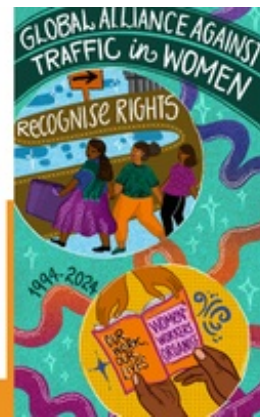




Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

e-Bulletin

April 2025



[Subscribe to this e-bulletin!](#)

Dear friends,

Warm greetings from the GAATW International Secretariat.

We are pleased to bring you the first bulletin issue of the year. It feels as if the year is passing too quickly. We have already held several meetings and consultations from November 2024 to April 2025, and recently released a new publication.

The year 2024 concluded with a refreshed GAATW website, and a powerful interactive forum and panel sessions at the Feminist Forum on Migration and Displacement (FFMD) and AWID, respectively. At the AWID event, GAATW staff interviewed migrant leaders and learnt about their organising efforts and the urgent need to fund initiatives led by migrants themselves.

The start of 2025 has brought new energy and direction for GAATW. Following a period of in-depth desk research, we're shifting to a new programme structure, now centred around three key thematic areas: Women on the Move, Human Trafficking and Forced Labour, and Women Workers for Change. We'll be sharing more about these programmes on our website soon.

Please stay tuned for updates.

News from the GAATW International Secretariat

Events and Activities

Here are some highlights of GAATW's key activities from November 2024 to April 2025, highlighting our ongoing efforts in advocacy, capacity building, and fostering solidarity across regions.



Reflections from the Ground: WW4C Review with Women Workers in Indonesia

From 11 to 17 April 2025, GAATW met with women workers in Jakarta and Yogyakarta to carry out a participatory review of the Women Workers for Change (WW4C) programme in coordination with partners from [GSBI](#), [Jala PRT](#), and [Yasanti](#).

Discussions focused on the challenges faced by women in Indonesia's textile and garment sectors, home-based sector and women porters (*Buruh Gendongs*), where workers continue to confront low wages, poor conditions, and limited access to rights. Women workers shared how union involvement has strengthened their confidence, expanded their knowledge, and enabled them to advocate for better treatment, wages, and health rights. The review also reflected on the collective efforts and strategies led by our partners to broaden solidarity, deepen workers' education, and build stronger negotiating power with employers and local governments.



Participatory Review of the Women Workers For Change project with Women Agricultural Workers

From 3 to 5 April 2025, GAATW staff travelled to Dhulikhel and Kathmandu, Nepal, for a participatory review of the Women Workers for Change (WW4C) programme. The visit included a day-programme with women agricultural workers in Kavre, who reflected on how organising in networks has strengthened their voices, improved their livelihoods, and deepened their understanding of labour rights, gender-based violence, and sustainable farming. Despite ongoing challenges, such as lack of land ownership, wage discrimination, and limited market access, these women are advocating for identity cards, fair subsidies, and better working conditions. Their collective efforts, plans to expand income-generating activities by learning and adopting new technologies, and engaging in local governance

have brought them visibility. The programme also included field visits to the lands where the farmers work.

GAATW Members Meeting in Kathmandu

On 6 April, GAATW held a members meeting in Kathmandu, bringing together organisations working on trafficking, migration, and labour rights in Nepal. The meeting was attended by representatives from our ten member organisations based in the city. During this meeting, our members shared updates on their work, reflected on current trends and challenges in their areas of focus, and discussed the impact of Nepal's policies on the rights of trafficked persons, migrant workers, and other vulnerable groups. Each organisation made a short presentation covering the national context, highlighting their advocacy involvement during the last few years, their funding realities, and provided future recommendations for GAATW. At the end, a lively discussion followed, highlighting both the strengths of collective advocacy and the urgent need for solidarity in the face of funding crises and growing challenges. The GAATW Secretariat deeply values the insights shared and looks forward to continued collaboration with members in Nepal.



Cross-Movement Conversations: Feminist Organising and Migration at the AWID Forum



At the [AWID Forum](#) that took place in December in Bangkok, GAATW facilitated and co-organised two panel sessions that brought together activists, advocates, and feminist leaders from diverse movements.

Intersectional Feminist Organising for a Just Economy

This session was filled with inspiring dialogue on building a just and inclusive economy in the face of ongoing global crises. Intersectional feminist leaders shared their visions and strategies for resisting systemic inequalities and strengthening solidarity across movements.

Connecting Across Borders: A Conversation on Women, Work, and Migration

This interactive panel highlighted the powerful ways in which low-wage women workers—both local and migrant—are organising to advocate for labour rights and challenge patriarchal and neo-liberal structures. It was a vibrant exchange of ideas, stories, and strategies for collective action.

These sessions are examples of the strength of cross-movement



collaboration and the importance of centring women's voices in global conversations about justice and equality.

Feminist Forum on Migration and Displacement: Collective Strategies for Change

GAATW co-organised the Feminist Forum on Migration and Displacement (FFMD) with [Women in Migration Network](#) on 30 November and 1 December. We were part of the organising committee for this important gathering held in Bangkok. Over the course of two days, more than 130 participants from 35 countries engaged in interactive and participatory discussions aimed at identifying key issues, exploring power dynamics, and developing strategies to advance the rights of migrant and displaced women.

On the first day, participants shared personal stories and experiences, which was pivotal for deeper group discussions on core themes. The second day focused on formulating collective demands and strategies to guide future advocacy and action.

A statement from the event is available [here](#).



Statements

Reports to CEDAW on the Struggles of Migrant Domestic Workers in Saudi Arabia

GAATW, along with our members Sema Nami, Kenya and [Tarangini Foundation](#), Nepal, submitted two reports to CEDAW, both highlighting the struggles faced by migrant domestic workers in Saudi Arabia. The report calls out the discrimination and hardships migrant workers endure under restrictive systems and laws. Mary Mugo from Sema Nami made her statement during the CEDAW Saudi Arabia session in Geneva. You can watch her intervention [here](#) at the 25 minutes 45 seconds mark. For the reports, head over [here](#) to find out more.

Call for Solidarity: Justice for Mary Jane Veloso

The [Network for the Protection of Women Migrant Rights](#) (NPWMR), of which GAATW is a part, released a [statement](#) urging women migrant leaders, women's rights advocates, and human rights defenders to stand in solidarity for justice and freedom for Mary Jane Veloso.



April 25th marked 15 years since Mary Jane, a Filipino migrant worker trafficked under false pretences, was arrested in Indonesia and sentenced to death for unknowingly carrying drugs. Although a prisoner transfer agreement brought her back to the Philippines in late 2024, her legal status remains uncertain, and she continues to serve her sentence with no clear path to justice. Mary Jane's case highlights the vulnerabilities faced by thousands of migrant women, especially those who come from impoverished backgrounds who, in desperate search for better opportunities for their families, become victims of exploitation and human trafficking. NPWMR is seeking more endorsements. Sign up [here](#) to endorse the statement.

Publication



New Publication: Reframing Narratives: Anti-trafficking from the ground up

GAATW is proud to announce the launch of our [new annual publication](#), Reframing Narratives: Anti-Trafficking from the Ground Up. Developed in collaboration with GAATW members, the publication aims to bridge movements and foster dialogue across intersecting fields such as migration, women's rights, labour organising, climate justice, corporate accountability, and conflict.

Issue #1: (In)formal Pathways to Justice

The inaugural issue examines the mechanisms that influence migrant and trafficked individuals' access to justice, highlighting both formal and informal avenues.

Other resources

[We are on Bluesky!](#)

GAATW has joined Bluesky. Follow us [here](#) to stay updated on the latest news, resources, and activities from the Alliance.

New Report Highlights Global Criminalisation of Poverty and the Rising Incarceration of Women

A new report, *Poverty is Not a Crime*, co-published by [Penal Reform International](#), [Women Beyond Walls](#), and the [Campaign to Decriminalise Poverty & Status](#), highlights the growing global trend of incarcerating women and girls—often as a result of poverty, marginalisation, and discriminatory laws. GAATW is among the organisations acknowledged in this publication.

Since 2000, the number of women and girls in prison has increased by 57%, which is growing faster than the rate of male incarceration. However, women's incarceration remains underreported, underfunded, and ignored in policy spaces.

The report also critiques how policy discussions often reduce incarcerated women to gendered caregiving roles, ignoring the diverse roles they have. This not only continues the harmful narrative but also leads to policy gaps, harsher punishments, and neglect of the most vulnerable.

Read the full report [here](#).

GAATW's Revamped Website Goes Live

In December, we launched our revamped website, designed to better serve our network and provide easier access to GAATW's resources, updates, and events. With a fresh look, improved navigation, and a more user-friendly interface, check out our [new site](#) and stay connected with our latest initiatives!

Stories of Leadership and Feminist Funding

GAATW released a series of interviews featuring three inspiring migrant leaders who shared their journeys of organising, advocacy, and the critical role of feminist funding in supporting migrant communities.



[Leni](#), co-director of ODA (Otros Dreams en Acción), shared her journey from living undocumented in the United States to organising with a community of deportees in Mexico. She highlights how feminist funding can better support migrant workers by prioritising collective efforts to foster international collaboration and strengthen global solidarity.

[Jean](#), a Filipino migrant worker in Thailand, who founded the Phuket Pinay Migrants Association (PPMA), emphasised that feminist funding is essential for building safe spaces where migrant workers can share their experiences and amplify their voices in mainstream media.

And [our speaker](#) from Kenya shared her journey into advocacy, driven by witnessing the lack of basic human and labour rights for migrants and the devastating impact on their families. For her, the importance of feminist funding is to provide resources for education and skill-building.

30 Years of Collective Action: GAATW's Anniversary Audiovisual Presentation



As part of our 30th anniversary celebration in 2024, GAATW-IS organised a special [audiovisual presentation](#) at the International Members Congress and Conference (IMCC). The presentation highlights GAATW's journey over the past three decades: our collective efforts, key achievements, and commitment to promoting the rights of women, migrants, and workers.

Alliance News

Our New Members

GAATW welcomed two new members to the Alliance in the first quarter of this year. Join us in extending a warm welcome to them!

The [National Survivor Network](#) (NSN) is a values-based, survivor-led professional membership community for survivors of human trafficking who are engaged in or preparing for leadership in the many movements to end violence, whether as professionals, activists, or community organisers. Using a human rights approach to survivor empowerment and policy work fosters survivor well-being and enhances survivors' effectiveness as advocates and leaders. This approach also results in policies and protocols that are inclusive, less likely to cause harm to already-marginalised communities, and supportive of survivors in reclaiming the agency taken from them through trafficking.

[Nigat Global Initiative](#) (NGI) is a registered non-governmental organisation in Ethiopia dedicated to eradicating trafficking and human rights abuse. Rooted in impactful work, their mission is to dismantle systems of exploitation through innovative programmes and global collaborations. They empower individuals and communities by addressing critical issues like migration, human rights, economic independence, and youth development. By leveraging technology, media, advocacy, and survivor-led initiatives, they bridge

grassroots efforts with high-level policy reforms to create sustainable and meaningful change.

Member Spotlight

Meet our members



Madrid, España

"When identifying victims of trafficking, we place significant emphasis on their circumstances of origin and vulnerability, such as climate crisis"
Interview with Carmen Martínez Raposo

In April, we interviewed [Accem](#), a GAATW member based in Madrid, Spain. In this interview, Carmen Martínez, Human Trafficking Programme Officer at Accem, spoke with Vivian Cartagena from the GAATW Secretariat about their anti-trafficking work, the communities they support, and how broader issues like the climate crisis shape

vulnerability to trafficking. You can read the interview [here](#).

Member News

Brigada Callejera Shares their Story of Courage and Hope

[Brigada Callejera de Apoyo a la Mujer "Elisa Martínez"](#), a GAATW member based in Mexico, works alongside sex workers, migrants in transit, and indigenous communities to advance their rights and well-being.

In a recently released short film, Brigada offers a portrayal of their work with some of the most marginalised groups in Mexico. The film highlights their collective struggle for dignity, justice, and access to rights, capturing moments of resilience, solidarity, and hope.

Watch the film [here](#) (English subtitles available) to learn more about Brigada's journey and ongoing efforts to improve the conditions of the communities they serve.

Supporting Women Porters in Yogyakarta's Traditional Markets

In Yogyakarta, Indonesia, women porters (*Buruh Gendong*) form the backbone of traditional markets. The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted their livelihoods, leaving many facing job losses and financial insecurity.



[Yayasan Annisa Swasti \(Yasanti\)](#), a GAATW member, responded by working closely with women porters to organise, provide skills training, and explore alternative income opportunities. Through a series of workshops, consultations, and collective action, the women have built strong networks, improved their working conditions, and some have even launched their own small businesses.

Beyond income generation, these initiatives have contributed to improved physical and mental well-being among women. Their experience shows the power of solidarity and self-determination in creating meaningful and lasting change.

You can watch the full video [here](#).

Challenging the Right to Work Restrictions for Asylum Seekers in the UK

“I was so stressed and many times I had panic attacks... you’re waiting for a very long time and that is really challenging.” — Rose, refugee and asylum seeker, 2021–2023

A new research report by GAATW member [Focus on Labour Exploitation \(FLEX\)](#) explores the right to work for asylum seekers in the UK, highlighting the barriers they face in accessing legal employment.

The report sheds light on how long waiting periods, bureaucratic hurdles, and legal uncertainties leave people in a state of limbo—unable to work, support themselves, or heal from past trauma. This exclusion not only deepens vulnerability but also has long-term social and economic consequences.

Read the full report [here](#).



Sex Workers Speak: Reclaiming Dignity and Demanding Rights

This [video](#) features the voices of sex workers and the grassroots movements working alongside them to advocate for dignity, recognition, and justice.

Produced as part of GAATW’s Women Workers for Change

(WW4C) programme, the video highlights how sex workers are organising, educating, and supporting one another as informal sector workers. Through the support of grassroots community-based organisations and allies, including GAATW member [Women’s Initiatives \(WINS\)](#), many are reclaiming their narratives, challenging stigma, and calling for change.

The video captures the practical knowledge and political consciousness that emerge from collective spaces. Once shamed into silence, many sex workers are now asserting their rights and voicing their demands.

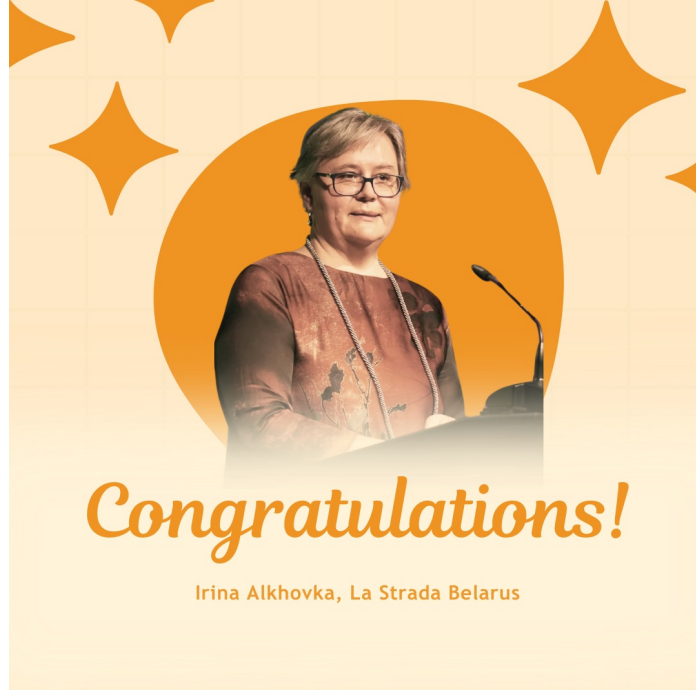
Despite government efforts, women workers continue to move forward together

This [video](#) is also from Women’s Initiatives (WINS), produced as part of GAATW’s Women Workers for Change (WW4C) programme. It highlights the transformative journeys of women workers who have gained land rights, developed new livelihoods, and emerged as leaders within their communities.

Many of the women featured faced systemic challenges such as lack of documentation, exclusion from entitlements, and invisibility as workers. Through collective organising with WINS, they have secured land rights and official recognition as farmers, gained skills to start and grow small businesses, and built leadership skills to fight for community rights.

Today, they are no longer seen solely as labourers—they are recognised as micro-entrepreneurs and landowners.

Irina Alkhovka of La Strada Belarus Receives Anne Klein Women’s Award for Her Work in Anti-Trafficking and Women’s Rights



Recently, Irina Alkhovka from La Strada Belarus was honoured with the Anne Klein Women's Award. We offer our congratulations to her for this recognition.

Irina is the founder of La Strada Belarus, a GAATW member, and she has dedicated her life to anti-trafficking efforts and advocating for women's rights. Her advocacy work includes prevention, protection, and policy change to support survivors of trafficking and gender-based violence in Belarus. You can read her acceptance speech [here](#).

Call for Papers

Call for Papers: Corporate Accountability and Forced Labour in Value Chains

The Anti-Trafficking Review is currently [inviting submissions](#) for a special issue on 'Corporate Accountability and Forced Labour in Value Chains'. This upcoming issue will look into how transparency laws, trade agreements, and import bans—often driven by governments in the Global North—are being used as tools to combat forced labour. The journal is particularly interested in exploring how these measures affect workers, especially in the Global South, and how they are viewed by advocates and policymakers worldwide.

We encourage researchers, advocates, and practitioners to contribute their insights and analyses to this critical discussion.



Visit our
website



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women



Try email marketing for free today!