CATHII

Comité d'action **contre la traite humaine** interne et internationale

Annual Report 2025-2026

Review – Activities – Outlooks

www.cathii.org

October 2026

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1 – INTRODUCTION

Mission

The Action Committee against Internal and International Human Trafficking (CATHII) has the mission of promoting the dignity of all human beings:

- ensuring respect for the rights of victims and survivors of trafficking, in particular women and children;
- and by acting in favor of their protection and support.

It accomplishes its mission through training, research, advocacy and consultation activities.

Ultimately, CATHII aims to eliminate situations of human trafficking, including sexual exploitation and forced labor, but also other forms of human trafficking.

Message from the President

Human trafficking is no longer a distant threat; it is a major global crisis: the second most lucrative criminal industry in the world, generating $236 billion annually. Drug trafficking is the largest, followed by human trafficking, which is now more lucrative than arms trafficking. According to the International Labour Organization and the Global Slavery Index, up to 50 million people live in modern slavery.

In the face of this emergency, CATHII asserts that individual aid alone is insufficient. We must address the root causes: removing bureaucratic barriers, imposing legal constraints on traffickers, and demanding bold public policies. This is the rationale behind our advocacy, conducted in collaboration with our partners in Quebec, across Canada, and internationally.

This 2025-2026 annual report reflects this dynamic, structured around four strategic focuses. You will discover how our Training focus has raised awareness among hundreds of stakeholders through innovative tools. The Research focus informs our actions, particularly regarding the crucial empowerment of survivors to break the cycle of vulnerability. Finally, our Advocacy and Partnership-Consultation focuses reflect our conviction that only close collaboration between people on the ground, organizations, and institutions can build a shared future and sustainably protect the rights and dignity of all people.

Isabelle Couillard

The board of directors

During the 2025-2026 year, the Board of Directors (BoD), composed of five members, met regularly about ten times to address day-to-day business and a few additional meetings to adopt more urgent resolutions. A sixth person was invited to the BoD in November to familiarize themselves with the process.

The Board of Directors finalized the Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy by designating two individuals to receive complaints. It also refined its Health and Safety Policy and adopted a Communications Policy.



In September 2025, two new employees joined CATHII: Ariane Collin and Jean Thevenin. The BoD provided guidance to the new team and encouraged them to undergo training to better understand the issues surrounding human trafficking and to be more effective in their work.

Throughout the year, the Board of Directors considered the merits of CATHII obtaining consultative status with the UN; a committee was formed to present the best options. In fact, the Board continued to demonstrate its confidence by appointing or extending the mandates of various permanent and ad hoc committees and working groups, covering areas such as action planning, funding, and communications (see the organizational chart in Chapter 3).

Finally, during the president's extended and planned absence of a few weeks during the winter of 2026, Vice-President Michel Pilon stepped in to fill in and remained a valuable member of the team. We thank him for this.

The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held virtually on October 28, 2025, with the following items on the agenda: presentation of the financial statements, budget forecasts, annual report, action plan with its various projects and the renewal (without election) of two members to the BoD.

Following the anticipated shortfall, mention is made of the committee working to secure funding, as the organization currently lacks a charitable registration number. We also thank Elodie Ekobena and Kavitha Culasingam for their valuable contribution to the creation and development of the CATHII-Universities project at UN-CSW.

Members' meetings

These virtual meetings are intended as a means of sharing news, information, discussing, and making decisions on actions. Here are some of the topics covered:

- **October 2025**

The Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking presented its legal opinion and brief to members of the Quebec Ministry of Public Security. Advocacy efforts against closed work permits are being renewed at the federal level.

- **November 2025**

Presentation of research on the empowerment of survivors of trafficking, followed by a productive discussion. Support for the Canadian Council for Refugees' "We're Better Together" campaign was also discussed.

- **March 2026**

A lively, collective reflection on the motivations and mobilization of members, based on role-playing games with four fictional characters.

- **May 2026**

Presentation of the advocacy at the provincial level, in view of the upcoming elections in Quebec; the direction to be prioritized and proposed actions.

2 – ACTIVITIES

Training focus

A year marked by public education and the involvement of the next generation

Training is at the heart of CATHII's mission.

This year, the focus has been on public education through national and international partnerships.

From Rimouski to Winnipeg, via Montreal, local groups and universities hosted us for in-person workshops. Internationally, a webinar drew attention to the trafficking issues surrounding the FIFA World Cup.

The next generation was there with an exceptional cohort from the UN-CSW Universities project and two ambitious projects designed and carried out by the Talitha Kum Young Ambassadors group.

A new idea has also taken shape: addressing the exploitation of temporary migrant workers through forum theatre.

Finally, our increased presence on social media has allowed us to relay relevant campaigns, suggest courses of action and highlight news articles on human trafficking.

Workshops and training courses

Rimouski, October 2025
Workshop on closed work permits, offered by Michel Pilon at the Paradis cooperative in Rimouski, then at UQAR.

Winnipeg, November 2025
Series of presentations on human trafficking in Canada given by Michel Pilon and IsaBelle Couillard to the Grey Nuns of Montreal, the Social Justice Committee of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, residents of the Despins Residence and then master's students and professors of St. Paul's College in Winnipeg.

Montreal, May 2026
*T*raining course "Does human trafficking exist in Quebec?" offered by Lise Gagnon at the Halte-visitation in Montreal.



Photo credit: IsaBelle Couillard

Forum Theatre

Initially, a dream formulated in May 2025 by a core group of thinkers from CATHII: "Let's go to the people with a participatory theatre project!" This creative and collaborative process began in the fall.
Inspired by real-life cases, the play "Working and Keeping Silent" depicts the exploitation of migrant workers. Through its participatory format, it challenges the audience. What is our individual and collective responsibility?
An initial reading allowed us to gather feedback from partners and finalize the writing process. This project is now ready to take off in 2026-2027.
Special thanks to Lauriane Fortin, our summer employee, who supported the committee with heart and creativity!



Photo credit: Lauriane Fortin



Photo credit: Carla Adima Yaly

Universities at UN-CSW

After six years, the Universities at UN-CSW project continues to bring together committed and passionate students.

Twenty-two young people were selected to participate in a stimulating training program with key players in the fight against human trafficking in Quebec. This training culminated in March 2026 with participation in activities surrounding the 70th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

Thanks to Sofia Ranke-Farro, the tireless coordinator of this project!



Photo credit: Renaude Grégoire



Photo credit: Ariane Collin

South-North Webinar

More than 90 people from over 14 countries attended this trilingual webinar on a pan-American issue for 2026: the FIFA World Cup and its impact on human trafficking.

This is a second success for our interprovincial South-North Migration Committee, which had joined forces for the occasion with activists from Mexico, the United States, Brazil and Peru.

Talitha Kum Canada Youth Ambassadors

Building on their exceptional commitment to training and taking action against human trafficking, the Talitha Kum Youth Ambassadors turned their attention to the sexual exploitation of young people in 2025-2026.

The members rigorously equipped themselves before embarking on two ambitious projects:

- The design and facilitation of a workshop for parents on online luring of children;
- The production of short awareness videos on luring and trafficking aimed at adolescent girls.

We would like to highlight the valuable collaboration of CLES in this new Ambassadors project.

Future

EPU Canada Advocacy Training (Webinar November 17, 2026)
Canada's Universal Periodic Review by the United Nations will take place in 2028. This is an opportunity for civil society organizations to put forward strong recommendations regarding human trafficking in all its forms and realities. The impact is much greater when several organizations submit observations on the same issue, each based on its own experience and concerns. To support such mobilization, CATHII will offer training to groups working to combat human trafficking. These groups will be able to familiarize themselves with the entire process of submitting a written statement.

Training on empowerment (Webinar January 26, 2027)
Organizations combating human trafficking at both national and international levels will discover the various concepts for addressing post-trafficking – whether in sexual exploitation or forced labor – the concept of empowerment, good practices and finally recommendations.

Research focus

Exploring emerging issues in a constantly evolving context

In partnership with academic and community organizations, CATHII has experience in exploring issues that are still understudied or little understood by the public. Research ensures the relevance of our work in a constantly changing context.

Indeed, the realities of human trafficking are evolving rapidly. They are influenced by migratory movements, technological developments, as well as legal, administrative, and community contexts.

Social representations, particularly regarding prostitution or migrant work, also play a role.

In 2025-2026, three topics particularly caught our attention: the empowerment of survivors of human trafficking, the impact of new technologies on human trafficking, and the vulnerability of people without status or with precarious status.

Empowering survivors

Venturing into a relatively unexplored area in 2024, Renaude Grégoire conceived and led a research project on the empowerment of victims of human trafficking. What visions do groups addressing the needs of trafficking survivors hold? What experiences and practices can serve as inspiration?

This important work was completed in 2025 and presented to members. It is now ready for dissemination to equip community sectors offering support services to victims.

People without status

People without status or with precarious status are the most vulnerable to human trafficking in Quebec and Canada. What is the current state of knowledge regarding their numbers, their situation, and their needs? What role do law enforcement agencies play in their trajectory? How can we intervene with them safely, both for them and for those intervening?

These are the questions that CATHII began to address in partnership with other organizations and researchers, through the creation of a “Without formal status” committee. This topic will be explored in greater depth in 2026-2027.

New technologies and human trafficking

Several technological developments have changed the recruitment and control strategies of traffickers, with a significant impact on the realities on the ground. This is particularly true of smartphones, social networks, and, more recently, artificial intelligence tools. Marie Phaneuf, a doctoral candidate, has undertaken the task of synthesizing and simplifying the current state of knowledge on this subject.

Drawing on the latest available information, her report allows the public to clearly understand these emerging issues. It has been selected for the symposium “Illuminating Justice: Student Research Symposium on Human Trafficking” on October 13, 2026.

Advocacy Focus

Giving voice to victims and survivors: a plea to transform laws and practices

Advocacy is a way for CATHII to address the conditions that foster human trafficking and exploitation. It allows them to bring concerns from the field into the public sphere and to decision-making bodies, in order to contribute to concrete change.

In 2025-2026, this commitment was deployed at several levels. In Quebec, CATHII members asked questions as part of the election campaign.

At the federal level, it joined various initiatives calling for the abolition of closed work permits, while continuing its own postcard campaign on this issue. CATHII also participated in the Canadian Council for Refugees’ “We’re Better Together” campaign.

Internationally, the board of directors considered various ways to denounce human trafficking and raise awareness of the realities observed here. It mandated the "Reflection on Advocacy at the UN" committee to develop a five-year vision for the actions that CATHII could undertake with international authorities.

Provincial elections (Quebec)

In June 2026, as the Quebec provincial elections approached, CATHII prepared a guide encouraging its members to raise their concerns about human trafficking with candidates. Before and during the campaign, our members asked questions, conversed, and wrote to their candidates, notably to encourage the adoption of a national plan to combat human trafficking.

Campaign to abolish closed status

As the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery has stated, the closed work permit system in Canada creates fertile ground for contemporary forms of slavery. It is to call for change that CATHII launched a postcard campaign in 2025.

The 3rd and 4th phases of this campaign took place in 2025-2026. Our members signed, mailed and distributed 1200 postcards addressed to the Prime Minister of Canada to request the abolition of the closed work permit for temporary migrant workers.

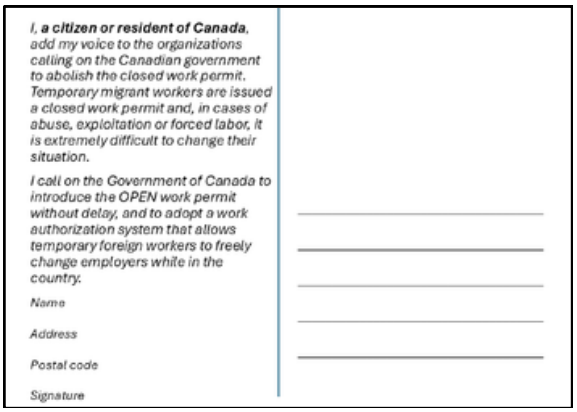




Illustration by Nancy Roberge

Partnership and consultation focus

Uniting forces, amplifying impact: consultation at the heart of our mission

CATHII actively participates in the life and collective projects of several consultation spaces, at the international, federal and provincial levels.

Beyond formal consultation spaces, almost all CATHII activities are carried out in partnership with various groups and organizations.

This collaboration is an integral part of how we operate and is an essential asset to our work. We therefore extend our warmest thanks to all the organizations and partners who have contributed to our activities over the past year.

In Quebec

At the provincial level, CATHII played a key role in giving rise to the Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

Now that it has become an independent organization, CATHII continues to be actively involved, notably with Michel Pilon on the board of directors and the Legal Advice committee.

In Canada

Canadian forums for dialogue are essential for making progress on federal issues such as migration. For this reason, CATHII is committed to actively engaging with the Canadian Council for Refugees, not only by participating in consultations and campaigns, but also by facilitating workshops and participating in internal committees, including the Status for All committee.

On the other hand, the JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) network of the Canadian Religious Conference allows CATHII to remain in consultation with a large number of organizations committed to social and ecological justice in Canada.

Internationally

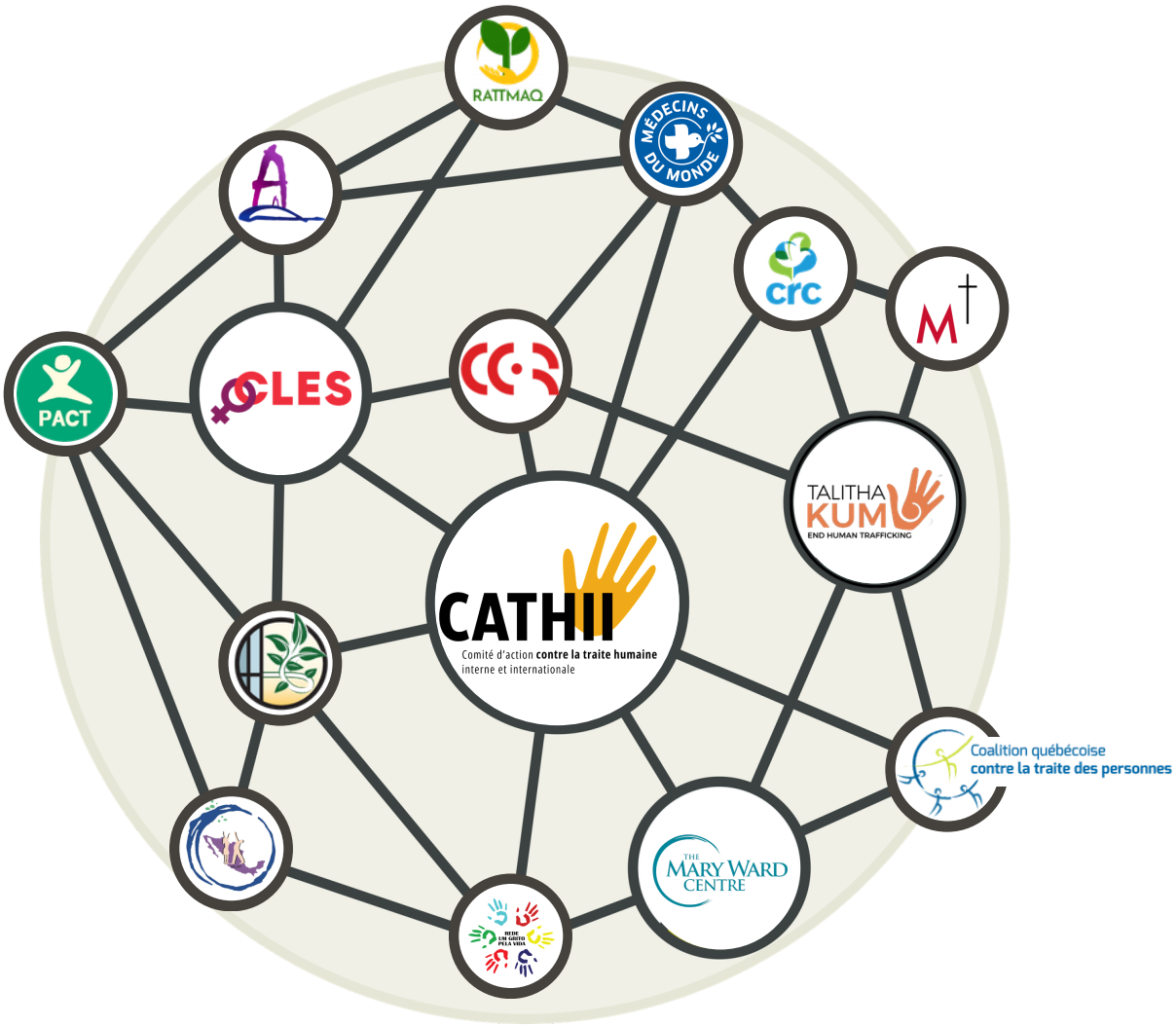
CATHII played a leadership role within the international Talitha Kum network, with IsaBelle Couillard serving as the North American representative for the third year. This allowed CATHII's experience and vision, particularly its advocacy potential, to be showcased.

We have also contributed to collective projects within this network, such as the creation of a French-language training course and an online training module.

Finally, one of our young ambassadors, Lismabel Sanchez, completed Talitha Kum’s very comprehensive leadership training program, which took her to Peru and put her in contact with anti-trafficking groups in more than 20 countries.



Photo credit: AI Copilot



Thanks to our partners

- Alliance to End Human Trafficking (United States)
- CAP International (France)
- Quebec Coalition Against Human Trafficking (Quebec)
- Coordination of efforts against sexual exploitation (Quebec)
- Canadian Religious Conference (Canada)
- Canadian Council for Refugees (Canada)
- Mexican Federation of Academics (Mexico)
- Marie-Vincent Foundation (Quebec)
- Mary Ward Centre (Ontario)
- Doctors of the World (Quebec)
- Jill Hanley, Univ. McGill (Quebec)
- Beacon of the Free (Quebec)
- Program for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers of the Archdiocese of Montreal (Quebec)
- Protect all children from trafficking (United States)
- Red Rahamim (Mexico)
- Network for Assistance to Migrant Agricultural Workers (Quebec)
- Yelema Art Hive (Quebec)
- Talitha Kum (Rome)
- Talitha Kum Burkina Faso
- Rede Um Grito Pela Vida (Brazil)

Some key figures

FIFA Webinar

7 partner organizations
90 people present
14 countries
3 languages

Training sessions and presentations

7 in-person training courses
307 people reached

Postcard campaign

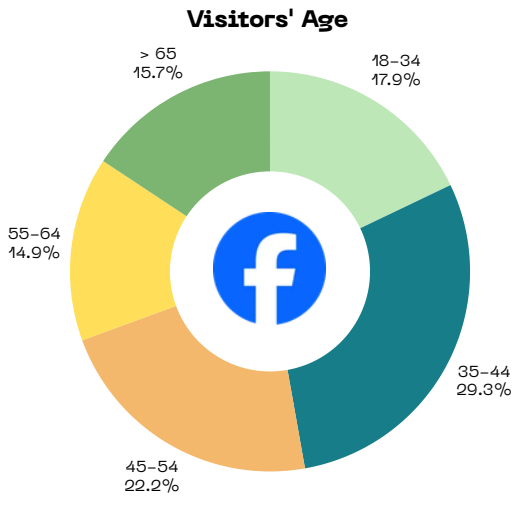
Nearly **1200** postcards sent calling for the abolition of the closed work permit

CATHII Project – Universities at the UN

54 candidates
22 selected
6 training sessions
3 days at CSW in New York

Facebook Page

21% more subscribers
37,800 views in one year
80% of subscribers are women



3 – ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Funding

A year marked by the search for funding

The Board of Directors is well aware of the financial situation, as the accountant presents them with the financial statements every quarter.

- **The challenge of mission-based funding**

CATHII is experiencing a decline in the regular and charitable contributions that have supported it since its founding. Therefore, its major challenge now is securing a source of funding for its mission. As with any community group, it is essential to be able to maintain administrative operations, organizational life, and regular activities. This is not only a matter of survival, but also of independence and consistency in action. Here, the lack of a charitable registration number presents an obstacle. The fundraising committee has held numerous meetings and consultations to explore strategies and legal frameworks that would allow it to overcome this challenge.

- **New projects and sources of funding**

Despite this obstacle, thanks to constant research and monitoring of financial support opportunities, the CATHII funding committee obtained donations enabling, in particular, the financing of the start-up phase of the forum theatre project as well as a government grant for the hiring of two summer students.

Team and summer jobs

- **Team recruitment and structure**

New members joined the team in September 2025: Ariane Collin, coordinator of committee development and mobilization, and Jean Thevenin, in charge of administration and communications. Renaude Grégoire continues her role as development, research and advocacy officer, while Sofia Ranke-Farro is the CATHII-Universities at UN-CSW project manager.

Nelson Tardif, who was warmly thanked, ensured a sustained presence until the fall of 2025 to ensure the transition.

- **Training and skills development**

Training sessions on the issues surrounding human trafficking and the operations of CATHII were provided by various stakeholders (members of the Board of Directors and highly involved contract staff) to all new team members, including summer employees. Online training was also made available to enhance team skills as needed.

- **Summer jobs**

Thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs program, two young people joined our team for nine weeks this summer. Marie Phaneuf, a research and outreach officer, produced a research report on sexual exploitation and new technologies, while Lauriane Fortin, a communications officer, lent her energy and interpersonal skills to the forum theatre project. Both received training on human trafficking. They made a dynamic and valued contribution throughout the summer!

Communication and media relations

- **Communication plan**

With the establishment of a committee and a communications plan in November 2025, the team set objectives and a communications calendar for the coming years. It also established standards to serve as a reference for all its communications, ensuring visual consistency. In addition, the CATHII logo was redesigned for improved image quality.

- **Social media presence**

The CATHII Facebook page resumed activity on November 12, 2025. It is used regularly, with one or two posts per week. A posting schedule has been implemented to ensure a high-quality mix of post types, while maintaining regular email communication with members. These posts have allowed us to share invitations to events, relevant articles from the media, and communications from our partners, as well as remind members of international days and key events throughout the year.

CATHII has also launched on Instagram. The goal is to gradually develop this channel to reach a wider and more diverse audience, particularly young adults. Its development will be managed by a social media committee.

- **Media presence**

In January 2026, a report by ECDQ.tv, the web television channel of the Catholic Church of the Diocese of Quebec, highlighting the reality of human trafficking and the work of CATHII, was broadcast. It was viewed more than 550 times. In this report, IsaBelle Couillard, Chairwoman of the BoD, presented in detail the issues related to human trafficking and the actions undertaken by CATHII.

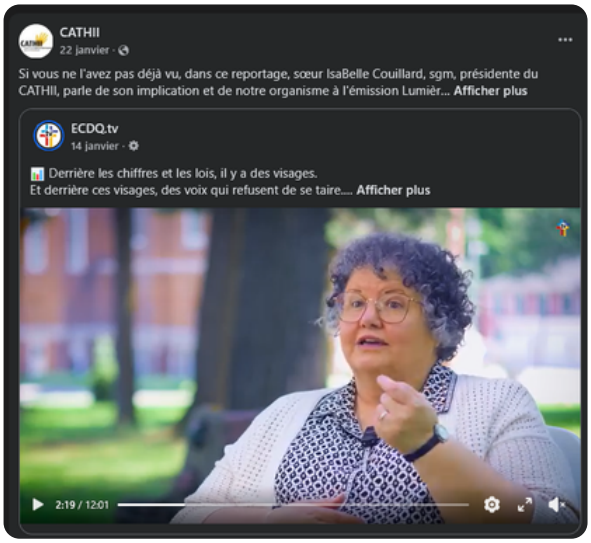


Image taken from the CATHII Facebook page

- **CATHII-Info**

The CATHII-Info bulletin was published five times during the year. Particular effort was devoted to improving its aesthetics and general presentation, in order to make it more up-to-date.

- **Promotional materials and website**

A new promotional leaflet has been printed, in French and English, with the aim of better presenting ourselves to the general public, potential members and funders.

With the same goal in mind, the CATHII website was analyzed in order to update the content and visual appearance of our online presence.

Compliance with Bill 25

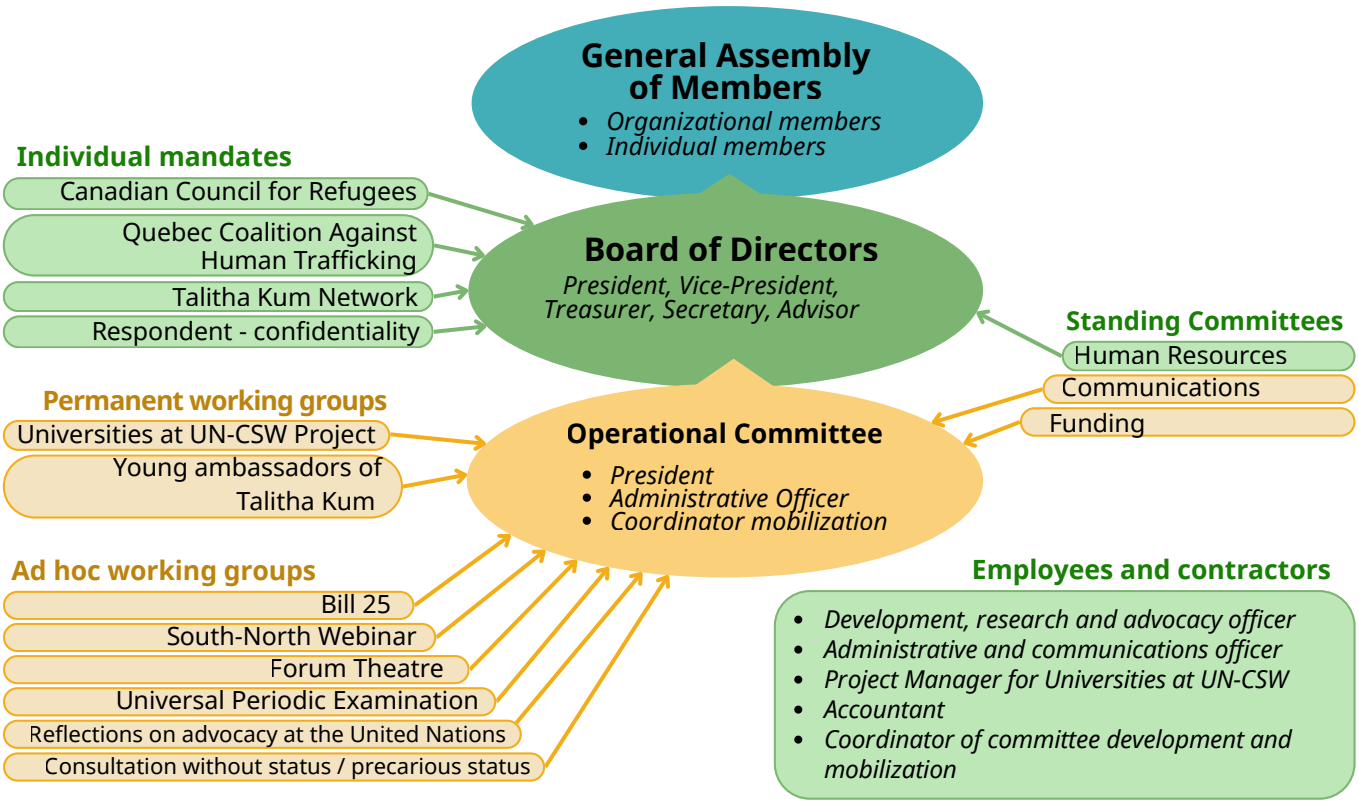
The Bill 25 committee continues its work to provide CATHII with best practices for managing personal information. As such, our Privacy and Personal Information Protection Policy is now separate from the Code of Ethics.

In the event of a breach of confidentiality, each board member and employee has detailed the personal information they hold and the medium on which it is stored.

Organizational chart

CATHII is primarily a committee of members committed to the fight against human trafficking. These members meet at least four times a year for training and discussion.

The organization is supported by a small team of two employees and three contractors, all part-time. Files are handled by committees and working groups, most of which evolve according to needs and ongoing projects. External resources are often invited to provide support. The organizational chart below represents the committees and groups active as of July 2026.



4 – CONCLUSION

Review

A year marked by training and mobilization against human trafficking

This year has been, in many respects, a year of transmission and construction for CATHII.

First, there's the transmission of knowledge, with the arrival of three new team members, the welcoming of young summer employees, and the involvement of numerous young people through two flagship projects. Then there's the building, with the implementation of new internal tools and policies, the creation of committees, the development of our online presence, and efforts dedicated to consolidating the organization's core funding.

Throughout the year, CATHII pursued its mission on several fronts: training and raising awareness, particularly among the general public and in collaboration with other groups; deepening our understanding of rapidly evolving realities through research; and promoting consultation, from the local community to international networks.

A common thread runs through these various actions: to better understand and name the realities of human trafficking, to give voice to the concerns on the ground, and to propose courses of action to individuals and organizations that can take action. It is through this collective, patient, and sustained work that CATHII contributes to preventing and combating human trafficking, both locally and globally.



Photo credit: AI Copilot

Through the shared light of acts of solidarity,
each bond forged becomes a force against isolation and indifference.

THANKS !

Revision of the English translation of the annual report: Joanne Pundyk

CATHII

October 2026

www.cathii.org