



CITIZENS IN ACTION SOUTHERN AFRICA

(CIASA)

COMMEMORATING WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2022

Citizens in Action Southern Africa (CIASA) in solidarity with over 60 million people who have been forcibly displaced including asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons joins the rest of the world to commemorate the World Refugee Day on this day the 20th of June under the theme “Whoever. Wherever. Whenever. Everyone has the right to seek safety” which has been set aside to build empathy and understanding for plight of refugees and to recognize their resilience in rebuilding their lives. The campaign slogan for this year is on the right to seek safety. CIASA also honors the strength and courage of refugees and encourages public awareness and support of the refugees, people who have had to flee their homelands because of conflict or natural disasters. Refugees, other forcibly displaced people in their search for a “safe place” to call home face barriers, trauma and several challenges and often suffer hunger. On this day, CIASA recognizes that women, girls and persons with disabilities face situations of financial and sexual exploitation and gender based violence. In the camp context, women also face many challenges in accessing basic humanitarian services for themselves and even for their families.

According to the UNHCR, the number of forcibly displaced and stateless people in Southern Africa remained above 8,4 million, a result of conflict and internal displacement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Mozambique, political violence in the Central African Republic resulting in refugee movements into Southern Africa and the eruption of Mount Nyirag. Many of those displaced are now faced with increased poverty, destitution and widespread protection risks from exploitation, trafficking, sexual and gender based violence, child labor, early marriages, deportation e.t.c as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and climate change. It is important to note that nearly ninety per cent of the world’s refugees are hosted in developing countries whose capacities were overstretched even before the pandemic and are now forced to contend with worsening humanitarian conditions for local and displaced communities alike.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This year's theme calls on governments, development partners and CSOs to work on ensuring that the displaced have access to services such as education, health care, WASH. CIASA recognizes that the theme also reminds us of the importance of inclusion and ensuring that all the people including refugees from diverse backgrounds, women and persons with disabilities have access to all basic services such as health care, education and WASH services. Governments and development partners should also safeguard access to protection and asylum, respond with life-saving assistance and work to reduce and prevent statelessness. Access to livelihoods, opportunities, skills development, education, health, safety and security should be also ensured. On this World Refugee Day, CIASA calls for greater global solidarity and action to support and include refugees, internally displaced and stateless people especially women, girls and persons with disabilities.

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