

Refugee Women Statement: International Women's Day

Refugee women face a range of intersecting inequalities and are discriminated against on the basis of their identity as both a refugee and as a woman. Consequently, refugee women are the most disproportionately impacted by the violence, poverty, inequality, and displacement experienced in their communities. In spite of facing a range of difficulties, refugee women both in Turkey and around the world have overcome these challenges to become leaders, activists, and change-makers who transform their communities and societies for the better. Refugee women must be treated with equality, and be recognized as agents who, when afforded the opportunity to do so, can successfully make the world a better place.

Recognizing International Women's Day on 8 March this year, the Refugee Council of Turkey (TMK) Gender and Migration Working Group recommend that:

1. Women and their organizations, especially those led by refugee women, must be included in all stages of policy- and decision-making processes, spanning from planning, consultation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of policies and decisions. Women-led and refugee-led organizations must be supported through easing access to funding and resources, and through targeted support for their advocacy, networking, research, planning, management, and strategy building.
2. Refugee women must be recognized as first responders and the work that they do on the front-lines of humanitarian response. To that end, investments must be made for policies and programs to scale up and amplify refugee women's leadership in humanitarian and development responses.
3. Considering the disproportionate impact of war and violence on refugee women and the weaponization of women's bodies, refugee women must also be equally represented in peace-keeping and building and post- conflict development programs efforts, and be meaningfully included in processes relating to conflict resolution, early recovery, and access to durable solutions.
4. Policies and investments should support economic enterprises and businesses of refugee women and other women-led businesses as a strategy to overcome existing social and economic inequalities and poverty confronting women and their networks.
5. Representation of refugee women must be meaningfully supported across different sectors, and especially in spaces that are traditionally viewed as "male", such as in business, law enforcement, STEM, and the digital economy.
6. Refugee women must be recognized as leaders, positive role models, and rights-holders and stakeholders. Women, and especially refugee women, must not be portrayed as weak, passive, or vulnerable recipients of aid.