

Sex work in the midst of GBV

A basic guide

By

SISONKE A MOVEMENT FOR SEX WORKERS

“To deny someone their human rights is to challenge their very humanity.”

- Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela

FATHER OF THE RAINBOW NATION/ FORMER SA PRESIDENT

Sex work

The term refers to sexual orientated services offered in exchange for financial benefit by consenting adults who choose to do so.

Gender Based Violence

Gender-Based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious violation of human rights and a life-threatening health and protection issue.

Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking refers to the recruitment, harbouring, obtaining or transporting a person by means of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of sexual exploitation, commercial sex acts or labour exploitation. Human Trafficking is not sex work and does not only apply to border crossing, foreign nationals or undocumented immigrants.

Decriminalisation

The reference to the removal of criminal and administrative penalties that apply specifically to sex work. Recognising that sex work is work; allowing sex work to be governed by labor law and protections similar to all other jobs.

Criminalisation

The action of turning someone into a criminal by making their activities illegal. This means the selling, buying and any other sex work-related behaviour is a criminal offence.

"the criminalisation of sex work under the Sexual Offences Act 23 of 1957"

Definition of a sex worker

An adult consents to offer sexual entertainment to other adults for financial gain. Sex workers are commonly young women; or men or a member of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Did you know?

- There are more than 150 000 sex workers in South Africa
- Sex workers are most susceptible to GBV, rape and hate crime
- Most sex workers are reluctant to open cases against perpetrators as a result of fear of stigma and discrimination

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