

## *Message from the Editor :*

Every year, we work with different local institutions to provide internship for the students. We aim to let students find out the story and experiences of sex workers through direct interaction with sex workers.

However, because of COVID-19 this year, we had to postpone the internship program. We also had to cut down their outreach hour so as to reduce the risk of getting infected during outreach. In this case, students not only have fewer chances to meet and talk to sex workers, it is also difficult to achieve the aim of internship program, that is to let students understand the real picture of the sex industry.



(image: <https://studylish.com/>)

Though we tried to reschedule the working hours of the students so that they have more opportunities to talk to sex workers, we admit that students do not really have much time to talk to sex workers. We have to apologize to the lecturers coordinating the internship and the students participating in these programs.

At the same time, we realize we should develop special work plan for emergency situations like current pandemic. We can then minimize the influences on our partner institutions and students. Also, sex workers will be less affected by the suspension of our services.

## Our work and movement:

### Hong Kong

#### Disappearing police

Though the pandemic is not yet over, with many sex workers work fewer hours, it does not mean that they are less exposed to violence. Below are the complaints from sex workers against police and client violence in past 4 months.

Below is the number of complaints about violence from sex workers in the past 4 months.

<u>Police violence/abuse</u>		<u>Client/criminal violence</u>	
Free massage service before arrested	3 cases	Denial of payment	11 case
Arbitrary arrest	35 cases	Candid camera	4 case
Neglect of duty	2 cases	Theft	1 case
		Physical assault	1 case
		Properties damaged	1 case
		Robbery	13 cases
		Indecent assault	1 case

One of the cases above is probably the most unreasonable case we know.

Scarlet (pseudonym) works in one woman brothel. One day, a client she knows well went to visit her. They agreed on the service charge and entered the room. Her client said he wanted to have a shower first. Yet, after shower he told Scarlet that he had to leave immediately. Scarlet thought it was unfair as the client had taken off his clothes and took a bath. It means that he had used Scarlet's belongings at her workplace. She therefore asked her client to pay \$100 as the charge of using her belongings. However, the client refused to pay. Scarlet quarreled with him. Another sex worker working next door heard the quarrel and went to Scarlet's place. Scarlet told her what happened. Her neighbor helped Scarlet to explain to the client that entering the room after negotiating the service

charge is the same as consent to have sex. Even the client only uses the shower in the room or sex workers remove their clothes, the client still enjoys the services and should pay a certain amount as service charge.

Unfortunately, the client insisted not to pay. Scarlet's neighbor helped her to call the police. Nevertheless, they did not see any police. Scarlet called the police by herself and the police center told them to wait for a while. At last, as long as Scarlet was not paying attention, the client left quietly, with the police still showed no sign of arrival. We heard from Scarlet and her neighbor afterwards that there had been waiting for the police for 3 days but no one went to her to follow the case.

The police once stated that they would try to arrive at the crime scene when they received the call for help. However, Scarlet saw no police follow her case even she called the police for 3 days. This definitely constitutes the neglect of duty. Do the police seriously handle cases only when there are serious injuries or life-threatening situations?



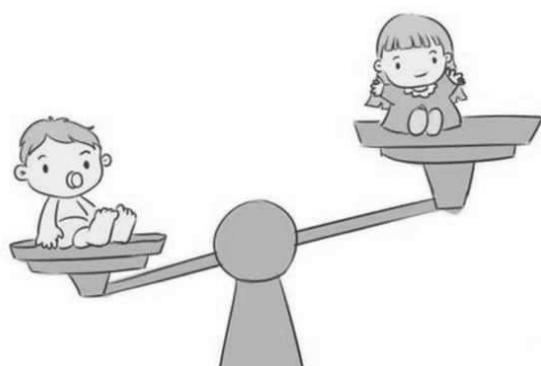
(image: Dreamstime.com)

## Stories/experiences of Migrant Chinese sex workers

### Shenzhen

#### Value of a girl

May (pseudonym) is the first child in a traditional family, which weighs boys than girls. Her father used to own a canned food factory. Whenever May mentions this part of her history, she always says ‘At that time, our family was not really that poor. When I was small, while others worried much about food, I could eat meat every 3-5 days. We did not have to worry anything about daily life. We had several



(image: kknews.cc)

tens of buildings at one moment. I almost got one building but my father was seduced and lost his mind. He sold all buildings to his mistresses, including the one my grandparent was living in. At last, all mistresses left him. The whole family lived in the same small flat.’ May therefore lost her faith in family after these family changes. She did not want marriage.

May’s younger brother is the great treasure of the family. The whole family strived to satisfy every need of his. He has his own career now. He has his flat and car. Even the family needed money, he chose to cut off from the family so that he did not need to give a penny. He also changed his name. ‘Later, father was seriously ill, but his precious son, whom he thinks could continue the family line, denied his father. He did not want to spend money to take care of his father.’

On the contrary, May, who was dumped by the family, ‘I paid my father and mother’s medical fees, take care of them till they died. I was dumped at the beginning, but they eventually needed me. My aunties also did not like me, but when their children were in trouble, I paid to settle the problems for them. They are now very nice to me. I do not have any expectation on them now.’ Though May said in a desperate tone, she could not really ignore her relatives. She could not really give up her relatives. Recently, May’s relative had appendicitis and was hospitalized. She became very busy to help her relative, as she was eager to tell herself: girls can also of great value.

## **Linking with the world**

### **UK**

#### **'Care Income Now'**

Covid-19 has created great impact on different parts of the world. People in these areas are subsidized and aided differently. However, sex workers are not necessarily benefited. Though they are affected by the pandemic just like others, it does not mean that they receive support as others do.

Sex workers in the UK are one example. They lose their income and are unable to take care of their family during the pandemic. To help sex workers cope with the situation, local groups in the UK launched a campaign named 'Care Income Now', which appeals to the UK Government to provide care income to those involved in caring work, particularly women unconditionally taking care of the family, so as to support them to go through with the difficult economic situation.

To show support to ECP (English Collective of Prostitutes) which joined the campaign, we signed the petition. On the other hand, as far as ECP told us, they provided various support to sex workers, such as helping sex workers to apply non-government subsidies, provide daily meals and necessities for undocumented sex workers,. ECP also assisted sex workers to apply for government emergency funds.

During the pandemic, sex workers are often overlooked. Support groups can then fill the gap caused by the lack of attention in the society.



(image: Twitter of GlobalWomneStrike)

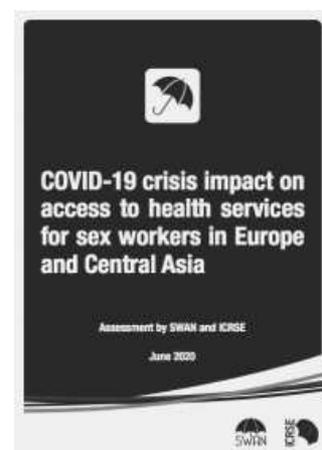
# What is happening in sex workers community?

## Europe and Central Asia

### Covid-19 impact on Health Services

During the pandemic, government in many areas announces different level of lockdown and maintained the social distancing. Shops were forced to close. Even medical services are suspended as most medical resources have to be allocated to patients infected by coronavirus.

Under this situation, sex workers are unable to access to medical services. For example, free access to condoms and lubricants, contraceptives, body check is suspended. They have to go to private clinics for medical help, which increases the burden of low income sex workers, especially migrant sex workers. They can hardly earn a living, let alone paying high medical bills.

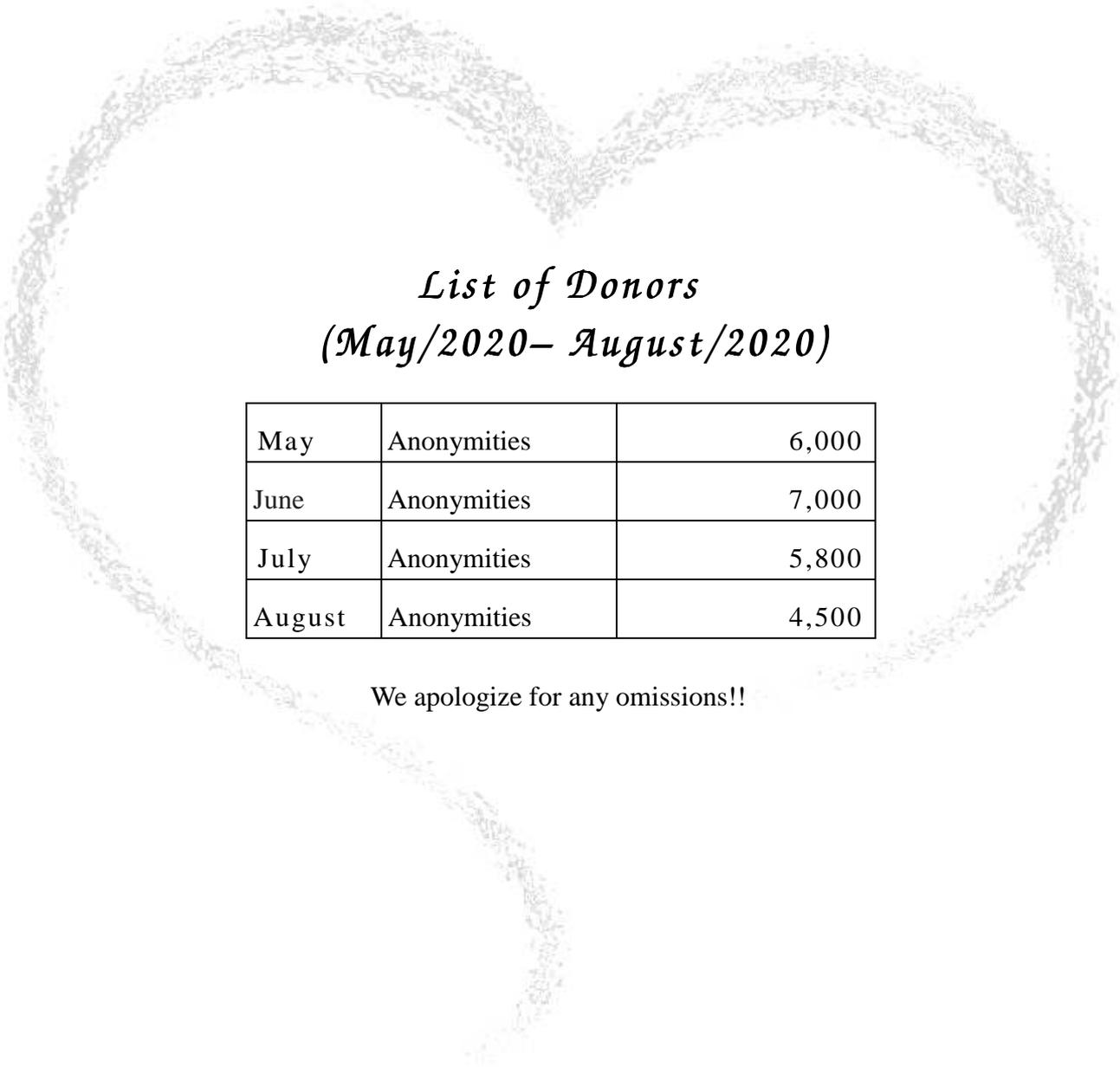


(image: Facebook of SWAN)

To address the situation, sex workers groups in different areas come up with many interesting and creative ways to provide supports for sex workers. They also encourage sex workers to help each other to solve the problems. For instance, in Kyrgyzstan, local organizations purchase food and distribute food packs to sex workers, groups in Russia contact other sex workers through their social network, to teach them how to prepare masks and hand sanitizers.

Regarding to the responses and works of sex workers organizations in Europe and Central Asia in supporting sex workers to cope with Covid-19, through questionnaires and video interviewing sex worker organizations in 13 areas, SWAN and ICRSE worked out the 'COVID-19 crisis impact on access to health services for sex workers in Europe and Central Asia' report. If you are interested to learn how sex workers in different places help each other to cope with the pandemic, you can visit

<http://www.swannet.org/en/content/swan-and-icrse-publish-assessment-impact-covid-19-sex-workers'-access-health-services-europe>



*List of Donors  
(May/2020– August/2020)*

May	Anonymities	6,000
June	Anonymities	7,000
July	Anonymities	5,800
August	Anonymities	4,500

We apologize for any omissions!!

## *Application for Membership*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (O): \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**I am willing to join the following activities:**

Publication       Data Collection       Research       Others

**I would like to donate monthly:**

\$100       \$200       \$300       \$500   
\$1,000       or once

**My donation is paid by:**

Cheque: (cheque number) \_\_\_\_\_

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