

## **1 WORK REPORT**

### **1.1 AFRO'S Annual General Meeting (5th Dec)**

Afro's AGM was held on 5 Dec 2009.

The newly elected Executive Committee consists of 6 members:

Chairperson: Nancy LEUNG LUI Mo Ching

Vice-chair: Moyreen Tilbrook

Treasurer: Dr. Francois FONG Yeung

Secretary: CHIU Hung

Members: NG AUI Tip Yee, Prof. CHOI Yuk Ping

### **1.2 Fund Raising Bazaar (13<sup>th</sup> Dec)**

**NEW RECORD!**

Many thanks to the generous support on donation of goods from companies and friends, we proudly announce that the 4<sup>th</sup> fund raising bazaar have raised a record of over \$20,000.

Although the Hawker Control Teams kept requesting us to minimize the stall, under ideal temperature and sunshine for the bazaar, and with the help of volunteers, we managed to comply with their request, without affecting the money raised from bazaar. We would like to say a big thank you to all the volunteers who offered their generous help in the event, and hopefully we will see you all again next year!

### **1.3 International Human Rights Day Carnival (6<sup>th</sup> Dec)**

As usual, AFRO participated in the International Human Rights Day 2009 Carnival on the 6<sup>th</sup> December at Pak Sha Road Pedestrian Zone, Causeway Bay. This year's carnival titled: "Where's My Rights?" with 20 organizations participated in the event, including International Human Rights organizations, Youth organizations, Homosexual support groups and sex workers support groups etc.

AFRO's booth was decorated as a one woman brothel, with some boards illustrating the abuse committed by the Police and law enforcement, plus the newspaper clipping of the Human Rights Abuse Committed by the Police and the Yau Tsim Mong District Council in late November. Due to the geographical unfavourable, there were not many passerby, yet there were still some of them stopped by and discussed the issue with us.

### **1.4 12 Dec Rally**

AFRO organized a rally in Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok on 12 Dec, to protest against Human Rights Abuse Committed by the Police and the Yau Tsim Mong District Council. There were about 40 persons standing in line for the rally, including sex workers, friends from Zi Teng, Midnight Blue, Women Coalition of Hong Kong, the Association for the Advancement of Feminism, as well as staff members, volunteers and friends of AFRO.

A petition signed by nearly 400 persons was submitted to the Yau Tsim Mong District Council and the Police. Our grateful thanks are extended to those who have been there for their support! Some photos have already been uploaded to our facebook group.

Please check:

[http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?pid=3438782&id=733112029&view=all&subject=51440404690&aid=-1&oid=51440404690&saved#/photo\\_search.php?oid=51440404690&view=all](http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?pid=3438782&id=733112029&view=all&subject=51440404690&aid=-1&oid=51440404690&saved#/photo_search.php?oid=51440404690&view=all)

1.5 Meeting with Yau Tsim Mong District Council – follow up on the Human Rights abuse committed by the Police and Yau Tsim Mong District Council in late November (18<sup>th</sup> Dec)

On the 26<sup>th</sup> November, after the press conference of the Working Group Concern over Vice Problem at Yau Tsim Mong District, the reporters followed and filmed the sex workers during an operation on cracking down the solicitation and vice establishments. We strongly opposed to this brutal behaviour of violating the human rights and privacy of the sex workers.

In response to this incident, the chairman of the Working Group Concern over Vice Problem at Yau Tsim Mong District, Mr. Hui Tak Leung has also attended the meeting,

Two staff members from AFRO have also sat in the meeting, and wrote down some notes as follow:

Recall from the incidents, the councilors who were at the press conference claimed that they took the coach arranged by the secretary of the district council, and went to two pre-arranged locations for “visits” to vice establishments which were just cracked down by the Police a short time ago. The councilors insisted they have no idea where they were going, and there were still arrested suspects at the scene. Councilor Mr. Ip Ngo Tung said the video was a “misfortune”, while the chairman Mr. Hui Tak Leung after all was claimed to be innocent, and knew nothing on the press release and the action.

AFRO expressed great regret on the review of incident, there was a lack of sincerity towards their explanation, and the acting chairman Mr. Ip Ngo Tung even refused to allow us and other two sex workers concern groups to raise our concerns due to procedural difficulties, only concluded it as “An Unpleasant incident”. AFRO strongly believes that, even the Police did not clear the area, with sex workers at the scene; the district councilors should also stop the reporters from filming the sex workers. Resulting in no one willing to take up the responsibility, it is truly the “misfortune” of the citizens with a district council in this way.

#### 1.6 2009 X'mas Party (21 Dec)

It's Christmas again!

AFRO has celebrated it with 16 sex workers on the 21 Dec, with some of their children joining the games together, having the feast and the lucky draw!

Although they were not precious gift, we can still see lots of happy faces, with work aside and enjoyed the festive season.

## **2 FUTURE WORK**

### 2.1 Monthly Tea Gathering with Sex Workers

From Jan 2010, a tea gathering with sex workers will be organized by AFRO on a monthly basis. The topic for the first gathering will be “personal finance management”.

We have invited qualified financial consultants to share their experience and tips on money management, in order to have a clearer view on your 2010 financial plan.

Date: 27 Jan 2010 (Wednesday)

Time: 3:15 – 5pm

Venue: AFRO's drop in centre

Money does not grow on trees. If you want some tips on how to manage your money wisely, reserve a seat by calling us at 2770 1002 as soon as possible!

## **3 AFRO's NEWS READING**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8405154.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8405154.stm)

## **India court raises question of legalising prostitution**

10 Dec 2009

India's Supreme Court has asked the government to consider whether it might legalise prostitution if it is unable to curb it effectively.

The court said legalising prostitution would help in the monitoring of the trade and rehabilitating sex workers.

Although illegal, prostitution is a thriving business in cities and towns across India.

It is estimated that there are more than two million female sex workers in the country.

The court's remarks came while dealing with a public interest litigation filed by an NGO about child trafficking.

The court said child trafficking and prostitution were flourishing because of poverty.

"When you say it is the world's oldest profession and you are not able to curb it by laws, why don't you legalise it?" Judges Dalveer Bhandari and AK Patnaik asked a government solicitor.

"You can then monitor the trade, rehabilitate and provide medical aid to those involved."

The solicitor said that he would look into the court's suggestions.

"The [sex workers] have been operating in one way or the other and nowhere in the world have they been able to curb it by legislation," the judges said.

"In some cases, [the trade] is carried out in a sophisticated manner. So, why don't you legalise it?"

A government-commissioned study says that the number of sex workers has risen from two million in 1997 to three million in 2003-04.

Many prostitutes are said to be underage, entering the sex trade as young as 12.

Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal states together account for 26% of the total number of prostitutes in the country.

*AFRO's website: [www.afro.org.hk](http://www.afro.org.hk)*

*Email: [afro@afro.org.hk](mailto:afro@afro.org.hk)*

*Tel: (852) 27701065*

*Fax: (852) 27701201*