



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



ACRATH PRESIDENT  
**Clare Condon sgs**

I would like to commence by quoting Pope Francis' message for Lent 2024.

He quoted Exodus 20:2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." and "Through the desert God leads us to Freedom" "The exodus from slavery to freedom is no abstract journey. ....I ask two questions, which have become more and more pressing: "Where are you? (Gen3:9) and Where is your brother (sister)? (Gen4:9)"

So how has ACRATH responded to its mission in 2023? For the day-to-day ministry of members, Christine Carolan as the National Executive Officer will respond and outline the activities of members in their regions and beyond. I will make a few comments about the governance matters of the National Committee, the strategic directions and the overall focus of ACRATH over these months.

## GLOBALLY

Globally, deeply concerning, is that modern slavery and human trafficking are growing phenomena. Statistics from the latest Global Slavery Index (2021) by Walk Free indicate at least 50 million people across the globe experience slavery particularly through Forced Labour and Forced Marriage. With tragic wars in the Ukraine, the Middle East, Myanmar and parts of Africa, estimates indicate that war refugees continue to be vulnerable to trafficking and modern slavery.

In this global battle I want to acknowledge the strengthening relationships of ACRATH with other global networks. I mention just one significant one; that is, Talitha Kum as an agency of the UISG (the International Union of Superiors General) through the work of the Regional representative of Oceania, Colleen Jackson rsc.

We are linked together with like-minded partners through Colleen's persistence and resilience. There is a growing network developing across the Pacific countries, many of whom are involved in seasonal work in Australia and elsewhere. This is an important direction sponsored through the Conference of Major Superiors of the Pacific Islands. I take this opportunity to thank Colleen for her tireless ministry with Talitha Kum and ACRATH. I acknowledge and thank Annette Arnold rsj for accepting the continuing Talitha Kum collaboration as the new Regional Representative. From 18-24 May 2024 a delegation from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Nations will participate in Talitha's Kum's General Assembly in Rome.

## AUSTRALIA

On the home front, I acknowledge the ongoing persistent and professional ministries of Christine Carolan, as the National Executive Officer, the National Office staff and volunteers and the Regional Co-ordinators and all members, for the outstanding achievements through the ongoing development and sustaining relationships with Australian Politicians and Government Bureaucracies. The outstanding quality of never giving up, paid many dividends this past year. Just two examples are the introduction of an additional pathway for trafficked people onto the Support for Trafficked People Program, and the establishment of a Federal Anti-Slavery Commissioner, the latter currently being explored by a Senate committee. ACRATH's continued collaboration with other agencies in the field is an outstanding example of the possibilities for change when people work together.

## GOVERNANCE AND REGIONS

These past two years have seen the settling down of new organisational structures for ACRATH. There have been some significant developments, but it has not all been easy work for the National Committee or for Management as we have all negotiated new responsibilities and limitations.

Regional Coordinators are key to the life and ministry of ACRATH. They are the ones who hold the membership together, who with their regions generate ideas, possibilities and local action. Their direct working with the National Executive Officer has proved to be vital and energising for the whole group as greater coordination with the implementation of the strategic direction has occurred, as well as supporting local initiatives. In order to keep cohesion, the National Committee has met with Regional Coordinators twice during 2023, as a way of sharing ideas, perspectives and any challenges that we face as an Association.

At its October meeting, the National Committee considered the structure of regions, which is part of its mandate. We did so in the light of future directions of membership and the transfer of membership roles from members of religious institutes to those who are not members of religious institutes. It is clear now that coordinators are coming from these committed women and men and add an enrichment to ACRATH's organisation and mission.

Due to the small number of active members in Queensland it was decided by the National Committee to amalgamate Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory into a new Region – the East Coast Region and to consolidate activities with a new Regional Coordinator.

The Regional Coordinators for 2024-25 are:

East Coast	Cynthia Mulholland
South Australia	Angela Hart and Teresa Lynch
Victoria	Judy Lamb
Western Australia	Frances Hayes pbvm and Maureen Delaney

## NATIONAL COMMITTEE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

During 2023, the National Committee met in person on three occasions and virtually on three other occasions. Keeping our focus on the oversight of the implementation of the strategic directions 2023-25, the sustainability of ACRATH and the support of the National Office have been our constant commitments. I acknowledge the amazing work of the National Office and the regions in activating the strategic directions through awareness raising, advocacy, companionship and the ongoing support of people vulnerable to exploitation.

The fourth strategic direction namely strengthening organisational sustainability, both with membership and financial viability is a primary responsibility of the National Committee. I acknowledge the ongoing and significant support Religious Institutes provide for ACRATH. Without their support with personnel, with in-kind support and with donations on an annual basis, ACRATH would struggle to be effective. In early 2023, we held a workshop on how to develop sustainable fundraising. Finally, in late 2023, we established a small Committee of the National Committee, called Revenue and Marketing to advance and formalise these plans and directions. The initial committee is Clare Condon sgs, Clare Nolan rsc, Michael McDonald, Cath Hoban, Heather McNaught and ex officio Christine Carolan and Angela Duthie. The first meeting is planned for February 2024.

## NATIONAL COMMITTEE GRANTS

Much of the National Office work is funded from specific grants. Some of these are long standing and renewed on an annual basis. During 2023, two new significant grants were received. One from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation over two years to support the work of Religious Sisters and their partners, and more recently one from the Federal Attorney General's Department for awareness raising for undergraduate students in collaboration with Flinders University and Adelaide University and to be rolled out across universities in Australia. The place that grants play in ACRATH's strategic directions requires regular monitoring and policy development.

# NATIONAL COMMITTEE

## RISK OVERSIGHT

One of the key governance responsibilities of the National Committee is monitoring and managing risks to both members and to those who engage with members, staff and volunteers. At each meeting, risks are noted, reviewed and actioned where required.

As required by all Catholic church organisations we are required to comply with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards as approved by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia. I acknowledge the ongoing and professional guidance of the Safeguarding Committee of the National Committee, Clare Nolan rsc, Maree Marsh csb and Cindy Bohan. All relevant policies have been or are being reviewed. A thorough review of the Companionship Program has been undertaken by Sheree Limbrick. We need to continue to be vigilant in all aspects of safeguarding and we all must note what is compulsory for all ACRATH members, staff and volunteers.

The National Committee has four committees.

The Finance Committee of Shane Wood cfc, Michael Mooney, Noelene Simmons sm, Michael McDonald and Christine Carolan (ex officio)

The Public Fund Management Committee of Clare Condon sgs, Shane Wood cfc, Carmel Heagerty rsm.

The Safeguarding Committee of Clare Nolan rsc, Maree Marsh csb and Cindy Bohan.

The Revenue and Marketing Committee of Clare Condon sgs, Clare Nolan rsc, Michael McDonald, Cath Hoban, Heather McNaught and ex officio Christine Carolan and Angela Duthie I wish to acknowledge and thank all the members of the National Committee. We are indebted to each and everyone of you. In particular, I acknowledge the constant work of Annette Arnold rsj as Vice-President, especially during my absence from illness, Carmel Heagerty rsm, an incredible National Secretary, and Shane Wood cfc as Treasurer, who keeps us afloat.

I thank those members who will complete their term at this AGM and who are not offering themselves for further election, that is Clare Nolan rsc and Lorraine Phelan rsm.

I take this opportunity to thank the National Executive Officer and everyone who makes ACRATH what it is, as a committed network of members, staff, volunteers and partners; in our endeavour to combat the scourge of modern slavery and human trafficking in our world today.

### Clare Condon sgs

President





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# ACRATH Moving Forward 2023-2025

*I have come that all may have life and have it to the full.*

John 10:10

*No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and servitude shall be prohibited in all their forms.*

Article 4 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## OUR VISION

A world free of human trafficking and modern slavery

## OUR PURPOSE

To eliminate human trafficking and modern slavery, and the harm they cause, in Australia, the Asia Pacific region and globally, in collaboration with others

## OUR VALUES

Dignity of each human being

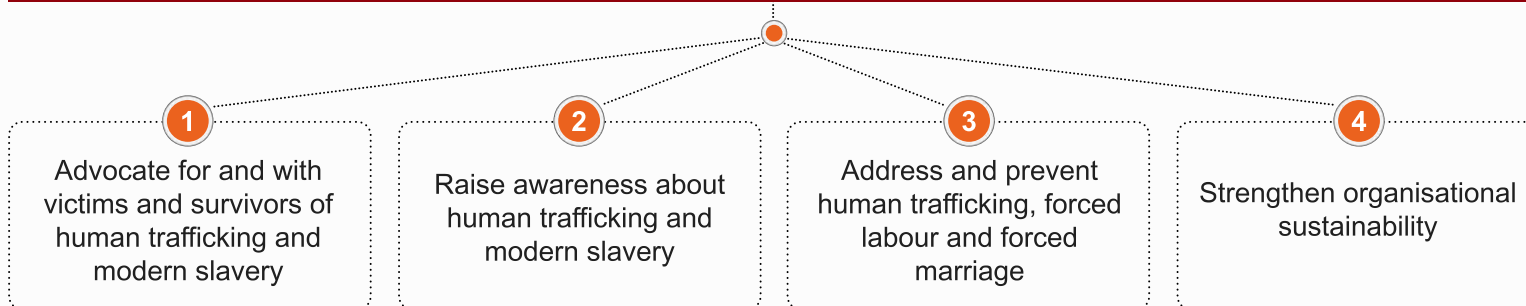
Human rights

Women's rights

Justice

Collaboration

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



ACRATH Members and staff continue to work collaboratively with one another and in partnership.

12 July 2022

# EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



ACRATH National  
Executive Officer  
**Christine Carolan**

And again another amazing year!

In early February 2023 at a special meeting convened by our president, the ACRATH national office and regional groups were called on to articulate our work under brief punchy headings; the aim is to describe our work in a way that our people and friends will easily remember. We thus framed our work, and all our public-facing materials, saying:

We support victims and survivors

We raise awareness

We advocate for systems change, and

We build a sustainable organisation

Below in reverse order are some major highlights within this framing of our work. I encourage you, the reader of our ACRATH annual report for 2023, to note these highlights and also to read carefully the detailed reports of ACRATH work on the following pages.

## WE BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

Throughout 2023 we threw ourselves into the work of building a cohesive effort across regional groups and the national office, as called for under the late 2021 Rules of Association changes. Regional co-ordinators, often now working in leadership teams, met regularly online with me as the NEO; we left governance matters to the national committee and embraced the operational challenges of building strong, focused and nationally linked regional teams.

Sometimes this has been hard to do as various people settled into new ways of relating, but as of late 2023, I saw a cohesive team of volunteers and staff, focused on achieving projects that clearly relate to ACRATH's strategic directions.

## WE ADVOCATE FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

The standout moment for long term ACRATH work was the announcement at the federal government budget in 2023 that there would be a trial of an additional pathway for victims and survivors of human trafficking onto the Support for Trafficked People Program. In 2005 ACRATH made this recommendation as part of a submission to the United Nations; ACRATH worked with Professor Jennifer Burn, several academics, lawyers and congregations of women religious to put this and other recommendations to the UN.

What does an additional pathway actually mean? It is a hugely significant change of government policy; it means that victims and survivors will now be able to access assistance without speaking with the Australian Federal Police (AFP). We know that the previous requirement to speak with the AFP deterred many people from asking for help. It took us and our network 18 years of political advocacy!

## WE RAISE AWARENESS

Lots of our ACRATH work fits within this focus; much of this work is rolled out by the Awareness Raising Team, known affectionately as the ART, and whose members from across Australia meet regularly online.

A new and challenging awareness raising project in 2023 is a joint project with Flinders Uni and the University of South Australia.

Our three organisations are working together to provide students in 21 universities across Australia with pre-service training on human trafficking, its detection and safe reporting, and its prevention.

We are able to tackle this two year project as the recipient of a much sought after Attorney General's Department grant under the National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery.



## WE SUPPORT VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS

A big change in 2023 was the significant boost to our direct service budget provided by several congregations of Catholic sisters and by some Trusts and; the donations were to be focused on supporting women as victims and survivors as they find their feet. Members in the Companionship program across three Australian states have made sure these donations support women with the pressing needs they articulate. We have been able to support women as their kids engage fully in excursions, camps and other expensive but essential aspects of schooling and we have been able to support some women to study at a tertiary level.

Looking forward to our work in 2024, we are focused on rolling out projects across Australia and internationally to again:

- Support victims and survivors

- Raise awareness

- Advocate for systems change, and

- Build a sustainable organisation

We invite you to set yourself a task for 2024; join in as

- A member working within the above four focus areas

- A campaigner

- A social media follower and share our important content

- A newsletter recipient - sign up today!

- [acrath.org.au/support-acrath/newsletter-subscription/](https://acrath.org.au/support-acrath/newsletter-subscription/)

- A donor

When we link arms to achieve our goals, we can achieve mighty things. Without naming individuals, I want to congratulate every person who has been part of team ACRATH in 2023. The 2023 network success of achieving better support for victims and survivors after 17 years of advocacy tells us we can do wonders when we work together. Robert Fitzgerald AM, who will commence as the Australian Age Discrimination Commissioner in 2024,, said recently that we are all looking at a night sky; some of us are overwhelmed by the darkness, but others seek out the light of the stars. Let's commit to be star-seekers.

**Christine Carolan**

National Executive Officer



# OUR TEAM 2023

## National Committee



**Clare Condon sgs**  
President



**Annette Arnold rsj**  
Vice President



**Carmel Heagerty rsm**  
National Secretary



**Shane Wood cfc**  
Treasurer



**Clare Nolan rsc**  
Committee Member



**Lorraine Phelan rsm**  
Committee Member



**Lisa McDonald**  
Committee Member



**Michael Mooney**  
Committee Member

## Our Staff



**Christine Carolan**  
National Executive Officer



**Ange Duthie**  
Communications Leader \*part time



**Cindy Bohan**  
Community Development Worker  
\*part time



**Taabeia Ibouri sgs**  
Forced Labour Worker \*volunteer



**Karen D'Souza**  
Bookkeeper \*part time



**Joseph Dunn**  
Community Development Worker  
\*part time



**Mary Baulderstone ibvm**  
National Office Administration Assistant  
\*Volunteer



**Melissa Halliday**  
Advocate against Human  
Trafficking and Forced Marriage



**Noelene Simmons sm**  
Communications and Advocacy  
\*Volunteer



**Marilyn Taylor**  
Volunteer Archivist \* part time

## Regional Coordinators 2023



**Teresa Lynch**

South Australia Coordinator



**Angela Hart**

South Australia Coordinator



**Suzette Clark rsc**

ACT/NSW Coordinator \*We acknowledge also the NSW/ACT regional members who assisted in leadership



**Janine Bliss fmm**

Queensland Regional Coordinator



**Marguerite Buckley**

Victoria Coordinator



**Mary Cameron**

Victoria Coordinator



**Heather McNaught**

Western Australia Coordinator



**Rosa Ranieri**

Western Australia Coordinator



**120 MEMBERS**

**10600 VOLUNTEER HOURS**

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1

Advocate for and with victims and survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery

2

Raise awareness about human trafficking and modern slavery

3

Address and prevent human trafficking, forced labour and forced marriage

4

Strengthen organisational sustainability

Initiated in 2008, the ACRATH Companionship Program is one way that ACRATH supports victim/survivors of human trafficking. This unique program arose from the Australian Federal Police's concern for the well-being of a woman residing in Melbourne who had been trafficked. Over the course of fifteen years, the Companionship Program has proven to be a vital aspect of ACRATH's broader work.

In 2023, ACRATH has 13 trained and supervised volunteer Companions that offer support and friendship to 35 trafficked women and their 45 children as they face the long journey of healing. ACRATH channels some funds from donations and grants for direct assistance to victim/survivors.

Judy Lamb researched the work of ACRATH Companions over years resulting 10-page publication, ACRATH Companionship Project Research Paper. <https://acrath.org.au/acrath-companionship-program/>, this research paper was developed this year by highlighting what many in ACRATH already thought – the Companionship program does impact on ACRATH – it informs policy, gives evidence to the advocacy work, and deepens our awareness raising and training.

To read see here: <https://acrath.org.au/research-applauds-companionship-program/>



*The companion explained that over the last seven or eight years, on two occasions she has given her partner information about a couple of services which might help her in terms of her intimate relationship, and she hadn't taken those up. This year "things got quite bad" and a doctor at the hospital gave her that same information. She has now been linked with a caseworker.*

ACRATH work in partnership with the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) to support seasonal workers from Timor Leste and the Pacific. Two ACRATH volunteers lead this work; they are Taabeia Ibouri sgs and Peter O'Neill ssc, Columban Regional Director of Oceania and ACRATH's representative on the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme Agriculture Committee. Eight ACRATH volunteers around Australia focus on supporting seasonal workers to prevent exploitation.

Peter O'Neill, took part in a Q & A as part of the 16 Days of Activism focussing on women migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation. Below is an excerpt – <https://acrath.org.au/a-better-deal-for-seasonal-workers>



*Pictured: Peter O'Neill ssc pictured with seasonal workers*

Q. Are you aware of incidences where seasonal workers have not been given adequate hours and struggle financially?

A. I have met some newly arrived seasonal workers who for several weeks were not given adequate hours of work and struggled financially.

Q. Are women, involved in the seasonal worker program, more vulnerable to exploitation?

A. Women who are pregnant are vulnerable to being sent home if they are unable to work.

# CANBERRA ADVOCACY

ACRATH was back in Canberra, visiting Members of Parliament and policy makers face-to-face, after three years of online advocacy, the result of COVID-19 travel restrictions. In the first week of September the team of 11 staff and volunteers met with a range of people in a bid to raise awareness and advocate for better outcomes for victim/survivors. The COVID driven physical absence from Canberra gave ACRATH's Canberra advocacy team the chance to develop important online connections and networks with MPs and staff, relationships that continue today.



*Pictured: ACRATH Advocacy Team at Parliament House September 2023*

Team members met with a range of people including Ms Lynn Bell, the Ambassador to Counter Modern Slavery, People Smuggling and Human Trafficking, Tony Burke, Minister for Industrial Relations, Andrew Giles the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs and Philippines Ambassador Ma. Hellen B. De La Vega. Some really significant meetings were held with Departmental Officers from relevant government departments..

The issues raised with key policymakers included the need for:

- A national compensation scheme for victims and survivors of modern slavery
- A national labour-hire licensing scheme
- An independent anti-slavery commissioner



*Pictured: The team had a fruitful meeting with AG Mark Dreyfus KC MP*

“This year’s visit to Canberra built on the last 17 years of advocacy, and some of the issues we discussed were ones we have raised again and again and we will keep doing that because that’s what leads to change for victim/survivors of human trafficking– persistent advocacy,”

Cindy Bohan– ACRATH Community Development Worker

## Ministerial Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery

The 15th Ministerial Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery was held in Canberra in early December. The annual national roundtable was established as a consultative mechanism between the government and NGOs on trafficking issues.

ACRATH was invited to the first roundtable in 2008 and has valued the open dialogue that takes place at these meetings. Over its 15-year history the roundtable has made concrete proposals for policy change thus making a difference in the lives of victim/survivors.

The December meeting was convened by Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus KC MP, Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Assistant Minister for Social Services Justine Elliot MP. It celebrated the achievements of the last 15 years but also recognised there is still work to be done in eliminating human trafficking and slavery and in ensuring victim/survivors can access their human rights.



*pictured: The Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery December 2023 ACRATH representatives front left.*

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1

Advocate for and with victims and survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery

2

**Raise awareness about human trafficking and modern slavery**

3

Address and prevent human trafficking, forced labour and forced marriage

4

Strengthen organisational sustainability

ACRATH continued to shed light on the issue of modern slavery practices within Australia within the healthcare and university domains. Through our partnership with St John of God Health Care we delivered eight two-hour online workshops for healthcare staff throughout the year. These sessions delved into critical topics such as forced labor, forced marriage, supply chains, and identification protocols for victim/survivors within healthcare settings. Distinguished voices from various sectors, including the Australian Red Cross, Baptist World Aid, the Australian Federal Police, and Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, lent their expertise as speakers, enriching these workshops and strengthening collaboration across the sector.

**90% of participants reported that their understanding of modern slavery and the indicators had improved by the end of the session.**

*"We weren't really aware that we have a declaration of human rights, and that we have slavery in this first world country. We feel we can share this information with our colleagues, and that we could link to friends and family as well." Workshop participant*



ACRATH deepened the collaboration with St. Vincent's Health Australia within the healthcare sector, working to support their Attorney General's Department grant project. This exciting project focuses on developing essential tools and learning materials designed to empower staff in identifying and supporting victim/survivors in the hospital setting.

*Pictured - ACRATH Forced Marriage Advocate, Melissa Halliday— facilitating a St John of God Health Care online workshop*

The ACRATH Awareness Raising Team (ART) is a vital and energetic team with members from each region. Building the confidence and capacity of presenters is a key focus, by facilitating webinars to inform and prepare presenters. A package of PowerPoint and resources guides the volunteer presenters with up-to-date information and is developed to target school students and staff and community groups. A focus in 2023 was ACRATH's support for a Voice to Parliament. Working with National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council who guided and suggested ways we could be visually prominent in our social media and also in our day-to-day meetings, in dialogue with Indigenous groups and with each other.



*Pictured: ACRATH member Joan Kennedy presenting to Star of the Sea Secondary students*

# AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGNS

## International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

Pope Francis instigated a global 'year of action by young people' – an opportunity for young people to raise their voices to make a real difference for a fairer world.

In response, a group of Victorian ACRATH members devised its Learning for Justice Project. The Learning for Justice Project has allowed students to be part of a global movement of young people – culminating in a series of special events, including the production of a video that four secondary schools from around Australia and New Zealand participated in and premiered live on Talitha Kum's 24-hour online pilgrimage.

This video was used as a valuable resource demonstrating the shared visions of young people inspiring thought and change in consumer-driven behaviour around modern slavery.



*Pictured: St Mary of the Angels Secondary College students*

## 16 days of activism against gender-based violence campaign

Since 2005, ACRATH has raised awareness of and encouraged action to combat human trafficking. We created a calendar highlighting the work carried out by ACRATH focusing on women migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation.

The Australian Embassy to the Holy See joined ACRATH in Rome to launch this global campaign. Valuable resources were highlighted, including contributions from global speakers, interviews with individuals with lived experience, informative articles, and more.



*Pictured: ACRATH's Executive Officer Christine Carolan and women ambassadors from around the world joined Pope Francis, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls.*

## Be a 'Good Egg' Easter Campaign

ACRATH continued its awareness-raising campaign, encouraging consumers to be good eggs and discover their chocolate's true origins and evaluate their favourite brands' ethical practices.



*Pictured: ACRATH's Cindy Bohan shopping wisely*



*Pictured: young supporters with chocolate displaying the rainforest alliance certification*

## World Day against Trafficking in Persons

The campaign for **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons July 30 2023** aimed to raise awareness calling on governments, law enforcement, public services, and civil society to assess and enhance their efforts to strengthen prevention and identify and support victims/survivors.



*Pictured: ACRATH WA Members*



*Pictured: ACRATHs 2023 National Committee (Clare Condon not pictured)*

**COMMUNICATIONS  
GROWTH**

**Digital  
Statistics**



**Newsletter:**  
1120 subscribers



**Facebook:**  
ACRATH  
1421 followers



**LinkedIn:**  
ACRATH  
84 followers



**Website:**  
<https://acrath.org.au>  
21,000 unique users



**X**  
ACRATHumans  
818 followers



**Instagram:**  
acrathau  
235 followers

As we reflect on our accomplishments, we recognize the profound impact of collective action and collaborative endeavours. Our dedication to combating modern slavery remains resolute, fuelled by the commitment to effectuating enduring change.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1

Advocate for and with victims and survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery

2

Raise awareness about human trafficking and modern slavery

3

Address and prevent human trafficking, forced labour and forced marriage

4

Strengthen organisational sustainability

In 2023, ACRATH, along with Flinders University, and the University of South Australia secured Attorney-General's Department funding for a collaborative project focused on raising awareness in the university sector. Over the next two years, we will be crafting six micro-credential modules that will cover risks and indicators of modern slavery, and the available support mechanisms for staff and students, in particular international students. We are aiming to roll this out in at least 20 universities across Australia.



*Pictured ACRATH met with South Australian academics starting the Education for Change project*



ACRATH facilitated a pivotal panel discussion for psychologists at the Women's Hospital, with a focus on combating forced marriages, and with input from the Australian Federal Police, Australian Red Cross and the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights. This forum served as a platform for exchange, driving deeper understanding and informed action within this critical sector.

In October 2023, ACRATH partnered with Catholic Education South Australia to offer a one-hour webinar for teachers, focusing on forced marriage. Speakers included Afra Prodan from the Australian Federal Police and ACRATH member, Elizabeth Payne. The webinar explored what forced marriage is and how it might present in a school context. Attendees also learnt about what referral pathways are available to support young people vulnerable to forced marriages, and how those referral pathways can integrate with existing school policies and procedures.



*Pictured: ACRATH trained marriage celebrants in WA on issues relating to forced marriage.*



## ACRATH Pacific Islands Outreach

The Conference of Major Superiors of the Pacific Islands (CMSPI) took place in August/September 2023. A full day of the conference was dedicated to reflecting on the issue of human trafficking and possible responses. This day was led by Abby Avelino mm, Talitha Kum International Coordinator, Colleen Jackson rsc, ACRATH member and Talitha Kum's Regional Co-ordinator of Oceania, and Peter O'Neill ssc, ACRATH member.

Colleen Jackson rsc commented:

*“The Assembly was on fire with determination to act! Several robust recommendations concerning human trafficking were among the assembly’s conclusions. Notably, a Talitha Kum network in the Pacific has been formed. This is an exciting development for the Pacific – and also for the wider region, including ACRATH and TKANZ.”*



*Pictured: Abby Avelino mm, Colleen Jackson rsc and Peter O'Neill ssc.*

*ACRATH is also delighted that we now have Taabeia Ibouri sgs, working in Kiribati with potential and returning workers who take on seasonal contracts within Australia.*

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1

Advocate for and with victims and survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery

2

Raise awareness about human trafficking and modern slavery

3

Address and prevent human trafficking, forced labour and forced marriage

4

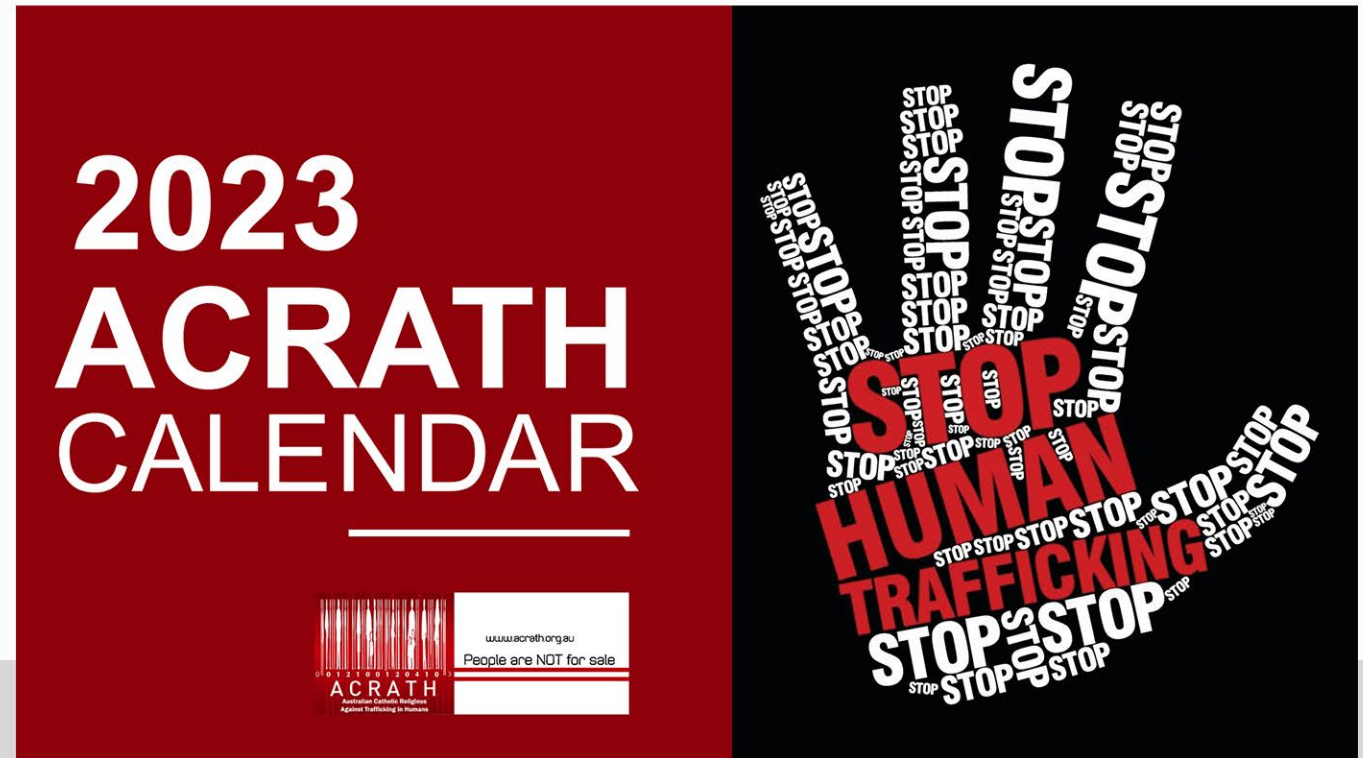
Strengthen organisational sustainability

## NEW MEMBERSHIP

In 2023 ACRATH had a record number of new members, including 12 in Western Australia. ACRATH in WA has been fortunate in attracting three first-year University students as well as a number who have had vast experience in the education sector.

### ACRATH regional group's fundraising efforts

Since its inception in 2015, the ACRATH calendar has become a beloved fixture in offices, homes, tea rooms and classrooms, The sale of the QLD-led ACRATH calendar continued to contribute to awareness and fundraising.



ACRATH presented at the Australian Catholic Press Association Conference on 'Speaking from the Heart'. WA Regional Coordinator Rosa Ranieri presented alongside author Shirley Eldridge, focusing on justice and Catholic Social Teaching and providing a deeper understanding of human trafficking. Rosa focused on three key areas of ACRATH work - offering support through the Companionship Program, raising awareness and advocacy. Shirley also talked about her book, 'Woman for Sale', which is inspired by real events.



*Pictured: Rosa Ranieri, Melissa Halliday and Shirley Eldridge at the conference. Image - Fiona Basile.*

ACRATH has received recognition from numerous churches, schools, and community groups for its work. The organisation is grateful for the support it receives from school fundraisers, such as the Genazzano FCJ College School Community. In 2023, the school hosted The ACRATH Benefit Concert, organised by Year 12 students, which featured student performances, a silent auction, and raffle items. The event raised over \$9,000, showcasing the generosity and dedication of the school community.



*Pictured: ACRATH members with ACRATH Executive Officer Christine Carolan, Mrs Loretta Wholley, Genazzano Principal and Phoebe Mondares - Social justice coordinator Genazzano*

ACRATH has created a new welcome member pack that introduces new members to our mission, strategic directions, past achievements, current projects, and opportunities for involvement. This nationwide initiative aims to attract new members to ACRATH. This is a joint project of WA and Vic members and national office staff.



*Pictured: new WA members*

# TREASURER'S REPORT



Treasurer  
**Shane Wood cfc**

## **Financial Summary**

Full Audit Report is available to ACRATH Members on request and publicly on the ACNC website.

### **Income**

Grants	171,848
Donations	617,487
Fee for Service	23,300
Interest	21,468
Other	24,406
	<b>858,509</b>

### **Expenses**

Projects	560,639
Office/Other	43,900
	<b>604,539</b>

Current Assets	1,378,371
Liabilities	321,274
Equity	<b>1,057,097*</b>
Increase in Equity	<b>253,971</b>

*\*This includes the Reserve Fund of \$400,000.*

## **COMMENTARY**

The financial records of ACRATH were audited on 14 February by Syed Abid of Collins and Company Audit Pty. Ltd. and the Report was signed off by Ryk Eksteen of the same company on 22 February.

The 2023 year saw the generous support of institutional and private donors, including especially Religious Congregations continue to provide more than expected support for ACRATH. Our Donations totalled \$617,487 for the year – above and beyond our Budget expectations, due mainly to a one-off generous donation of \$300,000. These donations together with grants from Religious Institute Foundations, government, and other sources totalling \$171,848 have enabled ACRATH to fulfil its program objectives, as well as enabling a small provision for a future where the historical sources of funding may not be available.

As all in the general community can attest, costs for all areas of modern life are increasing at a faster pace than available funds can meet at times. In attempting to address the emerging and increasing areas of human trafficking and modern slavery in Australia, ACRATH has to face similar increases in salaries and travel in particular – costs that cannot be avoided. While much of the local work is carried out by our large band of generous volunteer Members, the current milieu in which we, and all charities, operate requires significant investment in oversight and management, and compliance. These costs are increasing. However, 75% of our expenditure went directly into our Project areas and meeting our Grant requirements.

Responsible governance requires ACRATH to maintain a reasonable reserve to meet its liabilities and contingencies should the entity decide to cease operation. This has been preserved according to the Reserve Fund Policy at \$400,000. While we have seen a profit in the 2023 year, this needs to be seen in the context of previous years where we needed to draw upon Investments to meet annual deficits. It is pleasing to be able to show a healthy profit and to be able to return some funds to our investments to ensure a sustainable foreseeable future for ACRATH's vital work.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Karen D'Souza, our Bookkeeper, and the members of the Finance Committee (Sr Noelene Simmons sm, Christine Carolan, Michael McDonald, and Michael Mooney) for their advice and assistance. We are also grateful for the in-kind support of the Brigidine Sisters and the Christian Brothers in relation to Office space, meeting space, and HR advice.

**AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMANS (ACRATH)  
INCORPORATED**

**ABN 66 128 994 560**

**CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	2023 \$	2022 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Operations Account	177,978	121,061
ACRATH Public Fund Account	388,245	335,067
Term Deposit #1 (Reserve Fund)	712,502	400,776
Conrad Hilton Foundation Term Deposit	96,096	-
Travel Card - Noelene Simmons- Communications	148	76
ACRATH Petty Cash: NSW/ ACT	-	32
ACRATH Petty Cash: Victoria (National Office)	250	569
ACRATH Petty Cash: Perth Office (WA)	68	404
Prepaid Expenses	3,084	-
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>1,378,371</b>	<b>857,984</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,378,371</b>	<b>857,984</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
United Nations Grant	14,373	-
Delany Foundation Grant - 2022	-	6,668
Attorney-General's Departments Grant	11,258	-
Mary Ward International Australia Grant	10,940	-
Conrad Hilton Foundation Grant	242,317	-
Payroll Liabilities	-	4,248
PAYG Withholding Tax Payable	-	6,782
2024 Conference Revenue Received in Advance	6,000	-
Provision for Annual Leave	33,002	22,337
Provision for Long Service Leave	3,385	14,823
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>321,274</b>	<b>54,858</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>321,274</b>	<b>54,858</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,057,097</b>	<b>803,126</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated Funds	1,057,097	803,126
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>1,057,097</b>	<b>803,126</b>