

# Across The Border

## About us:

Established in February 2024, 'Across The Border', is a European-based, women-led non-governmental organisation (NGO). The organisation fosters a safe and inclusive environment, particularly for the youth, especially women, to express their opinions and concerns. The organisation aims to focus on amplifying the voices of the marginalised and under-represented communities of the Global South. We aim to build close-knit communities in countries of the Global South where we can address these concerns at the grassroots level through our collective effort. Our work focuses on raising questions about historical and ongoing discrimination, oppression, human rights violations and violence against people of all ages living in the Global South, and discourses on the migrant communities in the Global North.

## Event: "Holding Space: Mental Health and the Weight of Activism"

ATB recognises May as **Mental Health Awareness Month**, an opportunity to shed light on pressing mental health issues affecting individuals and communities. Within our work and broader network, it has become increasingly evident that **activists, humanitarian workers, frontline defenders, and social justice practitioners** often bear a heavy emotional burden. Regular exposure to trauma—whether firsthand or through the stories of others—can deeply affect one's mental well-being.

The work of advocacy, crisis response, and activism, though driven by hope and justice, can also lead to **burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma**. Yet, conversations around mental health within these sectors are often overlooked or deprioritised due to the urgency of the work. ATB seeks to open up space for this crucial conversation: **how do we care for ourselves while caring for others?** How can organisations, movements, and individuals integrate mental health awareness into their daily work without compromising their values or commitments?

### Virtual Engagement:

The online discussion will be held on Zoom as an informal discussion to ensure it is accessible and inclusive for all by engaging to a wider audience. The total time for the event will be a maximum of **1 hour and 30 minutes**.

### Date and Time:

The event will take place on **25th May**. The exact date and time will be confirmed with the speaker during the meeting.

\*subject to change

Event Overview	Description
Introduction ( 5 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and overview of ATB</li> <li>• Introduction of the topic and discussing the importance of having conversations about mental health and its challenges</li> <li>• The moderator will introduce the speakers, their background and expertise</li> </ul>
Discussion by Speaker 1 (20 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlighting the psychological impact of activism, care-giving roles, front line defenders</li> <li>• Discussion about normalizing feelings like burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma</li> <li>• Navigating guilt, urgency culture, and the myth of endless resilience</li> </ul>
Discussion by Speaker 2 (20 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systemic barriers to mental health support for frontline workers</li> <li>• How can we build sustainable activism and collective care practices?</li> </ul>
Q&A Session/ Sharing of person experiences (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open the floor for Q/A or reflections from participants</li> </ul>
Healing Circle/ Sharing of person experiences (10 - 15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided meditation or affirmations to close the session</li> </ul>
Closing Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing additional resources for mental health and support</li> </ul>

**Contact:**

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We understand that as a volunteer-run organisation, we can't offer a speaker fee. But this event offers a fantastic platform to share your expertise and reach a wider audience. It's a chance to make a real difference in raising awareness of this important issue. To highlight your accomplishments and effort, we provide a certificate for participation in the discussion as a speaker, after the event.

**If you wish to contribute now and even after the event for World Health Day:**

- 1) You can participate in an interview or discussion with one of our team members.
- 2) You can take part in another panel or workshop hosted by Across The Border and share your expertise.
- 3) You can submit articles, research or other relevant informative materials for the ATB Blog page.

We welcome any other suggestions or ideas for future collaboration and partnership!