



During Framework's **Outreach to Domestic Service Workers** event on March 4, 2021, Mary Caparas (Project Free Manager at Womankind) shared her insights on conducting direct and indirect outreach to individuals experiencing or at risk for labor trafficking in domestic service.

There are 2.2 million domestic workers in the United States.¹ This includes babysitters, caretakers, handymen, gardeners, home health aides, personal care aides, cooks, waiters, nannies, housekeepers, nurses, janitors, and family chauffeurs.

When conducting outreach to domestic workers, consider that the risk factors that make this population more vulnerable to labor trafficking double as outreach challenges.

- Communication barriers
- Immigration status
- History of exploitation
- Limited freedom of movement
- Stigmas
- Gaps in education or rights awareness
- Lack of support network

MATERIALS

- Use visuals that are inclusive and welcoming to capture attention (without sensationalizing). In order to counter the stigmas that exist against domestic workers, visuals should be affirming, encouraging, and not fall into stereotypes.
- Keep language simple, accessible, and trauma-informed.
- Include contact information.
- Avoid distributing materials to the residence where someone is working and may be trafficked, as this can put the worker in more danger.

1. Julia Wolfe et al., *Domestic Workers Chartbook*, (Economic Policy Institute, 2020).

Partnerships can be formal or informal.

One of the most important partners your organization can have is with domestic workers themselves, or friends of domestic workers. The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) is a great group to partner with, as they have local and national groups.

Other Partnerships to Consider

- Professionals within the community (e.g., immigration attorneys, health care providers)
- Religious groups
- Service providers (local and national)
- Local, state, or federal labor officials

Consider creating an Ecomap to identify opportunities for your organization

By using community data (such as word of mouth), research conducted by national hotlines, academics, institutes, or groups like the NDWA, you can create an Ecomap to define and organize potential access points.

- A two-way arrow indicates an existing solid relationship between your organization and the entity on the other end.
- A one-way arrow indicates an existing relationship, though it may not be as well-established.
- The larger, colored circles indicate entities that your organization should consider working with, if you are not already doing so, with more specific groups listed around the larger concepts.



PANELIST Q&A

Where are some places where you have seen domestic workers gathering where outreach could be conducted?

Churches and faith-based organizations can be a good starting point. Often, Catholic churches have domestic workers who are their parishioners, and the churches may have migrant centers in larger cities. Some organizers have gone to playgrounds, but it is very important to be aware of postings and rules that state who is allowed to be at the playground (for example, no one without a child/children should be loitering). Another option could be at parks, with the consideration that you don't want to startle anyone by approaching them. It is important when handing out flyers in places like these that you don't make anyone feel like they are the victim. Be clear that you are spreading awareness.

Due to how isolated this population is, how do you reach people at-risk or who are being trafficked in the context of COVID-19?

There are a lot of providers right now who are seeing an influx, which could be occurring through word of mouth of the domestic workers, because people are seeking things like financial assistance. Referrals between domestic workers are still happening, which is one of the ways that outreach to this group can still occur even within the COVID era. You can give outreach materials to places that may be interacting in this capacity, such as health clinics or food banks, so that they can pass the information along to domestic workers that they may come in contact with through their work.

Does Womankind track the calls and e-mails it gets back to a particular material or drop location? And if so, how?

Womankind does not use a specific tool to track effectiveness of outreach materials. We do, however, track the quantity of materials distributed through our internal agency-wide database. We also periodically do a check in and ask staff for feedback on items. We keep inventories of items that help us track frequency of use and requests. This is primarily based on feedback from staff, and not directly from community or clients (we will often have staff note if community members expressed preference or complaint). We have increased collaboration with a media company to implement mission and vision changes across the agency. Part of this work is looking at all the program cards/flyers/helpline cards/promotional items to assess effectiveness from the following points:

1. Design – Is it easy to read? Easy to find important information? Memorable?
2. Safety – Will survivors be safe if seen with any of our materials?
3. Sustainable – Are our materials functional? Wasteful? Optimizing our limited budget?

And, to sum it up, it's a work in progress especially for our broader organization (not specific to anti-human trafficking efforts).

Are there expected changes to any employment laws that may improve working conditions in the near future?

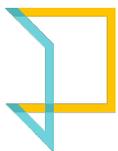
In 2019, there were plans to create a [Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights](#) federally. If passed, this law would have guaranteed a minimum wage and overtime pay, basic protections against racial and gender discrimination, as well as work to address issues that make domestic work precarious, such as requiring employers to give live-in nannies and housekeepers at least a month's notice before terminating them. There has been growing support surrounding domestic workers' rights, and several states have passed their own protections for domestic workers. While it is not specific to domestic workers, raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 would make a world of difference to domestic workers who may not be experiencing labor trafficking but who are being paid below a livable wage.

What types of visuals are effective on outreach materials? What types should not be included?

It is always important to approach creating outreach materials with a trauma-informed lens. While flyers that include images of food may be confusing to some and appear as if it is an offer for free food, those images often do get attention and get picked up. You should always stay away from sensationalized imagery and stereotypes, such as a woman in a maid's outfit.

RESOURCES

- [Domestic Workers Chartbook](#) – A comprehensive look at the demographics, wages, benefits, and poverty rates of domestic service workers, published by the Economic Policy Institute in 2020
- [Human Trafficking at Home](#) – Resources from Polaris providing an overview of trafficking of domestic workers in the United States
 - [Fact sheet](#)
 - [Full report](#)
- [Department of Labor Fact Sheet](#) – Description of a domestic worker's job duties and definition of a private home
- [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#) – Advocacy and resources to create safer and fairer work environments for domestic workers throughout the United States
- [Tips for Employing Domestic Workers](#) – A list of do's and don'ts to ensure you are treating those who live and work in your home with the respect they deserve and according to the rights afforded them by law



To learn more about Framework or to request training, technical assistance, or individualized support on labor trafficking, visit us at FrameworkTA.org.

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