



Photo: The Global Fund

# Sex Work Programme

South Africa's national Sex Work Programme is based on the principle of community empowerment and is implemented by sex workers working as peer educators and site coordinators. The programme mobilises sex workers (male, female and transgender) to address extremely high rates of HIV and AIDS, while championing sex workers' health, human rights and wellbeing.

Built on the successes of the Red Umbrella sex work programme under the previous Global Fund grant, the current programme offers a comprehensive package of services that are peer-led, clinical and holistic according to sex worker needs.

Community empowerment and engagement is an integral part of the programme, with sensitisation of stakeholders in and around the areas where the programme is implemented. As well as HIV testing, condom distribution, STI and TB screening and risk reduction workshops, the Global Fund programme supports the Sisonke Sex Worker movement and a 24-hour helpline for sex workers, operated by SWEAT.

*"I learned so much with the programme. I know my rights and I know about HIV"*

– Milant, Site Coordinator, Mpumalanga

## PEER EDUCATORS

Site coordinators lead teams of trained peer educators who:

- Distribute male and female condoms and lubricant
- Provide sexually transmitted infections (STI), TB and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and HIV prevention messaging
- Provide paralegal services and support
- Offer STI and TB screening
- Refer sex workers to relevant health, social, legal and other services, including the national helpline
- Identify substance abuse and refer sex workers to relevant services

## SEX WORK

**47 880** sex workers reached per quarter

**338** peer educators and site coordinators

**R179.2m** investment by the Global Fund

Roll-out of **Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)** for sex workers through a Global Fund grant.

Specially trained peer educators also:

- Recruit sex workers for risk reduction workshops, support groups, counselling, training and other services
- Facilitate risk reduction workshops and support groups
- Conduct support groups on adherence
- As Human Rights Defenders, support sex workers in cases of human rights violations.

*“Before this project, I thought I was nothing. Now I know I am not bad.”* – Sex worker, External Evaluation

## ACCESS TO SERVICES

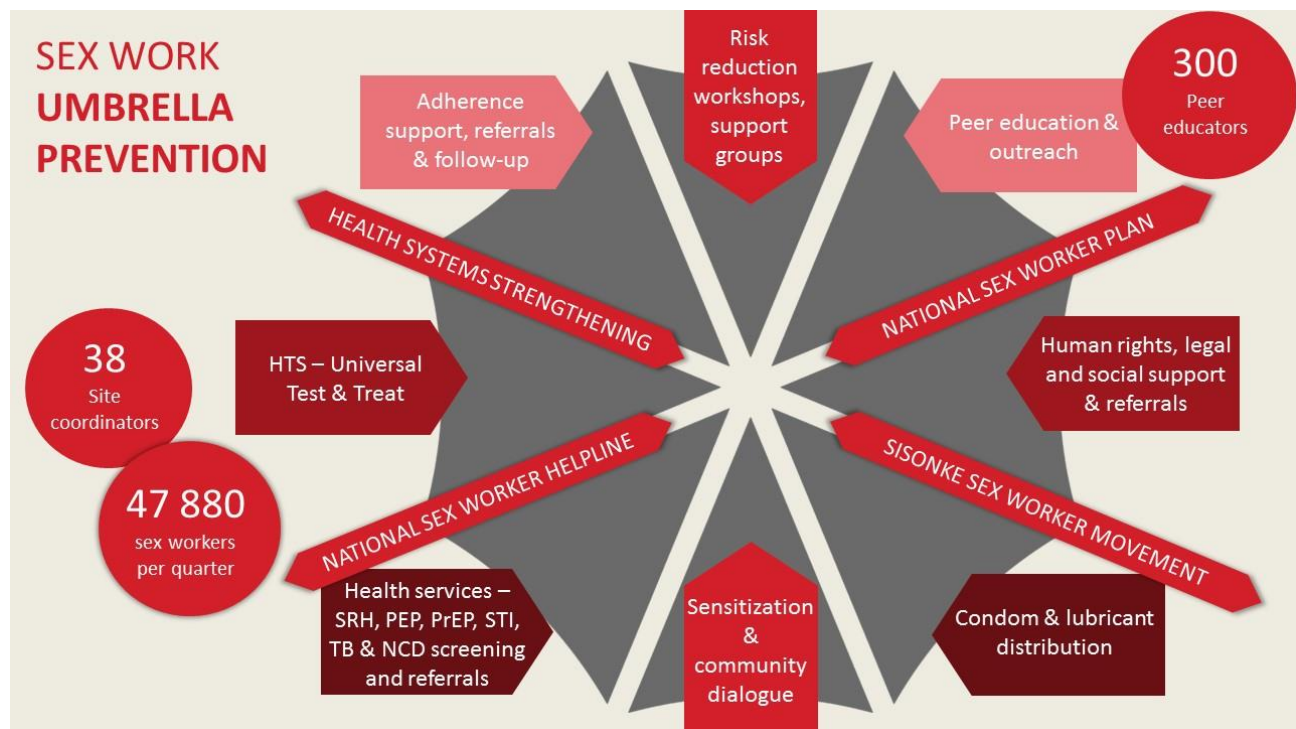
With peer education as the centre of the programme, sex workers can test for HIV and access other clinical services in an accessible environment.

HIV Testing Services are provided to 36,392 sex workers through mobile sites or at sex worker-friendly clinics each quarter.

## ADVOCATING FOR SEX WORKERS

Continuous **engagement** with stakeholders and the communities in which the programme operates is conducted to tackle the stigma and discrimination surrounding sex workers. A national response call centre offers emergency assistance and psychosocial support for sex workers. The **helpline**, operated by SWEAT, is staffed and managed by sex workers trained in counselling. It provides a 24-hour, toll-free, national counselling service for sex workers or those with sex work concerns.

The Sex Work Programme also supports **Sisonke**, the national movement of sex workers in South Africa on national mobilisation and empowerment of sex workers.



NACOSA’s Sex Work programme is also involved in the ground-breaking roll-out of **Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)** for sex workers through a Global Fund grant, in line with the with the South African National Sex Worker HIV Plan (2016 – 2019).

## NACOSA – NETWORKING HIV AND AIDS COMMUNITY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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