



nswp

Global Network of Sex Work Projects
Promoting Health and Human Rights

annual report 2019



About NSWP

THE GLOBAL NETWORK OF SEX WORK PROJECTS (NSWP) is a membership organisation which exists to uphold the voice of sex workers, amplify the voices of sex worker-led organisations globally, and connect regional networks advocating for the rights of female, male, and transgender sex workers. It advocates for rights-based health and social services, freedom from abuse and discrimination, and self-determination for sex workers.

NSWP members are sex worker-led organisations and networks from across the five NSWP regions: Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe – including Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. Our organisational culture and rules ensure that we are led by sex workers and that sex workers are meaningfully involved at all levels within NSWP.

To become a member of NSWP, sex worker-led organisations must endorse the NSWP Consensus Statement¹ and core values:

- Acceptance of sex work as work.
- Opposition to all forms of criminalisation and other legal oppression of sex work (including sex workers, clients, third parties², families, partners and friends).
- Supporting self-organisation and self-determination of sex workers.



NSWP members are from diverse cultures and have different experiences and organisational histories. Most are independent sex worker-led organisations, some are informal groups of sex workers within larger organisations, and some are non-governmental organisations who support sex workers' rights. Some member organisations provide services, some focus on advocacy, and some on mobilising to reduce vulnerability. All work on human rights issues that affect the health and well-being of sex workers.

NSWP advocacy focuses on the following issues and goals:

- **Human rights:** Sex workers' human rights are promoted and protected.
- **Health:** Sex workers have universal access to health services, including for HIV.
- **Labour:** Sex work is recognised as work.
- **Stigma and discrimination:** Sex workers live free from stigma and discrimination.
- **Criminalisation and legal oppression:** Sex workers do not face criminalisation or legal punishment.
- **Violence:** Sex workers live free from all types of violence.
- **Migration and trafficking:** Sex work is not conflated with trafficking and sex workers can move and migrate freely.
- **Economic empowerment:** Sex workers have free choice of employment and economic security.

1 NSWP, 2013, NSWP Consensus Statement on Sex Work, Human Rights, and the Law.

2 The term 'third parties' includes managers, brothel keepers, receptionists, maids, drivers, landlords, hotels who rent rooms to sex workers, and anyone else who is seen as facilitating sex work.

Contents

ABOUT NSWP	2
Board Members	4
NSWP Secretariat	4
THE VIEW FROM 2019	4
NSWP Membership	5
NSWP HIGHLIGHTS	6
Global Mapping of Sex Work Laws	6
NSWP @ CSW63	7
Making the Global Fund work for sex workers	7
NSWP ACHIEVEMENTS	8
Strengthened capacity within sex worker-led networks and organisations	8
Engagement in International Policy and Programme Platforms	9
NSWP website and social media platforms	9
NSWP publications	10
NSWP AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO ADVANCE SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS	12
LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020	14
FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2019	15

Board Members

PRESIDENT:

Kay Thi Win (APNSW, Thailand)

AFRICA:

Patrick Fotso (Alcondoms, Cameroon) and Phelister Abdallah (KESWA, Kenya)

ASIA PACIFIC:

Manjula Ramaiah (ASHODAYA SAMITHI, India) and Sherry Sherqueshaa (Project X, Singapore)

EUROPE:

Dinah de Riquet-Bons (STRASS, France) and Nataliia Isaieva (Legalife-Ukraine, Ukraine)

LATIN AMERICA:

Cynthia Navarrete Gil (APROASE, Mexico) and Miguel Angel Saurin Romero (Asociación Civil Cambio y Acción, Perú)

NORTH AMERICA

AND THE CARIBBEAN:

Shaunna-May Trotman (Guyana Sex Work Coalition, Guyana) and Natasha Potvin (Peers Victoria Resources Society, Canada)

All Board members are sex workers and four board members are openly living with HIV.

NSWP Secretariat

GLOBAL COORDINATOR:

Ruth Morgan Thomas

OPERATIONS MANAGER:

Gillian Galbraith

OPERATIONS AND

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER:

Manuela Nehrig

PROGRAMME MANAGER:

Aline Fantinatti

SENIOR POLICY OFFICER:

Neil McCulloch

POLICY OFFICER:

Katherine Koster

SENIOR PROGRAMME

OFFICER: Mick Matthews

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER:

Dani Anderson

The View

from 2019

Sex workers organising globally continued to face many challenges as well as opportunities in 2019

NSWP continued to implement various strategies as set out in our [Strategic Plan 2016–20](#):

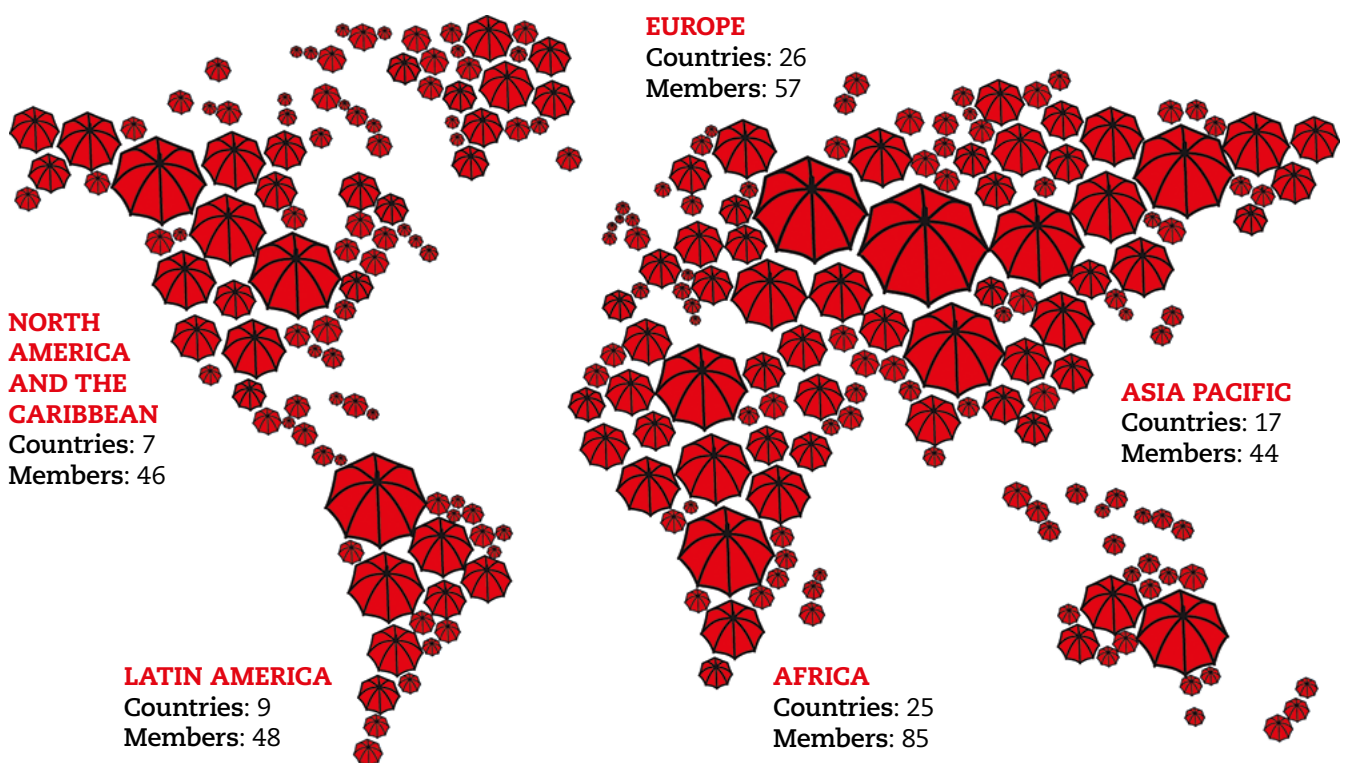
- To convene and further build on NSWP achievements as the global network committed to the realisation of sex workers' human rights.
- To build capacity within sex worker-led networks and organisations and support emerging sex worker leaders.
- To promote rights and evidence-based policies and programmes affecting sex workers.

NSWP and our members participated in international and national dialogues and spaces, to promote rights and evidence-based policies and programmes affecting sex workers, using the [Sex Worker Implementation Tool](#) and [NSWP Consensus Statement](#) as the foundation for all global advocacy. In addition to capacity building and technical support provided to regional networks, NSWP developed a range of advocacy tools, highlighted below, that bring the human rights of sex workers strongly into focus.



NSWP Membership

In 2019, NSWP membership grew to 280 members in 84 countries, spread across the five NSWP regions.



NSWP Highlights



Global Mapping of Sex Work Laws

NSWP published a global mapping of sex work laws used to regulate and criminalise sex work. The map provides information on laws which criminalise the sale of sexual services, the purchase of sexual services and the facilitation, management or organisation of sex work by third parties. This includes activities associated with selling sexual services that are intrinsic to the work or protect safety (e.g. soliciting on the streets or in a public place, advertising, sharing premises with other indoor sex workers), or other activities associated with buying (e.g. “kerb crawling”). The term ‘third parties’ includes managers, brothel keepers, receptionists, maids, drivers, landlords, hotels who rent rooms to sex workers and anyone else who is seen as facilitating sex work and can also include sex workers themselves.

The global mapping methodology involved researching the primary legal sources (e.g. penal

codes and statutes), trusted secondary sources, and a verification process on the legal situation with NSWP member organisations and others in the relevant countries.

The information in the map reflects legislation that exists in relation to sex work, rather than how laws are implemented, enforced, or the impact they

have on sex workers. However, NSWP has also published seven country case studies on how laws work on the streets. NSWP will continue to work on more national case studies that will provide insight into how law enforcement implement the legislation and its impact upon sex workers, these will be added to the country pages as they are completed, as funding allows.



NSWP @ CSW63

CSW is an important space within the United Nations that should promote the respect, protection, and fulfilment of the human rights of all women, including sex workers. NSWP facilitated a delegation from member organisations to attend the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) where they amplified the voices of sex workers in a space where fundamental feminists and abolitionist groups have dominated discussions about sex work, where the diversity of sex workers' lived experiences and

realities are seldom reflected and policies that undermine the human rights of sex workers are promoted. The 63rd CSW session theme of social protection and access to public services is particularly important to sex workers. *"When we talk about poverty, the great problem is criminalisation. The police and authorities use sex workers as an ATM. When we make money, they arrest us, and they take money from us."* KayThi Win, NSWP President.

Delegation members raised the profile of sex workers' rights as women's rights by presenting

at CSW side events organised by UN agencies and member states. They lobbied country missions, attended NGO side events organised by sex workers' organisations, allies and the opposition. In partnership with some UN Agencies, member states, donors, and inclusive rights-affirming women's rights organisations – the delegation succeeded in giving voice to sex workers' call that sex work must not be exceptionalised, and sex workers must not be excluded, if the United Nations is to leave no one behind.

Making the Global Fund work for sex workers

NSWP has continued to provide technical support to strengthen the capacity of sex worker-led organisations to engage in Global Fund national processes. The challenges sex workers must overcome to "have a seat at the table", to be involved in decision-making on issues that directly affect their lives, are many. Criminalisation, stigma and discrimination, lack of resources, paucity of knowledge about the Global Fund and its processes, inhibition and lack of confidence in their own abilities and skills, and a society that often places little or no value in what they have to say, are all obstacles to be overcome. The technical support and training provided by NSWP, facilitated by NSWP Senior Programme Officer and the regional community experts, empowers sex workers with the tools to "do it for themselves". Given the knowledge and skills gained, sex workers continue to grow in influence, to be seen, heard, and listened to, and ensure rights-based programmes for sex workers become an essential component of Global Fund funded programmes.

NSWP knowledge-sharing, technical support and training has been a catalyst for longer-term change. In Suriname,



UMANDE's roundtable with DRC national stakeholders about sex workers' meaningful involvement in Global Fund national processes (October 2019)

SUCOS moved into new offices and were formally invited to register at the Ministry of Health. They are now recognised as a key and important stakeholder and invited to participate in activities and decision-making forums. *"NSWP has been one of the main sources in the development of the organisation. The technical support and Global Fund training empowered the team in areas that can now be used to build individual and collective capacity"* Denise Carr – Director of SUCOS. In Tanzania, support from the NSWP Regional Expert, trained by NSWP, enabled sex workers to be elected to the CCM and gain a place on the Oversight Committee. In Rwanda, South Sudan, Senegal, Ecuador, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo

sex workers have achieved significant progress in 2019. The achievements include gaining representation on CCMs, becoming sub-recipients of Global Fund grants, building relationships with Ministries of Health and Global Fund Principle Recipients, and gaining knowledge and understanding of Global Fund and other national decision-making processes. Sex workers have gained confidence in using their skills and knowledge in advocacy, in effectively representing sex workers in decision-making forums, in building relationships, in contributing to national Global Fund funding proposals, and in oversight of grant implementation, and through this, show persistent and significant progress.

NSWP Achievements

Strengthened capacity within sex worker-led networks and organisations

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

In 2019, NSWP continued to provide face to face and virtual technical support to four regional networks (APNSW, ASWA, PLAPERTS and SWAN) and virtual technical support as issues emerged to the remaining two regional networks (CSWC and ICRSE), working with regional networks to strengthen their capacity, with financial support from Bridging the Gaps, Robert Carr Fund (RCF), and the Global Fund.

APNSW: NSWP continued to provide technical support to APNSW's Management Committee and Secretariat to strengthen capacity around organisational development, financial management, and human resource management.

ASWA: NSWP continued to provide technical support to ASWA Secretariat to strengthen capacity around governance and organisational development, financial management and human resource management. NSWP also continued to provide

technical support to the South-South learning programme, the **Sex Worker Academy, Africa (SWAA)**, a programme based on the SWIT implemented by ASWA. The faculty of Kenyan sex workers facilitated three academies in 2019, attended by sex workers from Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Seychelles, South Sudan, Tunisia, and Zambia. SWAA is funded through NSWP by Bridging the Gaps and the Sex Worker Networks Consortium Africa region grant from RCF.

SWAN: NSWP continued to provide technical support to SWAN to strengthen their capacity around governance, leadership and organisational development.

PLAPERTS: NSWP provided technical support to PLAPERTS to strengthen capacity around governance and organisational development, and financial management.

Graduation ceremony for sex worker teams attending the 22nd Sex Worker Academy Africa, with special participation of sex workers from AMA (November 2019)



© ASWA

REGIONAL NETWORKS: work continued to provide technical support and work with sex worker-led organisations to strengthen their institutional capacity and their capacity to influence rights-affirming sex work related policies and programmes at national and local level within the five NSWP regions.

SEX WORKER NETWORKS CONSORTIUM

Sex Workers: strengthening rights-based responses to HIV: Through the Robert Carr Fund (RCF) grant to the Sex Worker Networks Consortium (Consortium), NSWP continued to work with regional sex worker-led networks to advocate for a rights-based approach to sex work, build sex worker-led organisation’s capacity to advocate for the SWIT at national, regional and global levels, and build the sustainability of global and regional sex worker-led networks in 2019.

NSWP continued to organise Consortium partners meetings in 2019, bringing together the Regional Coordinators to reflect on programme implementation, share learning and adapt the monitoring and evaluation system to be used during the year.

Engagement in International Policy and Programme Platforms

During 2019, NSWP representatives sat on the World Health Organization Civil Society Reference Group; The Global Fund Communities, Rights and Gender Advisory Group; the Global Fund Communities Delegation; HIV Prevention Coalition Working Group; and the UN Steering Committee on HIV and Sex Work. In addition, NSWP has a seat on the Bridging the Gaps Board.

IWRAW-AP Global Convening on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration in Bangkok (January 2019)

Additional to those reported already, during 2019, NSWP and members from all five regions participated in a variety of international policy forums including: global and regional consultations on Donor Activist convening on Trafficking; UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board; UNAIDS Community-led Definition Consultation; and global and regional expert meetings and consultations on the development of the CEDAW General Recommendation on trafficking of women and girls in the context of global migration.



© IWRAW-AP

NSWP website and social media platforms

NSWP’s website had 690,384 page views during 2019, an increase of 107% from 2018 and was accessed by 398,103 users, 10% of whom were returning visitors, and representing a 142% increase from 2018. returning visitors. 266,465 (67%) visitors entered the NSWP website via a search engine; 117,190 (29.) visitors entered by directly typing the URL of the website into their browser; and 14,111 (4%) visitors entered via social media.

277,704 (40%) of all visits to the NSWP website in 2019 were to pages in our Members’ section. In 2019, the Communications Officer worked with member organisations to produce 13

featured members’ profiles for the NSWP website. Resources were accessed either directly or through browsing the Resources section of the website, 65,863 times (nearly 10%) of all website hits. News pages were visited 86,976 times (12%) in 2019. The Communications Officer drafted 54 news stories for the website in 2019 – 5 from Africa, 4 from Asia Pacific, 14 from Europe, 2 from Latin America, 5 from North America and Caribbean, and 24 from a global perspective.

NSWP continued to publish the Sex Work Digest, a quarterly newsletter, and used social media platforms to engage and share information with

members and beyond in 2019. NSWP continued to use global and regional listservs to support information-sharing among members. NSWP maintained a private group on Facebook for sex workers and sex workers’ rights advocates to discuss issues and organise around common causes. As of 31 December 2019, the group had 1,938 members. The NSWP Facebook Page, created in July 2016 to communicate to NSWP members and external stakeholders, had 2,737 likes and 3182 followers as of 31 December 2019 and the NSWP Twitter account, @GlobalSexWork, has a wide reach with 19,544 followers as of 31 December 2019.

NSWP Achievements

NSWP publications

LEGAL MAPPING

Global Mapping of Sex Work Laws (January 2019): NSWP published a global mapping of sex work laws used to regulate and criminalise sex work in 208 countries and dependencies, with sub-national legislation included for some countries.

BRIEFING PAPERS

How sex work laws are implemented on the ground and their impact on sex workers (December 2019): Legislation around sex work can be extremely complex; different legal models exist in different countries and sometimes even within countries. This Briefing Paper summarise case studies done in 7 countries Aotearoa New Zealand, France, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mexico and Senegal, each with a different legal frameworks.

POLICY BRIEFS

The Impact of Anti-Trafficking Legislation and Initiatives on Sex Workers (January 2019): Trafficking in persons has generated increasing global attention in recent decades, largely due to the development of international frameworks, pressure from fundamental feminist and abolitionist groups, and as a reaction to increased migration for labour. International policies on trafficking frequently contain vague or ambiguous language, which can cause harm to sex workers in a number of ways.
[Policy Brief](#) | [Community Guide](#)

Sex Workers and Travel Restrictions (December 2019): Sex workers face many barriers to migration and travel, and are often subjected to arbitrary questioning, biased visa refusals and surveillance and

discriminatory immigration checks after entering a country. Sex workers' movement can also be restricted under measures purporting to be 'anti-trafficking'. Travel restrictions can create a great deal of stress for sex workers, and some sex workers avoid travel altogether because they are afraid of being denied entry, deported or of being identified as a sex worker.
[Policy Brief](#) | [Community Guide](#)

BRIEFING NOTES

Social Protection (February 2019): This Briefing Note outlines the key areas within social protection systems that must be addressed to meet the needs of sex workers. Globally, sex workers are excluded from financial systems, housing, and public services that would support economic security and independence, and labour protections that are the

rights of other workers. This is driven by criminalisation, discrimination and stigma, and creates social exclusion and economic marginalisation. This Briefing Note also outlines the roles of sex worker-led groups in fostering appropriate social protection for sex workers, and highlights the need for policies and programmes to uphold the human rights of sex workers and promote their autonomy and agency.

Sex Work is not Sexual Exploitation (June 2019): This Briefing Note outlines the problems with the conflation of the term ‘sexual exploitation’ with sex work, and how this exacerbates harms to sex workers. ‘Exploitation’ and ‘sexual exploitation’ have no agreed definition in international law, which has led to misinterpretation of the term (wilful or otherwise), and harmful laws, policies and practices that impact negatively on sex workers’ human rights. Some groups support an ideological framework that views all sex work as violence and exploitation. Conflation of sex work and ‘sexual exploitation’ in this way has led to extremely harmful legislation that limits sex workers’ access to justice and services, and prevents them from organising for better work conditions or asserting their human and labour rights.

Universal Health Coverage (September 2019): This Briefing Note outlines Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the challenges it presents for sex workers and other criminalised populations. WHO defines UHC as a system where “all people have access to health services they need (prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care) without the risk of financial hardship when paying for them”. Challenges remain around ensuring adequate financing for UHC, and ensuring a rights-based approach when implementing UHC, so that key populations, including sex workers, are not left behind as a result of criminalisation, stigma and discrimination.

STATEMENTS AND RESPONSES

Joint Statement on Supporting People Living with HIV and Key Populations through Ambitious Global Fund Replenishment (January 2019): NSWP joined MPACT, GATE, GNP+ and INPUD to express concern and actively campaign for stronger Global Fund replenishment targets to scale up the important work with key populations. The Global Fund is an essential mechanism that helps ensure the life-saving treatment, care and prevention response for people living with HIV and key populations in countries that need it most.

Statement on AIDS2020: Community-led networks are organising an alternative International AIDS Conference event: Here’s Why: NSWP joined MPACT, INPUD, GNP+ as co-organisers of HIV2020, given the IAS decision to host the 2020 International AIDS Conference (AIDS2020) in a country that has legal travel restrictions for sex workers – the USA – for the second time in a decade. We stand in solidarity with Mexican HIV activists, who we are working with the coalition of global key population-led networks to organise the community-led alternative event in July 2020 in Mexico City.

Written Submission for CEDAW discussion on the General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration: NSWP submitted a written submission for the CEDAW discussion on the General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration as part of the 72nd session, 18th February – 8th March 2019.

QUARTERLY GLOBAL FUND UPDATES

During 2019, the Programme Manager produced four Quarterly Updates about the most recent topics being discussed and addressed within the Global Fund. Quarterly updates will continue in 2020.

[Quarter One](#) | [Quarter Two](#) | [Quarter Three](#) | [Quarter Four](#)

CASE STUDIES

Reviewing Sex Workers’ Use of International Guidelines: This case study is the third of five case studies that will be published on a yearly basis from 2016-2020. These case studies will monitor and document the impact of international guidelines and policies on sex work that NSWP and NSWP members have helped develop. NSWP will also monitor how members use these international guidelines in local, national and regional advocacy efforts. Examples of international guidelines include the Amnesty International Policy on State Obligations to Respect, Protect, and Fulfil the Human Rights of Sex Workers, the Sex Worker Implementation Tool, and the development of the UN Women policy on sex work.

Technical Support: NSWP provides technical support to regional sex worker networks in line with the needs identified by each regional network. This includes face-to-face technical support around organisational development to the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW), the African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA), and the Sex Workers’ Rights Advocacy Network for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), in addition to virtual technical support provided to other regional networks.

Enhancing sex workers’ capacity to engage with Global Fund processes: This case study focuses on the NSWP’s Global Fund capacity development programme for regional and national sex worker-led organisations and assesses its impact. The programme supports a range of capacity building activities in 27 countries, and this case study focuses on the impact of these interventions. Specifically, the case study highlights the ability of regional networks and community experts to provide technical support relating to the Global Fund, and the capacity within sex worker-led organisations to engage with the Global Fund.

NSWP and Partnership Working to Advance Sex Workers' Rights



NSWP continued to invest in partnerships to enhance the health and human rights of sex workers

In 2019, NSWP maintained strong alliances with other global networks of key populations, including MPact and INPUD, and strong working relationships with GNP+, ICW and ITPC to ensure the needs of sex workers are integrated into their work and to strengthen NSWP's work around sex workers living with HIV and treatment advocacy.

- UNAIDS STEERING COMMITTEE ON HIV AND SEX WORK:** to influence and improve UN policy on HIV and sex work.
- WHO HIV CIVIL SOCIETY REFERENCE GROUP:** to influence and improve WHO guidelines and policy on HIV and sex work.
- GLOBAL FUND BOARD – COMMUNITIES DELEGATIONS:** to influence and improve rights-based approaches to HIV prevention and treatment programmes for key populations, including sex workers.



- | **GLOBAL FUND COMMUNITIES, RIGHTS AND GENDER ADVISORY GROUP:** to influence and improve rights-based approaches to HIV prevention and treatment programmes for sex workers.
- | **GLOBAL NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV (GNP+):** to ensure the needs of sex workers living with HIV are incorporated within the work of GNP+.

- | **FREE SPACE PROCESS (FSP):** to explore the potential for a common advocacy agenda with other HIV global networks and organisations.
- | **SEX WORKER INCLUSIVE FEMINIST ALLIANCE (SWIFA):** to advance the acceptance of sex workers' rights within the women's movement.

- | **IWRAW-ASIA PACIFIC:** to increase sex worker-led organisations understanding of and engagement with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Looking Forward to 2020

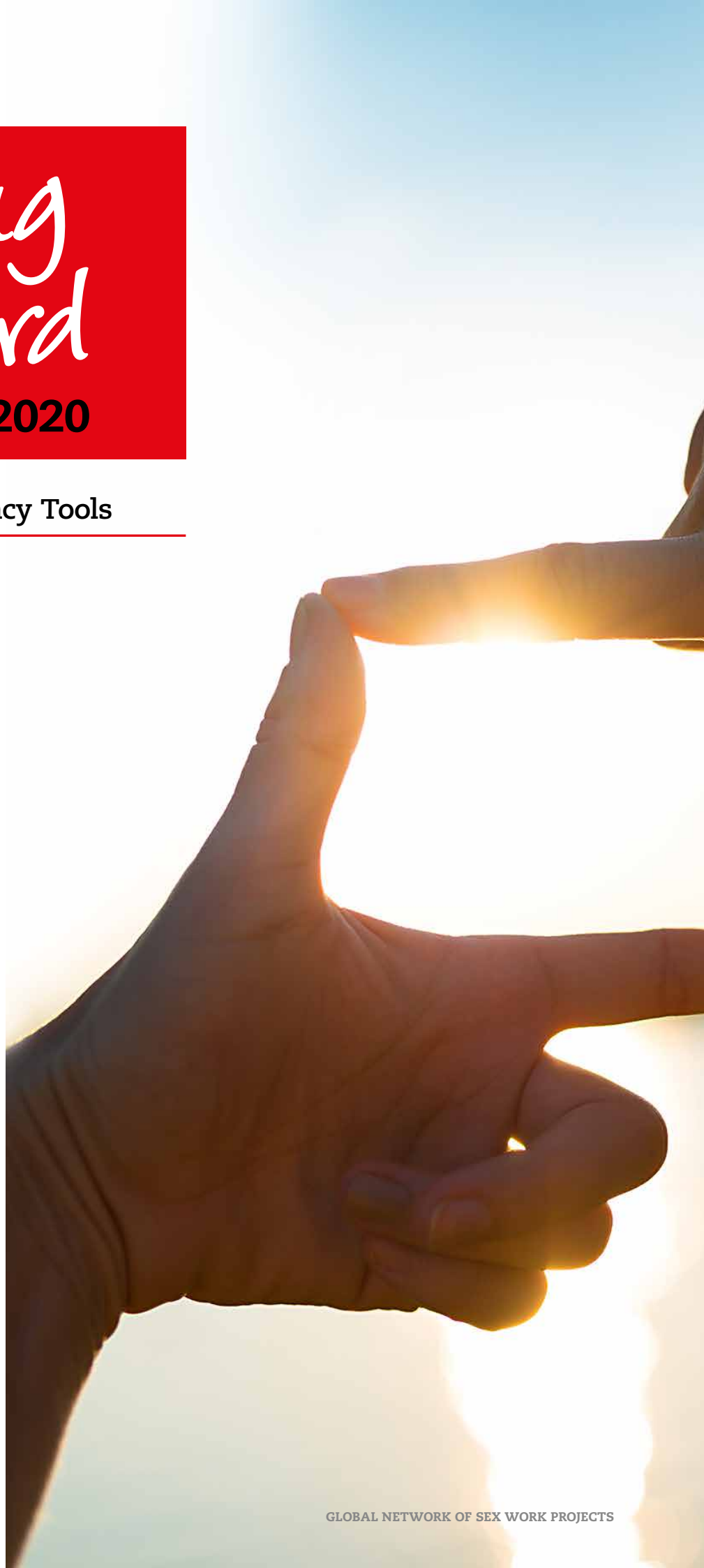
Development of Advocacy Tools

The following advocacy tools were developed in 2019 but will be published in 2020:

- Briefing Paper and Community Guide on Shrinking Spaces and Silencing Voices
- Briefing Paper and Community Guide on Lack of Access to Justice
- Smart Person's Guide to Recognising Sex Workers as Experts

The following advocacy tools will be developed in 2020:

- Briefing Paper and Community Guide on Economic Empowerment
- Briefing Paper and Community Guide on Universal Health Coverage
- Smart Guide to Decriminalisation
- Smart Guide to Decent Work



Financial Summary

2019

Income 2019

NSWP would like to thank the following donors for their financial support during 2019:

INCOME	£
Aids Fonds – <i>Bridging the Gaps II Programme</i>	340,591
Aids Fonds – <i>Sex Work Team</i>	39,996
Robert Carr Fund for civil society networks (RCF)	551,142
The Global Fund	223,064
Open Society Foundations – <i>Sexual Health and Rights Program</i>	93,151
Open Society Foundations – <i>Springer book</i>	17,486
American Jewish World Services	28,766
PITCH	37,664
UNFPA	4,466
Miscellaneous	4,288
TOTAL INCOME	£1,344,554

Expenditure 2019

EXPENDITURE	£
Global Personnel (<i>staff and global, national and task consultants</i>)	391,533
Global activities	248,711
Global operating costs	61,675
Capital costs	9,249
Regional Sex Worker-led Networks activities:	
<i>Africa</i>	246,342
<i>Asia Pacific</i>	130,612
<i>Europe</i>	114,543
<i>Latin America</i>	69,063
<i>North America and Caribbean</i>	64,909
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1,336,637



Global Network of Sex Work Projects
Promoting Health and Human Rights

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