



We stand with women refugees

In 2025, the number of forcibly displaced people fleeing persecution, conflict and violence rose to 123 million, 38 million of whom were classified as refugees. That's 1 in 67 human beings worldwide. 49% are women and girls, subject to additional risks of gender-related levels of physical, psychological and sexual violence. In the two-year civil war in Sudan – considered the worst current humanitarian crisis – displaced women and girls have been subjected to live streamed rape, designed to destroy them, their families and their communities.

2025 simultaneously saw an unprecedented decline in international aid for dealing with the root causes of displacement and migration, including in the UK, where budgets have been slashed and over 20% of development aid intended for protection, education and healthcare in vulnerable communities around the world has been spent domestically on housing asylum seekers due to the backlog in processing claims.

International protection is now being further undermined by calls for long-established human rights laws to be diluted or even scrapped, with the UK government amongst those seeking to "modernise" the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) by diluting Articles 3 and 8, offering vital protection against torture and family separation. If governments renege on their legal and moral obligations, we will see an unacceptable rise in lawlessness and impunity, as evidenced by illegal attacks on sovereign states in Europe, the Middle East and, most recently, Venezuela.

Against this backdrop, refugee women are risking their lives to save their families in their struggle for survival. They are a powerful resource even in the most challenging circumstances, and the Women in Black stand with them and UK organisations that seek to help them rebuild their lives, such as:

- Women's Refugee Commission (www.womensrefugeecommission.org)
- Women for Refugee Women (www.refugeewomen.co.uk)
- UK for UNHCR (<https://unrefugees.org.un/how-we-help/women-and-girls/>)

For further reading, see International Organization for Migration, CIOP and UN Women: *Comprehensive information and orientation programmes: A Gender-Responsive Approach for Supporting the Empowerment of Women on the Move, IOM 2025 ISBN 978-92-9278-000-5*

Sign the *Welcome Every Woman* pledge, become part of a strong, compassionate and caring community standing in solidarity with refugee women. <https://www.refugeewomen.co.uk/welcome-every-woman/>

Please write to your own MP and the Foreign Secretary, Yvette Cooper fcdo.correspondence@fcdo.gov.uk and Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, public.enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk in support of our demands:

1. Act in accordance with international law instead of undermining it
2. Ensure that foreign aid adequately addresses ongoing humanitarian crises
3. Actively involve refugee women in peacebuilding processes



Women in Black hold vigils every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the National Portrait Gallery, St. Martin's Place, London WC2. Our vigils are silent, women-only and if possible, we wear black. We welcome all women who support our call for an end to militarism and war.

*Contact us: Twitter @WIB_London FB @womeninblack.london
<http://london.womeninblack.org/>*