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1h · Edited

The Refugee Crisis: A Humanitarian Tragedy

The refugee crisis continues to be a profound humanitarian tragedy, with millions displaced from their homes due to conflict, persecution, and natural disasters. Many live in dire conditions, and a significant number of children are unable to attend school. Countless individuals risk their lives traveling on fragile boats across rough seas in search of a better life.

As of the end of 2023, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported 117.3 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, the highest figure on record. This represents nearly 1.5% of the global population. Among them, 68.3 million are internally displaced, 37.6 million are refugees, and 6.9 million are asylum seekers. Most refugees originate from just a few countries, and many live in overcrowded camps or informal settlements, lacking basic necessities such as clean water, sanitation, education, and healthcare.

Despite these hardships, refugees often display remarkable resilience and determination. Many engage in informal economic activities, such as small businesses or agricultural work, to support their families, while others depend on the generosity of host communities and international aid organizations.

To address the refugee crisis effectively, it is essential to tackle the root causes of displacement, including conflict, persecution, and climate change. Improving living conditions and enhancing access to opportunities for refugees is vital to preserving their dignity.

Recently, the International Conference on Refugee Women's Health in Light of Climate Change was held, hosted by Abu Dhabi University and organized by the Sheikha Fatima Fund for Women Refugees. Under the patronage of H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Mother of the Nation, and in collaboration with the Emirates Red Crescent, the conference addressed the challenges faced by women refugees, particularly the impacts of climate change, political conflict, and healthcare access. This initiative demonstrates the importance the UAE places on the plight of refugees through the excellent work of its charitable institutions.

It is also heartening to see initiatives like that of Times Higher Education (THE), which is collaborating with UNHCR to map higher education opportunities for refugees worldwide—this is indeed a step in the right direction.

Refugees are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, and children, sharing the same hopes and dreams as us. Yet, a twist of fate has tied their lives to a global crisis of unprecedented scale.

— Khaled Hosseini

#refugees #UNHCR #ADU #THE

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency Times Higher Education Abu Dhabi University Emirates Red Crescent (ERC) | الهلال الأحمر الإماراتي

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