



nswp

Global Network of Sex Work Projects
Promoting Health and Human Rights

Technical Support

case **STUDY**



Technical Support



case STUDY

Introduction

Globally, sex workers and sex workers' rights organisations experience a variety of challenges.

Individual female, male and transgender sex workers routinely experience human rights violations. They face punitive laws, policies and practices and experience stigma, discrimination and violence from multiple actors. As a result, sex workers often lack access to appropriate, quality services and are not protected by the law.

Sex worker-led organisations and networks also face multiple challenges. They often operate in hostile environments and encounter challenges registering as organisations. They are frequently disrespected and marginalised by civil society, government and other stakeholders and face challenges accessing both financial and technical support, particularly for organisational capacity-building.

NSWP advocates that community empowerment – through strengthening the capacity of sex worker-led organisations and networks – is the most effective way to ensure that sex workers' human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Regional networks are pivotal members of NSWP. NSWP works with regional networks to enable them to support national networks and local organisations. NSWP's 2016–2020 strategic plan identified enhancing the capacity of regional sex worker-led networks and emerging leaders as one of three core strategies of its work.

NSWP provides technical support to regional sex worker networks in line with the needs identified by each regional network. This is supported by funding from Bridging the Gaps, the Robert Carr Fund and the Global Fund. 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.

This case study focuses on the technical support provided to regional sex worker-led networks from 2016, focusing on APNSW, ASWA and SWAN. It explores:

- The impact of technical support provided by NSWP over a number of years.
- Regional networks' perceptions of the impact of the technical support provided to members in their region.
- National organisations' and networks' perception of the impact of technical support provided by the regional networks.

NSWP

NSWP is a global network of sex worker-led organisations with over 265 members in 80 countries. It exists to uphold the voice of sex workers 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.



All NSWP members endorse the [NSWP Consensus Statement on Sex Work, Human Rights and the Law](#) and confirm their commitment to three 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 parties¹, families, partners, and friends).
- Supporting self-organisation and self-determination of sex workers.

The Global Secretariat is responsible for implementation of the [NSWP Strategic Plan](#) and the day-to-day running of the organisation. The Global Coordinator, under the direction of the Board of Directors, leads the Secretariat. The Board includes sex workers from all five regions and is elected by and accountable to the sex worker-led member organisations.

The majority of NSWP staff and consultants are sex workers, and priority is given to suitably qualified applicants who have sex work experience in the recruitment process. NSWP does not require that all staff, consultants, or Board members publicly disclose their sex worker status. However, the Global Coordinator, President and Vice-President must be current or former sex workers who are prepared to speak publicly as sex workers.

The requirement that NSWP members support sex worker self-determination is interpreted as an obligation for NSWP and its members to take all practical steps to ensure that sex workers are meaningfully involved within member organisations and NSWP activities.

Regional Networks and the Sex Worker Networks Consortium

Independent regional networks were formed in Asia and the Pacific (1994), Europe (2004), Central and Europe and Central Asia (2006), Africa (2009), the Caribbean (2008), and Latin America (2013) respectively.

The regional networks have evolved over time and are at varying stages of organisational development. Throughout their evolution, NSWP has offered technical support on a range of issues identified by the regional networks.

In 2013, NSWP joined with regional networks to form the Sex Worker Networks Consortium (the Consortium), which has successfully applied for funding from the Robert Carr Fund and the Global Fund.

NSWP serves as the lead agency of the Consortium, partnering with: [Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers \(APNSW\)](#); [African Sex Workers Alliance \(ASWA\)](#); [Caribbean Sex Work Coalition \(CSWC\)](#); [International Committee for the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe \(ICRSE\)](#)² and [Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia \(SWAN\)](#); and [La Plataforma LatinoAmérica de Personas que EjeRcen el Trabajo Sexual \(PLAPERTS\)](#).

“The Consortium is sex worker-led, facilitating global and regional networks to connect and strengthen their own and their members’ capacity to advocate for rights-affirming policies and laws which underpin rights-based services.”

Ruth Morgan-Thomas, NSWP Global Coordinator

Regional networks are meaningfully involved in the governance and operations of the Consortium, including the identification of common goals and priorities, allocation of funding across the Consortium, developing regional activities and budgets in line with regional priorities, and contributing to the collective monitoring, evaluation and learning framework.

1 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.

2 As of 2019 ICRSE decided to withdraw from the Consortium and support SWAN activities in Europe through collaboration rather than as formal members of the Consortium.



Background: Technical Support

As a member of the Consortium, NSWP provides technical support to all regional networks relating to the implementation of Consortium programmes and donor requirements. This support focuses on financial management, work planning and programme management, and monitoring, evaluation and learning.

“It’s a mix of making sure the regional networks get the technical support for what the Consortium needs them to do, and that we can also give them the technical support that they need and want to have.

There is an open line of communication... It’s a continual process, so I provide virtual technical support throughout the year.”

Gillian Galbraith, NSWP Operations Manager

NSWP staff also provide technical support to regional networks to strengthen their capacity to support national networks and organisations in the development and maintenance of accountable and transparent governance systems, policy development, organisational and project budgeting and financial management, human resource management, and in developing advocacy strategies.

“I think this model is realistic and sustainable. NSWP staff resources are limited, so we have to focus on a limited number of organisations ... if regional networks have their capacity built, then they will be able to provide technical support to their member organisations at national and local level.”

Paul-Gilbert Colletaz, NSWP Programme Manager

SWIT training in Bangladesh



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- **NSWP Global Coordinator** provides technical support on governance, organisational development and budgeting, international policy guidelines and conflict resolution.
- **NSWP Operations Manager** provides technical support on human resource and financial management systems.
- **NSWP Programme Manager** provides technical support on programming, monitoring, evaluation and learning, and donor reporting.
- **NSWP Senior Policy Officer** provides technical support on international policy guidelines and governance and acts as a returning officer for some regional network elections.
- **NSWP Senior Programme Officer** provides technical support on engaging with national and regional processes related to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis.

“We’ve received technical support in almost everything. It comes in different forms, like loads of phone calls about any number of subjects, as well as regular face to face meetings in Budapest to work with me as well as our board; Myself and our Operations Manager also went to Edinburgh to get support.”

Staša Plečaš, SWAN Executive Director

“We find that the technical support that NSWP provides to SWAA is always there, all the time;...they are always there... even when I have a call with a donor about difficulty with reporting, I always call the NSWP Programme Manager and have him guide us.”

Stella Kawira, ASWA Sex Worker Academy Africa (SWAA) Coordinator

“We get support all the time from NSWP; for instance, when they bring all the regional coordinators...they work with us in terms of how we can go back and share that information in our regions; if there’s anything that we don’t understand, we can always go back and ask them; they are always building the capacity of the regional organisations.”

Miriam Edwards, CSWC Coordinator

The technical support provided by NSWP is always rooted in NSWP’s identity as a sex worker-led network supporting other sex worker-led networks and organisations.

“Although NSWP is a highly professional network, it is different in its professionalism. All of the materials produced by NSWP are meant for community to understand them. All of the programs that are run through or by NSWP are for sex workers, building their capacity and amplifying their voices...”

Staša Plečaš, SWAN Executive Director

“I think that what is important is that it is by the community for the community. It is taken to that level whereby the community is in a better position to understand from their own level and that is the reason what makes it unique.”

Phelister Abdalla, Kenya Sex Workers Alliance (KESWA) National Coordinator



Global to Regional

The technical support provided by NSWP to regional networks varies in line with their needs and with their diverse challenges and contexts. The regional networks' needs have changed over time as their organisational development has evolved and economic and political landscapes have shifted. The diverse technical support provided to regional networks and its impact is described below.

APNSW

In 2014 and 2015, technical support requested by APNSW focused on mentoring new leadership following the unexpected death of Regional Coordinator Andrew Hunter.

In 2014, NSWP in collaboration with other stakeholders supported APNSW's Co-Coordinators to negotiate with donors, address grant management issues and formalise APNSW's governance system, including a new membership structure and election processes.

“In 2013, in December, Andrew died; NSWP was crucial, without NSWP support, APNSW would be hard to sustain; there was no Coordinator, no funding, no documented systems in place. NSWP supported resource mobilisation and systems in place, along with UNAIDS regional office.”

KayThi Win, APNSW Regional Coordinator

In 2015, following the registration of APNSW in Thailand, NSWP in collaboration with other stakeholders supported the development of staff recruitment policies and protocols, including terms of reference, and assisted in establishing financial management systems. By early 2016, most organisational systems were in place.

NSWP continued to work with APNSW's Regional Coordinator and Management Committee to further strengthen organisational capacity around governance systems, developing funding proposal and organisational budgets, and work planning.

NSWP's Global Coordinator continues to provide technical support to both staff and the Management Committee, while the NSWP Senior Policy Officer continues to act as returning officer for APNSW Management Committee elections. NSWP's Operations Manager continues to provide support to the APNSW finance team by providing training for staff and on-going support around strengthening financial management systems.

“NSWP Operations Manager helped me a lot on how to do the organisational budget, and then how to calculate the percentage for each donor, how to manage and allocate funds to [different] donors I never knew about this system before.”

Nantaza Srisilrapanan, APNSW Finance Officer

The NSWP Programme Manager provided support on understanding and implementing the Consortium monitoring and evaluation framework and supported the development of organisational indicators common to all APNSW programmes.

“I think APNSW is now documenting what they do consistently, rather than ad-hoc when a report is needed.”

Paul-Gilbert Colletaz, NSWP Programme Manager

With this support, APNSW has strengthened governance, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation systems, and has built strong alliances with other key population networks in the region (e.g. the [Asian Network of People who Use Drugs](#)). APNSW has mobilised additional resources from the UN Women Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, Women's Fund Asia and VOICE to strengthen capacity among APNSW members.



ASWA

ASWA has grown rapidly since it was formed in 2009, becoming an independent Pan-African sex worker-led movement with more than 100 member organisations in 30 African countries.

In 2012, NSWP mobilised resources for a Steering Committee meeting and independent consultants to support African sex workers in the development of a Strategic Plan that would lead to ASWA becoming an independent organisation. The NSWP Global Coordinator attended the Steering Committee meeting as a resource person and provided on-going technical support around establishing transparent and accountable governance and membership systems throughout the process of ASWA moving out of South Africa and becoming an independent organisation.

“...just being available to answer questions whenever they arise is one of the critical things in trying to support building a movement, you can’t just schedule a weekly call, and people’s questions will wait; you have to try to be available as the questions emerge”.

Ruth Morgan Thomas, NSWP Global Coordinator

“A lot of our membership system is more or less designed on the NSWP one – so that has really helped a long way, in us trying to have codes of conduct for our members, having communications channels with our membership. From the technical support from NSWP, at least we’ve been able to understand how that works.”

Daughtie Ogutu, ASWA Executive Director

NSWP also provided technical and financial support in 2013 for the development of the Sex Worker Academy Africa (SWAA), an ASWA initiative implemented by the Kenyan Sex Workers Alliance (KESWA) that launched in 2014. Due to the challenges of registering ASWA as a non-profit organisation in Kenya and the high management fees requested by external organisations, ASWA’s Board agreed that KESWA would auspice funds for all ASWA’s programmes funded through NSWP. The NSWP Global Coordinator continues to provide technical support to the SWAA through building capacity of the SWAA Faculty and Coordinator who implement the SWAA and working with them to ensure the curriculum responds to both their needs and those of the participants.

The NSWP Global Coordinator, Operations Manager and Programme Manager have also provided on-going technical support to KESWA on financial management and reporting, strengthening their capacity to implement and manage the SWAA and other Consortium programmes on behalf of ASWA.

In 2017 and 2018, ASWA experienced a number of challenges with both staff and Board members, including the resignation of the Executive Director and Chair. Some ASWA members expressed a loss of confidence during this period, feeling there was a strong need for increased accountability and geographic diversity among its leadership.

Throughout this difficult period NSWP continued to provide technical support to ASWA. In 2018, the ASWA Board requested technical support from NSWP to build their capacity to manage the leadership transition and secure resources to support this work.



“We decided to contact NSWP for advice and support in the real needs for change in the governance of ASWA. We needed constructive advice, especially regarding... the funding of ASWA, the search for donors... and the structure of ASWA, as well as more information on the structure of other regional networks. We needed support in explaining the situation to donors in order to resolve salary continuity and costs necessary for transition. This is the support we received from NSWP and this support continues until today.”

Modeste Mambo Amisi, ASWA Interim Caretaker Team and HODSAS Co-founder

In 2018 ASWA obtained donor approval for the reprogramming of funds to hire local consultants to support ASWA in strengthening governance and responding to members' concerns. By October 2018, with support from the consultants, ASWA had established an Interim Caretaker Committee with 8 sex worker representatives from the 4 ASWA sub-regions to support the strengthening of ASWA's governance structure and fundraising capabilities.

NSWP will continue to provide technical support to the ASWA governing body and Secretariat as it goes through this leadership transition and takes on the management of the Sex Worker Academy Africa in 2019.

SWAN

SWAN faced many challenges in supporting the establishment of sex worker-led organisations in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. This was due to the suppression of civil society under Soviet rule, which led to a lack of understanding and confidence in community-led organising, and a culture of hierarchical organisations and deference to 'experts'.

This unique context led SWAN to request technical support that focussed on the development of governance systems and organisational policies that would establish sex worker leadership and increase their accountability to the sex worker community.

“The most important bits were to establish how we would work and to firmly establish sex worker leadership within the organisation.”

Staša Plečaš, SWAN Executive Director

The NSWP Global Coordinator started providing technical support to the SWAN Management Committee and Secretariat in 2015 following a leadership transition in the SWAN Secretariat. Initial work focussed on developing organisational policies to support transparency and sex worker involvement and developing an organisational development manual. In 2016 and 2017, work focussed on the development of human resource and financial management manuals.

In 2017 and 2018 the NSWP Global Coordinator acted as a resource person in the development of SWAN's Strategic Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Once completed, the NSWP Programme Manager worked with SWAN's Executive Director to review indicators and set up a monitoring and evaluation system.

SWAN adopted many of NSWP's financial and reporting templates and then adapted them for their own membership.

“We prepare sheets for national reporting. The same way NSWP would do for us. We do the same with our members. So we basically replicated the system adapting it to our context.”

Staša Plečaš, SWAN Executive Director



SWIT training in Budapest

SWAN increased the percentage of sex workers on their Management Committee, established policies to ensure sex workers represent SWAN at conferences and meetings, revised their recruitment policy to remove criteria that disadvantaged sex workers, and created tiered membership – where only sex worker-led organisations or organisations that meaningfully involve sex workers can vote.

In 2017, SWAN conducted an evaluation of this strategy. Members had noticed the changes and welcomed them. A higher percentage of sex worker-led organisations responded to their consultation than in previous years, indicating increased engagement from sex worker-led organisations.

“We have a completely different perspective of what community engagement means, and community leadership in a network... I don’t think we would have gotten that on our own... I think it would have taken a very long time for us to understand certain processes that now seem easy and self-explanatory.”

Staša Plećaš, SWAN Executive Director

“The advantage of SWAN is that they never try to push us with their own ideas; they ask member organisations what kind of activities sex worker organisations would like to implement.”

Nataliia Isaieva, Legalife-Ukraine Director

SWAN also identified technical support to national and local sex worker-led organisations as a priority in their Strategic Plan.



ICRSE

In addition to receiving technical support relating to the Consortium programmes, ICRSE accessed support on governance and financial management issues from the NSWP Secretariat.

The ICRSE Coordinator reported that the accessibility of NSWP organisational policies and resources – and the support provided to adapt them – was valuable.

“NSWP has been quite useful with ICRSE to help us develop governance, so for example, we’ve been developing organisational manual... this is based on SWAN’s organisation manual, which is based on NSWP. So we’re basically recycling, instead of starting from scratch.”

Luca Stevenson, ICRSE Coordinator

In 2011, ICRSE drew on NSWP’s Strategic Plan in developing their own, and in 2014 adapted the NSWP membership voting criteria to hold the first regional election for the ICRSE Steering Committee. ICRSE has continued to use NSWP organisational policies and resources as the basis for developing their own systems, including the development of their finance manual in 2018. ICRSE reported that the technical support provided has supported greater transparency, and ensures that ICRSE is sustainable and accountable to the community.

ICRSE membership and funding has grown alongside its organisational development systems. Membership expanded from 57 organisational members to 98 in 31 countries between 2013 and 2018. ICRSE had no paid staff in 2013, but funding from the Red Umbrella Fund, Open Society Foundations and the Robert Carr Fund (through the Consortium) enabled them to recruit a part-time Coordinator and other staff in 2014 and 2015. While funding for sex worker-led organisations in Europe remains limited, on-going advocacy and organisational strengthening has increased donor confidence and created more opportunities to access funding.

PLAPERTS

In 2014, funding from the Robert Carr Fund through the Consortium enabled NSWP members in Latin America to form a regional network, bringing together sex worker leaders from four countries to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats faced by sex worker-led organisations, and using this analysis to develop an advocacy plan.

In 2015, PLAPERTS initiated capacity-building programmes to strengthen sex workers’ knowledge of, and engagement in advocating for the Sex Worker Implementation Tool (SWIT) and engagement in Global Fund national processes. The NSWP Secretariat provided technical support to PLAPERTS in implementing the Consortium programmes.

SWIT training in Cancun



© PLAPERTS



“The technical support... it has done enormous good in terms of us understanding how things work. And that has made it so that we can participate, for example in Ecuador, in the country dialogue, the national strategy plan.”

Karina Bravo, PLAPERTS Regional Coordinator

The NSWP Global Coordinator has also provided technical support around organisational development and conflict resolution, but there remains a significant need for capacity-building around budgeting and proposal writing, and financial and narrative reporting.

“When it comes to working with [budget and workplan] templates, how to design programmes, I think there is a lot more for me to learn, I think that we need more technical support, because... I have many ideas... but when it comes to putting these ideas on paper, I get lost.”

Karina Bravo, PLAPERTS Regional Coordinator

Through implementing the Consortium programmes PLAPERTS has expanded its membership from 4 to 9 countries across Latin America.

CSWC

Since 2014, the NSWP Operations Manager has provided training and on-going technical support to the CSWC Finance Officer, focusing on building the organisation’s capacity around budgeting and financial management related to the Consortium programmes. CSWC has also implemented capacity-building programmes to strengthen sex workers’ knowledge of and engagement in advocating for the Sex Worker Implementation Tool (SWIT), and engagement in Global Fund national processes. They have received technical support and capacity-building around proposal writing, project management and reporting as a member of the Consortium.

As a result, CSWC is better able to manage funding and carry out programmes.

“We are better able to manage the Consortium programme. Due to regular capacity-building from Gillian, we are better able to manage our funds and give national organisations funds. Our staff, rather than facilitators, train people on the SWIT and other work we do through NSWP.”

Miriam Edwards, CSWC Coordinator

At a regional level, CSWC has used the learning to train policymakers and healthcare providers on the SWIT. In 2018, through the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) regional funding request to the Global Fund for 2019, CSWC was identified to provide training to healthcare providers on the SWIT.

Technical support provided to CSWC by NSWP has also increased their ability to build the capacity of national organisations, including providing technical support to members in Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad, as well as virtual technical support throughout the region. The SWIT capacity-building has enabled members to independently access funds and provide their own national workshops on the SWIT.

CSWC provides technical support to members on organisational strengthening, managing funds and writing proposals. CSWC helped sex workers in Suriname start their own organisation, SUCOS, and helped strengthen organisations in Trinidad and Jamaica. As a result, sex workers in Trinidad were able to reform an inactive organisation, and the Jamaican SW Coalition was able to successfully apply for funding from the Red Umbrella Fund.



Global to Regional to National

All the regional networks reported that they were better able to serve their members and implement larger scale programmes after receiving technical support from NSWP.

In 2016 and 2017, the regional networks organised 14 regional workshops on both the SWIT and the Global Fund. They were attended by 232 sex worker leaders from over 115 organisations across 49 countries. Following the regional workshops, 1,721 sex workers from 121 sex worker-led organisations across 55 countries participated in national SWIT and Global Fund capacity-building activities supported by the regional networks and national community experts trained at regional workshops.

Technical support provided by NSWP also increased regional networks' capacity to provide technical support to their own members as identified in their strategic plans. Regional networks provided technical support to 63 national or local organisations in 2017.

KESWA, Kenya

KESWA was founded in 2010. Since 2013, NSWP has provided technical support to KESWA, as ASWA's fiscal agent and implementing partner for the SWAA.

“I think the kind of support that NSWP comes in to bring, it's a very intense technical support. Technical support to build leaders ...showing us on how to make budgets and workplans, not only for the Academy but also helping us with the entire organisation plans and giving us an example of how they do theirs and how we can do ours; financial support ...how to use the spreadsheet: how to have a spreadsheet that has all the funding coming in from different donors and how those fundings can be well documented.”

Phelister Abdalla, KESWA National Coordinator

Due to the support KESWA received from NSWP, KESWA has developed strong financial and programme management structures. This, as well as KESWA's experience in managing the SWAA, has allowed KESWA to access new funding sources.

“When NSWP started helping us put those structures in place, we started attracting funders from outside. Where the funders were in a better position to see the kind of reports that we do; how we started attracting other funding beyond the funding that we had. It was easier for us to report to other funders, since we had an experience of reporting and being trained on how to do financial reports.”

Phelister Abdalla, KESWA National Coordinator

TASWA, Tanzania

The sex workers from Tanzania who attended the Academy in September 2014 came together to form TASWA. TASWA then supported the development of five sex worker organisations in Tanzania, including Waremba Forum. Waremba Forum joined ASWA in 2016 and attended the SWAA in July 2017.

Sophia Jonas, of TASWA and Waremba Forum, describe the positive impacts of attending the SWAA and receiving technical support from ASWA, including: an increased understanding of organisational management and resource mobilisation; empowerment; and effective advocacy, including through art.

“...the steps of advocacy, and how to package the messages with regards to the audience that you are targeting; it's one of the components that we learned from the Academy; the issue of advocacy was very very critical and important.”

Sophia Jonas, TASWA



Participants at the 3rd SWAA in 2017

During the 2017 SWAA, the Tanzanian team developed an advocacy plan focused on the Global Fund and succeeded in getting funds for a hotline for sex workers. TASWA also successfully advocated for inclusion of rights-based sex worker programming in the national funding request submitted in 2018.

In addition to the SWAA, Sophia Jonas highlighted emerging issues (e.g. police violence) around which members could benefit from additional technical support from ASWA, including in-country support and regional convenings.

AMA, Myanmar

AMA was founded in 2009 and has become an internationally recognised, strong, sustainable national movement of nearly 4,000 members across Myanmar.

“Today we’re one of the most coordinated and capable organizations in the country as well as in the region simply because of APNSW.”

*Khaing Shwe Wah, AMA
Senior Program Support Officer*

AMA receives extensive technical support from APNSW and receives funding to implement programmes as a national partner on regional programmes led by APNSW.

As a regional network, APNSW is able to access funding to support national work that national sex worker-led organisations – especially emerging organisations – cannot access. While AMA has diverse funding sources, half of AMA’s grants have resulted from partnership with APNSW. For example, as a national partner for a programme funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, APNSW launched comprehensive anti-violence programming, which AMA was able to sustain and further expand with support from other donors.

“This project has lots of impact among sex worker communities in Myanmar... This project breaks the silence in Myanmar on violation of sex workers’ rights.”

*Khaing Shwe Wah, AMA
Senior Program Support Officer*

Recently, AMA has received technical support from APNSW on monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, budgeting, programme and leadership development, proposal writing and identifying and soliciting grants. APNSW also supported AMA in updating their financial and human resource manuals.



OPSI, Indonesia

OPSI was formed and became a member of APNSW in 2009. Technical support from APNSW has increased over time.

OPSI has participated in regional workshops and capacity-building activities including on the SWIT and the Global Fund. In 2018, OPSI was one of four countries to pilot the evaluation of the SWIT roll-out at a national level, with technical support provided by APNSW and NSWP. The evaluation involved interviews with a variety of government, donor, and UN agency stakeholders.

As a result of these interviews, UNDP requested training from APNSW and OPSI on community empowerment and violence against sex workers.

As a result of the technical support provided, OPSI's credibility and visibility have increased; they have been able to access more resources and have strengthened relationships with national and international NGOs, and have advanced meaningful sex worker involvement by advocating for implementation of the SWIT. In 2018, OPSI was contracted as a technical assistance provider for outreach to female sex workers for Global Fund supported programmes.

“Becoming a member of a...sex worker network...is benefitting OPSI because then OPSI feels [we] have...a better connection now to the donors, because previously there were no relationships to any donors. By having activities or exposure to APNSW and NSWP, we now know more donors, and donors now know OPSI.”

Liana Andriyana, OPSI National Coordinator

OPSI identified the need for more technical support around organisational development in order to better compete with other non-governmental organisations and meet requirements for government and international funding. In particular, OPSI would appreciate support to develop their membership, governance and management systems.

Legalife-Ukraine, Ukraine

Legalife-Ukraine has received technical support as a national partner in the Consortium programmes on engagement with the Global Fund national processes and on the SWIT. Having received technical support on the Global Fund and SWIT, Legalife-Ukraine have been able to conduct their own workshops adapting the materials provided by NSWP and SWAN. NSWP also provided technical support in developing and implementing the process to elect the sex worker representative for the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) in Ukraine.

In addition, Legalife-Ukraine received technical support from both SWAN and NSWP in an attempt to resolve conflict with another organisation in Ukraine, unfortunately without success.

Like many of the regional networks, Legalife-Ukraine has adapted NSWP membership and governance systems for their national network. Due to the support received, Legalife-Ukraine has been able to rapidly grow their membership, partnerships and support base.

“As a result of technical support we have received from both SWAN and NSWP, we are able to grow our membership quite rapidly; we also expanded our partnerships quite rapidly, and one of the most crucial outcomes was gaining support of All Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV.”

Nataliia Isaieva, Legalife-Ukraine Director

Participants at Global Fund meeting in Cambodia 2017



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Tais Plus, Kyrgyzstan

SWAN has provided Tais Plus with technical support and capacity-building around documenting human rights abuses, as well as the SWIT and engaging with national Global Fund processes. Following the training on documenting human rights abuses, Tais Plus successfully sought funding to document human rights abuses in Kyrgyzstan and now co-facilitates SWAN training on human rights documentation.

Tais Plus identified written materials in Russian as one of the most important elements of technical support provided by SWAN and NSWP. As one of the national partners in the Consortium Global Fund programme, Tais Plus was able to utilise the written resources prepared by the NSWP Senior Programme Officer and share them with other key population organisations in their country.

Tais Plus noted that SWAN was no longer able to organise large regional events, seminars and trainings, but recognised that funding was shrinking in the EECA region.

“funding is decreased, not just for us but for regional networks as well.”

Shahnaz Islamova, Tais Plus Director

Asociación Tumbes, Peru

Asociación Tumbes, an emerging organisation on the Peru-Ecuador border, participated in a PLAPERTS regional workshop on the Global Fund. They have also received ongoing in-person and virtual technical support from PLAPERTS, including on resolving internal conflict between migrant and local sex workers.

Through attending PLAPERTS meetings and ongoing technical support, the organisation has “learned a lot from the movement in Ecuador”. Despite low capacity and a lack of funding, Asociación Tumbes has been able to continue due to support from the PLAPERTS network, whose members “are always in contact”.

“Support from PLAPERTS has given us bravery and courage to continue forward. Because of PLAPERTS, we are not alone, we are many.”

Janneth Flores, Asociación Tumbes

Conclusion

“NSWP is supporting the member organisations in line with the NSWP strategic plan. In the regional network, we have our own strategy plan, and also the country, our members have their own strategy plan; So we all, global to regional to country level, we are supporting each other. When we develop the regional strategy plan, we also look to what is the NSWP global strategy plan and how we can do it together to bring the goal.”

KayThi Win, APNSW Regional Coordinator and President of NSWP

Regional networks interviewed for this case study were overwhelmingly positive about the technical support they had received from NSWP and outlined the various ways it had strengthened regional networks, including their capacity to support members at national and local levels. Regional networks appreciated the comprehensive, continuous and flexible nature of technical support from NSWP. They also appreciated the unique mentorship approach and willingness of NSWP to share its membership and governance systems and its financial and human resource management policies and systems for adaptation by regional networks and beyond.

National and local organisations interviewed for this case study also expressed appreciation for support provided by the regional networks and emphasised the importance of having strong regional networks to support sex worker organising at national and local levels.

“The main role that regional and international networks play is that they provide technical assistance. ... countries use that information which they can adapt to country context. This kind of technical assistance – regional and national – doesn’t exist elsewhere for sex workers.”

Shahnaz Islamova, Tais Plus Director



“We take technical support from APNSW simply because we cannot do it by ourselves or by consultant, as the issues of sex workers and developing sex worker organizations need special assistance. Today we’re one of the most coordinated and capable organizations in the country as well as in the region simply because of APNSW.”

*Khaing Shwe Wah, AMA Myanmar
Senior Program Support Officer*

Global and regional networks not only engage in advocacy, they play a critical role in building the capacity of national and local sex worker-led organisations. Organisations interviewed for this case study repeatedly spoke of the value and efficacy of community-led technical support from the global to regional to national level. In particular, interviews highlighted: the value of having model organisational policies, protocols and processes designed by and for sex workers at the centre of technical support; and the value of technical support based on the lived experiences of sex worker-led organisations, whether on budgeting, programming, grant proposal writing, advocacy or governance.

Technical support has had a concrete impact on sex worker-led organising at national levels. It has catalysed the creation of new sex worker-led organisations and networks, and helped emerging sex worker organisations build their capacity, formalise their work, and gain recognition from donors and other stakeholders. It has empowered sex worker-led organisations to use the SWIT to advocate for rights-based services and meaningful involvement in the development of both policy and services.

It has also increased sex worker engagement with national Global Fund processes. Sex workers have participated in concept note and funding proposal development and in the development of national strategic plans. Sex worker representatives have become CCM members, including Ecuador, Guyana, Kenya, Ukraine and Vietnam. Sex worker-led organisations have also been able to receive Global Fund funding for sex worker-led responses, including programming addressing violence, human rights abuses, and the provision of legal assistance in a number of countries including Ecuador, Tanzania, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia.

Improving the situation of sex workers around the world requires on-going capacity building and technical support for sex worker-led organisations. Strengthening global and regional networks is the most effective, sustainable and efficient way to build the capacity of sex worker-led organisations at national and local levels on a global scale.

The Global Network of Sex Work Projects uses a methodology that ensures the voices of sex worker-led organisations are made visible. Case studies examine the strategies, activities and impact at global, regional and national levels of NSWP and regional sex worker-led networks in consultation with NSWP members. Case studies are based on ongoing monitoring, utilising internal reports, in-depth interviews, and site visits.

The term 'sex workers' reflects the immense diversity within the sex worker community including but not limited to: female, male and transgender sex workers; lesbian, gay and bi-sexual sex workers; male sex workers who identify as heterosexual; sex workers living with HIV and other diseases; sex workers who use drugs; young adult sex workers (between the ages of 18 and 29 years old); documented and undocumented migrant sex workers, as well as and displaced persons and refugees; sex workers living in both urban and rural areas; disabled sex workers; and sex workers who have been detained or incarcerated.



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NSWP is an alliance partner of Bridging the Gaps – health and rights for key populations. This unique programme addresses the common challenges faced by sex workers, people who use drugs and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in terms of human rights violations and accessing much-needed HIV and health services. Go to: www.hivgaps.org for more information.