

Building a Base for Women Resisting Sexual Exploitation and
Gender Discrimination

Women's Human Rights Centre Construction Project

Appeal for Donations to Support Construction Costs

Colabo is a Japan-based non-profit organisation supporting young women and girls, including those who have suffered abuse or sexual exploitation.

Currently in Japan, sexual exploitation of isolated and impoverished women is becoming increasingly severe, especially among teenage girls. In our society, the issue of such sexual exploitation is seen as a problem of women's delinquency rather than a societal issue, resulting in a lack of support system for women who are seeking to leave sex trade. The law also states that women who trade sex are subject to punishment, but there are no penalties for the act of purchasing sex. For this reason, sex buyers from all over the world gather in Kabukichō, Shinjuku – where Colabo is based. To change the status quo, solidarity from the international community is critical.

On top of that, Japan lacks support centres for girls and women who have experienced sexual exploitation, and there is no Women's Human Rights Centre. Backlash against women's human rights movement has been intense, and Colabo is also under harsh attack. This makes many women's groups fear to tackle the issue of sexual exploitation.

To change this situation, we have launched a fundraising campaign to build a Women's Human Rights Centre.

The Women's Human Rights Center will be built in Kabukichō, Shinjuku, the city where sexual exploitation is most severe in Japan, and will create a base for activities that support women who are in the midst of sexual exploitation. Construction costs 1 billion yen (\$6.7 million).

Colabo receives no public funding and operates solely through donations from citizens. We are calling for support from all over the world with the aim of building the centre in 2030. We need your support.

What we hope to achieve with the Women's Human Rights Centre :

A foundation for the women's movement — where women resisting sexual exploitation and gender discrimination can meet, connect, and take action together.

1. A Base for Women Who Refuse to Be Silenced by Patriarchal Violence

In Kabukichō, Shinjuku, we will create a space where women can carry out their work without fear — free from the harassment and interference of a male-dominated society. By owning and operating our own independent centre, women will have a secure and stable base from which to act.

2. A Place to Connect with and Support Girls Facing Abuse and Sexual Exploitation

This will be a refuge where girls experiencing abuse or sexual exploitation can escape from violence, find safety, and take the time they need to heal. It will be a space where they can begin to restore trust in others and in themselves — a centre committed to protecting the dignity of women and girls.

3. A Hub for Learning and Exchange on Sexual Exploitation, Gender Discrimination, and Women's Rights

We will establish a space for learning about the realities of sexual exploitation and women's human rights — a place to share experiences and pain, and to build solidarity. This will be a meeting point for those who are standing together against gender discrimination.

4. A Launchpad for Young Women Activists

The centre will be a gathering place for young women who wish to begin their journey in human rights activism. It will provide office space and a safe environment to organise, free from fear of violence.

Message from the representative:

Why is the Women's Human Rights Centre needed now?

From my own experience of wandering the streets as a girl

As a teenager, a home with domestic violence was not a place to be in peace. Having dropped out of school and being unable to return home, we would wander the streets, approached only by sex trade operators or buyers. Without any adults to rely on, we were desperate to get what we could eat and where to sleep for the day. Sometimes we'd lay cardboard on a building's rooftop to see out the night. To girls like us, sex buyers and traffickers would come up with questions like, "How much?", "Looking for work?", "Have you eaten?" and then broker us into sex trade.

At the time, I believed that being seen solely as an object of sexual consumption meant "it was my own fault" and "I only have that kind of value." However, when I visited the Philippines at the age of 18 and saw girls being "sold" in a brothel for Japanese and Japanese men who came to buy them, I realised that this was not a personal issue, but a societal one. In order to change this situation, I went to university to learn about the structure of society. It was during my student years, in 2011, that I began Colabo's activities.

The current state of welfare and sex trafficking in Japan

Even today, Kabukichō, Shinjuku is home to a large number of girls from all over the country who have lost their place due to abuse or poverty. In Japan, there is little support available for abused girls, and those who have run away from home or become victims of sex trafficking are often treated as troublemakers, even by schools and welfare agencies. Having experienced inadequate responses when seeking help from adults, children gather on the streets, believing they must fend for themselves.

The only adults showing interest in these girls are those who exploit them sexually. Girls with intellectual or developmental disabilities are frequently victimised. Deceptions have persisted for decades – girls and women get recruited into host clubs, where men deceive them into incurring substantial debts and then force them into prostitution to pay them off. These girls and women suffer from various problems, including trauma and mental illnesses caused by the victimisation, sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, and they need care.

In downtowns like Kabukichō, between 100 and 200 sex trade "scouts" approach young girls every night within a radius of just a few hundred metres. Over 100 sex buyers are also confirmed daily. For men living in Japan, prostitution is familiar, and they casually come to "buy" girls with their colleagues and friends on their way home from work or school. In the country where sex traffickers are legally present, this is nothing new.

An increasing number of young women are being forced into prostitution by their parents or boyfriends, and more girls are being compelled to marry much older men who are sex buyers, often just after turning 18, usually for economic reasons. This is not just in big cities. Colabo supports girls from rural areas who are in the same situation.

Sex buyers from around the world

Currently, sex buyers gather from all over the world in Kabukichō. Tourists from Europe, the United States, Oceania, Asia and other countries are increasingly buying prostitution as an "experience." It is known that "in Japan you can do things you can't do in your own country. What's more, you can buy women "cheaply".

In response, the Japanese government is trying to address the issue by strengthening crackdowns on women. In the summer of 2025, multiple news companies collaborated with the police to broadcast videos showing the faces, names, ages, and arrest scenes of four women involved in sex trade, all around 20 years old. The faces of the buyer are obscured by mosaic, their names concealed, and they are not arrested. Nonetheless, the host club that forced them into prostitution and extracted over 100 million yen (\$670,000) from them over two years were never held accountable. We are the sole women's organisation in the country protesting against such human rights violations.

What are the laws regarding the sex trade in Japan?

Japan's Anti-Prostitution Act ostensibly prohibits prostitution (which refers to insertion only), but only women who trade sex are subject to punishment, and there are no penalties for sex buyers. This discriminatory provision against women has not been revised for 70 years since its enactment in 1956. Japan's Anti-Prostitution Act has failed to address sex trade as a violation of human rights against women. Instead, the Act has obscured the structure of sexual exploitation by punishing women who have engaged in such sex trades.



In Japan, the Act on Control and Improvement of Amusement Business permits all possible forms of sex trading to be conducted legally. There are "free information centres" everywhere in downtown areas across the country, introducing men to places where they can purchase women of all ages, from the young to the elderly. In Kabukichō, Shinjuku, these free information centres are located just metres apart. How much better it would be if there were centres guiding women to welfare services rather than selling them.

Some places specialise in pregnant women, breastfeeding, and women during periods covered by Act on Support for Women Facing Difficulties, and others advertise that you can buy women with disabilities. One shop's website states, "though she may not understand much due to her intellectual disability, she is quite obedient and always smiling. Feel free to mould her to your liking☆."

Within the sex trade, all forms of violence are treated as services. Some places include free options such as inflicting physical harm on women, forcing them to ingest faeces or urine, or walking them while blindfolded and collared. Many shops operate on the premise of penetration, an act that should be prohibited by law.

Colabo campaigns for legislation that does not penalise women involved in the sex trade, instead criminalising the act of purchasing sex, and provides support for women seeking to leave the industry.

The backlash against feminism and the monetisation of misogyny

For the 15 years since Colabo began its activities, it has consistently been subjected to rumours and defamatory attacks. This has become particularly severe in recent years. The background to this includes the recognition of the necessity of Colabo's work, its designation as a national model project in 2018, and our involvement in the enactment of the Act on Support for Women Facing Difficulties in 2022.

When the support for young women was legally established and Colabo's work began spreading nationwide, false claims such as 'accounting fraud' were disseminated against Colabo by sex trade operators and buyers. This was accompanied by politicians connected to the sex trade industry.

Obstructed, the term "sex trade" was removed from the national basic plan for women's support legislation. Meanwhile, perpetrators spreading false information have raised over 200 million yen (\$1.3 million) in donations under the banner of "fighting against Colabo", and several have stood for election and been elected. Learning that attacking women's support yields financial gain and votes, others are now copying this behaviour.

Colabo won all 20 or more trials in this hoax, making it clear that there was no accounting fraud. However, violence from countless people who believed the hoax did not end up on the internet, including identifying staff homes and shelters, stalking or surveillance of our bases of operations, sending large quantities of unpurchased items, sending only one sanitary napkin, killing threats and rape threats, threats at the site of the activity, shouting obscene words, and video footage.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Shinjuku City demanded Colabo cease its activities, citing obstruction and claiming it was 'dangerous', and expelled us from Kabukichō. This became a success story for the perpetrators, and the damage is spreading to women's human rights organisations nationwide. Subsequently, at the organisation commissioned by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to replace Colabo, incidents have occurred such as sexual violence within the facility, intervening for sex trade, and staff recommending drugs to those seeking help. Sex trade operators have infiltrated 'women's support' services, intensifying their activities.

Attacks against women who speak out have escalated in recent years, attempting to silence us. Unless we continue resisting sexual exploitation, opposing discrimination against women, and refusing to be silenced, this violence will not cease.

Therefore, we plan to establish the Women's Human Rights Centre. We wish to create a base for women's activities where they will not be intimidated by harassment or violence from a male-dominated society, nor fear being driven out. We aspire for it to be a place where women across generations connect, resist discrimination, and build solidarity among women. We want to build an unshakable base for women, through women's own strength. To achieve this, we need solidarity and support from around the world. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Yumeno Nito

Founder & Representative, Sexual Exploitation Victims Support Center Colabo



Colabo

Vision for the Women's Human Rights Centre

Ground Floor

Tsubomi Café & Shop

Serves cakes made by a woman trained as a pâtissier following her connection with Colabo Part-time job opportunities for girls and young women Evening café time offering free meals and essential items for teenage girls, especially those wandering the streets at night / Sales of books and goods related to women's rights, as well as hosting events and gatherings



- A welcoming space where girls on the streets can have a meal and connect with adults who expect nothing in return
- A place that supports employment opportunities for girls and women
- A space open to the public, offering opportunities to engage with and learn about the issues of sexual exploitation and gender discrimination

2nd Floor

Anti-Sexual Exploitation Library

Permanent exhibition of 'We Were "Bought,"' including survivor testimony videos Books and materials documenting the history of women's resistance to gender discrimination, as well as laws, support systems, and movements from around the world / A venue for study sessions, talks, and other events



- A place to learn about the realities of prostitution and sexual exploitation, and to engage in dialogue about women's human rights
- A foundation for campaigning to move beyond Anti-prostitution Act—which punishes women—and to establish legislation banning the purchase of sex
- A space to build solidarity with the international community

In Japan, there is no dedicated museum or facility where people can learn about the realities of sexual exploitation. The exhibition 'We Were "Bought,"' which shares the voices of girls who experienced child prostitution, received a powerful response. We have heard many calls from women seeking safe spaces to talk openly about the discrimination and violence they face, and to connect with others. This centre will also provide a venue where various groups resisting sexual exploitation and gender discrimination can hold events and study sessions.

3rd Floor

Hub for Young Activists

Rental desks and mailboxes (allowing users to have an official address), co-working space and printer facilities / Meeting rooms, self-support centre: a space where women who have experienced sex trade can connect, share their experiences and time, and develop products or services aimed at rebuilding their lives and employment prospects. Similar centres, based on ACT ON THE PREVENTION OF COMMERCIAL SEX ACTS AND PROTECTION, ETC. OF VICTIMS, have been established nationwide in South Korea for women seeking to leave the sex trade.



- A hub supporting young activists working on women's human rights issues
- A place where women seeking to leave the sex trade can come together to build the strength they need to move forward with their lives

- When women begin human rights activism, they often lack the know-how and find it difficult to connect with others who share their vision. Moreover, there have been cases where founders of organisations have faced stalking and other safety threats targeting their registered addresses. To deal with this, we will create a space where women who wish to start human rights work can gather, establish an office, and hold meetings and activities in a safe and secure environment.
- In Japan, support for women seeking to leave the sex trade is scarce. As a practical response, we will open a self-support centre that will serve as a model for future efforts to assist women exiting the sex trade.

4th Floor

Colabo (Support Centre)

Open free space, office space, meeting rooms, bedrooms, shower facilities, storage, consultation rooms for girls and women, including the "KEY" counselling service for those seeking to exist the sex trade

- A safe space where girls on the streets can take a moment to rest and seek refuge
- Providing meals and fostering relationships with caring adults who expect nothing in return
- Offering essential information, goods, and food necessary for daily life
- Emergency consultation – Accompaniment to hospitals, government offices, and other appointments
- Collaboration with professionals such as doctors and lawyers
- Shelter protection and housing support
- Assistance with daily living, employment support, education, and parenting advice
- Support group activities run by girls and women connected to Colabo



5th Floor

Shelter

Residential units with 2 to 3 bedrooms and a living-dining-kitchen, plus a terrace for barbecues and growing vegetables and flowers.

- Emergency accommodation and protection (for those fleeing violence or without a place to stay)
- Temporary respite (for those needing to escape domestic violence or abuse for a short period) – Access to showers and baths
- A safe place to sleep and time to consider the next steps
- Provision of essential information, goods, and food for daily living
- A place to return to whenever needed



Budget Required for Construction: 1 Billion Yen (\$6.7million)

Breakdown: Land purchase: 600 million yen (\$4 million)
Building construction: 350 million yen (\$2.4 million)
Equipment and fixtures: 40 million yen (\$270,000)
Other expenses and fees: 10 million yen (\$67,000)

Schedule

- Autumn 2025: Donation campaign launch – target 250 million yen per year for 4 years = 1 billion yen
- Winter 2025: Nationwide caravan planning and implementation
- 2026: Second year of donation campaign
- 2027: Third year of donation campaign; land purchase; finalising building design plans and contractor agreements
- 2028: Fourth year of donation campaign; finalising post-construction operation plans
- 2029: Construction commencement
- 2030: Completion

Videos explaining the Women's Human Rights Centre construction project can be viewed here.

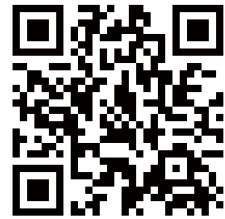


https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_JV-JO2E2hCbP441qW0L5s8g0DXp3wVz2&si=phUzew37oHYEijbP

Please Support the Construction of the Women's Human Rights Centre

Donation through credit card can be made here:

<https://congrant.com/project/colabo/19128>



About Colabo

Our Vision: A society where girls do not face exploitation or violence

Our Mission: Ensuring every girl has access to necessities of life and meaningful relationships

Our Value: Walking alongside the girls



Since 2011, we have sustained the following activities, supporting over 10,000 girls to date:

- Night-time outreach (locating and engaging girls wandering the streets to establish connections)
- Hosting free night cafés for teenage girls (providing rest, meals, charging points, counseling, and supplies/clothing in entertainment districts)
- Counselling services and accompaniment support (for medical/legal assistance and liaison with authorities)
- Protection and accommodation support in emergency shelters
- Providing housing in medium/long-term shelters or apartments, alongside life support and employment assistance
- Self-help group activities led by survivors, and the exhibition 'We Were "Bought"' exposing child sexual exploitation realities
- Lectures, supporter training workshops, and policy advocacy
- International solidarity initiatives to resolve sex trade issues
- Emergency support for girls and women in disaster-affected areas (as sex traffickers infiltrate disaster zones)



Website & Media coverage

<https://colabo-official.net/projects-english/>



Representative's background

<https://researchmap.jp/yumenonito?lang=en>