

UN SDG ACTION CHANGEMAKER AWARD WINNER, NERY SANTAELLA, SHARES SPOTLIGHT IN A SELFLESS ACT OF UNITY

Refugee community leader, Nery Santaella, shares UN SDG Award spotlight, emphasizing the need to unite to sustainably transform and meet our planet's needs.

ROME, ITALY, July 27, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Nery Santaella, founder of the [Voices of Venezuela](#) refugee support network, is the 2023 recipient of the prestigious Changemaker Award given by the UN SDG Action Campaign. In a remarkable demonstration of unity and shared achievement, she surprised both Award hosts and the audience by sharing her victory with fellow finalists at the award ceremony in Rome, Italy. This heartwarming act of selflessness made a profound statement about the essence of this award.



Nery surprises judges and audience by sharing spotlight during speech

“

In a world that is meant to alienate us, to separate us; to act together, to care for each other, to work with each other is an act of bravery.”

Nery Santaella

The award encompasses four categories: MOBILIZE, INSPIRE, CONNECT, and CHANGEMAKER, focusing on different aspects of activism and change-making related to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The awards ceremony, held on July 24, marked the opening of the UN Food Systems Summit+2 at the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Nery's Voices of Venezuela initiative was chosen from over 5,000 applications from 190 countries, for its pivotal role in

empowering Venezuelan migrants. It has provided essential resources and information benefiting over 640,000 displaced Venezuelan refugees through her helpline and reached over four million refugees and host citizens through media.

In her acceptance speech, Nery articulated her vision for unity, stating "In a world that is meant to alienate us, to act together, to care for each other, to work with each other is an act of bravery." She then turned this brave statement into action by inviting fellow finalists, Nazir Atul and Emmanuel Mushy, to share her spotlight and recognition.

Co-founders of Tanzania's VAS Hub, Nazir and Emmanuel actively combat youth unemployment, communicate crucial information using accessible language, and enhance societal engagement through their transformative project. By showcasing local talent via public and digital murals, they provide resources that help youth convert skills into tangible economic value.

As Nery shared her win, Nazir and Emmanuel responded in kind, dedicating the award to all those committed to sustainable development and social change. They declared, "This award is for all of us, we are celebrating all of you," celebrating the collective efforts that go into effecting transformative change.

Nery Santaella's selfless act at the UN SDG Action Awards speaks volumes about her commitment to unity, inclusivity, and shared success. Her bold actions are steering transformative change and building an impactful humanitarian ecosystem that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals. Her work emphasizes prevention of poverty and hunger, reduction of inequalities, and promotion of peace and justice for migrants.



Nery Santaella shares hug with finalists before she invites them to speech during her spotlight



Nery Santaella and her Voices of Venezuela cofounder Jason Rovig, pose with VAS Hub's Nazir Atul & Emmanuel Mushy

Award Speech Transcript

Nery's speech: "Empowering people to unite them for a cause is such a brave idea in the world right now. In a world that is meant to alienate us, to separate us, to act together, to care for each other, to work with each other is an act of bravery. We need to unite now, we don't have much time, we need to protect the vulnerable and only together, we can build a more inclusive, a more just, and a more sustainable world. I'm not going to talk too much, because this spotlight is not only mine, I want to share my spotlight, I want to share this moment, I want to share this prize with my friends and colleagues Nazir and Emmanuel."

The emcee breaks in: "this is literally uniting to act, this is not planned..."

Nazir and Emmanuel, in turn honored all the other people out there changing the world who applied and were not chosen as finalists: "Probably we're going to get in trouble for this but thank you so much Nery for doing this, this matters a lot to us. We came from Tanzania to here. We thank the government of Tanzania for making this happen, UN SDG Action Campaign, the team, Marina Ponte and your team. Thank you for making this happen, I think it matters. After 4 years of hustling here and there for the fact of being appreciated and being recognized in a platform like this here in the UN, that matters a lot to us. It shows that the work we have been doing for the last 4 years, it actually matters, and that is why people have seen it. And now its like a step of us being shown that we actually matter. So for all the people that applied this year in the Changemaker Category, and you are not here, you're back there at home, you're watching this, this award is for all of us. This award is for all of us, we are celebrating all of you."

About Nery Santaella and Voices Of Venezuela:

Nery Santaella, a Venezuelan refugee, has emerged as a trusted leader within her community of 2.4 million Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. She founded Voices of Venezuela with Jason Rovig as a family initiative rooted in the empowerment of vulnerable communities. United in both marriage and mission, they have spent the past four years dedicated to ensuring that migrants have equal access to information, resources, and services. Guided by a shared vision of inclusivity and alignment with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, they are emerging as influential changemakers on a global stage. Their joint efforts through their companies [Art For Impact SAS](#) (Colombia) and [Tech Equalized LLC](#) (USA) serve as a vital bridge between organizations, governments, and migrants, underscoring the transformative power of community-driven initiatives in enacting significant social change.

<https://sdgactionawards.org/nery-santaella/>

About Nazir Atul and Emmanuel Mushy:

Nazir Atul and Emmanuel Mushy, co-founders of VAS Hub, are visionary leaders who use art and storytelling to drive social change. Their project "Usage of Murals For Social Change" nurtures local talent and raises awareness of critical social issues, providing alternatives to unemployment for talented youth in Tanzania. <https://sdgactionawards.org/nazir-atul-emmanuel-mushy/>

About the UN SDG Action Awards:

The UN SDG Action Awards is a signature program of the UN SDG Action Campaign. It recognizes initiatives and individuals that mobilize, inspire, and connect people to drive positive change.

<https://sdgactionawards.org/>

Jason Rovig

Art For Impact SAS

info@artforimpact.org

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