Message from the Editor:

We recently received a complaint, where a sex worker working in the one woman brothel found her personal information publicized on the Internet. She tried to call the police and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data for help, but since she was not blackmailed or threatened, and she had no idea who put her information on the Internet, both the police and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data could not offer her any help.

To a certain extent, the person who put the information on the Internet may not really aim to hurt or take advantage of her. Yet, this person apparently does not see sex workers as one member of the society. S/he may believe that it is not a big deal to publicize the identity of a sex worker, but when s/he exposes the identity of a sex worker, the latter will face great pressure.

When we call on the society to stop discriminating sex workers, we are not simply asking the public to say ‘I do not look down on sex workers’. What we expect is their genuine respect on sex workers. Understanding the challenges of being a sex worker, think more from the viewpoint of the sex worker, do not judge sex workers with another set of values and attitudes. If the people in the society view and treat sex workers in these ways, definitely there will be less pressure exerted on the sex workers.

(The picture comes from the Internet)
Our work and movement:

Hong Kong
Strip search
Though the District Board Election was over, the police operations targeting the sex industry had not yet stopped for a while. This may probably because there is still the Legislative Council Election, the Election Committee Subsector Elections and the Chief Executive Election in 2017. In the past 4 months, we collected a total of 187 complaints against police abuses from sex workers and massage workers. Among these complaints, we worry the most the rise in the number of strip-search complaints. Compared with the complaints we released previously, the number has risen from 1 case to 4 cases.

According to the 3-tier guidelines on the searching of detained persons of the police, the police officer will conduct the body search including ‘no need to remove the clothes’, ‘remove the clothes’ and ‘remove the underwear’ based on the offence and criminal record of the detained person. Before the body search, the police have to explain the reason and the type of body search to the detained person. S/he also has to give the detained person a Custody Search form, which the detained person will sign on it. The detained person can raise objection on the form. At the same time, the police have to provide a good reason and record why they conduct the body search.

However, in one of the complaints, when the undercover operation ended, before taking the massage workers to the police station, one woman constable asked the massage workers to take off the clothes for the body search. The woman constable not only did not explain the reason for the search, or give the massage workers the Custody Search form, she even made the massage workers to repeat squatting and standing for several times. If the police mainly base on the offence and the criminal record of the detained person to conduct the body search, the offence of ‘assisting in the operation of a massage establishment without a valid license’ and ‘assisting in the management of any premises, vessel or place kept as a vice establishment’, how is strip-search related to these offences? Did the woman constable think that the massage workers possess weapons and drugs? Why did she not explain the reason of strip-search to the massage workers? To us, it was very likely to be one way the woman constable used to humiliate the massage workers.

(The picture comes from InMediaHK)
Number of complaints against violence from sex workers in Hong Kong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police violence/abuse</th>
<th>Client/criminal violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strip search</td>
<td>Denial of payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal threat and insult</td>
<td>Theft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being deprived of basic rights</td>
<td>Physical assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free sexual service</td>
<td>Condom removed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Police impostor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>Triad threats and harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force/coax into signing the statement</td>
<td>Grievous bodily harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstructing the course of justice</td>
<td>Forced labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive license check</td>
<td>Properties damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>police break into house without warrant</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Social Media

Due to the shortage of manpower and resources, we only had the website but not the other social media. Yet, we are happy to tell you that we finally have started to use more the social media. One volunteer is now helping us to administer the Twitter account.

We hope we can spread our messages and the latest situation about sex workers more effectively to everyone all over the world. If you are using Twitter, you are more than welcome to follow us.
Stories/experiences of Migrant Chinese sex workers

**Macau**

**Magic’s experience**

Magic (anonymity) is around 36 years old. We have not met for more than a year. When we met her again, she described her overseas experiences to us. She did work in Malaysia, where she kept soliciting customers in the streets. She spent several thousand on the visa. At that time she could still earn some profit, but it was not profit-making now. Police often targeted migrant sex workers, particularly those from Mainland China.

“I came to Shenzhen for more than 10 years and I never left Shenzhen. I went to work in Hong Kong at the very first beginning. I worked as a street-based sex worker in Yaumatei District. Many ‘sisters’ working there also came from Mainland China. I also went to work in Macau. I entered Macau with the passport. Usually we would get a visa to Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand before going to Macau. We only had to fly to these countries once (we really had to buy an air ticket and enter these countries). We did not need to fly again but we could then stay in Macau for 14 days. When we flew to these countries, we could stay in Macau for 7 days. When we left these countries to Macau, we could then stay in Macau for another 7 days. If we only entered Macau with the passport but did not fly to the visa issued countries for two times, when you tried to enter Macau for the third time, the Macau Government might just let you stay in Macau for 1 day but not 7 days. I learnt a lesson here. I just flew to the visa issued country once and I would not fly to the country for the second time. Do you know that it cost several thousand yuan (Renmenbi) for one ticket? (The picture comes from Wikipedia https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=28234766)

We did not have to find the customers by ourselves in Macau. We put our advertisements on the Internet. The brothel where we worked had such advertisement website. Sometimes we had to pay the advertisement fee, but sometimes we did not have to pay. We only had to pay 200MOP (currency in Macau) for the rent to the boss every day. We charged each customer 400MOP. Sometimes we could earn profit. If the business was not good we could just cover the travel costs, sometimes we even lost the costs. Particularly when we had to fly to some countries, we would not earn much when we had to buy a ticket with several thousand yuan. Yet in general, we could earn more than working in Shenzhen. That’s why I insisted to work in Macau.”
Linking with the world

The Philippines
Philippine Sex Workers Collective

We recently met the Philippine Sex Workers Collective, a sex worker group in the Philippines. We were happy to exchange with them much information about the Filipina sex workers whom we met in Hong Kong. We also understood more from them the current situation of Filipina sex workers.

As described by the Philippine Sex Workers Collective, life has always been rough for sex workers in the Philippines. Sex workers are treated worse than dirt by the society. In fact, the worst insult you could hurl at any woman if you are a Filipino is to call her prostitute or to call anyone for that matter the child of a whore. People have been killed for that. The social stigma attached to the work could be ascribed to religion. The Philippines is predominantly Catholic and the Catholic Church has censured prostitution as highly immoral. It did not help that the feminists in the country since the onset of the feminist movement has waged war against sex workers calling for the abolition of prostitution. Given the environment of social stigma, sex workers have to change their identities and work underground. It was a difficult existence.

Sometime in the late part of 1989, a few sex workers decided they have had enough of being treated like they were not human beings. It was time to fight back. They got themselves organized and set up the first sex worker led organization in the country, the Women Hookers Organizing for their Rights and Empowerment (WHORE). WHORE demanded for sex work to be recognized as work and the human rights of sex workers to be recognized and respected. Immediately, the organization was condemned by the Catholic Church and the feminists called the women delusional. The feminist movement was very strong at that time. The Catholic Church was a well-established institution. The sex workers were like ants battling elephants.

WHORE had to retreat. It has realized that it needs to prepare itself for battles of that kind knowing the whole country is against them. But the experience has taught them that they could only rely on each other for help. The move to fight for their rights was shelved for the moment in favor of looking for ways to help each other in ways they can. They focused on the everyday problems, they encountered. When a colleague gets arrested by the police, they raise the money to get her out of jail. When one of them gets sick, they contribute what they could to help with hospital bills. As they went on helping each other they realized it would be better if more of their colleagues would join
them. They know that there is strength in numbers and if these numbers are united, they could engage in a more sustained movement to resume fighting for their rights. For the subsequent years, WHORE focused itself in getting their colleagues organized. The organizing efforts spilled over to the side of the male sex workers. They set up their own organization, they called the Red Nobles. The transgender sex workers also got themselves organized which led to Shawushka being set up. The lady students who dabble in sex work to pay for their studies founded their own organization called Deviant Daughters. This was followed by their male counterpart, the Deviant Dudes.

With all these different sex worker groups coming together, it was imperative to seek for ways by which they could work as one group. This led to the birth of the Philippine Sex Workers Collective.

The Collective is built on a dream. It dreams of a world society that upholds sex workers human dignity and respects and recognizes sex work as work. Given that dream, the Collective, has been tasked to actively engage itself in relevant and forward looking actions towards the adaption, implementation and institutionalization of policies and interventions that promote and protect sex workers human rights and recognize sex work as work.

(The picture comes from the facebook of Philippine Sex Workers Collective)
Understanding more about migrant sex workers

France
Criminalization of buying sex service
Following Sweden, Norway and Northern Ireland, France just passed the criminalization of buying sex service. Though many sex workers and concern groups raised their opposition, saying that the law would only create troubles and risks to sex workers, the law was still passed. If the client is only arrested for the first time, he has to pay a fine of 1500 euro. If he is arrested for the second time, he has to pay 3750 euro and will be kept a criminal record.

In fact, the criminalization of buying sex service brings no good to the sex workers, particularly in France. The criminalization of buying sex service hits the migrant sex workers the most, as most of them work in the streets. As long as buying sex service will be punished, even though it is not illegal for sex workers to solicit in the streets, clients will not dare discussing in public areas with the sex workers about service and price. The migrant sex workers can only change their working mode. Instead of soliciting in the streets, they have to use the Internet or social media to contact the sex workers about service and price. The migrant sex workers can only change their working mode. Instead of soliciting in the streets, they have to use the Internet or social media to contact the clients. Since they no longer need to work in the streets, they will become more hidden. It will be more difficult for anyone who aims to develop closer relationship with the migrant sex workers or provide them with some job-related information. As a result, they may indirectly face more occupational risks.

On one hand, the French Government insists that she aims to protect sex workers more with the new law, but she is actually making sex workers more isolated and helpless.

(Newsaper report comes from the Oriental Daily)

List of Donors (1/2016 – 4/2016)

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<th>January</th>
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<th>February</th>
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We apologize for any omissions!!
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:
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