

TALITHA KUM   
END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

## INTERNATIONAL NETWORK AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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

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# INTRODUCTION BY UISG



*Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC*  
UISG President



We gratefully look back on the year 2022 and the activities that have marked Talitha Kum's engagement during this unprecedented time in history.

**First of all, I would like to thank the members of the Coordination, appointed early last September, who will accompany the work of the international cooperation network for the next three years (2023-2026).**

We are grateful for the **willingness** they have shown, for their **openness** of heart to assume this call of responsibility, and for their **creativity** in initiating synodal processes in continuity with the path taken.

**Talitha Kum's tireless and prophetic efforts to raise awareness and combat human trafficking, in synergy and collaboration** with thousands around the world, make **its mission meaningful and responsive** to the challenges of every time and every reality. Fighting human exploitation and eradicating all forms of slavery is a call that is becoming increasingly necessary. The *Call to Action*, drafted and launched last year, is **vibrant and inspiring and continues to provide an in-depth perspective when creating new proposals to promote a more just and supportive world in which every person can live with dignity.**

The core values that motivate the Talitha Kum network are **the centrality of the person**, the importance of community in ensuring **closeness to victims and their families**, and **providing support** for those at risk. Raising awareness and taking charge of different situations illustrates the **transformative power of hope and compassion** that must be spread with conviction and courage.

In his speech to the European Parliament in November 2014, **Pope Francis** emphasized that *"promoting the dignity of the person means recognizing that he or she possesses inalienable rights which no one may take away arbitrarily, much less for the sake of economic interests."* His words resonate very strongly, especially in today's day in age, when the persistence of war makes the plight of the vulnerable who easily become victims of human trafficking ever more evident.

**The impact of armed conflicts on human rights** and the **need for greater cooperation** between humanitarian organizations and civil society to better support victims of trafficking are challenges that **Talitha Kum is taking on, encouraging all those involved in the solidarity network to take collective action.**

**Minors and women** are most vulnerable to involvement in this dramatic condition through **forced enlistment, sexual slavery, forced labor for armed groups**, and **recruitment as child soldiers**. However, victims of trafficking also include **people fleeing wars** who are blackmailed or illegally detained and whose fragility is exploited. **New forms of slavery are strongly linked to gender discrimination and the proliferation of poverty**, which creates the conditions upon which criminal activity breeds.

**We are all challenged to nurture a generative dynamic capable of leading humanity toward lifestyles renewed by the Gospel.** Talitha Kum, with its growing commitment, is annually achieving **goals that open horizons of hope.** Its prophetic call not to look away from the suffering of all those deprived of their freedom and dignity is a **constant call for change.** As Pope Francis said in his message for the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking, *"human trafficking disfigures dignity. Exploitation and subjugation limit freedom and turn people into objects to be used and discarded. And the system of trafficking exploits the injustice and inequality that force millions of people to live in conditions of vulnerability."*<sup>2</sup>

This must encourage us **to join forces in weaving networks of good** to spread the light that comes from Christ and his Gospel by reaching out to those who play a decisive role in the effort to eradicate the exploitation of human beings. Only through **joint and systematic actions**, along with a **multi-level commitment**, will it be **possible to contribute to the change we hope for.**

We are called to **walk together with an attentive heart** in discovering and supporting **daily paths to freedom and dignity**, with the hope of promoting anti-trafficking actions to support each other and **build a culture of encounter.** These efforts will lead to **inclusive societies capable of protecting the rights and dignity of all.**



**Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC**  
**UISG President**



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/november/documents/papa-francesco\\_20141125\\_strasburgo-parlamento-europeo.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/november/documents/papa-francesco_20141125_strasburgo-parlamento-europeo.html)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2023/documents/20230208-videomessaggio-tratta-persone.html>

# EMBRACING THE TRANSFORMATION: A CALL TO ACTION



*Sr. Abby Avelino, MM*  
Talitha Kum International Coordinator



# 01

Firstly, on behalf of our sisters and brothers of the Talitha Kum Networks from all over the world, I thank Sister Gabriella Bottani, smc, the former Talitha Kum International Coordinator, for her immeasurable service rendered to the Talitha Kum Network, making it what it is today.

Talitha Kum, an International Sister-led Network Against Human Trafficking, has grown significantly, and continues its efforts to make changes for a better world. With heartfelt gratitude, I also thank Talitha Kum networks all over the world as they make these changes happen worldwide, to promote a just world in which every human being can live in dignity and fullness.

I am pleased to present herewith the 2022 Talitha Kum Annual Report. This is the second time that it has been made available on a digital platform.

The year 2022 demonstrates significant quantitative and qualitative growth. Talitha Kum has grown into a network of networks that reaches **560,606 people worldwide**. This is an increase of 40% compared to 2021. This is due to our sisters and brothers in the field who work tirelessly to carry out Talitha Kum's main areas of action: Prevention, Care for Victims, Advocacy, and Networking.

The following pages tell some stories- journeys of liberation - to care, heal, empower, and restore women, young people, children, and at-risk groups. They are stories of hope and gratitude for the work of our sisters, priests, brothers, and lay partners present on 5 continents in **58 inter-congregational networks in 97 countries**.

Three new Talitha Kum networks were established in 2022; in Mali, Ivory Coast, and Bolivia. Furthermore, Talitha Kum is in contact with several other countries as they develop potential networks mainly in Mauritania, Tunisia, Angola, Malawi, Togo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Nepal, Puerto Rico, and Nicaragua.

The past year has been one of the most challenging due to many interrelated crises such as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, conflicts in many countries (Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Syria, Burkina Faso, Venezuela, etc.), the war in Ukraine which has caused distress for millions of people, and devastating natural disasters as consequences of climate change. All of these crises are having a direct impact on human trafficking worldwide.

In 2022, the number of members of Talitha Kum worldwide decreased by 9% compared to last year, as many women religious congregations continued to face declining membership, thus resulting in a challenge in their active participation and involvement within Talitha Kum networks. However, men's religious congregation participation has increased by 13%.

Furthermore, as we reflect upon the challenges of leadership transition and the complexity of the times we live in, we see that the Talitha Kum network remains committed to its mission, journeying with one another in caring for persons wounded by exploitation, and acting against trafficking of human beings.

In spite of the challenges we have witnessed, members continue to respond to the Call to Action by caring, healing, empowering and being involved with the lives of victims and survivors, and populations that are at risk of trafficking and exploitation.

As I recall Pope Francis's message, "It is not about statistics; it is about real people! If we encounter them, we will get to know more about them. And knowing their stories, we will be able to understand them."<sup>1</sup>

Human trafficking has changed and expanded. We live in a world where human relationships are valued by what people 'have' rather than who they 'are.' The latter dimension is often dismissed and forgotten, leaving the ground to the former: to be, I need to have, at any cost. The untiring work at the grassroots level should be used as an advocacy tool to force those in power to face and change the current situation. True **TRANSFORMATION** involves a paradigm shift in society and in an individual's mindset.

We call on the Church as an alternative community to embrace the work of transformation that God is doing in the world. Change often arises from the consciousness and conscience of individuals. We need a place to start to take some concrete steps to get us moving in the right direction. In line with this, Talitha Kum's Call to Action has become an instrumental tool and guide to keep us moving towards concrete actions. We continue to call on all relevant actors and stakeholders to join our journey to realize the power of change. It is a CALL to ACTION for us as a Church, together with civil society, like-minded NGOs, and other organizations, to work alongside governments, international organizations, and other agencies. This requires precisely everyone individually, in families, and in communities, more so than the policymakers, law enforcement officers, etc. Together, we embark on a synodal journey to have our eyes and ears open to what is happening in the communities around us.

Since the beginning, the strengthening of networking with different partner organizations and religions within Talitha Kum networks has been crucial. Being a network of networks gives us greater strength. Journeying and working together, coordination and cooperation, are essential tools in combating trafficking.

The involvement of young people – Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors of Anti-Trafficking program – has grown and expanded worldwide. We began in Asia, moving to Oceania, Africa, and Latin America. The Youth Ambassadors have taken their commitment to be protagonists among their peers in raising the voices of young people with courage and hope. They will play an important role towards the 10th anniversary of the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, which is celebrated every year on February 8th. Moving forward for transformation is inspired by the message of Pope Francis to young people all over the world on February 8th, 2023:

<sup>1</sup> MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS for the 106th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 27 September 2020  
<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2020/05/15/0282/00625.html#en>

***“I hope that many people will accept your invitation to walk together against trafficking: walking together with those who are destroyed by the violence of sexual and labor exploitation; to walk together with migrants, displaced persons, those who are searching for a place to live in peace and family. Together with you, young people, to reaffirm courageously the value of human dignity.”***

Another highlight of Talitha Kum’s strong collaboration with other religions or inter-faith-based groups is marked by its 31% growth in 2022, at the local, regional, and international levels, particularly in Asia, Africa, and Oceania. Talitha Kum’s involvement in raising awareness and empowerment of survivors is significantly visible in the American and African continents. Furthermore, we cannot underestimate the work in the area of advocacy at the national level. The work achieved by European, American, and Oceanian networks in particular, stands out strongly. At the international level, we continued to collaborate with international organizations and international agencies, particularly with IOM, UNHCR, OSCE, G20 Interfaith Forum, Multilateral Section of the Secretary of State, Ambassadors to the Holy See, and many more partner organizations for mutual support and coordination in tackling this issue by having society move in the direction of not only condemning human trafficking, but also denouncing its causes.

WE continue to journey together towards dignity as we move forward to the 15th anniversary of Talitha Kum in 2024; Love manifested in action and true transformation. An invitation to manifest the healing hand of Jesus empowering the little girl to get up on her own and walk.  
– Talitha Kum!

Lastly, in gratitude to the Executive Board of International Union of Superiors General (UISG) for entrusting us with this prophetic mission; to General Superiors worldwide for their continued support of Sisters involved in this ministry, to the Talitha Kum International Coordination Committee (TKICC), and to all people with whom we journey together, especially with victims and survivors of trafficking and exploitation.

I end here with a quote from a survivor who rose up with courage and hope!

***“The day came when I was ready to go home. I had the strength to start again, I longed to resume work in a small kiosk of my own, as I did a few years before. The Sisters of Talitha Kum made this dream possible. Two years have passed, I now live in Uganda, have my own kiosk and continue to receive spiritual accompaniment and am supported to continue my healing journey and rebuild my life in dignity.”***

In gratitude to God for the transformative power of Hope and Courage!



*Sr. Abby Avelino, MM*  
**International Coordinator – Talitha Kum**





# WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

02

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

**Traffickers operate in situations of vulnerability:** they target people who desire a better life – to improve their own financial situation, to develop their abilities and skills, or simply to find a safe living environment. Many of these people are forced to flee their country of origin in search of safety or work.

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

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

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

**Human trafficking is an ever-evolving phenomenon,** adapting to the social, economic and political realities. It is a highly profitable illegal business. According to the United Nations statistics on trafficking in persons (2022 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons), reported court cases show that victims of human trafficking are exploited for longer periods of time and with extreme violence, especially women and girls. The high percentage of 69% of these cases refer to traffickers that are part of organized crime networks.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the report illustrates that **climate change** and **conflicts increase vulnerability to human trafficking.**



**THE WAR IN UKRAINE**

Conflict and human trafficking are inherently related. Conflict zones are the perfect places for traffickers to target victims. In 2016, the number of detected Ukrainian victims in Western Europe quadrupled, as a direct consequence of the 2014 conflict in Ukraine<sup>2</sup>. It is no different this time. A few days after the war started last year, Talitha Kum networks in Europe reported the high vulnerability of Ukrainian refugees, especially women, to human trafficking.



An alarming multiplication of traffickers at the borders of Ukraine, as well as train and bus stations in neighboring countries was reported. **Since March last year**, the Sisters of Talitha Kum, “Bakhita” Religious in Poland Networking Against Trafficking, have been actively attentive and have collected information about potential human trafficking cases at the Ukrainian-Polish border: people discreetly sneaking in among the various humanitarian organizations, offering free food and lodging and then inviting people to follow them. The sisters have also collected reports of the disappearance of women and children, especially in border regions.

[www.siecbakhita.com](http://www.siecbakhita.com)  
[www.facebook.com/siecbakhita/](https://www.facebook.com/siecbakhita/)

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022GLOTiP\\_2022\\_web.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



# WHAT IS TALITHA KUM?

03

@Lisa Kristine

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

Gospel of Mark (5:41)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The strength of the Talitha Kum network lies in its bottom-up, grassroots engagement and in its person- and community-centered approach, which ensures proximity to victims and survivors of trafficking, their families, and those at risk of exploitation. It also lies in rotating leadership between congregations and sisters from different realities. After serving as Talitha Kum International Coordinator for 8 years and nurturing its growth, Sr. Gabriella Bottani, SMC, has passed the torch to Sr. Abby Avelino, MM. Talitha Kum is grateful to Sr. Gabriella for her devoted work and tireless commitment to the fight against human trafficking.

**Talitha Kum Networks are:**

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

## The international coordination team

WHAT IS TALITHA KUM?



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



**SR. COLLEEN JACKSON, RSC**  
*Regional representative of Oceania*  
RSC - Religious Sisters of Charity

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

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

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

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

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



# NETWORKS AND ACTIONS



04

@Talitha Kum Thailand

## Areas of Action of Talitha Kum International

Talitha Kum International, with the aim of strengthening the anti-trafficking actions of grassroots networks around the world, has promoted, since its inception, the following tenants:

1. **networking** as a fundamental part of its identity;
2. **formation** and **communication** between sisters, partners and friends committed against trafficking in persons.

Talitha Kum's internal priorities established in September 2019 during the Talitha Kum General Assembly, will remain in force until 2025. These include **education** and **prevention, active involvement of survivors** in the activities of the networks, and **advocacy**, with priority on the African and Asian continents. These are areas of action and geographical areas that have been strengthened and developed during 2022, allowing the response of the networks to the challenges of prevention and care for victims and survivors of trafficking, such as the impact of Covid-19 pandemic and conflicts in different parts of the world.

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### WAR AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

*In 2022, conflicts worsened in many countries. For instance; the conflicts in Myanmar and Sri Lanka in Asia, Burkina Faso, Mali, DRC, and others in Africa, Syria in the Middle East, Venezuela in America and most recently, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in Europe, worsened. **The realities of conflict exacerbate people's vulnerability to human trafficking**, as they create fragile conditions and situations that cause people to be at risk-groups of human exploitation.*

*The Talitha Kum networks, witnessing the impacts of these conflicts, responded with **actions of prevention at various levels** to care for victims and displaced persons affected by war and conflict. The **post-Covid recovery path on the one hand**, and the **political-social conflicts on the other**, challenged the networks that continued to implement different ways of organizing and networking. They used **creative methods of prevention**, and **care for victims, survivors and groups at risk of trafficking**.*

# NETWORKING

Networking is essential to strengthen prevention of human trafficking and protection for victims and survivors, and to support groups considered at risk of trafficking. It has also facilitated the building of advocacy pathways.

*“The commitment and responsibility of this work is enormous and requires members and collaborators to work together against trafficking. As we are at the beginning, there is a need for constant training for members and collaborators so members are able to strengthen their skills. There is still a need for resources that are necessary for the implementation of the action plan.”*

Shared by Father Nicolas Dyemo, mf, and Sister Marie Chantal, sjd from Talitha Kum Mali - TAKUMA (newly established Talitha Kum network in 2022)

Collaboration and anti-trafficking efforts among different religious congregations is a key feature of Talitha Kum's networks. This collaboration is in direct connection with the national conferences of major superiors and the various Catholic organizations, NGO's, and government organizations engaged against trafficking that operate at the local level. The year 2022 highlighted a strengthening of interfaith collaboration and inclusion of lay people (including young people) with Talitha Kum networks. Networking facilitated the creation of the new Talitha Kum networks in 2022, as well as the growth and strengthening of hubs in Africa and Asia, operating with more incisive actions in the different areas of action of Talitha Kum.

## Areas of Action of Talitha Kum International

# FORMATION

In 2022, Talitha Kum International offered **courses, workshops** and **seminars** for capacity-building purposes, to spread awareness and to strengthen Talitha Kum's commitment to combating human trafficking. Here are some highlights:

- **32 members of Talitha Kum from 22 nationalities** received a **leadership qualification in the Third edition of Leadership Training**, coordinated by Talitha Kum in collaboration with Pontifical University Antonianum, and Tangaza University College.

Talitha Kum's leadership course dedicated to the continuing development of those who want to engage in work against trafficking and accompany survivors of trafficking in their social reintegration, including the following:

- In **Asia**, facilitated the formation at the local levels, particularly in Myanmar, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Korea, etc. targeted the religious (junior professed, novices), new members from different regions/nucleus have joined.
- Training on Talitha Kum's Call to Action for 67 members and collaborators of Talitha Kum in **Latin America**
- Training on Talitha Kum and Human trafficking with the youth communicators selected by the **Dicastery for Communication of the Holy See**: Faith Communication in the Digital World.

## Areas of Action of Talitha Kum International

# COMMUNICATION

Communication plays a **fundamental role in Talitha Kum networks**: it strengthens the life and identity of the network, is a strategic tool to raise awareness and mobilize against trafficking in persons, and gives visibility to the commitment of the sisters at the grassroots level, collaborators and friends working against trafficking.

One of the key tools for Talitha Kum is **data collection**, which makes the network's efforts and the exchange of information, knowledge, and good practices visible. In 2022, member networks that updated their data accounted for a total of 93.1%.

**Talitha Kum facilitates communication between the networks through the consistent exchange of information in terms of best practices and actions to fight trafficking** in persons throughout the different contexts in which its networks operate. In order to maintain communication with the Sisters at the grassroots level of the Talitha Kum Network, constant communication with the regional coordinators who not only act as the bridge between Talitha Kum International, but also represent the contact with Sisters on the ground, is essential.

**Sharing their stories** about the prevention and protection activities for/with victims and survivors of trafficking gives visibility to the Sisters engaged locally in the fight against trafficking and in the care of victims.

To do this, **Talitha Kum shares stories on its website ([www.talithakum.info](http://www.talithakum.info)) and social media platforms** such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter.

Additionally, Talitha Kum coordinates and supports the Networks in particularly important campaigns by calling them into action. For instance:

- Talitha Kum coordinated the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking**, which is celebrated on **8 February** and which, in the year 2022, had the theme "The Power of Care. Women, Economy and Trafficking in Persons".
- on the **30 July**, the **United Nations International Day Against Trafficking in Persons**, Talitha Kum invited the international network to participate, using the official hashtag #CareAgainstTrafficking

# ADVOCACY



Talitha Kum’s advocacy efforts are rooted in its **grassroots experience** and aim to empower and amplify the **voices of victims and survivors of human trafficking**, and to increase protection and access to justice, rehabilitation, healing and restoration. Talitha Kum calls upon actors and leaders at all levels to unite and stand to eradicate human trafficking. This advocacy has taken many forms, ranging from awareness raising about prevalent forms of human trafficking and exploitation, to the impact on victims, to coordinated advocacy with national governments to change or create laws and policies to prevent, protect, heal and support.

Talitha Kum’s advocacy is inspired by the **“Talitha Kum Call to Action”**, the first advocacy document ratified and endorsed by the Executive Board of the International Union of Superiors General. Various networks have translated the “Call to Action” into their local languages and are using it as **an advocacy tool within their local realities**.

In **Asia**, an online study group meets monthly to discuss the “Call to Action” of ways to use and implement it. In **Latin America**, the “Call to Action” was presented by two members of Talitha Kum at the occasion of the VII Latin American and Caribbean Congress on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants, held in Mexico City in July. In **Oceania** in 2022, regional groups incorporated reflection on and discussion of the “Call to Action” into every meeting over several months. Other regions dedicated part of their formation to the “Call to Action.” For example in **Africa**, members of Talitha Kum were trained on its content in November. Additionally, **Talitha Kum International presented it during the G20 Interfaith Forum, held in Abu Dhabi in December**. Finally, in partnership with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Talitha Kum International coordinated **four online workshops throughout 2022** to deepen the “Call to Action” and share feedback between Talitha Kum members and regional coordinators of the Dicastery. These are some of the many examples of how Talitha Kum’s “Call to Action” has been actively used.

The **“Talitha Kum Study, Prayer and Action Packet: Migration and Human Trafficking”**, highlighting the third priority identified at the 2019 Talitha Kum General Assembly, was launched in October 2022. Through supported data and research, and reflection on the scriptures and the Church’s Social Teaching presented in this packet, Talitha Kum invites reflection on the link between migration and human trafficking and calls us to use our collective voice to promote change at the structural level.



DOWNLOAD  
THE CALL  
TO ACTION

# ABOUT INVOLVEMENT OF SURVIVORS

In **2022**, the involvement of **survivors** in the activities of **Talitha Kum** networks **increased**:

- **38** Talitha Kum networks (66%) reported collaboration with survivors;
- **14** networks were focused on this area.

Some survivors have been involved in **various prevention and awareness activities** against trafficking and exploitation.

Some networks reported the **active participation of survivors** in decision-making and project management activities to empower them.

## YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN THE TALITHA KUM NETWORK

Young people have the potential to bring about great change in the world. The passion, power and energy that young people hold can be channeled to combat one of society's insidious and silent social scourges: human trafficking. The networks of Talitha Kum work towards **informing, educating, empowering** and **training** young people to **understand, identify** and **recognize** warning signs of trafficking with the hope of equipping them with the tools necessary to prevent and combat the world's third largest multidimensional crime.

Young people, with their incredible skill of networking and communicating, have the ability to reach people from all over the world. The Talitha Kum network works tirelessly to motivate and enable youth to be **protagonists** among their peers and reach out to empower those at risk. The fight against trafficking requires us all to come **together as a community**. The hope is that these strong voices of **you(th)** can progressively mitigate this form of global organized crime.

In 2022, taking a leap in the direction of this hope, Talitha Kum organized the **second training course** (online) to empower 35 passionate youth ambassadors from 13 different countries in Asia, and 2 countries in Africa. All participants were actively working towards the following aims:

- Understand the phenomenon of trafficking in persons.
- Analyze the situation of trafficking in different Asian and African countries.
- Share perspectives and views on the phenomenon of trafficking in persons.
- Recognize the importance of the role of youth ambassadors in combating trafficking.

The course was successfully concluded with key recommendations relevant to combating trafficking. **Sr. Abby Avelino, MM, the International Coordinator of Talitha Kum**, emphasized that, *“Young people want to help in the fight against trafficking with concrete actions and carry out awareness campaigns on this scourge.”*

Talitha Kum, along side fighting to end human trafficking, also focuses on social integration and rehabilitation of survivors. An **open letter** written by the Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors was published in 2022. The letter highlights that one should not define themselves by their negative past. It also showcases how a survivor can be a dynamic Talitha Kum Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassador. Together, with the Talitha Kum youth network, youth ambassadors have relentlessly worked for this cause. As one of them shared, *“So far, we, young people, have come up with many ideas to better raise awareness on the issue of Human Trafficking among uninformed and at-risk persons by using various forms of communication, both in-person and online...”*

One of the most significant moments in recognition of the youth's fight against human trafficking was when Areeya Pongpit, one of the youth ambassadors from Talitha Kum Thailand, received the **Outstanding Youth Award in the Prevention and Fight Against Human Trafficking** from the Thai government on June 6th, 2022. Referring to the anti-trafficking efforts, Areeya stressed the importance of youth involvement citing their power “to move our world forward.” She said, “Let's help people around us to be more careful through love, kindness and comprehension of others” - that is her invitation to the youth.

In addition, an **interview with the young people of the Talitha Kum network** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6J69LjKdoU>) was published by the Dicastery of Migrants and Refugees Section on September 25th, 2022, The World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Young people have exhibited tremendous efforts to challenge human trafficking every day. Their efforts remind us why young people are called the “leaders of tomorrow's change”.



# GLOBAL DATA

# 05

## 2022 in Figures

The 2022 data demonstrates **impressive capacity throughout the different levels of Talitha Kum's networks**. New national networks were established in 2022, and the various anti-trafficking actions **reached 40% of benefited people**. This is more than in the past year, and demonstrates the development of other areas of action in the networks' work, such as access to justice.

By 2022, Talitha Kum was present in **97 countries**, organized into **58 national networks** and **13 regional coordinating networks**, including **hubs on the African and Asian continents**, and **two continental coordinations**. These coordinators facilitate communication and networking at different levels, actively supporting victims, survivors, and people at risk of trafficking.

Three new networks were established in 2022: in Africa (Talitha Kum Côte d'Ivoire and TAKUMA - Mali), and in Latin America (Red Kawsay Bolivia). **The number of countries where Talitha Kum has a presence increased by five compared to 2021.**

The total **number of subdivisions<sup>1</sup> of national networks** reported in 2022 also **increased by 13%** from the previous year, with a total of 224 subdivisions. The continents with the largest growth in subdivisions compared to last year are Africa (41%) and Asia (14%), demonstrating the ability of Talitha Kum Networks to create subdivisions and decentralized working groups.

The year 2022 shows a smaller total number of members and collaborators than last year, with 10% less than those in 2021. Regionally, the **American continent** has shown a **growth in volunteer staff and lay collaborators** of 18%, while the decrease is seen on the Asian (23%) and European (5%) continents. The decrease in the total number of members in 2022 may be due to various factors, such as situations related to one's socio-political reality. In some cases, the decrease in volunteers and increase in staff can be understood as a response to the networks' need for experienced staff in certain action areas such as access to justice.

*<sup>1</sup> Some networks may have subdivisions. A subdivision is generally defined as a unit under the central (national) network and operating in a certain area of the country. They have an inter-congregational characteristic and, in most cases, maintain the primary identity of the national network. In the event that the subdivision is in a different country than the core network, it may become a national network. Generally, the higher number of subdivisions corresponds to national networks that have a larger territorial area requiring a more articulated organization.*

**Involvement of Sisters, priests and lay partners is a key feature of Talitha Kum Networks.** As the 2022 data shows, this involvement accounts for 91% of total membership.

An important growth figure can be seen in the **involvement of survivors and their families** in Talitha Kum's actions. In 2022, 38 networks (66% of the total) reported the active collaboration of survivors in various anti-trafficking activities, showing a 37% growth over 2021 figures. Survivors are particularly involved in prevention activities, project decision-making and management in assisting victims of trafficking.

The **participation and involvement of religious congregations** within the Talitha Kum Networks in 2022 decreased by 4%. This process occurred as early as 2020, a possible consequence of the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic. In 2022, other possible factors are important to consider as they also impacted the reorganization of networks after Covid, such as loss of members within congregations and/or change of leadership due to shifts within local networks. However, there has been an increase in the number of men's religious congregations involved in Talitha Kum compared to the 2021 figure of 13% of the total number of religious congregations. This figure has grown particularly on the African continent.

Regarding **interfaith collaboration**, in 2022, 18 Talitha Kum networks or 31% of the total, reported having interfaith collaboration, particularly in Asia, Africa and Oceania.



@Lisa Kristine

## Methodological note

The collection and analysis of data from the Talitha Kum Networks has been supported since the beginning by academics at universities. Since 2018, data collection has been made possible in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. This year, the follow-up analysis was supported by **Prof. Giulio Guarini**, Associate Professor in Economics, **University of Tuscia** (Viterbo, Italy); **Prof. Ilaria De Benedetti**, tenure track in Economic Statistics, **University of Tuscia** (Viterbo, Italy); **Silvia Di Risio**, student in Master Degree “Economics and Communication for Management and Innovation” - **Sapienza University of Rome & University of Tuscia** (Viterbo, Italy).

The data is collected through the completion of **two semi-structured questionnaires** created by the national networks. The “Census” questionnaire collects data on their internal structure, such as the number of members, religious congregations, active participation of trafficking survivors in the life of the networks, subdivisions of the national networks, and collaboration with different organizations at the local and international levels.

The second questionnaire, “Inform Activities,” covers the activities of the networks in Talitha Kum’s main areas of action against human trafficking: Prevention, Care for Victims, Survivors and Groups at Risk of Trafficking, Access to Justice, and Networking. The objective of the data collection and analysis is to map the Network structure and initiatives of the networks in the fight against trafficking at the global and regional levels, taking into consideration each reality in its own context.

**Talitha Kum’s data collection is pastoral-oriented.** Every year, the database questionnaires are updated and improved, taking into account new needs that have emerged from the networks. A question regarding the interfaith collaboration was added to the Census questionnaire for 2022. In addition, the different headings of action areas in the “Activity Inform” have been updated to correspond with the language of Talitha Kum’s Call to Action.

This Report is the result of the analysis of data collected through the Talitha Kum-UISG database and is based on data provided by the national networks which constitute the basic unit of Talitha Kum. The questionnaires were completed by the database reference persons for each local network during the period from January to March 2023 (for data collection for the year 2022). Of those who received the questionnaires, 93.1% responded to which equates to a total of 54 local networks.

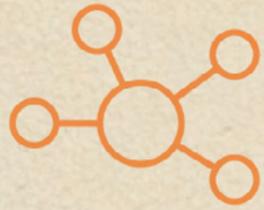
The two questionnaires, especially the one concerning the activities of the networks, enabled descriptive research using a mixed approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. The technique of topic coding was used to analyze and interpret the data, which allows the data to be organized according to their thematic characteristics so that they can be subsequently categorized and described. Microsoft Excel was the software used to statistically structure and analyze the data.



*Mayra Cuellar - MDB*  
**Talitha Kum International**



*Silvia Di Risio*  
Student in Master Degree “Economics and Communication for Management and Innovation” - Sapienza University of Rome & University of Tuscia (Viterbo, Italy)



**NETWORKS**  
**58**



**ACTIVE MEMBERS  
AND COLLABORATORS**  
**5445**

**TALITHA KUM**  
END HUMAN TRAFFICKING 

**TOTALS  
WORLDWIDE  
2022**



**COUNTRIES  
IN ALL CONTINENTS**  
**97**



**RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS**  
**762**  
87% FEMALE  
13% MALE



**PURSUED INTERFAITH  
COLLABORATION**  
**31%**

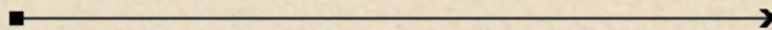




# TOTALS WORLDWIDE 2022



**PROTECTION**  
CARE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS  
OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
**27334**



**ACCESS TO JUSTICE**  
FOR SURVIVORS  
**7129**



TOTAL OF VICTIMS/SURVIVORS  
SUPPORTED BY TALITHA KUM IN 2022  
**34463**

**PREVENTION**  
WITH AT-RISK PEOPLE, AWARENESS-RAISING  
CAMPAIGNS, EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH STUDENTS  
**442276**

TOTAL OF PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2022  
**560606**



NETWORKING, TRAINING,  
CAPACITY BUILDING  
**83867**

## TALITHA KUM: NETWORKING AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Data is invaluable for monitoring and evaluating the activities of Talitha Kum (TK). Without awareness of scenarios and trends, it is difficult to imagine the future and plan new actions.**

Talitha Kum is an excellent example of an expanding international network; in 2022 TK strongly increased the number of victims contacted (40% more) and networking activities (30% more).

The TK network has a polyhedral nature: all continents are represented; networks are composed of both religious and lay members who can be volunteers and collaborators; the majority, not the totality, of members and religious orders are female.

The TK network has a multi-level structure; it is a network of national and regional networks. The TK network has multifaceted collaborations with different types of change makers, such as governmental and non-governmental associations, Catholic and non-Catholic associations. The TK network pursues a comprehensive approach to combat human trafficking, such as prevention, partnership, prosecution and protection.

All these features make the TK network a potential driver of social innovation; indeed, its members can create novelty in organization and activities by sharing different knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences. However, this richness also implies a complexity due to the number and variety of people and factors involved, as well as an instability due to potential changes depending on different national and regional dynamics.

For the long term projection it could make it possible to distinguish between structural and cyclical dynamics, which is impossible to do within a few years.

Finally, new types of data could support the governance and development of Talitha Kum: particularly resources sustainability to highlight the limits and potential of TK's networking; data on relationships with public institutions to monitor TK's tackling roots in the local contexts; data on young people involved in TK to monitor the effect of the active participation of international group of young people representing partner organizations to the last "Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking 2023"; more data on survivors of human trafficking with respect to their social inclusion and their collaborations with TK to better assess TK's ultimate social impact.



*Prof. Giulio Guarini*

**Associate Professor in Economics - University of Tuscia  
(Viterbo, Italy)**



## PREVENTION

One of the main focus areas of Talitha Kum networks, the area of “Prevention”, concentrated on:

**Raising awareness about trafficking and trafficking-related issues:** These activities included training pastoral workers, workshops in parishes for parents and educators of children, and the development of digital anti-trafficking materials and radio programs.

For example, in Albania (Europe), young people orchestrated flash mobs. In Zambia (Africa), booklets/flyers about trafficking were published. Short-and long-term educational training programs were organized in schools, parishes, and communities. These programs aimed at equipping young people, educators, community leaders, and pastoral agents with skills to identify cases of trafficking in their communities and go on to become amplifiers of **prevention**.

**Information campaigns explaining trafficking**, its causes, and consequences in different socio-cultural contexts were disseminated on social media platforms and radio campaigns, particularly in Africa.

Additionally, activities for support and prevention were organized for vulnerable and at-risk populations, focusing on children and young women without economic resources, students in schools located in high-risk areas, migrants and refugees, individuals experiencing psycho-social stress/disorder, and family crises, as well as those displaced due to war in Europe taken in by the network in Poland and Germany, particularly women and children.

In 2022, Talitha Kum Network activities benefitted a total of **442,276 individuals** in the area of prevention, reflecting a significant **increase of 41%** compared to 2021. The primary beneficiaries included students, youth, educators, religious, community leaders, government employees, and other key stakeholders.

## ACTIVITIES OF TALITHA KUM NETWORKS

The report in 2022 has seen phenomenal growth, **qualitatively** and **quantitatively**, in the areas of **prevention, care for victims, access to justice, and networking**. The data indicate an overall increase of 40% in the number of people the Talitha Kum network has reached. The area of “Access to Justice,” which is an area that has generally been less implemented by networks in the past years, has gained new momentum. This significant achievement in 2022 demonstrates Talitha Kum’s reach to more people across all focus areas.



## ☂ PREVENTION - GOOD PRACTICE

**Talitha Kum Thailand:** Inspired by Pope Francis's message; "An economy without human trafficking is an economy of care," sisters in Thailand promote best practices in the prevention of human trafficking and empowering women and young people by providing training for **sustainable economic sufficiency** to help improve economic models intentionally, with a strong focus on natural resources.

They provide sustainable economy capacity programs through income-generating projects, such as selling their products, for women and local communities in villages and mountainous areas to reduce their risk of becoming victims of trafficking.

Another approach to enhancing economic capacity is **aiming for zero waste and zero human trafficking** by generating income from waste selling and recycling products by using the same garbage to create items that can be sold. Another good practice in Thailand is the **use of technology**. They organized a series of media literacy activities that will help people understand the various ways in which traffickers use media to exploit their victims and provide them with the knowledge and skills they need for the safety of students grade 6-12.

The main main objectives of these activities are to promote the recognition of human dignity, to raise awareness about the threat of human trafficking, and to help students and young people learn how to use media safely and effectively. Our goal is to empower young people with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent trafficking and to use media in a way that respects the dignity of all individuals.



@Stefano del Pozzolo

## ☔ PREVENTION - GOOD PRACTICE

**Wells of Hope Lebanon:** Wells of Hope Lebanon is the Talitha Kum Network based in the Middle East and it is the first interreligious Talitha Kum network with Muslim and Christian women working together. They instituted awareness sessions in schools and technical academics in different regions, especially in poverty-ridden areas where there is a high level of school dropout or at-risk populations. Additionally, these sessions were provided to women in vulnerable areas, such as Palestinian camps and Beirut suburbs, who are either victims or at high risk of trafficking.

The activities include a special curriculum for different age groups:

- Children age group 6-11 years old: how to protect themselves; good and bad secrets by using coloring techniques and storytelling and visual effects.
- Teenagers age group 12-17 years old: how to protect themselves from exploitation, especially on social media; the importance of education and the difficulties of early marriage.
- Adults aged 18 and above: types of trafficking; people who are fragile towards trafficking; how to protect themselves through the Laws in countries.

Moreover, contact references had been distributed for any assistance, as well as flyers distribution for any further information.



## CARE FOR VICTIMS

Talitha Kum's Call to Actions states, "Victims are the first to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society." The Talitha Kum network is committed to providing dynamic assistance to victims. This support revolves around principles of welcoming, care, acceptance, and empowerment of individuals who have been subjected to trafficking.

The network provides a supportive, safe, and caring environment for the survivors and the victims to heal and recover. They also offer material and economic resources alongside spiritual and psychosocial support. Numerous instances show that specific needs like medical care, psychological assistance, and assistance with safe repatriation to their country of origin, were addressed. Legal assistance has also been provided to navigate through bureaucratic legal procedures. Additionally, many training programs have been conducted, empowering survivors to reintegrate and rebuild their lives independently. The Sisters in Kenya Network in particular cited accompanying victims and survivors to their families as a critical element for reintegration into society.

**Advocacy** initiatives, through constant engagement with local and intergovernmental institutions, are crucial in order to protect the rights of migrant workers, women, and girls vulnerable to forced marriages, as recently encountered in Australia.

In 2022, Talitha Kum networks reached out to a total of **27,334** victims, survivors, and their families, including groups considered at risk of trafficking. This represents a significant **increase of 56%** compared to 2021.

**Talitha Kum Nigeria:** Some victims of human trafficking have this feeling of shame and for this reason, they do not want to go home on repatriation. This is because they are humiliated by coming back home empty-handed or because they are angered with their family for their part in their misfortune of being trafficked. For this reason, reconciliation becomes necessary; indeed efforts are made to reconcile, helping them into their social reintegration. Knowing the family helps to understand its situation and background and the circumstances that led the victim to be trafficked.

**Red Kawsay Perú:** In Puno-Peru, two religious congregations (women and men) that are part of Red Kawsay have teamed up to open a shelter for women who have been trafficked and have reached majority age (18+). These are people who have been accepted in state shelters but have to leave because they are of age. The shelter in Puno welcomes these women and continues to accompany them in their process of social inclusion and to avoid re-victimization.



## ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Talitha Kum, partnering with local governments, states, and other organizations, has made impressive efforts to secure justice for victims and survivors of trafficking by reporting incidents of exploitation and trafficking, for example, as can be noted in Brazil.

Supporting and assisting victims throughout the legal and judicial process to claim compensation for damages and financial issues was crucial to promoting access to justice. The network's access to justice initiatives also involve training stakeholders to address gaps in legislation in their own context. In 2022, Talitha Kum's pursuit of access to justice has benefited **7129 individuals**, marking an **increase of 28%** compared to 2021.

**ACRATH Network in Australia:** Aims to work towards structured mechanisms, within the government, to ensure justice for migrant workers. It aims to:

- meet with exploited migrant workers and represent their voices in national working parties;
- maintain persistence in presenting such cases to government for action;
- identify failures and weaknesses in current migrant worker programs and present these;
- restructure national and state employment regulations/guidelines for migrant seasonal workers.

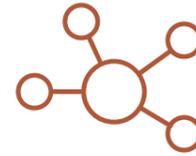
## ACCESS TO JUSTICE - GOOD PRACTICES

**Bakhita Poland:** In such a large migration movement due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, vigilance and contact with people working at the border, who were the first to observe disturbing phenomena, turned out to be very important. The courage of the sisters who, with the help of lawyers, drew up a letter of intervention to the Polish authorities turned out to be important.

At the beginning of the war, Sisters from different congregations opened their homes to accommodate women and families based on their capabilities. Ukrainian women crossing the border shared accounts of numerous individuals coercively urging them to go to unspecified locations. There were also offers to leave Poland, such as a bus specifically for pregnant women, with a group of men insisting on taking them, even with children.

These stories recurred frequently and were corroborated by a Polish sister who had returned from Ukraine. In response, a team of lawyers residing in Lublin prepared a document that was sent to the Ministry of Justice, assisting refugees from Ukraine. During a conversation with Gabriella Bottani, who was involved with Talitha Kum at the time, the urgent situation was discussed, leading to Talitha Kum expressing concern and joining efforts to address the issue.

The Ministry responded to our message and increased support and border controls. Additionally, whenever possible, we shared flyers prepared by the Ministry of Interior to raise awareness.



## NETWORKING

Networking is essential for strengthening actions against trafficking, especially for prevention, caring for victims, and supporting vulnerable groups. **Training and collaboration** are crucial areas for any efficient networking.

Their main activities in this area are aimed at strengthening the collaboration and cooperation among network members at local and regional levels with different local institutions (Catholic, NGOs, governmental and intergovernmental organizations) supporting victims and survivors. Joint ventures were aimed at prevention and building advocacy pathways for systemic change. Furthermore, interfaith collaboration was fostered to enhance responses to trafficking challenges in diverse contexts.

In 2022, Talitha Kum Networks collaborated with 248 Catholic organizations, 216 NGOs, and 164 governmental and intergovernmental organizations. They reached a total of **83867 people**, an **increase of 30%** from 2021.

**Talitha Kum Indonesia:** Organizing an interfaith discussion is considered to have an important impact on the network because it provides a wider perspective to begin to work collaboratively across religions to combat human trafficking.

**Talitha Kum Ivory Coast:** The international session with the networks of West Africa was an important opportunity to share contacts, deepen knowledge and methods on how to help victims, and to better understand the phenomenon of human trafficking. The hub meeting strengthened the joint work of the networks in the French-speaking area of West Africa.

## AFRICA

Despite the many challenges that the African continent is facing, the **commitment of the members of Talitha Kum Africa remains strong and firm**, through **concrete actions** in awareness-raising, victim support and advocacy.

This year was marked by the first meeting of the leaders of Africa from 15 countries.

We reflected on the **identity of Talitha Kum Africa** and **identified regions constituting different countries**, to foster interaction. Each region/hub has one person in charge.

- East Africa Region: **KENYA, TANZANIA, UGANDA, AND ETHIOPIA.**
- North Africa Region: **MOROCCO, TUNISIA, ALGERIA, AND MAURITANIA.**
- West Africa Region (English-speaking): **NIGERIA, CAMEROON, AND GHANA.**
- West Africa Region (French-speaking): **IVORY COAST, BURKINA FASO, AND MALI.**
- Southern Africa Region: **SOUTH AFRICA, ZAMBIA, MOZAMBIQUE, MALAWI, ZIMBABWE, ANGOLA, BOTSWANA, AND ESWATINI.**

We have **expanded the Talitha Kum-Africa coordination team** with six new people supporting the coordinator in the following focus areas: Prevention ; Formation; Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors; Advocacy and Communication. This is a way for us to prepare and train more members to take responsibility at the continental level of Talitha Kum Africa.

Each person in charge of a focus area has a team that accompanies them in the reflection and elaboration of an action plan, as well as the animation and the implementation of the area at the African level.

**The number of countries where Talitha Kum is present has increased** with the adhesion of Malawi, Zambia and Mali. Mali, which is 95% Muslim, has also seen the involvement of youth of Muslim origin in the fight against human trafficking.

**Several networks work in collaboration with other organizations.** For example, a meeting to follow up on the Bakhita project set up by Talitha Kum, WUCWO and Caritas International in Southern Africa (Eswatini, Malawi and South Africa) initially planned in Eswatini was finally held in South Africa.

The networks continued to hold **online zooms and webinars on different themes** related to trafficking, involving people from their countries and networks from the African continent.

This is an opportunity for us to recognize the **commitment** of all those who have dedicated themselves along with us in the fight against trafficking on the continent and congratulate them. **Thank you to all our partners without whom our goodwill would not have had concrete actions on the ground.** May the Lord bless our efforts and support us all in this prophetic mission.



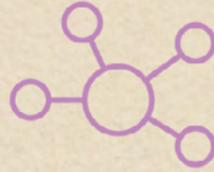
*Sr. Yvonne Clémence Bambara, RGS*  
Regional representative of Africa



PREVENTION  
**292206**



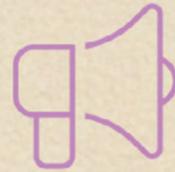
ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**2091**



NETWORKING  
**34077**



PROTECTION  
**4200**



ADVOCACY  
**33%**  
OF THE NETWORKS

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**80%**

## AFRICA

Networking and Prevention focus areas were the African's priorities at regional and national levels. They focused on training for Religious and laities through face-to-face and online meetings, productive projects, and skills training. They organized motivational and sensitization campaigns through radio & TV and developed digital anti-trafficking materials.

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**52**

CATHOLIC

**49**

NGOS

**33**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

## REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

- East Africa Hub
- Northern Africa Hub
- West Africa Hub (English speaking)
- West Africa Hub (French speaking)
- Southern Africa Hub

**1137**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**60**

SUBDIVISIONS

**27**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

TOTAL OF PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2022

**332574**



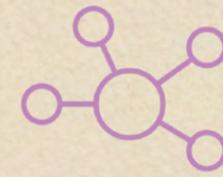
**15**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

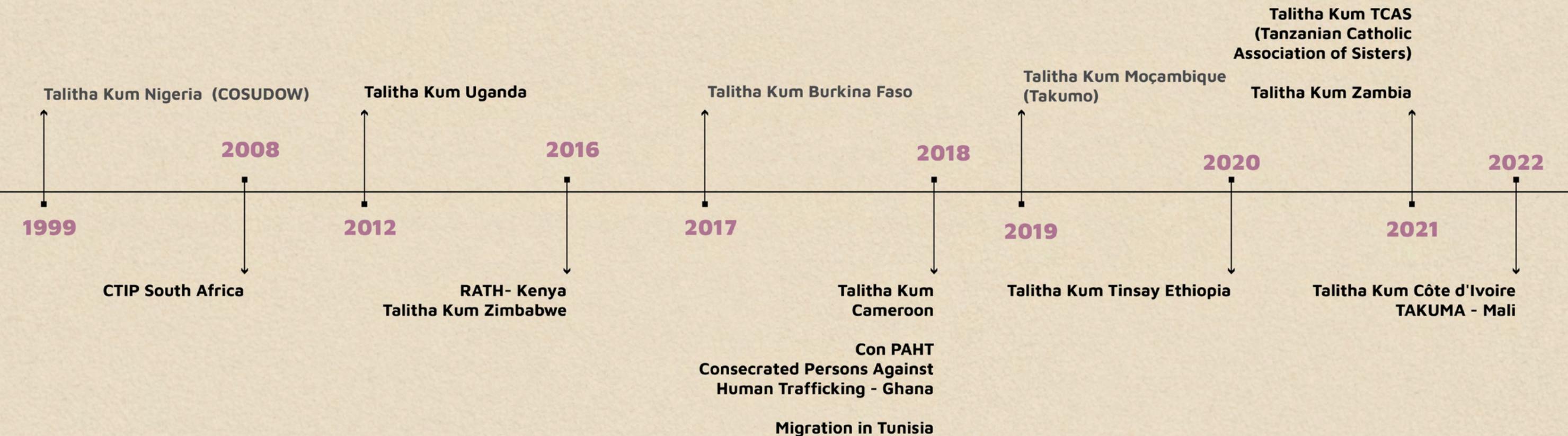
**218**

RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

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



NATIONAL  
**NETWORK**  
**15**



**REGIONAL COORDINATIONS**

- East Africa hub
- Northern Africa hub
- West Africa hub (English speaking)
- West Africa hub (French speaking)
- Southern Africa



# JOURNEYS OF LIBERATION

## THE STORY OF JESSIE

### **My name is Jessie and this is my story:**

*After I finished my university studies, I started working in a chemical plant in Uganda. Unfortunately, I got sick because I developed an allergy to the materials we used in the factory and had to quit my job. Still, I was not discouraged and bought a small kiosk to sell food to passers-by in my neighborhood. Everything was going well, until one day, in the search for other possibilities for new income, I was deceived by an agency that offered me a job in the Middle East. I thought I had found a great opportunity, but I became a victim of domestic slavery.*

*I worked without rest and received neither food nor compensation. All I could think about was escaping from that terrible situation. During a first escape attempt, I was raped by a cab driver whom I had asked for help. But, desperation drove me to flee again and fortunately someone decided to help me and accompanied me to the Ugandan embassy in the country where I was. **It was the beginning of a new life:** I arrived at a house of nuns who welcomed me and took care of me; they gave me food, clothes, dignity... One day, I asked the sisters about the possibility of returning home, as I often thought of the happiness I had had owning that small kiosk a few years before. The sisters helped me to obtain the documents and to get in touch with my country of origin. Today, I live in Uganda and the Talitha Kum sisters in Uganda continue to help me in my social and professional reintegration.*

*According to information from Amnesty International 2019, a large proportion of migrant domestic workers in the Middle East come from African and Asian countries. The vast majority of these workers are women. Migrant domestic workers are victims of the kafala system, a system that increases their risk of being subjected to labor exploitation, forced labor, and human trafficking, and leaves them with little prospect of compensation.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde18/0022/2019/en/>

## NORTH AMERICA

Let me begin by expressing all our gratitude to Sister Ann Oestreich, i.h.m., Talitha Kum's Regional Representative for North America from 2017 to 2022. It was she who provided tremendous leadership and did all the work for 2022. The committee has benefited from her joyful presence, creativity, wisdom, problem-solving ability and voice rooted in her faith for victims of human trafficking.

Many activities, particularly in the area of **advocacy**, have been carried out by networks of religious women and their allies against human trafficking **in Canada and the United States**. For instance, we have called on our governments to grant open permits for temporary migrant workers, especially in the agricultural sector. We are seeing **greater movement of people from poor and repressive** countries, and, faced with the **difficulty of obtaining legal immigration status**, some will go underground. In order to survive, they will often work in the black economy where they are more vulnerable to traffickers.

We have also led a **campaign to raise awareness about the endemic phenomenon of child labor exploitation in international companies** whose products flood major supply chains.

Much effort, including research, is being put forth to **highlight good practices** in various community settings with respect to empowerment. We recognize that survivors must choose their own path to healing and regaining control of their lives.

We also **advocate for the justice system to recognize the circumstances of trafficked persons** when they are charged with crimes committed under the coercion of their exploiter.

**Our actions and advocacy contribute to greater public awareness and push government authorities towards concrete actions.** With determination, we continue our actions in order to live the faith that has the favor of God in breaking the unjust chains and giving freedom to the oppressed. We hope that God's light will rise in the darkness for the victims and survivors of trafficking (Is 58).



*Sr. IsaBelle Couillard, SGM*  
Regional representative of North America

## LATIN AMERICA

*“There can be no safe and secure society until the root causes that drive human trafficking are effectively addressed, perpetrators are brought to justice and survivors are supported.”* These are words expressed during the launch of UNODC’s 2022 annual global report on the crime of trafficking in persons. While limiting the ability of law enforcement authorities to combat trafficking, the impacts of COVID and its restrictions influenced the evolution of the crime, making trafficking more clandestine, with new modalities of exploitation at the hands of coercive organizations and trafficking for forced criminal activity.

**In the Latin American context**, in February 2023, in her book, *El tren de Aragua*, the author describes the organization that revolutionized organized crime throughout Latin America, at the expense of the most heinous crimes: from drugs to human trafficking, especially the sexual exploitation of Venezuelan women and girls, who have had to migrate due to the social and political conditions of their country.

In July 2022, CIMAC News published that those who migrate to the United States and other parts of the world are subjected to forced labor and, for those who do not have documents, labor exploitation seems to be their only alternative as opposed to denouncing the exploitation or being forced to return to their country of origin. Also, in Central America and the Caribbean, 50% of the people trafficked for domestic work are girls who are threatened to work in the home without days off, without benefits and, in most cases, far from their families.

Additionally, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), in the Fifth Dialogue on Trafficking in Persons, in October 2022, emphasized that in Latin America, women and girls continue to be the most affected as they are increasingly captured through digital channels, in addition to being subjected to violence at the hands of traffickers. The hotel sector is also noted as one of the most common institutions where sexual exploitation of women, children and adolescents takes place.

The Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy declared that Latin America is on high alert due to the increase in femicides. A study published in November 2022 by ECLAC’s Gender Equality Observatory, said that, during 2021 more than 4,473 femicides were registered throughout the region, and the crime did not desist during 2022.

The panorama is discouraging, the challenge is great. Between lights and shadows, but moved by love, the Talitha Kum networks, also integrated in the CLAR Commission (Latin American Confederation of Religious), have been creatively weaving our time, gifts and knowledge in a path of communion and synodal participation in the fight against human trafficking. We have a privileged and difficult mission: *“to rebuild the hope destroyed by exploitation, transforming fear into trust.”*

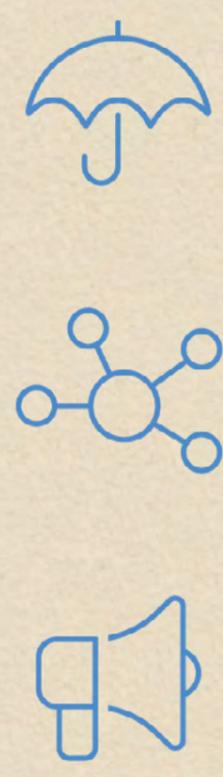
To eradicate human trafficking, it is necessary and urgent to know the underlying pattern of all exploitation processes, the dynamics of manipulation and deception of traffickers to obtain the “consent” of the victims. Since with the implementation of Talitha Kum’s Call to Action, the main activities are focused on the prevention and visibility of the crime, we raise our voice against the commodification of life and all forms of exploitation and walk with the migrant population. We are taking steps in the care and accompaniment of victims and survivors. We are promoting productive projects to empower women and achieve a new economy. We are also beginning the training of Youth Ambassadors of Talitha Kum – who better than them to ensure that their peers recognize and do not fall into the deceitful dynamics of traffickers?

And because we are moved by the pain of our brothers and sisters, we promote the mystique of care to heal, empower and restore their dignity. And because we want to continue to tell stories of redemption, we walk with tenderness and courage to awaken the world. We dare to walk confidently through the night by the hand of our God.



*Sr. Carmen Ugarte García, OSR*  
**Regional representative of Latin America**

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022/GLOTiP\\_2022\\_web.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022/GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf)



PREVENTION  
**59670**



ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**157**

NETWORKING  
**20889**



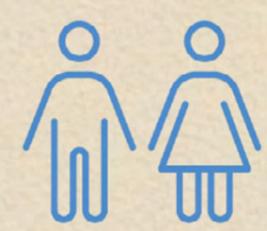
PROTECTION  
**4084**

ADVOCACY  
**38%**  
OF THE NETWORKS

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**63%**

## AMERICA

Focus areas on prevention, advocacy and networking. Many networks at regional and continental levels raised awareness through training, distribution of educational materials, monthly newsletters, and using social media. Furthermore, they implemented training for students on trafficking, raising awareness on dedicated days. Participated in meetings with laity and catholic representatives to increase relationships with partner organizations for services to migrants and refugees.



TOTAL OF PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2022  
**84800**

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

- 81** CATHOLIC
- 59** NGOS
- 57** GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL

### REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

- Red Kawsay
- Red Ramá
- Comisión Trata CLAR

### CONTINENTAL COORDINATIONS

- Emisferic Coordination  
(North, Central and South America)

**1108**  
ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**68**  
SUBDIVISIONS

**18**  
COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

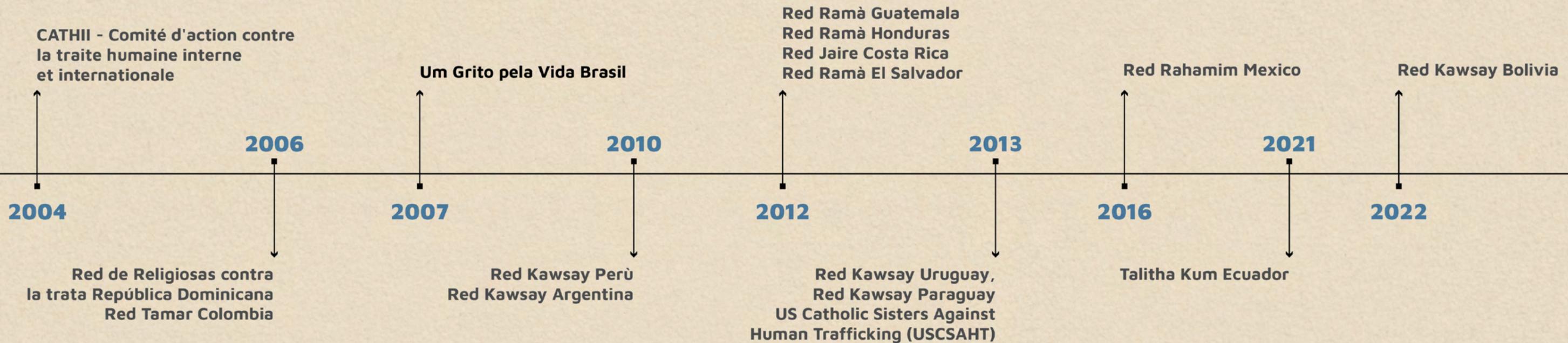
**16**  
NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**235**  
RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

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



NATIONAL  
**NETWORK**  
**16**



**REGIONAL COORDINATIONS**

Red Kawsay  
Red Ramà  
Comisión Trata CLAR

**CONTINENTAL COORDINATIONS**

Emisferic Coordination (North, Central and South America)

## STORY FROM RED KAWSAY ARGENTINA

### **Male member of Kawsay Network Argentina.**

*Human trafficking in Argentina worsened during the pandemic as many women returned to the street because there was no other source of work. Many others resorted to virtual pages. As in the rest of the world, men are the main exploiters of women and girls. Though there are laws that punish these crimes in Argentina, the penalties are derisory or the judiciary is complicit.*

*The biggest challenge for me is to help individuals in vulnerable situations not to trap into illegal recruiters.. That is why it is vital to make people aware of prevention, visualization, and sensitization against trafficking. Another challenge remains to educate the Church and the different religious families on this issue, provoking a dialogue in which all our practices are reviewed, especially in vocation ministry and in formation and seminaries.*

*I have been collaborating with Sisters in Montevideo and CasAbierta, since mid-2020, helping women to obtain their primary education certificate. Feeling like part of a process where women are helped to build their life plans is very healing for me. I recognize that while I am a part of their lives, I am also alien to them. To see as they make small advancements towards a healthier and more independent life is extremely rewarding.*

*I believe that the greatest pain is the feeling of frustration that comes from not seeing the progress that one expects from survivors. Once, a sister told me, "We all have that superhero complex...that believes we will rescue all the victims and that...they will build a life plan where they will always be grateful to us". As a man, this complex is even more underlined. My work has helped me to understand that I am neither better nor worse than them; that they and I are simply learning together to overcome difficulties. I must continue to learn how to accompany without invading, helping others to what they want from their life. Above all, I have learned to be grateful to my network sisters who accept me as I am and teach me the importance of involving everyone in the fight against trafficking.*

*I participated in the third edition of Talitha Kum's leadership course that urges me to be part of a global community fighting against trafficking. Personally, this is a great challenge. However, we must carry forward the "Call to Action" that Talitha Kum created to carry a world without trafficking.*

# JOURNEYS OF LIBERATION

## ASIA

.... *“as it was in the beginning, is now and will be ....”*

This is an expression that every fighter and advocate of anti-human trafficking in all its forms is strongly trying to eliminate. Although it seems an impossible task, especially in the face of political turmoil still happening throughout different parts of Asia, **we persevere and firmly believe that our determination will not be in vain.**

Asia Talitha Kum Network continues **its effort to educate people**, especially youth, through awareness and prevention campaigns. Integrating the subject in the curriculum of the school is one of the best ways to reach out and touch the minds of young people. **Cutting the bud in its early stage.** Education and Capacity building training activities in different communities, whether in the mountains or on the islands in churches, schools, agencies and the like, have been crucial.

The imperative nature of networking and collaboration with government and private agencies, and other religions working together has also guided our work. More young people as **“Talitha Kum Youth”** are getting involved and interested in contributing to this cause. This is the fruit of the launching of the **Youth Ambassadors program.** Our attendance of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference (FABC) held in the Pastoral Training Center of the Bangkok Archdiocese, Thailand, October, 2022 was beneficial in the recognition of the presence and efforts being made by Talitha Kum Asia. At present, the Sisters are getting in touch with their respective bishops to collaborate in setting up programs to combat human trafficking and exploitation. Part and parcel of these programs is the strengthening of the rescue process and assistance given to the victims/survivors for social reintegration and rehabilitation.

Talitha Kum Asia continued to organize and contribute to the special event of February 8th, the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, as well as the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons on July 30. Currently, the development of Talitha Kum “Training Manual, Manual for Call to Action and Guidelines for Youth Ambassadors,” through the effort of its formation team, are now in place for capacity building training of new members.

Pope Francis, in his address to the youth during the 9th International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking (February 8, 2023), called on them “to be a blessing for other young people.” He said, “Never tire of seeking pathways for transforming our societies and preventing the shameful scourge that is human trafficking”.<sup>1</sup>



*Sr. Paula Kwandao Phonprasertruksa, SPC*  
**Regional representative of Asia**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/messages/pont-messages/2023/documents/20230208-videomessaggio-tratta-persone.html>



PREVENTION  
**75620**



ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**1293**



NETWORKING  
**9551**



PROTECTION  
**9329**



ADVOCACY  
**56%**  
OF THE NETWORKS

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**67%**

## ASIA

Prevention and care for victims were the Asian networks' priorities. It was strengthened through training and awareness-raising campaigns in schools, parishes, and local communities, targeting especially women, youth, religious, tribal communities, and migrant workers. They organized learning activities for students about human trafficking, creative arts activities, and games for young people. They provided physical and psychological support assistance.

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**76**

CATHOLIC

**59**

NGOS

**38**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

## REGIONAL COORDINATIONS

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

**2604**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**73**

SUBDIVISIONS

**20**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**18**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**210**

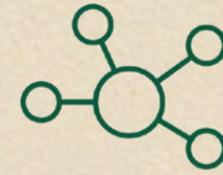
RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

TOTAL OF PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2022

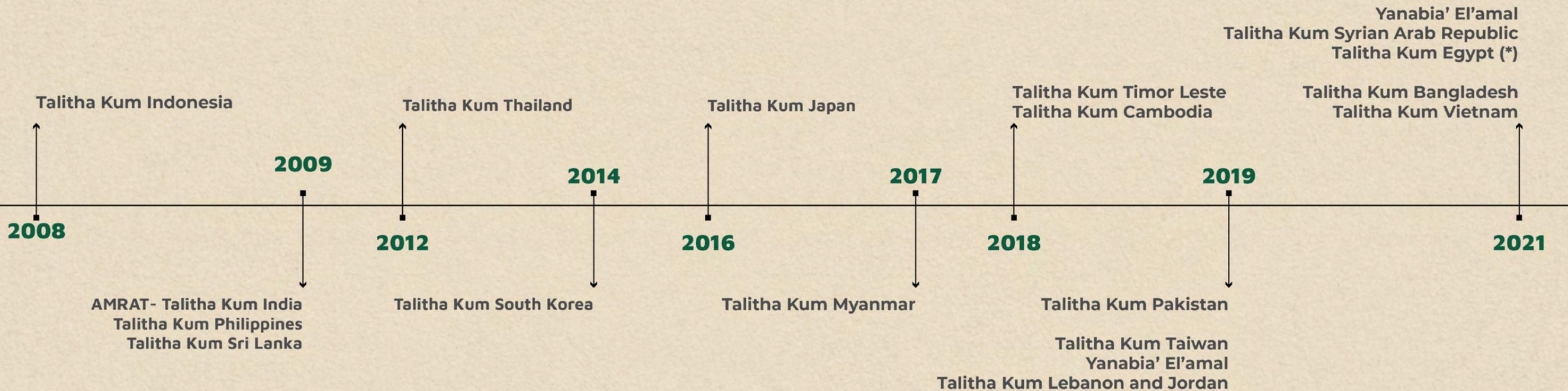
**95793**



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



NATIONAL  
**NETWORK**  
**18**



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

**REGIONAL COORDINATIONS**

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



# JOURNEYS OF LIBERATION

## TESTIMONY FROM THAILAND

*Member of inter-congregational network of Talitha Kum Thailand and work with Caritas in refugee camps and the mountains.*

*Working against human trafficking in Thailand is a grave challenge due to our border with Myanmar and the constant flow of people escaping violence and war who are vulnerable to human trafficking. This is not to mention that our previous government promoted prostitution. As social workers, we cannot stand passively in the face of this reality. We must do our best to help every person who needs support in improving their quality of life.*

*The biggest challenge of this work is raising awareness among youth. I am very concerned to see them in refugee camps, living in poverty with a lot of free time. They tend to follow everything they see online, which can be very violent, and are at risk of getting caught up in drug dealing and consumption. We struggle to inspire them and pull them out of these harmful cycles.*

*However, the most beautiful experience of my work is when I help women, men, teenagers, and children, who have survived human trafficking. I feel blessed to be able to help and walk by their side as they re-enter society. That brings me so much happiness; it is truly beautiful to see someone overcome such hardships.*

*My heart aches when I see new cases and complicated situations of people who experienced human trafficking. I feel like a mother whose child is suffering. As a mother, I would do anything I can to help my child. I keep them in my heart and my prayers and, although it is difficult to overcome this struggle, I trust in God and try to heal and help where needed.*

*I feel very strongly that being part of Talitha Kum helps us to better overcome human trafficking. I hope and pray that youth ambassadors from many countries join our efforts – they give me hope. Through interfaith collaboration we can engage more young people and put into practice Talitha Kum's "Call to Action," to strengthen our information, communication, prevention, networking, and advocacy.*

*Talitha Kum Thailand collaborates with the government thanks to the Thai law against human trafficking. Nevertheless, we do not stop there. As brides of Christ, we are part of religious congregations that bring care and hope to restore human dignity. We aim to achieve this by promoting access to justice and helping people in their journey. I feel empowered when working alongside and meeting with many different religious congregations. I believe that the hands of Jesus Christ guide everything and Jesus loves us, me and you. He helps us to become love, to help the victims of human trafficking to be lifted up and have a life of dignity.*

## EUROPE

Looking back to 2022 we see a year marked by the war in Ukraine and its short and long-term consequences which affect not only Europe, but the whole world.

Networking was the keyword of 2022. The **diversity of organizations and Church Institutions** in Europe committed to end human trafficking **was visible** in the **diversity of actions undertaken to identify and stop trafficking before it happens**. This can be seen through local, national and transnational awareness raising campaigns, research, advocacy and networking, as well as working at the grass-roots level to protect the victims and help them rebuild and restore their lives.

We look back and see how organizations working against human trafficking gave a **fast and proper response to the outbreak of the armed conflict in Ukraine** which raised serious concerns about human trafficking inside the country and also about human trafficking and migrant smuggling of people fleeing across its borders.

International and local religious congregations have played a major role in channelling life-saving humanitarian aid across Ukraine, maintaining hope while continuing to serve the severely deprived communities, villages and cities. This is not to mention the many European organizations who stayed at the borders in different countries offering information on the dangers of exploitation and accompanying the vulnerable to safe places.

Education and awareness raising, networking, support for survivors services, advocacy, prayer and communication were the main areas of intervention in Europe during 2022 – **Europe where women, children, and men are still bought and sold, humiliated, abused, and sometimes killed in the process of being trafficked.**

Is it just an ideal to create a Europe where every survivor is surrounded by trained professionals, an alert and welcoming community, effective legislation and policies, skilled service providers and appropriate shelter options as well as exit programmes? Or is it a necessity?



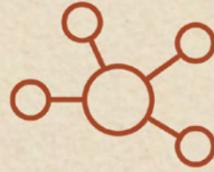
*Sr. Adina Bălan, CJ*  
Regional representative of Europe



PREVENTION  
**9680**



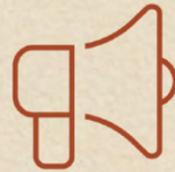
ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**2085**



NETWORKING  
**9250**



PROTECTION  
**8221**



ADVOCACY  
**14%**  
OF THE NETWORKS

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**43%**

## EUROPE

European networks carried out most of their activities in prevention and care for victims, particularly with migrants and refugees, and assistance to victims and survivors by offering housing facilities and legal support. Also, they provided active support for people affected by the war, particularly for women and children.

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**30**

CATHOLIC

**30**

NGOS

**25**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

REGIONAL  
COORDINATIONS

Renate

**430**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**17**

SUBDIVISIONS

**30**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**7**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**50**

RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

TOTAL OF PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2022

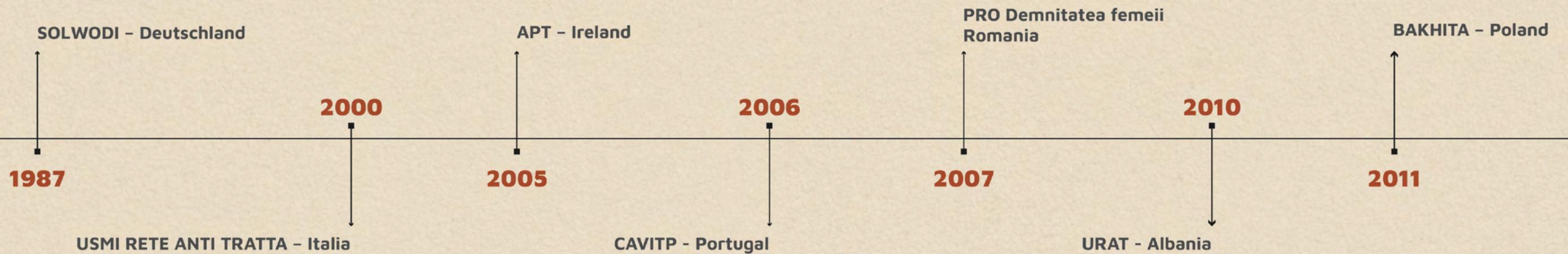
**29236**



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



NATIONAL  
**NETWORK**  
**7**



**REGIONAL COORDINATIONS**  
Renate



# JOURNEYS OF LIBERATION

## THE STORY OF MARIANA

### **My name is Mariana and this is my story.**

*I was born in Romania into a wealthy family and was the eldest of two sisters. My life changed when I was 13 years old. One day, after I was taken by a group and raped, I felt excluded from everyone - from school, from my friends - and I became convinced that the only option for my life would be prostitution.*

*I was invited to go to Spain, where I was promised a pension after a few years. So, I decided to leave.*

*I was sold for 300 euros by traffickers in my country to the owners of a brothel. There, the nights were very long - they seemed to go on forever. I had to stay with men of all ages and looks, for whom we were just pieces of meat to eat and use. For five years I was trapped in the prostitution business, passing through more than forty brothels, places that are visible to all of society. For me, they were nothing more than a concentration camp, a prison, where I was forced to satisfy men's desires 24 hours a day.*

*I was tired of abuse and violence, and thanks to an encounter and the nuns' accompaniment, I was able to say "enough!" to this situation. I took charge of my life. The nuns encouraged me to resume my studies and regain my self-confidence. Today, I understand that prostitution is not the only possible path for women like me. We all deserve to live free from violence and human trafficking.*

*Like Mariana, many girls experience the violence of human trafficking for sexual exploitation on a daily basis, forced into prostitution, against their will, made vulnerable by the discrimination suffered by women in different cultural contexts. "Talitha Kum is determined to counteract the power differential between men and women in all sectors – economic, social, familial, political, cultural and religious – as a key factor contributing to the objectification and denigration of women and to the subsequent culture of violence, a heinous expression of which is human trafficking for sexual exploitation, labor exploitation and other forms of exploitation."*

*According to the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Person (2020), trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most common form of trafficking detected in Europe (both in the Western and Southern region and the Central and Southeastern region). Most victims remain women. "Most cross-border trafficking flows around the world are limited within the same subregion or region. [...] Most victims detected in Europe are Europeans, but with significant flows originating from other regions, and so forth." <sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.talithakum.info/en/call-to-action/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTiP\\_2020\\_15jan\\_web.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTiP_2020_15jan_web.pdf)

## OCEANIA

We are currently **2 national networks** in Oceania – in **Australia** and **New Zealand** – with 8 regional groups ensuring that we remain **deeply committed to eliminating human trafficking** and supporting trafficked and exploited persons across our region. Our networks are deeply engaged in multiple facets of Talitha Kum’s mission to end the scourge of human trafficking – through **collaborative partnerships** focused on prevention, protection, advocacy, and importantly, support of survivors.

Both ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans) and TKANZ (Talitha Kum Aotearoa New Zealand), have vigorously advocated for robust Modern Slavery legislation, and in Australia, for a national labor hire scheme, both of which will promote ethical business practices and accountability, and ensure that in the drive to develop strong economies, workers are not only respected and protected, but are also nourished and nurtured. At local levels, we have provided scores of awareness raising presentations in a wide variety of settings, including schools, hospitals, parishes, community service groups, government offices and more. We have advocated for schools, offices and workplaces to move towards becoming ‘slavery free’ – for example, by using only fairtrade chocolate and coffee, or ensuring that uniforms or sports equipment are ethically made and sourced, or that the millions of rubber gloves used in hospitals are free of slavery in their production.

Talitha Kum’s Call to Action calls for the socioeconomic integration and inclusion of survivors. In Australia, ACRATH advocated for a high level multi-stakeholder taskforce to oversee the repatriation of victims of forced marriage. ACRATH advocated strenuously for improved pathways to government support programs for trafficked people. At the level of individual needs we advocated for work opportunities for survivors, and succeeded in gaining financial reparation for the stolen wages of a group of migrant workers. ACRATH’s unique Companionship Program continues to provide precious one-on-one support to survivors in their lifelong quest for healing and integration.

Across Oceania, we have advocated for laws and systems to change. Our lawmakers want to hear from us because they know we maintain our grassroots connections and motivations and have, at the very heart of our advocacy, justice and care for people.

During 2022, we have collaborated with our Sisters and Brothers in the Pacific Islands and look forward to a deeper engagement and collaboration in 2023.

We have worked for the cultural and systemic changes that will eliminate human trafficking and exploitation. We understand that eliminating human trafficking is a complex search for economic, social and environmental justice, and for an economy of care. Our work is always collaborative, as we partner with other international, national and local stakeholders, to bring the voices of victims and survivors to the quest for goodness and justice.



*Sr. Colleen Jackson, RSC*  
**Regional representative of Oceania**



PREVENTION  
**5100**



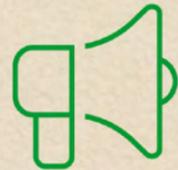
ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
**1503**



NETWORKING  
**10100**



PROTECTION  
**1500**



ADVOCACY  
**100%**  
OF THE NETWORKS

SURVIVORS  
PARTICIPATION  
**50%**

## OCEANIA

Focus on areas of Advocacy and Networking with strong collaboration with other organizations at governmental and international levels. They reported on the issue of violation of labor rights by collaborating with Federal and State law enforcement related to forced marriage and advocacy support for the migrant workers to access their legal rights.

PARTNERS  
ORGANIZATIONS

**9**

CATHOLIC

**19**

NGOS

**11**

GOVERNMENTAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL

CONTINENTAL  
COORDINATIONS  
Talitha Kum Oceania

**166**

ACTIVE MEMBERS AND  
COLLABORATORS

**6**

SUBDIVISIONS

**2**

COUNTRIES  
INVOLVED

**2**

NATIONAL  
NETWORKS

**49**

RELIGIOUS  
CONGREGATIONS

TOTAL OF PEOPLE  
REACHED IN 2022

**18203**





# JOURNEYS OF LIBERATION

@Stefano del Pozzolo

## ACRATH'S COMPANIONSHIP PROGRAM

ACRATH stands for Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans

Judy Lamb is a volunteer with ACRATH's Companionship Program in Victoria (Australia). She has spent almost a decade as a volunteer companion to a family supported by the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project.

*"I have loved this work and feel privileged to be able to do it. I think my years as a companion and friend to the asylum seeker family has given me an insight into the experiences of ACRATH Companions and how they inform the organization's advocacy work,"* said Judy.

Judy has begun, through interviews with Companions, documenting what many have suspected for years – that the Companions are an important link between trafficked people and the policy development that comes from advocacy by NGOs, including ACRATH. Judy's research will look at different areas, including: 1) each Companion's involvement and experiences in the program and any challenges they face, and 2) how each Companion sees their work impacting advocacy, lobbying and awareness raising by ACRATH.

Judy has already interviewed several Companions and will also interview those who support the Companions, and ACRATH members involved in advocacy work to explore the Companionship-advocacy links.

*"... it's important to document experiences so that the information can be readily available for advocacy, fund-raising and storytelling,"* said Judy.

*"It's an organic process that might offer new insights...Some Companions may share ideas about how things could be done differently and I am open to hearing that."*

*"It is such a privilege to be a companion to someone; to be with them through so many ups and downs and to be able to help in some way,"* said Judy.

# SPECIAL FOCUS

# 06

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY  
OF PRAYER AND AWARENESS  
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



## THE POWER OF CARE, UNITED IN PRAYER AROUND THE WORLD

*“Saint Bakhita shows us the way of transformation. Her life tells us that change is possible when one lets oneself be transformed by God’s care for each of us. It is the care of mercy — the care of love that changes us deeply and makes us able to welcome others as brothers and sisters. Recognizing the dignity of each person is the first act of care. [...] Thank you all, and keep going, do not be discouraged!”*

Pope Francis  
Message on the occasion of the 8th  
International Day of Prayer and Awareness  
Against Human Trafficking

## International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

On February 8, 2022, the world united in prayer for the 8th edition of the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking and the feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita. Led by Pope Francis, the Day proposed to reflect and pray together on the theme: The Power of Care: Women, Economics, Human Trafficking. The power of CARE is the only way to tackle human and all forms of exploitation.

**Trafficking is one of the deepest wounds inflicted by the current economic system.** The wounds that affect all dimensions of life, personal and community. **The pandemic has increased the “business” of human trafficking and has exacerbated the pain: it has favored the opportunities and socio-economic mechanisms underlying this scourge, worsening the situations of vulnerability that involve the people most at risk - disproportionately women and girls.** The latter are particularly penalized by the dominant economic model. The gap between men and women has thus grown. However, women should not be considered victims but agents of change. It is, therefore, necessary to transform the current socio-economic model that is the basis of trafficking, urgently creating an economy of CARE for people and the “common” home.

This theme was also illustrated through the *“Let the oppressed go free” sculpture of St. Bakhita by artist Timothy Schmaltz.* The artwork was dedicated to the victims of trafficking and to all women, particularly the sisters committed to their liberation

The reflection on the Day started on February 6 at St. Peter’s Square, where Talitha Kum and its partners were greeted by Pope Francis, following the Angelus Prayer. **Several parishes, local communities, and networks held Prayer Vigils during the week of the 8th. Finally, on the 8th,** the second **Online Marathon of Prayer and Awareness** against Human Trafficking was held. This second edition reached even more people than the first one: **51 countries contributed directly through 100 contributions,** 30 of which were from young people. Ecumenical and interreligious partners participated as well, for example, Churches from other Christian denominations, representatives of the Buddhist and Shinto traditions in Japan, as well as Islam and Druze representatives. The Marathon was a phenomenal opportunity to gather in prayer and raise awareness against human trafficking around the world.

Talitha Kum International would like to heartily thank its partners involved in the organization of February 8, 2022, for the successful celebration of the Day made possible.

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY  
OF PRAYER AND AWARENESS  
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



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## INNOVATION IN AWARENESS-RAISING: NUNS HEALING HEARTS VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

On July 30, 2022, the UN World Day against Trafficking in Persons, Talitha Kum joined the global awareness campaign along with many other local, international, and civil society organizations, together as the voices of the sisters and collaborators of the Talitha Kum networks promoting “The Power of Care”.

On that day, Lisa Kristine’s photo exhibition, **Nuns Healing Hearts** was launched virtually for the first time. The photo exhibits took its viewers on a splendid virtual journey in Guatemala, Mexico, the Philippines, Thailand, Italy, and the United States.

Lisa Kristine’s shots take shape from a profound dialogue between the artist, the sisters, and victims of trafficking. The images provide a closer look at the reality of human trafficking and the Talitha Kum networks. Lisa Kristine shows, in her shots, the relationship established between the victims and the members of Talitha Kum on the paths of welcome, care, and social reintegration.

“Nuns Healing Hearts” was originally launched by Pope Francis, at the Vatican, on May 10, 2019, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Talitha Kum. Since then, the exhibition traveled around the world and has been showcased at the United Nation’s Glass Palace (New York) on July 29th, 2019, at the Gyoko Underground Gallery in Tokyo Station and the Mitsubishi Museum in December 2019 (Japan), in Rome, at the National Museum of 21st Century Art - MAXXI in March 2022, and in Milan at the Festivale della Missione in September, 2022.

This exhibition is one of the creative ways for awareness raising and increased prevention efforts of the phenomenon of trafficking. It points out possible actions against trafficking manifested in respecting the dignity of each person and the importance of the commitment to care for all victims and survivors. Through its online presence, it aims to reach out to even more people. Within a month after the launching, the Virtual exhibition had already been accessed by 1,600 people worldwide.

Talitha Kum, through this exhibition, extends a call to all to interrupt the violence of trafficking through acts of Care, Healing, Empowerment, and Restoration.

*“I have been documenting for over 30 years in more than 150 countries, and I was first initiated into documenting slavery about a decade ago when I learned about the severity of the problem. [...] I was in several different countries in which the nuns have been working and [...] I was humbled by their humility and by their tireless dedication to get up every day with very little resources and work for the greater good of humanity, really putting themselves on the line of danger and helping people that are stuck in slavery or could be invited by a cunning trafficker into enslaving themselves.”*

Lisa Kristine  
**video message** for the launch of the MAXXI exhibition  
Rome on March 1st, 2022



VISIT THE  
ONLINE  
EXHIBITION



## Regional Conferences STRENGTHENING NETWORKING IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

*“The regional meeting of Talitha Kum Africa was an opportunity to enrich each other through deep listening and sharing of experiences of our mission to end human trafficking. One of the objectives of the conference was to deepen the identity of Talitha Kum Africa, which was successfully facilitated by training the members on the vision, mission, and spirituality of the Talitha Kum network.”*

Sr. Abby Avelino, MM, Talitha Kum International Coordinator

For Talitha Kum, **networking is the key to building a world free of human trafficking.** The best way to counter trafficking and exploitation is through collaboration, partnership, and dialogue. Within Talitha Kum, networking can take many different forms, with the common objective of sharing information and good practices to tackle human trafficking at local, regional, and international levels. It starts with building a **coalition of relationships based on mutual trust.**

After the Covid-19 global restrictions, many regional and international gatherings within Talitha Kum networks resumed in-person meetings to strengthen networking and collaboration. It began in May 2022 with the Talitha Kum International Coordination Committee (TKICC) members gathering in person in Rome for the first time after three years of online networking. The theme of this gathering was *“Remain in my love”* (John 15, 9). Inspired and accompanied by this Gospel, the week consisted of meetings of deep listening and sharing of experiences and challenges faced in different parts of the world. This week was also used to reflect upon Talitha Kum’s journey and pave its future together.



@Talitha Kum Kenya



@Red Kawsay Bolivia



Next, the **4th regional conference of Talitha Kum Asia**, which followed the theme “Casting the Nets as Network in Asia to End Trafficking in Persons”, took place from the 22nd to the 26th of August, 2022, in **Thailand**. There were 63 participants present from 13 national countries in Asia at this conference. Several interfaith groups and other regional and international anti-trafficking organizations also participated in the conference. Additionally, **the presence of the Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors was very enriching**. As Talitha Kum Bangladesh shared, “this platform of Talitha Kum Asia Conference was an opportunity for us to collaborate with much more religious and like-minded people here, and through this networking, we voice out the message worldwide [to stop human trafficking].”

#### **Crossing the Pacific Ocean, to reach Cochabamba, Bolivia:**

From September 16th to 18th, 2022, the Talitha Kum networks, through the Commission against Trafficking in Persons in **Latin America**, met during the meeting of CLAR (Latin American Confederation of Religious). A month later, from October 26th to 28th, 2022, the U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking network gathered for its annual conference on the theme “Weaving Community, Building Capacity, Affecting Change.”

In **Europe**, the 3rd RENATE Assembly was held in Fatima, Portugal from November 13 to 19, 2022. The theme of the meeting was “*Realizing the Dream: A World Free of Slavery.*”

Last but not least, the first-ever in-person regional conference of Talitha Kum **Africa** was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from November 20th to 26th, 2022, with the theme “Slavery-Free African Network.” There were 35 participants (religious women and men) representing 15 countries from both English- and French-speaking regions present at the conference. The gathering was an enriching opportunity for deep listening and the sharing of experiences that inform and drive Talitha Kum’s mission to end human trafficking. The forum institutionalized the creation of geographical and focus area hubs.

Inspired by these themes: Casting Nets, Weaving Community, and A World Free of Slavery, Talitha Kum’s network of networks continues to utilize its resources, in both physical and spiritual ways, as it works to end human trafficking.





# NEXT STEPS

# 07

@Christian Van Lohiuzen

## Concrete Plan of Actions

Talitha Kum continues to hold its commitment to stand for the dignity and rights of every person. It faces new and old challenges with innovative action and engagement. This is a summary of Talitha Kum's concrete plan of action for 2023:

- **Reinforce** networking at all levels in areas of Formation, Advocacy, Prevention, Communication, and Care for Survivors
- **Strengthen** the "Hubs" in Africa and Asia
- **Consolidate** and multiply collaborative awareness-raising initiatives with key stakeholders at all levels, such as the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking on February 8th (2023-2024 Dedicated Year to Young People)
- **Implement** the Call to Action at the grassroots level by supporting pilot networks in each continent to focus on advocacy projects.
- **Develop** Innovative App - to engage more people in raising awareness - Walking in Dignity
- **Participate** at global event with involvement of young people, particularly in World Youth Day in Portugal (2023)
- **Strengthen** the collaboration and networking at international levels with international organizations and international agencies (UNODC, UNHCR, IOM, ILO, G20 Interfaith Forum, Caritas Internationalis, etc.)
- **Promote** Talitha Kum's Anti-Trafficking Youth Ambassadors on a global scale, adapting the success story of the Asian continent and empowering young people as protagonists in the fight against human trafficking.
  - *Training in Latin America (14 countries)*
  - *Training in African Continent (15 countries)*
- **Pave** the way to the 2024 Talitha Kum 2nd General Assembly, an in-person gathering of Talitha Kum networks on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of Talitha Kum.

# CONCLUSION



Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM  
UISG Executive Secretary



# 08

This comprehensive report for 2022 offers you, the reader, an opportunity to appreciate the **extraordinary dedication and creativity** of thousands of sisters and their collaborators, as they work with many others to combat the scourge of human trafficking. Behind all the activities and the statistics are the faces and lives of millions of women, men, and children whose vulnerable existence makes them targets for the traffickers. **Whenever even one person is exploited and dehumanized, the dignity of each one of us is threatened.** We know that we live in demanding times but Pope Francis appeals to us to say NO to the culture of indifference. Love, he says, *“is restless, love does not tolerate indifference, love has compassion.”*<sup>1</sup>

What then does saying “no to indifference” ask of us as we read and reflect on the content of this report? Perhaps you can take up the report and read it a second or even a third time. This is not an easy read; you need to dwell on the content. On this occasion read it with a compassionate heart, seeking to discover what it is you are called to do and who it is you are called to be. Perhaps there is one person’s story or a particular intervention that stays with you? Can you allow it to speak to you and to remain within you? This is how we can determine what our particular response should be so that we can deepen our commitment to seek ways of transforming our societies.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/cotidie/2019/documents/papa-francesco-cotidie\\_20190108\\_notothe-culture-ofindifference.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/cotidie/2019/documents/papa-francesco-cotidie_20190108_notothe-culture-ofindifference.html)

We are surely being asked **to be promoters of human dignity** and to weave networks for good, locally, nationally and internationally so that together we can confront this dreadful evil. We are called to be more attentive to where people who are trafficked may be living and working in our local neighborhoods. Often they are hidden in plain sight but we do not see them and recognize their plight.

Are we sufficiently **attentive**? Are we **restless** enough to intervene and show **compassion**? Are we **courageous** enough to ask questions? Are we **committed to** highlighting the evil of human trafficking with policy and decision-makers, asking them to take more **radical action** on apprehending and prosecuting the perpetrators?

We also need to remember and to give thanks for the many who have intervened and rescued others or those who because of their awareness raising have protected and saved others from becoming victims of human trafficking. I remember hearing about a very young girl who had been rescued by a Catholic Sister and whose father had sold her so that he could buy a TV. His only regret when he was prosecuted was that he had not asked for more money. So **there is much to be done so that the dignity of each person is protected.**

On December 10th, 1948, the Universal Declaration for Human Rights was adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly in Paris: "*Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.*"<sup>2</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights established a common standard of achievements for all peoples and nations. Yet we have to admit that we are far from that noble vision. **Wars and conflicts, poverty and underdevelopment, environmental degradation and climate change are among the factors which create vulnerability at every level of a society.** This creates the context in which unscrupulous people can prey on people's vulnerabilities and their dreams for a better life. This is the context in which the underground world of trafficking can flourish.

Recently in the port of Lampedusa I saw the many small fragile boats in which migrants arrive, seeking a better life in Europe. They represent for me the many millions who are on the move worldwide and who are exploited as they search for safe, healthier and more secure places to live. **May each of us find a way to speak up and speak out in our different contexts to protect them?** May we ponder the words of Pope Francis from his message on the Feast of St. Bakhita, 8th February 2023?

*"Human trafficking disfigures dignity. Exploitation and subjugation limit freedom and turn people into objects to use and discard. And the system of trafficking profits from the injustice and wickedness that oblige millions of people to live in conditions of vulnerability."*<sup>3</sup>

May we proclaim together a strong NO to indifference which disfigures dignity and YES to compassion and restless love which restores life and hope?



*Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM*  
UISG Executive Secretary



<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2023/documents/20230208-videomessaggio-tratta-persone.html>



# PARTNERS

# 09

## The International Union of Superiors General thanks all the partners, collaborators and supporters of Talitha Kum International during the year 2022

### Partners

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

### Collaborators

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

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