

1. WORK REPORT

1.1 AFRO's Fund Raising Bazaar (5 Dec)

AFRO's fund raising bazaar was held on 5 Dec. With the help of colleagues and volunteers, we were able to raise HK\$25,113.00, after the deduction of the cost. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for the generous support and the help from our volunteers Kam, Nancy, Po Man, Ryan, students from The Chinese University of Hong Kong – Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Community College, Banfi, Wai, Tony (who audit the event for free), and friends who donated the goods.

Thank You!



1.2 International Human Rights Day Carnival (12 Dec)

International Human Rights Day Carnival was held on 12 Dec at the Pedestrian's Zone in Mong Kok. The theme of the International Human Rights Day Carnival this year was "Fight for Dignity!" AFRO has been participated in this meaningful event for years, and AFRO's activities were focused on harmonious neighbourhood. Apart from displaying the related laws in the sex industry and information on the abuse of police, there was also exhibition of news clipping on the mutual help between sex workers and the neighbourhood, which hopefully to enhance the relationship between the sex workers and the neighbourhood, also to eliminate the discrimination against them.

We would like to give a big thank you to nine students from The Chinese University of Hong Kong – Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Community College, who helped us with the games and leaflets distribution, in order to widespread the messages.



1.3 The release of “A survey on the relationship between the street-based sex workers and the community” (16 Dec)

From March 2008 till January 2009, nine sex workers had been murdered. To help prevent further violent incidents and protect the personal safety of the sex workers, we have to eliminate the discrimination against them, and to build up harmonious relationship with the neighbourhood.

Because of this, AFRO have conducted a questionnaire survey in July 2009, also April and May 2010, and the results was released on the 16 Dec, a day before the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, to bring out the inter-linkage between a harmonious community and the personal safety of the sex workers.



The report can be downloaded from the following link:
<http://www.afro.org.hk/research2.php> (Chinese)

1.4 Forum on the latest development of the policy on sex trade in Taiwan (18 Dec)

By next year, the government of Taiwan will amend the law, which only penalizes the sex workers, but not the clients. It is estimated that the new legislation will not penalize both parties, only outlaw those privately operated brothel and the street-based sex workers. The government of Taiwan also suggested that the possibility of setting up red light districts, and the sex workers may be allowed to operate individually, similar to the one woman apartment in Hong Kong.

Thus, we have invited representatives from Collective of Sex Workers and Supporters (COSWAS), an organization which provides support to sex workers in Taiwan, to share their views on the latest development of Taiwan's policy on sex trade. Thereafter, we have also expressed our views on the importance of the personal safety of the sex workers in one woman apartment, and to strive for the decriminalisation of sex work.



1.5 Christmas Party

Apart from the sex workers, we have also invited friends from the Collective of Sex Workers and Supporters to join our party this year. They get to know each other during the game and they have lots of fun and enjoy the party.



2 FUTURE WORK

2.1 Monthly Tea Gathering

In the past year, we have monthly tea gathering, in order to provide opportunities for the sex workers to engage in different issues, which all related to their daily life or work, and also some festive celebrations and outings.

This year, we will continue this tea gatherings, I don't think you want to miss any one of those, so let us introduce the topics of the forthcoming four months.

January - Astonishing misunderstandings: How sex workers understand safe sex?

February – BBQ gathering for the Chinese New Year

March – One year anniversary gathering of the AFRO's Club members

April – Legal information

3 AFRO'S NEWS READING

http://www.thestandard.com.hk/news_detail.asp?pp_cat=11&art_id=106127&sid=30659984&con_type=1&d_str=20101217&sear_year=2010

Red-light areas call by concern group

Rebecca Yu

Friday, December 17, 2010

Up to two-thirds of those living in red-light districts have no qualms about prostitution, while three in five say they regard prostitutes as members of the community.

A sex workers' concern group "Action for Reach Out" said 128, or 64 percent, of 200 people interviewed in the Yau Ma Tei, Mong Kok, and Tsim Sha Tsui districts said their lives are not affected by vice girls.

Nearly the same number agree sex workers are members of the community.

The overall acceptance of street sex workers was 2.87 points out of a maximum five, the poll found.

Nearly half, 48.9 percent, said they will support any move to legalize street prostitution in Hong Kong since the "sex trade is also a kind of work," "sex workers need understanding and respect," and the "sex trade may help reduce sex crimes."

According to the poll, 63.4 percent said the SAR needs red-light districts, though many suggest they should be in more remote areas such as the Outlying Islands.

Those supporting red-light areas in the city said these streets can be set up in "popular prostitute areas" such as Yau Ma Tei, Tsim Sha Tsui, Sham Shui Po and Wan Chai.

One in five expressed a "half-and-half" attitude to prostitution, and 16.5 percent were "strongly against" the proposal, saying sex workers will degrade social conduct, set a bad example for children, affect public security and stain the image of the district.

The poll found more than 70 percent of those living in the area have not encountered sex workers in their community. None of the 99 women interviewed said they have been mistaken for sex workers by the police.

Group executive director Kendy Yim Kit-sum said the image of sex workers has been misrepresented by the media and the police.

"Due to their working hours, ordinary people do not normally bump into sex workers," she said.

Yim suggested the government draw reference from Australia and New Zealand and decriminalize street prostitution because "it is an affair between two adults acting on their own free wills."

She also urged district councils, the public and the police to treat sex workers fairly.

A sex worker known as Nina, who has been running a "one-woman brothel" on Hong Kong Island for three years, said her neighbors treat her well.

"I have received no complaints from them," she said.

Street prostitute Kiki said she was insulted by police officers when she went to a station for help.

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