



Innovative women-led photography exhibition in London shatters refugee stereotypes

- **Women by Women returns to London with a new collection of photos celebrating refugees from around the world this International Women's Day**
- **The free exhibition is open from Thursday, March 7 - Sunday, March 10 at London's gallery@oxo, Oxo Tower Wharf**
- **Organised by ActionAid, thanks to funds raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery, the exhibition features work by women photographers from Poland, Uganda, Bangladesh, Colombia and Turkey**

A women-led photography exhibition organised by international charity [ActionAid UK](#) is shattering stereotypes and celebrating inspiring women refugees from around the world.

[Women by Women](#) returns to London this International Women's Day with a new collection of photos that highlight the incredible contributions refugees make to their host communities, as well as the trailblazing women-led organisations that support them to flourish.

Held in London's iconic gallery@oxo, Oxo Tower Wharf, on the banks of the Thames, the exhibition showcases the stunning work of photographers from five countries who tell the stories of 21 women refugees.

From the Rohingya women living in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar who have trained as lifeguards to protect children in the community, to the activists in Uganda's refugee settlements who are teaching girls how to make their own reusable period products, each of these women has a unique tale of resilience and bravery.

Following a star-studded private launch night hosted by LBC's Sangita Myska, the free exhibition will be open to the public for a short run of four days from March 7-10.

Many of the women pictured describe facing discrimination in their host country, on top of the violence and trauma that led them to flee their home in the first place. Yet by using their skills to benefit their new communities, they are challenging established stereotypes around refugees and defining their own narratives.

Yasmina, from Syria, survived detention by the Syrian regime and was released from prison in 2014. Now living in Turkey, she is a human rights defender, journalist, researcher, and the CEO of Freedom Jasmine, an organisation which provides life-saving services to Syrian refugees, including psychosocial support and skills training.

Yasmina said: *"After the [February 2023] earthquake we supported around 500 women in Syria and in Turkey with food parcels, dignity kits and other emergency supplies. Many of these women then joined our training workshops and some of them are now leaders within their communities."*

Yasmina's picture was taken by award-winning Turkish photographer F. Dilek Yurdakul, who visited Freedom Jasmine and spoke to women refugees there.

Dilek said: *"Seeing strong women and telling their stories to the whole world is important for me... What they are doing is really special, especially when you realise what they have lived*

through, what their experience is and they're still strong, and this determination to make a difference for women is so important."

In Poland, photographer Magda Klimczak captured pictures of women refugees from countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Ukraine, Iran and Chechnya, who are all supported by Conflict Kitchen, a women-led social foundation and bistro in Warsaw.

Magda said: *"Each of our heroines was unique, each had different motivations and transitions, but for each one, this session was something special. Being a woman in front of a woman's lens, feeling heard, and important, gave them back their dignity."*

In spotlighting the vital work of groups like Freedom Jasmine and Conflict Kitchen, the exhibition highlights the urgent need for more funding for women-led organisations, which currently receive just 1% of gender equality funding.

And by showcasing the diverse range of refugee experiences, Women by Women hopes to change societal attitudes towards people seeking sanctuary.

Taahra Ghazi, Director of Innovation at ActionAid UK, said: *"Portrayal of refugees, particularly in the media, should be with impartiality, dignity, and humanity. We must create more space for refugee women to tell their own unique stories and celebrate their special contributions to their host communities. In doing so, we shine a light on the incredible women-led organisations that are an invaluable lifeline to women refugees in the hope that their chronic underfunding is addressed so they can continue to uplift and empower women refugees."*

The exhibition was made possible thanks to funds raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery and awarded by Postcode International Trust, to support ActionAid's Women By Women campaign and its anti-racism work. The flexible funding provides a lifeline to women-led organisations around the world.

Find out more about the exhibition [here](#).

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For more information, contact the media team at uk.media@actionaid.org or +44 (0) 7753 973 486.

Notes to editor

The Women by Women photography exhibition takes place at gallery@oxo, Oxo Tower Wharf, in London's South Bank, from 7th March to 10th March. Opening hours are 11am to 6pm, admission is free of charge.

High res images are available [here](#)

More photos and interviews of the women pictured from each country, as well as the photographers, are available on request.

Availability to interview

- Taahra Ghazi, Director of the Innovation, ActionAid UK

- Maria Saidy, Anti-Racist Storytelling Manager, ActionAid UK
- Dilek Yurdakul, Turkish photographer
- Magda Klimczak, Polish photographer

About ActionAid

<https://www.actionaid.org.uk/>

ActionAid is an international charity that works with women and girls living in poverty. Our dedicated local staff are changing the world with women and girls. We are ending violence and fighting poverty so that all women, everywhere, can create the future they want.

About Oxo Tower Wharf

Oxo Tower Wharf is an award-winning mixed-use building, home to a creative community of designer-maker studios and showrooms, gallery and event spaces, shops, and cafes all at the heart of London's South Bank and Bankside. Right on the riverside, visitors can browse, buy and commission from independent small businesses ranging from fine jewellery, luxury ceramics to neon lighting, leather goods and much more, in addition to fine dining at the world-famous roof top restaurant. The iconic building with its famous art deco tower is owned and managed by Coin Street, a local social enterprise creating a thriving, diverse, and welcoming place for people to live, work and play.

Visit: www.coinstreet.org | Instagram: @oxotowerwharf