

TALITHA KUM

END HUMAN TRAFFICKING



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## INTERNATIONAL NETWORK AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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



INTERNATIONAL UNION  
SUPERIORS GENERAL

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# INTRODUCTION



SR. MARY BARRON, OLA  
UISG President



Our hearts are filled with gratitude to God as we consider the fruitfulness of the many activities undertaken by the Talitha Kum network during 2023, positively impacting the lives of many people enchained in modern day slavery. In a year marked by unprecedented challenges and remarkable resilience, Talitha Kum continued its unwavering mission to combat human trafficking and provide hope to countless individuals worldwide. 2023 has been a testament to our collective strength, adaptability, and unwavering commitment to the dignity and freedom of every human being.

Throughout 2023, Talitha Kum expanded its global network, fostered new partnerships, and reinforced its strategies to effectively respond to the evolving dynamics of human trafficking. We have witnessed the power of collaboration, the importance of innovation, and the profound impact of our community's dedication.

As we present this annual report, we reflect on our achievements, acknowledge the obstacles we have overcome, and recommit ourselves to the relentless pursuit of justice and human dignity. The stories and statistics contained within these pages are not just numbers or narratives; they are the lives we have touched, the freedom we have restored, and the hope we have rekindled.

Some of the most significant activities in 2023 include the spread of the **Youth Ambassadors Program** across the world, harnessing the creativity and social commitment of many youth in the struggle to end human trafficking. The gathering of young people in Rome for formation on anti-trafficking, coinciding with the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking** was a particularly powerful experience.

A further innovation in 2023 was the inauguration of the **Sister's Anti Trafficking Awards (SATA)**, celebrating three sisters, as representatives of their congregations and networks, who have demonstrated exceptional courage, creativity, collaboration and achievement in the protection of their communities from human trafficking. This annual event aims at creating awareness of the evil of trafficking which often goes unseen.

While Talitha Kum as a network continues to grow and harness the goodwill of many to collaborate to combat trafficking, unfortunately the number of people caught in the chains of trafficking is also increasing. The many situations of war and conflict and the impact of climate injustice continue to increase the necessity of forced migration, leaving many people vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking, especially women and children. Talitha Kum's Call to Action, addressed to Sisters, to the Catholic Church and religious leaders of other religious or spiritual traditions, to non-believers, to allies, friends and all people of goodwill who share our vision of a world free from human trafficking and exploitation gains deeper significance with each passing year. Much remains to be done and Talitha Kum needs more collaborators to continue to build the network and strengthen both prayer and action focused on the eradication of human trafficking. Earlier this year in May 2024, the **Final Declaration of the 2nd General Assembly** committed TK to three priorities for 2025-2030; 1. Systemic Change in the Face of New Vulnerabilities: 2. Holistic, Survivor-Centred Approach: 3. Broadening Collaboration and Partnerships. The UISG Board endorsed and ratified this declaration, which can be adapted according to the local realities.

As Pope Francis appeals:

**“Let us pray fervently and work proactively for this cause, the defense of human dignity, whether by prayer and action as individuals and families, or as parish and religious communities, as ecclesial associations and movements, and also in the various spheres of social and political life.”**

*(Pope Francis, Message for Feb 5th 2024)*

With this report, we honor the courage of survivors, the dedication of our network, and the enduring spirit of hope and solidarity that fuels our work. We extend our deepest gratitude to our supporters, partners, and volunteers whose unwavering dedication and generosity have made our mission possible. Together, we have made significant strides in the fight against human trafficking, but our work is far from done. As we move forward, we remain steadfast in our resolve to empower, protect, and advocate for the vulnerable and exploited. If your Institute or Organization is not already part of the Talitha Kum Network, consider joining forces so that together we can be **Pilgrims of Hope** throughout the Church's upcoming Jubilee Year, as we strive for a world where every person can live free from exploitation and fear.



**SR. MARY BARRON, OLA**  
UISG President



# INTRODUCTION



SR. ABBY AVELINO, MM  
International Coordinator



## Hope and gratitude

I am pleased to present the Talitha Kum Annual Report 2023, which was first shared during the Talitha Kum 2nd General Assembly in May 2024. This report provides both quantitative and qualitative data on the Sisters' anti-trafficking efforts and the main actions taken in 2023.

This report invites everyone to express hope and gratitude as Talitha Kum's network continues to grow worldwide. New networks were established in **Togo** and **Puerto Rico**, bringing the total to 60 networks across every continent in 107 countries.

The report emphasizes the ongoing commitment of Talitha Kum's network to building a world that reflects hope and respects the dignity of every human being.

Talitha Kum faces challenges posed by the current trends in human trafficking. The ongoing wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, along with armed conflicts in many other countries, create special vulnerabilities for women and children, migrants, and displaced people, leading to heightened risks of exploitation and abuse at many levels, including human trafficking. Additionally, the rise of the internet and digitization presents risks as traffickers exploit technology for online sexual exploitation of women and children and for the distribution of child sexual abuse materials.

While the scourge of human trafficking continues to evolve and grow, Talitha Kum's networks mobilized tirelessly to combat this issue by enhancing the sharing of best practices and fostering collaboration. Throughout the year, we made significant progress worldwide. Our networks continue to focus on key areas for action: prevention, advocacy, training, involving survivors, capacity building, and engaging young people as protagonists among their peers in anti-trafficking efforts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in developing the **Talitha Kum Walking in Dignity App** in 2023. This mobile application serves as an innovative tool for raising awareness of human trafficking and its prevention. Another highlight of 2023 was the active participation of young people in promoting the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking**, which was dedicated to youth. Last year, many of our networks enhanced **interfaith collaboration by 80%** globally. The successes achieved through our work stem from partnerships and networking with international organizations, as well as collaborations among various congregations, commissions, and agencies at both national and international levels. These collaborations have facilitated the establishment of advocacy pathways.

In 2023, Talitha Kum assisted **39,081 victims/survivors and individuals at risk**, reflecting an 11.2% increase from 2022. We continue to deepen our collaboration with survivors' advocates to empower them as ambassadors of hope and change. Talitha Kum's networks walk alongside victims and survivors on their journey toward healing and empowerment. Our work is challenging, as we face difficulties each day. However, our sisters are determined to play a crucial role in the fight against human trafficking by providing spiritual support and compassionate care to victims and survivors. Our collective efforts are essential in promoting a world free from exploitation and abuse. The hope of accompanying survivors and witnessing the transformation in their lives is a source of inspiration for many members, motivating their commitment to combating human trafficking.

We concluded the year with a period of reflection and listening during a synodal journey, holding an online pre-assembly for the entire Talitha Kum network as a prelude to the Talitha Kum 2nd General Assembly in 2024. This event served as an opportunity to reflect on the work of Talitha Kum over the past 15 years. The 2nd General Assembly, held in May 2024, aimed to continue our journey together to end human trafficking. The assembly's final declaration affirmed our commitment to implementing three priorities for 2025-2030: addressing systemic change at all levels, deepening our holistic, survivor-centered approach, and expanding collaboration and networking at all levels.

We are grateful for the launch of the **Sisters' Anti-Trafficking Awards (SATAs)** in 2023, which recognize Catholic Sisters working on the frontlines against human trafficking.

I would also like to express my gratitude for the ongoing support of the UISG Executive Board and its members, the Major Religious Superiors Conferences (both men and women), Bishops' Conferences, various Dicasteries in the Vatican, partner organizations, and our donors and partners in this mission. A special thanks goes to the Talitha Kum International Coordinating Committee, continental coordinators, and all Talitha Kum members and collaborators worldwide.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to the Holy Father for his continued support and encouragement of Talitha Kum's network throughout the years, echoed in his message on the 15th anniversary of Talitha Kum:

**“I encourage you to continue on this path, furthering prevention and care, and weaving together many valuable relationships that are indispensable in order to combat and defeat trafficking.”**

*Pope Francis*

Most importantly, we are thankful for God's love and grace, which guide us on our journey to become ambassadors of hope and change in pursuit of a world filled with freedom and dignity.

*Thank you so much!*



**SR. ABBY AVELINO, MM**  
International Coordinator



**With Talitha Kum, I consider broadening my horizons and creating international relationships to respond to the urgency of human trafficking that crosses all geographical, ethical, human-rights borders. I like to use art to raise awareness of social issues and above all to create social networks in order to eliminate forms of isolation and individualism.**

*Sr. IsaBelle Couillard, Regional Coordinator of North America*



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# WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



## Human Trafficking: An Overview

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.** Exploitation means a **restriction of personal freedom and exertion of power** over the victim through actual or threatened violence or punishment.

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

Victims of trafficking may be forced into sexual or labour exploitation, for example, in the domestic, agricultural, hospitality, mining and manufacturing sectors. Children may be forced into early marriages. 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. While there is **no single profile** of a trafficked person, women and girls are particularly vulnerable due to inequalities in their economic, social, familial, cultural and religious status.



**12 million**

CHILDREN LIVING IN MODERN SLAVERY

source Global Slavery Index 2021



**1 in 3**

VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
ARE CHILDREN

source Global Slavery Index 2021

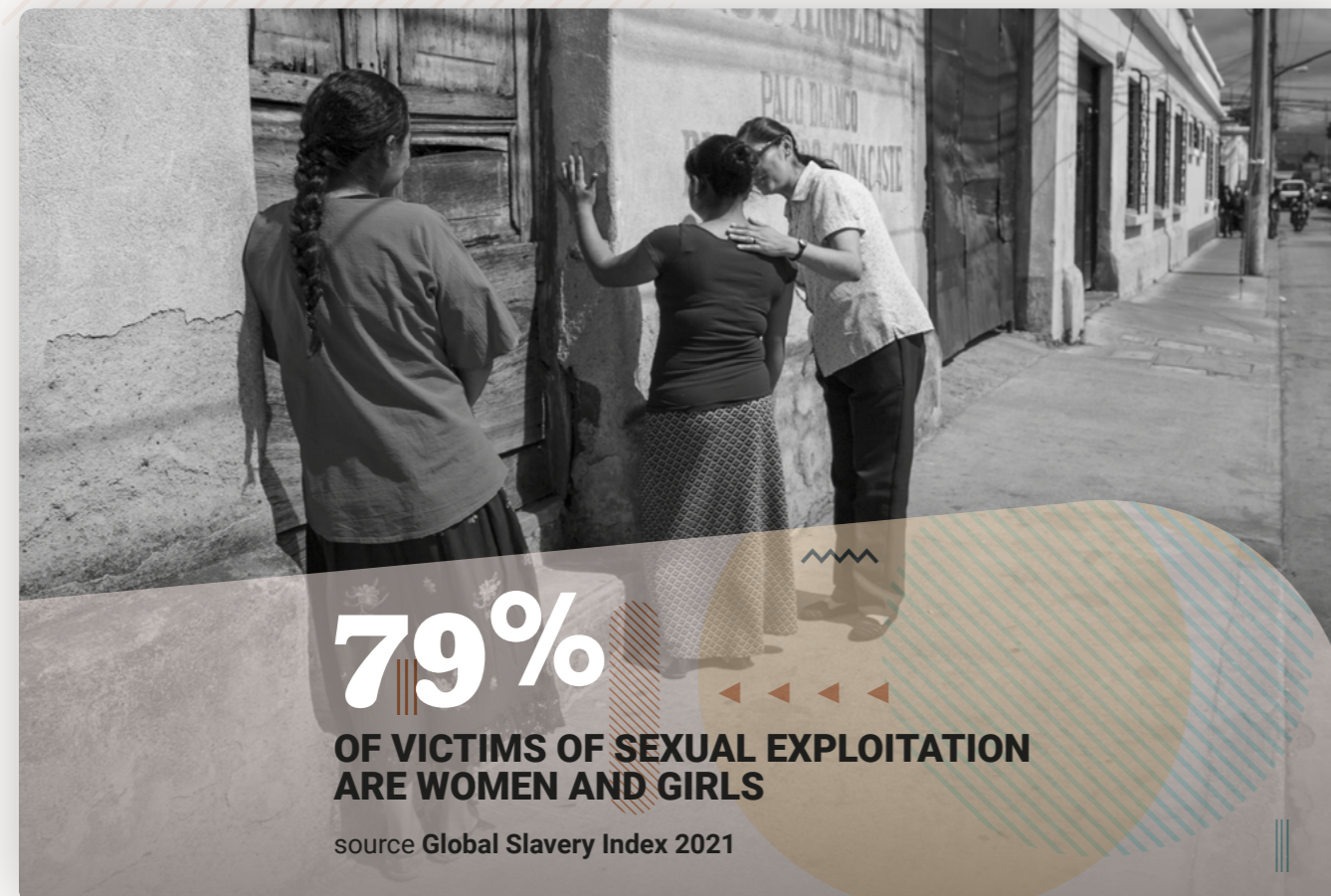
## Online Exploitation

**Human trafficking is constantly evolving.** With the rapid evolution of technology, human trafficking methods have adapted, taking on new and more complex forms in the digital world. Due to the internet's very nature, traffickers more easily avoid detection. This makes it **increasingly more difficult to track and combat these crimes**. This shift presents fresh challenges, requiring updated strategies and tools to protect victims and prevent further exploitation, especially online, which is now a main component traffickers use.

**The COVID-19 pandemic ushered in an alarming increase in online exploitation.** More and more, traffickers use online technologies and platforms to locate, exploit, and subjugate victims. **Using fake identities, they entice** particularly young women and children with promises of work, romance, or a better life.

**The anonymity provided by online activity** allows traffickers to groom victims through chat rooms, dating websites, and social media. Once they have earned their trust, traffickers can coerce victims into creating sexually explicit material to be shared or sold online. A growing trend in online sexual exploitation is forcing victims to engage in sex acts in front of webcams.

Traffickers frequently operate across international borders, thus adding a layer of complexity to the challenges law enforcement authorities and organizations face in their efforts to fight the crime.



## Climate Change and Human Trafficking

Natural and manmade disasters such as floods, droughts, and hurricanes cause millions of people to be displaced every year. Many displaced persons are already impoverished and lack the means to reconstruct their lives after a disaster, making them easy prey for traffickers.

Climate change is increasingly acknowledged as a driver of human trafficking, especially in regions disproportionately affected by extreme weather events. Additionally, climate change also affects food security and agricultural output, forcing people from rural areas to migrate to cities or abroad in search of employment.

Traffickers take advantage of communities being uprooted and families being split up, by giving false promises of safety, jobs, or protection. Displaced women and children, already among the most vulnerable groups, are even more so after major climate disasters. Many other displaced and vulnerable people end up as victims of sex trafficking or in conditions of exploitative labor.

There is an urgent need for integrated solutions that address the socioeconomic and environmental elements that contribute to human trafficking, given the rising frequency of migration due to climate change.

In conclusion, the global issue of human trafficking is constantly changing. Its latest dimensions include online exploitation and climate change. The development of digital technology and the displacement caused by climate change make it easier for traffickers to target vulnerable populations, and to open new avenues for exploitation. Therefore, effective measures to prevent and diminish human trafficking, including stronger legal frameworks, public awareness campaigns, and international cooperation, need to be increased.

**“This training played an important role in that it was a process through which all of us participants shared experiences from different countries, not only to gain knowledge or tools, but also to strengthen our skills to confront the context of a specific reality or painful experiences of our brothers and sisters who have experienced trafficking.”**

*Testimony from Monica, a young leader from El Salvador, Latin America*



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# WHAT IS TALITHA KUM?

03

@Lisa Kristine

Talitha Kum is an International Network Against Human Trafficking, an initiative established in 2009 by the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). This global network, led by Catholic Sisters, aims to end human trafficking and exploitation through collaborative initiatives focused on prevention, protection, spiritual support, social reintegration, and rehabilitation of survivors.

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

*(Mark 5:41)*

“Talitha Kum” is derived from a powerful biblical passage: “Talitha Kum. Little girl, I say to you, rise up.” (Mark 5:41). In this passage, Jesus addresses Jairus’s 12-year-old daughter, believed to be dead, and upon taking her hand, she immediately rises and walks. This message of hope and transformation is the core to Talitha Kum’s mission.

The expression “Talitha Kum” defines the identity and mission of its global umbrella network, which unites around 6,000 Catholic Sisters, allies, and partners by referring to the transformative power of hope, compassion, and mercy. As Catholics, rooted in the Gospel and guided by the Catholic Social Teaching of the Church, we draw inspiration from Jesus’ words. This word is an invitation to Talitha Kum networks and all people of goodwill to rise up with courage and hope, stand with victims and survivors of trafficking, and promote a just world where every human being can live with dignity and fullness, fulfilling Christ’s message:

**“I have come so that they may have life,  
life in its fullness”**

*(John 10:10)*

As consecrated women, we stand in solidarity with those suffering from human trafficking. We share our lives with individuals in vulnerable situations and those at risk of trafficking. Our network responds to the call to support the discriminated, exploited, and victimized by modern slavery.

Talitha Kum promotes collaboration among networks organized at national, regional, and continental levels, actively supporting victims, survivors, and people at risk.

The strength of the Talitha Kum International 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. We are committed to preventing trafficking through a global preventive approach.

### Talitha Kum Networks are:

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

### APPROACH

Our call as Talitha Kum network is to remain alongside victims and survivors throughout their healing and restoration journeys, upholding their dignity, while embracing Jesus' example of care for marginalized groups, including children, women, migrants, and those on the fringes of society. We aspire to inspire and catalyze necessary change through our efforts. Our faith and spirituality remind us of God's transformative power—the ability to bring new life even from the most hopeless situations.

Our networks remain focused on key areas for action: prevention, advocacy, training, involving survivors, capacity building, and engaging young people as leaders among their peers in anti-trafficking efforts. Talitha Kum addresses the root causes of human trafficking and advocates for systemic change at all levels.

We reaffirm our commitment to assisting survivors effectively, ensuring their healing and sustainable reintegration. Our ongoing mission to end human trafficking, woven with the dedication of Religious Sisters and Brothers, along with many committed individuals fighting against this scourge. Talitha Kum network uniquely embodies the life stories of millions of trafficked individuals and survivors, inviting us to rise up with courage and hope in our collective commitment to combat human trafficking.

**"TOGETHER, OUR ACTIONS HAVE THE POWER TO TRANSFORM LIVES WITH COMPASSION TOWARDS A WORLD FREE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING."**

## The international coordination Committee



**SR. ABBY AVELINO, MM**  
International Coordinator  
MM - Maryknoll Sisters



**SR. YVONNE CLEMENCE BAMBARA, RGS**  
Regional representative of Africa  
RGS - Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd



**SR. CARMEN GARCIA UGARTE, OSR**  
Regional representative of Latin America  
OSR - Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer



**SR. ISABELLE COUILLARD, SGM**  
Regional representative of North America  
SGM - Sisters of Charity of Montreal



**SR. ADINA BALAN, CJ**  
Regional representative of Europe  
CJ - Congregatio Jesu



**SR. ANETTE ARNOLD, RSJ**  
Regional representative of Oceania  
RSJ - Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart



**SR. PAULA KWANDAO PHONPRASERTUKSA, SPC**  
Regional representative of Asia  
SPC - Sisters of Saint Paul of Chartres



## Areas of Action

Talitha Kum International has fostered and nurtured anti-trafficking networks at the grassroots level, focusing on the following:

1. **Networking** with a common vision for anti-trafficking work and collaboration with like-minded organizations.
2. **Formation** and communication between networks to integrate and share capacities, learning and skills.
3. **Advocacy** for victims/survivors, and at-risk populations through promoting systemic change that addresses the root causes of human trafficking.
4. **INVOLVEMENT OF SURVIVORS** relying on Talitha Kum's grassroots activities and person-centered pastoral approach, ensuring engagement and empowerment of survivors.

Below are the action areas during 2023, which enabled the networks to venture into challenges around the globe amidst natural and man-made crises with concrete activities, especially prevention campaigns and care for victims/survivors.

## NETWORKING

Networking is one of Talitha Kum's strengths and is a major priority that allows Talitha Kum to reach out to key stakeholders at all levels. Thus, collaboration with religious congregations, parishes, other Catholic organizations, non-governmental and governmental agencies, and interfaith based groups that allowed for common participating in various activities and awareness campaign involvement improved tremendously in 2023. Some examples include:

- **TK Thailand** - Collaborated with the following government agencies: Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division (ATPD), Thailand Anti Trafficking In Persons (TATIP), and Thailand Internet Crimes Against Children (TICAC) in awareness raising campaigns to educate about human trafficking risks, participating in rescue efforts, and aiding in the investigative and judicial processes.
- **TK Zambia** - TAKUZA formed 11 TAKUZA Teams, comprising religious Sisters and their collaborators at ZAS Branch Level in all 11 Catholic dioceses.
- **TK El Salvador** - Collaboration included a press conference with the Latin American observatory against human trafficking, coordinating with the hierarchy through the El Salvador chapter, and sending subsidies to parishes to sensitize parishioners about human trafficking in the context of Eucharistic celebrations.

- **TK Middle East** – The Wells of Hope network presented the network's activities and success stories to the president of CNEWA and a team of Missio- Aachen. The network also participated in World Mission Sunday in October 2023 in which the issue of human trafficking in the region was presented alongside the work of the Talitha Kum global network.
- **Talitha Kum Asia** – Members of the network participated in and raised the voice of women religious in the follow-up meeting of the Federation of Asian Bishop Conference (FABC) 50th Anniversary General Assembly, held from 5th to 10th June 2023 in Vietnam. It paved the way to establish desks for Human Development to provide help to human trafficking victims.

A major achievement in 2023 was an increase in membership – active members and collaborators – by 7.8% in America, Europe and Asia. More members and collaborators equal a greater ability to amplify the fight against human trafficking.



@Margherita Simionati

## FORMATION

Talitha Kum International coordinates the organization of formation courses, workshops and training programs in leadership skills, and capacity building, with key priorities being the prevention of human trafficking, integral human development and advocacy. In addition, networks organized training on their respective continents that allowed the identification and better understanding of issues related to human trafficking at the local, regional and international levels.

Some highlights are:

- **The fourth training course for Talitha Kum leaders** was held in hybrid form (online / in person). It was coordinated by Talitha Kum International in collaboration with the Pontifical University Antonianum (Rome) and Tangaza University College (Kenya). The intensive portion of the training was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from November 21-26, 2023. Begun in 2019, this course aimed to provide the necessary leadership skills to committed Talitha Kum members. 22 participants from 17 different nationalities, and 17 religious congregations completed the 4th edition course.
- **Youth Initiatives in North America:** Training of Canadian University Students took place at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), with more than 30 students from different programs and fields including social work, psychology, criminology, public affairs, international relations, law, political science and anthropology. This training highlighted the definition of and different forms of human trafficking, the Palermo Protocol, the Canadian legislative framework on trafficking.

- **Young People Formation program in Latin America:** Talitha Kum's training of young leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean involved 39 young people from 11 different nationalities, to raise awareness and implement skills to identify and prevent human trafficking.
- **Youth Ambassadors online Formation in Africa:** 56 youth ambassadors from 15 countries completed 6 online sessions organized in both French and English. The online training was meant to encourage the youth ambassadors to be protagonists among their peers in prevention activities at national and regional levels.

All in all, in 2023, **42 out of 60 networks organized formation** at different levels, around the objectives of the mission and vision of the network.

*"What motivated me was the fact that in the city where I live, trafficking in persons, and in particular the sexual exploitation of minors, is a recent fact in the media. The whole course was interesting, and updated and fortified my skills on the subject. My desire for the future is to inform and educate adolescents on the topic and make them aware of what trafficking is. I wish to protect and care for young people!"*

*Soledad from Uruguay*

## COMMUNICATION

Communication plays a key role in the global work of Talitha Kum networks. It strengthens the visibility of Sisters and the grassroots activities of the networks for awareness-raising via creative social media tools such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and X (formally Twitter), as well as through the distribution of monthly newsletters and recent news on its web page ([www.talithakum.info](http://www.talithakum.info)). This area of communication has improved the visibility of both Religious and collaborators who walk the extra mile to fight human trafficking at both the local and international levels among stakeholders.

Talitha Kum International provides a **database tool** to assist each network in collecting data regarding its activities for prevention, care for victims, access to justice and networking. This database allows Talitha Kum to approximate the impact consecrated life makes against trafficking in persons via a pastoral approach in **qualitative** and **quantitative** data. This tool also aids monitoring and strategic planning for systemic change.

In 2023, the total number of people reached by the global network increased by 34.38%, and the number of countries in which networks are operative increased by 10.3%. This demonstrates the diligent cooperation of the networks in reporting the activities carried out in the areas of Prevention, Care for victims, Advocacy, Networking, and Collaboration.



## ADVOCACY

Advocacy efforts are implemented in different forms in each network.

In 2023, some network's initiatives included:

- Australia Network **Australia Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH)** - Participated in National Roundtable meetings with multi agency groups involved in combating human trafficking and modern-day slavery, advocating for access to legal and health support, education, employment, compensation for survivors.
- **Talitha Kum Uganda** - The priority of the network in supporting care for victims expressed itself in a platform for political negotiations to advocate for basic human rights of survivors.
- U.S. Network **Alliance to End Human Trafficking (AEHT)** - endorsed the Immigration Court Efficiency and Children's Court Act bill. In November 2023, members met with State representatives in Congress to highlight the link between human trafficking and forced migration, and to seek support for the network's multifaceted approach of addressing root causes of forced migration, reducing delays in work permits for asylum applicants, and protecting unaccompanied children.
- **Talitha Kum International** committed to the **annual G20 Interfaith Summit** to engage in conversation for the **G20 Agenda**, specifically to tackle and address the root causes of human trafficking. In 2023, the **IF20 Interfaith Forum** was held in India. The central focus of this annual summit is the world's most vulnerable communities, particularly children and those confronted by inequalities and disruptions linked to armed conflicts and climate change. Its primary aim is to foster global peace, hope, and holistic development.

Out of the total 60 Talitha Kum networks, 26 networks (43%) worked in the area of advocacy in 2023.

## INVOLVEMENT OF SURVIVORS

In 2023, **involving survivors in the activities of Talitha Kum networks increased by 67%**: 40 Talitha Kum networks reported collaborating with survivors whose participation takes different forms according to local needs. Some forms of participation included:

- **Caring and Empowering** through physical and sustainability skills programs.
- **Sharing and advocating** survivors' inclusion in voicing their rights and in awareness raising activities.
- **Being part** of the survivors-led working group to develop a mentoring program.

The active involvement of survivors is playing an increasingly important role in the networks. Survivors' contribution also helps identify components necessary to carry out reintegration into their communities of origin through concrete activities, and participation in prevention and raising awareness against human trafficking and exploitation.

**The intervention of the Talitha Kum network of religious in Bangladesh heeded to my given situation and responded, helped me in designing an income generation program and to start and expand a micro-business, a grocery store. Now I am very delighted to be able to make a livelihood and support my family.**

*The story of Rony, Bangladesh, Asia*



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# GLOBAL DATA

04

## 2023 In Figures

By 2023, Talitha Kum had expanded its presence to **107 countries**, and developed a network comprising 240 local subdivisions, **60 national networks**, 13 regional coordinating networks, and 5 continental coordinating networks. Talitha Kum also established networks in **Togo and Puerto Rico**. This expansion demonstrates the network's commitment to combating human trafficking and to provide care for victims and survivors on a global scale.

The Talitha Kum network included **5,871 active members** and collaborators (7.3 % increase over 2022), encompassing **777 congregations of women religious, 93 congregations of men religious, and 48 interfaith** collaborators. The cumulative efforts of the entire Talitha Kum network reached **753,392 individuals**, marking a **34.4% increase** over 2022.

This growth reflects the network's strength with collaborative efforts involving 297 Catholic organizations, 219 NGOs, and 204 governmental and intergovernmental organizations (**14.6% increase** over 2022).

**Prevention** efforts continued to be a key focus for Talitha Kum networks. These activities benefitted **623,700 individuals (41% increase** from 2022), including students, youth, educators, religious and community leaders, government employees, and other stakeholders who were equipped with the knowledge and tools to combat trafficking.

In addition, through this **networking and collaboration, 90,611 individuals** participated in training and capacity-building programs (8% increase over 2022), which showcased the network's emphasis on education and empowerment.

Direct **care and support for victims and survivors** reached new heights in 2023. **33,520** individuals benefitted from services that included physical and psychological care, legal assistance, and social reintegration. 40 local networks contributed to this **22.6% increase** from 2022, enabling the healing and empowerment of more survivors. Advocacy and justice support were provided to **5,561 survivors (22% decrease** compared to 2022). However, advocacy efforts focused on legislative reforms and policymaking, promoting systemic change and enhancing survivor reintegration initiatives, thus **indirectly affecting countless people**. Overall, Talitha Kum supported **39,081 victims and survivors** in 2023, reflecting its ongoing commitment to protection and empowerment.

**Interfaith collaboration** reached **80%** in 2023, fostering unity among diverse religious groups with a shared vision of ending human trafficking. This approach not only strengthened partnerships but also inspired young people to become agents of change in the fight against modern-day slavery.

Talitha Kum's efforts in 2023 underscore the efficacy of the collaboration and partnering capacity, its advocacy, and educational activities in addressing the complex challenges of human trafficking. By continuing to expand its global reach, strengthen partnerships, and support survivors, the Talitha Kum network took a step forward as a vital force in the fight against this global scourge.

## Methodological note

Talitha Kum's database was created in 2018 to support its networks at the local level. The qualitative and quantitative data gathered about activities carried out every year allows Talitha Kum to assess and represent its regional and global impact.

Talitha Kum's data collection follows the psycho-social, pastoral intervention approach to combat human trafficking. Every year, during the period of January to March, the network updates its database with data collected the preceding year. The percentage of responses (57 out of 60 national networks) from the networks for the year 2023 improved to 95%. In addition, most of the questions under both sections, Census and Activity, were filled in. This demonstrates the appreciation Talitha Kum networks have for the collection of data.

The Talitha Kum Database system consists of two main sections. The first is **Census Report** which collects the information from specific networks, namely: structure, functions, and a list of collaborators, including religious congregations, governmental and NGOs, inter-governmental organizations, inter-faith based groups, and sub-divisions of the network.

The second section, the **Activity Report**, is collated around the four action areas: Prevention, Care for Victims, Access to Justice, and Networking and Collaboration. Data gathered under this section includes: best practices, participation of members and collaborators, number of people benefiting from the specific activity, impact of the activities, evaluation of the work undertaken, and best responses to Talitha Kum's core mission.

An evaluation of the global and regional impact of Talitha Kum's mission is thus possible through an analysis of the data provided under both of these sections.





NETWORKS  
**60**



ACTIVE MEMBERS  
AND COLLABORATORS  
**5871**

TALITHA KUM  
END HUMAN TRAFFICKING



**TOTALS  
WORLDWIDE  
2023**



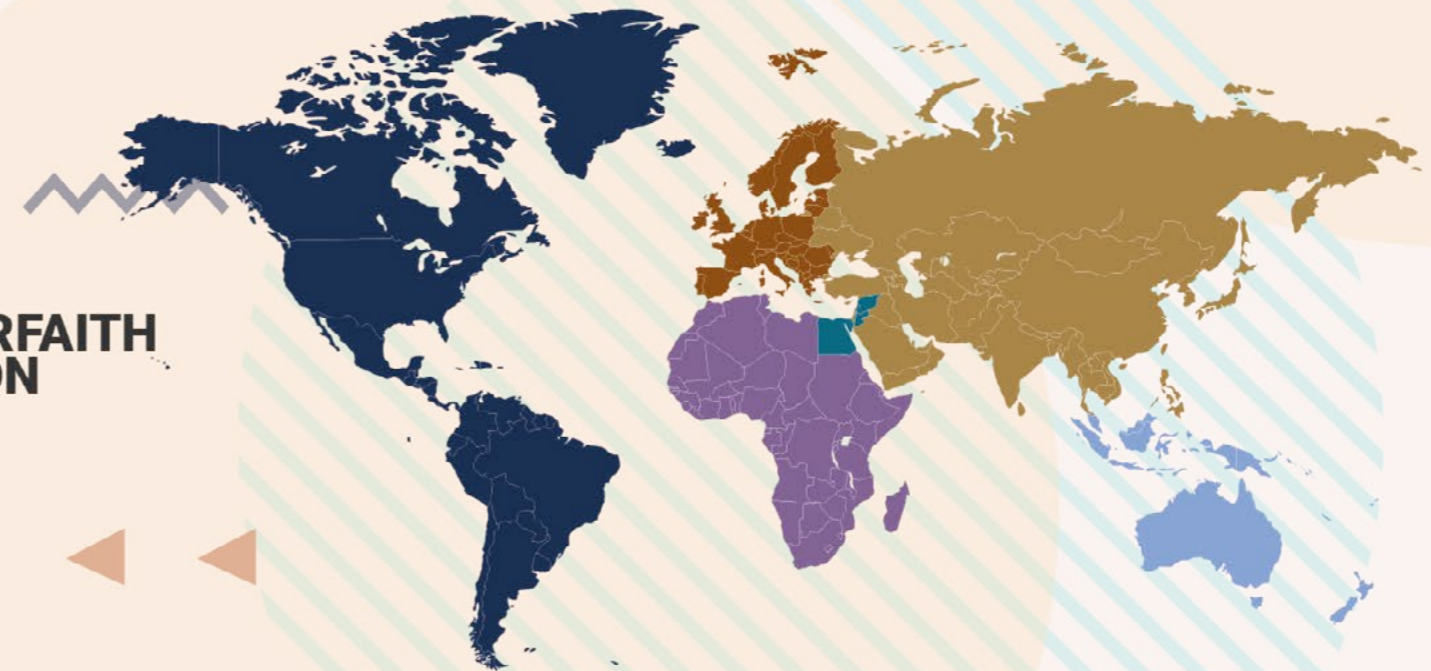
COUNTRIES  
IN ALL CONTINENTS  
**107**



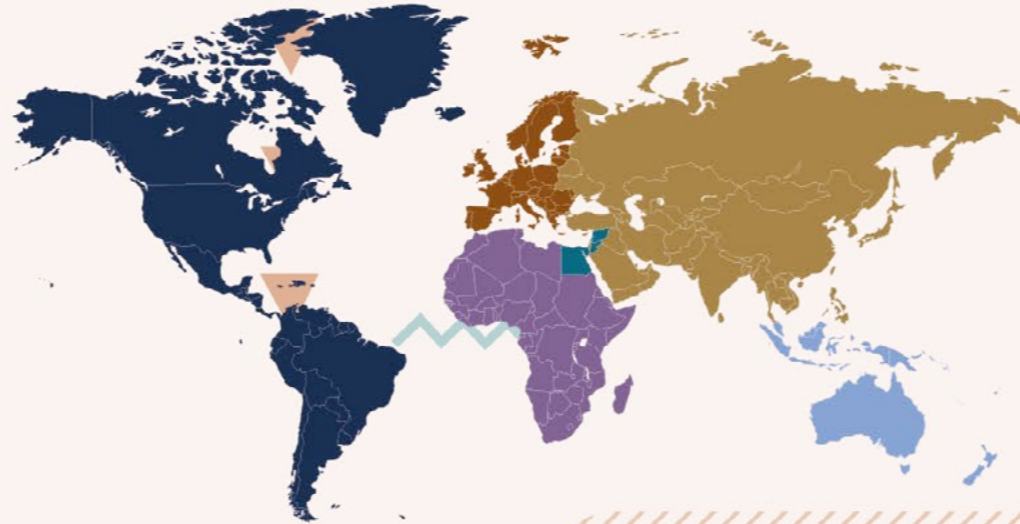
RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS  
**870**  
89% FEMALE  
11% MALE



PURSUED INTERFAITH  
COLLABORATION  
**80%**



TALITHA KUM  
END HUMAN TRAFFICKING



# TOTALS WORLDWIDE 2023



**PROTECTION**  
CARE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS  
OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**33520**



**ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
FOR SURVIVORS**

**5561**



**VICTIMS/SURVIVORS  
SUPPORTED BY TALITHA KUM IN 2023**

**39081**

**PREVENTION**  
WITH AT-RISK PEOPLE, AWARENESS-RAISING  
CAMPAIGNS, EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH STUDENTS

**623700**

**PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023**

**753392**



**NETWORKING, TRAINING,  
CAPACITY BUILDING**

**90611**

## AFRICA

Talitha Kum networks in Africa are increasingly raising awareness of the tragic phenomenon of human trafficking that destroys lives. In 2023, Talitha Kum Africa extended its reach to include Ethiopia and Angola.

The training of members and new adherents was a priority, particularly the new groups of Youth Ambassadors now deployed in all the African countries where Talitha Kum is present. Accordingly, the training of two groups, a French-speaking group and an English-speaking group, took place online via Zoom every Sunday in August. The six training modules culminated in the development of an action plan for each country. In addition, training sessions with different groups, such as women's religious congregations and groups of major superiors, were organized by various networks in certain countries to enhance a better understanding of Talitha Kum's mission.

Thousands of students in schools and student circles attended Talitha Kum awareness-raising campaigns regarding the phenomenon of human trafficking and to explain Talitha Kum's commitment to the fight against human trafficking. These events sometimes elicited the poignant testimonies of a number of participants, some of whom had been victims themselves. Awareness-raising also took place occasionally via local radio or television.

In several countries, such as Kenya and Uganda, a survivors' network was set up to provide credible voices to denounce trafficking, and raise awareness through first-hand testimony.

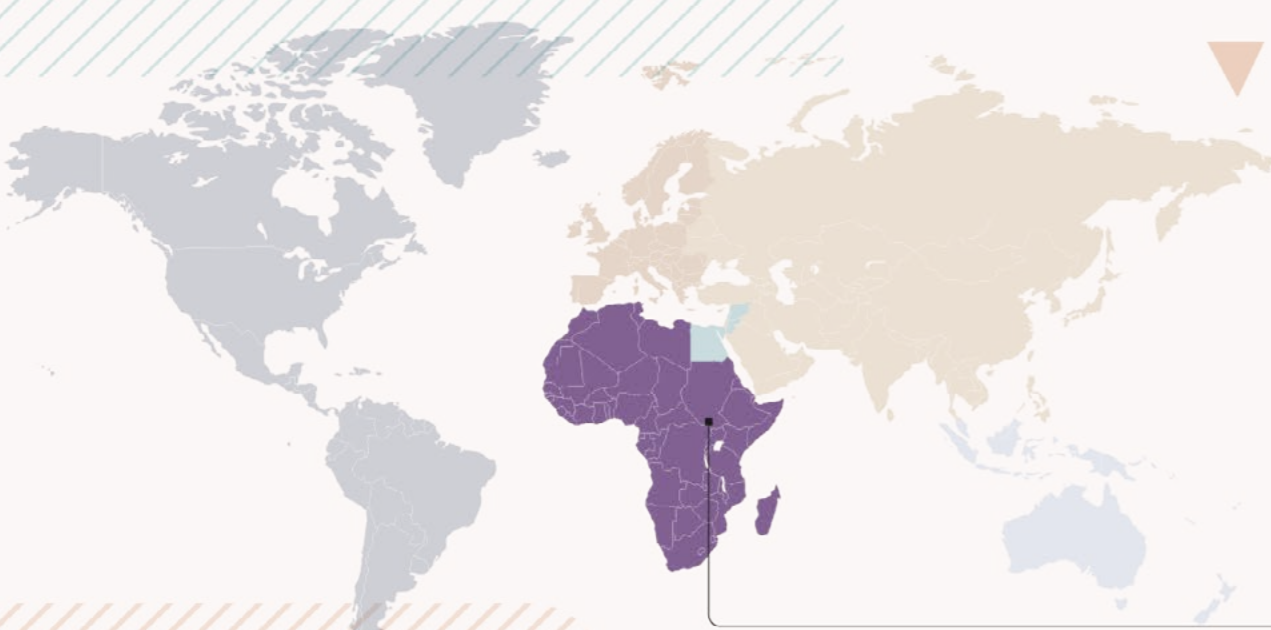
Talitha Kum Africa kept its website (<https://talithakum.africa/>) up-to-date with the activities carried out by its different networks, providing greater visibility to its various actions.

Talitha Kum Africa's partnership with international organizations on the local level has enabled members to participate with these organizations in the celebration of specific days such as International Migrants Day, International Day of the Girl Child, and the United Nations World Day against Trafficking in Persons, among others.

Talitha Kum Africa also sought greater collaboration between the leaders of the various networks in the area of providing support and assistance to victims, and helping them return to their countries of origin. To this end, Talitha Kum's regional groups are collaborating to raise awareness and create new networks along borders in order to reduce the risk of human trafficking. Through projects supported by our friends and partners, shelters for victims provided what is needed for victims to be restored, providing the tools needed to build a new future.



**SR. YVONNE CLEMENCE BAMBARA, RGS**  
Regional representative of Africa  
RGS - Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd



PREVENTION  
**312998**



NETWORKING  
**40206**



ADVOCACY  
**38%**  
OF THE NETWORKS



ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**685**



PROTECTION  
**4445**

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**81%**

## AFRICA

Africa's priorities were the focus areas of Networking and Prevention at regional and national levels. The networks and sub-divisions have started growing gradually. The network focused on training and awareness-raising campaigns against human trafficking. The main beneficiaries were youth, women, religious individuals, children, local leaders, and vulnerable groups through face-to-face conversations, radio and television shows, social media coverage, debates, and theatrical dance showcases.



PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023

**358334**

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**63**

CATHOLIC

**45**

NGOS

**46**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

## REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

Talitha Kum Africa  
East Africa Hub  
Northern Africa Hub  
West Africa Hub  
West Africa Hub  
Southern Africa Hub

**1478**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**61**

SUBDIVISIONS

**30**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**16**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**266**

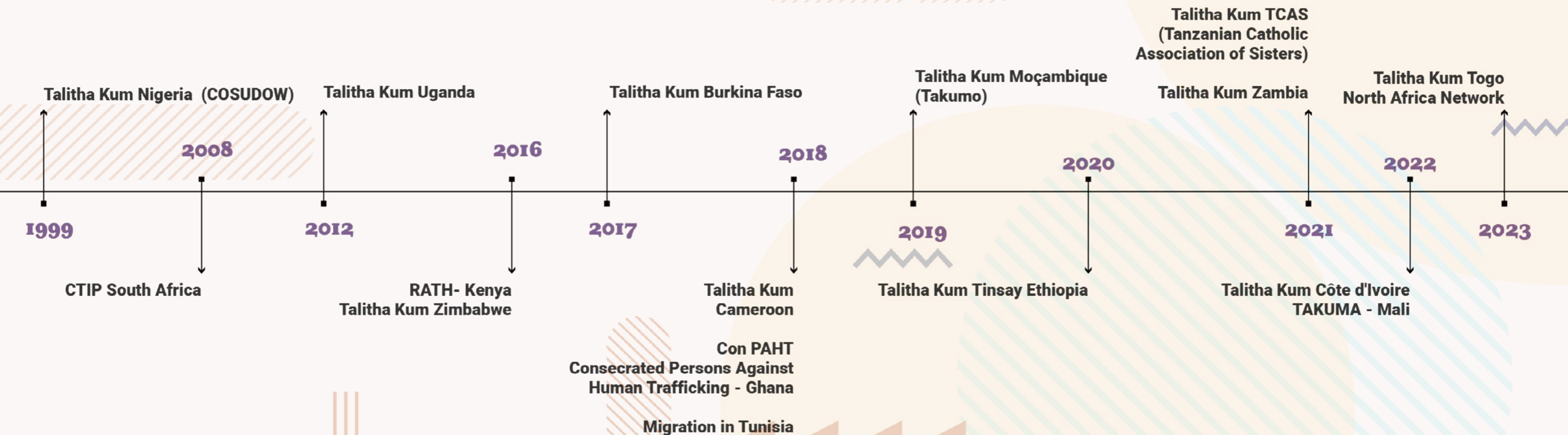
RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS



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



NATIONAL  
**NETWORKS**  
**16**



### REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

Talitha Kum Africa  
East Africa Hub (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia)  
Northern Africa Hub (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Libya)  
West Africa Hub (English Speaking) (Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana)  
West Africa Hub (French Speaking) (Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Mali, Togo)  
Southern Africa Hub (South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe)

## MIDDLE EAST

Talitha Kum's Middle East Network, **Wells of Hope**, operates in a setting where economic and social insecurity prevail. Challenges such as high unemployment, currency devaluation, poverty, and various other socio-economic problems create a conducive environment for human trafficking. The situation during the last three years has deteriorated politically, economically, and socially in the Middle East, thus causing an increase in human trafficking. Organ trafficking, forced early marriages, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and begging are a few of the forms human trafficking takes in the region.

The network's primary goals focus on the areas of prevention, safeguarding, and aiding victims of trafficking through preventive strategies, outreach initiatives, comprehensive victim protection and assistance, effective trafficking reporting mechanisms, and the creation of tailored educational programs. In particular, the network has prioritized a stigma-free reintegration of survivors by equipping them with valuable expertise and abilities.

In 2023, Wells of Hope organized three main events in the region:

- presented our activities and success stories to the president of CNEWA from New York, and a team of Missio-Achen, and participated in World Mission Sunday in October through a discussion of human trafficking as a concern in the region and Missio-Achen's collaboration with Talitha Kum;
- the Lebanon Regional meeting, held in September, the main objective being to strengthen the identity of the Wells of Hope network, share experiences and best practices, address concerns, and create a path of collaboration with Talitha Kum International;
- Advocacy for Gaza children through a written petition submitted to the UNHCR, IOM, Talitha Kum, and other NGOs to determine the reality of violence, especially against children.

Wells of Hope is characterized by its collaboration between Christian and Muslim women fighting a human trafficking. Thus, it is a unique example of networking, dialogue and integration of diverse approaches towards the common goal of protecting people's dignity. The network is working to reinforce and empower its members in all regions by training them to develop their skills. Moreover, members seeks to reinforce relations with partners and networking.



Wells of Hope



Yanabia' El'amal - Talitha Kum Lebanon  
Yanabia' El'amal - Talitha Kum Jordan

Yanabia' El'amal - Talitha Kum Syrian Arab Republic  
Talitha Kum Egypt

2019

2021



PREVENTION  
**6220**



NETWORKING  
**371**



ADVOCACY  
**25%**  
OF THE NETWORKS



ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**1000**



PROTECTION  
**120**

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**25%**

## MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East network's focus was on awareness sessions in schools and training for religious individuals to work with vulnerable groups. the main beneficiaries of these endeavors were children, women, girls, and people at risk.

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**8**

CATHOLIC

**12**

NGOS

**3**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

REGIONAL  
COORDINATION

Yanabia' El'amal (Wells of Hope)

**111**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**4**

SUBDIVISIONS

**4**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**4**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**37**

RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023

**7711**



## NORTH AMERICA

In 2023, a number of major issues emerged regarding human trafficking in North America. Restrictive migration policies, precarious immigration status, and socio-economic tensions helped create an environment conducive to the exploitation of migrants, particularly in the area of forced labor. Hence the need for strengthened advocacy efforts to identify both the roots of the problems that pave the way for criminal human trafficking, as well as flaws in the system.

A growing concern among Talitha Kum partners is that traffickers or criminal networks are increasingly resorting to intimidation or threatening physical harm to victim/survivor advocates who are trying to get them to desist from their activities or to 'turn over' victims.

In 2023, U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking changed its name to the Alliance to End Human Trafficking (Alliance) to better reflect its reality as women religious, congregations/communities, professionals, organizations, schools, dioceses, etc. The Alliance:

- hosted a national conference attended by people from several U.S. states, and a number of other countries;
- awarded grants to six homes for survivors of human trafficking and scholarships for survivors;
- initiated an advocacy campaign on the connections between human trafficking and forced migration;
- produced several webinars;
- attended conferences at which members provided educational material to thousands of people;
- the Alliance Board of Directors met at the end of 2023 to advocate for three pieces of U.S. legislation dealing with a specialized court for children, work authorization asylum seekers, and improved conditions in countries of origin;
- looked forward to spring 2024 when it invited all of its members to join on Capitol Hill to meet legislators on these issues.

The Alliance continues to believe that preventive education for children and families is necessary and that government agencies and non-governmental organizations must address the root causes of human trafficking.

In the summer of 2023, the visit to Canada of the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, including its Causes and Consequences, provided a unique opportunity to assess the specific situation of modern slavery in Canada

His visit highlighted the persistent challenges and advances in prevention, protection of victims and prosecution of traffickers. The Rapporteur's presence also helped raise awareness among the Canadian public and authorities about the current problems associated with human trafficking. He encouraged greater mobilization to strengthen policies and practices aimed at eradicating several forms of human trafficking.

The Rapporteur visited Montreal on the invitation of the Comité d'action contre la traite humaine interne et internationale (CATHII). This enabled partner organizations to inform him about the on the ground realities of forced labor, enabling the Rapporteur to identify the challenges and make recommendations to the Canadian government. Thanks to CATHII's specific contribution surrounding temporary foreign workers and closed work permits in Canada, Rapporteur Tomoya Obokata addressed this issue directly in section B of his [report](#):

***"... Canada should end labour migration arrangements that foster exploitation by creating dependency situations that tie workers to their employers and give employers control worker's housing, health care and migration status. The Special Rapporteur retains the view that the Temporary Foreign Worker Program serves as a breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery, as it institutionalizes asymmetries of power that favour employers and prevent workers from exercising their rights."***

In addition, the first group of French-speaking Young Ambassadors was set up in North America, in Canada. Their goal is to become Missionaries of Human Dignity, following the invitation Pope Francis directed to them in a [video message](#) on the World Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking on February 8, 2023.



**SR. ISABELLE COUILLARD, SGM**  
Regional representative of North America  
SGM - Sisters of Charity of Montreal

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the continent's role as a place of origin, transit, and destination has created an increase in human trafficking. A high percentage of women and girls are trafficked for sexual and labor exploitation. Furthermore, the recruitment of children for criminal activities and begging is on the rise, particularly in Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico.

Latin America is experiencing the worst migration crisis in its history. The lives of men, women and children who are forced to migrate are in constant danger, especially when they are trapped by organized crime. The areas most affected by emigration are Central America, Haiti and Venezuela. What is worse is that UNICEF reports that 25% of Latin American migrants are children. This statistic is truly alarming and demands attention.

A historical context of poverty, inequality, violence, and impunity has created a background in which exploitation and trafficking are accepted in a muted, perverse and unscrupulous manner. In this context, human traffickers more easily control victims, and reduce them to commodities who are sold at the highest price.

Talitha Kum networks, in collaboration with CLAR's (Latin American Confederation of Religious) anti-trafficking commission, Red Clamor, religious congregations, lay people, and other organizations, continue to strengthen their mission against human trafficking. Care is part of our every-day language and prophetic action, which translates into a respectful and merciful welcome for victims, and spaces for listening, acceptance and empowerment.

Priority areas of intervention:

- **Individual accompaniment:** all networks acknowledge that listening is an essential quality of care by which trust is gradually gained, after which the processes of care, healing, empowerment and restitution of dignity can begin.
- **Formation and training:** prioritized throughout the networks, formation and training is utilized for network teams, alongside awareness raising and prevention of trafficking, which focuses on various at risk groups in educational centers and parishes.
- **Documentation and legal Aid:** a focus for networks in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Uruguay is assisting migrant women and those who need help by referring cases to other institutions.

- **Skill training for the small-scale income generation activity:** projects support for more than 300 women in Colombia and Mexico in gaining occupational skills in beautician, catering, and handicraft businesses, and home repair and remodeling, by which women can make a dignified livelihood and transform their lives into stories of recovery and hope, and in some cases return to their countries of origin.
- **Shelters and care homes:** established in Argentina and Peru for women survivors that provide tools to improve their lives; another in Bolivia for trafficked girls where sisters visit each week to provide a supportive presence. In places such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Puerto Rico and Uruguay, network congregations carry out projects and operate homes for girls and women living in difficult and vulnerable circumstances or neighborhoods.
- **Survivor Advocates:** In Argentina, Colombia and Mexico, female survivors wanting to support other victims have integrated into the networks, participate in meetings and offer a unique form of support and connection after the resilient process of their healing journeys.
- **Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors:** after the first training courses for 64 young people were held on the continental level in both Spanish and Portuguese, 11 new projects are in development in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Uruguay.
- **Commemorative days:** various activities and campaigns were carried out to commemorate the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking, Good Friday with Stations of the Cross for victims of trafficking, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, the International Day against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Women and Children, and World Human Rights Day.

**New Network:** founded in Puerto Rico with the desire to strengthen resistance against exploitation and the underlying socio-economic and cultural issues that fuel it.



**SR. CARMEN GARCIA UGARTE, OSR**  
Regional representative of Latin America  
OSR - Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer



## AMERICA

America's focus areas were on prevention, care for victims, and networking. Training programs and awareness campaigns were held for youth, women, migrants, indigenous communities, and groups at risk of human trafficking. The Training of Trainers (ToTs) program allowed for new program leaders to gain the skills needed to facilitate workshops in the future. Programs to empower survivors and aid in reintegration into communities were held in collaboration with local and international networks.



PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023  
**189242**



PREVENTION  
**158510**



NETWORKING  
**25039**



ADVOCACY  
**41%**  
OF THE NETWORKS



ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**430**



PROTECTION  
**5263**

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**59%**

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**84**

CATHOLIC

**61**

NGOS

**72**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

REGIONAL  
COORDINATIONS

Red Kawsay  
Red Ramá  
Comisión Trata CLAR

CONTINENTAL  
COORDINATIONS

North America  
Latin America and Caribbean

**1200**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**83**

SUBDIVISIONS

**20**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**17**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

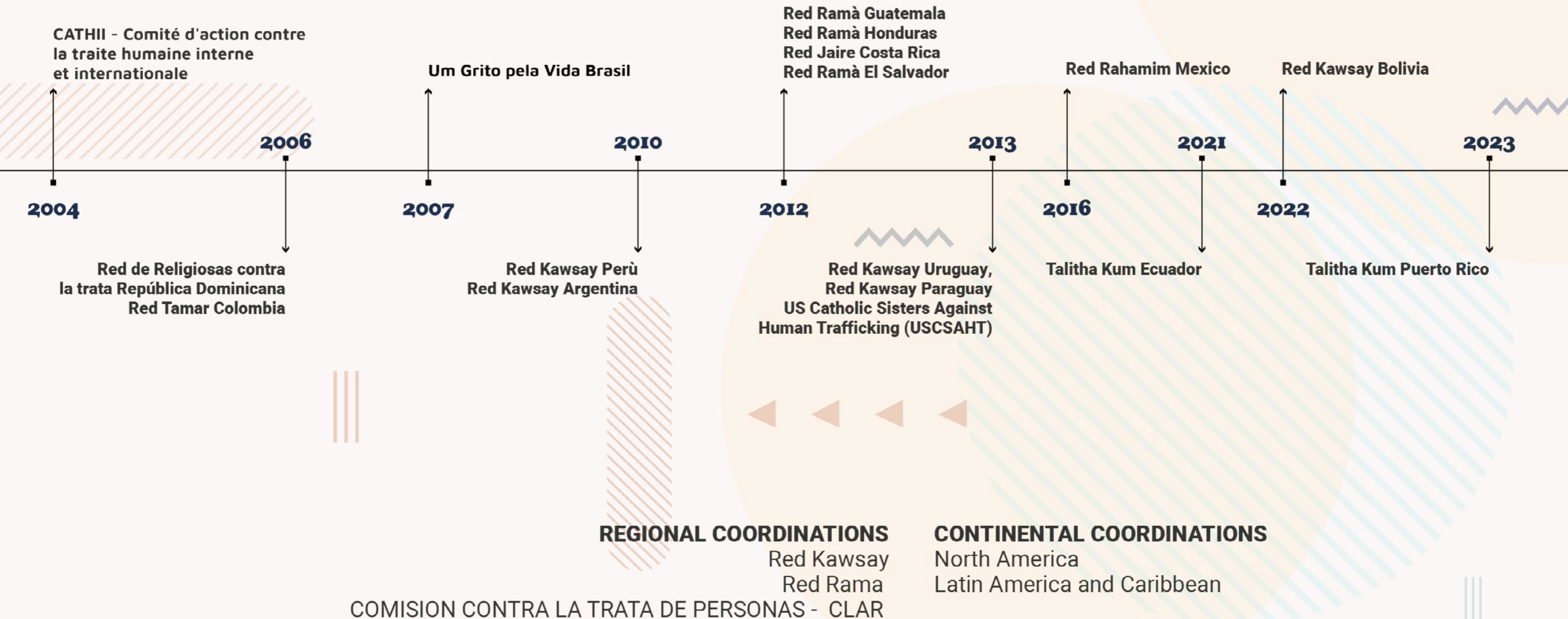
**302**

RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

## The representation of the growing Networks of Talitha Kum in AMERICA



NATIONAL  
**NETWORKS**  
**17**



## ASIA

The Talitha Kum networks in Asia are united in their efforts to end human trafficking. Members are committed to strengthening networking across Asia and collaboration with Catholic organizations, NGOs, and government bodies. Talitha Kum networks invite young people to join in ending human trafficking. Their approach is synodal, encouraging collective action, attentive listening, and participation.

Asian networks are continuously engaged in prevention activities. A campaign targeting various groups was organized to raise community awareness about the threat of human trafficking and self-protection against it, highlighting those at risk. Given the spread of offenders throughout society, Talitha Kum Asia tailored its educational content to address the current forms of human trafficking through social media. Talitha Kum Asia also strengthened collaboration between networks so prevention activities could be more effective.

Through collaborative efforts, the Talitha Kum network was able to provide timely assistance to victims. Collaborating with government agencies enabled members to prosecute perpetrators and to facilitate survivors safe return to their countries. In 2023, members worked to help victims receive access to social welfare and to achieve justice by finding places for survivors to stay, and accompanying them as they start a new life.

In addition to providing care for victims, Talitha Kum Asia also conducted training for its members to enhance their knowledge and effectiveness, and to develop their capacity to fulfill their mission. All the networks organized training both online and on-site, helping teams gain a deeper understanding regarding the prevailing situation of human trafficking.

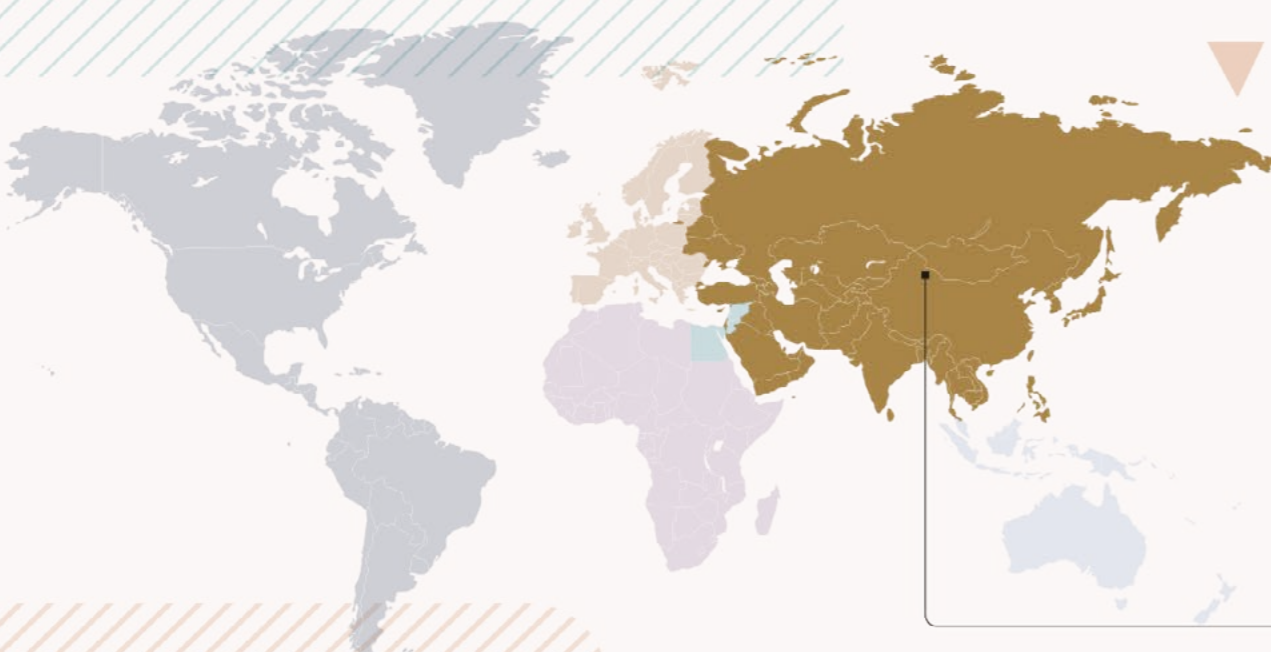
Coordinators met regularly to discuss and plan activities for Asia, and to prepare for the Talitha Kum 2nd General Assembly 2024. Team building and communication skills training was also organized. Each network also conducted formation sessions for youth groups to develop leadership skills and raise awareness regarding human trafficking in their local communities.

Reports indicate that many cases of human trafficking are migrant workers. In response, Talitha Kum Asia created a prevention plan designed to reduce the risk of individuals becoming victims. This plan focuses on educating the communities about economic sustainability and safe job application practices. In order to expand our mission to marginalized communities, the network recognized the need for additional resources and hub teams to disseminate this crucial information. Addressing these issues at the grassroots level is vital to prevent the emergence of new victims. We earnestly hope more individuals will step forward to support Asian countries in alleviating the suffering of the people and to help them achieve a more peaceful life.



**SR. PAULA KWANDAO PHONPRASERTUKSA, SPC**

Regional representative of Asia  
SPC - Sisters of Saint Paul of Chartres



PREVENTION  
**115682**



NETWORKING  
**9645**



ADVOCACY  
**57%**  
OF THE NETWORKS



ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**1308**



PROTECTION  
**9616**

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**71%**

## ASIA

Prevention and care for victims were the Asian networks' priorities in training and organizing awareness-raising campaigns. Programs were held in schools, parishes, and local communities, focusing especially on reaching women, youth, religious individuals, tribal communities, and migrant workers. Workshops included learning activities for students about human trafficking, creative arts activities, and games for young people. Support and care for victims provided both physical and psychological resources and assistance.



PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023  
**136251**

### PARTNERS ORGANIZATIONS

**71**

CATHOLIC

**47**

NGOS

**43**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

### REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

South-East Asia Hub  
East Asia Hub  
South Asia Hub

**2150**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**4**

SUBDIVISIONS

**16**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**14**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**156**

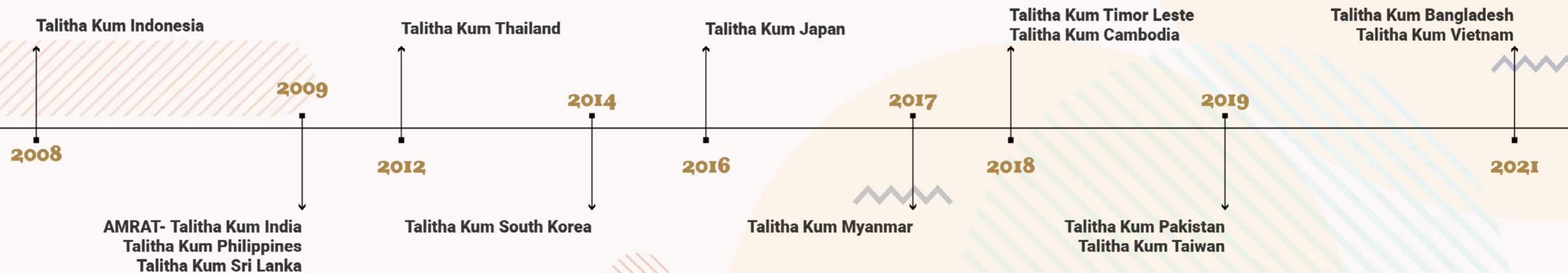
RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS



## The representation of the growing Networks of Talitha Kum in ASIA



NATIONAL  
**NETWORKS**  
**14**



### REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

South-East Asia Hub (Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, East Timor, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam)  
East Asia Hub (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia)  
South Asia Hub (India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal)

## EUROPE

Talitha Kum Europe is made up of seven networks present in thirty-one nations, involving 756 active members and 60 religious congregations. Through its victim-centered, human rights-based, and trauma-informed strategy that emphasizes prevention, victim care, access to justice, networking, and advocacy.

The network promotes a key component of **prevention** through education and awareness-raising campaigns, led by networks RENATE, URAT Albania, APT Ireland, Bakhita Poland, ProDemnFe Romania, and SOLWODI Germany. Many students, youth, educators, and religious community leaders, participated in such activities as webinars, podcasts, and cross-European school and community initiatives, aimed at educating and mobilizing the public to eradicate human trafficking.

Talitha Kum's European networks place a strong emphasis on providing comprehensive **care to victims** by providing secure housing, therapy, vocational training, and support services. RENATE launched the Survivor Leadership Training Program in Albania to focus on economic empowerment and self-sufficiency. This program provided 20 survivors with training in areas such as economic empowerment, self-sufficiency, and self-esteem-boosting skills. Participants received certificates of participation and financial support for personal development while being monitored by social workers.

A priority for each European network is to improve **access to justice** for victims. For example, RENATE collaborated with St. Mary's University's Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery on a Conrad Hilton Foundation-funded research project that examined legal resources in six nations. Its goal was to raise awareness, increase access to, and improve the quality of legal aid for victims, while highlighting the importance of compassionate and knowledgeable legal professionals. The study also sought to address three specific issues: victims' awareness of their rights, capacity for victims to receive legal support, and the quality of legal assistance offered.

True to its nature as a network, Talitha Kum Europe works toward networking with other groups to further its goals. Among the noteworthy events of 2023 were:

- meeting with the Dicastery for Integral Human Development;
- meeting of the RENATE Working Board in Germany;
- involvement in the Listening Exercises of the Talitha Kum General Assembly.

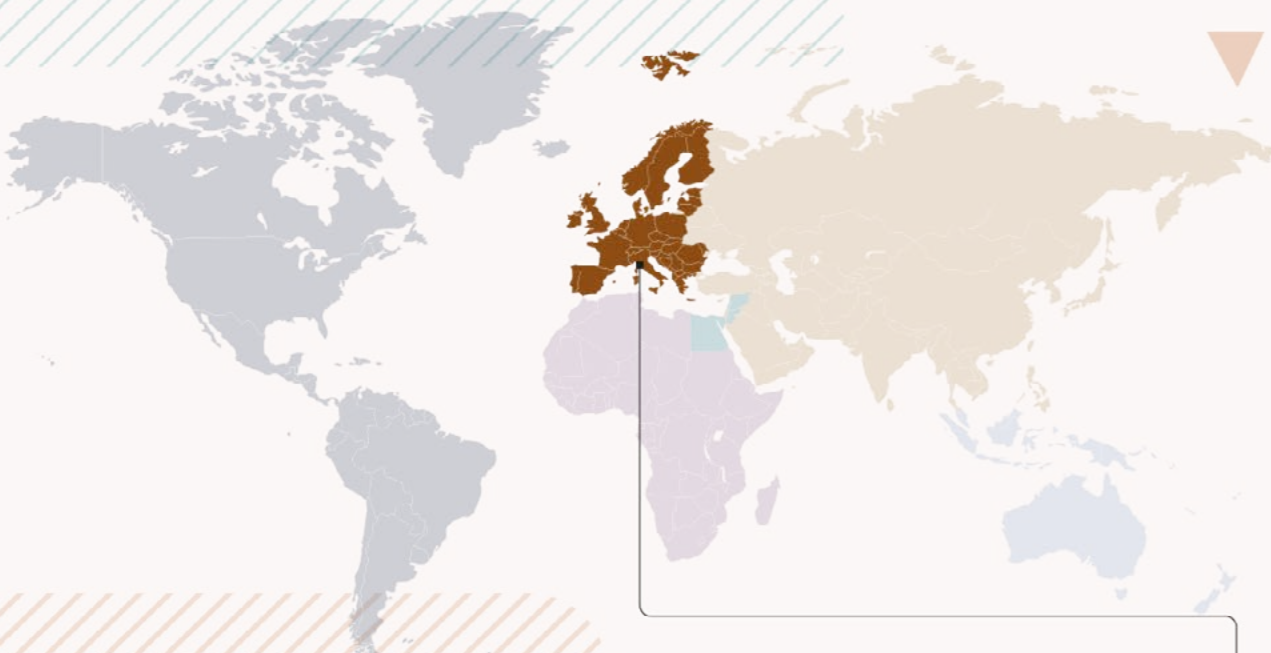
These meetings strengthened the network's identity and strategic objectives while encouraging partnership.

**Advocacy** efforts of the networks focused on raising awareness and influencing policy to combat human trafficking. Talitha Kum Europe contributed through RENATE, APT and URAT to the UN CSW67 conference, emphasizing digital innovation for gender equality. The network commissioned presentations and produced a documentary film highlighting its anti-trafficking missions in Albania, Ireland, and Ukraine. Campaigns focusing on significant dates (February 8, July 30, and October 18) engaged over 1,500 participants through vigils, social media, and community events. URAT Albania took a bold step with a series of joint statements from April to July addressing the increasing numbers of Albanian human trafficking victims in the UK, common forms of human trafficking in Albania, the Trafficking in Persons Report for Albania, and the trafficking of boys and men in Albania.

Talitha Kum Europe remains committed to ending human trafficking through strategic programs in the areas mentioned above. By empowering survivors, establishing legal frameworks, and fostering collaboration, the network's hope is to accomplish significant achievements toward its objective of eliminating human trafficking by 2030. The collaborative efforts of varied and devoted colleagues across Europe continue to advance this objective, producing a warmer and more inclusive world for all.



**SR. ADINA BALAN, CJ**  
Regional representative of Europe  
CJ - Congregatio Jesu



## EUROPE

European networks carried out activities which focused on care for victims and prevention. Resources and services that were provided for victims included psychological counseling and support, medical therapy, and facilitation of their reintegration through shelter and spiritual support. The main beneficiaries of these endeavors were children, youth, women, migrants and refugees.



PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023

**42711**



PREVENTION

**24290**



NETWORKING

**5250**



ADVOCACY

**29%**

OF THE NETWORKS



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

**635**



PROTECTION

**12536**

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION

**57%**

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**36**

CATHOLIC

**33**

NGOS

**27**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

REGIONAL  
COORDINATION

Renate

**756**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**20**

SUBDIVISIONS

**30**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**7**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

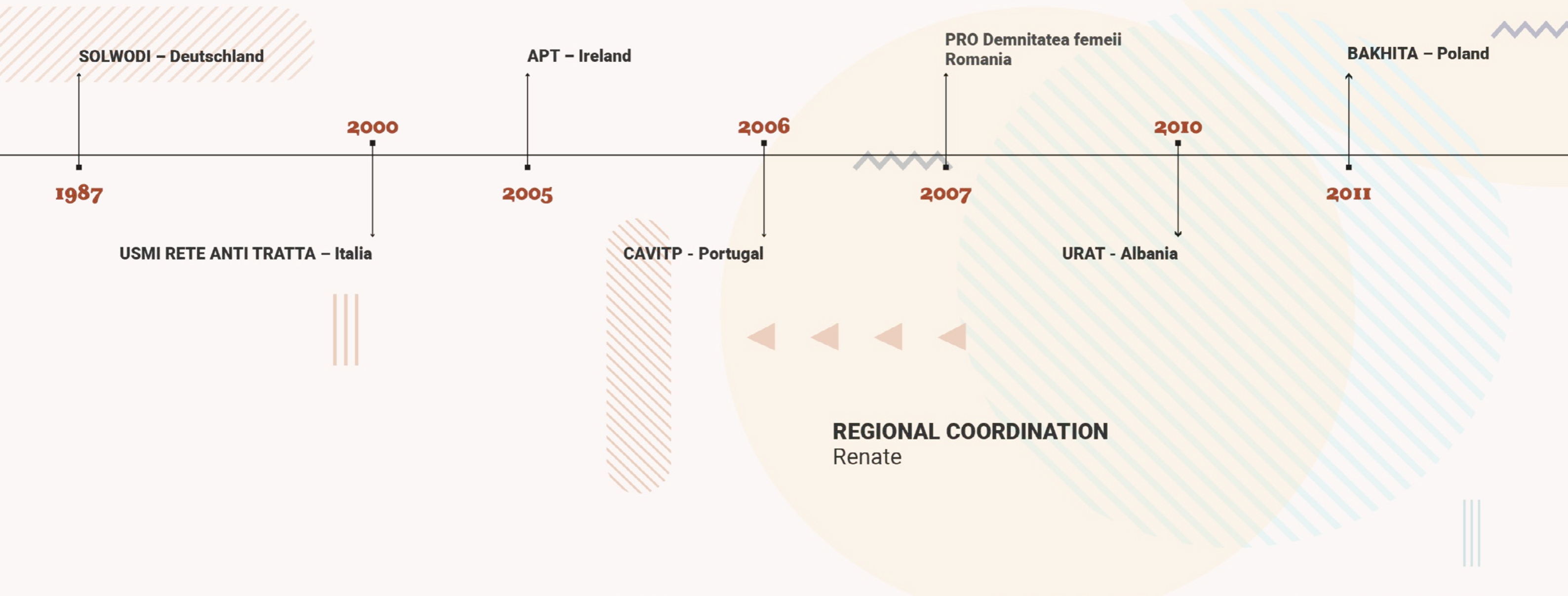
**60**

RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

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



NATIONAL  
**NETWORKS**  
**7**



## OCEANIA

The Talitha Kum Oceania Region expanded in 2023 after the Conference of Major Superiors of the Pacific Islands made the decision to form a Talitha Kum Network. As a result, Talitha Kum Oceania now has members in countries throughout the South Pacific – Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Australia.

Talitha Kum Aotearoa New Zealand has **three small networks**; Australia has **four internal networks** that make up ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans).

Sister Colleen Jackson, rsc, completed her six-year term as Talitha Kum Oceania Coordinator and handed the position over to Sister Annette Arnold, rsj. Sister Colleen has been honoured because of her significant contribution at both the regional and international level. Colleen collaborated over many years toward the formation of the Pacific Island countries into a Talitha Kum network.

Forced labor in the diverse industries of farm work, meat processing, fishing, and viticulture is a significant issue confronting all countries in the region. Both Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia experience an influx of Pacific Islanders with seasonal workers visas. **Even though both receiving countries have organized programs, many are still vulnerable to exploitation.** The region's network now closely and effectively addresses this issue. ACRATH, for example, has representation at the Federal Governmental level on the Seasonal Worker Advisory Group.

**Network members conduct education and awareness-raising sessions in various settings.** Volunteers regularly offer sessions in schools, parishes, and community groups. This has resulted in the development of a Secondary School Education program with a focus on helping students to learn and deepen their knowledge about human trafficking, and to commit to sharing their experiences with their peers in partner schools. ACRATH is collaborating with the university sector and the Australian Government on an initiative that educates future frontline workers, particularly healthcare and social work students, about indicators of modern slavery. Educational resources are being developed in all areas of the region. In the health sector, the education of staff has led to identifying people at risk of forced marriage and exploitation.

**Advocacy is critical to effect legislative change.** Networking across the region with partner organizations is essential to strengthen this advocacy. Significant advances are: the Modern Slavery Amendment (Australian Anti-Slavery Commissioner) Bill 2023 passed in Australia, which created the position of an Anti-Slavery Commissioner; the State of New South Wales now has an anti-slavery commissioner.

**Talitha Kum is nourished by the inspiration of survivors and Saint Bakhita**, that truly feeds the impetus for this ministry.



**SR. ANETTE ARNOLD, RSJ**  
Regional representative of Oceania  
RSJ - Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart



**ACRATH**  
(Australian Catholic Religious  
Against Trafficking in Humans)

2005

2012

Talitha Kum Aotearoa  
New Zealand

## OCEANIA

Oceania's focus on areas were on care for victims, advocacy and support for migrant workers, and resources for women. Lobbying for the rights of trafficked persons and exploited persons was a main emphasis of the network. Accompanying victims through the companionship program allowed for the support of victims on a personal level and created strong bonds of friendship. The network also aided in assistance for individuals to receive legal support, education, employment and grant compensation.

**PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2023**

**19143**



**PREVENTION**

**6000**



**NETWORKING**

**10100**



**ADVOCACY**

**100%**

OF THE NETWORKS



**ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

**1503**



**PROTECTION**

**1540**

**SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION**

**50%**

**PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS**

**35**

**CATHOLIC**

**21**

**NGOS**

**13**

**GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL**

**CONTINENTAL  
COORDINATION**

Talitha Kum Oceania

**REGIONAL  
COORDINATION**

Pacific Island Region

**176**

**ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS**

**7**

**SUBDIVISIONS**

**2**

**COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED**

**2**

**NATIONAL  
NETWORKS**

**49**

**RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS**

**“I love to do this because we should never package someone’s abusive reality as a fantasy. Let’s stop just reading statistics and start changing them. Nothing is more beautiful than seeing smiles of survivors who have bravely struggled through tears. That gives me joy.”**

*Mary Wangithi Mugo  
Youth Ambassador in Kenya/Founder of Sema Nami Organization*

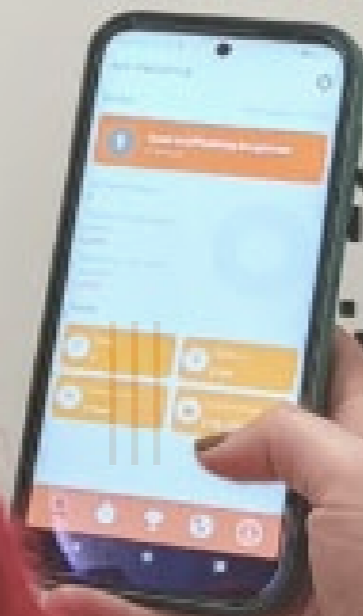


# SPECIAL FOCUS

TALITHA KUM  
END HUMAN TRAFFICKING



## WALKING IN DIGNITY



## Walking in Dignity App: An Innovative Tool for Raising Awareness to End Human Trafficking

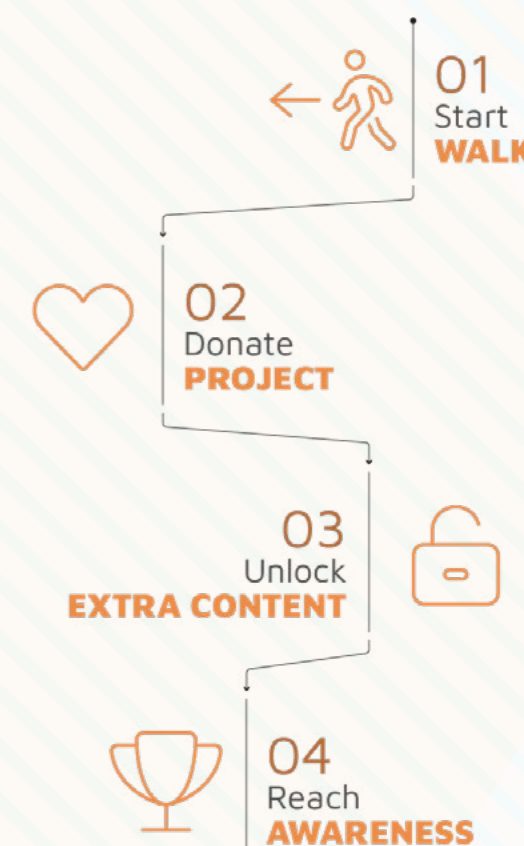
On January 30, Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors targeted young people with an invitation to get involved in caring for trafficked persons through its new Walking in Dignity App developed in 2023.

The “Walking in Dignity” app not only raises awareness about human **trafficking** and **inspires collective action**. It is a **platform for social change**, inspiring collective action, and serves as a call to action for everyone to combat trafficking, and contribute to creating a world where no one is a victim of exploitation, and everyone can walk with dignity.

The “Walking in Dignity” app allows users to learn about trafficking, support survivors, and contribute to anti-trafficking efforts by earning tokens for every 1,000 steps they donate, which donors match. Users thus engage in a pedagogical journey by unlocking interesting content when they donate their tokens, learning more about human trafficking and **local projects supporting survivors**.

The app emphasizes youth involvement, educating individuals aged 16 to 35 to participate in the fight against trafficking. In addition to providing education, the app seeks to engage youth through a digital tool, and empower them to lead prevention initiatives. To date, more than 1.400 people have downloaded the app and 145.200 tokens have been donated to 9 initiatives.

## Download the app





## ***International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking 2023***

On February 8, Feast of Saint Bakhita, the universal symbol of the commitment of the Church against trafficking, the ninth International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking took place. An international group of young people involved in the fight against trafficking chose the theme for the 2023 edition, *Journeying in Dignity*. This theme highlighted the steps, the journey, and the shared path of those committed to combatting trafficking and the victims/survivors.

On February 6th, around 200 people participated in a Prayer Vigil in Rome to begin the week. On February 8th, participants, partners, and organizers meeting and training in Rome gathered in an **audience with the Pope**.

The central moment of the week was the **online Pilgrimage of prayer and awareness** on February 8th. Uniting participants from over 50 countries across all continents, it brought together people of all ages, backgrounds, and faiths—survivors, activists, lay people, women and men religious—all committed to the fight against trafficking. The central block featured youth efforts against trafficking, along with a **special video message from Pope Francis**.

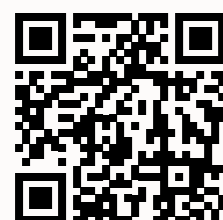
[Video Pope Francis](#)

## Walking in dignity: week of initiatives with young people at the center

For the first time since the Day of Prayer was established in 2015, 15 young representatives of Talitha Kum partner organizations gathered in Rome from all continents for a week of meetings and training. In view of the 10th anniversary of the International Day of Prayer in 2024, the week culminated in the launch of a Call to action from young people to journey in dignity.

On February 10th, in collaboration with the dance group Evolution Company of the Holy Dance, youth representatives organized a flash mob in St. Peter's Square to raise awareness about human trafficking.

The week concluded with the recitation of the Angelus prayer in St. Peter's Square on February 12.



**prayagainsttrafficking.net**

*Journeying In Dignity:  
Listen, Dream, Act*



@Margherita Simionati



**ORGANIZATIONAL  
PARTNERS  
FOR THE DAY**

**18**

+6 from 2022



**PARTICIPATED  
IN PRAYER  
VIGIL IN ROME**

**200**



**DIOCESES, RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES,  
INTER-RELIGIOUS GROUPS  
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD ORGANIZED**

**100+**

a prayer vigil against human trafficking



**COUNTRIES FROM  
EVERY CONTINENT**

**over 50**



**Pilgrimage  
online**

streamed on YouTube



**HOURS  
ONLINE**

**7**



**VIDEO CONTRIBUTIONS  
FROM PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

**76**



**LANGUAGES**

**5**



**VIEWS**

**1.6k**

## Fourth Training Course for Talitha Kum Leaders (2023-2024)

78

Talitha Kum has held four leadership-training sessions over the **past five years, engaging 104 participants and over 25 formators**. A key priority is developing leadership skills in networking, advocacy, communication, and support for survivors of human trafficking. The latest session (2023–2024) combined virtual and in-person learning in Nairobi, **focusing on “learning by doing”** in the areas of advocacy, prevention, rehabilitation, and community building.

Selected through global networks, participants attended online meetings to prepare for the in-person phase. In Nairobi, they engaged in seminars on leadership and human trafficking, **developed practical projects, and implemented them in their communities** with ongoing support via monthly online check-ins.

The training concluded with an online ceremony on June 28, 2024, during which participants presented reports on their experiences. Keynote speakers, Sr. Anne Victory and Sr. Patricia Murray, Executive Secretary of the International Union of Superiors General, highlighted the **need for adaptive and servant leadership**. The event ended with certificates awarded in partnership with Tangaza College, Kenya, and the Pontifical University Antonianum, Rome.



@ Max Hader/SATA 2023

## Sisters Anti-Trafficking Awards (SATAs)

The Sisters Anti-Trafficking Awards (SATAs) honor **three exceptional sisters** on an annual basis. These awards **recognize the vital work of Catholic sisters in the global fight** against exploitation, and promote cooperation among religious communities and the anti-trafficking sector. By celebrating the recipients' dedication, bravery and achievements in combating human trafficking, the SATAs inspire further action to protect the vulnerable.

**2023 Recipients:** The inaugural SATA award ceremony was held in Farringdon, London, on October 31, 2023. The Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP spoke during the event, while Sir Mo Farah announced the awards via video. The recipients were:

- **Sr. Patricia Ebegbulem SSL (Nigeria) – Human Dignity Award:** Recognized for leading awareness campaigns and managing a shelter for survivors.
- **Sr. Seli Thomas SMI (India) – Common Good Award:** Honored for her efforts in protecting children of brothel workers and promoting safe migration.
- **Sr. Francoise Jiranonda SPC (Thailand) – Servant Leadership Award:** Acknowledged for creating networks to protect young women and establishing vocational training schools.

*“Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. It is our responsibility to protect the most vulnerable.” – SATA recipient Sr Patricia Ebegbulem, SSL*

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## Call to Action 2023

In 2021, Talitha Kum launched its [Call to Action](#) – its **first advocacy document ratified and endorsed** by the Executive Board of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). Talitha Kum's Call to Action advocacy efforts aim the four main objectives: **to care** for victims of human trafficking and exploitation and people at risk, to heal physical, psychosocial, and spiritual wounds, **to empower** survivors, as well as individuals at risk, **to restore human dignity** by promoting access to justice.

In 2023, Talitha Kum was challenged by new threats due to wars, conflicts, climate change, and other mitigating factors. The vicious cycle of human trafficking is a complex and challenging one that demands a global response. It is a worldwide issue that affects many peoples' lives, particularly the vulnerable ones: women and children, young people, migrants, and refugees. The impact of these from the ring is even truer today. Because of this, Talitha Kum renews its urgent call to action to unite all people of goodwill and global stakeholders to address the systemic causes of human trafficking at international, regional, and local levels.

Talitha Kum networks are increasingly promoting the Talitha Kum's Call to Action presenting it during seminars and conferences to raise awareness, to reach out to all stakeholders and to all those who have a role to play in the tireless effort towards the eradication of human trafficking and exploitation.

In 2023 many networks have translated the [Call to Action](#) into their local languages. In addition to original publication, it has been translated into 10 different Asian languages; recently it was translated into Swahili (Kenya) and Amharic (Ethiopia).

*"Talitha Kum's Call to Action is an **urgent commitment to the promotion and defense of our brothers and sisters** who fall into trafficking networks because they are in vulnerable situations. [...] We also live this Call to Action as an opportunity to raise awareness and involve more people in the fight against this scourge. We do it by **actively participating in the spaces of consultation** to make an impact from there" (Sister from Latin American network).*



**Talitha Kum's  
Call to Action**

Go to the website





## Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors: Empowering a New Generation to Combat Human Trafficking

Talitha Kum recognizes the **critical role youth play in fighting** human trafficking through the Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors Program. This initiative empowers youth to become leaders in this endeavor, especially in raising awareness among their peers.

The program provides youth with knowledge and practical skills to address human trafficking in their communities. Members learn about forms of trafficking, advocacy, leadership, and are trained to become peer educators. As one member states, *"With a grateful heart, I thank Talitha Kum International for involving the youth, and training us to become Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors. It has been an inspiring journey."*

In 2023, the program **expanded globally** across **North and Latin America, Asia, Africa, Oceania**, and the **Middle East**. Every region customizes the program to its unique circumstances, cultural norms and vulnerabilities. Youth ambassadors connect Talitha Kum to their communities, amplifying the network's capacity to protect human dignity.

As the Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors Program continues to grow, so does its impact. **Every new cohort of ambassadors serving as beacons of hope**, allows Talitha Kum to extend its reach to collaboratively end human trafficking and **create a world where everyone can walk in dignity and freedom**.

### TALITHA KUM PRESENT AT WORLD YOUTH DAY 2023 IN LISBON!

From August 1-6, 2023, Talitha Kum and CAVITP manned a booth at the Vocational Fair during World Youth Day in Lisbon. The team met with **thousands of young people around the world**, presenting the reality of human trafficking and inviting them to become **active ambassadors** against it. Many committed themselves to join the fight by adding their painted hand prints on a banner illustrating unity and collective resolve against human trafficking. Talitha Kum present at World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon!

From August 1-6, 2023, Talitha Kum and CAVITP manned a booth at the Vocational Fair during World Youth Day in Lisbon. The team met with **thousands of young people around the world**, presenting the reality of human trafficking and inviting them to become **active ambassadors** against it. Many committed themselves to join the fight by adding their painted hand prints on a banner illustrating unity and collective resolve against human trafficking.

**The importance of the work of the Um Grito Pela Vida is to reach out to the greatest possible number of people, to inform people that these things are happening, especially to inform people who think that we are involved in this life because we want to, that that's not true."**

*victim of human trafficking from Brazil*



**read more**  
Go to the website



# NEXT STEPS

## Concrete Plan of Actions

Talitha Kum remains steadfast in its mission to uphold the dignity and rights of every individual. By addressing both longstanding and emerging challenges, it fostered innovative action and meaningful engagement. As 2023 came to a close, the concrete plan of action for 2024–2025, focused on communication, prevention, formation, and advocacy:

### Strategic Initiatives

- **Walking in Dignity App:**
  - Launch date of January 30, 2024.
  - Enhance visibility and usability of the app as an innovative awareness-raising and fundraising tool.
  - Promote the app strategically to engage a broader audience in combating human trafficking.
- **Strengthening Networking and Collaboration**
  - **Talitha Kum Survivors' Advocate:** Expand and enhance collaborative efforts with the Survivors Advocates to amplify survivor-centered initiatives.
  - **Interfaith Collaboration:** Develop concrete programs to strengthen partnerships across different faith communities.
  - Strengthen international collaboration with key organizations, including UNODC, UNHCR, IOM, ILO, G20/IF20 Interfaith Forum, and Caritas Internationalis.
  - Enhance the implementation of the Call to Action by supporting pilot networks on each continent to focus on priority areas.

- **Key Events**

- May 2024 – 2nd General Assembly: Foreseen as a landmark in-person gathering celebrating Talitha Kum's 15th anniversary, bringing together its global network, including survivors and Youth Ambassadors to strategize future development.
- Increase collaborative awareness-raising campaigns, such as the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking on February 8, 2024–2025.**

- **Regional Hubs and Grassroots Actions**

- Strengthen sub-regional hubs to advance Talitha Kum's priorities in networking, formation, communication, advocacy, and prevention.
- Reinforce networking and collaboration across all levels to focus on survivor care and other key areas.
- Enhance the Impact Pathway framework to measure and amplify effectiveness.

- **Leadership Formation**

- **5th Edition Leadership Training (October 2024-September 2025):** Equip Talitha Kum leaders with the skills to drive impactful initiatives.

- **Youth Empowerment**

- Expand the Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors initiative globally, empowering youth as key players in combating human trafficking among their peers.
- **Training Cohorts:**
  - 2nd Cohort: Latin America (16 countries) – July 2024- February 2025
  - 2nd Cohort: Africa (16 countries). August 2024 -February 2025
  - 3rd Cohort: Asia (14 countries) September 2024
- Develop a Formation Kit created by young leaders to support Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors' networks in raising awareness.





**We also consider that this ministry of “being there” alongside people who are wounded in their dignity must be continued by people who carry out this ministry with inner passion, charged with spirituality and also with precise vocational motivations. It is a ministry that is not for everyone, it demands preparation and experience, and it must be felt strongly in the heart and with the heart.**

*Talitha Kum USMI anti-trafficking in Italy, Europe*



**read more**  
Go to the website

# FINAL DECLARATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Talitha Kum 2nd General Assembly FINAL DECLARATION

May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

We, 153 delegates and participants from 71 countries, representatives of the 60 Talitha Kum (TK) networks committed to ending human trafficking on all continents, gathered at the 2nd General Assembly of Talitha Kum at Fraterna Domus in Sacrofano from May 18-24, 2024, with the theme “**Journeying Together to End Human Trafficking: Compassion in Action for Transformation**,” in order to:

- Share experiences and listen to the grassroots.
- Embrace our identity and diversity as an international network of networks.
- Strengthen relationships, networking, and collaboration.
- Revisit our priorities for action in light of emerging realities.
- Celebrate 15 years of Talitha Kum.

The power of Pentecost fills us with prophetic hope. The Holy Spirit emboldens us to persevere in eradicating human trafficking to create a future where “all may have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10). We hear in the pain and suffering of persons wounded by human trafficking the call of Jesus that generates life: “Rise up!” (Mark 5:41) We pray for eyes to see the reality of trafficking, hands that reach out to those affected, a heart filled with care and compassion, and feet to journey forward together on a path of transformation.

As we recommit to the three priorities from our **1st General Assembly in 2019<sup>1</sup>**, we recognize that the world has changed dramatically in these past 5 years. Our diverse cultural contexts are marked by accelerating change, intense globalization, rising migration, exponential growth in the use of technology, the devastating impact of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the conflicts that currently ravage many parts of our world. Today, these emerging realities call Talitha Kum to commit to our next three priorities for 2025-2030, which we have discerned using the synodal method of Conversation in the Spirit.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.talithakum.info/en/news/final-declaration-talitha-kum-assembly>

### **PRIORITY 1. SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN THE FACE OF NEW VULNERABILITIES:**

The complex systems that enable human trafficking need to be dismantled through concrete steps towards social, economic, cultural, and political transformation. We denounce the many factors that leave people trapped in modern forms of slavery: discrimination and violence against women and minority groups, exploitation of vulnerable persons especially children, patriarchal systems, internal displacement, forced migration, terrorism, conflict and war, unfettered market capitalism, corruption, racism, organized crime, inadequate immigration laws, and inconsistent law enforcement. These realities cry out to us, and so we commit to:

- Empowering women, children, and youth towards more just, equitable societies.
- Adopting effective strategies to reduce the demand for human trafficking, including through education for boys and men and advocacy for regular migration pathways.
- Advocating for the prosecution of traffickers and for effective policy and legal changes for at-risk populations, including migrants, refugees, and displaced persons.
- Addressing the push and pull factors of migration and displacement, advocating for the protection and integration of people on the move.
- Exposing the risks of online trafficking and social media by sensitizing young people and their families and promoting cyber safety.

### **PRIORITY 2. HOLISTIC, SURVIVOR-CENTRED APPROACH:**

Our experiences of walking with people who suffer because of trafficking shows us the human face of this global phenomenon. We are called to take a holistic, long-term approach to journeying with trafficked persons that aims at their integral healing and flourishing, walking together in dignity and empathy. This calls upon TK to be more intentionally survivor-centred, survivor-informed, and trauma-sensitive – listening to their stories, consulting them in decision-making processes and putting them at the heart of our networks. We open our ears to hear the silent cry of diverse forms of human trafficking, which affects women, men, youth, and children. Promoting the protagonism of survivors in our network is an essential key to improve our capacity to prevent human trafficking and to act with empathy, care, and unconditional acceptance towards those whose lives are affected by it. Their resilience inspires our perseverance to eradicate human trafficking in all forms. We commit ourselves to:

- Caring for survivors as valued members of our TK family.
- Promoting safe and secure spaces/shelters, survivor-to-survivor peer support, and survivor-led initiatives.
- Establishing spaces for non-judgmental listening, hotlines, and mobile app reporting.

- Linking survivors to education, health services, skill-building, housing, legal aid, and job opportunities.
- Offering psycho-social support and providing spiritual accompaniment for survivors, as well as psychological and legal support and training for TK members and partners.

### **PRIORITY 3. BROADENING COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS:**

We realize that we are not alone and that this work cannot be done in isolation. Within TK, this means diversifying our membership and multiplying our impacts. TK is alive today thanks to the courageous and enduring commitment of women religious and their collaborators. Rooted in their prayerful witness, we see lay people, clergy, and young people as key to the long-term sustainability of our work to end human trafficking. We commit ourselves to community engagement and call for broad-based collaboration with Church leaders, other religions and faith communities, governmental organizations, NGOs, women and men, young and old, so that together we can:

- Find creative ways to raise awareness in the face of the globalization of indifference, inspired by Fratelli Tutti.
- Stand up for equality between women and men and respect for human rights.
- Share resources, best practices, data analysis, and the online TK international directory.
- Confronting the impact of climate change and mitigating its underlying causes, inspired by Laudato Si'.
- Pray for an end to human trafficking, widening the reach of the International Day of Prayer and Awareness on February 8th.
- Foster the active involvement of young people, particularly TK youth ambassadors, and empower them as leaders of our online campaigns to raise awareness.

**TOGETHER, OUR ACTIONS HAVE THE POWER TO  
TRANSFORM LIVES WITH COMPASSION,  
TOWARDS A WORLD FREE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.**

•

# CONCLUSION



**Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM**  
UISG Executive Secretary



As you read the various sections of this 2023 report, I am sure that you have noticed how much has been accomplished on the different continents and in each country. We see the effectiveness of outreach, person to person, and how lives are transformed, when we encounter one another. In his Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis reminds us that authentic fraternity calls us to see each other as a brother or a sister, not just a statistic, or a “other” but a human person who has human dignity and merits respect. I invite you to see the haunted faces and shattered lives behind the statistics. Perhaps there is one story of human suffering that holds your attention. I remember the face of one young woman, trafficked to Europe from Albania, for sexual exploitation. For me, she represents all the thousands of people, whose dreams are shattered, by unscrupulous traffickers, who see human beings as mere merchandise.

In his message to those attending the Meeting on Human Fraternity on June 10, 2023, Pope Francis stressed that “tweaks and adjustments are not enough” in a suffering world marked by exploitation and indifference. He called for concrete actions, undertaken together, in order to promote a culture of peace. These words describe so well the nature and effectiveness of Talitha Kum. All the members of the various local and worldwide networks participate in concrete actions which together are effective. The actions may sometimes seem small and inconsequential but on other occasions these actions are very courageous and even dangerous. All these actions together, like the mustard seeds, grow into a big tree. They say to each trafficked person: “you matter because you are my sister, you are my brother.” As the members of the networks reach out to those who have been exploited, their own humanity is deepened and enriched by the courage, the resilience and the hope of their wounded sisters and brothers. For it is, in and through the wounds of the exploited and the oppressed, that we are called to face our own lack of humanity, our own indifference in the face of suffering and ultimately our responsibility to bring about change and transformation.

As I write, the second session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops has just concluded. Throughout the pages of the final document, we are invited to listen with special attention and sensitivity to the voices of victims and survivors because listening “is a fundamental element in the path to healing, repentance, justice, and reconciliation (#55). We are to listen especially to the suffering children who have been trafficked and denounce their suffering and call for a serious commitment to solidarity. While we are all called to share our gifts for the good of society, young people in particular, can play a key role in its healing and restoration. They are acutely aware of the need to create networks which will help sustain their personal commitment to flight against any kind of social injustice and to accompany those who are escaping the hardship of any kind of exploitation.

As Talitha Kum grows and develops as an organization, it can serve as “a social prophesy for today’s world.” Its members can inspire many from different religious traditions and different beliefs to join together, linking diverse cultural contexts in the common aim of protecting and defending the dignity of each person. A sincere thank you to each person for all that has been achieved in 2023. Finally, adapting the words of Pope Francis on the Feast of St. Bakhita, February 8, 2024, I pray “May we listen to the cries for help from those who have been trafficked and feel challenged by the stories they tell. Together with the survivors and young people, let us once more dream of a world where all people can live with freedom and dignity. Amen.”



**Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM**  
UISG Executive Secretary



# PARTNERS

## UISG thanks all the partners, collaborators and supporters of Talitha Kum International during the year 2023

### Partners

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 (JPIC) UISG - USG  
Pontifical Gregorian University - Department of Social Sciences  
Pontifical University Antonianum  
Tangaza University College  
Jesuit Refugee Service

### Collaborators

Multilateral Section of the Secretary of State  
Ambassadors to the Holy See  
UNHCR  
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)  
UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children  
The Regional Implementation Initiative of Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking  
The Santa Marta Group  
Religions for Peace  
Focolari Movement  
The Clewer Initiative  
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# TALITHA KUM

END HUMAN TRAFFICKING



INTERNATIONAL UNION  
SUPERIORS GENERAL