

Sex worker community a buzz

Today, 14 September, marks the fourth National Sex Worker Pride Day. A day where sex workers celebrate their achievements and share stories of sex workers' self-determination while honouring the tireless efforts of colleagues across the globe to secure rights and safety for all sex workers. Despite, it being in its fourth year, this year marks South Africa's first celebration of this prestigious event in the sex work community.

Sisonke National Sex Workers Movement in South Africa together with Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT) and Mothers for the Future came together offering a fun-filled day for supporters of sex workers. This year, Sisonke celebrates its registration as an NPO and a leading human rights organisation in South Africa for key populations. Looking back where we started in 2003 to date, Sisonke is the only organisation with a membership booklet; a pocket-size handbook containing human rights for sex workers. We are the voice of sex workers and continue to advocate for improved working conditions and human rights for sex workers.

As a sex work-led movement we only conduct work with self-identified consenting adult sex workers who are willing participants in the industry it prides us to have reached milestones, improving sex workers' lives. Sisonke prides itself to be working in conjunction with SWEAT, the first organisation to call for the decriminalisation of sex work in South Africa, founded by a male sex worker, Shane Petzer more than 20 years ago.

Calling for the decriminalisation of sex work in South Africa, Sisonke together with Women's Legal Centre, Sonke Gender Justice and SWEAT also highlights and prides itself to have launched the sex workers guide for journalists together with the South African National Human Rights Plan.

This 3-year Plan is based on the National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs. The Plan, developed with consultation with key stakeholders with the HIV and TB response was based on assessment of the progress on achieving the NSP's human rights goals; the ongoing work at country level and identifying key gaps challenges and priorities for action in the upcoming 3 years.







