



Subscribe!

August 2020

Dear friends,

Greetings from Bangkok! We hope you're safe and healthy.

Our thoughts are with the people of Beirut and Lebanon where last week a deadly blast killed almost 200 people and left more than 300,000 homeless. We were glad to learn that our friends and work partners were not harmed; but the scale of the devastation and loss of livelihoods is heart breaking. This tragedy came on top of the already severe economic, financial, and political crises that have been unfolding for more than a year and the health crisis of the past six months. These had been especially devastating to the migrant workers in the country, many of whom were left without income, homes, access to healthcare and social benefits and, at the same time, unable to return to their countries of origin. It was deeply touching to learn that migrants and refugees have joined the local volunteer workers to carry out emergency support work. As we grieve for Beirut, it is also important to note that this is a tragedy that happened because of a negligent government. Colleagues from Beirut are appreciative of the outpouring of love, grief and the much-needed humanitarian support. But as one of them put it, "We are fighting a repressive system, we were not hit by a natural disaster. As more of us come to this consensus and we find ways of taking the streets again, we will need you to step up and support us from that standpoint; organising marches in front of our embassies, pressuring your respective states, writing our version of the story in your news outlets - we will need nothing short of genuine solidarity."

In our office in Bangkok, we are continuing to adapt to the "new normal" mode of work during the pandemic. Although our work and personal lives have been disrupted, we are getting better at planning, coordinating, and implementing our activities over Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp and so on. In June, we organised a webinar on the role of technology in human trafficking and anti-trafficking related to the [latest issue of Anti-Trafficking Review](#) on the same topic. Scholars and activists from the United States discussed the currently existing technological tools meant to prevent and combat trafficking, their underlying assumptions, their challenges and (limited) successes. You can view a recording of the webinar [here](#). We co-organised a webinar with the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking to reflect on the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Trafficking Protocol and the need to put human rights at the centre of all anti-trafficking work (see more below). We also participated in an online consultation organised by the new UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery Prof Tomoya Obokata who sought feedback from civil society about the priorities of his mandate over the next three years.

We formed an internal study group to learn more about the methodology of popular education (following Paulo Freire's [Pedagogy of the Oppressed](#), and feminist elaborations on and critiques of it) and think if and how it can be applied in relation to migration and trafficking. In the coming months, we'll work with several partners from Asia, Africa and Latin America to learn more about their methodologies of work and how they build and support social justice movements.

We began a new research project that will focus broadly on the topic of social and economic inclusion of migrant and trafficked women. Over the next year or so, we'll be working with members and partners in South and Southeast Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America to find out what options for economic and social inclusion exist for migrant and trafficked women, how women access them, how they articulate their needs, and what can be done to improve these options. While the topic may "feel" familiar and researched enough, our preliminary conversations with project partners indicate that there are enough new and original experiences to be documented, not least given the massive numbers of migrant workers returning because of the pandemic.

Finally, we are placing more focus on strategic communications. We created a new [Blog](#) section on our website where the GAATW Secretariat team, our members, and allies reflect on various issues related to our work and share our learnings (and we welcome contributions from anyone). We worked with Migrant-Rights.org to produce two short videos based on our joint research in 2018-2019 - one on the [experiences of migrant domestic workers](#) in West Asia, which we released for International Domestic Workers Day, and one on [access to justice for women migrant workers](#) from Asia and Africa, released ahead of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. In another video, we drew attention to the [cost of the pandemic on migrant workers](#) around the world. In the coming months, we'll be working with Shamila Parmanand, a PhD student at Cambridge University, to produce a series of videos or podcasts where members, partners, and allies reflect on the successes and challenges of the UN Trafficking Protocol, 20 years after its adoption.

As always we welcome your feedback and contributions to future issues at borislav@gaatw.org.



News from the GAATW International Secretariat

UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking Organises Webinars on Twenty Years after the UN Trafficking Protocol



In June and July, the (now former) UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, Dr Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, organised two webinars to reflect on the successes and challenges of the implementation of the UN Trafficking Protocol twenty years after its adoption. The first was co-organised together with the Italian NGO On the Road and focused regionally on Europe and the Americas. The recordings of the six sessions can

be watched on the [YouTube channel of On the Road](#). The second webinar was co-organised with the GAATW Secretariat and focused on Asia and Africa. It can be found on GAATW's Facebook page, see [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#).

Participants at both events - service providers, advocates, academics and independent experts - emphasised that the dominant approach to human trafficking as an issue of organised crime and criminal justice has been detrimental to the human rights of trafficked persons and other vulnerable groups such as migrants. This approach has resulted in states enacting stricter border controls and restrictive migration policies, arrests and deportations of trafficked persons as irregular migrants, prosecution of trafficked persons for crimes they were forced to commit, provision of assistance conditional on trafficked persons' cooperation with law enforcement and other measures that have failed to protect people's human rights, or reduce trafficking in any meaningful way. Importantly, they shared positive examples from different countries and regions of initiatives and legislations that prioritise human rights over law-and-order and immigration control, and the important role of civil society. However, they also

emphasised that these are still too rare. [Continue reading...](#)

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons



In 2014, the UN General Assembly designated 30 July as World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. This year, the UN used the occasion to highlight the people who work on the front lines to end human trafficking - those engaged in identification, counselling, and seeking justice for victims. Perhaps unsurprisingly, of the eleven speakers at the [virtual high-level panel](#) organised by the UN, only one is currently working at a frontline NGO. It is frustrating that

after decades of anti-trafficking work, the majority of those who speak at high-level events organised by international agencies are academics, government representatives, and celebrities, with the occasional woman from the Global South as a survivor.

Notably different was the [online conversation](#) organised by ILO India on the same occasion, in which the GAATW International Coordinator participated as a speaker. This was the second in a series of four theme and sector-specific [Conversations on Work in Freedom](#) and was titled "Trafficking in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and strategies for its prevention". Its aim was to link evidence and policies to reduce vulnerabilities to trafficking in the wake of COVID-19. Speakers sought to analyse trafficking in the context of the pandemic, deconstruct how women's work continues to be stigmatised through gender and class biases, and how sex work is all too often still amalgamated with trafficking. The selection of speakers, which included academics, service providers, advocates, sex workers and survivors of trafficking, the majority of them from South Asia, shows that diversity and representation are achievable in this type of events.

For our part, the GAATW International Coordinator wrote two blog posts to mark the day. [Continue reading...](#)

Call for Papers: 'Anti-Trafficking Education: Pedagogy, Policy, and Activism'

The Anti-Trafficking Review calls for papers for a Special Issue themed 'Anti-Trafficking Education: Pedagogy, Policy, and Activism'.

Teaching and learning about trafficking far exceed the boundaries of the traditional student and classroom. Students range from novice to expert across various professions and industries as well as survivors of, and witnesses to, trafficking. From short-form workshops to long-term engagements, anti-trafficking education is a growing field that impacts multiple sectors, including the medical profession, social work, hospitality, travel, and law enforcement. In response to the proliferation of anti-trafficking education, this Special Issue of Anti-Trafficking Review will endeavour to assess, understand, and share pedagogical approaches and practices within the anti-trafficking movement.

The journal invites scholars, activists, practitioners, survivors, and others involved in anti-trafficking education to evaluate and share how they disseminate knowledge about trafficking. In addition to full-length conceptual, research-based, or case study thematic papers, the Editors invite authors to contribute short pieces for a Forum Section on the topic of trafficking and education. They particularly encourage practitioners with diverse expertise in trafficking education to reflect on their experiences, teaching strategies, curriculum design, and/or target audiences in order to provide practical examples and advice for others in the field of trafficking education.

See the full Call for Papers [here](#). The deadline for submissions is 15 November 2020.

Women's Workload during COVID-19 Lockdown in Nepal



The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of human life including the world of work. As women work in both the private and public domains, they are among the worst hit in terms of increased workload. For them, the crisis has increased their working hours to **work from home and work for home**.

Therefore, in May, WOREC Nepal conducted research to understand the scenario of women's work in the private and public sphere and see if their workload had increased during the lockdown. Through telephone interviews and online questionnaires, WOREC received responses from 317 women.

Almost half of the women reported that their household/care work had increased and was proving challenging, while a little more than one-third said it had remained at similar levels. The office work had remained the same for slightly more of the women than those for whom it had increased. Almost two-thirds said that the balancing of "work from home" and "work for home" was a challenge. [Continue reading...](#)

Messaging Modern Slavery: Expert panel and discussion

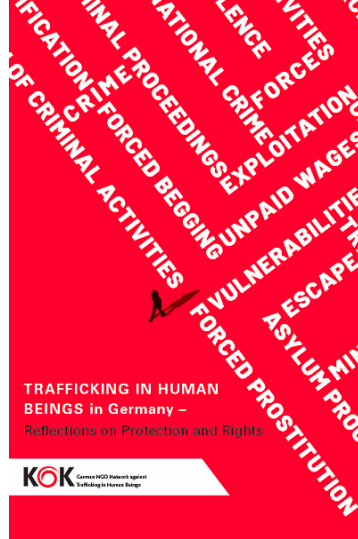
In July, Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX) from the UK organised an [online discussion](#) on the language used by the media to report on human trafficking and modern slavery. This event was part of the ongoing work of FLEX to understand and improve how the media covers exploitation issues.

Emily Kenway from FLEX spoke about their research, which found that UK media covers trafficking and modern slavery primarily as crimes perpetrated by an individual exploiter against an individual victim, or related to consumer action. From over 150 reviewed articles, a very small number focused on systemic issues related to socio-economic policies. Kieran Guilbert from the Thomson Reuters Foundation shared about the Foundation's approach to writing about trafficking and slavery, which attempts to embed exactly these systemic issues in its articles, as well as write about under-reported problems that marginalised people experience. Sophie Otiende from Liberty Shared emphasised how the media's reporting on trafficking shapes the perceptions of policy makers and leads to ineffective policies. Importantly, it also shapes people's own perceptions and many victims of trafficking cannot self-identify as such because their story doesn't fit into the one portrayed by the media. Finally, Dr Christiana Gregoriou from Leeds University and Dr Ilse Ras from Leiden University shared the findings of their review of media reports of trafficking and modern slavery in the UK, which largely confirmed the points that the other speakers highlighted. Drs Gregoriou and Ras also spoke about [their analysis](#) of the metaphors used by three UK corporations in their modern slavery statements.

New KOK Publication on Human Trafficking in Germany

On World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, KOK, the German NGO network against trafficking in human beings, published its 2nd volume of the KOK book-series titled *Trafficking in Human Beings in Germany - Reflections on Protection and Rights*.

This is a unique book-series on trafficking in human beings and exploitation in Germany written with the expertise of various specialists in the field. In this 2nd volume, 26 authors analyse trafficking in human beings, different forms of exploitation with political and practical recommendations for the adequate support of trafficked persons and their rights deriving from the



multi-faceted experiences of specialised counselling centre practitioners, lawyers, researchers and representatives of civil society. This publication is available free of charge in German and English (postage costs only), as paperback and eBook and can be obtained via email (info@kok-buero.de) at the KOK office or on [KOK's website](#).

Alternative Report on Human Trafficking in Peru

On 10 August, Capital Humano y Social (CHS) Alternativo and the Peruvian Ombudsman office, together with USAID Peru, presented the [7th Alternative Report](#), an exhaustive and detailed shadow report on the state's role in the fight against trafficking in persons in Peru between 2018 and 2019.

The report shows that the Peruvian government reduced the budget for actions on human trafficking from USD 2.87 million to USD 2.18 million during this period. Most national, regional and local government agencies did not even allocate funds to the prevention of trafficking and did not report data on it. There continued to be a lack of public prosecutors and public defenders with specialised knowledge of human trafficking, and only 4.8 per cent of investigations for human trafficking in 2018 ended with a conviction.

Congresswoman Leslye Lazo and congressman Gino Costa committed to the fight against trafficking in persons, and will seek to create a budget plan together with the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Internal Affairs. Percy Castillo, Deputy for Human Rights and People with Disabilities of the Ombudsman office, showed concern that the Ministry of Education was not taking trafficking prevention as a priority even though the majority of victims are teenagers of school age.

On World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, CHS Alternativo released a [video](#) highlighting the reports of violence and abuse, including trafficking, against women, adolescents and children during the lockdown caused by the pandemic in Peru.

New ASTRA Campaign on Labour Rights in Serbia



On 27 July, ASTRA launched a new campaign: **LABOUR RIGHTS - NOW! Awareness is the first step towards protecting your rights** to raise awareness of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. ASTRA's goal is to inform people looking for work in the country or abroad how to protect themselves and recognise the signs of trafficking, and to inform victims about their rights and the types of assistance available to them. In addition, through dialogue with experts and based on the results of the 2019 research [Labor Exploitation is Real](#), ASTRA will seek to identify gaps in the legal framework governing labour relations and labour rights and make new proposals for its improvement.



In addition to the [campaign website](#), which provides detailed information and advice to job seekers, ASTRA produced a [short campaign video](#) (in Serbian, with English subtitles).

If you'd like to contribute to this e-Bulletin, please contact borislav@gaatw.org

www.gaatw.org

Resources

[Anti-trafficking, Policing, and State Violence](#)

Jennifer Suchland

What is the relationship between policing, state violence and anti-trafficking? *That* is the question we should double-down on at this historical moment, as global outrage and protesting

demand justice for the Black lives killed by racist police. There is a deep and serious connection between anti-trafficking strategies and systems of oppression and violence endemic to policing, border control, prisons, detention centers, and surveillance. These systems are sources of violence that remain at the center of the anti-trafficking apparatus because human trafficking is primarily understood and approached as a problem of criminal justice. While countless activists and scholars have exposed these connections, the most dominant approaches to anti-trafficking still actively align or are complicit with systems of injustice such as over-policing, deportation, and mass incarceration...

[Migration, Exploitation, and Pro-Democracy Protests in Bulgaria](#)

Borislav Gerasimov

In this blog post, our colleague reflects on the ongoing pro-democracy protests in Bulgaria and how they are linked to migration, exploitation, and trafficking. He describes how deficits in democracy and the rule of law in Bulgaria, the widespread corruption and economic destitution, and the neoliberal economic policies of the past 30 years are pushing more and more people to leave the country to seek job opportunities abroad and risk, or put up with, exploitative working conditions. He shares some examples of family and neighbours who have suffered hardship abroad and how, in Bulgaria, "hardship abroad" is a more common and meaningful term than "trafficking".

[COVID-19: Counselling for trafficking victims goes online in Colombia](#)

UNODC

The UNODC writes about the work of GAATW member Espacios de Mujer during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Director, Betty Pedraza Lozano, explains that the organisation now offers counselling to victims online via Skype, WhatsApp and other means. The lockdown has increased the amount of support survivors need and the organisation has been able to devote additional time, as well as data packages and vouchers for food, hygiene products and other necessities. At the same time, Betty expresses concerns that survivors, as well as many other people, are not able to work during this period and may be targeted by traffickers...

[Climate crisis and local communities / Trafficking and smuggling / COVID-19: early reflections](#)

Forced Migration Review, issue June 2020

Since the journal *Forced Migration Review* published an issue on human trafficking in 2006, increased reporting of both trafficking and smuggling has triggered renewed attention around the growing impact of, and the links between, these related but distinct phenomena. The 12 articles in this new issue explore some of the current challenges, misconceptions, insights and innovations in these fields. This issue also includes a feature on **Climate crisis and local communities**, plus a small collection of articles presenting early reflections on **COVID-19** in the context of displacement.

["A chance to feel safe": Precarious Filipino migrants amid the UK's coronavirus outbreak](#)

Kanlungan Filipino Consortium

This report focuses on the impact of the coronavirus outbreak and associated lockdown in the UK on Filipino precarious migrants (a majority of them undocumented). The report finds that the systematic disenfranchisement of migrants through the "hostile environment" has exacerbated the negative effects of the pandemic and lockdown on this group. The coronavirus pandemic has intensified and highlighted the deadly effects of the hostile environment. But it also reveals the life-threatening inequalities that already existed before the outbreak.