

PRESS RELEASE**20th June 2025****CARITAS ZAMBIA ON WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2025: "SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES – UBUNTU IN ACTION"**

On World Refugee Day, June 20th, Caritas Zambia stands in solidarity with refugees around the globe, especially the children and young people who have sought safety and a new beginning here in Zambia. This day serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience, courage, and hope of millions forced to flee their homes due to conflict, persecution, and violence.

For Caritas Zambia, caring for refugees is not merely a humanitarian act, it is a profound moral imperative deeply rooted in our Catholic faith and guided by biblical teachings and Catholic Social Teaching. We recall that even Jesus Himself was a refugee, fleeing with Mary and Joseph to Egypt to escape persecution (Matthew 2:13–15). This sacred narrative powerfully illustrates the experience of displacement and God's enduring solidarity with those who are forced to move.

From the Old Testament's command to welcome the stranger (Leviticus 19:34) to Christ's identification with "the least of these" (Matthew 25:35), Scripture calls us to extend compassion and hospitality to those in need. Catholic Social Teaching reinforces this call, particularly through the principles of human dignity and solidarity. We believe that every refugee, like every human being, is made in the image and likeness of God and possesses inherent dignity that must be respected and protected.

The principle of solidarity reminds us of our interconnectedness as one human family. It calls us to stand with our brothers and sisters who are suffering, to share their burdens, and to work for their well-being. Our faith directs us to recognize Christ in the face of the displaced and to respond with love and practical assistance.

Here in Zambia, Caritas is deeply committed to living out this faith. We focus on empowering young refugees with livelihood skills, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to build independent and fulfilling futures. We also recognize the profound emotional toll displacement can take. That is why our psychosocial counseling services are vital in helping individuals and families heal and cope with trauma.

However, we recognize that we cannot do this alone. Addressing the needs of refugees requires collective effort, including strong partnerships with the government and other stakeholders.

This year's theme, **"Solidarity with Refugees: Ubuntu in Action,"** underscores our shared humanity and collective responsibility to support and empower refugees and the communities that host them. It also acknowledges the Government's longstanding commitment to refugee protection. In this spirit, we call upon the Government to renew and strengthen its dedication to upholding the rights, dignity, and well-being of refugees.

We urge the following actions:

1. Strengthen Legal Protections

Implement and harmonize national legislation with Zambia's 2024 Refugee Policy. Ensure that all asylum seekers receive fair and timely procedures, and that the principle of non-refoulement is strictly upheld.

2. Harmonize Legislative Frameworks

Review and amend various laws that currently hinder the full implementation of refugee protection policies and programs. A coherent legal framework is essential for effective service delivery, coordination, and accountability.

3. Enhance Coordination

Strengthen collaboration among departments under the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security, particularly the Immigration Department, the Commissioner for Refugees, the Anti-Human Trafficking Department, and the Zambia Police Service to ensure a unified, efficient, and rights-based approach to refugee protection and service delivery.

4. Invest in Refugee Self-Reliance

Support vocational training, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion programs that empower refugees, especially forcibly displaced children, youth, and women, to rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose.

In Conclusion

We believe that every refugee has a unique story, dreams, and immense potential. By investing in their well-being and future, we are not only offering a lifeline, we are also enriching our communities. As we observe World Refugee Day, let us remember our shared humanity and continue to work toward a world where all refugees are welcomed, protected, and allowed to thrive as our faith compels us to do.

Yours in Service,



Fr. Dr. Gabriel Mapulanga
Executive Director, Caritas Zambia