

ISSUE 8, MARCH 2022

OUR WORK, OUR LIVES

Songs that Women Sing



Our Work, Our Lives
Issue 8, March 2022

Editorial Team: Alfie Gordo, Bandana Pattanaik and Borislav Gerasimov

Cover Design: Tanuja Sethi



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

Our Work, Our Lives

Many members and partners of the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) work closely with women workers to support and strengthen their organising. The women earn their living from domestic work, sex work, agriculture, weaving, entertainment work, garment sector work, home-based work, and any available daily wage work. Except those who are working away from home, all women also carry out much of the care work in their families. While some workers are affiliated with trade unions, others are part of informal collectives or community groups linked to local NGOs.

Since March 2021, some GAATW members and partners have been part of an online initiative called *Women Workers for Change*. The group has held discussions to understand what women workers who engage in unpaid and paid labour define as 'change' in their lives, how do they want to participate in creating change and what the CSOs can do to improve their accountability towards women workers.

Our Work, Our Lives, a monthly E-Magazine, is born out of those discussions. Published on the last day of the month, each issue will take up a simple theme that resonates with the everyday lives of low-wage women workers, their joys, sorrows, struggles and most importantly, their agendas for change.

While this English language E-Magazine will act as a bridge among CSO colleagues (and the few workers who can communicate in English) in different countries, each group will create publications in their own language. Where the workers have no formal literacy, they will use other innovative techniques. GAATW Secretariat will do all it can to democratise digital technology and facilitate knowledge building and sharing from ground up.

Contents

Issue 8, Songs that Women Sing	6
AAINA: Rice Planting Song.....	11
BADABON SANGHO: Songs that Women Sing	13
COMITATO PER I DIRITTI CIVILI DELLE PROSTITUTE: Music and Activism..	17
DWSN: Never Giving Up	26
ESPACIOS DE MUJER: Slogans of Latin American Women.....	30
EUROPEAN SEX WORKERS ALLIANCE: Fils de Joie	34
GPI: Equality Clap and Power Chanting	36
GSBI: Women Workers' Song.....	38
HOMENET: My Fair and Happy Home	41
KOMUNITAS DEWI SINTA: Mars Dewi Sinta	44
LUCY TURAY: Thewanthdean //By and By	46
MADHU BHUSHAN: Singing Revolution and Radical Love: Memories from the Women's Movement in Karnataka, India.....	49
MANDIKA NILAMAN: In Honour of Niyamgiri	54
NAWO: Two of our Favourite Songs	56
OKUP: Amader Soi Group Celebrates 8 th March, 2022.....	60
OPORAJITA GROUP: Love and Longing in Jordan	61
SBMI: Migrant Workers Unite: Chants Calling for the Government of the Republic of Indonesia.....	68
SEWA: Kalamereyayi Kanavu Kandatham	71

SHANTI FOUNDATION & SHAKTI SAMUHA: Songs that have Inspired Us.....	74
SMS: Songs of our Festivals	80
VIOLETKI COLLECTIVE: A Song About Stanka Nefertiti	82
WOREC: Together We are Rising	85
Links to video and audio clips in the stories & some additional resources.....	88

Issue 8, Songs that Women Sing

Dear friends,

The March issue of **Our Work, Our Lives** focuses on music. Songs and music have always been powerful tools to inspire and mobilise people. They have been an integral part of social justice movements and the feminist movements have a treasure chest of powerful songs. So we thought that in March, when we celebrate International Women's Day, it would be good to learn about the songs that our colleagues have been inspired by and use in their work. We are delighted that friends from so many countries shared songs, old and new, that they have used in their movements – for protest marches, trainings, celebrations, and solidarity gatherings. These songs raise their voice against patriarchy, discrimination, injustice, and extractivism and call for peace, freedom, and equality. Many songs are creations of groups. Some are full of humor and sarcasm. Some have anger. All are simple and powerful.

Songs have also been important for workers, including women workers. A lot of work that women do is repetitive, monotonous, time consuming, and taxing. They need patience, grit, imagination, love, and care to carry out their tasks, day in and day out. Women workers in traditional societies, like their male counterparts, have made up songs to go with work. They have sung while planting, weeding, cleaning, grinding, knitting, weaving, and putting their babies to sleep. Our friends

from Aaina in Odisha, India shared a song performed by a woman farmer which is sung while planting rice.

Many songs have travelled across time and place. [Bella Ciao](#), which many of us may know as a resistance, anti-fascist song, has its roots in the paddy fields of Po Valley in northeast Italy. The original singers of Bella Ciao in the nineteenth century were women *mondine* (literally “weeders”), who were bemoaning their harsh working conditions. Now the song is available in multiple languages and part of the social justice movements in many parts of the world. Even in the pre-digital era, songs like *Bread and Roses* and *We Shall Overcome*, had crossed geographical and linguistic barriers and become global. More recently, the protest march titled [“el violador en tu camino”](#) (A rapist in your way) organised by a Chilean feminist collective, *LASTESIS*, has gone viral and inspired women to hold street protests in many parts of the world including in [Delhi](#) and [Nairobi](#).

The invitation to our colleagues was simple. We asked them to share one or two songs which they have used in their work along with some contextual details and a summary translation. We said that the songs could be from the social justice movements that they have been part of or they could also be chosen and sung by the women they work with. We asked them to share an audio or video clip and some photos, if possible.

The response is a wide-ranging collection of clips and write-ups from 21 organisations in 12 countries around the world – Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Colombia, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Jordan, Nigeria, Nepal, Sierra Leone, and Thailand. The songs speak of love, separation, and longing, celebrate nature and the beauty

of Spring, question the hypocrisy of mainstream society, reject patriarchy and discrimination, and express hopes for a just and peaceful world. When we announced the theme, we wondered how many of our colleagues still use songs in their work and if it is popular only with some organisations in certain parts of the world. Our request made some colleagues nostalgic and many told us that there is a need to compile all the songs that they have used in their movements over the years. Some sisters felt inspired to compose or choose a song to sing for International Women's Day as well as share in the magazine.

As the month progressed, we came to know of many new songs. Most songs about labour migration, we realised, are written from male perspectives. Women's voices in those songs are often of the wives, daughters and sisters left behind at home. Listening to the songs and poems of our migrant worker sisters, we think that a new genre of writing might be in making. With women as the protagonists talking about nostalgia, loss, longing, and dreams. Similarly, we found very little documentation of songs from the perspective of women workers. Hopefully, our colleagues working in rural communities will document songs that women sang while going about their work. Indeed, those would be invaluable cultural resources.

Each short piece of this issue features one or two songs with translation and some background information. We have inserted links to the audio or video files into the essays, but page 88 also lists all the clips in alphabetical order. There is a small compilation of links to clips of songs and essays which colleagues may find useful.

“Does music have the power to stop war? Sadly, the answer is no,” said Haruki Murakami in one of his recent programmes on FM radio Japan where he chose to share some powerful anti-war songs. “But it has the power to make listeners believe that war is something we must stop,” he added. We agree. Music does not change the world but it inspires us to work for social change. It makes us believe that another world is possible.

We hope you feel inspired by the songs shared by our colleagues.

Do write to us with your comments, suggestions, or stories for upcoming issues at bandana@gaatw.org

Warmly,

GAATW-IS team

PS: After a break of two years, local and international travel is starting again. Our colleagues in different countries have resumed work travel and in person meetings and we at GAATW Secretariat will do so very soon. In order to allow everyone a little more preparation time, we have decided to make **Our Work, Our Lives** a bi-monthly magazine. The next issue, focusing on **the how and why of organising**, will be published on 31 May 2022.



Songs that Women Sing

Rice Planting Song

AAINA, ODISHA



The Aaina team would like to share a song sung by Phula Malika from Laukhala village in Soroda block of Ganjam, Odisha. This is a song that women sing while planting rice. Often one person starts and others join in. These are oral songs that are passed on from one generation to the other. Women learn the songs from their mothers and mothers-in-law. Lyrics are often improvised. As this is not the season for rice planting Phula has sung it in her kitchen.

Click this link to listen to Phula's song:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10b9gEEN5j9O4R_sgpnfj9-9qHKH6zahP/view?usp=sharing



Aaina has been working in Ganjam for many years now. During the last years, their work has included encouraging women farmers to resume traditional, sustainable agricultural practices. Women farmers from more than 40 villages have formed groups and joined the SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) trade union. Many women have been able to get some land in their names and Farmer's Card from the Government now.

Courtesy: Dhableswar Pradhan and Dillip Kumar Biswal, Aaina, Odisha, India

Songs that Women Sing

BADABON SANGHO

Three women worker members of Badabon Sangho would like to share a song each. While the first two songs are sung solo, the last one is a group song of women fisher folks. All are local folk songs.

Broken Heart

Singer: Bilkis Begum

Women Returnee Migrant
Worker

Group Member of Ashandipur,
Kalatia, Keraniganj,

A broken-hearted woman is wondering with whom she could share her pain. She can't tell anyone, but she is drowning in pain. It is suffocating her, but no one knows about. If she tells her mother or her father, they won't be able to bear it. So she decides to keep the turmoil within herself.



Link to the video: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19yeWam7-KdCFI8jt28AbmzflQs4BrZVB/view?usp=sharing>

The Song of Separation



Singer: Parvati Das

Woman group member from Gourabmbha union of Rampal Upazila

The singer is expressing her feelings to the Koel (a singing bird of the Asian continent which sings in Spring, mainly to attract female birds) that is singing for a long time from the tree in the courtyard. The singer says that her husband/loved one is away for his work and has not come home for a long time. She is feeling lonely and cannot concentrate on any household chores. Lastly, she hopes for some advice from the bird who is also waiting for his partner and calling out to her.

Link to the video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RxCWU9RkJL6bpKvPFWN0VThZZXzVA3Tp/view?usp=sharing>

This Padma, Meghna, Jamuna ... Song by Fisherfolk women group members of Chila Union of Mongla Upazila



This is a popular song that mentions the main rivers of Bangladesh and how they flow around the country. While talking about the trajectory of the river, the song also describes the lifestyle and livelihood of Bangladeshi people (i.e., fishing, farming) which depends on the rivers. This song is very close to the hearts of rural people. People often sing it while working or just in a group.

Link to the video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YXh4CI6XuBV6xyoEpNxNP1sz--WWu2Ac/view?usp=sharing>

Translation by Lipi Rahman

Music and Activism

COMITATO PER I DIRITTI CIVILI DELLE PROSTITUTE, ITALY



Lucciole Vagabonde (Wandering Fireflies)

Pia recalls that in the early period after the organisation was founded, some members of the Comitato per i Diritti Civili delle Prostitute onlus would sing *Lucciole Vagabonde* by Achille Togliani. The song was very popular when it was composed in 1927 by Bixio and Cherubini.

Lucciole literally means fireflies. Metaphorically, the word *lucciole* indicates sex workers. This song tells of the desire of the fireflies to be free, to go out at night in the streets under the lamp post and sing freely when there are no patrols. As

fireflies, they represent the flowers of evil and yet, if though they are slaves in a brutal world, the night light always shines in the dark. Only the moon is there to notice them when they dance and sing even with a heavy heart.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCa6NtsP6vc>

Lyrics

Lucciole Vagabonde

Quando più fitta l'oscurità
Scende sulla città
Lucciole ansiose di libertà
Noi lasciamo i bassifondi

Senza una metà ci incamminiam
E sotto ad un lampion
Quando la ronda non incontriam
Cantiamo una canzon

Noi siamo come le lucciole
Brilliamo nelle tenebre
Schiave di un mondo brutal
Noi siamo i fior del mal.

Se il nostro cuor vuol piangere
Noi pur dobbiam sorridere
Danzando sul marciapiè
Finché la luna c'è.

Pallida luna soltanto tu
La nostra gioventù
Vedi ogni notte appassir di più
Come un fiore senza sole.

Ma se il destino ci spezzerà

Wandering Fireflies

(Google translation)

When it gets dark
We descend upon the city
Fireflies yearning for freedom
We leave the slums.

We walk without a destination
And under a streetlamp
With no patrols to be seen
We sing a song.

We are like fireflies
We shine in the dark
Slaves of a brutal world
We are the flowers of evil.

If our heart wants to cry
Yet must we smile
and dance on the pavement
While the moon is there.

Pale moon, only you
can see our youth
wither more and more every
night
Like a flower without the sun.

Nel cuore la canzon
Solo il tuo raggio ci bacierà
All'ombra dei bastion.

Noi siamo come le lucciole
Brilliamo nelle tenebre
Schiave di un mondo brutal

Noi siamo i fior del mal.

Se il nostro cuor vuol piangere
Noi pur dobbiam sorridere
Danzando sul marciapiè
Finché la luna c'è.

But if fate breaks us
the song in our heart
Only your ray will kiss us
In the shadow of the bastions.

We are like fireflies
We shine in the dark
Slaves of a brutal world
We are the flowers of evil.

If our heart wants to cry
We must smile
Dancing on the pavement
While the moon shines.

Bocca Di Rosa (Rose Mouth)



Fabrizio De André's Song *Bocca di Rosa* is a homage to sex workers. So much has been said and written about this song, which remains one of the most popular songs of the loved artist.

It's all about passion and a woman's free choice to give love. It also indicates how society's moral values change depending on the geographical area where one is.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrFjFOjxYyA>

Lyrics

Bocca Di Rosa

La chiamavano Bocca di Rosa
Metteva l'amore, metteva l'amore
La chiamavano Bocca di Rosa
Metteva l'amore sopra a ogni cosa.

Appena scesa alla stazione
Del paesino di Sant'Ilario
Tutti s'accorsero con uno sguardo
Che non si trattava d'un missionario.

C'è chi l'amore lo fa per noia
Chi se lo sceglie per professione
Bocca di Rosa né l'uno, né l'altro
Lei lo faceva per passione.

Ma la passione spesso conduce
A soddisfare le proprie voglie
Senza indagare se il concubito
Ha il cuore libero oppure ha moglie.

E fu così che da un giorno all'altro
Bocca di Rosa si tirò addosso
L'ira funesta delle cagnette
A cui aveva sottratto l'osso.

Ma le comari d'un paesino
Non brillano certo in iniziativa
Le contromisure fino a quel punto
Si limitavano all'invettiva.

Si sa che la gente dà buoni consigli
Sentendosi come Gesù nel Tempio
Si sa che la gente dà buoni consigli
Se non può più dare cattivo esempio.

Così una vecchia mai stata moglie

Rose Mouth

They called her Rose-Mouth
she put love, she put love
they called her Rose-Mouth
she put love above everything.

As soon as she got off at the station
in the little town of Sant'Ilario
everybody realised with a glance
that she wasn't a missionary.

Some make love because of boredom
Some choose it as a profession
Rose-Mouth was not one or the other
she did it for passion.

But passion often leads you
to satisfy your true wishes
without asking if the object of your lust
has a free heart or a wife.

And so from one day to another
Rose-Mouth drew upon herself
the fatal wrath of the little bitches
from whom she had stolen the bone.

But the old wives of a little village
don't stand out for their initiative
the countermeasures up to that point
were limited to invective.

We know that people give good advice
feeling like Jesus in the temple
We know that people give good advice
if they don't give a bad example.

Senza mai figli, senza più voglie
Si prese la briga e di certo il gusto
Di dare a tutte il consiglio giusto.

E rivolgendosi alle cornute
Le apostrofò con parole argute
"Il furto d'amore sarà punito" - disse -
"Dall'Ordine Costituito".

E quelle andarono dal commissario
E dissero senza parafrasare:
"quella schifosa ha già troppi clienti
Più di un consorzio alimentare".

Ed arrivarono quattro gendarmi
Con i pennacchi, con i pennacchi
Ed arrivarono quattro gendarmi
Con i pennacchi e con le armi.

Spesso gli sbirri e i carabinieri
Al proprio dovere vengono meno
Ma non quando sono in alta uniforme
E la accompagnarono al primo treno.
Alla stazione c'erano tutti:
Dal commissario al sacrestano
Alla stazione c'erano tutti
Con gli occhi rossi e il cappello in
mano.

A salutare chi per un poco
Senza pretese, senza pretese
A salutare chi per un poco
Portò l'amore nel paese;

C'era un cartello giallo
Con una scritta nera
Diceva: "Addio Bocca di Rosa
Con te se ne parte la primavera".

So an old lady who'd never been a wife
who never children, who has no desire
decided with a certain pleasure
to give all women the right advice.

And turning to all who'd been betrayed
she cut them off with sharp words:
"The theft of love shall be punished,"
she said, "by the established order."

And the ladies went to the police chief
and said without paraphrasing:
"That disgusting woman has too many
clients,
more than a food consortium."
And four gendarmes arrived
with plumes, with plumes
and four gendarmes arrived
with plumes, and with weapons.

Often cops and carabinieri
neglect their duty
but not when they are in full uniform
and they put her on the first train.

At the station they were all there
from the police chief to the sexton
at the station they were all there
with red eyes and cap in hand.

To bid farewell to her who for a while
without claims, without claims
to bid farewell to her who for a while
brought love to the town.

There was a yellow sign
with black writing
it said: "Farewell, Rose-Mouth,

Ma una notizia un po' originale
Non ha bisogno di alcun giornale
Come una freccia dall'arco scocca
Vola veloce di bocca in bocca.

Alla stazione successiva
Molta più gente di quando partiva
Chi manda un bacio, chi getta un fiore
Chi si prenota per due ore.

Persino il parroco che non disprezza
Fra un Miserere e un'Estrema Unzione
Il bene effimero della bellezza
La vuole accanto in processione.

E con la Vergine in prima fila
E Bocca di Rosa poco lontano
Si porta a spasso per il paese
L'amore sacro e l'amor profano.

with you, spring leaves”.

But original news
doesn't need any newspaper
just as the arrow of an archer shoots
it flies quickly from mouth to mouth.

And at the next station
were more people than when she left
who blow a kiss, who throw a flower
and who book for two hours.

Even the priest who does not condemn
between Miserere & Extreme Unction
the ephemeral wealth of beauty,
wants her by his side in the procession.

And with the Virgin at the front
and Rose-Mouth not far behind
he carries around town
sacred and profane love.

Four Women

Another important singer whose song speaks of women's condition is Nina Simone's song *Four women* which was released in 1966 on black women's condition in the United States. Although the song refers to the conditions of black women during slavery, the lyrics of *Four Women* describe the condition of migrant women in present times as they still face racial discrimination, sexism, sexual violence, minors forced into sex work, social exclusion and the question of identity. Sara, a strong woman; Siffronia, conceived from sexual violence by a white man; Sweet Thing, a prostitute; Peaches, an activist, a fighter.

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWWqx_Keo1U

Lyrics

My skin is black

My arms are long

My hair is woolly

My back is strong

Strong enough to take the pain

Inflicted again and again

What do they call me?

My name is Aunt Sarah

My name is Aunt Sarah, Aunt Sarah

My skin is yellow

My hair is long

Between two worlds

I do belong

My father was rich and white

He forced my mother late one night

What do they call me?

My name is Saffronia

My name is Saffronia

My skin is tan

My hair is fine

My hips invite you

My mouth like wine

Whose little girl am I?
Anyone who has money to buy
What do they call me?
My name is Sweet Thing
My name is Sweet Thing

My skin is brown
My manner is tough
I'll kill the first mother I see
My life has been rough
I'm awfully bitter these days
'Cause my parents were slaves
What do they call me?
My name is Peaches

Bella Ciao

Last but not the least is the symbolic song which is common to all global social justice movements: *Bella Ciao*. It embodies an important message of resistance and is sung on 1 May, International Workers Day, and in all situations where social justice is at peril. The lyrics evoke freedom, the struggle against dictatorships and opposition to all forms of extremisms.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CI3lhyNKfo>

Lyrics

Una mattina mi sono alzato
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
Una mattina mi son alzato
E ho trovato l'invasor.

O partigiano portami via
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
O partigiano portami via
Che mi sento di morir.

E se muoio da partigiano
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao,
ciao
E se io muoio da partigiano
Tu mi devi seppellir.

E seppellire lassù in montagna
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
E seppellire lassù in montagna
Sotto l'ombra di un bel fior.

E le genti che passeranno
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
E le genti che passeranno
Mi diranno "che bel fior".

Questo è il fiore del partigiano
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
Questo è il fiore del partigiano
Morto per la libertà.

Translation

One morning I woke up
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
One morning I woke up
And I found the invader.

Oh partisan, carry me away,
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
Oh partisan, carry me away,
Because I feel I'm dying.

And if I die as a partisan
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao
And if I die as a partisan
You must bury me.

Bury me up in the mountain
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao,
Bury me up in the mountain
Under the shadow of a pretty flower.

And the people who pass by
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao,
And the people who pass by
Will say to me: "what a pretty flower".

This is the flower of the partisan
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao
ciao,
This is the flower of the partisan
Who died for freedom.

Never Giving Up

DOMESTIC WORKERS SOLIDARITY NETWORK - JORDAN

We selected our network song 'Never Giving Up' during one of our sessions for the Women Workers Forum (WWF), supported by GAATW. This became our motivational song as it gives inspiration to each and every one of us at the Domestic Workers Solidarity Network. The song also represents our commitment to our network.

We decided to sing it during our learning session for WWF in time for the women's month. During this month we conducted skills training for some members to gain knowledge and skills for added income, and in order to find opportunities for upward employment. This is important because we seek economic and social stability while working as migrant domestic workers in Jordan.



We believe that whatever challenges we face within our network, or in our own lives as migrant women, we will fight to reach our dreams!

We may fall, we may cry, we may be in pain but we will never give up!



Click this link to listen to DWSN's song:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kVz0SopAEBcMkTrd7thJR9CdM1AEFEZs/view?usp=sharing>

Never Giving Up

I will take a chance

To be who I'm meant to be

I won't let fear

Keep me from trying

It's time for me to make a change

To start living the life I want

I'm going to reach for the sky way up high

I'm never giving up

It's up to me

To see who I can be

Make dreams reality

I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I won't live the life

Others expect of me
I want to be proud
Of who I'm becoming
It's time for me to make a change
To start living the life I want
I'm going to reach for the sky way up high
I'm never giving up
It's up to me



To see who I can be
Make dreams reality
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up

Step by step
I will make my own way
Even when others don't believe me
Brick by brick
I will build my destiny
I can't wait to see who I become
I'm going to reach for the sky
Way up high

I'm never giving up
It's up to me

To see who I can be
Make dreams reality
I'm going to reach for the sky
Way up high
I'm never giving up
It's up to me
To see who I can be
Make dreams reality

I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up
I'm never giving up

Source: [Musixmatch](#), Songwriters: Nicholas Macri



Slogans of Latin American Women

ESPACIOS DE MUJER, COLOMBIA

In Colombia, thousands of women protest against gender violence through slogans and marches. We, the women, go out to march and "take over the cities", to raise our voice and for everyone to listen to our protest.

It is a way to make our demands, protests, utopias and rebellions visible. On special dates, such as March 8, September 23, November 25 and December 10, women "get together and take to the streets", claiming the power of their congregation. We do it by painting our faces, wearing colorful outfits, protesting with songs and demanding our rights.

The **slogans** are the key elements of the marches. They are focused on specific topics and have a political meaning. They are short, strong and musical, which allows a lot of people to participate.

They reveal the essence of the anti-patriarchal feminist struggle and express the nonconformity of women in the face of a society that oppresses and undervalues them. They are artistic and political.

Here are some of them in bi-lingual version, Spanish and English:

(1)

José José, hacéte tu café

José José, make your coffee

*Carltoncho Carltoncho, prepara tu
sancocho*

Carltoncho Carltoncho, prepare your
sancocho

*Jaramillo Jaramillo, lava tus
calzoncillos*

Jaramillo Jaramillo, wash your
underpants

*Ernesto, Ernesto, aprende hacer buen
sexo*

Ernesto, Ernesto, learn to have good
sex

Jeremías Jeremías, yo soy mía mía mía

Jeremiah Jeremiah, I am mine, mine,
mine

Cristina Cristina mírate tu vagina

Cristina Cristina, look at your vagina

Mujer Mujer apréndete a querer.

Woman Woman, learn to love.

(This song plays with the rhyme between the name of the person and the object mentioned. *Sancocho* is a broth based on meat and tubers that appears in different forms in several Latin American countries, especially the countries that border the Caribbean Sea. Its preparation is very laborious).

(2)

*Mis derechos son deberes, el Estado a
mí me debe.*

My rights are duties; the State owes me.

(3)

*Saquen sus rosarios de nuestros
ovarios.*

Get your rosaries out of our ovaries.

(4)

Ni del estado, ni de la iglesia, ni del
marido... el cuerpo es mío y yo decido.

*Neither from the state, nor from the
church, nor from the husband...*

My body is mine and I decide.

(5)

*Todas las mujeres, todos los derechos,
todos los días.*

All women, all rights, every day.

(6)

*De noche o de día, desnudas o vestidas,
en la casa y en la calle: ¡que respeten
nuestras vidas!*

*Night or day, naked or clothed, at home
and on the street: let them respect our
lives!*

(7)

*Arroz con leche no queremos más,
más muertes de mujeres en esta
ciudad,
que quien la mató, que quien la violó,
son crímenes de estado y nadie los vio;
libertad si, machismo no,
no más feminicidios ni explotación.*

*We don't want more rice pudding
more deaths of women in this city,
who killed her, who raped her,
they are state crimes, and no one saw
them.*

*Freedom yes, machismo no,
no more femicides or exploitation.*

(8)

*Alerta, Alerta, Alerta
que camina La lucha feminista por
América latina.*

Alert, Alert, Alert

*The feminist struggle walks for Latin
America.*

*Y tiemblan y tiemblan
Y tiemblan los machistas
Que América Latina se vuelve
feminista.*

and tremble and tremble
And the machos tremble
That Latin America becomes feminist.

<https://youtu.be/ADiHobZWpBE>

(9)

América latina va a ser toda feminista. Latin America is going to be all
feminist.

Translation by Bianca Fidone

Fils de Joie

EUROPEAN SEX WORKERS ALLIANCE

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7Z2tgJo8Hg>

On the eve of International Women’s Day in 2022, [Stromae](#) launched a new song about the child of a sex worker: “Fils de Joie” (“fille de joie”, “girl of joy” is slang for sex worker; “Fils de Joie” means “Son of Joy”). The video clip imagines a state funeral for a sex worker who passed away (not “missing” as the video wrongfully translates).

A little anecdote, which makes the video and song even more touching: the idea came after Stromae heard the inimitable [Jimmy Paradis](#), a [STRASS](#) member, on French TV [talking about](#) his fight for sex workers’ rights as the child of a sex worker. So from this one interview by one activist, a song was born which already been viewed over 15 million times, only two weeks after being published, and will probably touch millions of people. Yes, the lyrics are not perfect but check this chorus below. Keep up the fight everyone, every action, every interview, every conversation, every word creates change and has a ripple effect. And this is how we will win.

Fils de Joie

Chorus

But oh, leave my mom alone

Yes, I know, it’s true she’s not perfect

*She's a hero, and I will always
Speak proudly of her, speak proudly of her
I'm a son of a whore, as they say
After all she's done for them
Forgive them their stupidity, oh, dear mother
They dehumanise you, it's easier
The same ones court you
And everyone closes their eyes.*

Equality Clap and Power Chanting

GIRLS' POWER INITIATIVE (GPI), NIGERIA

GPI is a feminist, youth development, nonprofit organisation established in 1993 to intervene in the socialisation of girls for the realisation of a future where women are visible and valued actors in Nigeria, thus the motto – *Towards an Empowered Womanhood*. We aim to promote the rights of children, especially girls, and mobilize them for development and participation through Research, Education, and Action-oriented programmes directed towards their empowerment.

We often use songs in our work with girls and many songs have been composed by our team and the girls over the years. We are sharing two clips here.

The first clip is called [Equality Clap](#). This is what we use to welcome, commend or motivate the young girls, partners or visitors who come to our safe space sessions to learn about our programme. The words we use are EQUALITY, EDUCATION EMPOWERMENT/INFORMATION/ACTION. This clap reminds of our core value, **Equal Opportunities for All & Gender Equality**. The activities we carry out are tailored to equip young women with information and skills needed to realise their power and live healthy lives free from violence and all forms of abuse and exploitation. This clap also reminds the young girls that at every point in time, they should treat everyone equally and fairly as a way of reducing gender discrimination in the society.



The [second clip](#) shows girls chanting songs. Most of our songs were formulated by GPI students on topics such as violence against girls and women, child abuse, self-esteem, gender, communication skills etc. Songs are also used to emphasize the key points help them to understand and retain the message.

Website: <https://gpinigeria.org/>

Women Workers' Song

GSBI - INDONESIAN TRADE UNION ASSOCIATION

(Written in Bahasa Indonesia by Emelia Yanti, Secretary General of GSBI – Indonesian Trade Union Association, translated into English by Dewi Nova)

GSBI would like to share a song that was composed in 1994 by Teater Buruh Indonesia (the Indonesian Labor Theater). The words of this song, *Women Workers*, are taken from the stories of fellow women workers who used to gather every weekend. At that time, most of the members of the Teater Buruh Indonesia were women. They often shared stories about their working conditions such as lower wages than men, being yelled at by supervisors, being groped and touched by fellow male workers or male bosses. The high production targets that forced them to work overtime. The women couldn't refuse to do overtime work, even though they were sick and exhausted after long working hours.



The words *“Your suffering is always like a baby's cry at midnight, No one wants to hear, all ignore you, Nobody cares, everyone ignores you”* depicts the reality of the women workers who can only cry over their fate and no one understands their suffering.

But this song also invites women workers to organise and change the situation, fight for the equal rights with men: *“Hey girl, roll up your arms, because women are not second-class human beings. It's time now, men and women. There's no difference any more in opportunity.”*

Unfortunately, the reality that this song describes is still the lived experience of women workers today, even after nearly three decades. So the message of this song, its call to rise and organise still has relevance.

Singing is a key part of trade union programmes. We often sing workers' songs in between activities. This song is still popular because it is still very real. The music is catchy and words repeat so workers like to sing it over and over again.

Here is the link to our song in YouTube. We sang this song in front of the office of the Minister of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia on 8 March 2022, International Women Workers Day. Click here to watch the video clip: <https://youtu.be/83prViPCA6A>

Here is the song in bi-lingual version, in Bahasa Indonesia and English:

Buruh Perempuan

Hai, hai buruh perempuan

Women Workers

Hey, hey, women workers

*Deritamu slalu bagai tangisan bayi
di tengah malam*

Your suffering is always like a baby's
cry at midnight

*Tiada yang mau mendengar, cuek
semua*

No one wants to hear, all ignore you
Nobody cares, everyone ignores you

*Tiada yang mau peduli, cuek semua
Hai, hai buruh perempuan*

Hey, hey, women workers

*Untuk itu perempuan, singsingkan
lenganmu,
sebab perempuan, bukan klas dua
Sudah saatnya kini, laki-laki
perempuan*

Hey girl, roll up your arms,
because women are not second class
It's time now, men and women
There's no difference any more in
opportunity

Tiada bedanya lagi dalam kesempatan

Let's seize all opportunities

Mari kita rebut semua kesempatan

We must advance, we must also win

*Kita harus maju, kita pula harus
menang, 2X*

Let's seize all opportunities

We must advance, we must also win

Hai, hai buruh perempuan



My Fair and Happy Home

HOMENET THAILAND



We would like to share a song that we sing with our domestic worker members.
The song is in Thai.

Click this link to watch a video clip:

<https://www.facebook.com/MyFairAndHappyHome/videos/180914492309958/>

Here is a summary translation:

“We are on a long road together, to create a dream
Our dream is to create a bright and joyful world, the sun shines brightly in our hearts.

มูลนิธิบ้านนกขมิ้น
Baannokkamin Foundation
ต้อนรับทุกท่าน
ทำการ อังคาร - เสาร์
10.00 - 17.00 น.
ดู วันอาทิตย์
www.baannokkamin.com



We use our hands to create beauty in everyday work. But where is the fairness?
Come, let's join hands and dream of a better world.

Be fair. International Domestic Workers have confidence (that you will be fair).
Working together, working hard, moving forward. Come, let's walk on the road to
freedom.





All workers, be together,
Sisters, join for freedom, for a new life.
For a New Society with equal rights”

Courtesy: Poonsap Tulaphan, [HomeNet Thailand](#)

Mars Dewi Sinta

KOMUNITAS DEWI SINTA

The sisters from Dewi Sinta Community in Semarang, Indonesia have shared a song.

This song is composed by six volunteers of the Dewi Shinta Women's Community -- Dian Kartika, Anny Handayani, Ngatmi, Kartini, Siti Mukharomah and Cicilia on 16 February 2014.

This song aims to give encouragement to other community members to fight for women's human rights, especially rights of the victims of violence. In addition, this song is also used to promote the work of Dewi Shinta community among the wider community.



Here is the bi-lingual version, in Bahasa Indonesia and English:

Kami pejuang dari bandarharjo

(We are fighters from Bandarharjo)

Bersama-sama dengan

KJHAM

(Together with KJHAM)

Menegakkan hak

perempuan

(Upholding women's

rights)

Membina remaja jangan

salah sangka

(Fostering teenagers don't

get me wrong)

Yok ayok ayok Dewi Sinta Beraksi

(Come on, come on, come on, Dewi Sinta in action)

Yok ayok ayok KDRT di Berantas

(Come on, come on, come on, let's fight against domestic violence)

Yok ayok ayok Dewi Sinta Berperan

(Come on, come on, come on, Dewi Sinta has a role)

Yok ayok ayok tetaplah semangat

(Come on, come on, keep the spirit)

Here is the link to the video:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10x8GqfxjSL4_Qg9Br4t5IEeYhHWM4ahp/view?usp=sharing

Translation by Lenny Ristiyani, LRC-KJHAM



Thewanthdean //By and By

LUCY TURAY

I am Lucy Turay from Sierra Leone. I had migrated for work to Lebanon in 2020 and had a terrible experience there. Many other sisters were in the same situation as me. We did not keep quiet. With support from a few local people, we protested. During that difficult time, I wrote a few songs, and we sang those together. I would like to share one of the songs with you.

Here is the link: <https://youtu.be/bCMRKSvhTRA>



I wrote this song, when I was trapped in Lebanon under the Kafala system. When I ran away from my employer's home because I was not being paid, I was on the street with nowhere to go. I called it the street of nowhere because I don't know anyone else or where to go. I was without food for days and slept on the street. It was February and Beirut was bitterly cold.

I lost hope of seeing my family again. I was sitting on the

roadside when the words of this song came to me. It was as if my heart was singing the song inside me. I was thinking of the reasons that brought me to an unfriendly city, far away from home. I felt that people there did not understand me. Before I knew what I was doing, I started singing this song. I was crying as I sang. I cried a lot.



An Indian lady helped me at that time. She told me about other sisters in the same condition. She took me to her house, and I could call my husband to send me some money for accommodation and food. I was hoping and praying for a miracle so I could be repatriated to Sierra Leone.

Fifteen of us, all waiting to get back home, were staying in a small room. Aline Deschamps, a French photojournalist came to do an interview with us. After the interview, I told Aline about the song. She asked us to sing it. All of us were crying while we sang. She filmed us as we sang and many people in different parts of the world saw the video clip. Several people came forward to help us.



It is a more than year since I returned home. Many other sisters also returned home to Sierra Leone with me. Many young women are still going to the Middle East. Some are staying on. Several are coming back after experiencing abuse. The employment situation has not changed in my country. Many of us do not have jobs. We have started a small organisation. We call it DoWan, Domestic Workers Advocacy Network. We do some agricultural work. We do other income generation trainings. Life goes on.

Singing Revolution and Radical Love: Memories from the Women's Movement in Karnataka, India

MADHU BHUSHAN



In the eighties and early nineties an inchoate, restless spirit and energy drove the resistance to the politics of caste, patriarchy, class and communalism in whose creative vortex many women's rights activists like me found ourselves. Each movement was defining itself with defiance and yet we found ways of working together with little thought for

where "we" or the "other" came from – for it was more the time of ideologies than identities. And so it was that Kotiganahalli Ramiah a bard of the Dalit movement and a man, also composed so many incredible songs for the women's movement in Karnataka whose sensibilities transcended and included all identities including gender.



Two particular songs come to mind – one which was composed in the late eighties and the other in the mid nineties - both for protests and programmes that we had organized from the women’s organization we were part of that had its roots in the autonomous women’s movement of the late seventies/eighties.

The first song was composed for a street play we had performed in the mid eighties in solidarity with women workers of the subsidiary unit of a public sector watch company who were protesting against their unfair and illegal dismissal from work by an all-woman management. All because they had dared to organize themselves into a union. The song speaks of the daily grind of a woman’s life whose work starts from the moment she gets up till she sleeps – be it in her house, on the road to her workplace or in her workplace itself. And underpinning this is the exploitation she faces in her work place where there is no job security or social entitlements with her continuance dependent on her total compliance. The street play and song were composed around the metaphor of a clock that just keeps relentlessly ticking without any respite and the intense labour it takes to produce one – as the women were doing.

*Oh my sister who handles machines
rudely woken by the early light of dawn
you rush to get ready, unable to even soothe the crying child
crushing yourself into a crowded bus
breathless and tired
you rush to the factory gate
only to be told you are late and thrown out
oh my sister caught in the clutches of exploitation
rise up and revolt oh sister!*

*Becoming one with the clock
with ever watchful eyes than cant miss the minutest part
twisting and straining every nerve to make the watch come to life
watching the loss of youth
and a beautiful life dissolve into a dream
this pain and injustice you all must confront
and moving forward come together to resist
Oh my sister caught in the clutches of exploitation
rise up and revolt oh sister!*

The situation with women working in the informal and unorganized sector like the garment industry is no different today despite the existence of some unions that are speaking and fighting for their rights. However, the precarity of employment has become even more endemic in times when labour laws are being totally dismantled and work has taken on a totally new meaning in the modern “gig” economy.



The other song is *Hejje Maathadu*, Let the footsteps speak, a song composed for an event on the impact of development on increasing violence on women which became almost our anthem for a feminist revolution based on “radical love”! The song itself invokes the unfettered spirits of the mother goddesses who once freely roamed the earth but got buried under the debris of development in the time of intense betrayal and greed.

*Let footsteps speak and anklets too
Let silence speak and the jasmine too
The way to the flower garden of dreams is long, too long
be there flowers, thorns or even the dusk of dew drops
let even the hordes of darkness descend
one flickering lamp is enough*

*lighting one lamp with the other
we can ignite a procession of light*

*The spreading light of these lamps
these footprints we leave behind
should sing and call out to those goddesses buried deep within the
earth*

*may age old wounds inflicted by the sword of time
be healed with care and love
may seeds break and sprout from burnt ashes
blooming again in the lap of mother earth
Let footsteps speak and anklets too
Let silence speak and the jasmine too*

*Madhu Bhushan
Gamana Mahila Samuha*

This article is drawing from and based on an interview conducted with the well known Dalit Poet, Kotiganahalli Ramiah and written for the journal Seminar

In Honour of Niyamgiri

MANDIKA NILAMANI



I am Mandika Nilamani from Kurli village of Rayagada district of Odisha. I am a, Adivasi woman from Desia Kondh tribe living with a Dongria Kondh community for a very long time. My song is in the praise of Niyamraja, the nature God of Dongria Kondh Adivasis. We believe that Niyamraja created us. We are the children of forest and Niyamraja is the supreme God, our parent and creator. We the Kondh people believe that what we have today is only because of Niyamraja.

He created the forest, river, God and Goddess. We follow the rules created by Niyamraja.

We are grateful to Niyamraja. This song in honour of Niyamraja says, *“You are the forest, you are the river, you are the leaves, and you are the God. We honour you Niyamraja.”*

Dongria Kondh Adivasia live in the deep forest of Niyamgiri hills of Rayagada district of Odisha. Our deep relationship with the forest and the nature God is reflected in our everyday activities, rituals, songs and folklores. We have fought for our land rights and protested against the attempts to destroy our sacred land. Our struggle to protect our sacred land of Niyamgiri from the Vedanta company continues.

Click here to listen to the song (audio only):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YyED9tLyPrWaVZlfDdU8vXHZ3TaISjDI/view?usp=sharing>

Translation by Pankaja Sethi of Kala aur Katha

Two of our Favourite Songs

NAWO-ODISHA CHAPTER



The National Alliance of Women's Organisations -Odisha chapter offers gender training to grassroots women's groups in all parts of Odisha. Songs are an integral part of our trainings. The resource persons co-create songs on each theme, set it to music and the group sings them. Songs help the women in understanding complex social issues in a simple way.

We are sharing two songs here. These songs were created around 10-12 years ago but even today sometimes we hear women's groups in rural Odisha singing them. The first song talks about the busy day of a woman and wonders why people say



that women don't do any work. It ends with an assertion that women will not keep quiet anymore. The second song analyses society from a feminist perspective and questions gender discrimination.

Mothers and Sisters, so what work do we do in a day?

Mothers and sisters, so what work do we do in a day? Let's make a list. From morning till night, and again from next morning, we are busy with our work.

When we wake up we sweep and clean the house, wash dishes and clean our cowshed. We fetch water and give bath to our children. While doing all these, we also cook food.

Then we send our children to school and go to the field. After a day's work in the field, we also carry some firewood with us.

We need to look after the trees and plants in our backyard too. We need to dry our crops and store them. We need to boil the paddy .



If someone is sick at home we take care of them, we look after the guests who come to visit us. We go for work as a wage labourer and bring some money home. We work, both at home and outside. But people always say we don't do any work!

For how long should we put up with these false comments? We must not remain silent anymore.

Remember that we are powerful. We will not tolerate humiliation and discrimination anymore.

Now we will ask questions and not remain silent.

Because we are women.....

Are we poor because we are women?

Are we poor because we are silent?

Shall we remain silent because we are poor?

For how long should we live without speaking our minds?

Are we poor because we don't speak up? Are we poor because we could not go to school? How long shall we live without speaking our minds and remain poor?



We do all the work at home. But our work is never recognised.

We are told that we are not skilled workers, not skilled enough, so we get less wage than men.

Are we poor because we get less wage? How long shall we live without speaking our minds and remain poor? Are we poor because we don't speak up?

Being girls, we are given less to eat, so we become sick.

We get married at a very young age. We become mothers at a young age.

So we become weak and sick.

Are we poor because we are always Sick? Are we poor because we get married very young?

Are we poor because we don't speak up? How long shall we live without speaking our minds and remain poor?

Click here to watch the video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KMKFUvlKQnaJm20aXTjastSNixEpyxKO/view?usp=sharing>

Translation from Odia by Bishakha Bhanja. Singing by Anupama Rout

Amader Soi Group Celebrates 8th March, 2022

OKUP, BANGLADESH

The returnee women migrant workers group which has now named itself Amader Soi Group held their 6th meeting on 8th March, 2022 at our Munshigonj field office. All 25 members of the group came in festive clothes. They sang songs and talked to each other.

They also learnt to use the Doc Time app. This is an app that people can use to consult any specialist doctor on phone by paying a small amount of money.

The group decided to sing the national anthem of Bangladesh and share it with the E-Magazine. This song is very important for all Bangladeshis because of our liberation struggle. We feel proud of our identity as a Bengali. This song also reminds every one of their childhoods, a happy and carefree time. We remember our school days when we sang this song with other children.

Here is the link to our song: <https://youtu.be/c46aFx2NuRo>

Love and Longing in Jordan

OPORAJITA MIGRANT WOMEN GARMENT WORKERS' GROUP,
JORDAN

The Oporajita group would like to share four songs that four of our members have performed. The words are closely related to their own personal feelings, as they explain below. Jannath's and Shefali's songs are popular 70s Bengali romantic songs, which people still love today. Sabina sang a traditional Bengali folk song, whereas Rupali's song is the theme from a popular educational cartoon about a young girl.

Meena's Song by Rupali

Rupali

I have chosen to sing the theme song of Meena (a popular cartoon in Bangladesh about a smart little girl who encourages other girls and her villagers to educate their daughters and raises awareness about many other social issues). It was my most favourite and inspirational song as a young girl, and Meena was my idol. Listening to this song I used to dream about being very well educated, and making my parents proud.



However, life didn't allow me to do so. I had to give up my education at a very early age and start working to support my family financially. My sacrifice is supporting my younger siblings' education.

Nevertheless, I still listen to this song with a lot of emotions and console myself saying that I am a migrant worker. I may not have much education from school, but I have valuable learnings from my life experiences. And I'm proud to be able to support my sister's education.

Click this link to Listen to Rupali's Song:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1655EEnkAaFCgQ383CZA9u1U0wOD8BreT/view?usp=sharing>

And here are the words of the song in translation

I am my parents' beloved daughter
I am growing up with everyone's love
There are many dreams in my eyes
I want to be educated!

I am my parents' beloved daughter
If my life is confined only to the four walls of our home,
I will just be a burden to all
Education will give me freedom!

I am the happiness and hope for tomorrow
I have dreams and desires of my own
Don't keep me locked up at home!
Let me move forward!

***The Words of your Songs* by Jannath
Jannath**

My song is about love, betrayal and longing.

I got to know him through songs. He used to sing songs every single day to impress me. He had a lovely voice and I fell in love with it.

I was also impressed by his courage when he dared to ask my parents for my hand.

I don't know how this courageous person could turn into such a coward that, upon his family's pressure, he decided to leave me and our child - only because we were not able to give him any dowry.

This song gives me mixed feelings of love, memories of lost hope, bitterness and deception. I have decided not to marry again in my life and not to let anyone hurt me anymore.

Click this link to listen to Jannat's song:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rGpURD6TuRBbXVDOrma_hWvbdwoBioUt/vi?usp=sharing

And here are the words in translation:

The words of your songs,



The music of your singing had brought us together
Only your songs
The sweetness of your songs
Stolen glances along the way
The love in your eyes, your words
Was it just a pretense? Just a little play acting?
But my silly heart,
My errant heart,
Ran away from me
Oh, smiling full moon, Oh moonlit night,
Tell me why this heart is so excited?
Birds go back to their nest at dusk,
Leaving the day's work and play
But the story of their flight is written in the sky
Like a song
Like the sweetness of your songs
Stolen glances of love along the way
Was it just a pretense?

Cool me with the fan, my friend by Sabina

Sabina

This is actually a sad song sung but I am singing it in a funny way. It is about a woman's reactions after being deceived by her lover. As migrant women, one of

the most common sacrifices we make is to lose our love life. Many of us have been deceived by our husbands.

I sometimes sing this song and laugh to forget the pain of my husband marrying another woman while I was working abroad like a machine to support the family. Will we ever get justice?



Click this link to listen to Sabina's song:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rPQUAk8EzY4BDx7qYHdXbsRko8QmL97j/view?usp=sharing>

And here are the words in translation:

Cool me with the fan, my friend
Pour water on my head
He did whatever he was meant to do,
Beloved thief of my heart
Burned my happy heart with the fire of pain
Is that what he had in his mind?
Cool me with the fan, my friend

Pour water on my head
No, no, no, my broken heart will never be mended
He did whatever he was meant to do,
Beloved thief of my heart!

***My Soulmate* by Shefali**

Shefali

I am singing a song about someone who fears losing her soulmate, and not having anyone compassionate to share their pain with.

My husband died just after a couple years of our marriage when I was only 16 and pregnant with my second daughter. Since then, I have gone through many ordeals. I have raised my daughters on my own. I have not had another partner; I do not have a friend to share any pain with. I really need a partner who will love me and take care of my heart.



But my brothers say that they would kill me if I ever remarried. They say that they are ashamed of me for even having such thoughts.

I listen to this song in my dorm room and sometimes at work.

Click this link to listen to Shefali singing the song:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NDf2PZTDlGhHaY5nmqfUpWGJ7cDhiqbg/view?usp=sharing>

And here are the words in translation:

My soulmate, if you leave me, where would I find love?

With whom will I share my pain?

Who will listen to my songs and fill my heart with colours of love?

For whom will I weave a necklace of *Night Jasmine*?

With whom will I share my pain?

Tell me, who else can I talk to?

About happiness and sorrow.

Translated into English by Nadia Afrin

Migrant Workers Unite: Chants Calling for the Government of the Republic of Indonesia

INDONESIAN MIGRANT WORKERS UNION (SBMI)

This song was created by the Indonesian Migrant Workers Union (SBMI) to demand that the Indonesian government provides services to migrant workers affected by COVID-19. This was sung during the demonstration, including an online demonstration supported by the Kurawal Foundation.

Here is the link: <https://youtu.be/b4TMawZvdig>



Below are the words in Bahasa Indonesia and English.

Buruh Migran Bersatu

*Ada yang terluka, ada yang kecewa,
juga ada yang menangis
Ada yang hilang, ada yang terpapar,
juga ada yang mati
Mereka memanggilmu, mereka
membutuhkanmu*

*Yo ayo yo ayo
Ada yang terluka, ada yang kecewa,
juga ada yang menangis
Ada yang hilang, ada yang terpapar,
juga ada yang mati
Mereka memanggilmu, mereka
membutuhkanmu*

*Buruh migran Indonesia sungguh luar
biasa
Meninggalkan desa, meninggalkan
keluarga
Raih masa depan tak kenal putus asa
Membangun negara juga bangsa*

Migrant Workers Unite

Some were injured, some were
disappointed, some were crying
Some are missing, some are exposed,
some are dead.
They call you, they need you

Oh come on, come on, oh come on
Some were injured, some were
disappointed, some were crying
Some are missing, some are exposed,
some are dead.
They call you, they need you

Indonesian migrant workers are
incredible

Leaving the village, leaving the family
Achieve a future without despairing
Building a country as well as a nation

Some are successful, some are
displaced
They struggle, but lack protection

*Ada yang sukses, ada yang terlantar
Mereka berjuang tapi minim
perlindungan*

*Dieksploitasi, kadang hilang kadang
juga dibungkam*

*Covid 19 hancurkan mimpi dan juga
harapan*

*Gagal berangkat dan banyak juga
yang pulang*

*Mereka dituduh nembawa virus
mematikan*

*Ayo dong pemerintah segera turun
tangan, hadir, membuktikan*

*Buktikan buruh migran maju, buruh
migran bersatu,
Tak bisa dikalahkan*

Exploited, sometimes lost, sometimes
silenced

COVID-19 destroys dreams and hopes
Some failed to leave and many came
home

They are accused of carrying a deadly
virus

Oh, come on Government
Immediately intervene, be present
and prove (that you care)

Migrant workers are advancing,
migrant workers are united,
They can't be beaten.

Songwriter: Hezz Aan

Music arrangement: Ryskian Ariandi Pratama

Written by Bobi Anwar Maarif Secretary General SBMI, translated by Dewi Nova

Kalamereyayi Kanavu Kandatham

SEWA-KERALA

This song is composed by a team of SEWA Kerala members in a music workshop conducted by us. Ten members of our team co-created this song and Santhosh George Joseph, a friend of SEWA, set it to music.

Here is a bi-lingual version of the lyric, in Malayalam and English

Kalamereyayi kanavu kandatham

Puthiya lokam varthedukkuvan

Kaikal korthidam shirassuyarthidam

Puthiya ghanam chernnu padidam

For the new world we have dreamt since long

Let us join our hands, raise our head and sing together a new song

Ethra paninjalum mathiyavilla

Ethra paninjalum shariyavilla

Lokaro chollunnu veettammakko joli,

Joli cheyyathorkku enthu visramam(Kalamereyayi)

How much ever we work, it will not be sufficient

How much ever we work, it will not be called skilled

Still people are asking, whether house wives have any work
Why rest is needed for someone who doesn't work?

*Palapanikal cheyyan palayidangalil,
Yatra cheyyunnoram njangal aayiram
Bheethiyil valanju, chooshanathil veenu
Sareeravum manasum thalarnnu pokunnu
(Kalamereyayi)*

To do different jobs, in different areas
Thousands of us are traveling
We suffer in fear, we are exploited
Our body and mind become tired

*Kutta vatti polum busil eettiyal
Durgantham paranju puramthallunnu
Chumadu thangi polum kanmathillennakil
Nokku kooli vangan kathu nilkkunnu
(Kalamereyayi)*

When we try to load our baskets which carry fish
They push us out because of the bad odor
When we reach the market
There isn't anyone to help us
The head loaders demand money even without unloading our baskets

Njangalkkenth u labham ennithe vare
Porattathin anthamenthu vannidum
Erakalayavar nam orumayode chernnu(2)
Swathanthrathyin nale thedi poyidam(2)
(Kalamereyayi)

What have we achieved till now?
When will this struggle end?
Let all of us, the workers, become united
And march for a just and liberated future

Click here to watch the video clip: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qmybm-SESiNH0z0cynd4Mi9cOn2kWCHr/view?usp=sharing>

Translation by Sonia George, SEWA-Kerala

Songs that have Inspired Us

SHANTI FOUNDATION & SHAKTI SAMUHA, NEPAL

Happy International Women's Day. Here are two songs that have inspired us. We have used those on special days in performances.



Shanti Foundation team group photo after the rally on the occasion of 112th International Women's Day

This song on human trafficking is produced by Shakti Samuha. It speaks about the journey of a victim of trafficking who turns her pain and grief into power and courage. Shanti Foundation team performed this song during the inauguration event of National Magna Meet 2021. The honourable Vice President of Nepal Mr. Nanda Kishor Pun was present at the event along with hundreds of human rights

activists. Demanding the rights of survivors is one of our key areas of focus. Click here: <https://youtu.be/DICI99ZuUDs>

This is a Nepali song that talks about the freedom and struggle. We performed this on the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons in 2020 to build solidarity with survivors. Click here: <https://youtu.be/HKg4fjZLitA>

We are also sharing the photos of our March 8 event this year.



National Ceremony program at Rastriya Sabha Griha, Kathmandu in the chief guest of Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba on the occasion International Women's Day 2022.



Glimpse of Shanti Foundation team chanting “let’s make women’s day successful” during the rally



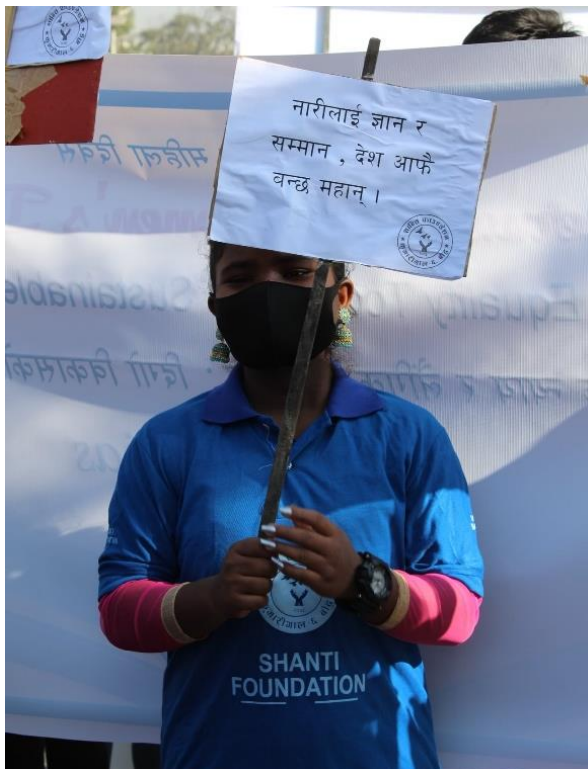
Rounding the Tundikhel area during the rally



Shanti Foundation team taking a group photo at Rastriya Sabha Griya.



Glimpse of Shanti Foundation team holding different cards demanding for the rights of women during the rally



One of the Shanti Foundation team member holding the pamphlet during rally titled "Knowledge and respect for women, the country itself becomes great"



Shanti Foundation team dancing to celebrate International Women's Day at Tundikhel

Shanti Tamang (Sanjamaya)

Executive Director, Shanti Foundation

Kumarigal-6, Boudha, Kathmandu Nepal

website: <http://www.shantifoundation.org.np/>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/shantifoundations/>

Songs of our Festivals

SHRAMAJIVI MAHILA SAMITY



We celebrate many festivals during the year, and we have music and songs for each one of them. We may not be rich; we may not be highly educated but we always find a way to share our simple joys with each other.

In Sonua, among people of Ho community, Maghe Parab (festival) is very popular. It is held in the month of Magh (January -February). This festival starts from 15th January and continues till the end of April. There is no fixed date for Maghe festival. The villagers decide the date of the festival by meeting with the Munda, the village head. Villagers celebrate the festival by fixing different dates in different villages. On this occasion, people from the same community living in the



surrounding villages are invited. This festival is also a good time for young men and women to meet each other and choose their life partners.

We are sharing our Jhumur singing and a group dance here:

Women express their happiness

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RJWUu1MR_jr1H7PFAViWjB_LVUT--zdm/view?usp=sharing

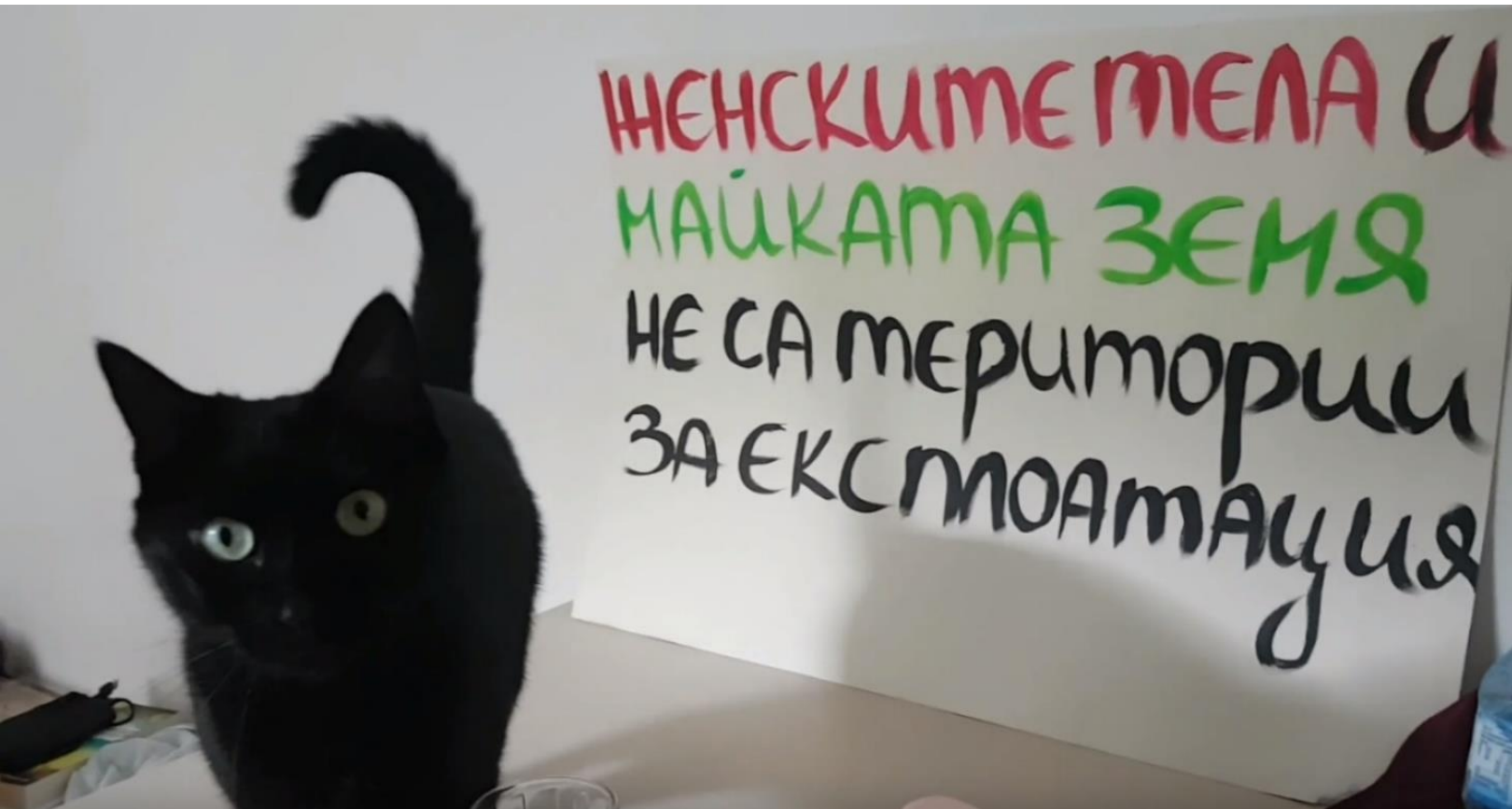
Women singing Jhumur...

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pt0eOZUdtgBeBF3IixNw9GtcicAsotpo/view?usp=sharing>

A Song About Stanka Nefertiti

VIOLETKI COLLECTIVE, BULGARIA

Stanka-Nefertiti's person (Dari Na) wrote the song, sang it, and made a video for it. Simeon Hevito recorded it and played the guitar. The posters were collected from various protests in Sofia, Bulgaria. Many thanks to their creators, wherever they are!



Click here to watch the video:

<https://kolektiva.media/w/fbC5hxFCwve749PtC7odnW>

Lyrics

This is a song about my best friend and muse: Stanka-Nefertiti.

She is the soul of the people
an anarchist by nature
Four-legged
of unknown breed
She recognises no kings
She goes out scratching fascists
If she plays with you
remember that NO means NO.
Stanka-Nefertiti
Stanka-Nefertiti
She's hairy and beautiful
She's wild at night

Wherever she goes
there will be resistance!
She recognises no kings,
scratches fascists.
If she plays with you
remember that NO means NO.
Stanka-Nefertiti
Stanka-Nefertiti
She's a black panther,
wields black magic
She's my favourite
purple-black offensive over my heart.

The posters in the video are from 2021 anti-government protests:

“More prevention - less police”

“The female bodies and Mother Earth are not territories to be exploited”

“If tomorrow we get rid of all corruption, the billionaires will remain billionaires and all the rest of us will stay poor”

“Patriarchy kills”

“It's not the victim's fault”

“Fighting corruption will not get rid of inequality. NO TO CAPITALISM”

“The establishment infects us with hatred. Racism and homophobia have no place at the protest”

“Solidarity with sex workers. Decriminalisation now”

“Mother Earth is a part of the women's struggle”

“Nature and people above profits. CAPITALISM=DESTRUCTION”

“Equal wages for nurses and for members of Parliament”

“38 women were murdered by men they knew. ... but politicians are worried about LGBT...”

“A world without oppression, inequalities, exploitation and poverty is possible”

Translated from Bulgarian by Milena Stateva, GAATW

Together We are Rising

WOMEN'S REHABILITATION CENTRE (WOREC), NEPAL



Our friends from WOREC have sent this inspiring song below with pictures and a video clip.

Together we are rising

Firmly uniting

With the waves of change

Everywhere we are approaching

Nurturing the flowers of diversity

Embracing the beauty of identity



Humanity is budding
Better world we are creating
Together we are rising
Firmly uniting
With the waves of change
Everywhere we are approaching

Ours is also Human Rights
Importantly "our body our rights"
To validate our independent thoughts
Time has come to speak out loud
Together we are rising



Firmly uniting

With the waves of change

Everywhere we are approaching

To wipe the absurdity in practice

Along with discrimination and injustice

We are marching towards salvation

Also confronting with differentiation

Together we are rising

Firmly uniting

With the waves of change

Everywhere we are approaching

Click here to watch the video *Together we are Rising:*

<https://youtu.be/pDObGGVPkIs>

Links to video and audio clips in the stories & some additional resources

Aaina, Rice Planting Songs:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10b9gEEN5j9O4R_sgpnfj9-9qHKH6zahP/view?usp=sharing

Badabon Sangho, Broken Heart: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19yeWam7-KdCFl8jt28AbmzflQs4BrZVB/view?usp=sharing>

Badabon Sangho, Song of Separation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RxCWU9RkJL6bpKvPFWN0VThZZXzVA3Tp/view?usp=sharing>

Badabon Sangho, This Padma, Meghna, Jamuna:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YXh4CI6XuBV6xyoEpNxNP1sz--WWu2Ac/view?usp=sharing>

Domestic Workers Solidarity Network, Never Giving Up:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kVz0SopAEBcMkTrd7thJR9CdM1AEFEZs/view?usp=sharing>

Espacios de Mujer: America Latina Feminista

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w8_4S9772kAbqU1gjGGa8fluMQ7vV7iI/view?usp=sharing

Espacios de Mujer: Jose, Jose

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GJksDitzosLqjj9mDv-GbHHiC1qMHw1R/view?usp=sharing>

Espacios de Mujer: Para todas las masas,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eIPmOXGjXZ8FUZevkjK6T8j8yCHYTDc4/view?usp=sharing>

ESWA, Fils de joie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7Z2tgJo8Hg>

GPI, Equality Clap:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sDMLozwEUpJd0bTprs1TsijvxtBptzSC/view?usp=sharing>

GPI, Power Chanting:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a60hYEVl2O4g16FOhcC5H_DWZWxWYlJH/view?usp=sharing

GSBI, Buruh Perempuan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83prViPCA6A>

HomeNet Thailand, Domestic Workers' Song:

<https://www.facebook.com/MyFairAndHappyHome/videos/180914492309958/>

LRC KJHAM, Dewi Shinta Group's Song:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10x8GqfxjSL4_Qg9Br4t5IEeYhHWM4ahp/view?usp=sharing

Mandika, In Honour of Niyamgiri: (audio only)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YyED9tLyPrWaVZlfdDdU8vXHZ3TaISjDI/view?usp=sharing>

NAWO, Two of our Favourite Songs:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KMKFUvIKQnaJm20aXTjastSNixEpyxKO/view?usp=sharing>

OKUP, National Anthem of Bangladesh: <https://youtu.be/c46aFx2NuRo>

Oporajita Group:

- Rupali -

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1655EEnkAaFCgQ383CZA9u1U0wOD8BreT/view?usp=sharing>

- Jannath -

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rGpURD6TuRBbXVDOrma_hWvbdwoBioUt/view?usp=sharing

- Sabina -

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rPQUAk8EzY4BDx7qYHdXbsRko8QmL97j/view?usp=sharing>

- Shefali -

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NDf2PZTDlGhHaY5nmqfUpWGI7cDhiqbg/view?usp=sharing>

SBMI, Buruh Perempuan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4TMawZvdig>

SEWA-Kerala: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qmybm-SESiNH0z0cynd4Mi9cOn2kWCHr/view?usp=sharing>

Shanti Foundation and Shakti Samuha:

- Thematic Dance on Human Trafficking <https://youtu.be/DlCl99ZuUDs>
- World Day Against Trafficking in Persons – 2020:
<https://youtu.be/HKg4fjZLitA>

SMS: Women express their happiness:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RJWVu1MR_jr1H7PFAViWjB_LVUT--zdm/view?usp=sharing

SMS: Women singing Jhumur...

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pt0eOZUdtgBeBF3IixNw9GtcicAsotpo/view?usp=sharing>

WOREC, Together we are Rising: <https://youtu.be/pDObGGVPkIs>

Additional Musical Resources from YouTube and FB on Social Justice

Movements, Migration and Work (We hope this will encourage you to create your own list. And maybe share it with us too!)

Songs of the Social Justice Movements

The Birds Haven't Stopped Calling: Thai singer-songwriter Nitithorn “Ae” Thongthirakul wrote the song in February 2021 and dedicates it to protestors in Burma. It's based on a poem by Wisa Kanthup, an artist from the 1973 struggle in Thailand.

Women on the Farms Project, South Africa: “South Africa, HEAR US. We are the women who make the food the country eats; yet our children go hungry. Stand with us, the farmwomen, to demand a living wage and the right to a beautiful life”, say the farm women of South Africa. Click this FB link below to listen to them as they march on the streets, demanding justice:
<https://www.facebook.com/118004724902439/videos/1413936602411747>

United Sisterhood Alliance (Us) is an alliance of four women’s organisations in Cambodia: Workers’ Information Centre that works with women workers in the garment sector; Women’s Network for Unity which is a sex workers network; Social Action for Community and Development which carries out research and builds knowledge from ground up; and The Messenger Band, that uses art, including music and performance, to raise awareness on women’s rights, carry out advocacy and strengthen grassroots movements for justice.

- Here is the YouTube channel of the Messenger Band:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYm8ZV3tbcIvFr-OwPh7J1g/featured>
- Land and Life, a song from Messenger Band

Sama-Sama:Music Beyond Borders: This is an essay by Joseph Purugganan from Focus on the Global South on AMP3, a Southeast Asian Music Group for Social Change. Below is a YouTube link to one of their workshops.

- A Village in the Making the AMP3's (Asian Music for People’s Peace and Progress) Music for Change

Is the world listening?: the poets challenging Myanmar’s military : This is a short essay published in the Guardian by Mayyu Ali, co-founder of the Art Garden Rohingya, a collective of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh’s refugee camps and

beyond, who have since written hundreds of poems in Rohingya, Burmese and English.

[Unfettered, Jagori's YouTube Channel](#): This is a real treasure! Here are some amazing feminist tracks from Kamla Bhasin's songs: [Songs- Part 1](#) , [Songs-Part 2](#) [10 songs for social change](#) (Amnesty International's List): "From the original protest songs of the civil rights movement to the charity singles raising money for those in need, for decades musicians have inspired change through their songs."

[Our Top Feminist Anthems](#) : (IWDA's List)

[Women's Day playlist: Paying tribute to Africa's musician-activists](#)

[WITH LOVE](#): Spotify launched *With Love*, a playlist on International Women's Day. With Love celebrates and honours 24 women who share "love letters" to their past selves or to a key supporter who changed their lives during a pivotal moment in time. There are three playlists: one for [Artists](#), one for [Storytellers](#), and one for [Changemakers](#).

['The rapist is you': why a viral Latin American feminist anthem spread around the world](#) : This powerful Chilean song went viral a couple of years ago. Here is [The Rapist is You](#) in Hindi and [in English sung in Kenya](#).

[Feminist Flashmob for Women's Rights \(Philippines\)](#): This is a flash mob held on 10 December, International Human Rights Day, 2012 at Plaza Miranda, Manila.

[8 Songs by Filipina Acts to Empower and Inspire Pinays Everywhere](#):

Here are 8 songs chosen by Filipina Acts on Women's Day in 2021.

[Sing The Water Song](#): This Algonquin Water Song expresses loving gratitude for the water and raises the consciousness and connection of women with Mother Nature's greatest gift.

[Water Song by the Akwesasne Women Singers](#): The 'Water Song' by the Akwesasne Women Singers. The Music Video was produced by Raienkonnis

Edwards and the Summer Film Fundamentals Program in Akwesasne Mohawk Nation. Water is precious, we all need to show love for the water.

[Trauma and Healing song by Ngangkarri Women's Group](#): The songs from the Ngangkarri Women's Group reflect on the different ways we can heal within our communities.

[The Power of Music](#): As an antidote for these times, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center invited community members to share their favorite songs; the result is a splendid playlist

[Music for Peace](#) – This list has some of the music that Haruki Murakami chose in his recent Japan FM Radio programme.

Songs of Migration

[The Bidesia Project](#): The Bidesia songs are testimony to the loss and longings of Indian indentured labourers in British colonies in the 19th century. Mainstream history may not acknowledge these voices, but they live on in our collective memories.

[The Love Letter Songs of Kerala](#): Kerala has a special genre of songs called Kathu Pattu or 'love letter songs' that used to be written to migrants. This essay by Sebastian Castelier gives a brief history of the songs. There are a few clips too.

[Songs about Migration](#): This is a very interesting essay in The Wire by Sumangala Damodaran. It also has links to some songs.

- [A Migrant Road Worker's Song](#)
- [A Bidesia Song](#)
- [Soona](#), an internal migrant worker's song during the COVID-19 lock down

Work Songs

[Traditional Work Songs](#): An amazing resource from the Library of Congress.

[Classic Labor Songs from Smithsonian Folkways](#): Songs of the American labor movement over the 20th century called for just wages, dignity, and a fair shake. They voiced grievances, affirmed the value of the worker to society, and expressed hope for life in a more just world.

[Work Songs](#) : This site of the Virtual Museum of Images and Sounds (VMIS) is an absolute treasure. VMIS is created by using the resources of two image and sound archives of the [AIS](#) – the [Center for Art and Archaeology \(CAA\)](#) and the [Archives and Research Centre for Ethnomusicology \(ARCE\)](#).

[Bread and Roses](#) : Sung by Sunila Abeysekera (1952 – September 9, 2013), a Sri Lankan feminist and human rights activist.

[Japanese Traditional Music: Songs of People at Work and Play](#)

[The Grindmill Songs Project](#): **all stories so far from People’s Archive of Rural India (PARI)**: The Grindmill Songs Project is a unique storehouse of over 100,000 ovi – couplets sung by women in rural Maharashtra – with recordings, videos, transcripts, translations and stories. This collection speaks of the diversity and depth of this form, through which the women sing of everyday life, patriarchy, caste, poet-saints, historical events, Babasaheb Ambedkar and more

[Domestic Workers Rap](#): A rap created by our friends from the Mekong Migration Network.

[Preta Rara overcame housework to slay](#): An essay about former Brazilian domestic worker Joyce Fernandes / Preta Rara, her activism and powerful songs. Here is a [track of Joyce](#).

[Women Farmers Sing Folk Song While Planting Rice Saplings In Boudh](#), Odisha, India

[Mabuhay Singers-Planting Rice/Magtanim Hindi Biro](#): Lyric Video of a popular folk song by the Mabuhay Singers plus versions of the famous painting by Fernando Amorsolo

[Rice Planting Song \(Nepal\)](#)

[Rice planting festival song in Nepal "Ropai Geet"](#)



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women
191/41, Sivalai Condominium, 33, Itsaraphap Road, Bangkok, Thailand
Tel: +66-2-864-1427/8, Fax: +66-2-864-1637, Website: www.gaatw.org