



Members'

Handbook



This book belongs to a Sisonke member

Full name:

Work name:

ID/Passport/other number:

Sisonke membership number:

Phone number:

Address:

Province:

Home language:

Age: **Gender:**

First person to contact in case of emergency:

.....

Phone number:

Relationship to you:

.....

Second person to contact in case of emergency:

.....

Phone number:

Relationship to you:

.....

Note: All Sisonke members pay a membership fee every year which is deposited into the Sisonke Bank Account and used to benefit sex workers as a whole.

You can deposit your membership fee directly to:

Account: **Sisonke**

Absa Bank

Account Number: **9273729800**

Reference: **Your membership number**

How we use this book

English

- isiZulu
- isiXhosa
- Sesotho
- Afrikaans

English

- isiZulu
- isiXhosa
- Sesotho
- Afrikaans

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- Afrikaans

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- isiZulu
- isiXhosa
- Sesotho
- Afrikaans

This book is for us as Sisonke. It has information to help us work together as sex workers, to fight for our rights and stay safe and healthy. We can share this information with other sex workers.

Most pages have illustrations which highlight key messages for us as sex workers.

We can use the illustrations to start conversations about the things that are important to us.

As Sisonke members we come from all over South Africa and beyond and we speak different languages. If English is not our first language we may want translations of some of the difficult words. These words are in **bold**. They are explained in isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho and Afrikaans in the little boxes on the side of the page.

The boxes look like this.



***We can use our handbook
to share information.***



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Welcome to

harassment

- ukuhlupha
- ukutshutshiswa
- tlheketso
- teistering

discriminatory

- ukubandlulula
- calulayo
- kgethollo
- diskriminerend

referrals

- abadluliselayo
- ukudluliselwa
- ho romelwa di-bakeng tse ding
- verwysings

vulnerable

- ukuba buthaka
- sesichengeni
- kotsing ya ho utl-wiswa bohloko
- kwesbaar

As Sisonke members we have a community together. Sisonke is our home away from home and we are like family. We take care of ourselves and we stand up for ourselves.

We stand up for our rights

- together our voices are heard more than one person's voice
- we take issues forward, like abuse, police **harassment** or **discriminatory** services
- we work with partners so we can do **referrals** for legal advice, counselling or health services

We support each other

- we are all different with different needs so we learn to understand each other
- we respect each other
- we teach those of us who don't know how to share
- we hold our most **vulnerable** sex workers at our centre and we are a home for them
- we know we are loved whether we sell sex or whether we don't sell sex

Sisonke

As sex workers, we used to think the abuse was ok because we are illegal. But abuse is never ok and we do have rights! Together we stand up for our rights.



Our Movement

defending

- ukuvikela
- ukukhusela
- ho sireletsa
- verdedigend

constitutional

- ngokomthetho-sisekelo
- yomgaqo-siseko
- ya ka molao-theo
- aangebore

solidarity

- ubunye
- imbumba yamanyama
- kopano e tiileng
- solidariteit

visible

- ukubonakala
- bonakalayo
- bonahalang
- sigbaar

Our Sisonke history

As sex workers we decided that there should be a movement by sex workers for sex workers. As sex workers, we don't want our situation and challenges discussed without us. That is why we say "nothing about us without us." Like any movement we are a committed group of people working together to take forward our rights, our beliefs and our dreams.

The decision to start a movement was made at a meeting in Worcester in 2003 held by the Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Task Force (SWEAT). We started with a group of 70 members from across South Africa. We chose the name Sisonke, meaning "We are together" and Sisonke was launched!

We started out as part of SWEAT, an organisation which has been **defending** the rights of sex workers and accessing services for sex workers for 20 years. In 2017 Sisonke was formally registered as a Non-Profit Organisation – which means that we can raise our own money, that we are recognised as an independent organisation and that we have the power to advocate for the rights of sex workers.

We now have over 1000 members across South Africa. We plan to reach out to more of us and grow even further. Sisonke is a member of the international NSWP (Global Sex Worker Project). Sisonke is also a member of the African Sex Worker Alliance (ASWA), which unites sex workers from all over Africa. Sisonke is recognised throughout the world as the voice of South African sex workers.

Sisonke is a movement for and led by sex workers.

Sisonke vision

A South Africa where sex work is recognised as work and where our **constitutional** rights to safety, health and human rights are respected.

Sisonke mission

Through **solidarity** we create a strong, fearless movement towards the decriminalisation of sex work and the realisation of our rights by being **visible**, acknowledged and heard.



As Sisonke we are diverse

diverse

- okunhlobon-hlobo
- yantlukwano
- fapane
- uiteenlopend(e)

transgender

- ubulili obunge-sibo obemvelo
- umntu onga-phili ngokwesi-ni azelwe esiso
- mofetolabong
- transgender

bisexual

- ukuthanda abantu bobulili bobubili
- nezini ezibini
- tarasi
- biseksueel

unique

- okuhlukile
- yodwa
- ikgetha
- uniek

As sex workers we are **diverse** and Sisonke includes us all:

- We are female, male, and **transgender**
- We are mothers and fathers
- We are straight, gay, queer, **bisexual** and lesbian



- We work in brothels, indoors and from the street
- We work from the internet, from taverns and in the bushes
- We are from different races, religions and cultures
- Many of us are migrants from other places



Sisonke welcomes us all and celebrates the ways we are different. As a sex worker movement, Sisonke is unique in the ways it includes all of us. We are truly proud of our diversity!



Under 18 years old

As Sisonke, we don't agree with people under 18 selling sexual services. We rather look at the person and their back ground to see how we can help him or her. Especially we take a stand and fight against the exploitation of people under 18.



We are members of Sisonke

renew

- ukuvuselela
- vuselela
- ntjhafatsa
- hernu

participate

- ukuzibanda-kanya
- thabatha inxaxheba
- nka karolo
- deelneem

solidarity

- ubunye
- imbumba yamanyama
- kopano e tiileng
- solidariteit

This is what we get being a member of Sisonke:

- Sisonke membership card
- Sisonke T-shirt
- Referral to friendly health and legal services
- Chances to shape our Sisonke movement
 - ▶ we can help make decisions about how Sisonke goes further
 - ▶ we can wear our Sisonke T-shirt and be active and a voice for Sisonke
 - ▶ some of us could attend the annual national meeting (members who are active take turns to attend in different years)

What we cannot expect of us as Sisonke

- we don't expect Sisonke to rescue us or take responsibility for our poor behaviour caused by drugs or drinking
- we don't expect Sisonke to pay for our funeral

What we expect of us as Sisonke members

- we **renew** our membership and pay our fees every year
- we wear our T-shirt to Sisonke meetings and events
- we say what we know at meetings and **participate** in what happens
- we recruit other sex workers to become members of Sisonke
- we are sober and behave calmly when we wear our T-shirts
- we care for each other (see page 60)
- we speak to Sisonke staff if we have problem (see page 18 on how to make contact with Sisonke)
- we work for ourselves, rather than with pimps or other middle people
- we stand in unity and **solidarity** with our fellow sex workers
- we share the call for the decriminalisation of sex work

We are a member of Sisonke when we self-identify as a sex worker, when we are 18 years or over, when we have filled out a membership form, and when we have paid our membership fee for that year.



We make contact with Sisonke

communicate

- ukuxhumana
- nxibelelana
- bua/buisana
- kommunikeer

peer

- ontanga
- ntanga
- mphato
- portuur

abusive

- okuhlukumezayo
- phatha gadalala
- -hlekefetsang
- mishandelend

referrals

- abadluliselayo
- ukuthunyelwa
- ho romelwa di-bakeng tse ding
- verwysings

Local Sisonke members often stay in touch using WhatsApp groups. If you want to start your own please contact head office through the Helpline.

As Sisonke members we can **communicate** with our organisation in these ways:

- through the Helpline - 0800 606060
- toll free from a public phone - 0800 606060
- sending a "please call me" - 071 357 7632
- through the provincial branch office
- through Sisonke **peer** educators
- through other Sisonke members

We should be in contact with Sisonke when:

- we get poor or **abusive** services at clinics and police stations
- we need **referrals** to services like legal or counselling, etc.
- we need to notify Sisonke that our contact details have changed
- we want advice about talking with the media
- we refer media people to Sisonke
- we feel alone or need someone to talk to
- we get external invitations e.g. to AIDS council meetings



**Sisonke/SWEAT
Helpline Hello?**

**24 HOUR
HELPLINE**
0800 60 60 60
or SMS "Please call me"
071 357 7632



We're here to support
sex workers 24/7

***I have an issue
to report.
Please tell me
what to do.***

As Sisonke, we are active

Many of us sex workers travel regularly for our work. As Sisonke members it is nice to know there is support across the country. To find out the closest place where we could get



across South Africa

support, we can phone the Helpline number 0800 606060, toll free. We can also send a "please call me" to 071 357 7632. We can also visit our provincial branch offices.



How Sisonke works

Sisonke is an organisation of sex workers, led by sex workers. Sisonke is led by our Sisonke Board and the active participation of all our members across branches in six provinces.

National Meeting

At Sisonke we have a National Meeting once a year where members from the provincial branches and all over the country get together. Members are invited to attend the National Meeting based on their participation in the provinces. At the National Meeting we discuss the key issues we want to take forward as a movement and we vote on nominations for the Sisonke Board.

Sisonke Board

The Sisonke Board guides Sisonke and supports fundraising. Key decisions are taken to the Board. The Sisonke Board includes a member from each province. Board members are not paid. Across the different provinces, as members we nominate other members we believe should be on the Board. Only paid up Sisonke members can be **nominated** and it is their choice to reject or accept the nomination. At the National Meeting a vote is taken on which nominated members should be on the Board.

nominated

- oqokiwe
- nyuliweyo
- kgethilwe
- genomineer(de)

mentorship

- ukucathulisa
- ubucebisi
- botataisi
- mentorskap

Once on the Board, Board members get **mentorship** from previous Board Members. Mentors support new Board members to know their roles. This includes chairing meetings, taking minutes and managing finances. The Board have a retreat and training every year.



***As a Sisonke member
you can nominate
someone to be on the
Board.***

Sisonke coordinators and staff

The National Coordinator, Deputy National Coordinators and Provincial Coordinators are employed by Sisonke. They perform the day to day leadership and coordination of Sisonke. They are supported by a strong team that helps organise Sisonke, its campaigns and consultants and takes national sex worker issues forward. These include peer educators, paralegals and media liaisons. The coordinators and their teams may not be nominated onto the Sisonke Board because they are paid employees of the organisation.

Sisonke provincial branches

Sisonke is organised into 6 provincial branches. All Sisonke branches have a Provincial Coordinator who coordinates things for the branch in that province. The provincial coordinators have a Skype meeting every week and make up the Provincial Steering Committee. Each provincial branch of Sisonke works a little bit differently.

Sisonke members take action where needed

Sisonke also has members in provinces where we may not have structures. These members organise themselves, hold meetings and keep in touch with the national office.

SISONKE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

National Office

Consultants

National Coordinators

Communication
and Membership
Officer

Advocacy
Manager

Partners

Helpline

Media
Spokesperson

Provincial
Steering
Committee

Provincial
Coordinators

Paralegals

Outreach

Peer
Educators

Media
Liaison

Members

Volunteers

reasonable

- okufanele
- fanelekile
- utlwahala
- redelik(e)

benefit

- inzuzo
- inzuzo
- una
- bevoordeel

outreach

- ukwelula isandla
- fikelelo
- thuso setjhabeng
- uitreik

recruitment

- ukuqasha
- ukufuna abantu abatsha
- khiro
- werwing

sensitise

- ukuqwashisa
- yenza ubuntununtunu
- lemosa
- sensitiseer

Sisonke partners

At Sisonke we look for partners who can support us and offer services. For example, SWEAT is one of Sisonke's partners.

Sisonke funders

Our funders donate money to Sisonke to do its work. We report back to our funders on what we have spent this money on.

Sisonke members

Sisonke members may be anyone 18 or over, who lives in South Africa and who is a sex worker. Sisonke members pay an annual membership fee. The membership fee is always **reasonable** and affordable. Membership fees are deposited into the Sisonke Savings Account and used to **benefit** sex workers as a whole.

Sisonke training

All the branches have full or part time peer educators. Peer educators do **outreach**, training and **recruitment**. Sometimes the training is for sex workers and sometimes the training is to **sensitise** groups who work with us. These include health and police services. Peer educators are sex workers, and may also be employed at partner organisations. Peer educators also run the Creative Space meetings.

What do they use our membership fee money for?

It goes into the Sisonke Savings Account. We use these savings as a back up for the future needs of our Sisonke Sex Worker Movement.



Sisonke Creative Space

Creative Space meetings are run by us as sex workers and are for all sex workers in the area. Creative Space is a safe space to share stories and issues. We are all equal at Creative Space meetings and every one of us can be a teacher. It is also where

opportunities

- amathuba
- amathuba
- menyetla
- geleenthede



We join Sisonke and offer whatever skills we have. If we can sing, we sing. If we can write poems, we write poems.

we share information on activities, **opportunities** or services offered by Sisonke or its partner organisations.

Creative Space meetings are hosted by the branches in each province and usually held in the third week of every month. Through being active in Creative Space meetings sometimes there are opportunities to attend training on human rights, or to become peer educators.



liaison

- ukuxhumanisa
- ukudibana
- kamano/buisana
- (ongoorloofde) verhouding

Outreach and following up on sex workers issues

As Sisonke members we work through our branches to try and reach sex workers in all parts of the province. We record the issues being experienced by sex workers in hot spots and other places and we see what action we can take to have these addressed. Some branches have a steering committee or ambassadors who take the lead in this work. Some branches have paralegals or access to paralegals who can help us with the legal stuff.

Getting our issues in the media

Some branches also have a media **liaison** person who supports us to take up our issues in the local media. Members of Sisonke may be approached by the media for stories – members must contact head office when this happens.

As Sisonke we also have a quarterly newsletter called Izwe Lethu written by sex workers for sex workers and distributed at our Creative Space meetings. Sisonke is grateful for support from African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) for producing this newsletter.

***As Sisonke members we
are active, we stand up
and talk, we advocate for
us as sex workers.***



Our Rights

As Sisonke we say “Sex

exchange

- ukushintshisana
- ukutshintshisa
- fapanyetsana
- uitruiling

standards

- imigomo
- imigangatho
- maemo
- standarde

consenting

- ukuvuma
- ukuvuma
- ho dumela
- instemmend(e)

transactional

- okumayelana
nokukhokha
- yorhwebo
- -kgwebisanang/-
sebedisanang
- onderhande-
lend(e)

We are in the business of providing pleasure. Sex work is work because as sex workers we provide a service to our clients and get money in **exchange**. It is agreed between the client and us as the sex worker that the sexual services will take place within a particular time frame, with particular **standards**, and at an agreed price.

Sex work between **consenting** adults is just like any other work. Many people in South Africa sell sex to get in a regular amount of money.

Sex work is different from **transactional** sex. Transactional sex happens when some type of sexual service is exchanged for gifts, shelter or drugs.

Sisonke will never condone trafficking in people, violence and exploitation in sex work—we want these crimes to stay offences in law, and we want justice for victims.

work is work”

***There is a price for
half an hour with me
and you must use a
condom.***



As Sisonke we say “decrim

bribery

- ukugwaza
- unyobo
- tjetjo
- omkopery

exploitation

- ukuxhaphaza
- ukuzisebenzisela
- tshwaro e mpe
- uitbuiting

victimisation

- ukuba yisisulu
- ukoyikisa
- tshotlo
- viktimisasie

partial

- ukuchema
- enxalenye
- -sa fellang
- partydig(e)

We want a legal system that makes us safer, frees us from the oppression of police harassment and violence and respects us as adults. This system is decriminalisation.



Criminalisation of sex work

In South Africa it is a criminal offence to sell sex, buy sex, and to engage in other sex work-related behaviour. This leaves us as sex workers open to discrimination, abuse, **bribery**, **exploitation** and **victimisation**. Clients and brothels are also criminalised. This is the system in South Africa and many other countries around the world.



Partial decriminalisation of sex work

Some people say we should have **partial** decriminalisation like they do in Sweden and other countries in Europe. This would mean that our clients and others are criminalised, but sex workers are decriminalised. The problem with this is that it would be difficult for us to stand together on the issues that affect us. If we work together, or work indoors we may be criminalised as this is seen as running a brothel. The police would still watch us so that they can catch our clients, and the police would still ask for bribes from our clients so that they are not arrested.

inalise our work”

Legalisation of sex work

Some people say sex work should be legalised. If sex work was legalised, the state would decide on the conditions under which sex work could take place. This might mean we could be forced to have certain health tests, work in specific areas, and have to go through red tape. This system is in places like the Netherlands and Germany.

Decriminalisation of sex work

As Sisonke we stand for the decriminalisation of sex work. Decriminalisation recognises sex work as ‘work’ and so as sex workers we would have the protection of labour and **occupational** laws. If decriminalised, the sex work industry would be **regulated** like any other **industry**. As sex workers we would have access to necessary police services, we could visit clinics without fear of harassment, we could demand access to condoms and better working conditions if we work indoors, and we could work in any location. We would also have responsibilities like paying tax. New Zealand and parts of Australia have this system.

occupational

- okuqondene nomsebenzi
- yomsebenzi
- -amanang le mosebetsi
- beroeps-

regulated

- okulawulwayo
- lawulwayo
- laolwa
- gereguleer(de)

industry

- imboni
- ishishini
- indastri
- bedryf

Our rights protected by

As Sisonke members, we are human rights defenders and we take a stand for our rights. The Constitution has a list of rights that each of us have as people living in South Africa. In South Africa, our constitution is the highest law in the land. This means that any action by anyone (including the police) that goes against the rights in the Constitution is not allowed. We have these rights no matter what. These are some examples of our rights:

Right to human dignity

Everyone has dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. For example, police officers should not insult sex workers or take away our self-respect with actions.

The High Court in the Western Cape has said that this right together with the right to freedom and security of the person means that the police may not arrest and release us for no reason or just to harass or intimidate us.

the highest law in South Africa

Isn't selling and trying to sell sex still a criminal offence?

Yes, but you as a person are not a criminal offence. The police must have actual evidence and intend to prosecute you if they arrest you.



citizen

- isakhamuzi
- ummi
- moahi
- burger

tortured

- ukuhlushwa
- ukuthuthumbisa
- sotlwa
- gemartel(de)

degrading

- ukwehlisa isithunzi
- ukuthoba
- theosa boemo
- vernederend(e)

confidential

- okuyimfihlo
- yimfihlo
- sephiri
- vertroulik(e)

Right to equality

All persons are equal before the law and have equal benefit and protection of the law. For example, when sex workers are approached by police officers we should be treated as any other **citizen**. As sex workers we should also have equal protection of the law i.e., if we are abused, we should be able to speak to the Station Commander at the Police Station immediately or lay charges. If this doesn't work go to the next police station or the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID).

Right to freedom and security of the person

Everyone has the right to be free and not to be **tortured** or treated in a cruel, inhuman or **degrading** way. For example, police officers should treat all sex workers with respect, they should not be arrested without just cause. When they are in custody they should not be tortured. Police officers are not allowed to punish us by withholding food, water and/or medical attention.

Right to privacy

Everyone has the right to privacy. For example, sex workers HIV status should be **confidential**, especially when we mention that we need medication if we are detained over the weekend.



As Sisonke, we take action around South Africa

solidarity

- ubunye
- imbumba yamanyama
- kopano e tiileng
- solidariteit

discrimination

- ukucwasa
- ucalulo
- kgethollo
- diskriminasie

xenophobia

- ukubandlulula abantu bakwamanye amazwe
- ukubukula abemi bamanye amazwe
- lehloyo la melata
- xenofobie

As Sisonke we look for ways to build our movement and fight for our rights. Together we are stronger! These are some of the actions we have taken already:

Sisonke members go to court to show support for murdered 23-year-old sex worker

Sisonke members showed support at the court during the trial of Zwelethu Mthethwa. Mthethwa was found guilty of murdering sex worker Nokuphila Kumalo. Sisonke supports the message sent by the judge who sentenced Mthethwa to 18 years. This acknowledges that a human being died that night, never mind what profession she chose to be in. *June 2017*

Sisonke members march against Xenophobia

As Sisonke we support all sex workers including migrants. Together in **solidarity** we say no to **discrimination** and no to **xenophobia**. Sisonke members joined the People's March against Xenophobia in Johannesburg. *April 2015*

for sex workers rights

We go to the court to support each other.



unlawful

- okuphambene nomthetho
- ngokungekho mthethweni
- -seng molaong
- onwettig(e)

outcry

- isikhalo
- isimbonono
- mohoeletso
- uitroep

advocate

- ukumela
- ukuxhasa
- advokheiti/ mmuelli
- verdedig

law reform

- ukushintshwa komthetho
- utshintsho lomthetho
- popobotjha ya molao
- wetshervorming

Sisonke members club together to pay bail

Sisonke members organised to help each other with bail money. In Johannesburg police started arresting sex workers on Fridays so that they had to spend the weekend in jail. Sisonke members got together to create a fund to pay the bail of any sex worker who was arrested.

Sisonke members demand CCTV cameras in dangerous areas

Sisonke members demanded better security. When a sex worker was murdered in a Butterworth hotel, local sex workers demanded CCTV on the street and police action around the murder.

Sisonke partners with other organisations to stop police violence

Sisonke partnered with other organisations working in health and human rights to end violent and **unlawful** raids by Witbank police. An **outcry** was raised in the media and legal action taken against the police. *September 2016*



Sisonke members work with Asijiki

Sisonke members are active in the work of the Asijiki Coalition for the Decriminalisation of Sex Work. The Coalition is made up of sex workers, activists, advocates and human rights defenders.

Sisonke members represent sex workers at SANAC

Members of Sisonke represent the Sex Work Sector at the South African National Aids Council (SANAC). SANAC is leading the roll out of the National Strategic Plan to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS.

***“What is the power of the Orange Sea?
Let those with membership cards
answer me!” Kagee***



As Sisonke, we recognise, draw strength from and support

policy

- inqubomgomo
- umgaqo-nkqubo
- leano
- beleid

alliance

- umbimbi
- umanyano
- selekane
- ooreenkoms

empower

- ukuhlomisa
- ukuxhobisa
- matlafatsa
- bemagtig

capacitate

- ukuhlomisa ngekhono
- ukukwazi
- eketsa bokgoni
- bevoeg maak

Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) advocates for the health and human rights of sex workers. It gets sex workers' voices into international **policy** forums, like the World Health Organisation. It got the word "prostitution" replaced with "sex work". Formed in 1990, based in the United Kingdom. Sisonke is a member.

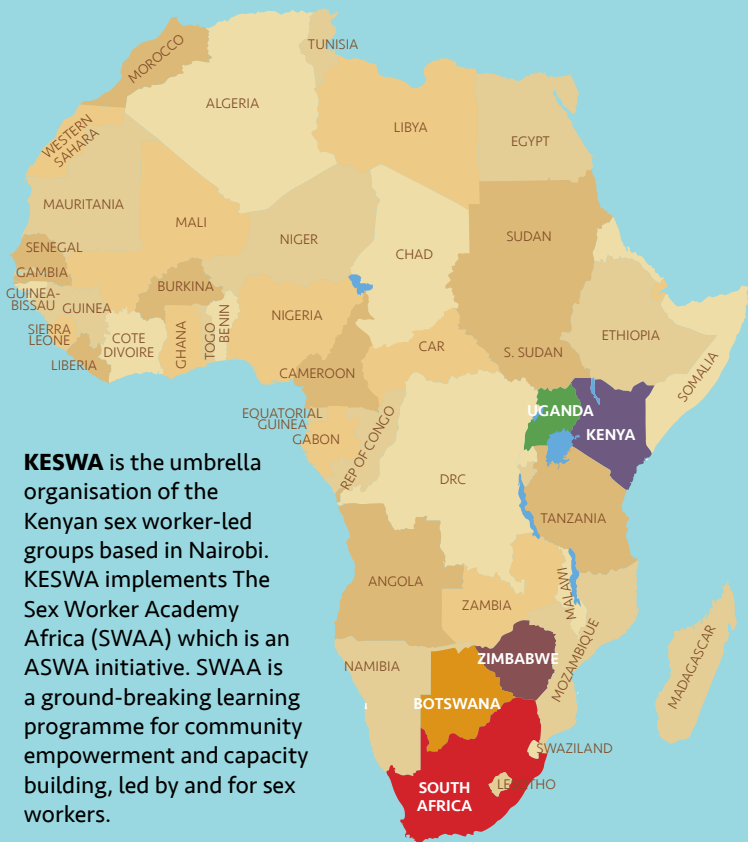
African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA) is a pan African **alliance** of sex worker led groups which focuses on the health and human rights of female, male, and transgender sex workers. Formed in 2009, based in Kenya. Sisonke is a member.

Sisonke Botswana is a sex worker-led organisation consisting of 456 members across the country. Peer educators do membership drives, educate other sex workers on safe sex practices, sexual reproductive health and human rights.

Pow Wow in Zimbabwe is a collective and any individual who is a sex worker can be a member. It is for sex workers by sex workers and addresses sex workers rights, health and safety.

Uganda Network for Sex Workers Organisation (UNESO) unites sex workers in Uganda and works to **empower** and **capacitate** sex workers.

sex worker movements in Africa and world



KESWA is the umbrella organisation of the Kenyan sex worker-led groups based in Nairobi. KESWA implements The Sex Worker Academy Africa (SWAA) which is an ASWA initiative. SWAA is a ground-breaking learning programme for community empowerment and capacity building, led by and for sex workers.

Days we remember

As Sisonke, we take action all year round but we also have special times which we celebrate.

respected

- ukuhlonishwa
- hlonitshiweyo
- hlomphuwa
- gerespekteer(de)

constitution

- umthethosisekelo
- umgaqo-siseko
- molaotheo
- grondwet

violated

- oxhashazwayo
- ophulwe
- - se hlomphe tokelo/tlotse molao
- verkrag(te)

3 March and 21 March International Sex Worker Rights Day and Human Rights Day

During March we remind South Africa and the world of our rights as sex workers. We want our rights **respected** like any other person in South Africa. Let's remember, we are human beings first! Some of the things we could organise in our area:

- March to our local police station to let them know we have rights
- Talk to journalists and let them know that as human beings our rights under the **constitution** are being **violated**
- Put up an "Ask a sex worker" booth in a public place. Members of the public can come and talk to us, get to know us better and find out about our rights

17 December International Day To End Violence Against Sex Workers

On 17 December we remember sex workers who have passed away through illness, accident or murder. We bring everyone together. We light candles. We sing. We say the names and remember those of us who have died.



**My body is my
business. Sex
work pays my
bills.**

**Enough is
enough. I'm
a human
being.**

**Sex workers
have the right
to be free from
violence.**

**Everybody is
equal before
the law.**

**Only rights
will stop the
wrongs.**

**NOTHING
ABOUT US
WITHOUT
US.**

**#SAY
HERNAME**

Dealing with the media

consent

- isivumelwano
- imvume
- tumello
- toestem

reputation

- igama elakhekile
- ukundiliseka
- ho tuma
- reputasie

consequences

- umthelela ongase ube khona
- iziphumo
- ditlamorao
- gevolge

identity

- ubuwena
- isazisi
- bowena
- identiteit

As Sisonke, the media might be able to help our campaigns for decriminalisation and getting all of our rights met. Examples of the media are television, radio, print media, such as newspapers and magazines, or social media.

It is always up to us whether we **consent** to be interviewed by the media or not. Things we can say to the media:

- What is the purpose or intended use of the interview?
- My **reputation** and my safety are at stake. What could be the possible **consequences** for me and other sex workers in your publication or broadcast?
- Unless I give you permission, you do not have a right to publish details of my life or **identity**

When we speak to the media, write down who we are speaking to, what publication or station they are from and what our agreement is about revealing details about us.

If we have been treated unfairly or the journalist did not respect our conditions contact the Helpline for help.

Remember members can't speak for Sisonke unless we speak to the National office first.



Things we can say to the

struggle

- ukuzabalaza
- umzabalazo
- lwantsha
- sukkel

violent

- ukuba nodlame
- nobundlobongela
- -nang le dikgoka
- gewelddadig(e)

permission

- imvume
- imvume
- tumello
- toestemming

medication

- imithi yokwelapha
- iyeza
- moriana
- medikasie

As Sisonke members we don't **struggle** with or swear at the police, even if they have made a mistake. These are the things we can say to the police.

- Am I under arrest? If you are not going to arrest me, you have to let me go
- If I am under arrest, you have to tell me why and explain my rights to me
- I don't have to answer any questions until I see your police badge
- If I see your police badge, all I have to tell you is my name and address
- I have a right to silence
- I have a right to talk to my legal advisor before I say anything to you
- I have a right to be treated with respect by you and all other officers. You have no right to be **violent** toward me
- You do not have **permission** to search me

If we are arrested we have the right to:

- ▶ A phone call
- ▶ Access to our **medication**
- ▶ Food, water and warm blankets

police

***I have the right to
not say anything
and remain silent.***



We report the police that

Members of the police service who are **abusive** or who demand free services or who in other ways **violate** our rights at the police station or elsewhere should be reported. Try to get as much information as we can.

abusive

- okuhlukumezayo
- phatha gadalala
- -hlekefetsang
- mishandelend(e)

violate


- ukuxhaphaza
- yophula
- -se hlomphe ditokelo
- verkrag

- Names and description of the police officers
- The police station where we were taken and where the officers are based
- Date and time of the incident
- Names of any witnesses to the incident
 - ▶ photographs of the police officers
 - ▶ registration number of the police van

If our rights are violated we complain to the station commander, we contact SWEAT and our Sisonke branch. The Independent Complaints Directorate or the Human Rights Commission could also help with our complaint.

When we report a violation, it's important we follow up with SWEAT or the organisation helping us. We must give them updates. We must let them know if our contact details have changed. We must be active in our own case!

violate our rights



The police have no right to abuse us. We report them when they do.



What we should do if we are

medication

- imithi yokwelapha
- iyeza
- moriana
- medikasio

consent

- isivumelwano
- imvume
- tumello
- toestemming

threat

- ukwesatshiswa
- intsongelo
- tshosetso
- bedreiging

unconscious

- ukuquleka
- ukungabikho zingqondweni
- idibetse
- bewusteloos

- Go to a health centre as soon as possible
 - ▶ Take **medication** to avoid infections (STIs)
 - ▶ Take medication to avoid unwanted pregnancy (this is not having an abortion)
 - ▶ If we lay a charge, the doctor's report is important to our case
- Consider laying a charge at the police station
- Get support - talk to friends we trust or phone the Helpline for a list of places that can offer special support for survivors of trauma

According to the law there is no **consent** if we are forced to have sex by violence or **threat** or if we were drugged, asleep or **unconscious**.

raped

***I have been
raped!***

**24-HOUR
HELPLINE
0800 60 60 60**

or SMS "Please call me"
071 357 7633

We're here
sex workers

***I can give you
support.***



Our work

We dress for respect

attract

- ukuheha
- ukutsala
- hohela
- aanlok

scanty

- ukukhinda
- ncinane
- bonaletsang/
bofefo
- onvoldoende

professionals

- ochwepheshe
- amagcisa
- diprofeshenale
- professionele
persone

We know:

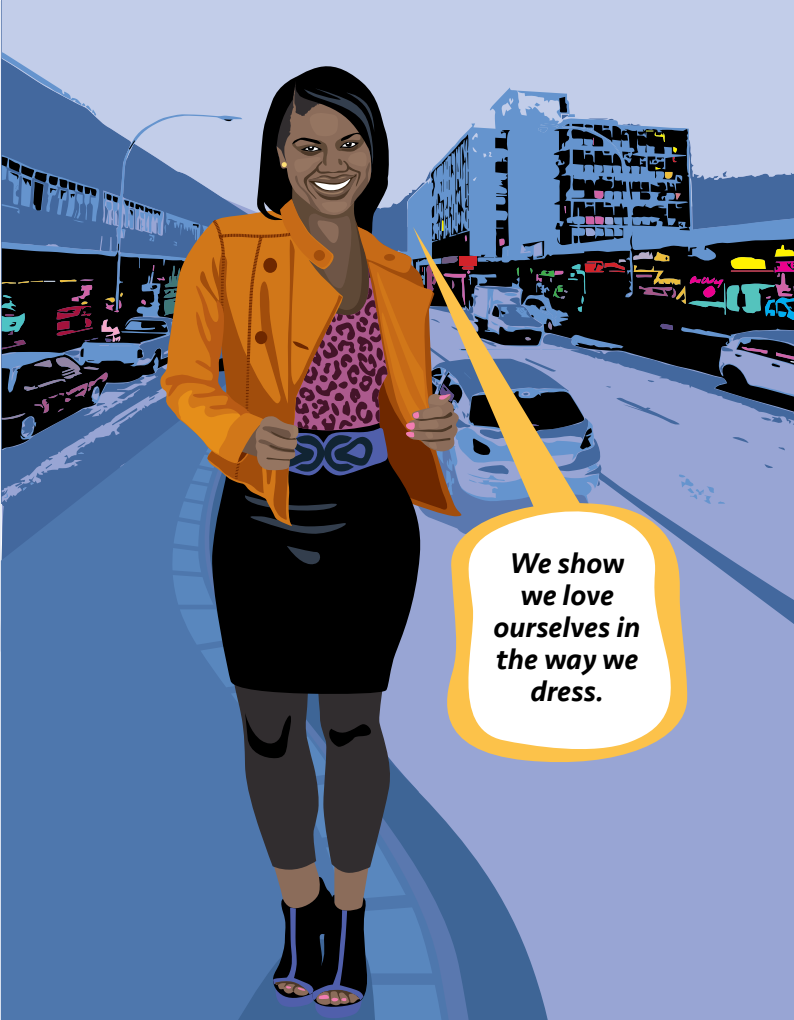
- We can **attract** clients in the way that we dress
- It is our right to wear what we like

We also know:

- **Scanty** dressing could lead to harassment
- If we dress well we might be safer on the streets

As Sisonke:

- We are **professionals** and we dress to get respect
- We are aware of schools and the community when we get dressed
- We are also parents and community members



We are clear what we offer

services

- imisebenzi
- iinkonzo
- ditshebeletso
- dienste

refer

- ukudlulisela
- bhekisela
- romela
- verwys

negotiate

- kuxoxisenwe
- thethathethwene
- buisanwe/
dumellanwe
- onderhandel

- Be in control of the situation in a relaxed way
- Be straight forward and honest
- Be clear what **services** we do offer
- Be clear what services we don't offer
- If possible **refer** to another sex worker for services we don't offer
- State our price for services. We **negotiate** our price
- Get payment before we get started

to our clients

We negotiate the rules before we get in the car. Then the service can begin.



As Sisonke we support each

opportunities

- amathuba
- amathuba
- menyetla
- geleenthede

colleagues

- osebenza nabo
- abalingane
- basebetsimmoho
- kollegas

stigma

- isihlamba
- ibala
- sekgobo
- stigma

- We tell each other about meetings, events and **opportunities**
- We try to understand each other
- We support **colleagues** going through hard times, e.g. we could go with them to the funerals of loved ones
- We don't tell tales or say bad things about each other e.g. telling a client that one of our colleagues is HIV+
- No-one has a spot. We all work together.
- We don't fight for customers, they have the right to do what they want with their money
- As Sisonke members, we calm the situation
- Sisonke members know who the real enemies are – we focus our fight not on each other, but on ending abuse, **stigma** and on fighting for our rights!

other

Let's not fight. Let's try to understand each other.



As Sisonke, we stay safe

trust

- ukwethemba
- ukuthemba
- tshepo
- vertrou

instincts

- imizwa yokusola okuthile
- ithuku
- sehlaho
- instinkte

uncomfortable

- ukungakhululeki
- ngakhululeki
- bohloko/-sa phuthulloha
- ongemaklik

- We work with other sex workers
- We tell them where we are going
- We have someone we can stay in contact with while we are with a client
- We **trust** our **instincts** and leave if we feel **uncomfortable**
- We don't work when we are high or drunk so we take less risks

We might turn down clients who seem dangerous

- If they use rude language
- If their body language is off
- When they insist on things like going to their place in their car

We think through the different situations we work in and how we can be safer

- We could take a photograph of our client's car and registration number and send it to a friend
- We could carry pepper spray
- We could use a whistle to call for help or signal danger or alert police if we need to

together

Our sister was with a client and she hasn't come back.

We are going to report her missing at the police station.



Our money

survive

- ukusinda
- sinda
- hlotse
- oorleef

income

- ingeniso
- ingeniso
- lekeno
- inkomste

expenses

- izindleko
- iindleko
- ditshenyehelo
- uitgawes

transport

- ezokuthutha
- isithuthi
- sepalangwa
- vervoer

We manage our money

Sometimes we make just enough money to **survive**. This means we don't get to make choices about our lives. If we want to be able to make choices, we need to do something differently with our money.

Income

Make a list of all the money that comes in for one day.

Income

Payment from client 1: R70

Payment from client 2: R100

Payment from client 3: R85

Total income for one day: R255

x 7 for total income for one week R1785

x 4 for total income for one month R7140

TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME R7140

TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES

Now look at our list of expenses and see where we could cut back. Separate out what we need from what we want. For example we need food and **transport**. But maybe cigarettes are

and so get to make choices

We need to know how much money we get in. This is called our **income**. We also need to know how much money we are spending. This is called our **expenses**.

Expenses

Make a list of all the money that you spend in one day.



something we want rather than something we need. Maybe we could smoke a little less. Maybe our boyfriends can buy their own beer. It's possible we could save money every week. We could put our savings into a bank account or stokvel.

We save money for things

manage

- ukulawula
- ukuphatha
- laola
- versorg

loan shark

- umashonisa
- umatshonisa
- mashonisa
- woekeraar

residential address

- ikheli lasekhaya
- idilesi yendawo yokuhlala
- aterese ya bodulo
- huisadres

lump sum

- isamba
- isixa mali
- bokgothokgotho
- enkelbedrag

Money is very important to us. When we **manage** it well, it allows us to care for ourselves and our families. We manage our money by not spending more than we earn and by saving. We try to save 20% of what we earn. For example, if we earn R100, we save R20.

If we have savings we will never have to go to a **loan shark**. We should never borrow money from a loan shark because we will end up paying a lot extra just to borrow the money. We can save by opening a bank account or by joining a stokvel.

Save by opening a bank account

One of the ways to keep our money safe and to save is to open a bank account. There are lots of banks to choose from. We should choose the one that is easiest for us. Capitec is a good bank because as well as the ATM, we can draw cash from any Pick n Pay, ShopRite, Checkers, PEP or Boxer.

To open a bank account we need an ID and proof of South African **residential address**. Any letter we have got in the last 3 months with our name and complete residential address typed on it will be ok. For example, a letter from our:

- cell phone provider
- store where we have an account e.g. Edgars

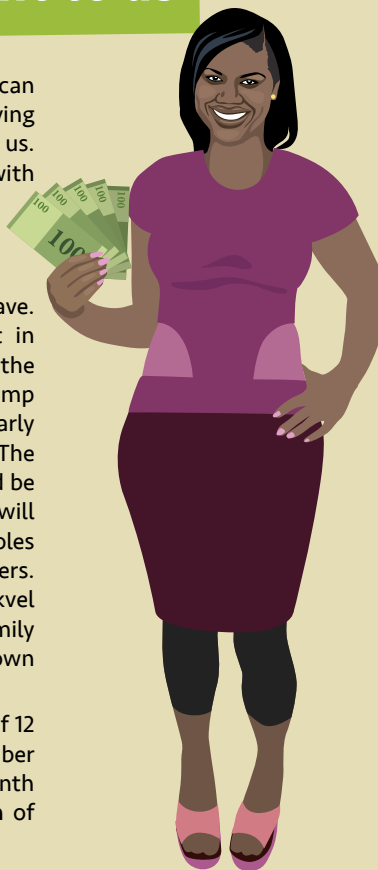
that are important to us

Once we have a bank account we can keep our money safe and start saving for the things that are important to us. A monthly debit order can help with regular saving.

Save by joining a stokvels

A stokvel can be a good way to save. A stokvel has members who put in money every month. At the end of the month one of the members gets a lump sum. Our stokvels will meet regularly and have rules or a constitution. The rules will include: how much should be paid, when it should be paid, what will happen if we don't pay, and the roles and responsibilities of the members. We find belonging to a burial stokvel useful when someone in our family dies, or it can pay the costs of our own funeral.

For example, we could be a group of 12 members. Every month each member puts in R500. At the end of the month one member receives a **lump sum** of R6000.



We plan for our retirement and

retirement

- ukuthatha umhlalaphansi
- umhlalaphantsi
- ho beha meja
- aftrede

supplement

- isondlamzimba
- isongezo
- eketsa
- byvoeg

All working people will need to stop working at some point when they get older. It's important to plan for our **retirement** and save money for the future. We could also consider finding ways to **supplement** our income. Or we might want to stop doing sex work and try something different. These are some ways sex workers are making additional money:

Sales

Many of us sex workers are skilled at selling things! We could sell clothes or snacks. Some sex workers are also representatives of a direct selling company selling products like cosmetics or plastic containers. For every product sold, the representative gets a commission or percentage of the sale from the company.

Services

As sex workers we know about delivering a service. Offering massages, hair styling or beauty treatments go well with our sex work business. Some sex workers have found that getting part-time work as a waitron allows potential clients to get to see what is on offer and it is a good way to make initial contact.

supplement our income

Providing a service brings in money whether it's sex or hair styling.



Our bodies

usually

- ngokujwayelekile
- ngesiqhelo
- kamehla
- gewoonlik

damages

- umonakalo
- umonakalo
- ditshenyehelo
- skade berokken



We drink sensibly or do not drink alcohol

It is better to drink alcohol after we have eaten food. We sip our drink slowly. We have a glass of water between every drink of alcohol. We don't let others force us to drink. We have the right to say no to alcohol.



We exercise to keep fit

Thirty minutes of fast walking makes us sweat and our heart beat fast.



We drink water

We drink up to 8 glasses of water every day.

As sex workers we care about our bodies. Healthy living makes us look good, feel good and live longer.



We eat healthy food

Healthy food gives us energy, stops sickness and makes us strong.

We avoid food with sugar, salt and that has been fried in oil.

See page 72 for more on eating healthy.



We take time off to relax and enjoy things

We try doing something different from what we usually do. We talk with family and friends and our stress is less.

To calm down, sometimes we lie flat in a quiet place and breathe deeply for a while with our eyes closed.



We cut down or stop smoking

We know it damages our lungs, our blood vessels and many other parts of our body.



We practice safer sex

Using a condom protects us against, pregnancy, HIV and other STIs. See page 74 for more on this.

We eat healthy food to stay

processed

- okuqhutshiwe
- lungisiwe
- sebeditswe
- geprosesseerde

protein

- amaphrotheni
- iproteni
- matlafatsa
- proteïen

fibre

- ifayibha
- ifayibha
- faeba
- vesel

Healthy eating is important for everyone.

Some people with diabetes or hypertension need a special diet from a doctor or nurse. For most people, if they follow these rules they will eat well and stay well:

- Eat 3 meals a day
- Avoid fatty/**processed** foods like polonies, pies, sausages and take aways

We need fat for good health, but eating too much will cause us to be overweight. Being overweight puts us at risk of heart disease, diabetes and hypertension.

- Avoid sugar, for example in fruit juice and fizzy drinks
- Drink lots of fresh clean water
- Eat many different kinds of foods every week. Have a mixture of starch, fruit, vegetables, protein and dairy products in your meals



Protein foods build our body

Liver, chicken, meat, fish, eggs, dried beans, split peas, lentils, peanut butter and more.

Eat **protein** at each meal. Eat a mixture of plant and animal proteins.

Protein keeps our blood, muscles and bones strong.



Fruit and vegetables fight sickness by giving us vitamins and fibre

Spinach, marog, broccoli, cauliflower, pumpkin, butternut, oranges, apples, tomatoes, and many more.

Eat five pieces of fruit/vegetables every day. Fruit and vegetables of different colours are good for us in different ways. For example, they help to fight sickness and give us **fibre** which helps digestion and prevents constipation.



Starch foods give us energy

Pap, potatoes, mealies, whole wheat bread, samp, oats, bran, cereal, rice and more.

Use starch foods that are not processed or refined. When the factory processes food it takes the goodness out. Examples of processed food are white rice, white bread, pastries and sugar. Whole-wheat or low GI bread is healthier than white bread. Brown and basmati rice are healthier than white rice. Have small portion sizes of starches.



Dairy products are also good

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and more.

Dairy products have protein to make us strong and calcium which is good for our teeth and bones.

We use a condom to practice

minimise

- ukunciphisa
- nciphisa
- nyenyefatsa
- verag

maximize

- ukwandisa
- yandisa
- hodisa
- vergroot

precautions

- okumele kuxwaywe
- ukulumkela
- oitshireletso
- voorsorg

deceive

- ukulahlekisa
- qhatha
- thetsa
- bedrieg

As Sisonke members, we are experts on having safer sex. We know that sex can never be 100% safe. We know that condoms break and accidents happen. But we can **minimise** risks and **maximize precautions** to have the safest possible sex.

CORRECT AND CONSISTENT USE of condoms every time we have sex will protect us from STIs and unwanted pregnancies.

- We negotiate condoms with our client before we start with the business
- We put the condom on and we guide the penis into our vagina or anus
- We use lube to make it more comfortable and stop the condom breaking (especially when client takes long to come)

When our clients don't want to use a condom

We have the right to make our own rules about what we will and will not do. We know that having sex without a condom is the biggest risk factor for getting STIs including HIV.

- Sometimes it works to discuss safe sex with a client and they agree to use a condom
- Sometimes we can **deceive** clients and secretly put on a condom
- We can also use a female condom

safer sex

***Condoms protect us from
STIs and pregnancy.***



latex

- i-latex
- irabha
- leithekse
- latex

thrush

- amalovula
- usulelo
ngumngundo
- lekgopo
- sproei

erection

- ukuvukelwa
- ukuvukelwa
- tshohelwa
- ereksie

oral

- ngokomlomo
- yomlomo
- molomo
- oraal

Good reasons to use a female condom

- A female condom is a good alternative to safer sex, especially if a client doesn't want to use a male condom
- We can use a female condom immediately and we could also put it on up to 3 hours before we have sex
- We don't have to remove a female condom immediately after sex
- Men and transgender people can also use a female condom
- We can use the female condom during menstruation
- The female condom is not made of **latex** so we can use it if we often get **thrush**
- We can use the female condom when the man cannot hold an **erection** well
- DO NOT use both male and female condom at the same time

Tip: A female condom makes a client finish fast!

***Glad I have already
put in my female
condom.***



What we do if we don't use a

cum

- ukuhlangana
- amadlozi
- mmoho le
- kom

douche

- i-douche
- idawutshi
- mokgwa wa ho hlatswa ka hara mmele
- uitspoel

- If there is **cum** inside squat down and push downward with our muscles
- We should NOT **DOUCHE** as this can push sperm further up into our vagina
- We go to the health clinic for PEP to help protect us from HIV and for tests
- If we are not already on contraception, we also get emergency contraception at the clinic to stop us getting pregnant

condom or the condom breaks

**The condom broke
and I'm worried.**

**I'm giving you PEP to
protect you from HIV and
a pill to stop you getting
pregnant.**



We stay safer around HIV

reduce

- ukunciphisa
- nciphisa
- fokotsa
- verminder

default

- ngokuzenzakalela
- ukusilela
- hloleha
- versuim

intimate

- ukusondelana
- buqabane
- bontsha kamano ya lerato
- intiem

As members of Sisonke we are educators on preventing the spread of HIV and other infections. We know that everyone needs to use a condom.

If we are HIV positive

If we are HIV positive stay well for longer and **reduce** risk of spreading HIV



Use a condom



Get onto treatment and stick with it



If we **default** with our treatment, don't be shy, talk to our health provider and get back on to treatment



Have a discussion with our **intimate** or non-paying partner about our status and agree to use a condom

Even if we already have HIV, we should use a condom because being re-infected with the virus can make it difficult for ARV treatment.

If we are HIV negative

If we are HIV negative, reduce the risk of getting HIV



Use a condom



Use PEP. PEP stands for Post Exposure Prophylaxis and it is treatment with ARVs to prevent infection with HIV if you have had unprotected sex and you are worried about being infected



Use PrEP. PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis and is medication for a person who is HIV-negative to prevent him/herself from becoming infected with HIV.

We take care of our genitals

foreskin

- ijwabu
- ijwabi
- letlalo le ka hodimo/ kwahetseng
- voorhuid

labial folds

- imilebe
- imifingo yemilebe
- malebe
- labiale voues

genitals

- izitho zokuzala
- amalungu angasese
- ditho tsa bong/ bopele
- genitalië

anus

- izinqa
- umva
- sebono
- anus

- Wash and dry regularly, cleaning under the **foreskin**, and under the clitoral hood and between **labial folds**
- It is enough to wash the external genital and anal area with warm soap and water
- Avoid washing with perfumed or harsh soaps
- Baby wipes can be useful for simple, quick and gentle clean-ups
- See a doctor if there is discomfort, burning, itching or a smelly discharge. Usually there is a simple solution, but if we wait before getting help, it would turn into something more serious
- Don't use other people's washcloths or towels
- Don't douche. Douching is rinsing the inside of the vagina or colon by forcing or squirting water or other solutions. Douching can upset the balance (PH) and make us get infections
- Avoid working if we have tears, sores or cuts on our **genitals, anus** or mouth

**Don't douche!
It will give you
infections.**

**Gentle washing with
warm water is all
that is needed.**



Our menstrual cycle

menstruation

- ukuya esikhathini
- ukuya exesheni
- ho ya matsatsing
- menstruasie

transmitted

- okudlulisiwe
- sulela
- fetiswang
- oorgedra

rectal

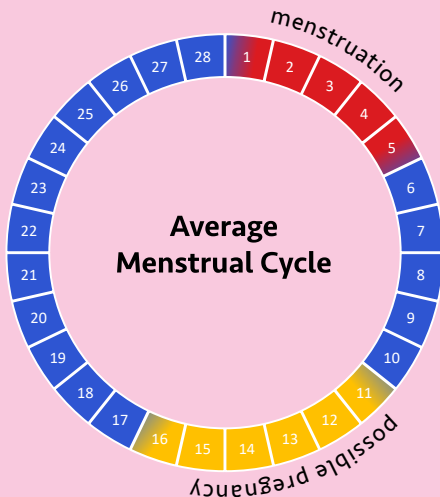
- umdidi
- impundu
- -mokoteng
- rektale

insert

- faka
- faka
- kenya
- insteek

Our period or **menstruation** is when we bleed. If we menstruate it means we are not pregnant but that we are fertile and could fall pregnant if we have sex without contraception. We count the days in our menstrual cycle from the first day of our period. Every woman's cycle is different but usually our period lasts between 3-7 days.

We are most likely to get pregnant 11-16 days after the first day of our period.



Take a break when we are menstruating

- If we can, we should take a break or at least just give blow jobs or hand jobs
- Some clients might not come to us again if they find we are menstruating. Others might beat us. Rather don't risk it
- DO NOT keep tampons in longer than 8 hours. The risk of toxic shock syndrome (blood poisoning) is very serious

If we have to work we use a condom when we are menstruating

- HIV is **transmitted** through blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, **rectal** fluids, vaginal fluids and breast milk. This means we must use a condom if we want to keep working when we menstruate
- Hiding periods with cotton wool/cloth or sponges can lead to problems. Tiny pieces can stay in the vagina and become infected. What we **insert** may cause small tears in our vagina which can get infected

We get treatment for sexually

symptoms

- izimpawu
- iimpawu
- matshwao
- simptome

passing urine

- ukuchama
- ukuchama
- ho ntsha metsi
- urineer

abdomen

- isisu
- isisu
- mpa
- buik

diagnosis

- ukutholakala kwezifo
- ukuqonda isifo ngokuxilonga
- tlhahlobo
- diagnose

STIs are diseases passed from one person to another through unprotected sex (without a condom). We will not always know if we have an STI. We may have one and not have any **symptoms** for a long time.

Symptoms of an STI

- Bad smelling liquid from penis or vagina
- Pain and/or burning when **passing urine**
- Blood in the urine
- Wanting to urinate often
- Sores, rashes, blisters or warts on or around vagina, penis or anus
- Pain in lower **abdomen** above sex organs
- Headaches, fever (sometimes shaking)

What to do if we think we have an STI

- Most STIs are curable but not all. Go to a health centre to get a **diagnosis** and treatment
- DO NOT buy medicines from the market as they may not treat the infections and we may have serious problems
- Try to find our sexual partner (if we can) and advise them to have treatment too to prevent spreading the infection further
- If we start treatment, we do not stop until the full course is finished

transmitted infections

There are sores on my vagina.

It's a good thing you came to see me soon. Now we can treat it and it will go away.



We care for our transgender

transgender

- ubulili obunge-sibo obemvelo
- isini somntu es-ingangqinelaniyo nesini sakhe sokuzalwa
- mofetolabong
- transgender

transition

- uguquko
- inguqu
- phetoho
- oorgang

surgery

- isikhungo sikadokotela
- utyando
- ho sehwa
- chirurgie

hormones

- imizwa
- iincindi zamadlala
- dihomone
- hormone

Some of us are **transgender** women. This is when we have a man's body but we feel like we are women. Some of us transgender women **transition** to living life full time as a woman. Transitioning could include changing our name, changing legal documents like our ID to reflect who we really are, having **surgery** or taking **hormones**.

Hormone therapy

Taking female hormones or contraceptives could give us breast development but not everybody's breasts grow big. It will give us softer skin, and less facial hair. It could give us a belly and it could give us more fat on our hips and thighs. There are risks when taking hormones or women's contraceptives. If possible, we should get medical supervision.

Where to get hormones and surgery

Hormones can be prescribed by any doctor. We will need a letter from a social worker, therapist or psychologist to state that our gender identity is female and then the doctor can give us a prescription.

Surgery is done by two government hospitals in South Africa. Steve Biko hospital in Pretoria and Groote Schuur hospital in Cape Town. They have long waiting lists but any person has a right to these services.

sistaaz!

***Your gender
is not defined
by your sexual
organs.***



Our phone numbers

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Acknowledgments

At Sisonke we say “Nothing about us without us”. We developed this Members’ Handbook with extensive engagement and consultation with our members.

We would like to thank each and every member who gave their input on its development.

Sisonke members gave input into the handbook in face to face interviews, over the telephone, in focus groups and in a series of Creative Space meetings held in Johannesburg, Polokwane, Potchefstroom, Pietermaritzburg, East London and Cape Town.

- Members brainstormed what key content was to be included in the handbook and decided on the size, length, look and feel
- Members identified key messages for the handbook which are reinforced on every page
- Members workshopped the development of content in the handbook emphasising what is important to us as sex workers

All members who participated at the Sisonke National Meeting in 2017 also provided feedback on the final draft of content, illustrations and translations.

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