Case Presentation

SDG 16

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.

11th September 2018
UNITED NATIONS ESCAP, BANGKOK

DHRRA MALAYSIA
Partnerships

- Member of Asia-DHRRA (Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas)- a regional partnership of eleven (11) social development networks and organizations in eleven (11) Asian nations

- Host & Secretariat of Statelessness Network Asia Pacific (SNAP)

- Implementing partner of Regional Cooperation to Empower Rural Development Organizations in Asia
Work

GOAL 1
- To identify all current Stateless Residents entitled to citizenship under the Constitution and assist them through the application process

GOAL 2
- To persuade the Government and NRD to adapt fair and efficient processes for reviewing applications from Stateless persons for citizenship as prescribed by the Constitution

GOAL 3
- Advocate for policy reform to remove gender discrimination from the constitution

GOAL 4
- Design and deliver effective social development and integration programmes targeting stateless and formerly stateless persons.

SDG Target: 16.9
Provide legal identity to all, including birth registration, by 2030
How did we make a change

1. Community Based Paralegal

• Conducted door to door identification and registration in the areas they were familiar – Trust, Reliability & Integrity

• Were able to deliver the required assistance, overcame the language barrier and literacy issues and also promoted stronger beneficiary acceptance of legal assistance

2. Community Outreach & Awareness

• Door to door outreach = informal community meetings (able to educate their community about nationality law and application procedures)

Success: Paralegals continue to facilitate in the following areas

• “Know your rights” workshops
• Addressing the psychological consequences of injustices like denial of legal identity papers - particularly when these can take years to materialize
• Leadership programs in which paralegals train volunteers who have an interest in helping their communities
How did we make a change

3. Protecting Socio Economic Rights

- Practical measures to help people access rights, convincing local employers to hire, healthcare providers to treat individuals denied healthcare coverage free of charge, or convincing schools to educate children without official proof of identity before working on recognition of their citizenship.

- Focusing on socio-economic rights prior to legal and citizenship status created space for more constructive relations with government actors on less politically sensitive topics than citizenship (such as school drop-out rates or population healthcare status).

4. Lasting Change – advocacy strategies

- Evidenced based – action data collection
- Policy amendments and reform
- Support efforts to improve quantitative/qualitative data
- Encourage clients to share about their experiences
Reduction of Statelessness
- Mapping & legal aid project to improve access to nationality and documentation for the stateless Indian population. Led to replication of similar projects for other communities, including the East Malaysia now.

Recognition of the existence of Statelessness
- Breakthrough: The Malaysian Indian Blueprint (MIB) contains recommendations to overcome the stateless and documentation issues however it remains in the grey area now. (Past ruling government)

Evidence based action
- Data collection and analysis patterns of inconsistency led to drafting of procedural and policy recommendation. Submission to government agencies

Invitation by state Agencies to conduct capacity strengthening

Equal Nationality rights – coalition of women rights organizations
- Advocate for policy reform to remove gender discrimination from the constitution

Announcement by the Prime Minister to approve Pre Independence cases
Thank you