



Talitha Kum
ANNUAL
REPORT
2021

TALITHA KUM
END HUMAN TRAFFICKING



**INTERNATIONAL NETWORK
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Caring for persons wounded by exploitation and acting against
inequalities caused by economic and cultural systems

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INTRODUCTION BY UISG



Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC
UISG President



01

Twenty years ago, the 2001 Plenary Assembly of the International Union of General Superiors (UISG) committed itself to:

“work in solidarity with one another within our own religious communities and in the countries in which we are located, to address insistently at every level the abuse and sexual exploitation of women and children with particular attention to the trafficking of women which has become a lucrative multinational business.”

We have come a long way in the last 20 years, carrying out a work **“very complex and tragic [...] [This] work brings together the missions of different institutions and demands cooperation between them.”**¹

¹ Address of his holiness pope francis to participants in the first general assembly of “talitha kum” the international network of consecrated life against human trafficking, September 26th, 2019.

I would like to recall just a few important milestones:

2004: the International Union of General Superiors, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, initiated training courses that led to the establishment of several territorial networks.

2009: the international coordination organization was founded at the International Union of General Superiors (UISG). Talitha Kum was established to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts of religious sisters.

2019: founding of the first interreligious Talitha Kum network in the Middle East, which marked the 10th anniversary of the creation of the international coordination organization.

The year **2021** was also a milestone, marking history for us consecrated women. For the first time, the executive of the International Union of General Superiors approved and supported the **Advocacy** document drafted by the **Talitha Kum Networks: the Talitha Kum Call to Action**. I would like to thank, on behalf of the UISG, the members of the Talitha Kum Network Coordination for their tireless and prophetic efforts to combat human trafficking and for their synergy and close collaboration with thousands of people around the world, who strive daily to combat human exploitation and eradicate all forms of slavery.

Talitha Kum's commitment has grown over the years, achieving important milestones that fill our hearts with hope and confidence towards the future. However, the road is still long and there are still many steps to be taken.

I was inspired by Pope Francis' words during the International Conference on Trafficking (April 10, 2014) which emphasized that **“human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ.”**

As consecrated women, we are called to embrace this vulnerability that wounds the flesh of Christ, to accompany the victims, and to commit ourselves to the care and defense of life by ensuring the dignity and integrity of every human person.

Human trafficking is a terrible crime involving millions of women, men and children around the world who are severely exploited and enslaved. History and the events we live through have a significant impact on the growth and development of new forms of exploitation.

The pandemic crisis, wars, growing poverty, with the consequent migration of peoples, are just some of the situations emerging in this deeply complex historical time, creating new forms of vulnerability and enabling the development of new forms of abuse and enslavement.

As a matter of fact, we are witnessing a steady increase in the number of people involved in trafficking, both adults and children of both sexes, as well as the different types of exploitation: forced labor, domestic work, coerced begging, petty crime, organ harvesting, recruitment of child soldiers/terrorist groups, illegal adoption and forced commercial pregnancies, and sexual exploitation. Trafficking is a real and perverse expression of the process of globalization and commercialization that touches us all today.

We are aware that there is an increase in **“markets where individuals become mere consumers or bystanders.”** We must become aware that “the advance of this kind of globalism strengthens the identity of the more powerful, who can protect themselves, but it tends to diminish the identity of the weaker and poorer regions, making them more vulnerable and dependent” (Cf. Fratelli Tutti).

There is a need to constantly raise awareness on this sensitive issue. The values of life and social justice particularly call us, consecrated women, not only to empower women through paths of legality but to make concrete choices for the care and support of those who suffer violence and become victims of trafficking.

We wish to embrace the needs of the most vulnerable, to make the cry of the poor audible by participating more effectively in the transformation of social systems that until now have promoted injustice and lawlessness.

The Talitha Kum International Network has been caring for wounded humanity for years now by trying to act on the inequalities caused by political, economic and cultural systems. With its mission to end trafficking, Talitha Kum continues to foster the social transformation that we all aspire to and that gives us hope for a more equitable, more sustainable, and therefore more humane world.

The four areas of commitment outlined in the Call to Action are clear and possible areas for action:

- Ensuring access to justice and long-term, state-supported psychosocial and health assistance, as well as work and residence permits for victims in destination countries;
- Empowering women and girls, as well as their families and communities;
- Supporting safe and legal migration pathways, including in cases of forced displacement;
- Promoting an economy of care and solidarity.

We can all do something! Each person should feel called to act.

“Love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realized each day. It is not possible to settle for what was achieved in the past and complacently enjoy it, as if we could somehow disregard the fact that many of our brothers and sisters still endure situations that cry out for our attention.”

(Fratelli Tutti #11)

As religious people, there is a lot we can do! There are many needs, and every small step becomes crucial if taken together, in synergy and close cooperation.

Let us join forces so that these goals have a concrete impact on the lives of individuals and communities affected by trafficking.

As General Superiors, let us feel called to raise awareness among our congregations to promote a bold and courageous commitment in the defense of life by taking the risk of clear denunciation of and protest against these forms of abuse. Sensitization, knowledge and denunciation of exploitation are concrete steps that allow us to foster the redemption of so many people who seek dignity and fullness of life. We want to be a prophetic presence in this world, ready to collaborate with Christ, in the redemption of humanity!

Let us also feel encouraged, let us take on the commitment developed by the Talita Kum Network, especially responding to the Call to Action, spreading and raising awareness of this form of care for all life, especially by reaching out to those who play a decisive role in the effort to eradicate the exploitation of human beings.

This effort should not thwart the daily work on the ground of so many religious women and people alongside the victims. Only through collective and systematic actions, together through efforts on different levels, will it be possible to contribute to the change we hope for and stop trafficking and exploitation of women.

With gratitude and keen interest, we welcome this report, allowing ourselves to be touched by the data and information of the work of 2021, shared by the Talitha Kum International Coordination Committee. One year after the UISG Executive endorsed the Call to Action, we want to continue to support Talitha Kum's efforts by embracing the global call and making room in our hearts for those who are rising up and courageously taking the path of full life.

With courage and hope, let us walk together into the future!



Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC
UISG President



MESSAGE FROM TALITHA KUM'S INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR



Sr. Gabriella Bottani, SMC
Talitha Kum International Coordinator



01

“The only way we have of preparing for times to come is to start preparing for them as of now within ourselves. They will certainly come: can I not feel them coming closer every day inside of me?”

Etty Hillesum, *An Interrupted Life the Diaries (1941-1943)*

It is in the darkest, most difficult moments that the path to change becomes clear, preparing us for times to come. This has been the key to Talitha Kum’s commitment in 2021: building networks of care to accompany victims and survivors, networks for prevention and collaboration, networks that are now intertwined with the changing times that have dramatically come upon us as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have experienced the pain caused by different forms of violence, conflict and war. Some are recent, like in the case of Myanmar, and others have dragged on for years, as in the case of the Syrian conflict. All our networks have detected an increase in violence against women, particularly in Latin America. Hunger is also on the rise. All these factors have caused movements of people. Migration trends and human trafficking are deeply intertwined. In 2021, Talitha Kum networks noted a sharp increase in injustices suffered by migrating people, who are even more vulnerable to trafficking and to different forms of exploitation including in the sex industry, in the workplace, in forced marriages and in having to beg for money.

Together with victims and survivors, our network has come to terms with the uncertainty and the fear caused by socio-political instability, urban violence and terrorism. On a global level, we have seen a rise in inequality, with poverty and exploitation worsening.

During 2021, there has been an increased awareness across Talitha Kum networks concerning the need to explore new avenues for reporting exploitation, that keep hope alive while facing the challenges of the present. This has led us to identify **four key words: caring, healing, empowering and restoring**. These concepts describe Talitha Kum's actions in accompanying victims and survivors. At the same time, they are part of a lifestyle made up of brave choices in favour of others, of social and community relations, and of our common home.

We've witnessed a crisis of certainties and of ideas. This crisis has allowed transformational processes to take place in Asia, Africa and Latin America. An interesting element to note in the data collected during 2021 is an increase in numbers (see infographic on p.40-41). Compared to 2020, there has been an increase in 2021 of those accompanied in access to care, justice and labour opportunities through preventative action. **Disfigured and wounded by the violence of human trafficking, these individuals and communities give meaning to our existence.** In 2021, Talitha Kum witnessed the birth of five new national networks, bringing the total number of networks to 55. We are on the ground in five continents, with 6,039 people active in the fight against human trafficking.

After all our activities were brought to a halt the previous year because of the pandemic, Talitha Kum's International Coordination Committee promoted research and reflection in 2021 in accordance with the outcomes of the General Assembly in 2019, deciding to focus on three areas of structural injustice that influence human trafficking:

- the power differential between men and women across all sectors;
- the dominant model of neoliberal development and unrestrained capitalism;
- unjust or inadequate laws and policies concerning migration and forced migration.

These three domains of research influenced the coordination of Talitha Kum's advocacy work, which led to Talitha Kum's first Call to Action: this text was the result of an in-depth study and a participatory reflection process. The document was approved by the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) and was launched in Rome on November 25th, 2021.

Regional and global activities for the formation of leaders, as well as network activities and their coordination, have taken place entirely online. The use of online platforms has aided the exchange of information and of best practices, supporting the realisation of common objectives: in Asia we have witnessed the formation of the **Youth Ambassadors** for Talitha Kum against human trafficking, which involved young people as key actors; Talitha Kum has also taken shape in Africa across the continent. On an international level, Talitha Kum was the promoter of the Online Marathon of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking, held on February 8th on occasion of the 7th World Day for Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

During 2021, we've become acquainted with new models for active participation, which have promoted the key role of young people and of those who have experienced human trafficking first-hand. **This is how Talitha Kum networks have decided to engage with the crisis of our times, embracing the synodal journey undertaken by the universal Church.** We have motivated and supported each other, recognising the value of collaboration within and beyond the Church. Diversity is a value when it promotes respectful relationships, and not relationships of submission. This is what we have learned from our daily commitment to fighting trafficking, and what we are called to testify with our coherent and prophetic choices.

We have become aware of the need to let ourselves be converted and transformed by what is nascent, beginning from ourselves and from our identity as a network. **The push for change has come from the continents most affected by the consequences of the pandemic.** The process to identify areas of mutual connection (hubs) began from the grassroots; these were formed in Africa on the basis of linguistic and geographic proximity, whereas in Asia and Latin America they followed three primary areas of action across the continent – formation, networking and communication.

This process initiated a change for all of us, including the International Coordination Committee. This change will accompany Talitha Kum in the years to come.

“Woven together in love” (Col. 2.2) was the theme chosen for the Talitha Kum Assembly in 2019. And in 2021 we have “remained in that love” (Gv. 15,9), holding in our hearts the Word of God that defines our identity: Talitha Kum. This phrase sustains and accompanies us, inviting us to walk together, all of us: victims, survivors, young people, men and women religious and all people of goodwill.

The Word of God has been heard, welcomed and contemplated, has allowed us to nourish life and the novelty of the Ruah, of the Holy Spirit. It is the Word which creates and transforms, weaving networks of hope and love. It is the Holy Spirit which encourages us: “Do not be afraid of the arrogance of violence, no! Do not surrender to the corruption of money and power” (from Pope Francis’ message for the 8th World Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking – 8.2.2022).

We hope you enjoy reading!



Sr. Gabriella Bottani, SMC
Talitha Kum International Coordinator



WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the process by which people are coerced or lured by false prospects, recruited, relocated, and forced to work and live in exploitative or abusive conditions.

Human trafficking is the process by which people are coerced or lured by false prospects, recruited, relocated, and forced to work and live in exploitative or abusive conditions.

Traffickers operate in situations of vulnerability: they target people who desire a better life – to improve their own financial situation, to develop their abilities and skills, or simply to find a safe living environment.

Victims of trafficking may be forced into sexual exploitation, child, early and forced marriages, or labour exploitation in, for example, the domestic, agricultural, hospitality, mining and manufacturing sectors.

Exploitation means a restriction of personal freedom and exertion of power over the victim through actual or threatened violence or punishment. Human trafficking robs individuals of their dignity, agency over their own lives, and the right to live safely and freely.

Trafficking in persons affects millions of people everywhere. There is no single profile of a trafficked person but women and girls are made particularly vulnerable by inequalities in their economic, social, familial, cultural and religious status.



According to the United Nations statistics on trafficking in persons (2020 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons) women and girls represent 72% of identified victims of trafficking, with that percentage increasing significantly in the context of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Globally, one in every three victims detected is a child. Human trafficking is a highly profitable illegal business.

150.2 billion dollars are the annual profits made from human trafficking in the world, two thirds of which derive from sexual exploitation. 34,800 dollars are the annual profits per victim of trafficking in advanced economies, 15,000 dollars in the Middle East, 7,500 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 5,000 in Asia Pacific, and 3,900 in Africa. 50% of exploited workers carry out forced labour to pay off a debt (peonage) (Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour, International Labour Organization, 2014).

WHAT IS TALITHA KUM?

03

*“Talitha Kum. Little girl,
I say to you, rise up.”*

Gospel of Mark (5:41)

“Talitha Kum. Little girl, I say to you, rise up.”

Jesus addressed Jairus’s 12-year old daughter -believed to be dead- with these words. When Jesus took her hand, she immediately stood up and began to walk.

These two words send a powerful message and have been chosen as the name for Talitha Kum, the International Network Against Human Trafficking.

These words invite all members of Talitha Kum’s networks to rise up with courage and hope, to stand with victims and survivors of trafficking in persons, whose hands reach out to us, to promote a just world in which every human being can live in dignity and fullness, thus fulfilling Christ’s message:

“I have come so that they may have life, life in its fullness”
John (10:10)

Faith and spirituality make the presence of God tangible, transforming even the most hopeless situations, and bringing back to life what appears to be dead.

The expression “Talitha Kum” defines the identity and mission of our global umbrella network, that gathers more than 6,000 Catholic sisters, allies and friends by referring to the transformative power of hope, compassion and mercy, which underpins efforts towards the restoration of dignity for the exploited as valuable members of the human family.

Formally established in 2009 with the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) as an international initiative against human trafficking and exploitation, Talitha Kum promotes collaboration among **networks** organized at national, regional and continental level, actively supporting victims, survivors and people at risk. While each Talitha Kum network retains its unique identity and operates within its own country or region, the International Coordination at UISG supports capacity development and training of networks and members, and facilitates the sharing of information, resources and experiences.

As an umbrella network of Sisters-led networks, Talitha Kum is grounded in the long, rich tradition of Catholic women, inspired by the life-giving ministry of Christ, who are committed to community work and collaboration, following the example of the Triune God.

The strength of the Talitha Kum network lies in its bottom-up, grassroots engagement and in its person- and community-centered approach, which ensures proximity to victims and survivors of trafficking, their families, and those at risk of exploitation.

Talitha Kum Networks are:

- inter-congregational Sister-led networks, organized primarily at the national level;
- on-the-ground oriented;
- linked to the national Conference/Association of Major Superiors.

The international coordination team

WHAT IS TALITHA KUM?



BOTTANI SR. GABRIELLA
International Coordinator (since 2015)
SMC - Comboni Missionary Sisters



BAMBARA SR. YVONNE CLEMENCE
Regional representative of Africa (since 2020)
RGS - Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd



PUGLISI SR. MARIA LUISA
Regional representative of Europe (since 2020)
AASC - Sisters Adorers, Servants of the Blessed Sacrament and Charity



JACKSON SR. COLLEEN
Regional representative of Oceania (since 2019)
RSC - Religious Sisters of Charity

22

23



UGARTE GARCIA SR. CARMEN
Regional representative of Latin America (since 2020)
OSR - Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer



OESTREICH SR. ANN
Regional representative of North America/USA (since 2017)
IHM - Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary



AVELINO SR. ABBY
Regional representative of Asia (since 2021)
MM - Maryknoll Sisters

Trafficking in persons is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that affects tens of millions of individuals, as well as the rest of human society. The expression “Talitha Kum” is an invitation to all to call out the system that sustains human trafficking through our voice, our actions and our daily choices. We commit ourselves to denouncing the arrogance and violence of economic and financial power when it acts against the dignity of the person.

Talitha Kum’s work with victims and survivors of human trafficking is grounded in the belief that the dignity of the oppressed and exploited can be restored through sororal and fraternal relationships, marked by the presence of the Holy Spirit and the mysterious encounter with God. In a relationship between equals, Sisters walk together with victims along the path of healing, as they themselves regain a deep awareness of their inner value as individuals and members of their families and communities. In this manner, Talitha Kum addresses the systemic causes that leave people at risk of falling into the hands of trafficking networks, engaging families and local communities together with key stakeholders at the national and international level.

In line with this approach, those who adhere to the values of Talitha Kum are committed to being neighbors to those who suffer the serious consequences of trafficking in persons: men, women, children, and families. The actions of Talitha Kum are aimed at all those who are robbed of their dignity and deprived of liberty, regardless of their lifestyle, race, religion, economic or sexual orientation. The members of Talitha Kum living and bearing witness to Christian values, dialogue with and show respect for members of the different religious traditions and for non-believers.

Talitha Kum’s **Mission** is to end human trafficking and exploitation through collaborative initiatives focused around prevention, protection, social reintegration and rehabilitation of survivors, partnership and advocacy, promoting actions that tackle the systemic causes.





NETWORKS AND ACTIONS

04

@Stefano dal Pozzolo

Areas of Action of Talitha Kum International

Talitha Kum was founded in **2009** to maximize the resources available to Catholic Sisters who serve in the fight against trafficking.

Since the beginning, Talitha Kum International has been particularly active in promoting **networking, formation and communication** among religious sisters, allies and friends who are committed to preventing human trafficking and supporting victims, survivors and people at risk. In 2019, during its last General Assembly, Talitha Kum set new internal priorities to grow and strengthen the network and deepen its impact for the period from 2020 to 2025: these priorities are **education** and prevention work, survivor-informed practices, and **advocacy**, with priority areas in Africa and Asia.¹

FACING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, some in-person activities were suspended in 2021, while others were moved online. Globally, human trafficking was greatly exacerbated by the pandemic, as were many fragilities and vulnerabilities across the world. However, Talitha Kum identified these changes and responded in kind. The crisis has challenged us to change our modalities of organizing and working together as a network against human trafficking. Some positive aspects emerged, such as increased collaboration between networks thanks to online meetings, or the creation of new, local partnerships to address growing challenges.

¹ (Final Declaration - Talitha Kum Assembly 2019)
<https://www.talithakum.info/en/news/final-declaration-talitha-kum-assembly>

Areas of Action of Talitha Kum International



ABOUT NETWORKING

Networking is at the core of Talitha Kum's identity and spirituality.

“The trinitarian model inspires our own work as communities coming together in love, to work towards a common vision: a world without trafficking and exploitation. We respect and honor the differences among our networks - cultures and congregations with distinct charisms - and appreciate how those various gifts are used in the service of promoting God's liberating force in the world.”²

In 2021, our commitment to promoting cooperation between religious congregations - strengthening Talitha Kum's networks in connection with National Conferences of Major Superiors and FBOs - and to implementing the UISG Child and Vulnerable People Protection Policy has led to the establishment of new Talitha Kum networks, the arrival of new members and collaborators, and the strengthening of care and protection actions to victims and survivors of trafficking at the local and regional levels.

² (UISG Bulletin 172, 2020 -24)
https://www.talithakum.info/files/documentdownload/2020/Bollettino_172_ENG.pdf

ABOUT FORMATION



During 2021, Talitha Kum International has continued to offer courses, workshops and seminars for capacity-building purposes. Some examples are listed below.

- 36 members of Talitha Kum received a leadership qualification in the second edition of our Leaders' Course, coordinated by Talitha Kum, Pontifical University Antonianum, and Tangaza University College.
- Training for Talitha Kum Formators included mentorship of nine sisters in Asia and three in Africa.
- Talitha Kum's basic course dedicated to the professional development of those who want to engage in work against trafficking and accompany survivors of trafficking in their social reintegration included the following highlights:
 - In Asia, online support was delivered to 82 religious people across five countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan, Taiwan, Vietnam and Cambodia);
 - In Africa, 116 religious people across eight countries were reached in person (Ghana, Nigeria and Burkina Faso 20; Kenya 25; Tanzania 60; Malawi, South Africa and Botswana 11), while 16 Talitha Kum Coordinators, including new religious people, required online support to implement the network in their four countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania and Algeria).

Areas of Action of
Talitha Kum International

ABOUT
COMMUNICATION

Communication is a fundamental element of the network, a strategic tool for raising awareness and giving visibility to the hidden crime of human trafficking through the work of Talitha Kum Sisters at the grassroots.

In 2021, Talitha Kum expanded data collection from network members: 94.5% of networks updated their data in 2021. Data collection allows us to make our efforts visible, maximizing communication and the exchange of information and good practices.

Talitha Kum International has implemented an internal strategic communications plan to facilitate communication within the Network across different levels. We have also designed an external communications plan to systematize the use of different social media channels: website, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, and Vimeo. This year, we have also implemented a new communications project: Journeys of Liberation shares testimonies of Sisters engaged against trafficking, and stories of survivors of trafficking in different contexts and regions.

Talitha Kum has also promoted and supported international anti-trafficking campaigns. The main one is the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Trafficking in Persons: on February 8th 2021, the Day was held online for the first time and the theme was “An economy without human trafficking”. Another important date is July 30th, the UN’s International Day Against Trafficking in Persons, when we ran an online campaign under the heading #CareAgainstTrafficking.



Areas of Action of Talitha Kum International



ABOUT ADVOCACY

On November 25th 2021, the Sisters of Talitha Kum's International Coordination Committee presented the Talitha Kum Call to Action at a launch event in Rome attended by the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, ambassadors to the Holy See, and several partners who have long accompanied the work of the network. Talitha Kum's Call to Action is the first advocacy document ratified and endorsed by the Executive Board of the International Union of Superiors General. This Call to Action is aimed at global governance stakeholders including states, international organizations, non-state actors such as civil society groups, private sector organizations and academic institutions, and all those who have a role to play in the tireless effort to eradicate human trafficking and exploitation. It also addresses Sisters, the Catholic Church, leaders of other religious or spiritual traditions, non-believers, allies, friends, and all people of goodwill who share our vision for a world free of human trafficking and exploitation.

Another important document in the advocacy area is the Talitha Kum Study, Prayer and Action Packet: Women and Human Trafficking³, which falls under the first priority identified at the 2019 Talitha Kum General Assembly. This document continues to explore and denounce the causes that contribute to human trafficking.

³ (Talitha Kum Study, Prayer and Action Packet: Women and Human Trafficking, 2021)

https://www.talithakum.info/files/documentdownload/2021/Talitha_Kum_s_Study_Prayer_and_Action_Pack_Women_and_Human_Trafficking_7W16cL8.pdf

ABOUT **SURVIVOR-INFORMED PRACTICES**

During 2021, we have seen an increase in the involvement of survivors in the activities and life of Talitha Kum: 24 Talitha Kum networks (44%) have reported collaboration with survivors (six new networks in 2021). Survivors are particularly engaged in prevention activities, and conducting empowerment projects for victims and survivors. In September 2021, Talitha Kum International welcomed a survivor and Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassador, to its team in Rome.



GLOBAL DATA

05

2021 in Figures

According to the 2021 data, and despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, Talitha Kum networking capacity has grown and shown increased coordination at multiple levels.

In 2021, Talitha Kum was active **across 92 countries in 55 national networks, 9 regional and 3 continental coordination committees**, actively supporting victims, survivors and people at risk. Five new networks were created that year: in Africa (Talitha Kum Zambia), in Latin America (Talitha Kum Ecuador), in Asia (Talitha Kum Bangladesh and Talitha Kum Vietnam), and in the Middle East – connected to Africa – (Talitha Kum Egypt). The number of countries where Talitha Kum has established its activities has grown by three units compared to 2020.

The total number of national network subdivisions reported in 2021 increased by 15% compared to the previous year. Since 2019, the growth in the number of subdivisions has been stable and constant, which shows the capacity of Talitha Kum Networks to create subdivisions and decentralized working groups.

2021 also saw a steady growth in the total number of **members and collaborators**, confirming the trend of the previous year. With a 72% increase compared to 2020 figures, Talitha Kum Networks demonstrate their capacity to engage volunteer staff and lay collaborators. Volunteering is a key characteristic of Talitha Kum Networks: 94% of members and collaborators are volunteers.

Another important increasing figure is the one of the **involvement of survivors and their families** within Talitha Kum activities. In 2021, 24 networks reported their collaboration with survivors, a 7% growth over 2020 data. This figure gives an account of the real effort of the networks to honor the joint commitment made during the 2019 Assembly. Survivors particularly participate in prevention and care for victims' activities.

The participation and involvement of **religious congregations within Talitha Kum Networks decreased by 5% in 2021. This process started in 2020, as a possible consequence of the Covid-19 impact.** The rate of women and men religious congregations involved in Talitha Kum compared with 2020 shows a slight decrease of male congregations, representing in 2021 8% of the congregations involved (1% less compared to the year prior).

New pieces of data were collected in 2021 to map the capacity of Talitha Kum Networks for **interfaith collaboration**. 13 Networks, corresponding to 24% of the total, reported pursuing **interfaith collaboration**; particularly in Asia and Africa.

TOTALS WORLDWIDE 2021



ACCESS TO JUSTICE
FOR SURVIVORS

6589



CARE FOR VICTIMS
AND SURVIVORS OF
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

13404



PREVENTION

258549

with at-risk people, awareness-raising campaigns,
educational programs with students



NETWORKING, TRAINING,
CAPACITY BUILDING

58416

TOTAL OF
VICTIMS/SURVIVORS

19993

SUPPORTED BY
TALITHA KUM IN 2021

TOTAL OF PEOPLE
REACHED IN **2021**

336958

TOTALS WORLDWIDE 2021



NETWORKS

55



ACTIVE MEMBERS AND
COLLABORATORS

6039



COUNTRIES IN
ALL CONTINENTS

92



PURSUED INTERFAITH
COLLABORATION

24%
OF THE NETWORKS



RELIGIOUS
CONGREGATIONS

792

8,2% MALE
91,8% FEMALE

Methodological note

The collection and analysis of the data from the Talitha Kum Networks started in 2018 at Talitha Kum / UISG in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, under the coordination of Prof. Peter Lah, sj. For the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Talitha Kum, a database was created and an extensive research report was published, explaining in detail the fruits of this collaboration.¹

The data is collected through the completion by the networks of two questionnaires. The Census Report questionnaire focuses mainly on data on the internal structure of the networks: numbers of collaborators, religious congregations, subdivisions of the networks, etc. The second questionnaire, Activity Report, covers the activities of the networks.

The data collection was gradually implemented. The objective was to implement a mapping of the structure and the activities of the networks, by listening to the networks and taking into account their context and realities. As a matter of fact, the first data collection for the year 2018 was completed through open questions. This allowed the networks to share their activities in great detail and the research team to identify the categories of activities.

The Palermo Protocol was the inspiration for the structure of the first questionnaire about activities; the open questions were organized according to the 4Ps: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnerships. The following year the data was systematized and the activities report designed according to the real needs.

Thanks to the terms and language of the Talitha Kum's Call to Action document, the data collection completed in 2022 (for the year 2021), was grouped and renamed according to the four categories of activities of the networks as follow: Prevention, Care for Victims, Access to Justice, and Networking.

Talitha Kum's data collection is pastoral-oriented. Every year, the database questionnaires are updated and improved, taking into account new needs that have emerged from the networks. Most recently, questions on the active involvement of survivors in the life of the networks and on interreligious collaboration were added to the database.

This report is the analysis of the data collected through the database of Talitha Kum-UISG and is based on data provided by the national networks, constituting the basic unit of Talitha Kum. It is the result of two semi-structured questionnaires sent to the database reference persons for each Talitha Kum's network during the period from January to March 2022 (for the 2021 data). A total of 52 networks responded to the questionnaires, representing 94,5% of Talitha Kum's networks, which is a higher response rate than the previous year.

The survey is a descriptive research tool and uses a mixed approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. For the analysis and interpretation of the data, the technique of coding by topic was used. This allows for organizing the materials according to their thematic characteristics so that they can later be retrieved, categorized, and described. Excel was the software used for structuring and statistically analyzing the data.



Sr. Mayra Cuellar, MdB
info@talithakum.info

¹ Lah, Peter S.J. (Ed.), in collaboration with Talitha Kum. (2019). *Talitha Kum 2009-2019. Analysis of the Structure and Activities of the International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in Persons. A research report.* Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press.



PREVENTION

The networks have implemented medium and long-term educational and training programs in schools and local communities and have accompanied and supported, in different ways, groups considered at risk of trafficking, e.g., women in rural communities in Asia, women in prostitution contexts in Latin America, young migrants in Africa, and families in conflict zones in the Middle East. In the context of Covid-19 restrictions, networks have adapted new prevention strategies, especially through the use of technology (e.g., online counseling for labor migrants and implementation of the case reporting hotline). Preventive activities were characterized by the use of traditional media (especially radio), social media for the promotion of various awareness and information campaigns, and the creation of digital materials for online prevention. The main beneficiaries in this area are church communities, consecrated life, labor migrants, families in conflict areas, women, students, and young people. The increase in the number of people benefited in the area of prevention, 258,549 people reached out, is remarkable, 47% more than in 2020. This data corresponds probably to the increased use of online and technologies during the Lockdown period, which enabled networks to reach new spaces for prevention and training.

From CATHII - Canada: Young people involvement. The network involved and trained university students to participate in the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in New York. Eight students participated in four training sessions on trafficking in persons, as well as workshops offered as part of CSW65 (Commission on the Status of Women). By the end, they shared the impact this experience will have on their personal development and professional practices.

From Red Kawsay Uruguay: Monthly program on a Catholic Radio in Uruguay. The radio station has a wide reach in Uruguay, reaching cities and towns throughout the country. This has given a lot of visibility to the issue of trafficking: it was a space to raise awareness and inform about human trafficking by giving a voice to specialists and leaders on the topic. In addition, important information was given, such as where and how to report and useful phone numbers for reporting cases.

ACTIVITIES OF TALITHA KUM NETWORKS

Talitha Kum's main areas of action at the grassroots level are Prevention, Care for victims, Access to justice, and Networking. After the sharp drop registered by Talitha Kum Networks during the year 2020, as a consequence of the restrictive containment measures as the pandemic spreaded, the data collected in 2021 shows in all actions area of Talitha Kum Networks a change in trend, registering an increase by 44.8% in the total number of people who benefited in the different Talitha Kum's areas of action.

However the year 2021 was marked by Covid-19 restrictions and increased vulnerabilities of groups at risk of trafficking; the collected data highlights the capacity of Talitha Kum networks to carry out prevention and care activities for victims in the difficult context.



Talitha Kum's approach to prevention

Talitha Kum networks lead prevention activities at local and international level. Each national or regional network tailors its approach to the local context, but they focus on three main areas:

- **Awareness-raising, education and information campaigns.**

These make people aware of the reality of trafficking, and share information and good practices. They empower community leaders, who are key actors in the identification of possible cases. They also build networks, which reinforce awareness and take action.

- **Prevention with at-risk groups.** This includes targeted awareness efforts such as approaching people in situations of vulnerability in order to identify potential victims, and providing people with tools and information to protect themselves.

- **Support for survivors, their families and communities.** The aim is to prevent victims, once rescued or freed, from surrendering to desperation, guilt, or helplessness. Survivors are supported long-term in their healing process, and helped to make healthy decisions, live with dignity, and gain a sense of agency in their lives.

To achieve prevention, Talitha Kum identifies systems – political, cultural and economic – that allow trafficking to occur, and advocates for effective and sustainable change. We call for policies and laws that prevent crime, support survivors and hold traffickers accountable. And with our allies, we advocate for these laws to be enacted and enforced at local and national level.

Talitha Kum believes that a society free from human trafficking and all forms of exploitation is possible. Transforming mindsets and behaviours is fundamental to achieving this.



CARE FOR VICTIMS

The networks provided material and economic support to the victims and survivors, mainly through reception facilities. They provided accompaniment for psychosocial and material support for survivors of human trafficking to the return to the country of origin, medical treatment, and study courses. They offered spiritual and psychological support and legal and bureaucratic assistance to the victims. In addition, they carried out various technical training programs for the social and professional reintegration of survivors of human trafficking and carried out advocacy actions by collaborating with governmental and intergovernmental institutions to guarantee the rights of migrant workers, women, girls, and boys.

The victims, survivors and at-risk people accompanied by Talitha Kum in 2021 were 13,404 representing a decrease by 18% compared to the year 2020. This could be related to restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, affecting the safe-houses system in many parts of the world. Another possibility is the increase of services provided to survivors and victims for access to justice (see next page).

From Red Tamar Colombia: In Quibdó, an area of armed conflict, training programs on trafficking in persons and technical training were held for women from the Afro population. Different entrepreneurial projects were also supported: three poultry companies, one making floor mops, and one making candles. In Cartagena, women who are victims of sexual exploitation received training on trafficking in persons; they are now the protagonists of prevention activities in parishes, schools, foundations, and other settings.

From Pro Demnitatea Femeii - România: Collaboration with other agencies and organizations, professional support, and exchange of experiences among associations dealing with women victims of violence and in vulnerable situations has enabled the network to support women who have been trafficked while also giving them practical and spiritual support. These vulnerable women need continuous recognition of their value and dignity.



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The main activities in this area include accompanying victims to report. Some networks have provided tools for reporting cases of trafficking and/or labor exploitation (hotline and online counseling). Networks have reported to the relevant authorities cases of violence, exploitation, or potential cases of trafficking, identified in schools and among working migrants. Another important action in this area has been the support of victims during the court process until damages are paid.

The number of people benefiting from support for access to justice in 2021 was 6,589; this is 82% more than 2020. The growth in services provided by Talitha Kum Networks for access to justice is increasing constantly since 2019.

This may show either the capacity of Talitha Kum Networks to differentiate better in data collection the services provided to survivors and victims or / and the overall growth of Talitha Kum Networks to accompany victims and survivors to access justice.

From ACRATH - Australia: Working towards structured mechanisms (in government) to ensure justice for migrant workers: meeting with exploited migrant workers and representing their voices in national labour parties; persistence in presenting a case to government for action; identifying failures and weaknesses in current migrant worker programs and presenting these. Another issue is forced marriage, the network works in reporting cases to Australian Federal Police; assisting women and girls to access legal and government support and collaboration with multiple government and civil agencies to improve protection and rights.

From AMRAT - Talitha Kum India: Repatriation of young adults to another country through judicial procedures. This was made possible through joint collaboration with the Indian Ministry of Prisons and with the support of the local police, and some NGOs in the target area. Counseling and restorative justice have been integral parts of the process.



NETWORKING

Activities in this area have two main objectives:

1. Strengthening the identity and collaboration of network members, especially through training activities and sharing of good practices;
2. Reinforcing cooperation with different institutions/ organizations (Catholic, NGO, governmental and intergovernmental organizations) through the participation and implementation of joint activities (events, training paths, advocacy actions), in addition to collaborating on specific projects, particularly in the area of prevention and care of victims.

Networking is essential to strengthen preventive and treatment activities for victims and survivors of human trafficking and to support groups considered at risk of trafficking. It has also facilitated the building of advocacy pathways. In 2021, the networks collaborated at the local level with about 251 Catholic organizations, 194 NGOs, and about 180 governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

As for networking, 58,416 people reached out in this area, 45% more than 2020. Talitha Kum Networks did an enormous amount of work in networking within the Networks and the Catholic Church, and with many other institutions in the territory to better respond to the challenges of the pandemic and ensure the different services to victims. Actions related to formation and collaboration for networking were implemented mostly online.

From Talitha Kum Zambia (TAKUZA): Listening to the encouragement of the sisters who want to be part of the Network. This led to advocacy activities not originally planned by TAKUZA. There is such an enthusiastic demand for training from the Network members. When TAKUZA sent out an invite for the training in May, the response was overwhelming.

From Talitha Kum Vietnam: Talitha Kum Asia monthly coordinators meeting enables the sharing of the learning tools of others from different areas of action of Talitha Kum. This training enhances the members' skills and strengthens the identity as a Talitha Kum network operating locally and regionally.

AFRICA

Despite the health emergency of Covid-19, and despite situations of conflict, terrorism, and insecurity in our countries the commitment and determination of members of Talitha Kum Africa have not weakened. Each country has carried out primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention activities against human trafficking. The events organized have reached different social groups: school children, university students, church groups, street children, people in our shelters, etc. Online training and webinars on Zoom have gathered many people on the issue of human trafficking in Africa and the rest of the world. Our actions have often been successful in getting victims out of the grip of traffickers.

Our concern has also been to strengthen the capacities of members through training and to work on our common African identity. Thus, we organized two training sessions on the issue of human trafficking, each held for 5 weeks, in order to better equip the new coordinators and members of Talitha Kum so that they can become more involved in this fight. Seventy-nine people from all networks took part in these training sessions.

Thanks to the collaboration of the Talitha Kum Ghana and Talitha Kum Burkina Faso networks, 33 victims of trafficking were able to leave Ghana to join their families in Burkina Faso and 4 traffickers were handed over to the Burkinabe justice system. This is but one achievement example; it is also happening in other countries across Africa.

Talitha Kum is spreading more and more on the continent, the latest network established was Mali. For greater communication between countries in this fight against human trafficking, we have organized the countries where Talitha Kum is located into constellations (hubs) according to language and geographical proximity:

- **EAST AFRICA**
- **FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA**
- **ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA**
- **NORTH AFRICA**
- **SOUTHERN AFRICA**

We express our gratitude to the Lord and the Talitha Kum International Coordination and to our different partners, collaborators, and friends of Talitha Kum, who have accompanied our countries in the implementation of their strategies against human trafficking.



Sr. Yvonne Bambara, RGS
Talitha Kum Africa

AFRICA



167396 TOTAL OF PEOPLE REACHED IN 2021

Networking organization at continental and regional level was the main area for Africa. This activation fostered and strengthened prevention, training, and care for victims, especially in cases of repatriation and socio-professional integration.



PREVENTION

147406

with at-risk people, awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs with students



NETWORKING, TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING

13819



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

2086



CARE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

4085



ADVOCACY

23%

OF THE NETWORKS

54% OF THE NETWORKS SURVIVORS PARTICIPATION

PARTNERS ORGANIZATIONS

46 CATHOLIC

39 NGOS

39 GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL

132 RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

13 NATIONAL NETWORKS

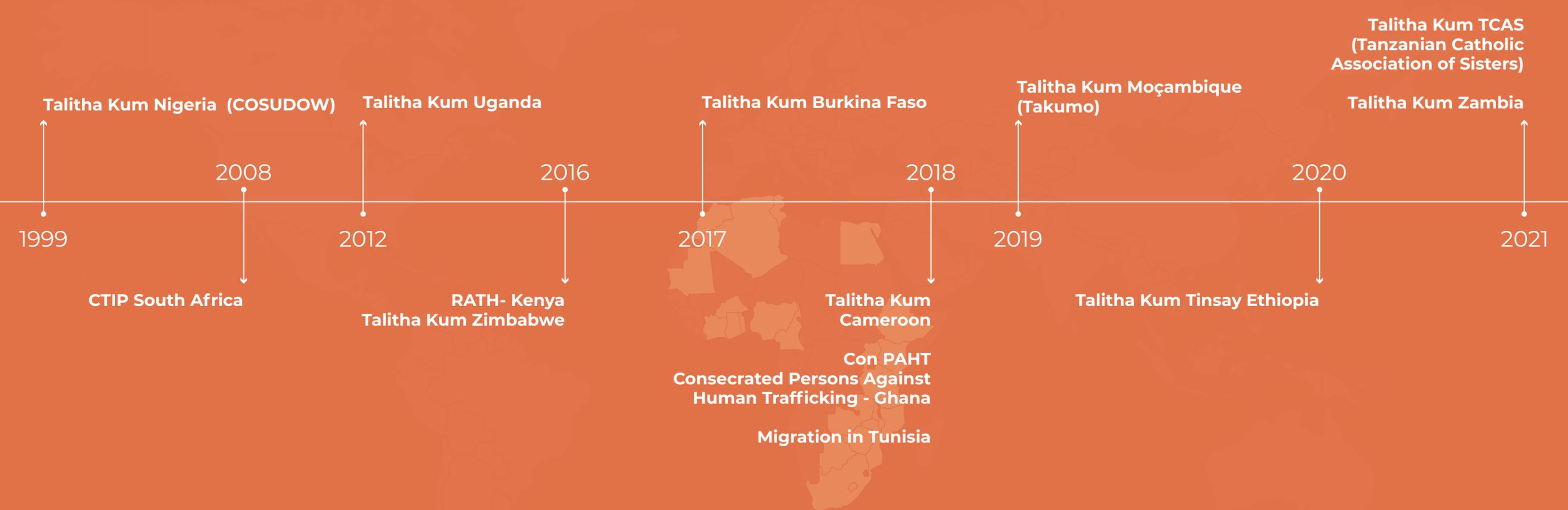
21 COUNTRIES

1002 ACTIVE MEMBERS

30 SUBDIVISIONS

2 REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

The representation of the growing Networks of
Talitha Kum in **AFRICA**



REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

Counter Trafficking in persons CTIP
Talitha Kum North Africa



THE STORY OF MYRIAM

BURKINA FASO

My name is Myriam, I am 12 years old, and this is my story.

When I was younger, as expected in my community, I was arranged to be married. I was desperate to escape this fate and begged my mother to help me flee this forced lifestyle. She agreed to aid me in running away. But this path was the beginning of another nightmare. I was losing any support I did have, and leaving behind all forms of security I previously possessed.

In this journey, I felt vulnerable and easily fell into the hands of human traffickers. I suffered greatly due to their exploitation. One day, I met a sister from Talitha Kum in Burkina Faso. I shared with her my pain and loneliness. I felt like she could see into my heart and understand my life. She cared for me and showed me love, compassion, and the possibility of a new life.

I was able to escape from the traffickers. But now, there was support and security waiting for me on the outside in the form of the Talitha Kum sisters who welcomed me into their home and continued to care for me. The sisters provided me with psychological and spiritual support to help me heal. They enrolled me in a sewing course and entrusted me into the care of a wonderful family who continues to accompany and support me.

Now, I have continued my technical training and have been able to finish the school year with serenity.

Myriam's story shows us that forced child marriages are still prevalent in today's world. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the likelihood of child brides, increasing it exponentially. UNICEF (the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) projects there to be 10 million more girls at risk of becoming child brides over the next decade as a result of the pandemic. (UNICEF, "Child marriage", 2021)

NORTH AMERICA

As we look back on 2021, the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we realize the power of being part of a creative community. Where fear and hopelessness could have threatened the effectiveness of our anti-trafficking work, creativity and care moved our networks to find new ways to come together with others to eradicate trafficking and support survivors.

The pandemic has helped us to see with new eyes our need to work together: Talitha Kum networks, congregations and parishes, Catholic Conferences of Bishops, health organizations, prison ministries, educators, young people, legislators, philanthropies and others. We also acknowledged our need for the advice and counsel of survivors to be truly effective in our work. These collaborations enabled us to reach more people and engage them in prayer, prevention, and action – both online and eventually, in person again.

Connecting people with each other is important – and so is connecting human trafficking to issues that drive this crime. To render visible the connections between human trafficking and forced migration, violence and war, gender discrimination, systemic racism, climate change, poverty and an economy that allows exploitation is an objective that continued to influence our work and bring us together with other who share our care, concern and passion for justice. This focus helped grow our creative community in 2021.

Envisioning an economy of care and equality – a world without human trafficking - and discerning together the steps that will lead us in that direction helped us move forward in 2021 despite the pandemic. Care, creativity and inclusive community, God's vision for our world: these values will continue to inspire our work in 2022 and beyond.



Sr. Ann Oestreich, IHM
Talitha Kum North America

LATIN AMERICA

In the Latin American context we can find poverty, structural violence, corruption, authoritarianism, populism, drug trafficking, organized crime, development difficulties, and a severe economic situation of inflation, extortion, unemployment, and debts. This is a common denominator across the continent that favors the crime of human trafficking. Constantly, people are forced to migrate in search of new horizons, without knowing that along the way they become easy prey for exploitation in its various forms and will be stripped of their human rights. With the pandemic, these realities have increased even more. Despite the existence of laws to combat the crime of trafficking, the authorities do not make sufficient efforts to eradicate it. All of this leads to the suppression of the human being.

In this context, the Networks of Consecrated Life of Talitha Kum are committed to building a society without human trafficking at the local and continental levels. The main objective is to achieve a better articulation between the Church, Consecrated Life, Organizations, and Civil Society, and to promote dignity, justice, and solidarity, especially with the victims who are mostly women, youth, girls, and boys. Likewise, we feel the commitment to train more people.

The networks are also members of the Clar Commission against human trafficking. We are collaborating with the networks in Western countries, which includes the networks of the United States and Canada, and with the Clamor Network. The intention is to strengthen our efforts as a Church in communion and translate them into best practices in favour of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters.

Our advocacy actions in 2021 were carried out both online and then progressively in different educational centers: schools, colleges, universities, and parishes. We provide support and care, especially to women victims of sexual exploitation, accompanying victims, and survivors of trafficking. During 2021, we promoted and participated in workshops, meetings, campaigns, prayer spaces, and some ecumenical celebrations, in addition to interviews, radio and television programs, social media, conferences, webinars, conversations with survivors, and the development of different training materials. We organized and participated in special celebrations and activities such as February 8 (International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking), July 30 (World Day Against Trafficking in Persons), and September 23 (International Day Against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Women and Children).

We offer a constant invitation to Religious Congregations and lay people to join our networks. Currently, we are beginning to encourage the participation of young people as ambassadors or collaborators of Talitha Kum. This is essential to respond to the new emerging realities and challenges that we face, such as the creation of shelters for victims and advocacy in social networks.



Sr. Carmen Ugarte, OSR
Talitha Kum Latin America

AMERICA



91266 TOTAL OF PEOPLE REACHED IN 2021

The main activities took place in the area of prevention and care for victims. The networks raised awareness through training programs, the distribution of educational materials, and social media. Furthermore, they offered to survivors and at-risk groups spiritual/psychological accompaniment and material support.



33% OF THE NETWORKS SURVIVORS PARTICIPATION

314 RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

68 SUBDIVISIONS

2 REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

PARTNERS ORGANIZATIONS

85 CATHOLIC

50 NGOS

65 GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL

911 ACTIVE MEMBERS

15 NATIONAL NETWORKS

17 COUNTRIES

2 CONTINENTAL COORDINATIONS



PREVENTION

65755

with at-risk people, awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs with students



NETWORKING, TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING

25138



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

37



CARE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

336



ADVOCACY

33%

OF THE NETWORKS

The representation of the growing Networks of Talitha Kum in AMERICA



REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

Red Kawsay
Red Ramà

CONTINENTAL COORDINATIONS

COMISION TRATA CLAR
EMISFERIC COORDINATION FOR NORTH, CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA



TESTIMONY OF SR. ILSE VILLAMAR CEDEÑO, COORDINATOR OF RED TAMAR

COLOMBIA

I am Ilse Villamar Cedeño, from Ecuador, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Divine Will. I currently live in Bogota and coordinate the Tamar Network of the Conference of Religious of Colombia. For me, working against human trafficking means listening and responding to God's groan of pain in the face of the cry of his people (Ex 3:7-15), in the face of the new slavery that affects girls, boys, women, and men.

The most beautiful experience I have had with the women victims and survivors of trafficking is seeing the faith they have in God. Despite everything they have been through, they continue to say: "God loves me, I am a beloved daughter and He has always been with me." This makes them tireless associates in the fight against human trafficking, especially in prevention activities.

The most painful experience was at an event of the "Commission for Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition." One of the survivors, accompanied by Red Tamar, told the audience in detail about being a victim of sexual slavery, mass sexual assault, and surviving impalement. She experienced this martyrdom for 12 years and described herself saying: "I am a dead woman in life." She lived all of this in silence and fear as she lived in a paramilitary territory.

I remember that at the end of the event, I was getting ready to leave when the woman who accompanied me from Red Tamar came past security (she was a protected witness) and called me shouting my name. I ran to her thinking something was wrong and she told me: "Sister Ilse, just give me a hug". I didn't have time to react, she hugged me, her body trembled, and she repeated: "Hug me sister, hug me sister," while crying. I don't know how many minutes the hug lasted, but for me it was eternal; she held me so tightly that it prevented me from breathing and I felt her heart beating fast, which confirmed all the anguish and pain of what I had heard only minutes before.

ASIA

The issue of human trafficking in Asia has been exacerbated in the current socio-economic situation. Many countries in Asia face severe economic crises due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and political conflicts such as in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, etc. A crisis like this increases the number of people who become vulnerable to trafficking, particularly women, girls, young people, migrants, and refugees. The predominant forms of domestic and international human trafficking are forced labor, forced marriage and sexual exploitation. As the economic problems become increasingly complicated, more vulnerable people get trapped in exploitation in order to survive. One area of entrapment is cyber-based trafficking and Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC).

We continued our prevention campaigns that have been moved online since the beginning of the pandemic to ensure continued information-sharing on anti-trafficking. Talitha Kum networks in Asia hosted monthly webinars on human trafficking to strengthen prevention, protection, capacity building, and networking, as well as collaboration, and advocacy.

The impact of this program has given greater visibility of Talitha Kum networks. Talitha Kum Bangladesh and Talitha Kum Vietnam were established in 2021 as an outcome of the growing visibility of our work. We have organized activities using the Sufficiency Economy Program, helping women and young people in villages and mountainous areas to manage natural food resources, such as herbs and vegetables that can be found in the local forests. This program has had a satisfying impact on the local community in supporting and promoting capacity building.

We launched the Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors program last year with the purpose of engaging more young people with the vision and mission of Talitha Kum. Young women and men, representing ten countries in Asia, were trained to be anti-trafficking youth ambassadors among their peers at the grassroots level. These trained youth leaders developed their skills in promoting Talitha Kum's work at the grassroots in creative and innovative ways with the coordination of Sisters in the networks. As a result of this program, many young people's awareness of the issues of trafficking grew as they participated in various levels of Talitha Kum's anti-human trafficking campaigns.



Sr. Abby Avelino, MM
Talitha Kum Asia

ASIA



35824 TOTAL OF PEOPLE REACHED IN 2021

Prevention was the Asian networks' priority. It was fostered through training and awareness-raising campaigns in schools, parishes, and local communities, targeting especially women, youth, religious, tribal communities, and migrant workers.



PREVENTION

26065

with at-risk people, awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs with students



NETWORKING, TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING

3909



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

1878



CARE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

3972



ADVOCACY

22%

OF THE NETWORKS

PARTNERS ORGANIZATIONS

61 CATHOLIC

56 NGOS

42 GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL

205 RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

3521 ACTIVE MEMBERS

18 NATIONAL NETWORKS

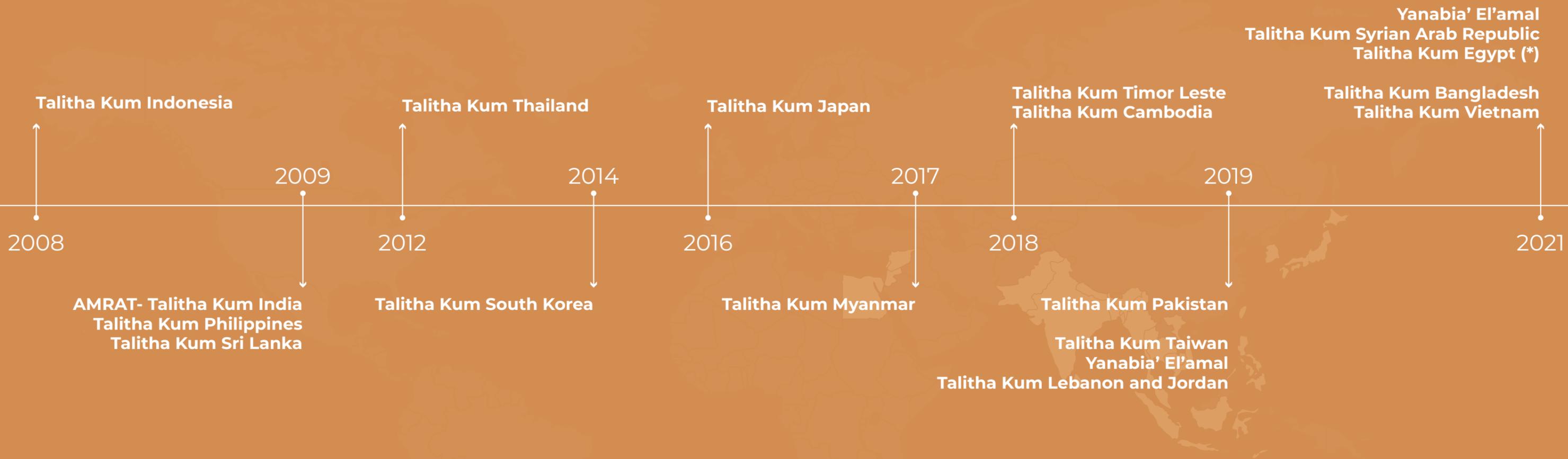
39% OF THE NETWORKS SURVIVORS PARTICIPATION

20 COUNTRIES

63 SUBDIVISIONS

4 REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

The representation of the growing Networks of Talitha Kum in ASIA



(*) Although Egypt is in North Africa, it is associated with Middle East Networks, according to the organization of the Catholic Church.

REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

- Talitha Kum East Asia
- Talitha Kum South East Asia
- Talitha Kum South Asia
- Yanabia' El'amal (Wells of Hope)



THE STORY OF LAKSHMI

INDIA

My name is Lakshmi and I am 15 years old.

When I was younger, I lived in the Wayanad district of India, a rural area where many families live in poverty. From there, a place I considered my home, I was taken against my will by a person from the nearby village for domestic work. In reality, I found myself, after a few days, forced into sexual exploitation. I began behaving abnormally as I fell into strong feelings of helplessness and despair.

Every other week, those people took me to work in a different place. This continued until I was found in a nearby village in a deplorable situation and returned home. After I escaped this hell, I came into contact with some sisters from Talitha Kum who were able to care for me. But, the horror did not end. One day, the sisters from Talitha Kum visited my house and found me in another violent situation: my hands were pinned to my chest, I could not talk, eat, and I had fallen into a depression as my brothers physically abused me, repeatedly beating me up.

The next day, the sisters came back and managed to give me a bath, but my hands were still there, pinned to my chest without me telling them to go there. I think this was my body's way of trying to protect itself. Then, the sisters took me to a psychiatrist and sought treatment for me. I took my medication regularly with the help of my neighbors and new community. Since then, there has been a wonderful change in my life. Now I am better, and although COVID-19 restrictions have made it difficult for me to take my medication regularly, I am accompanied by sisters who want the best for me.

As we can see in Lakshmi's story, sexual abuse and exploitation are often interconnected. UNICEF (the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) projects that there are 10.1 million child labourers in India and stated that "child trafficking is also linked to child labour and it always results in child abuse". (UNICEF, "Child labour and exploitation")

EUROPE

In its great linguistic and cultural diversity, Europe is a continent of departure, transit, and destination for so many trafficked people.

A continent that is still dreamed of by so many people who, due to wars, climate change, terrorism, and severe economic and social hardships, see Europe as the setting for a better future.

In recent times we have witnessed the externalization of borders; new political scenarios inside and outside the borders of Europe have led to a considerable increase of human trafficking; not to mention the COVID-19 pandemic that has exasperated situations of vulnerability and exclusion, causing so many people, especially women, to fall into the hands of unscrupulous traffickers, who once again seek to benefit from the hardships of others.

So much work has been done, with care, passion, and dedication by so many people, religious and otherwise, to accompany, welcome, and support the victims. We cannot forget the various training sessions held in different countries, as well as the incessant work of political advocates at all levels, for fair laws in favor of victims.

“If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain; If I can ease one life aching, Or cool one pain, Or help one fainting robin Unto his nest again, I shall not live in vain.” (Dickinson, 1830-1886)



Maria Luisa Puglisi, AASC
Talitha Kum Europe

EUROPE

European networks carried out most of their activities in prevention, particularly with migrants and refugees, and care for victims by offering housing facilities and legal support.



24189 TOTAL OF PEOPLE REACHED IN 2021



PREVENTION
14223

with at-risk people, awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs with students



NETWORKING, TRAINING,
CAPACITY BUILDING
5450



ACCESS TO JUSTICE
1085



CARE FOR VICTIMS
AND SURVIVORS OF
HUMAN TRAFFICKING
3431



ADVOCACY
14%
OF THE NETWORKS

32 COUNTRIES

7 NATIONAL NETWORKS

454 ACTIVE MEMBERS

83 RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

1 REGIONAL COORDINATION

26 SUBDIVISIONS

71% OF THE NETWORKS SURVIVORS PARTICIPATION

PARTNERS ORGANIZATIONS

33 CATHOLIC

27 NGOS

25 GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL

The representation of the growing Networks of
Talitha Kum in **EUROPE**



7 NATIONAL
NETWORKS



REGIONAL COORDINATION
RENATE

OCEANIA

The COVID-19 pandemic heralded an era of change in the way people are trafficked and exploited, and has led our networks to respond in kind. We have heard the cry of the trafficked and exploited - and responded with care, support and advocacy. For example, as online sexual exploitation increased, we collaborated with law enforcement agencies to highlight this activity and increase the interception of offenders, supported victims, and advocated for compensation.

Whilst some of our usual activities were limited by the pandemic (eg. face-to-face education and awareness raising), we were able to adapt advocacy activities such as education and training, and enhance them through the use of technologies. In fact, the limitations due to the pandemic resulted in new approaches to advocacy and awareness-raising, providing unexpected and particularly productive outcomes and opportunities.

The special needs of victims/survivors -heightened by the pandemic- were responded to: this delightfully prompted mutual support-giving between companions during lockdowns. In many ways, the pandemic has galvanised our commitment to “fresh thinking and concrete steps that stem from what ails society and how we might act differently” (Pope Francis), and propelled us into new and novel ways of combatting human trafficking and exploitation and supporting victim/survivors.



Sr. Colleen Jackson, RSC
Talitha Kum Oceania

OCEANIA



18283 TOTAL OF PEOPLE REACHED IN 2021

The main activities focused on care for victims and at-risk groups, particularly through the protection of the rights of exploited workers, assistance in accessing legal support, and accompaniment programs for victims.



PREVENTION

5100

with at-risk people, awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs with students



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

1503



CARE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

1580

PARTNERS ORGANIZATIONS

26 CATHOLIC

22 NGOS

9 GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL

1 CONTINENTAL COORDINATION

151 ACTIVE MEMBERS

2 NATIONAL NETWORKS

7 SUBDIVISIONS

2 COUNTRIES

58 RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS



NETWORKING, TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING

10100



ADVOCACY

100%

OF THE NETWORKS

CONTINENTAL COORDINATION
Talitha Kum Oceania



SPECIAL FOCUS

05

“Prayer touches the heart and impels us to concrete actions, to innovative, courageous actions, able to take risks trusting in the power of God”

Pope Francis
Video Message to the Participants
in the 7th International Day of Prayer and
Awareness Against Human Trafficking



**FROM OCEANIA TO THE AMERICAS,
PRAYING TOGETHER FOR
AN ECONOMY WITHOUT TRAFFICKING**

The International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

On February 8th, 2021, Talitha Kum coordinated the 7th International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking, on the feast day of St. Bakhita, the universal symbol of the Church's commitment against human trafficking. The theme of this 7th edition was 'An economy without trafficking', to promote new economic experiences that counteract all forms of exploitation.

The dominant economic model is one of the main structural causes of human trafficking in our globalized world. As a matter of fact, 150.2 billion dollars are the annual profits of human trafficking in the world, two-thirds of which derive from sexual exploitation.⁴

There is an urgency to collectively transform our global economic system into an economy of care. In his video message for this Day⁵, Pope Francis describes a new economic system as:

1. **Focused on the care of people and nature;**
2. **Built with “market rules that promote justice instead of particular interests”;**
3. **Courageous, which means focused on long-term construction.**

Since Pope Francis first asked the two Unions of Superiors General to start promoting it, the significance of and participation in the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking have greatly increased. This 7th edition of the prayer marathon was held online for the first time, bringing together all the realities involved in anti-trafficking efforts worldwide! 38 countries participated in the Prayer Marathon, through 68 different videos from the Talitha Kum networks and other partners. More than 6,000 people prayed with us, via direct streaming or by following the marathon later.

⁴ *Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour, International Labour Organization, 2014.*

⁵ *Video Message of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Participants in the 7th World Day of Prayer, Reflection and Action against Human Trafficking, Vatican Website, 2021.*

Talitha Kum takes this opportunity to thank its partners from the International Committee of the International Day, whose tireless work each year enables a beautiful collective experience of prayer.

Promoters

- International Union of Superiors General (UISG)
- Union of Superiors General (USG)

Coordinated by: Talitha Kum International

In partnership with:

- Migrants and Refugees Section
- Caritas Internationalis
- World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations
- Focolare Movement
- Justice and Peace and Integrity of Creation (USG and UISG)

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*The International Day of Prayer and
Awareness Against Human Trafficking
A light against Trafficking*

Talitha Kum's Call to Action to tackle the systemic causes of human trafficking

To care, heal, empower, and restore: four key verbs summarize Talitha Kum's Call To Action. The **Call to Action** was launched by Talitha Kum and UISG on November 25th 2021, marking the UN's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The event, held in-person and online, brought together voices from Talitha Kum's global network, from the Holy See, and from partners across the international development community.

Talitha Kum's Call to Action is addressed to Sisters, the Catholic Church, leaders of other religious or spiritual traditions, non-believers, allies, friends and all people of goodwill who share our vision for a world free of human trafficking and exploitation. In particular, this Call to Action is aimed at global governance stakeholders including states, international organizations, non-state actors such as civil society groups, private sector organizations and academic institutions, and all those who have a role to play in the tireless effort to eradicate human trafficking and exploitation.

Talitha Kum Call to Action is the outcome of a process that started during our General Assembly in 2019. The preparation of the document allowed Talitha Kum to explore the complexities caused by the impact of Covid-19 on human trafficking and anti-trafficking efforts.

Through this document, Talitha Kum invites all people of goodwill to come together and tackle the systemic causes of human trafficking, empowering everyone – and especially women – to foster safe and thriving communities. In particular, the document identifies four key areas of engagement:

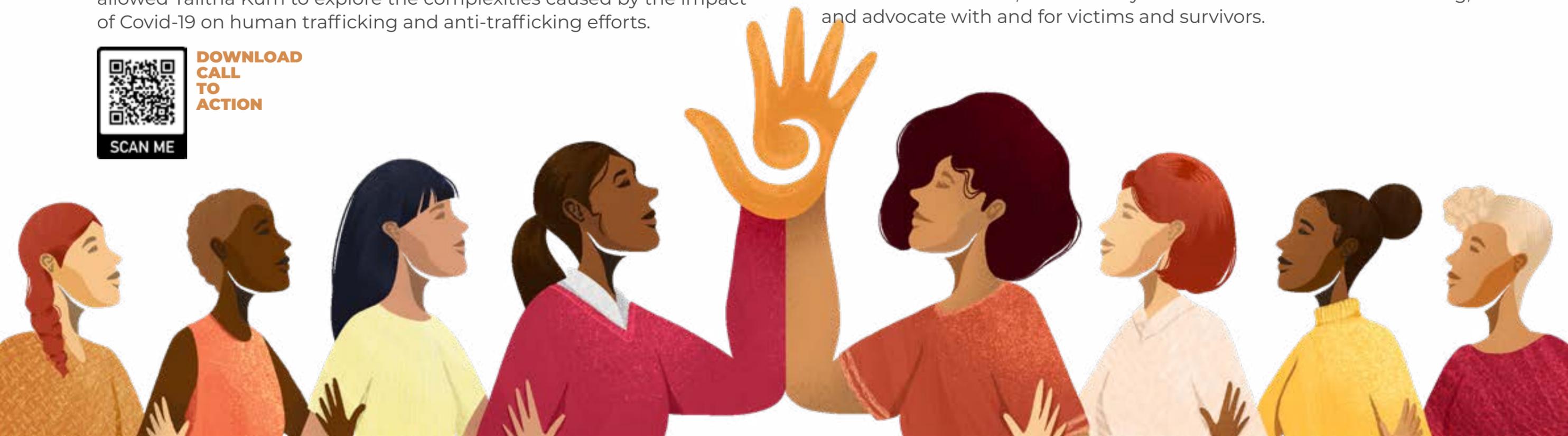
- ensuring access to justice and long-term, state-supported psychosocial and health assistance, as well as work and residence permits for victims in destination countries;
- empowering women and girls, as well as their families and communities;
- supporting safe and legal migration pathways, including in cases of forced displacement;
- and promoting an economy of care and solidarity.

Available in five languages on Talitha Kum's website, this Call to Action is the first advocacy document endorsed by the International Union of Superiors General. It outlines the identity and convictions of Talitha Kum, and its vision to live in a world free of human trafficking. All Talitha Kum networks and religious Sisters around the world have access to this document as an essential resource to raise awareness in their communities, tackle the systemic causes of human trafficking, and advocate with and for victims and survivors.



**DOWNLOAD
CALL
TO
ACTION**

SCAN ME



TALITHA KUM | UISG | 

Care Against Trafficking
Launch: Talitha Kum's Call To Action



International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
November 25th 2021, 3pm
Care Against Trafficking



Youth Ambassadors. Talitha Kum empowered young people as protagonists in the fight against human trafficking

“I witness the beginning of life every day as a midwife student. I believe that my mission as someone who delivers new life to this world is to make it a better place for new life. That’s my motivation to be Talitha Kum Asia Youth Ambassador: because Human trafficking is a huge problem which threatens our lives and we need to remove from this beautiful world...”

Youth Ambassador from Japan

The Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors initiative was one of the best surprises of 2021. The journey together with young people began at different times in many parts of the world, but has taken its current shape in the course of 2021. In Asia it developed on a continental scale, driven by various initiatives: In September and October last year, 26 young people from Italy and Asia were trained to become Talitha Kum anti-trafficking youth ambassadors. The training aimed to educate them on human trafficking, empowering them as protagonists, and introducing them to Talitha Kum’s vision and mission.

Since then, the Talitha Kum youth ambassadors have been the protagonists of anti-trafficking activities. As each network has its context and challenges, these trained young people collaborate directly with the Sisters in their country. They create and launch anti-trafficking activities among their peers, at schools, workplaces, parishes, and communities; both onsite and online.

By the end of 2021, Talitha Kum had Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors in 3 continents in 14 countries. We continue welcoming young people aged 17 to 35 from all over the world to join their local Talitha Kum network and actively engage in activities against human trafficking in their communities and countries.





NEXT STEPS

06

@Lisa Kristine

2021 witnessed the growth of many new initiatives and networks, as we all collectively move on to a post-Covid world. Talitha Kum is devoted to continuing its tireless efforts to end human trafficking. If the challenges of 2022 are numerous, so are the planned activities of the global network, which will be executed according to the priorities and areas of action decided by the 2019 Talitha Kum General Assembly.

Below is a summary of this year's upcoming activities:

- Translate Talitha Kum's Call to Action into local languages, making it a working document at the grassroots level.
- Consolidate key areas of action of Talitha Kum, such as Care for Victims or Access to Justice, through empowerment of survivors and at-risk groups.
- Continue promoting Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors and their involvement across the globe.
- Reinforce and reorganize networking at regional and international levels by increasing collaboration and communication, sharing good practices, and forming network hubs.
- Continue formation of new Talitha Kum leaders.
- Produce Talitha Kum's "Study, Prayer and Action Packet" on the third priority of structural injustices identified in 2019: unjust and inadequate immigration law and policy, coupled with forced migration and displacement, that put people at greater risk of being trafficked.
- Continue to actively involve survivors within Talitha Kum Networks.
- Promote the virtual photo exhibition Nuns Healing Hearts, by Lisa Kristine.

CONCLUSION



Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM
UISG Executive Secretary



07

As we reach the end of this outstanding report which provides an overview of the ministry of thousands of Sisters and their many collaborators, we must ask ourselves

“what is it that we are being called to BE and to DO?”

Each person who reads this report is potentially a leader in the struggle to rid the world of the scourge of human trafficking. Transformative leaders articulate a vision that sustains themselves and others when facing difficult challenges. They know that tackling human trafficking requires sustained action and resilience of mind and heart.

Every level and aspect of society needs to be challenged so that people can live with dignity and avoid being open to the temptation of empty promises that draw them into webs of entanglement and exploitation. Transformative leaders focus on the dignity and respect due to every person and on the need for relationships, systems and structures that do not oppress others but instead lead to growth, development and human flourishing.

Talitha Kum presents such a vision in their **Call to Action**. The members of Talitha Kum want to channel their experience of the suffering and exploitation endured by millions, so that they can inform decision-makers at every level. The vision of a worldwide network of spirituality and action based on the key principles - **Care, Heal, Empower** and **Restore** – calls each of us to reflect on how we live these values and how they call us to practical action. We are reminded in the Report that the voices of those who suffer must be listened to and heard so that they play a part in determining the radical steps needed to bring about fundamental change.

Finally, echoing the words of Pope Francis, Talitha Kum seeks to promote partnerships and collaboration to face this global phenomenon. Pope Francis says that in order to eliminate human trafficking “we need a mobilization comparable in size to that of the phenomenon itself.”¹ He urges us not to turn away from the sufferings of our brothers and sisters who are being deprived of their freedom and dignity. Instead we must have the courage **“to touch the suffering flesh of Christ, revealed in the faces of these countless person’s whom Jesus calls the least of these my brothers and sisters”** (Mt 25: 40-45)

What then is it that we are called to BE and to DO?

Through our global solidarity and fraternal action we can create new horizons of hope where our sustained passion and moral vision will help to transform our global landscape, so that all can live lives of profound dignity and respect.



Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM
UISG Executive Secretary





PARTNERS

08

@Stefano dal Pozzolo

The International Union of Superiors General thanks all the partners, collaborators and supporters of Talitha Kum International during the year 2021

Partners

*Migrants and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for promoting integral human development
Dicastery for Communication of the Holy See
Caritas Internationalis
World Union of Catholic Women Organizations
Anti-Trafficking Working Group of the Justice and Peace Commission UISG - USG
UISG Sisters Advocating Globally
Pontifical Gregorian University - Department of Social Sciences
Pontifical University Antonianum
Tangaza University College
John Cabot University*

Collaborators

*Multilateral Section of the Secretary of State
Women Ambassadors to the Holy See
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children (2014-2020)
The Regional Implementation Initiative of Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking
The Santa Marta Group
Religions for Peace
MCAD Massachusetts College of Art and Design
Aurora Vision
Anti-trafficking formation and networking consultants*

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View the Report online at: www.talithakum.info

Produced by **Talitha Kum**,
with the contribution of the **Global Solidarity Fund**

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