Kenya is host to close to 500,000 refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from Somalia, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and other countries in the region. While the overall population of refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya countrywide has decreased, the urban refugee population in Nairobi has increased; around 80,000 of the 500,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in Nairobi.

COVID-19 has destabilized the lives of refugees and migrants, cutting off access to income and increasing vulnerability to violence. To respond to their heightened needs, HIAS Kenya has modified its service by implementing remote support and developing other innovative solutions. HIAS Kenya helps the most vulnerable including single women, women-headed households, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), survivors of torture, older people, people with disabilities and serious medical conditions, and LGBTQ refugees.

**HIAS Programs and Focus**

HIAS protects and supports refugees to build new lives and reunite with family members in safety and freedom. HIAS Kenya integrates best practices based on international standards with a focus on community-based protection and empowerment. HIAS works to advocate and promote durable solutions for refugees, including local integration, safe and voluntary repatriation, and third-country resettlement.

**Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (CB-MHPSS)**

Refugees and forcibly displaced people face adversity and extreme stressors, including loss of loved ones, violence, and disruptions to daily life. HIAS’ community-based mental health programs train community members to recognize acute psychological and emotional distress in children and adults as a result of crisis, and how to respond with empathy and respect. HIAS’ team of psychologists, social workers, and community outreach workers collaborate with refugees to implement culturally appropriate interventions,
activities, and community-based support systems. HIAS Kenya supports the development and empowerment of community support and peer groups, facilitating opportunities for connection in a safe environment, and ensuring access to mental health and psychosocial support. HIAS has also created programs that promote resilience, including temporary cash assistance for qualified refugees; capacity building of community-based organization; savings match for entrepreneur women and girls; and the creation of safe community spaces for peer mentorship and networking for girls.

Legal Protection
HIAS maintains a safe house for at-risk urban refugees who have heightened security concerns. Residents are provided with meals and non-food items, and access to appropriate medical, legal, and psychosocial assistance. HIAS also offers temporary accommodation to new arrivals and refugees with heightened security concerns at a transit center, pending travel to the camps or integration in the community.

Safe House and Transit Center
HIAS maintains a safe house for at-risk urban refugees who have heightened security concerns. Residents are provided with meals and non-food items, and access to appropriate medical, legal, and psychosocial assistance. HIAS also offers temporary accommodation to new arrivals and refugees with heightened security concerns at a transit center, pending travel to the camps or integration in the community.

Child Protection
HIAS is responsible for the case management of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) registered with UNHCR in Nairobi. We coordinate with other partners to identify children at risk, either UASC or children within family units. HIAS also convenes monthly Best Interest Determination panel meetings.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response
Women, girls, and LGBTQ individuals are disproportionately affected by forced displacement. HIAS’ GBV services are driven by the needs and the voices of survivors, and our GBV programming helps forcibly displaced women, girls, and LGBTQ individuals pursue their potential, free from violence and gender-related oppression. HIAS’ Gender and GBV program in Kenya focuses on building strong, responsive pathways for survivors to access medical, mental health, and legal services. The program works to break the gendered cycle of vulnerability and violence for women and girls through strengthening community response and protection units, development of prevention models that seeks to transform men and boys to be allies, and empowerment of women and girls. Working closely with the local community, HIAS uses an array of strategic interventions to enhance the quality of care for survivors of GBV, including the provision of financial assistance, mental health and psychosocial counseling, therapy groups, and accessible and comprehensive health services. HIAS coordinates the GBV working group that is co-chaired by UNHCR, a collaboration that includes the collection of data and data management of GBV cases.

CONTACT
Lucy Kiama, Country Director • +254 798531053 • +254733703726 • lucy.kiama@hias.org