

Annual report 2023-2024

The mission of the Comité d'action contre la traite humaine interne et internationale (CATHII) is to promote the dignity of all human beings:

- by opposing all forms of violence and/or exploitation related to human trafficking;
- ensuring respect for the rights of victims and survivors, especially women and children;
- by acting to protect and support them.

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A word from president

CATHII is progressing vigorously. We're like the "little remnant" who stay the course and are promised a rebirth and many fruits. We are surrounded by many signs of hope. Our regular meetings with members have enabled us to take important steps forward in the fight against human trafficking.

Several CATHII members took part in meetings and consultations organized by our organization and its partners, including the Talitha Kum International Network, the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Réseau d'aide aux travailleuses et travailleurs migrants agricoles du Québec, CLES, CAP International's 4th World Congress to End the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Girls, and the Henry Dunant University College Foundation (Geneva).

We are placing increasing emphasis on training the younger generations, with initiatives such

as our 4^e "Academics at the UN" cohort, the participation of two young delegates from our networks in events with Talitha Kum in Rome around the International Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking in February 2024, as well as the creation of a group of Young Ambassadors and their "Agissons EnSable" project.

CATHII is actively involved in lobbying political decision-makers for the adoption and improvement of laws and measures to protect victims and survivors, through provincial and federal letter-signing and postcard campaigns.

Continued on next page Our ACTION COMMITTEE, active at both national and INTERNATIONAL levels, marked the past year with significant events such as our participation in a meeting during the visit of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery in the fall of 2023, our various written submissions to the UN and our contribution to Canada's fourth Universal Periodic Review.

At the second Talitha Kum General Assembly held in Rome in May 2024, Renaude Grégoire, as a panelist, was able to invite delegates from 71 countries to participate in our research on empowering survivors of human trafficking and share it with their respective networks.

In terms of training, we are proud of the university certificate obtained by Renaude Grégoire at the Pontifical Antonianum University, as part of Talitha Kum's leadership program, including a week's training in Kenya. This experience has led to collaboration with fellow CATHII members living in North and West Africa. An initiative we are determined to support over the coming year.

The recent restructuring has consolidated our twenty years of existence, equipping us with more contemporary tools and rekindling our zeal for action. The Human Resources Committee has developed effective operating methods. Thanks in part to CATHII, the Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking took off, securing funds to hire two full-time staff. At the same time, we are delighted to welcome their former coordinator, Nelson Tardif, who is now in charge of mobilization, communications and administration for CATHII, joining our team alongside Renaude Grégoire and Kavitha Culasingam, our two contract workers. We are privileged to have them on board.

We are a small mustard seed that bears much fruit. I warmly thank everyone who has contributed to our mission this year, the member communities with CATHII delegates and the supportive communities, my fellow board members, faithful, creative and committed to giving the best for CATHII, with the common goal of changing the lives of victims and survivors of human trafficking.

IsaBelle Couillard s.g.m.
Chairperson of the Board



IsaBelle Couillard,
president

Community Life

CATHII's 2023-2024 operating year was punctuated by five regular member meetings and one Annual General Meeting (AGM), all of which were held by videoconference.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on October 25, 2023, via videoconference, with the following agenda: presentation of the annual report, financial statements, budget forecasts, action plan and election to the Board of Directors. Members also received training from the Centre des travailleurs et travailleuses immigrants (CTI) on the problem of employment agencies, the need to abolish the closed work permit, and the importance of recognizing the contribution of migrant workers.

Regular meetings

In addition to sharing news and information, we'd like to highlight some of the themes that have marked our regular member meetings.

October 2023

A round table to break the ice and kick off the year, sharing information on the meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Modern Slavery, and introducing members to the planning for 2023-2024: advocacy, Canadian Council for Refugees, Talitha Kum (TK), CATHII - University Project at the UN, TK Youth Ambassadors, Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking and CATHII Info are on the menu announcing a busy year ahead.

November 2023

Highlights of the preliminary report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

February 2024

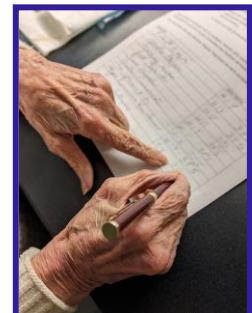
Information and sharing around CATHII's plea for a provincial action plan to combat human trafficking: - tour de table on the Signature Campaign and meetings with MPs.

April 2024

Training offered to members by the Réseau d'aide aux travailleuses et travailleurs migrants agricoles du Québec (RATTMAQ) on the reality of temporary migrant workers in agricultural settings, physical and mental health risk factors, barriers to accessing health care and RATTMAQ's actions in this regard.

June 2024

Presentation of the militant involvement of Kavitha, one of our project managers, in the Concertation des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle (LA CLES), the training she receives there, and the 4th World Congress of CAP International to end the sexual exploitation of women and girls, held in Montreal from June 1 to 3, 2024.



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (BOD) held around ten regular meetings over the past year on current business, plus virtual meetings with the consultant in connection with CATHII's restructuring. In December 2023, the Board hired a Mobilization, Communications and Administration Officer for a renewable nine-month contract. Nelson Tardif started in January 2024.

Board composition

- IsaBelle Couillard, s.g.m., president
- Lise Gagnon, s.n.j.m., Vice-President
- Francine Cabana, Treasurer
- Nancy Roberge, Secretary



Standing committees

- Comité CATHII-Université à l'ONU is made up of a project manager, Kavitha Culasingam, and two CATHII members, Lise Gagnon, s.n.j.m., and Élodie Ekobena.
- The Human Resources Committee is made up of two members of the Board of Directors, IsaBelle Couillard and Nancy Roberge, and an individual member of CATHII, Renaude Grégoire.
- The animation committee is made up of Lise Gagnon, s.n.j.m., Nancy Roberge and Renaude Grégoire.
- The research supervision committee is made up of Lise Gagnon, s.n.j.m., Sylvie Gagné, Renaude Grégoire. IsaBelle Couillard is also a member.
- Comité financement, made up of IsaBelle Couillard, Renaude Grégoire and Nelson Tardif, held its first meeting in July 2024.

Temporary committees

- Comité loi 25 sur les renseignements personnels is made up of Nancy Roberge, Renaude Grégoire and Nelson Tardif.
- Committee Members are Renaude Grégoire and Nelson Tardif.

Board-led restructuring process

In 2023-2024, CATHII continued its process of restructuring certain aspects with a consultant. The consultant drafted CATHII's management philosophy. This document presents the values to be put into practice in personnel management, between employer and employee, transparency, confidentiality and accountability. The drafting of this document represented the final stage in the restructuring process. Overall, the restructuring work led CATHII to set up a human resources (HR) committee and equip itself with better management tools. See organizational chart on page 5.

Training/awareness-raising

CATHII-University project at the UN

Spearheaded by the CATHII-University Committee at the UN, CATHII trains academics in the various manifestations of human trafficking around the world, and in the role of CATHII, the Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking, the United Nations, UNANIMA International, Franciscans International, Talitha Kum and religious communities in the fight against human trafficking. In addition to the interviews, the academics selected for this 4th cohort took part in four two-hour training evenings, not to mention the moments of integration between these meetings, the participation of some days in New York for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) and the in-person debriefing on April 13, 2024. Several resource persons contribute to this training.

The 2024 cohort included some twenty students from various university faculties (social work, criminology, law, political science, anthropology and law) who attended the 68^e session of the CSW in March 2024 in New York. At the CSW workshops, what struck the academics most were women's testimonies about trafficking, the use of technology to victimize others, and other realities about the fragility of women's rights. A visit to the United Nations headquarters in New York was also included in their program.

Training led by CATHII members

On February 20, 2024, a training session led by Sister Nicole Rivard and France Parent was given to residents of the Chartwell Bois-de-Boulogne Residence in Laval. 13 people took part in this training session to raise awareness of the problem of human trafficking and the distinction between trafficking and human smuggling. The event culminated in the signing of a letter addressed to the riding's federal MP, calling for the abolition of the closed work permit for temporary migrant workers.

On June 18, 2024, training led by Renaude Grégoire and Nelson Tardif was given to the new coordinator of the Coalition québécoise contre la traite des personnes (CQCTP) and the new coordinator of the CQCTP-led Table nationale en matière d'exploitation sexuelle. Among the topics discussed were the differences between human trafficking and smuggling, the definition of trafficking and criticisms of the Palermo Protocol, facts and myths about human trafficking.

February 8, 2024 International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking

An international virtual pilgrimage organized by Talitha Kum was broadcast live on the web as part of the Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking. Two young CATHII volunteers took part in the event via video. Two other videos produced by a CATHII member, including a prayer for temporary migrant workers, were accompanied by a word from the CATHII president. This was the tenth International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking.

Research

Empowerment research

The opportunity to participate in research on empowering survivors of human trafficking was disseminated at the TK General Assembly in May 2024 and to organizations here through CQCTP. A link has been created with Australia's ACCRATH to present a webinar in December 2023, but for logistical and personnel reasons, the project has not yet been carried out. The literature review continues.



Advocacy

Visit from the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

On September 2, 2023, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery visited Montreal. Along with representatives of other Five CATHII members attended the meeting to report on the situation in Quebec and Canada. Following the meeting, a forced-labor survivor cried out: "End slavery! Put an end to the closed permit! Finally, in the fall of 2024, a CATHII member took part in a follow-up meeting.



Pictured from left to right are Sofia Elena Ranke Farro, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations, Tomoya Obokata, Lise Gagnon, IsaBelle Couillard, Khavitha Culasingam, Renaude Grégoire.

Universal Periodic Examination

In the spring of 2023, CATHII sent a submission for the fourth session of Canada's Universal Periodic Review, held in November 2023. Several aspects of the CATHII submission were retained in the summary document on stakeholder contributions. Canada received 332 recommendations, including several relating to human trafficking. In December 2023, consultations were planned by the federally mandated organization, Équitas, and CATHII participated. March 2024, Canada has responded to this review. For a variety of reasons, some of the recommendations made to Canada are noted, while others are accepted in part or in full.

Provincial plan to combat human trafficking

Following the October 4, 2023 members' meeting, CATHII has relaunched its campaign to ask the Quebec government for a provincial plan to fight human trafficking. CATHII has held this campaign every fall since 2020.

Here are the main concerns of our members:

- The need for a provincial plan against human trafficking that covers all forms of human trafficking (sexual exploitation, forced labor, forced marriage, etc.) with a focus on vulnerable populations. This provincial plan must be drawn up in conjunction with non-governmental organizations working against human trafficking, including input from survivors.
- Significant financial support for the mission of organizations that welcome and support trafficked persons and survivors in the post-trafficking process up to empowerment.
- A public awareness campaign, conducted over several years and covering all forms of human trafficking, in conjunction with organizations and survivors of trafficking.
- A provincial anti-trafficking office or body with a mandate to :
 1. document the various forms of trafficking, to better define its contours in Quebec and the best ways to counter it;
 2. offer a 24/7 information and referral line in a variety of languages, including Aboriginal languages;
 3. include online training tools developed in conjunction with Quebec anti- trafficking organizations and survivors;
 4. include a regularly updated list of resources.
- Several members had the letter signed and forwarded to their MLAs, particularly in connection with the Days of Action Against Violence Against Women from November 25 to December 6.

December 20, 2023: Two CATHII members collected 152 signatures from CATHII members and women's groups in Nicolet. They handed them in at a meeting with Donald Martel, representative of the Nicolet-Bécancour MP. March 7, 2024: Two CATHII representatives met with the political attaché of the MNA for Mercier, Ruba Ghazal, QS spokesperson for the Status of Women at the Quebec National Assembly, as part of the CATHII Signature Campaign for a provincial plan to fight human trafficking and for global action against human trafficking. This zoomed-in meeting was preceded by the presentation of the letter signed by over 250 people.



Catherine-Laure
Juste and Sister
IsaBelle Couillard

- March 15, 2024: Four CATHII members meet with Laurier-Dorion MP Andrès Fontecilla, QS spokesperson on public safety. They discussed CATHII's Signature Campaign for a provincial anti-trafficking plan and the situation of temporary migrant workers.



Participation in the Open Work Permit Campaign

In early February 2024 and throughout the spring, CATHII continued its advocacy for an open work permit for temporary migrant workers by inviting members to sign a letter addressed to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Postcards were also given to participants at the screening of the film *Richelieu* on April 27.

Request for adoption of the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls

In May 2024, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, Reem Alsalem, published her report clearly stating that prostitution is «linked to various forms of violence against women and girls and [constitutes] a form of violence in itself». The Rapporteur was present in Montreal in early June at the CAP International symposium, a few days before her press conference in Geneva. A number of organizations have taken the initiative of supporting this report and asking the human rights bodies and their respective governments to support this report. The CATHII has proposed an action for members to carry out by July 30, 2024.



The Special Rapporteur, Reem Alsalem

Consultation Component

Talitha Kum

Youth meeting in February 2024

From February 2 to 9, 2024, two young women connected with CATHII took part in the Youth Meeting held in Rome on the theme of migrant workers. It was another opportunity to meet new people and forge international links.

Second Annual General Meeting

The second Talitha Kum (TK) General Assembly was held in Rome from May 20 to 24, 2024, with over 150 participants from all over the world. The Chairman of the CATHII, Sister IsaBelle Couillard, North American representative since February 2023, was present. She was accompanied by CATHII member Renaude Grégoire and young ambassador Rhama

Desjarlais. The event provided an opportunity to meet delegates from a number of countries and strengthen ties, thus fostering future collaborations. The CATHII delegation was very visible during this meeting with interventions by three delegates, participation in two panels and the leading of a morning prayer. A final declaration was adopted and will guide the Talitha Kum network's actions for the next five years. Sister IsaBelle Couillard gave a number of interviews, including one to The CATHOLIC REGISTER.

See: <https://www.catholicregister.org/item/36782-partnership-crucial-in-trafficking-fight>

TK International Coordination

A first approach was made this year by Sister IsaBelle Couillard as the North American representative on the Talitha Kum coordinating committee. Sister IsaBelle met with Ms. Karen E. Mollica, Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of the United States of America.

Canada to the Holy See on May 28, 2024 with Marcella Damiani, Political Affairs Officer. Together they discussed human trafficking and Talitha Kum.

Sister IsaBelle Couillard in front of the Canadian Embassy, Vatican City



TK Leadership Course

CATHII member Renaude Grégoire took part in the 2023-2024 edition of Talitha Kum's leadership training, which included several zoom sessions and an intensive week in Kenya. A joint project with members of TK Afrique du Nord and Afrique de l'Ouest raised awareness of the issues surrounding closed work permits in Canada, including a webinar on April 27, 2024 attended by 75 people. Finally, the 21 participants in the TK training program from four continents received their official diplomas at a zoom event on June 28.

Talitha Kum des 3 Amériques

Lise Gagnon and Sofia Elena Ranke Farro represent CATHII on TK's Latin America Human Trafficking Network, under the responsibility of CLAR. CATHII is in its third year of participation in solidarity with the 15 networks of the three Americas (North, Central and South) against human trafficking. Each month is punctuated by a well-organized Spanish-language Zoom meeting to combat human trafficking, focusing primarily on the issue of sexual exploitation. Each Zoom meeting also offers a training session. In September, there was a training session on "The new masculinities". These training sessions open up new horizons.

Young Ambassadors

Over the past year, Talitha Kum's Young Ambassadors (JA) from Canada have been actively engaged in breaking the taboo of human trafficking and raising collective awareness. Months of preparation led to the realization of various activities linked to the precarious conditions of migrant farm workers in Quebec.

On April 27, 2024, JA organized, in collaboration with CATHII members, a screening of the film *Richelieu* - which realistically exposes the daily challenges of migrant workers, followed by an exchange with the director, Pier-Philippe Chevigny, and a collection of signatures for a petition to abolish the closed work permit, addressed to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Marc Miller. Thirty-eight (38) people took part in the event, which was held at Patro Villeray in Montreal.

Continued on next page The public awareness project, *Agissons enSable*, came to fruition at the intergenerational morning on May 5, 2024 at Saint-Bonaventure parish in Montreal. The team led interactive activities on the many players involved in food production, followed by an open discussion after the screening of an excerpt from the documentary *Essentiels*. Finally, young and old were invited to spread red sand in the cracks of the sidewalks, representing the people trapped in the trafficking cycle. This symbolic action was repeated on June 16 near the Saint-Michel metro station in Montreal.



Pictured from left to right are Élodie Ekobena, the director Pier-Philippe Chevigny et sœur Isabelle Couillard

It was a year rich in awareness-raising activities, which reinforced our determination to work for a world free of human trafficking.

Other partnerships

Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking

CATHII is represented by Renaude Grégoire with two partners: the Coalition québécoise contre la traite des personnes, a consultation, referral and networking organization for "organizations that work with victims or people at risk in order to prevent trafficking, protect them, and to ensure that they receive adequate services and support", with which CATHII maintains close ties, and the Canadian Council for Refugees, «a leader in the advocacy, protection, sponsorship, settlement and well-being of refugees and migrants in Canada and abroad international».

Alliance to End Trafficking

Alliance to End Trafficking held its symposium from September 28 to 30, 2023 in Chicago. IsaBelle Couillard attended the meeting, which formalized the new name of the Coalition of American Nuns Against Trafficking. This network is also a member of Talitha Kum.

Three consultations in November 2024

IsaBelle Couillard took part in three meetings held in Edmonton and Calgary in mid-November. First, she took part in the national meeting "Participating in the Migrant Workers Fight Back: Solutions for Migrant Justice". This meeting, attended by a majority of migrants, highlighted the inhumane conditions faced by migrant workers, highlighting the need to demand changes in certain policies that keep workers in a system at risk of exploitation.

In addition, IsaBelle participated in the Forum on Human Trafficking held on November 15, 2023, entitled "In the Impasse: Recourse for Migrant Workers in Exploitative Situations", organized by the Canadian Council for Refugees Anti-Trafficking Committee. The meeting highlighted the vulnerability and abuse of migrant workers due to, among other things, closed work permits, lack of housing and very limited access to health care.

Finally, IsaBelle took part in the Canadian Council for Refugees' Annual Consultation on the theme "The Power of the Collective: Decolonizing and Advocating for Systemic Change", which took place from November 16 to 18 in Calgary. The consultation addressed key challenges facing our immigration and refugee system. Participants shared resources and strategies to address these issues in a series of workshops, caucuses and meetings. One migrant concluded a workshop by telling participants, "Your voice is essential to our fight!".

RATTMAQ International Symposium

RATTMAQ marked International Migrants Day with a symposium held on December 17 and 18, 2023 in Montreal. Indeed, "some forty organizations and unions and over a hundred participants from Canada, as well as Mexico and Guatemala, gathered at the Centre St- Pierre, in Montreal, at the invitation of the Réseau d'aide aux travailleurs et travailleuses migrants agricoles du Québec (RATTMAQ) as part of the international conference "Cultiver le travail décent, Les droits des travailleuses et travailleurs migrants temporaires, une responsabilité collective!", states the RATTMAQ press release. The CATHI was present with a representative of Jeunes Ambassadeurs Talitha Kumet and two members of our organization.



Equality in action: 4th World Congress to end the sexual exploitation of women and girls

At the CAP Internationale Congress held in Montreal from June 1 to 3, 2024, CATHII was invited by CLES - Concertation des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle - to co-host a workshop under the theme of "Countering prostitution and related human trafficking in a socially and politically coherent way." Élodie Ekobena and Kavitha Culasingam presented the CATHII's history on the issue of prostitution, human trafficking and sexual exploitation. This was approached through a four-pronged approach: advocacy, research, consultation and training. From this perspective, the transmission of knowledge, through the CATHII - University at was presented in detail. Nearly fifty people attended the workshop, which was co-hosted by Maria Mourani, former federal MP and criminologist.



Kavitha Culasingam and Élodie Ekobena at CAP International conference

Communication

Website

The website is a showcase for CATHII, its mission, vision and values, its publications including CATHII Info, as well as research reports and relevant resources. Regular updates contribute to the site's relevance.

CATHII Info

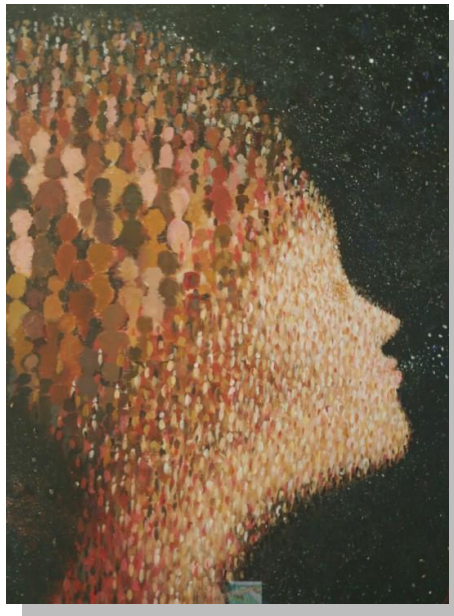
Distributed to members and available on the CATHII website, CATHII Info is a valuable and much-appreciated tool that provides information on human trafficking, events, CATHII actions and advocacy at the Quebec, Canadian and international levels. In 2023-2024, CATHII Info was published five times, in September 2023, February, April, June and July 2024.



Thanks

CATHII would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to all the member communities and individual members, to all the supportive communities and to all the groups and organizations that support it, both financially and in the form of donations. and in the time invested by staff.
people delegated by their communities.


Thank you so much for supporting CATHII's mission, vision and values!





CATHII – University at the UN

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