We always know that there is black sheep in the Hong Kong Police Force. They make use of their status and power to make sex workers, especially the migrant sex workers, provide them with free sexual service. When we complain to the police management, they tell us they will seriously handle the complaints but it is necessary for the sex workers involved to come out to make the complaint. If we say that the sex workers involved are afraid of the police revenge, they will say that the suspect may not necessarily be a real police officer, and it may be a police imposter or something like that. No matter what they respond, the underneath meaning is that they are not going to investigate into the complaints.

However, the police recently arrested two police officers, who were suspected of abusing their power to make the migrant sex workers provide free sexual service. According to the newspapers, the police quickly arrested the two officers because they received a nameless complaint letter. This is very strange to us. When we complain to the police, they always digress or explain much the complaint procedures. Yet, it appears that the police do start the investigation even it is based on the anonymous complaint letter. Or is the letter sent from one ‘celebrity’, who pressures the police to start the investigation immediately?

If the police have secretly changed their guidelines and now accept anonymous complaint letter, both local and migrant sex workers are more willing to testify the police officers. If it is the pressure from the ‘celebrity’ that pushes the police to start the investigation, sure we are gratitude to the ‘celebrity’. Nevertheless, we are happier if the police can handle and investigate into each complaint seriously. This helps much to protect the interests of the sex workers.
Our work and movement:

Hong Kong
Police officer = medical officer?
These days, the police operations targeting the migrant sex workers have never stopped. We almost read about the operations every 2 to 3 days from the newspapers or from the sex workers during outreach. The police may probably think that the sex workers from Mainland China are all affected by the Tongguan crackdown and choose to work in Hong Kong, so the police speed up their investigation and operation against the migrant sex workers.

In one recent operation, one migrant sex worker strived to push the door so as to stop the police from entering the room. Yet, she failed to struggle with the police outside the room. When the police opened the door with a kick, the kick was so forceful that the arm of the migrant woman was hurt. Luckily she was deported to China the next day. She could quickly go to the doctor and did not delay the treatment.

Why did the police refuse to let the migrant sex worker go to the doctor at that moment? Were the police able to tell the situation of the woman through simple observation? Or the police believed that they could help saving the public funds and resources of the Hong Kong Government, as the woman would soon leave Hong Kong and she could deal with the injury in China?

It is true that the migrant sex workers would have broken the law if they work in Hong Kong. There is nothing wrong when the police arrest them. However, in case the migrant women seek for medical treatment, as long as the police officers do not possess any professional medical knowledge, how can they make such an insensible decision of rejecting the migrant woman? If the arm of the migrant woman here gets worse, are the police to be blamed? To us, everyone is entitled to basic rights even s/he breaks the law. S/he should not be deprived of the freedom. The police therefore should not ignore the injured woman. No matter why the police reject the migrant sex worker, we strongly think that it is unreasonable and unacceptable.

In addition, below are the number of complaints from the sex workers and massage workers about violence and police abuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police violence/abuse</th>
<th>Client/criminal violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free massage service before arrest</td>
<td>Police imposter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free sexual service</td>
<td>Denial of payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper body-search</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force/coax into signing the statement</td>
<td>Theft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being deprived of basic rights</td>
<td>Forced labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstruct the course of justice</td>
<td>Candid camera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect of Duty</td>
<td>Fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Threat and insult</td>
<td>1 case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive license check</td>
<td>4 cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>3 cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infringe privacy by taking photo</td>
<td>6 cases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 cases 12 cases 3 case 25 cases 1 case 3 cases 1 case
Our first attempt

We worked with VOW (Voices of Women) Media a few months ago to organize a media class for the sex workers and massage workers. Friends from VOW Media taught the women how to take photos, make and edit videos. This is the first time we have such a formal media class for the sex workers and massage workers, because we always encounter the problem of lacking equipment and technique. However, through the collaboration with VOW, the problem above was solved and we are happy that the first media class is conducted successfully. We are also happy that Vivian, the Director of VOW Media, can share with us her feelings on the class and the participants.

“In 2007, I founded VOW Media to work with communities of marginalized women in the Netherlands. During this year, I was also a volunteer for grant-making in the Asia Pacific region at Mama Cash Fund for Women in Amsterdam when I came across a report from Zi Teng with a beautiful poster of images from sex workers in Hong Kong. It was inspiring to see these pictures created by the women themselves from across the globe. I would have never imagined that 7 years later, I would have the opportunity to collaborate and work with an organization such as Zi Teng.

VOW Media has worked with women in the sex industry in Amsterdam’s Red Light District in 2010 and 2012. We started this project, motivated by a curiosity about the lives of the women behind the windows, but more so that each woman has her own story to tell. The concept of A Day In Her Life, a multimedia workshop of photography, radio and video, reveals that each woman has her own unique day - from morning to night, and that she experiences this day as any other woman would. Through this project, VOW Media hopes to reduce the negative stigmas associated with sex work by providing a personal point of view from sex workers themselves.

I arrived in Hong Kong in 2013 to live and work in Asia for the first time. As a Taiwanese-American, this has been important for me as I am understanding how to navigate a new culture which is also part of my own. So, this was a special experience and also a way for me to understand the lives of local Hong Kong and mainland Chinese women working in this industry. One of my biggest challenges of working
in Hong Kong is similar to its layout and architecture - skyscrapers and hidden alleyways are similar to the many layers and levels of the city. To get to know the real Hong Kong, you have to look up onto different floors you may not find from the ground. This has been a similar experience with navigating this project in Hong Kong - there are language and cultural barriers, things I have had to find out and still have yet to find out. It has been a very humbling experience to work directly with the women at Zi Teng and to get a feel for real Hong Kong life. For me, it was an opportunity to learn more about the situation of women involved in the sex industry and also how to learn to work in Hong Kong for the first time.

A Day In Her Life Hong Kong ran from March to May 2014, where every Friday morning we set up a classroom, mini photo studio and video editing lab within the office space of Zi Teng. We started with 5 participants in the beginning of the workshops but ended with 3 very dedicated women who completed both the photography and video assignments with remarkable results. These works tell stories of their lives, but most of all it has given them the chance to learn new skills and to understand how media is created. The women are adept at using their mobile phones for taking pictures and videos, but they learned new techniques in how to better use these technologies. In the self-portrait workshop, the women were excited to learn how to make a more beautiful “selfie” through a class on camera angles, lighting and composition. They brought cameras with them on their travels back to their hometowns during the Ching Ming Festival - bringing back images saturated warmth and color and feelings of home, food, and family.

When it came to making their videos, it was more difficult for the participants to brainstorm their idea. However, once we started shooting, they were very excited to learn how to operate the camera and to watch the footage they shot. The participants also made a rough edit using video editing software, with one woman saying that she preferred shooting over editing which she found troublesome. At the end of this first workshop, there are four videos made, each telling a very different story from a very personal perspective. The participants are not sharing their lives as sex workers, but their points of views on life in Hong Kong as women, as mothers, as daughters, and as friends.

I hope that more women from Zi Teng will be interested in participating in making their own media. Creating alternative images to the mainstream also empowers women to become authors of their lives. It is important that stories from these communities are heard, especially in a fast-changing city such as Hong Kong. Although the biggest difference in Hong Kong compared to Amsterdam has been the issues of privacy and anonymity. In Amsterdam, perhaps because they work on display behind the windows, many of our participants wanted to share to their world about their experiences behind the windows, with some even choosing to reveal their identities. The negative stigma on sex work is strong in Asia, and it is a reality when compared to the open-mindedness found in Amsterdam. I find that this is why making media is important, so that other women among these communities can be encouraged to also speak up and have their voices heard.
Dialogue with the sex worker/lesbian activist from US

We were invited by the Lingnan University to the “Neo-Moralism Under Neoliberalism International Conference” in May, and exchanged with the scholars and groups concerning sex/gender our opinions on the social norms related to sex. We also had the roundtable discussion during the conference with Amber Hollibaugh, the sex worker/lesbian activist from the States.

We discussed with Hollibaugh and the representatives of several sex workers support groups various issues concerning sex workers, including human trafficking, the destruction of marriage, sexualities, the relationship between sex workers and race, and social workers’ understanding and support for sex workers. Sure there is no absolute answer to the above. However, we all agree that it is the basic requirement for any sex workers support group to substantially understand sex workers and their living situation. Since there are many differences among sex workers, it is not sensible to think that one can ‘help’ all sex workers with only one set of rules and methods.
Linking with the world

San Francisco, the States
Say No to San Francisco for hosting the International AIDS Conference 2018

The International AIDS Conference is convened every 4 years. Scholars, specialists and HIV/AIDS concern organizations will gather and share with each other the technologies and experiences on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The host city for the International AIDS Conference 2018 is not yet decided, but San Francisco is on the venue shortlist. This has aroused much attention and opposition from the HIV/AIDS concern organizations and individuals. Though the US Government has done much on HIV prevention, more is the criticism on some of her discriminative policies and immigration measures against sex workers and drug-users, which are two social groups closely related to the risk of HIV/AIDS. For example, it imposes ban on the purchase of supplies in the needle and syringe programs, it requires the groups and projects seeking for the US funds to sign the “anti-prostitution pledge”. As a result, two advocacy groups INPUD (International Network of People who Use Drugs) and NSWP (The Global Network of Sex Work Projects) have submitted a letter of opposition to the International AIDS Society, expressing their disappointment and discontent that America may be the host of the International AIDS Conference 2018. They also seek the support from the groups and individuals concerning sex workers, drug-users and HIV/AIDS issues. We definitely sign the letter, as we hope that the US Government can genuinely repeal all discriminative polices and administrative measures.
Prof. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, IAS President  
Dr. Chris Beyrer, IAS President-Elect & International Chair of Conference Coordinating Committee  
Mr. Bernard Kadasia, IAS Acting Executive Director

International AIDS Society Governing Council and Secretariat  
International AIDS Society HQ  
Avenue de France 23  
CH-1202 Geneva  
Switzerland

26th May 2014

Dear Professor Barré-Sinoussi, Dr. Beyrer and Mr. Kadasia,

Re: San Francisco short-listed to host the International AIDS Conference in 2018.

We are writing to you as global networks representing people who use drugs and female, male and transgender sex workers and our supporters and allies to express our great consternation that San Francisco is amongst the cities included in the shortlist to host the International AIDS Conference in 2018.

As you are no doubt more than aware, in order for a city to qualify as a host for an International AIDS Conference it must be in a country that has no legal barriers to the entry, stay or residence of people living with HIV. Whilst the United States does indeed meet this vital qualifying criteria having in 2009 overturned it’s previous extant legal impediments on these rights, we feel that holding the conference in the United States would be an egregiously flawed decision.

Both sex workers and people who use drugs, two of the most affected key populations in the HIV epidemic do face considerable, rigorously enforced legal barriers to entering the United States. In addition, whilst the United States has made enormous contributions to the fight against the epidemic, it still has in place a federal ban on purchasing supplies for needle and syringe programmes, both domestically and in its overseas programmes, and requires that beneficiaries of federal funds sign the infamous “anti-prostitution pledge”. Both of these pieces of legislation pose serious structural barriers to building effective HIV prevention programmes amongst sex workers and people who inject drugs.

We are frankly flabbergasted, and we do not think it an exaggeration to say, insulted, that so soon after the 2012 Washington IAC in which the slogan “No sex workers, no drug users, no IAC” was widely heard as a result of the systemic exclusion of international members of these communities from taking part in the conference that a return to the United States is even being considered.

The lessons of the Washington conference have clearly not been learnt and the concerns voiced by people who use drugs, sex workers and their allies have been ignored. Should the 2018 conference go ahead in San Francisco we will once again see a conference lacking in the voices of two of the communities most severely impacted by the epidemic. This defies, and makes a mockery of the often voiced commitment to ensuring the full inclusion and meaningful participation of all key affected populations. Such a decision would send the signal that in spite of the epidemiological evidence that repressive legal environments, criminalisation, stigma and other structural drivers are ensuring that sex workers and drug users, specifically, injecting drug users are massively disproportionately affected by the epidemic that our voices do not matter and are not wanted in the preeminent international platform for exchanging views, and providing leadership in the fight against the epidemic.

In light of these facts, we implore you not to, once again, discredit the International AIDS Conference by holding it in a country to which members of two of the key affected populations will be unable to safely gain entry. We urge you to show concrete commitment to the theme of this year’s conference “no one left behind”, and to hold the 2018 conference in a country that does not place systemic barriers to the meaningful participation of members of all key affected communities.

In conclusion, we call upon you to commit to not holding the IAC in the United States until it has repealed its restrictive barriers on the right to enter, stay and reside for people who use drugs and sex workers, and until it has repealed the federal ban on needle and syringe programs and removed the “anti-prostitution pledge” from its funding conditions.

Stand up in solidarity with sex workers and people who use drugs and say no to San Francisco in 2018.
Different working situation

Sydney, Australia
Strained atmosphere

One sex worker recently joined a tourist tour to Australia, but the whole tour was surprisingly stopped at the immigration. Middle-aged women were all brought to another room for further inquiries. During the inquiry, some immigration officers ‘reminded’ the women not to tell lie or they would then be sent to prison. The sex worker we know was also suspected, but as she did not tell lie, she was allowed to enter the territory after 3-hour inquiry.

Probably the Australian Government believes that more Chinese sex workers enter and work in the country, thus there is stricter border control. Similar information was reported in the Sydney Morning Herald. According to the Australian newspaper, Chinese women from Hong Kong were deceived to work in Sydney. They often entered Sydney on travel visas, but the brothel owners would use the excuse of applying the student visa for the women and make the women continue to work in their place. The Hong Kong sex workers had to bear very terrible working environment, according to the news report. For example, they had to perform unprotected oral, anal and vaginal sex, they had to work for 20 hours a day and take drugs with the clients, and their incomes were far less than they were told.

No matter it is the personal experience of the sex workers or the source of the newspaper, what we are sure is that there is tighter control on the immigration in Australia now, and Chinese women are particularly on the alert.
London, the UK
“Normal”
Produced by Nicola Mai, the professor teaching Sociology and Migration at the Working Lives Research Institute of London Metropolitan University and at the Mediterranean Laboratory of Sociology of Aix-Marseille University, “Normal” is a documentary focusing on the personal experiences and history of migrant sex workers in Italy, Albania and Britain.

There are interviews with the female, male and transgender sex workers in the documentary. However, different to the stereotyped images the public put on the migrant sex workers, the interviewees here in the documentary may give the audiences very different images. The stories are “unexpected, disturbing, sometimes moving and often contradictory”. As described by Mai himself, “the viewer is continually challenged by the truth of their words, their dreams and the lives that they lead”. You can click here for the trailer of “Normal”: http://vimeo.com/69792536.

In fact, the most impressive part to us of this documentary is that the interviewees are directly filmed with their faces unhidden. Many migrant sex workers we meet in Hong Kong are unwilling to be interviewed by the reporters, let alone showing their faces on radios and televisions. The documentary thus shows us how the producer has the trust from the interviewees, that the latter feels secure and free enough to express whatever they want to.


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<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Jacky Pang</td>
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<td>June</td>
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We apologize for any omissions !!

Zi Teng Newsletter  June 2014  49th Issue
Application for Membership

Name: ____________________________  Age: ____________________________

Occupation: ______________________  Gender: ______________________

Telephone: (H)____________________  (O):__________________________

e-mail: ____________________________

Address: __________________________

I am willing to join the following activities:
Publication  Data Collection  Research  Others

I would like to donate monthly:
$100  $200  $300  $500
$1,000 or once

My donation is paid by:
Cheque: (cheque number) ______________
Cash deposited into: Hang Seng Bank A/C 232-8-085580  (Account Name: Zi Teng)
Mail:  Hong Kong Post Office Headquarters P.O. Box 7450
Fax:  852 - 2390 4628  Tel:  852 - 2332 7182

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