



**Australian
Sex Workers
Association**

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Scarlet Alliance TRAFFICKING Briefing Paper April 2010



Sex workers gather in Indonesia to discuss human rights, August 2009.

Eighty sex workers from fourteen countries in Asia and the Pacific gathered to prepare a joint statement to the International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, Bali, Indonesia, in August 2009. Scarlet Alliance was instrumental in gathering and facilitating this and other meetings in Bali last year, key statements included:

Sex workers live with dignity; Ban Ki Moon urges: “We can remove punitive laws, policies, practices, stigma and discrimination that block effective responses to AIDS” Ratify CEDAW and recognise the rights of women who work as sex workers. Male and Transgender sex workers must also be protected from discrimination. Children of sex workers and sex worker parents and guardians have rights; end the removal of sex workers children. Sex workers who use drugs are a part of our community and deserve equal respect and access to services and support. Law reform for sex workers must include anti-discrimination protections.

Scarlet Alliance Pilot Migration Project

Australia and Thailand 2009-2011



Asian background migrant sex workers are the population group in Australia most affected by trafficking policy. Policing, trafficking legislation, immigration policies, criminal cases and victim services in Australia all disproportionately target migrant sex workers. Moves to expand policies to include other industries (such as hospitality, agriculture and the building industry) are currently being discussed but are not yet implemented.

The work of Scarlet Alliance and our membership targets *all* Thai, South Korean and Chinese migrant sex workers in Australia because those sex workers experiencing trafficking situations are a subset of this larger group of migrant sex workers. Our partnership with Empower Foundation, Thailand, targets Thai sex workers travelling to Australia.

The Scarlet Alliance Pilot Migration Project provides the most comprehensive, accurate and culturally appropriate initiative to date for sex workers in Australian trafficking situations and researchers all sex workers in Australia in four languages.

The results of this work will be of interest to all anti-trafficking projects and policy makers throughout the world. Evaluation, research and data from the project will encompass the entire populations mentioned and as such be able to support and develop policy for the sub-set within that population who seek trafficking support.

This project uses best practice approaches to anti-trafficking peer education

Scarlet Alliance is employing a best practice approach to these projects by hosting a Migration Steering Committee of migrant sex workers from South and East Asian backgrounds in Australia. This Migration Steering Committee informs all aspects of the project and provide a safe space for migrant sex workers to discuss the issues in depth. Scarlet Alliance is an affirmative action sex worker organisation; staff, leadership and volunteers are all sex workers (past and present). Activities include:

- Regular meetings of Migration Steering Committee
- Preparation of evaluation strategies, research tools, and appropriate ethics committee approval
- Training sessions for sex worker peer educators in Australia
- Networking meetings with other major partners in the field (Australian Federal Police, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Red Cross, Asian Women at Work, Anti-Slavery Project, Salvation Army and others)
- Mapping the gaps in information for migrant sex workers in Australia
- Preparing accurate information for sex workers in Thailand thinking of travelling to Australia
- Research with migrant sex workers in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. This will be running until July, with an expected 500 participants.

Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD Placement)

Scarlet Alliance has just had our second installment of volunteer placements return from Thailand where they have been working with Empower Foundation. This work includes skills exchange, supporting the Can Do Bar – an experiential go-go bar that is based on best practice sex worker occupational health and safety law in Thailand, teaching English to Thai sex workers, volunteering at the Empower offices and liaising with Scarlet Alliance to build our relationships with our Thai counterparts.

By making our community networks stronger we are combating the policies, conditions and injustices that hurt sex workers.