender discriminatory nationality laws, discussing in detail the situation of the UAE, Bahrain and Iraq which were under review by the Committee.

Statelessness, legal empowerment and human trafficking in Thailand

Throughout 2013, we continued our work on a project funded by the US State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration to develop and pilot a research methodology for mapping the impact of statelessness on women in Thailand, with a specific focus on legal empowerment and vulnerability to trafficking. Together, statelessness expert Laura van Waas, trafficking expert Conny Rijken and Subjective Legal Empowerment expert Martin Gramatikov, designed a survey questionnaire that measures the impact of statelessness on people’s Subjective Legal Empowerment in relation to key problems indicative of a heightened risk of trafficking (i.e. a greater prevalence of ‘risk factors’). A research mission to Thailand by this project team in early 2013 allowed the questionnaire to be fine-tuned to take into account the local and cultural context, as well as additional information on the situation of stateless people and the modus operandi of human trafficking in Thailand gathered through key informant interviews.

In collaboration with Chiang Mai University Law Clinic in the North of Thailand, the survey was then implemented in four communities, with a total of 490 respondents completing the questionnaire. Approximately half of the respondents held citizenship, while the other half were stateless, allowing for a direct comparison between these two groups. Similarly, the survey included approximately the same number of men as women, enabling the further disaggregation of the data to discover any differences between the situation, experiences and perceptions between the sexes. The considerations underlying this methodology and how they were translated to
a concrete research instrument were written up in an article for a Statelessness Special Issue of the Tilburg Law Review (January 2014).

Originally, an intervention project to improve the legal empowerment of stateless women had been envisaged following the completion of the survey, but this was deemed premature because there was a need to further interpret and contextualise the data. Instead, preparations were made to capture qualitative information to supplement the quantitative data from the survey. A protocol was designed for in-depth interview research and our collaboration with Chiang Mai University Law Clinic extended. The in-depth interviews will be implemented during the first half of 2014, after which a full write-up of the methodology and research findings will be completed. Meanwhile, some of the survey data has already been used to feed into discussions among key stakeholders about how to improve efforts to tackle statelessness in Thailand. A series of posts discussing the background to the problem of statelessness in Thailand – a country with half a million stateless inhabitants – was also published during 2013 on our weblog.

Other Research Activities

Statelessness and the role of National Human Rights Institutions

Around the world, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) share the common objective of promoting and protecting human rights. In the summer of 2013, we joined forces with the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights to conduct desk research and a small survey to look at the role of NHRIs in addressing statelessness. The study demonstrated that statelessness is indeed a phenomenon that is known amongst NHRIs and uncovered some interesting examples of their engagement on this issue. Among the NHRIs that responded to the questionnaire, an impressive 80% has conducted some form of lobbying or issued advice on issues relating to statelessness. Most often, this work concerns advising on the reform of nationality laws or on the removal of discrimination from nationality policy. A significant number of NHRIs has engaged in individual casework relating to the enjoyment of the right to a nationality (60%) or recognition as a stateless person (50%). Another important aspect of NHRIs’ human rights work is education,
i.e. informing different stakeholders and the general public about human rights norms and standards. The survey found that this human rights education has also touched on statelessness: 40% of the NHRIs that completed the questionnaire indicated having carried out awareness raising on the issue. Many of the participating NHRIs expressed an interest in developing more expertise on statelessness in the future, suggesting that NHRIs are open to and may benefit from the development of further tools and/or the establishment of networks for information exchange on statelessness. The study expresses this as one of its recommendations, recognising the role that capacity building and knowledge sharing can play in strengthening the influence of NHRIs on statelessness issues in their country of operation. A working paper discussing these and the other findings of the study was published online and is freely available via the Social Science Research Network (SSRN) and UNHCR’s Refworld resource site. At the invitation of the European Working Group of NHRI’s, we presented our report and discussed the current role and future potential for NHRI engagement on statelessness at a Brussels meeting in December 2013. There was significant interest in this issue and we remain open to opportunities to support the work of the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights and other NHRIs in addressing statelessness, including by encouraging their participation in the First Global Forum on Statelessness in September 2014.

**Statelessness and microfinance**

Stateless people often struggle to earn a living: barred from exercising certain professions and commonly facing severe restrictions in accessing the labour market, while also not qualifying for social security benefits. Poverty is a widely evidenced result. Statelessness also forms an obstacle to accessing financial services – bank accounts, loans, etc. – which can make it all the more difficult to break out of poverty. Nor will stateless people necessarily be able to benefit from development programmes, which may not be designed to take into account their particular circumstances and vulnerability. During his time as a visiting scholar at the Statelessness Programme, PhD researcher Jason Tucker explored some of the difficulties around statelessness, poverty and development. One of the propositions he put forward was that microfinance schemes may be a suitable means of assisting the stateless – and perhaps there are even programmes already reaching stateless beneficiaries. To take this question further, two students who were completing their Masters degrees in Economics spent the summer with us, researching statelessness and microfinance. Their study found that, indeed, some of the techniques used in microfinance could be highly appropriate in circumventing the common obstacles that stateless people face in accessing ‘regular’ financial services. For instance, microfinance schemes do not necessarily require participants to present official identity documents – which stateless people may not have – or to put up property as collateral. Instead, within microfinance, other systems are put in place to ensure that participants are able to meet their targets and repay their loans. This short research project concluded that microfinance schemes, tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of a stateless population, are a feasible approach to facilitating the development and economic empowerment of stateless communities. An article detailing some of the findings of this research was published in the Statelessness Special Issue of the Tilburg Law Review (January 2014).

**MENA Nationality and Statelessness Project**

Statelessness and discrimination in access to citizenship are significant problems across the MENA region, a region that hosts some of the largest populations of stateless persons.
in the world. Research and advocacy on the issue has, to-date, been limited. For the MENA Project, the Statelessness Programme works in close collaboration with – and is funded by – the Open Society Justice Initiative and the Open Society Foundations Arab Regional Office. The project involves a detailed, comparative analysis of the nationality laws of MENA countries, as well as an investigation into the origins, current treatment and future prospects of the most significant stateless populations in the region. Finalisation of the comparative report has incurred some delays due to instability in the region causing the research environment to be difficult and unpredictable – but it is expected to be published and launched in 2014. During 2013, two discussion papers which were drafted as independent research products within this project were made available. The first, *The Stateless Tebu of Libya?* explores the situation of the Tebu minority in Libya. Ambiguity surrounds the legal status of many Tebu people and concern that some may have left some of the Tebu without any nationality. The report includes a detailed interview with a member of the Tebu National Assembly who explains his perspective on the Tebu’s situation. The second, *The Stateless Syrians*, considers how Syria fares on the question of statelessness today. It offers an analysis of Syria’s nationality legislation and of the causes underlying the rendering stateless of the Kurds, before looking exploring the effects, after half a century of exclusion, of a decree that is allowing members of the community to naturalize but also leaving many questions unanswered.

Also during 2013, some of the preliminary findings of the MENA Nationality and Statelessness Project were presented at relevant conferences, including at a Symposium entitled ‘Nationality and Statelessness in the Middle East and Dutch Legal Practice’ at Leiden University (the Netherlands) and with a panel at the Conference ‘Making Citizenship – Practices of exclusion and inclusion, claims and subjectivity in the Middle East and Europe’ at Pavia University (Italy).

**Publications in 2013**

Training Activities

Statelessness Summer Course 2013

In August 2013, we hosted the second edition of the Tilburg Statelessness Summer Course: a week-long intensive training programme on statelessness and related issues for researchers and practitioners. The course was convened in collaboration with the Open Society Justice Initiative and UNHCR, which provided some of the expert lecturers for the course as well as funding in support of scholarships. A total of twenty-six participants from around the world completed the programme, which was comprised of a mixture of interactive lectures, case study sessions and group-work assignments.

‘The Statelessness Summer Course is a great introduction and practical guide for people who do not have a law background, or want to be inspired and share ideas on a subject that is largely untold of. Highly recommended from students – people in the field and policy makers – all. I returned empowered and positive. I also want to thank the most dedicated, professional and easy-to-approach facilitators.’

Won-Na Cha, UNHCR Regional Office, Sudan

‘In 5 days I learned more about statelessness than I ever did in my law practice and teaching career. I’m very glad to have participated in this Course and to have learned so much about the practice on statelessness with colleagues from all around the world that had so many amazing stories to tell.’

Carolina de Abreu Claro, PhD Researcher, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
Statelessness Regional Course for South East Asia

In November 2013, the Statelessness Programme organised a dedicated Regional Statelessness Course with a focus on South East Asia, in Bangkok, Thailand. The course was co-hosted by Open Society Foundations, the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network. During a very intensive but stimulating and enjoyable week, over 35 participants from around South East Asia followed lectures by international and regional experts. The participants were professionals working for a variety of organizations including the UNHCR, NGOs, regional coalitions, governments, and universities. The start of the week introduced the participants to the basic theory and legal framework of statelessness. These sessions were given by experts including Laura van Waas and Zahra Albarazi of the Statelessness Programme, Nick Oakeshott and Bongkot Napaumporn from UNHCR’s Regional statelessness team and Amal De Chickera from the Equal Rights Trust, while Marc Krupanski and Laura Bingham from Open Society Justice Initiative encouraged discussion on advocacy and legal aid. The theoretical and thematic sessions were alternated with sessions in which participants worked in groups to apply what they had learned. Throughout the week case studies and panels were set up to discuss the specific issues of the region. This included tailored discussion on the stateless Rohingya issue affecting the whole region, birth registration practices of Thailand and the newly adopted Statelessness Determination Procedure in the Philippines.

Course on ‘Nationality, Statelessness and Human Rights’

During the spring of 2013, the Statelessness Programme repeated its 12-week course for university students on ‘Nationality, Statelessness and Human Rights’. Over fifty students participated in the course, comprising a mixture of students enrolled in the undergraduate Liberal Arts and Sciences programme, as well as students from the undergraduate and graduate law degrees and a number of students from other disciplines. Some students from the previous year’s course went on to write very successful bachelor or masters’ dissertations on statelessness and even to secure internship places to continue to gain experience on statelessness with UNHCR (for instance in Geneva and in Dakar).
European Network on Statelessness
Training of Trainers

The Statelessness Programme is one of the founding members of the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) and Dr. Laura van Waas is the capacity building focal point on the ENS Steering Committee. In 2013, ENS secured a partnership with UNHCR to convene the first ever training of trainers to be held on statelessness anywhere in the world. Van Waas took the lead in the design of the training programme, which included in-depth sessions on statelessness theory, training on learning styles and practical teaching elements with individualised feedback. Twelve NGO and five UNHCR staff members completed the three-day course in Budapest in November 2013.

Guest lectures

During 2013, we provided guest lectures on statelessness as part of Human Rights Law, Victimisation of Vulnerable Groups and European Migration Law courses taught in Tilburg Law School’s Masters programmes. We also accepted invitations to lecture at the university law clinics of Liverpool Law School (UK) and Belgrade Law School (Serbia).

On 26 November 2013, Tilburg University student associations I*ESN and AWAke International threw a fundraising party in support of statelessness work. The money collected through tickets sales and a bachelor auction will go towards a visit by the award-winning international photographer Greg Constantine to the Netherlands in 2014 to create a photo essay on statelessness in this country. The photos will be exhibited during the first Global Forum on Statelessness in the Hague in September 2014 and used to help raise awareness of the issue of statelessness in the Netherlands and around Europe.

Student Involvement

Alongside regular teaching activities, since its establishment the Statelessness Programme has also offered talented and motivated students the opportunity to increase their knowledge and gain valuable work experience through its internship programme. Each internship is distinct and students work independently on a project that directly contributes to one of the Statelessness Programme’s research, training or outreach activities, while receiving guidance and technical support from one or more of our staff members. During 2013, we hosted a total of nine interns: five law students, two economics students, one liberal arts and sciences student and one women’s studies student. Two of the students who interned with us in 2012, Sangita Jaghai and Caia Vlieks, also worked under our guidance to turn their internship research into an article which was published in a Dutch asylum and migration law journal (Asiel & Migrantenrecht). At the end of 2013, the Statelessness Programme also launched a new initiative: the Statelessness Research Clinic, in which a group of six students will complete an individual and collaborative research task, as well as a small teaching project.
Interns in 2013

Mr. Ivan Kochovski: Nationality and Statelessness in the Middle East and North Africa

Ms. Deirdre Brennan: Mapping the Nexus between Statelessness and Human Trafficking in Thailand

Ms. Zhasmina Kostadinova: A Website for Understanding Statelessness

Ms. Linda Peels: Towards the First Global Forum on Statelessness

Mr. Brian Colgan & Mr. Ondřej Kolínský: Statelessness and Microfinance

Ms. Monica Neal: Statelessness and the role of National Human Rights Institutions

Ms. Sangita Jaghai: Statelessness Storytelling in the Netherlands

Ms. Christina van Kuijck: Teaching Statelessness & Support for the First Global Forum on Statelessness

International Internship Award

During the first half of 2013, Sangita Jaghai, the winner of our first International Internship Award enjoyed a six-month work placement with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Bangkok, Thailand. The main objective of her internship was to conduct a legal analysis of the nationality laws of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam (ASEAN member states). “I received feedback from my supervisors after every country analysis which was always a great learning moment, especially in terms of how to explain in a clear and systematic way why a specific provision in a nationality law can cause statelessness”, Sangita explains. “With this internship I have gained a better understanding of how statelessness fits in the field of human rights, the relevance of (non) treaty based monitoring mechanism and the way UNHCR implements its mandate to prevent, protect and reduce (and hopefully eradicate) statelessness.”

UNHCR Award for Statelessness Research

In early 2013, the Statelessness Programme and UNHCR invited academic institutions to nominate excellent research at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels in the field of statelessness for the newly established UNHCR Award for Statelessness Research. In its inaugural year, a total of 15 nominations were received, submitted by academic staff from 13 different universities, across eight countries. The research represented a variety of disciplines, including international law, political theory, sociology, international relations, social science and cultural psychology. Following a detailed review by a committee within Tilburg Law School, a shortlist of eligible, top-quality research pieces was drawn up and forwarded to the International Expert Jury for their assessment. In 2013, the Jury members who assessed the undergraduate and graduate level nominations were: Prof. Kohki Abe (Kanagawa University, Japan), Prof. Khadija Elmadmad (Casablanca University, Morocco), Dr. Benyam Mezmur (University of the Western Cape, South Africa), Prof. Peter Spiro (Temple University, United States) and Prof. Carmen Tiburcio (Rio de Janeiro State University, Brazil). The Jury members who assessed the doctoral level research were: Prof. René de Groot (Maastricht University, the Netherlands), Dr Sriprapha Petcharamesree (Mahidol University, Thailand) and Prof. Kim Rubenstein (Australian National University, Australia). The Jury was co-chaired by Mr Mark Manly (Senior Legal Coordinator Statelessness, UNHCR) and Dr Laura van Waas (Tilburg University’s Statelessness Programme) who reviewed all of the nominated work.
In the undergraduate category, the winner was Amanda Cheong, whose thesis “Changing Conceptions of Citizenship Among Stateless Chinese-Bruneian Immigrants in Vancouver,” was nominated by the Department of Sociology at the University of British Columbia in Canada. Cheong selected one of the world’s least-known situations of statelessness as the subject of her research: the Chinese minority of the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam. Cheong explores the implications of statelessness for peoples’ life chances in Brunei, looks at how international migration has been adopted as one response to this situation and how the exposure of those who have settled in Canada to a new and very different citizenship model has changed their understanding of the relationship between the individual and the state. She bases her analysis on oral history interviews with 13 Chinese-Bruneians who migrated to the Greater Vancouver area. The Jury was impressed by this original data collection and the manner in which both the methodology and the findings are presented, concluding that this well-refined and informative sociological study provides a useful contribution to deepening the understanding of statelessness. In the graduate category, the jury named two winners. The first was Eva Mrekajová, whose Master of Laws thesis on the “Naturalization of Stateless Persons” was nominated by the Department of International and European Law at Tilburg University. Mrekajová undertakes a highly methodical comparative study of the legal practice surrounding the naturalisation of stateless people in three European states. The second winner was Caroline McInerney, whose independent study paper entitled “Citizenship Laws of Madagascar: Future Challenges for a Developing Nation” was nominated by the University of Virginia School of Law in the United States. McInerney presents an extensive review of the content of the Malagasy nationality regulations and identifies how the law is serving to create and perpetuate cases of statelessness in the country. Both of these students identified highly original research questions and, in working to answer them, they demonstrated a thorough understanding of the issues at stake and a strong analytical ability, such that their work offers a tangible contribution to furthering the study of statelessness. No prize in the doctoral category was awarded this year, but the Jury was greatly impressed and encouraged by the diversity, ingenuity and quality of the undergraduate and graduate-level nominations received and, in its report, expressed confidence that “a new generation of talented young scholars will choose to pursue further studies in this field and looks forward to reviewing the fruits of this labour in years to come”. The Jury did make an honorary mention of Lindsey Kingston’s doctoral thesis entitled Legal Invisibility: Statelessness and Issue (Non) Emergence, which earned Kingston her PhD in social science from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University (United States) in 2010.
Outreach activities

Human Rights Day symposium
Every year, Tilburg University holds a symposium to commemorate World Human Rights Day on December 10th (the day on which, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted). In 2013, The Statelessness Programme was asked to give a multimedia introduction on statelessness to celebrate the event. Dr Laura van Waas and Ms Zahra Albarazi chose a provocative title for their joint presentation: *What connects Albert Einstein, Osama Bin Laden and Tom Hanks?* The stories of Einstein, Bin Laden and Tom Hanks’ character in the 2004 film ‘The Terminal’ illuminate some of the different causes and different dimensions of the problem of statelessness. These stories were juxtaposed with stories of people who are affected by statelessness today and through the videos shown, the audience was asked to reflect on what life is like for people who don’t have any nationality.

Statelessness in schools project
While statelessness is gaining increasing attention from governments, UN and non-governmental organisations and in academic circles, it remains a largely unknown phenomenon to the wider public. The lack of understanding of what statelessness is and how it happens can contribute to the day-to-day problems that stateless people face – they may be treated with intolerance or mistrust, where there should be empathy and respect. One way in which to build greater public awareness of statelessness is to target youth, at an age when they are becoming more aware of and engaged in international issues. With this in mind, we developed the idea for a schools project in which basic classes about statelessness would be targeted to children aged 14-17. International Law student, Christina van Kuijck, joined the Statelessness Programme as an intern in September 2013 and took the lead in this project. She arranged for and co-taught a pilot class at the Onze Lieve Vrouwen Lyceum in Breda (the Netherlands) in October 2013. “When I arrived there, I was very nervous. I have previously given private lessons to people between the age of 10 – 21, but never to an entire class of 30 persons” Christina explained. “I didn’t need to be afraid or nervous at all. The students were really enthusiastic and active in the lecture. The students showed a lot of concern towards the problem and understood everything correctly”. The regular teacher of the class, Jos van Schilt, was very enthusiastic, providing positive feedback and offering to help with the materials and different exercises for the Schools Project. We will continue this outreach in 2014 with a series of similar classes, in different formats, followed by an evaluation of what topics or exercises have the greatest impact on students of these age-groups.
WHATISSTATELESSNESS.org

Liberal Arts and Sciences student, Zhasmina Kostadinova from Bulgaria, joined the Statelessness Programme as an intern in February 2013 to explore new outreach ideas on statelessness: “From my first day at the Statelessness Programme I was surprised to realise in what great detail nationality is needed for every person. While preparing for my first steps with the team I was searching for information about statelessness and nationality, on the internet, to broaden my knowledge of this topic. Unfortunately, I could not find one single web-site that could combine the issues of nationality and statelessness in one place, together with examples and theory”. This is the gap that Zhasmina set out to fill with her internship project. She designed and built the website WHATISSTATELESSNESS.ORG. It offers a simple explanation of what statelessness is, what causes it and what its impact is, as well as explaining what nationality is, how we get it and why it is important.

Social media

In order to engage with a diverse and international audience on interesting developments in the field of statelessness and to provide regular updates on our own activities, the Statelessness Programme has an active presence on a number of social media sites. This is an important component of our day-to-day outreach work.

Blog: http://statelessprog.blogspot.com

We offer an informal commentary on the latest statelessness news, reports on our activities and guest pieces by others active in the field of statelessness on our blog site. We posted 50 blogs over the course of 2013. Among the topics covered were: “The humanitarian side of statelessness – Statelessness within the framework of the MDGs”, “A short history of ‘Dutch statelessness’ after the Spanish Civil War” (guest post); and “Europe’s National Human Rights Institutions put statelessness on the agenda”.

Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/statelessnessprogramme

Our Facebook page is used as a site for informal exchange with people interested in the topic of statelessness. We regularly post news updates and invite comments. We also announce relevant events here and maintain a repository of photographs of Statelessness Programme activities.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/statelessprog

We posted over 600 tweets with statelessness-related news in 2013, tapping into developments from around the world. We also followed and helped to pass on the latest news on statelessness which emerged during the year from countries like Myanmar and the Dominican Republic.
Looking ahead to 2014...

**Tilburg Law Review: Special Issue on Statelessness**

Over the last few years, academic interest in statelessness has increased exponentially: research projects and publications are mushrooming and a growing number of scholars from different disciplines are now studying this issue. In 2013, the Statelessness Programme collaborated closely with the editors of the Tilburg Law Review – Tilburg Law School's international, peer-reviewed journal – to produce a Special Issue on Statelessness. We helped to formulate and advertise the call for papers, as well as to provide content feedback on submissions and identify key contributors to ensure that the Special Issue drew on expertise from different backgrounds, regions and disciplines. The statelessness special issue capture incorporates a set of 30 short articles that explore statelessness from diverse angles – from climate change to Corporate Social Responsibility; from microfinance schemes to human trafficking; and from surrogacy arrangements to victimology. Published in January 2014 and freely available online throughout this year, this special issue is a timely contribution to wider developments in the field of statelessness. It is a celebration of the signing, in 2013, of an official agreement between Tilburg University and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for collaboration on research and training activities on statelessness. It contributes to the commemoration, in 2014, of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the first United Nations treaty dedicated to addressing statelessness, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons. And it is a sneak preview of what to expect in September 2014 when Tilburg University and UNHCR will co-host the first ever Global Forum on Statelessness in the Peace Palace in the Hague.
First Global Forum on Statelessness

The First Global Forum on Statelessness is a 3-day event, co-hosted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Statelessness Programme, bringing together some 300 academics, government representatives, international organisations, NGOs and stateless people from around the world to present their research, policy work and experiences of statelessness. The Global Forum will be held at the Peace Palace in The Hague (the Netherlands) from 15 – 17 September 2014. Today, statelessness is a dynamic policy area, demonstrated by the rapid growth in the number of accessions to the UN statelessness conventions, increased nationality law reform and the development of new tools and mechanisms for the protection of stateless people. Statelessness is also re-emerging as a rich and exciting field of study with high potential for new research across and between a diverse range of academic disciplines. Under the title of “New Directions in Statelessness Research and Policy”, the Global Forum aims to:

- Share good practices and challenges in policy development on statelessness;
- Explore and debate contemporary statelessness research and policy;
- Encourage new research on statelessness across and between a range of academic disciplines;
- Provide a platform for the voices of stateless persons in the development of new research and policy directions;
- Strengthen existing partnerships and build new networks among different stakeholders engaged on statelessness.

The Global Forum will feature a mix of keynote lectures, panel discussions, workshops and poster presentations, with at least 80 presenters from around the world already lined up to share their research or policy experiences.
International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT)

The International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT) of Tilburg University, established in 2005, is an international and interdisciplinary research institute. In 2011, the Board of Tilburg University awarded INTERVICT the status of Center of Excellence. This rare distinction encourages the Institute to continue serving the interests of victims of conventional and international crimes through dedicated research of the highest quality. INTERVICT conducts research into the legal, psychological and social implications of victimization. In its research, INTERVICT aims to contribute to a comprehensive, evidence-based body of knowledge on the empowerment and support of victims of crime and abuse of power.

Interdisciplinarity
By working in mixed research teams with academic staff from a variety of disciplines (e.g. law, criminology, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and medical epidemiology) INTERVICT aims at pursuing victimological knowledge integrating interdisciplinary insights. This approach ensures that proper research is performed into all aspects of victimization, which will ultimately contribute to preventing or reducing instances of criminal victimization across the world and to limiting the effects of such victimization on victims and their families including economic costs, pain and suffering.

Societal relevance
In its research, INTERVICT constantly seeks to develop empirical and theoretical knowledge that is not merely academically interesting but can also feed policy-making and legislation, as well as inspire the design of effective practical services for the benefit of crime victims. To this end, research findings are actively disseminated among national and international governments and NGOs. The Institute has also developed ongoing partnerships with the Dutch Ministry of Justice, victim support organizations, police forces, and judiciaries both at home and abroad.

Research program
INTERVICT’s research program 2011-2015 Working towards a comprehensive, evidence-based body of knowledge on victim empowerment is structured around three main themes:
1. The victim in the criminal justice system
2. Homogeneity and heterogeneity in the experience of victimization
3. Developing multidisciplinary victimological theory

Master’s program Victimology and Criminal Justice
Since 2012 INTERVICT offers the Master’s program Victimology and Criminal Justice at Tilburg University. This program is the only Master’s program in Europe focusing on victimology, and one of only a handful of such programs worldwide. Being the top-notch program in Victimology and Criminal Justice, this Master is aimed at motivated students with educational backgrounds in criminology, law, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and liberal arts. The Master trains students to academically analyze and professionally solve psychosocial, economic, political, and legal problems arising from victimization.

INTERVICT
Master Victimology and Criminal Justice
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