

WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS – JULY 30, 2025

Message from Sr. Abby Avelino, MM – International Coordinator, Talitha Kum

Today, on the **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons**, **Talitha Kum** joins the global campaign to call for an end to one of the most heinous and organized forms of modern slavery: human trafficking. This year's theme, "**Human Trafficking is Organized Crime – End the Exploitation**," highlights a critical but often overlooked truth: human trafficking is not an isolated incident, but a complex and systemic crime. It operates in hidden, highly organized ways and relies on the exploitation of the most vulnerable.

As Talitha Kum, a global network of women and men of faith committed to ending human trafficking, we stand in solidarity with survivors and call for the dismantling of organized systems of exploitation.

According to the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime** (UNODC), "around **74% of traffickers** operated within organized crime groups." These networks operate across borders and in both digital and offline environments, targeting the most vulnerable: women, children, migrants, refugees, and those displaced by conflict or poverty.

Trafficking is evolving in alarming ways. Digital platforms are being misused to recruit, manipulate, and abuse—often invisibly. In regions devastated by war and crisis, traffickers target displaced families, forcing women and girls into sexual exploitation or forced marriage. In some areas, we are also alarmed by rising reports of kidnapping for organ trafficking—a grave violation of human dignity.

In the face of these threats, Talitha Kum responds with compassion, resilience, and concrete action. In 2024, we accompanied more than **46,000 victims and survivors**, walking alongside them through healing, care, empowerment, and reintegration.

Among them is **Grace**, a young woman trafficked to Dubai. After escaping her traffickers, she found refuge through a local church and was referred to the Sisters of Talitha Kum in Nigeria. At the shelter, she received care and training. Today, Grace runs her own business and is studying nutrition, saying, "*With their help and prayers, the Sisters gave me the courage to stand on my own.*"

Grace's journey is a powerful witness to what becomes possible when survivors are treated as leaders in their own recovery. And when communities, churches, and justice systems collaborate to dismantle organized trafficking networks.

On this World Day, **Talitha Kum** calls on all stakeholders—especially law enforcement and the criminal justice system—to:

- Dismantle organized trafficking networks across borders and digital platforms;
- Prioritize survivor-centered approaches in justice systems;
- Strengthen prevention efforts, particularly in communities vulnerable due to conflict, poverty, or digital risks.

As part of our global awareness efforts this Day, we also invite you to explore the **Talitha Kum Annual Report 2024**, which highlights the impact of our network and affirms our ongoing commitment to a world free from trafficking.

Together, we can end human trafficking and exploitation. **Together**, we can build a world where every person lives in **freedom** and **dignity**.

Sr. Abby Avelino, MM – International Coordinator, Talitha Kum,, July 2025

(Source: TalithaKum website: <https://www.talithakum.info/>)