



What is a Stateless Person?

A Stateless person is someone that has no nationality. That's pretty easy to understand, until you come to the part about having citizenship under the laws of the government where you are living. So, it depends.

What is a Stateless Person in the Dominican Republic?

Simply stated it is a person living in the Dominican Republic that entered as a migrant worker or the child of a person that entered as a migrant worker. These people are considered as 'in-transit' and have no legal standing. They have none of the privileges afforded legal citizens. These privileges include being employed.

How Does This Happen?

There are many ways but the most frequent are:

- Walk across the boarder
- Human trafficking
- Born in DR with Haitian Parents

Walking across the boarder:

The Dominican Republic and Haiti share the island of Hispaniola but walking from one to the other is difficult. The countries are separated by a rugged mountain range. While some may climb mountain trails most enter at a market place where Haitian merchants are allowed into the DR to purchase food and clothing that is in very short supply in Haiti.

The markets are open almost daily. With planning and patience a person can slip away unnoticed and begin a new life. They can return the same way.

Human Trafficking:

Young men are approached with the promise of work and a better life harvesting sugar cane. They are being recruited by a buscones, someone being paid by the sugar company to recruit workers. They are paid about \$25 - \$50 for each worker they send. Most of the workers in the eastern region arrived this way, or their fathers arrived this way.

When they enter the DR they rarely have any identification. They are registered as migrant workers or 'in-transit'. With this designation, and no documentation, it is nearly impossible for them to obtain citizenship.

Born in DR with Haitian Parents:

This is perhaps the most common status of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic. Their families have been living and working in the bateyes for several generations. They have never lived in Haiti and their grand parents may have never lived in Haiti.

For years these births were not recorded, many of them occurring in the batey with only a mid wife. Those born in a hospital may have been recorded but they may not have been given a birth certificate.

Not only do these babies have no identification, their identification has been lost.

Statelessness

As a legal concept Statelessness defines someone that, under the laws of the state or country they are in, is not considered a national. The impact this has on Haitian cane cutters is devastating. For the more than 100,000 people living in the 125 bateyes in La Romana Province it means they don't exist. None of them.

What does that really mean?

- It means they live in wood or cement block buildings with less than 150 sq ft of floor space.
- It means they have no running water, no electricity, and a community latrine with raw sewage running between the houses.
- It means the men work sunrise to sunset cutting sugar cane and get paid \$2.00 a day for the sugar it takes you 3 minutes to earn the money to buy.
- It means their children are at risk of malnutrition, disease, and death.
- It means their children go to a one room school house with 100 students and 1 teacher.
- It means their children cannot get an education beyond eighth grade.

Human Rights - Human Dignity

Every Human Rights agency has cited the inhuman treatment of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic. While we support their efforts at the worldwide and country arenas our mission is providing assistance to the individuals caught up in the war against Human Rights violations.

How do we help?

- Good Samaritan Hospital - The hospital is being built entirely by volunteers. We started in 1991 and today it sees over 40,000 patients annually.
- Mobile Health Clinics - Medical Teams from the US visit over 125 communities each year bringing health care and medical screening to over 100,000 people.
- Health Promoter Program - Community health providers monitor local health conditions and provide basic assistance.
- Water Filter Program - Working with Rotary International we provide biosand water filters to homes requesting them.
- Sugar Cane Kids - We encourage parents to send their children to school and support the state run schools in the communities.
- After School Kids - A program that reinforces lessons learned in school and introduces new subjects to improve their education.

How You Can Help

Consider volunteering by joining one of the many teams that travel to La Romana and make difference.

You can help financially by contributing to:

- Good Sam Hospital Construction
- Batey Mobile Clinic (\$1,000.00)
- Provide a family clean water (\$115.00)
- Purchase a school uniform (\$40.00)
- After School Kids (\$25.00)
- School tuition for 1 year (\$350.00)
- Batey Food Distribution (\$800.00)
- Sponsor Women's Health Screening (\$500.00)
- Sponsor AIDS screening (250.00)
- Sponsor Family Planning Seminar (\$250.00)
- Support a team volunteer (\$100.00)
- Pray for the Cane Families (Priceless)

These are suggested categories and amounts. If you are able to help financially contributions of any amount are greatly appreciated.

We are a volunteer organization with no paid employees so the full amount of your gift will be used as you direct it.

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