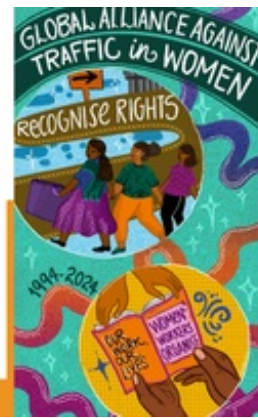




Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

e-Bulletin

July 2024



Subscribe to this e-bulletin!

Dear friends,

Warm greetings from the GAATW International Secretariat.

As we prepare for GAATW's 30th anniversary and the International Members Congress and Conference (IMCC) in October, we are excited to develop the IMCC programme and reconnect with members and allies who will be integral to the event. To begin the celebration of our decades-long journey, we are sharing artwork to illustrate GAATW's work on understanding labour migration and trafficking by centring women's voices and agency, acknowledging rights-based responses, and creating spaces for intersectoral/cross-regional dialogues. The illustration was drawn by [Sonaksha](#) who also developed a creative art piece for GAATW's 25th anniversary in 2019.



This June in Bangkok, we held the Women Workers for Change (WW4C): A Knowledge Sharing and Solidarity Forum. The forum successfully brought together representatives from partner organisations, women workers groups and advocates. Read more about it below.

We would like to extend our gratitude to our members and partners for their continued engagement with the Secretariat. We encourage you to keep sharing your updates with us so we can share them with other Alliance members. We hope you find the updates in this bulletin informative and relevant as we collectively



News from the GAATW International Secretariat

Publications

GAATW 2023 Annual Report

We recently published our 2023 annual report which highlighted a year of dedication, progress and shared achievements with our members and partners. The achievements featured advocacy, research, and events surrounding migrant rights and combating trafficking. Read the [full report](#) on our recent advocacy actions, significant achievements, and the dynamic aspects of collaboration that defined our year.

False Alarms, False Solutions

GAATW's Programme Officer-Voice and Participation, Srishty Anand, wrote a [blog article](#) critiquing the French administration's anti-trafficking measures in time for the 2024 Olympics in Paris, France. The article argues that such measures could harm sex workers without effectively addressing the issue of human trafficking. The blog also noted that similar measures in past sporting events were based on inflated and sensationalist predictions, which led to increased policing and harm to sex workers

Call for Papers

Anti-Trafficking Review is [seeking submissions](#) for our special issue: 'Climate Change and Work on a Heated Planet'. Climate change is expanding the reach of precarious work, affecting not only the most marginalised but also relatively secure individuals. As more people are displaced from their local economies due to environmental disasters, they become vulnerable to exploitation by unlawful recruiters, debt brokers, and traffickers. We invite papers exploring the intersection of climate change, migration, trafficking, and labour. Deadline for submission is 15 December.

Events

Women Workers for Change: A Knowledge-Sharing & Solidarity Forum

From 13-15 June, GAATW organised the Women Workers for Change (WW4C) Forum in Bangkok, Thailand. This forum foregrounded a feminist change agenda for low-wage women workers, focusing on three core strategies: Educate, Agitate, and Organise. Participants included CSOs, representatives from partner organisations, women workers' groups, and advocates. Plenary discussions featured testimonies from women workers' groups, with pivotal sessions on Social Protection and Gender-based Violence and Harassment. Afternoon sessions focused on interactive activities: activism, theatre, and dance movement therapy.





At the event, some of the forum participants presented a tapestry symbolic of women workers' resilience, strength and power. This art piece was put together by participants led by [PintaKultura](#) in the Artivism workshops during the WW4C. Another group presented a community theatre-inspired play, 'Unseen Struggles: A Call to Protect the Rights of Domestic Workers', under the guidance of [Gabfai Community Theater](#), a GAATW member. The play can be viewed [here](#). The WW4C forum concluded with participants celebrating the International Domestic Workers Day by joining 200 women workers in an event organised by [Homenet Thailand](#).



Learning and Sharing: GAATW's visit to Warsaw

From 21-24 May, GAATW-IS team's Programme Coordinator, Alfie Gordo, and Borislav Gerasimov, visited Warsaw, Poland, for a four-day [learning visit](#). The visit was organised in coordination with our member [Fundacja La Strada](#). For this event, GAATW Secretariat staff were joined by Sen Nguyen, a freelance journalist and GAATW media fellow, as well as colleagues from the [Blas Ople Policy Center](#), [Atikha Overseas](#)

[Workers and Communities Initiative](#) (Philippines), and [Center for Social Work and Community Development Research and Consultancy](#) (SDRC) (Vietnam). The visit was part of GAATW's Feminist Participatory Action Research project to understand the experiences of Southeast Asian women migrant workers in Europe and their reintegration upon returning to Southeast Asia.

During the visit, we met with members of the Filipino and Vietnamese communities, representatives from the Philippines Embassy and the Ministry of Interior and Administration, and other actors in the media, academia, labour recruitment, and civil society. It was a collective effort to gain an understanding of the situation of the growing migrant communities in Warsaw and hear the challenges faced by migrant workers in these two cultural communities. It was also an opportunity for Polish actors to hear from the Filipino and Vietnamese NGOs about the needs and experiences of migrants who return after migration from Poland and Europe.

Advocacy News

Joint Statement to Address the Gaps in the Updated EU Anti-Trafficking Directive

In April, GAATW joined five other organisations in a [joint statement](#) welcoming the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive updates adopted by the EU Parliament. While there are strengthened sanctions and expanded protections, we are concerned about the remaining gaps that could impact the rights of trafficked persons. Therefore, our statement urged the EU Member States to prioritise victim rights as they implement these changes and to consider our recommendations for a rights-based approach that truly supports and protects all victims.

Supporting Change: GAATW's Op-ed on UN's Call for Sex Workers' Rights

Co-written by our Advocacy and Media Lead Maya Linstrum-Newman, this [op-ed](#) supports the recommendations laid out by the UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls. The [recommendations](#) advocate for the full decriminalisation of adult voluntary sex work and the meaningful inclusion of sex workers' voices in policymaking. This evidence-based document, informed by consultations with sex workers worldwide, highlights the harms of punitive laws and calls for equal labour protections.

Standing in Solidarity: Oral Statement at the 56th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

As part of a delegation of representatives of sex workers groups and organisations, Sabra Boyd from Sex Workers and Survivors United, a member of [Freedom Network USA](#), [spoke](#) on behalf of GAATW. The attendance of this delegation to the hearing at the UNHRC is a clear rejection of the last report on prostitution launched by the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls (SR VAWG) last month. In her oral statement, Sabra emphasised that "a human rights approach to combating trafficking centers on protecting people's agency and autonomy to work – rather than increased policing and surveillance". Sabra referred to the SR VAWG's [report](#) on how it "dangerously conflates the needs of children and adults. To address these two populations simultaneously is ineffective and contrary to international human rights law."

Click [here](#) to watch Sabra's speech.

Alliance News

Our New Members

Join us in welcoming our new members who joined our Alliance between June and July. They are:

- [Workers Support Centre](#), Scotland: An organisation that reaches and represents migrant workers in Scotland in high-risk labour sectors and ensures workers' lived experiences inform policy change. They work with and for people who face intersecting inequalities, building leadership and solidarity to increase individual and collective power.
- [Anti-Racism Movement](#) (ARM), Lebanon: They began as a grassroots collective of Lebanese feminist activists and migrant domestic workers living in Lebanon, and has been a registered non-profit organisation for over thirteen years. As migrant workers are unable to register their own organisations, ARM is one of few organisations in Lebanon focusing specifically on migrant workers, and one of the few working with migrant workers on long-term and sustainable change with an anti-racism approach.
- [Christian Agenda for Development](#) (CAD), South Sudan: Founded in 2008, they are a South Sudanese women- and youth-centred civil society organisation with no religious, political, or governmental affiliation. CAD's main thematic areas and focus

include women's empowerment and protection; peacebuilding; reintegration activities for IDPs, returnees, and host communities; sexual and reproductive health; prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence; and governance and human rights.

- [Peers Victoria Resources Society](#) (PVRC), Canada: They are an innovative, multi-service grassroots agency established by, with, and for sex workers since 1995. PVRC provides a range of peer-focused services through direct support and community partnerships. These include outreach, harm reduction, housing support, education, violence prevention, and advocacy. Their efforts are directed towards current and former sex workers, people who use substances, Indigenous street families, and their connected communities in Coast Salish territories, known as Greater Victoria.

Member Spotlights

Early in May, we interviewed [La Strada Poland](#), one of the founding members of the La Strada network. Established in 1996, La Strada Poland has grown into an internationally recognised expert and advisory centre specialising in human trafficking. Their efforts extend to prevention and education, offering guidance on legal job opportunities abroad and safe migration practices. Their direct assistance includes operating a crisis intervention centre, which features a shelter for trafficked women, a hotline, and comprehensive legal, medical, psychological, and social support services. Click [here for an in-depth](#) look at La Strada Poland's contributions and the valuable lessons they have learnt from their work.


Meet our members



Warsaw, Poland

"Victims of human trafficking are not seen as persons deserving of help or empathy"
Interview with Joanna Garnier

Meet our members



Nairobi, Kenya

"The more we empower women on their rights the more they are able to claim them"
Interview with Janet Anyango

In June, GAATW had an interview with our Kenyan member, [FIDA Kenya](#), to get to know the organisation's history and impactful work in promoting women's and children's rights. They shared insights on FIDA-Kenya's founding motivations, challenges in accessing justice, and their influential mentorship programmes. To learn how FIDA-Kenya has shaped policies and continues to champion justice for all, click [here](#) for the full article.

We recently [interviewed](#) our member [Women Forum for Women in Nepal](#) (WOFOWON), the first NGO in Nepal dedicated to safeguarding the rights of women in the informal and entertainment sectors. Founded in 2008, WOFOWON focuses on ensuring the human rights, freedom, and dignity of women, young girls, and girl children who migrate from rural areas or are trafficked internally. Their work addresses various forms of discrimination, injustice, labour exploitation, and physical and sexual harassment.

Meet our members



Kathmandu, Nepal

"The voice is louder when we unite, and when we unite, we are stronger and can fight together."
Interview with Sarita Thapa

Regional Updates

Asia

Empowering Communities: Workshops for Migrant and Platform Workers

On 30 June, [Just Economy & Labor Institute](#) (JELI) co-organised a participatory workshop on organising migrant workers for trade union in Mae Pa sub-district in Mae Sot, Thailand. Following this, on July 2, JELI conducted the second participatory workshop on "Fostering Psychological Well-being and Self-Care for Platform Workers," attended by 16 platform workers, including riders and care workers.

Standing Against Injustice: ARM's Statement on World Refugee Day

[Anti-Racism Movement](#) (ARM) released a [statement](#) on the occasion of World Refugee Day (20 June), urging the Lebanese authorities to respect their international obligations in treating Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The statement also called for effective investigation of all instances of torture and ill-treatment of refugees and to halt unlawful deportations.

Europe

Prostitution Without Compulsion and Violence: Ban Ying's Responsible Client Campaign

Ban Ying launched their [social media campaign](#) "Responsible Client" aiming to raise awareness about forced prostitution and human trafficking, and to help those affected. The campaign was originally launched during the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. In light of the 2024 European Championship in Germany, the campaign has been revived, digitised, and distributed exclusively through social media.



Defending Sex Workers' Rights at UN Human Rights Council 56

[European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance](#) (ESWA) [delivered](#) a statement that highlighted the harms of criminalisation and the need for legal protections at the 56th Regular Session of Human Rights Council. The statement also mentioned the dangers of prominent voices spreading misinformation and calling for criminalisation of adult sex work. Check out ESWA's [flyers](#) summarising the statement.

Exposing Injustices: FLEX's Report on Improving Access to Redress on the UK's Seasonal Worker Scheme

In May, [Focus on Labour Exploitation](#) (FLEX) released their second report in a three-part series, Bound to Work: Improving Access to Redress on the UK's Seasonal Worker Scheme. It highlights the challenging conditions faced by migrant seasonal workers in the UK. The report also reveals how many workers are trapped in debt cycles due to poor employment practices, insufficient work opportunities, late or underpayments, and a myriad of other injustices. Due to these issues, workers are forced into accepting unsustainable and intensive living and working conditions. You can read their report [here](#).

The Americas



Constructive Dialogues on the Review of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols

In July, at the UNODC headquarters in Vienna, the Constructive Dialogues on Human Trafficking and Smuggling were held to examine the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its protocols. The main topics were the universalisation and application of the Palermo Protocol in relation to child trafficking and trafficking for organ extraction. Bianca Fidone, representative of [Corporación Espacios de Mujer](#), a GAATW member in Colombia, participated virtually in these dialogues.



ASBRAD representative Graziella Rocha, a GAATW member in Brazil, participated in person. In this forum, she advocated for facilitating migration as a human right and an effective strategy against migrant smuggling. She concluded by presenting recommendations to UN member states, including: (1) integrating a human rights perspective into actions against migrant smuggling; (2) developing mechanisms that facilitate regular migration and ensure the protection of migrants' rights; (3) ensuring that NGOs supporting migrants for humanitarian reasons are not

criminalised for their efforts; and(4) incorporating a gender perspective in actions to protect women, the LGBTQIA+ community, children, and adolescents.

Join our Community: Follow Us on Instagram and Twitter!

Stay connected with us on Instagram

Follow GAATW [@gaatw_is](#) to be a part of our Instagram journey! Stay connected with our updates and inspiring stories. Join us and please share your thoughts, and help us spread the word about our work on combating trafficking and fighting for justice for migrant and domestic workers.

Stay updated with Anti-Trafficking Review

Our Anti-Trafficking Review has a new X/Twitter [account](#)! Follow us for updates on the latest research, publications, and insights on trafficking and migration.



Visit our
website



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

GAATW | P.O. Box 36 Bangkok Noi Post Office | Bangkok, 10700 TH

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!