

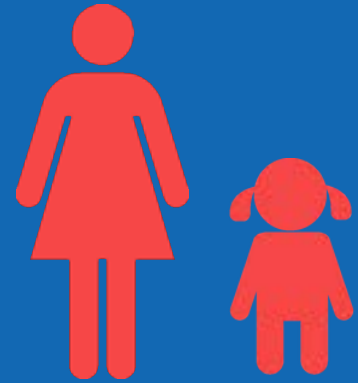
IMPACT REPORT

2015 – 2020

Coalition 
AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN



BY THE NUMBERS



65%

of identified
human trafficking
victims are
women and girls.

UNODC 2020 Global Trafficking in Persons Report

92%

of detected
sex trafficking
victims are
women and girls.

UNODC 2020 Global Trafficking in Persons Report

1 in 3

women globally
experience
physical or sexual
violence.

Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018, World Health Organization, 2021

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Generating billions of dollars annually, human trafficking is the fastest growing and second largest criminal enterprise in the world. It is a global scourge that disproportionately affects women and girls. Every day with determination and commitment, CATW leads efforts with our partners, from frontline service providers to the United Nations, to combat it.

We are delighted to present our 2015-2020 Impact Report, offering a snapshot of our celebrated victories and the unprecedented challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We remain grateful to our supporters and allies across the globe as we trace a journey toward a brighter future for women and girls everywhere. In particular, we salute sex trade survivor leaders, beacons of resilience and hope in our collective struggle to enact and implement laws and policies that address trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution.

At a time when we are examining the legacy of the darkest chapters of our respective histories and seeking a clear path toward justice, we exhort our governments to recognize women and girls as full human beings who deserve equal rights under the law and in practice.

Nobel laureate Toni Morrison once said “Don’t let anybody, anybody convince you this is the way the world is and therefore must be. It must be the way it ought to be.” The way the world ought to be is one where no woman or girl is bought or sold and where dignity is cherished. Together, let’s create that world.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taina".

Taina Bien-Aimé
Executive Director



Brian Ach/Getty Images for
Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW)

WHO WE ARE

CATW FOCUSES ON THREE KEY AREAS

Advocating for Strong Laws and Policies at Local, National and International Levels

- to prevent the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls.
- to ensure governments provide services and offer exit strategies for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- to hold accountable those who harm and exploit in the sex trade.

Raising Public Awareness

- to engage in high-level campaigns to educate policymakers, legislators, and the United Nations to ensure that laws protect the rights, safety, and lives of women and girls .
- to partner with survivor leaders to change public perceptions and negative stereotyping of sexual exploitation.

Supporting Survivor Leadership Globally

- to support the leadership of survivors of the sex trade in every aspect of campaigns, outreach, and participation as policy experts on panel discussions, official visits with legislators and policymakers, including at the United Nations, and in media.

CREATING A WORLD WHERE NO WOMAN OR GIRL IS EVER BOUGHT OR SOLD

The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) is one of the oldest international organizations working to end the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls. Through an approach rooted in women's rights and human rights principles, we advocate for strong laws and policies, raise public awareness and support survivor leadership.

SIX YEARS OF IMPACT

2015



Justice for World War II “Comfort Women” campaign gains 47,000 supporters.

The NoVo Foundation supports CATW for second year as Field Building Convener with partners to strengthen anti-trafficking movement. Leads to creation of World Without Exploitation.

Following the 2014 submission of an *amicus brief* in support of three teenage girls in Washington State suing Backpage.com for facilitating their sex trafficking, the **Global Campaign for a Sex Trafficking Free Internet** ramps up.

Legislative victories in the U.S.

Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, the first comprehensive federal bill to address domestic trafficking.

New York State's Trafficking Victims Protection and Justice Act.

2017



Global Campaign for a Sex Trafficking Free Internet contributes to momentum leading to a bipartisan Permanent Senate Subcommittee on Investigations report concluding that Backpage knowingly facilitated sex trafficking and promoted the prostitution of women and girls. The report also noted that Backpage covered up evidence of these crimes to increase its own profits.

Survivor Leader Grizelda Grootboom addresses the UN General Assembly.

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act of 2015 passes in Ireland signaling global spread of the Equality Model. CATW supported survivor leaders and frontline partners in their advocacy.

CATW, survivor leaders, Gloria Steinem and NOW-NY protest Pornhub Pop-Up in New York.

2016



CATW partners celebrate passage of The French Act Against Prostitution, the strongest Equality Model law in the world. CATW Europe initiated proceedings in the early 2000s that led to its passage.

CATW co-founds and co-convenes World Without Exploitation.

SIX YEARS OF IMPACT



2020

Launch of **At the Edge of the Margins** virtual round table series.

Supporting frontline partners in The Philippines and South Africa.

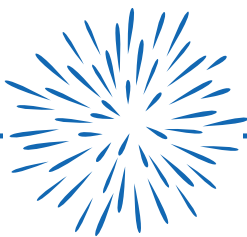


2019

Energizes the **5.2 Global Partnership** with a global conference in Madrid, reported as the largest international feminist conference in Spain's history.

Launch of **New Yorkers for the Equality Model**.

Women of Color Against the Sex Trade event with SPACE International.



2018

Decades of advocacy for a **Sex Trafficking Free Internet** result in:

- Shutting down Backpage.com.
- Enactment of FOSTA-SESTA, which holds websites accountable for knowingly facilitating sex trafficking and promoting prostitution (pimping).

Celebrates 30th anniversary with partners and supporters.



STANDING UP FOR THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS



EQUALITY MODEL LEGISLATION

At the core of our work is the belief that all women and girls deserve to live their lives free from violence, discrimination and exploitation. This can only be possible if no woman or girl is trafficked, exploited or prostituted in the sex trade. We call on governments to implement a legal framework that is based on fundamental principles of equality and women's rights. It is a model that ensures that governments will offer women and girls opportunities to survive and thrive, while exploiters and sex buyers are held accountable for the lifelong harm they cause. First enacted by Sweden in 1999, the Equality Model (also known as the Swedish or Nordic Model):

- Decriminalizes only individuals who are bought and sold in prostitution.
- Provides prostituted people, who are mostly women, with comprehensive services and offers them options should they wish to leave the sex trade.
- Penalizes sex buyers for the harm they cause, curbing the demand for prostitution.
- Criminalizes pimps, brothel owners and managers, and other third-party exploiters.

To date, seven additional jurisdictions have enacted the Equality Model: Iceland (2008), Norway (2009), Canada (2014), Northern Ireland (2014), France (2016), Republic of Ireland (2017) and Israel (2018).

CATW AT THE UN

We actively participated in the 2015 – 2019 sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), advocating for the rights of women and girls through interventions and events. We also engaged the UN and Member States as they conducted the third appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2017 to ensure inclusion of the particular vulnerabilities of women and girls. We participated in the General Assembly's Multi-Stakeholder Hearing and co-hosted an event at UN Headquarters highlighting the links between the Global Plan of Action, sustainable development, and states' commitments to ending the trafficking of women and girls.

In February 2020, prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, we met with the Committee to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the CEDAW Committee) at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. We urged this body of experts to remind governments to uphold the rule of law and prevent sex trafficking, protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable. The CEDAW Committee subsequently published its groundbreaking General Recommendation 38:

- stating that human trafficking is a gendered phenomenon.
- recognizing that sexual exploitation persists because states fail to discourage the demand that fosters sex trafficking.
- reminding governments that their obligations do not cease in times of conflict, political events, health crises or natural disasters.
- affirming that trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution of women and girls can be a threat to international peace and security.



If gender equality is to be achieved, the United Nations and its agencies, governments, and civil society must take action to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence and exploitation of all women and girls, including human trafficking.

– CATW Written Statement to CSW63



A CASE STUDY IN UN ADVOCACY

In October 2013, UN Women emailed a draft document, “Note on Sex Work, Sexual Exploitation, and Trafficking,” supporting the call for the legalization and decriminalization of the sex trade, including brothel keeping, pimping and sex buying, to an undisclosed number of recipients worldwide. The term “sex work” connotes acceptance of prostitution as a form of legitimate work, which directly contradicts human rights principles and international law.



UN Women does not take a position for or against the decriminalization/legalization of prostitution/sex work. Member states have approached the legal framework relating to prostitution/sex work in different ways ... UN Women believes that interventions should be guided by gender equality and women’s empowerment objectives, that all women must be protected from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation, as well as discrimination and stigmatization, and have access to protection, healthcare and other services

– Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, October 2019

As part of our core advocacy efforts to ensure respect for the rule of law and the rights of women and girls, we launched a global campaign, in collaboration with partners worldwide, including Equality Now, SPACE Intl and CAP Intl, to call on UN Women to retract the draft Note and affirm ratified international instruments and human rights principles.

After a six-year campaign that included letters, meetings and petitions to UN Women and the United Nations Secretary-General, UN Women declared “neutrality” on the issue, pledging to end implicit support of legalizing or decriminalizing the sex trade.



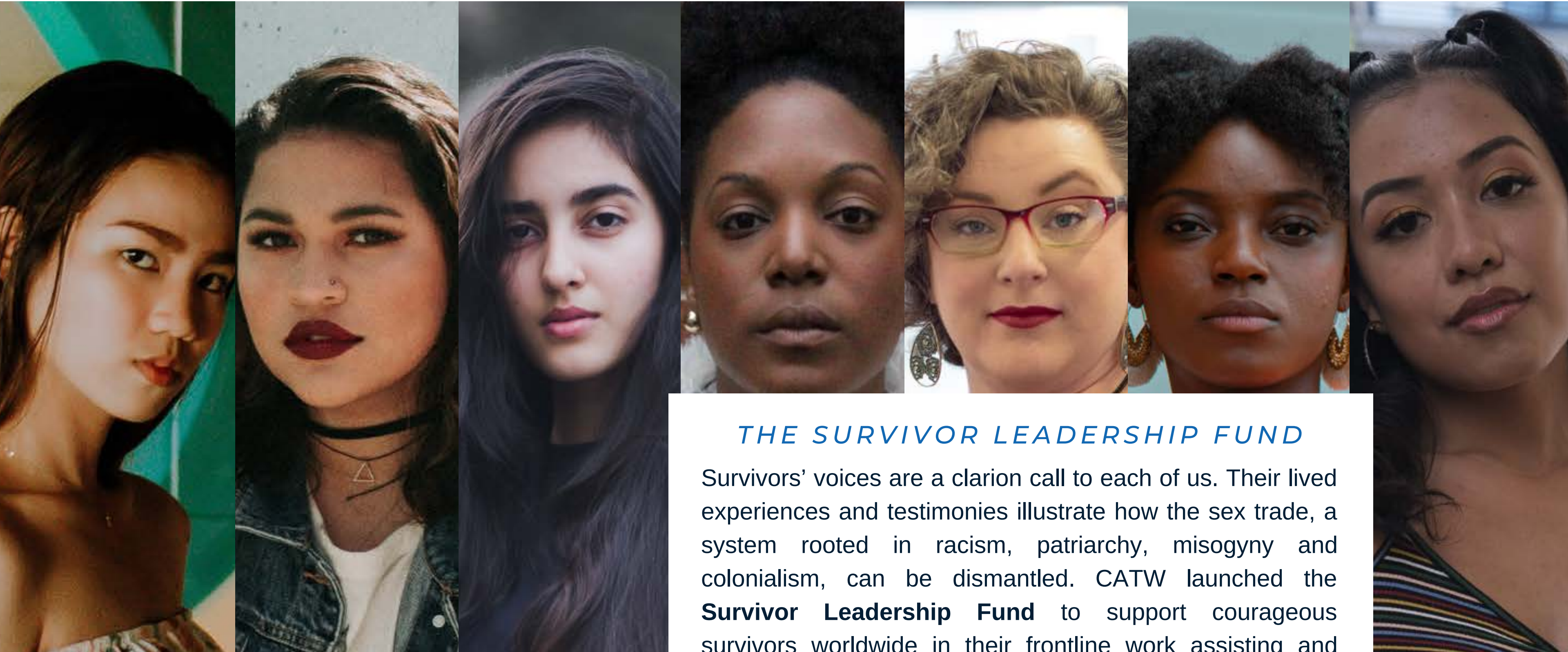
5.2 GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to provide clear guidelines for governments to address the world's most significant challenges. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets further codify UN commitments to sustain our planet and protect the fundamental rights of every human being by 2030. Gender equality is a prerequisite for global sustainable development and a key tenet of the 2030 Agenda. Through SDG 5, governments, the UN and its agencies, and civil society are reminded that achieving gender equality requires eradicating violence and discrimination against women and girls.

In 2017, CATW launched the **5.2 Global Partnership**, a civil society-led multi-stakeholder group dedicated to reaching SDG Target 5.2 by 2030. Together with grassroots networks around the world, the Partnership accelerates action and investments to end violence against women and girls, in particular human trafficking and sexual exploitation, sexual violence, and sexual harassment. It invites the collaboration and membership of the UN and its agencies, governments, the private sector, academia, philanthropic entities and individuals, and other members of civil society to reach these goals.



SUPPORTING SURVIVOR LEADERSHIP



THE SURVIVOR LEADERSHIP FUND

Survivors' voices are a clarion call to each of us. Their lived experiences and testimonies illustrate how the sex trade, a system rooted in racism, patriarchy, misogyny and colonialism, can be dismantled. CATW launched the **Survivor Leadership Fund** to support courageous survivors worldwide in their frontline work assisting and advocating for women and girls exploited in the sex trade.

SPOTLIGHT ON SURVIVOR LEADERS

MELANIE THOMPSON (USA), YOUTH OUTREACH COORDINATOR, CATW



I consider myself and many of the other survivors I know resilient people. I think that when it comes to making change, it's using the pain and the trauma that you have endured in your lifetime to fuel the laws and policies that we want to see, and trying to fight for a world where we feel safe, where we want to live, and where we feel protected.



In 2019, Survivor Leader and **CATW Youth Outreach Coordinator Melanie Thompson**, developed and delivered a Survivor Leadership Training module to up-and-coming movement leaders in New York City. This program has empowered survivor leaders to meet with legislators and frontline organizations to advocate for the Equality Model.



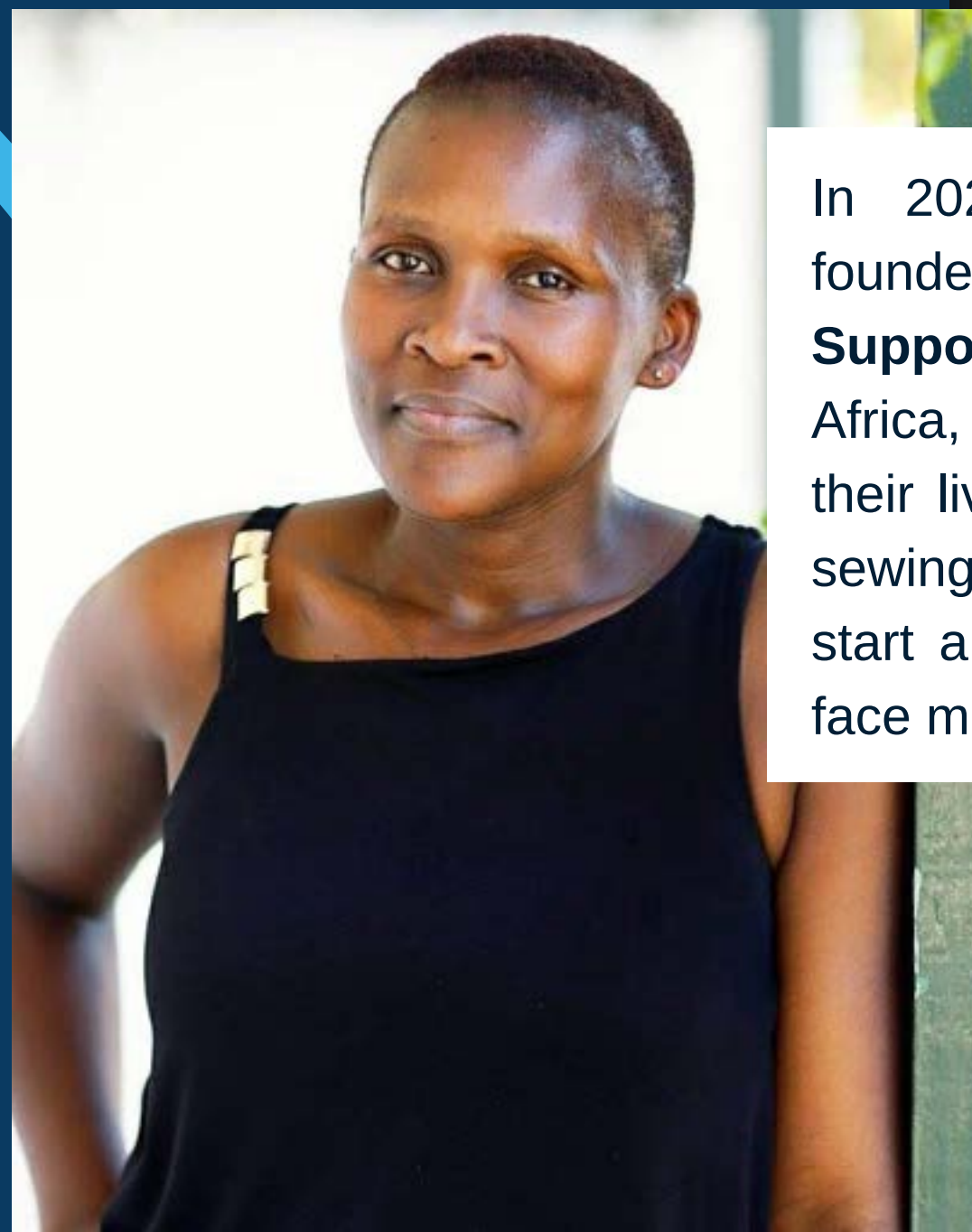
Photo credit (right): Lynn Savarese, New Abolitionists
Photos courtesy of Melanie Thompson

SPOTLIGHT ON SURVIVOR LEADERS

MICKEY MEIJI (SOUTH AFRICA), FOUNDER, PAN-AFRICAN SURVIVOR NETWORK



Our respective governments really need to sit down and speak to us, hear us out and provide us with platforms to hear what it is that we really want. We are constantly at the mercy of the men who abuse us. So, it is high time our government started hearing us and understanding what it is that we need.



In 2020, Survivor Leader **Mickey Meiji** founded the **Survivor Empowerment and Support Program** in Cape Town, South Africa, which helps sex trade survivors rebuild their lives. CATW facilitated the purchase of sewing machines for this survivor-led group to start a cottage industry producing protective face masks.

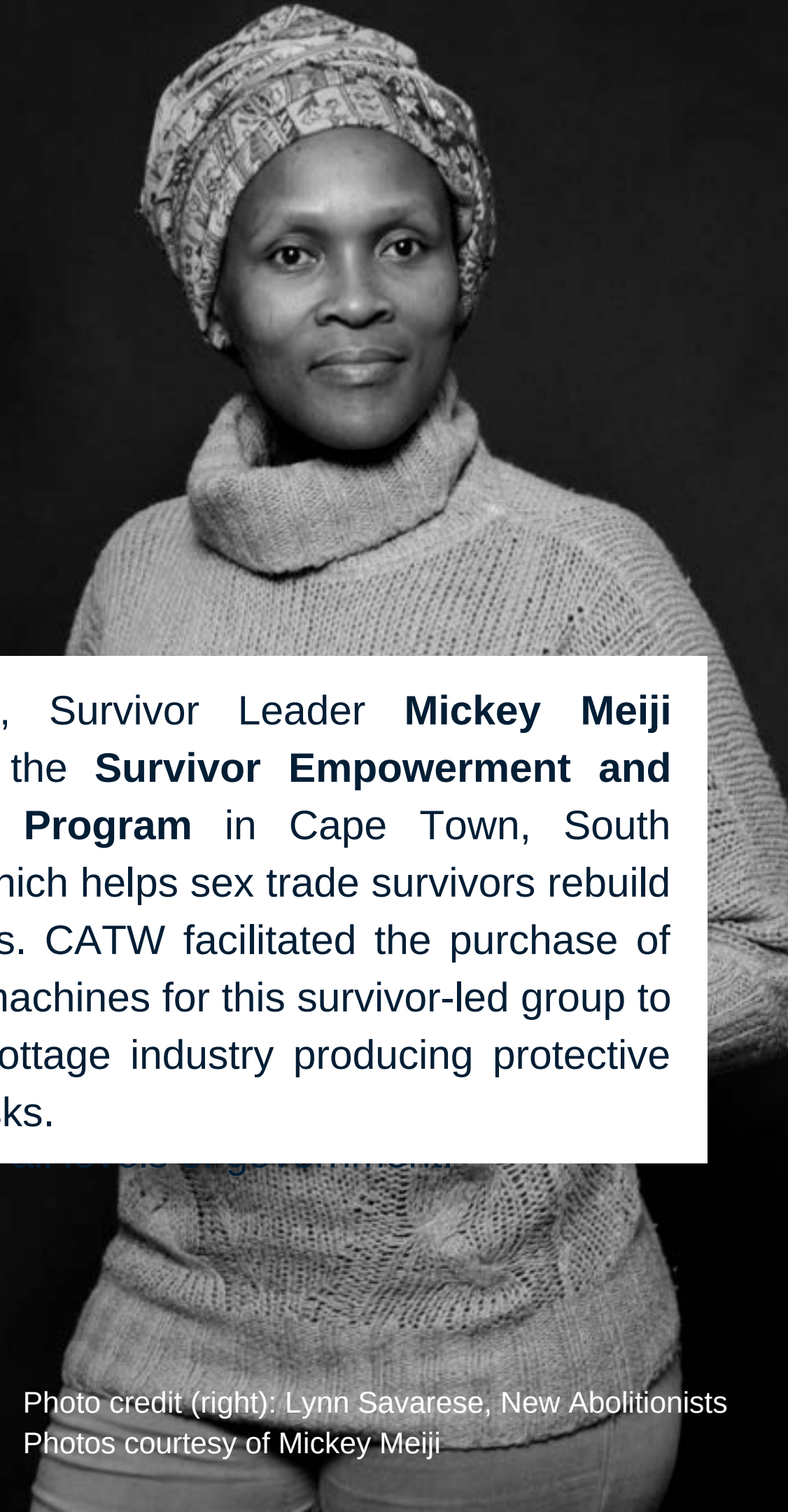


Photo credit (right): Lynn Savarese, New Abolitionists
Photos courtesy of Mickey Meiji

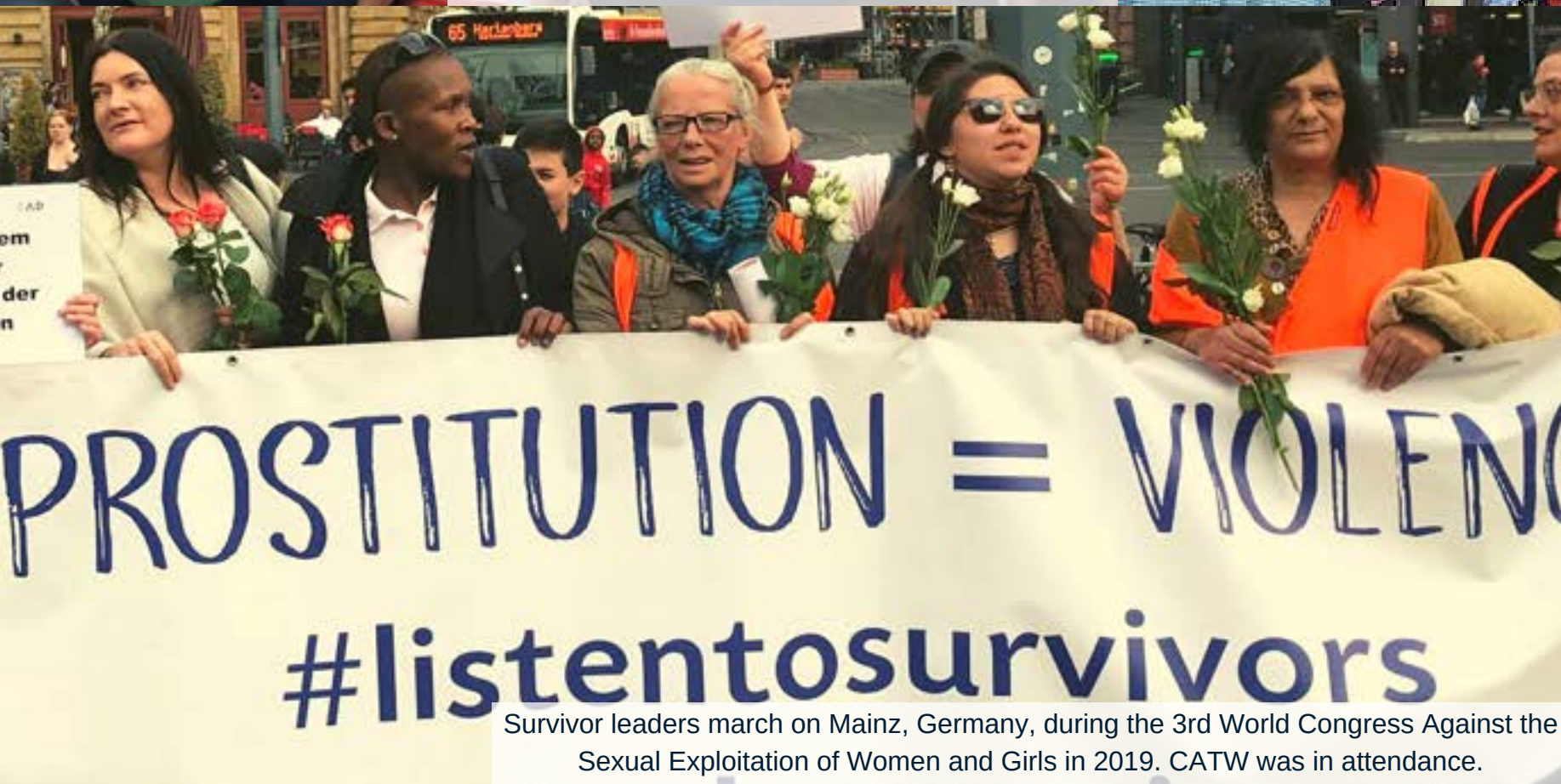
IGNITING A WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT



2018 conversations with survivor-led group AMADH in Argentina forge new connections in Latin America.



CATW executive director meets with CATW-AP survivor-led groups in the Philippines in Jan. 2020.



Survivor leaders march on Mainz, Germany, during the 3rd World Congress Against the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Girls in 2019. CATW was in attendance.



BUILDING GLOBAL COALITIONS

The strength of our connections with survivor leaders and grassroots networks across the world increases our ability to respond to challenges collectively and creatively.

REGIONS IN FOCUS

CATW-Latin America and the Caribbean, through its Red Alert System (RAS), provided evidence of the systematic disappearances of women and children into trafficking networks. By 2015, in nine years of operation, RAS was responsible for locating 1,314 victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in Mexico and abroad.

CATW-Asia Pacific provides direct services to women and children, including those displaced after natural disasters in the Philippines. They continue to call on the government to prevent the trafficking and sexual exploitation of populations made vulnerable after these horrific events through policies that help make their lives more sustainable.

COLLABORATING TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN & GIRLS



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