



Statement No. 003 CDH/VICAR 2026 on the Occasion of March 8: International Women's Day

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the CDH/VICAR pays tribute to the courage, resilience, and dignity of refugee women who continue to face extremely difficult conditions in several regions of the world, particularly in the Great Lakes region and East Africa.

While the world celebrates progress in women's rights, thousands of refugee women still live in situations of extreme vulnerability, particularly in refugee camps in Tanzania, among Congolese refugee women living in Burundi, as well as among women displaced or forced to flee because of the war in Sudan.

In Tanzania, Burundian refugee women, particularly in camps such as Nduta and Nyarugusu, are suffering the consequences of increasing pressure aimed at reducing the space for protection. The demolition of houses, restrictions on movement, and threats of repatriation push many women into a situation of permanent insecurity. Many of them are heads of households, responsible for the daily survival of their children, while living in constant fear of losing their shelter or being forced to return to a country where they do not feel safe.

In Burundi, Congolese refugee women who have fled the persistent violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo also live in extremely precarious conditions. In reception sites and camps, their access to essential services remains limited, particularly with regard to healthcare, clean water, and humanitarian assistance. Restrictions on movement also make it difficult for them to seek livelihoods or access markets and external services. In addition, poor sanitary conditions expose these women and their families to diseases such as cholera and other infections linked to the lack of safe water and adequate sanitation infrastructure.

The situation is equally alarming for women affected by the war in Sudan. Since the outbreak of the conflict, millions of people have been forced to flee their homes. Women and girls are particularly exposed to violence, forced displacement, and the total loss of their livelihoods. In displacement areas and host countries, they face extremely difficult humanitarian conditions, often without adequate protection.

In all these contexts, refugee women bear a disproportionate burden of humanitarian crises. They must not only protect their families but also rebuild their lives in environments marked by uncertainty, poverty, and insecurity.

Despite these challenges, these women remain pillars of resilience within their communities. They organize solidarity, support the education of children, and participate in the defense of human rights, often at great personal sacrifice.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, CDH/VICAR calls for:

- **Governments in the region** to fully respect the right to asylum and the dignity of refugee women, and to support dialogue initiatives and peace processes between the parties in conflict in order to promote sustainable solutions to the crises that cause forced displacement.
- **The Tanzanian authorities** to put an end to policies of pressure in refugee camps, including the demolition of shelters and any form of forced repatriation.
- **The international community** to urgently increase humanitarian support and protection mechanisms for women affected by conflicts in this region, while paying particular attention to the specific needs of women living in refugee camps and displacement areas.

Done on March 7, 2026

For CDH/VICAR

Léopold Sharangabo

