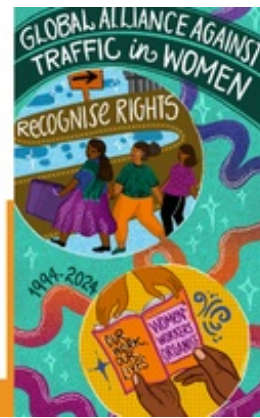




Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

e-Bulletin

October 2024



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Dear friends,

Warm greetings from the GAATW International Secretariat.

As we conclude GAATW's 30th anniversary celebrations and our recent International Members Congress and Conference (IMCC) held on 15-18 October in Bangkok, we are grateful for all the warm greetings, lively discussions and input from members and allies. We look forward to building on the momentum from our anniversary congress and continue our collective work of upholding the rights and agency of women migrants and trafficked persons. We stand in solidarity with our members and allies in striving for global social justice and equality.



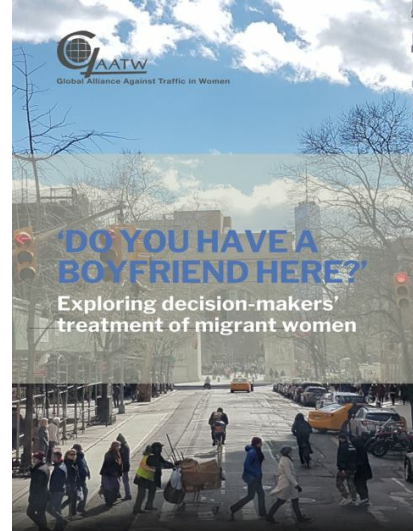
News from the GAATW International Secretariat

Publications

Exploring the Impact of Stereotypes and Prejudices in Decision-Making on Access to Justice for Migrant Women

GAATW's latest [report](#) examines how stereotypes and biases of decision-makers delay access to justice for migrant women. Drawing on consultations with migrant women across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the

report reveals how stereotypes about migrant women's backgrounds, choices, and work conditions affect their treatment within the justice systems. It demonstrates the pressing need to challenge harmful attitudes and guarantee just, impartial action for all migrant women.



New Anti-Trafficking Review issue out!

We are excited to share with you the latest [issue](#) of Anti-Trafficking Review, Following the Money II with guest editors Kiril Sharapov, Suzanne Hoff, and Jonathan Mendel. The issue critically analyses where the funding for anti-trafficking work comes from, whom it goes to, and what its impact is.

Contributors to this issue include academics, NGOs, and survivors. They demonstrate that anti-trafficking funding does not always reach trafficked persons or at-risk groups and in some cases is used in ways that actually harm them. Importantly, they make recommendations on how anti-trafficking funding can be (re-)directed to truly empower survivors and people vulnerable to trafficking.

Call for Papers

Anti-Trafficking Review is [seeking submissions](#) for our special issue on **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 2024.

The Anti-Trafficking Review is also inviting [submissions](#) for another special issue on **Corporate Accountability and Forced Labour in Value Chains**. This issue will explore the effectiveness of transparency and due diligence laws, trade agreements and import bans set by governments largely in the Global North to deal with forced labour in supply chains. The journal seeks papers that examine cross-country comparisons, the regulatory impact on workers in the Global South, and whether these initiatives prevent forced labour and human trafficking or deliver justice for those affected.

Events

GAATW International Members Congress and Conference



From 15-18 October, in celebration of GAATW's 30th anniversary, we organised the International Members Congress and Conference (IMCC) in Bangkok, Thailand, where 96 participants consisting of 47 members and partners from almost 40 countries gathered together to celebrate, reflect, strategise and plan together as an Alliance.

The IMCC began with words of welcome from GAATW's Founding Member, Siriporn Skrobaneek, Chair of the Board, Dr Naruemon Thabchumpon, and Bandana Pattanaik, GAATW's International Coordinator. The three speakers highlighted the Alliance's journey and its commitment to human rights and justice, pointed out the on-going challenges to realise rights and access justice and emphasized the urgency of stronger movements building. The remarks were a prelude to the next plenary session on agenda setting. The speakers in this plenary session spoke about the deep-seated issues affecting migrants, informal workers, and trafficked persons, such as neoliberal capitalism, racism, the legacies of colonialism, the retreat of multilateralism, armed conflicts, and the widening gaps in labour and human rights protections in policies and public services. The panelists noted that resistance and organising are happening, making it vital to listen, document their experiences, and spread their message. This creates an opportunity for collective action and solidarity.



We then co-created an interactive timeline, tracing milestones and achievements of the Alliance and allies between 1994 and now. The first day concluded with three lively parallel sessions in which each group discussed strategies, intersectionality, and learnings on protecting rights of trafficked persons, migrant workers, and those engaged in the informal economy.

The second day's morning session underscored the need to amplify the voices of those with lived experiences in shaping policies and advocating for their rights. By integrating their voices directly into anti-trafficking efforts and workers' rights advocacy, we are not just



talking about change from a third-hand perspective — we are building it with the very people who know these challenges best.

The afternoon session focused on our latest [issue](#) of the Anti-Trafficking Review, where we held a discussion about funding for anti-trafficking work, and how the increase in anti-trafficking funding globally over the past 30 years has not necessarily benefitted anti-trafficking efforts. Our panelists talked about how increasing anti-trafficking funding can become problematic due to political agendas, elite and institutional capture, the (often purposeful) conflation of sex work with trafficking, and failure to address the root causes of trafficking.

On the third day, we began our morning session with six speakers from each region where GAATW members work. Key highlights included: the need for stable governance to uphold the rights of migrant and domestic workers in Africa, the escalating violence from political instability in Latin America, forcing millions to migrate within the region or to North America, the anti-migration policies and the ascent of far-right governments in Europe, the battle to end the criminalisation of clients of sex workers in Canada, the need for South Asian governments to collaborate for regulating safe migration, and the fight to recognise informal workers in Southeast Asia.



We concluded the day by brainstorming ideas for a new annual GAATW publication with our members. Afterwards, Sohini Chakraborty of Kolkata Sanved introduced her new book *Dance Movement Therapy and Psycho-social Rehabilitation*, which examines the therapeutic impact of dance movement on survivors of gender-based violence and trafficking.

On the final day of the IMCC, we engaged in plenaries discussing increasingly pertinent topics in anti-trafficking and migrant rights, including the importance of engaging with survivors from a victim-centric approach. We also looked into the concerns of the climate crisis and its nexus to distress migration, which is often overlooked by states. The final session focused on the issue of trafficking for forced criminality, where members from Southeast Asia, Europe, and Latin America discussed its various contexts and implications.



Later, the discussion centred around strategic future planning with members by looking at cross-regional commonalities, global thematic priorities, and ideas for strengthening the Alliance.

The IMCC was concluded with a [joint statement](#) in solidarity with our European members to mark the EU Anti-Trafficking Day. The joint statement calls for a human rights-centred approach to combat trafficking, urging States to prioritise safe migration, labour rights, protection of migrant workers' freedoms over restrictive border controls, and advocating for dignity, justice, and collective solidarity. You can read the full statement [here](#).

Regional Consultation on Addressing Xenophobia

In September, Alfie Gordo from GAATW-IS participated in the Regional Expert Consultation on 'Addressing Xenophobia in Asia and the Pacific' co-organised by the UN Human Rights Office for South-East Asia and other UN bodies in Bangkok, Thailand. The consultation was attended by 40 representatives from migrant rights groups, academia, local governments, national human rights institutions, UN agencies and the private sector. GAATW was one of the discussants in addressing xenophobia in the context of public narratives. We highlighted that the differential treatment of migrants in policies and practice perpetuates the idea that migrants are somewhat less deserving of rights protection fuels harmful stereotypes. We noted the importance of developing a rights-based narrative on migration by seeing migrants as key stakeholders and involving them in narrative-shaping efforts to promote inclusivity and social cohesion.

Alliance News

Our New Member

Join us in welcoming our new member, [Accem](#), who joined our Alliance in July. Accem is an NGO based in Spain that defends fundamental rights and supports persons at risk of social exclusion. They specialise in asylum and migration, and foster an environment of inclusion, equal rights and duties of everyone regardless of their origin, sex, race, religion, opinions, or social group.

Member Spotlights

In August, we had the pleasure of [talking](#) with [Fundacion Quimera](#), a non-profit organisation that has led social transformation since 1996. Based in Ecuador, their area of work comprises prevention and elimination of gender-based

violence, including trafficking in persons especially women, children, LGBTQI+ groups, as well as refugees and migrants in Ecuador. We traced their journey – how they began, the difficulties they encountered, and their ongoing efforts.

Meet our members



Machala, Ecuador

"Networking is our biggest and strongest strategy in our experience working with sex workers and women's organisations"
Interview with Rosa Manzo

Meet our members



Lalitpur, Nepal

"When we talk about the root causes of discrimination and violence, at the core is unequal distribution of power due to gender, class and caste"
Interview with Sunita Mainali

In the same month, we had an [interview](#) with [WOREC](#), a leading feminist voice in Nepal dedicated to addressing deep-rooted socioeconomic, cultural, and human rights injustices. In its journey spanning back to 1991, WOREC has been working with people at the grassroots to foster social justice and sustainable livelihoods. Their primary mission is to prevent trafficking in persons from a human rights

perspective, but they also utilise a holistic approach to address the root challenges to ensure rights for all Nepalese people.

Regional Updates

Asia

AMKAS Nepal and Partners Unite for a Stronger Response to Trafficking Challenges in 2024

Our member organisation, [AMKAS Nepal](#), recently participated in the "CSO Dialogue on TIP Report 2024 for Collective Response", organised by Winrock International. This event brought together over 25 expert organisations to discuss Nepal's response to new trends in trafficking in persons, and unsafe and forced migration. In the 2024 TIP Report, Nepal was downgraded to a Tier 2 Watch List, which raises serious concerns among civil society organisations, government representatives, and partner agencies. This rating indicates either an increase in the estimated number of trafficking victims or a shortfall in concrete actions to address severe forms of trafficking. It also highlights the need for more robust evidence of collective efforts to combat trafficking.

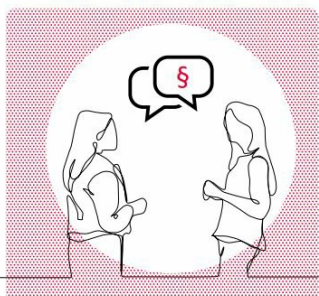


ATKI-HK Marks 24 Years

Our partner organisation, Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong - Asosiasi Te naga Kerja Indonesia ([ATKI-HK](#)), celebrated their 24th anniversary this year on the 13th of October. To mark the occasion, they hosted a migrant culture stage, group prayer, a forum, and offered counselling services. They also held public speaking competitions on the history and struggle of ATKI as well as a public song arrangement about migrants and freedom.



Europe



RECHTSBERATUNG DES KOK e.V.

Bericht 2022 – 2024

KOK Bundesweiter Koordinierungskreis
gegen Menschenhandel e.V.

KOK Germany Releases New Legal Tools and Insights on Asylum, Labour Exploitation, and EU Human Trafficking Reform

[KOK Germany](#) has published multiple legal resources in the past quarter of the year. In August, they released a [report](#) demonstrating the effectiveness of their legal advice centre programme that provides specialised legal advice to advice centres. September saw three releases: a [legal guide](#) to asylum proceedings in cases of gender-based violence, the [New Guide for Public Prosecutors on the Issue of Labor Exploitation](#) which provides advice and guidance for prosecutors so they can uphold the rights of victims despite challenges posed by the criminal system, and a report titled [The Reform of the EU Human Trafficking Directive: Good approaches and missed opportunities](#). The report evaluates the implementation of the new EU Compact on Migration that came into effect earlier this year from a human rights perspective. KOK also calls on the

German government to go beyond the minimum standards set by the EU in the compact, and take decisive action on their own.

ASTRA Serbia Publishes New Report on Preventing Labour Exploitation and Protecting Foreign Workers

In October, our member [ASTRA Serbia](#) released their new [publication](#) titled **Prevention of Human Trafficking for Labor Exploitation and Protection of Foreign Workers in Serbia**. This publication presents the current trends and problems facing foreign workers in Serbia, focusing on preventing human trafficking for labour exploitation and foreign worker protection.

Africa

Our member in Egypt, [FDHRD](#), participated in a [discussion](#) panel on "Supporting Refugee Issues in Neighbouring Countries". The panel brought together influential leaders from the Sudanese community in Egypt, and a diverse group of university professors, experts,

journalists, and educators. The goal of this panel was to foster mutual existence and cooperation between their nations. Panelists and attendees engaged in meaningful dialogue and committed to developing a roadmap for a proactive and constructive conversation between the Sudanese community and civil society institutions.



The Americas

Our US-based member organisation [Advocating Opportunity](#) (AO) hosted a workshop in August titled [Investigating Labor Trafficking: A New Framework](#). This workshop was directed at law-enforcement officials, and aimed to show a new framework that can be used to combat labour trafficking. AO identified a number of pitfalls with the current system we use to address labour trafficking – namely that investigation numbers are low year after year, and labour prosecutions remain few and far between. The workshop explored the fundamentals of labour trafficking, delved into the intricacies of coercion, and demonstrated how data could inform threats.

Calls for Submissions

Julie Ham (Brock University), Rashmee Singh (University of Waterloo) and Menaka Raguparan (University of North Carolina Wilmington) are inviting submissions for an anthology of critical reflections on the complexities within the anti-trafficking industry. In anti-trafficking work, harsh measures can often be disguised as humanitarian actions, victims may be misidentified as offenders, and some interventions may do more harm than good. This includes instances where situations that meet the international definition of human trafficking are dismissed, or vice versa, where unrelated issues are treated as trafficking. Such distortions reveal a disorientation within the field, highlighting what scholars have termed "carceral humanitarianism," "carceral protectionism," and "carceral feminism".

The editorial team is seeking submissions that highlight these "perversions" in anti-trafficking practices, examining the processes and mechanisms that allow them to persist without scrutiny. Contributions could explore these dynamics within criminal justice, social services, migration control, tourism, popular culture, or other areas intersecting with anti-trafficking. They are welcoming submissions from researchers, practitioners, those with lived experience, and anyone who has engaged with these challenges. Read the full detail [here](#)

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