



INVESTIGATING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT NEEDS OF CHILDREN OF KEY POPULATIONS

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OUTLINE



Background

Case for Action

Methods

Results

Recommendations

Acknowledgments

Assessment : Background & Objectives

To establish the psychosocial situation of children of SW in Kampala, Wakiso & Mukono.

To establish the strengths of the sex workers and challenges they face in supporting their children

What are the experiences of children at home, school and in the community.

To determine the existing support systems, interventions and opportunities for intervention

Develop recommendations about programmatic responses to improve the children situation

Methodology



- ▶ The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods
- ▶ The target population for the study included; selected children of sex workers categorized into three (< 5, 6-13 and 14 – 18 years of age)
- ▶ A simple random sampling technique was used to pick 300 registered sex workers (out of the 530) respondents based on computer generated random numbers aligned to registration lists of members
- ▶ Sex workers who had children in the age bracket of 13 -18 years were requested to provide researchers with details of the children and give consent to interview them on their experiences

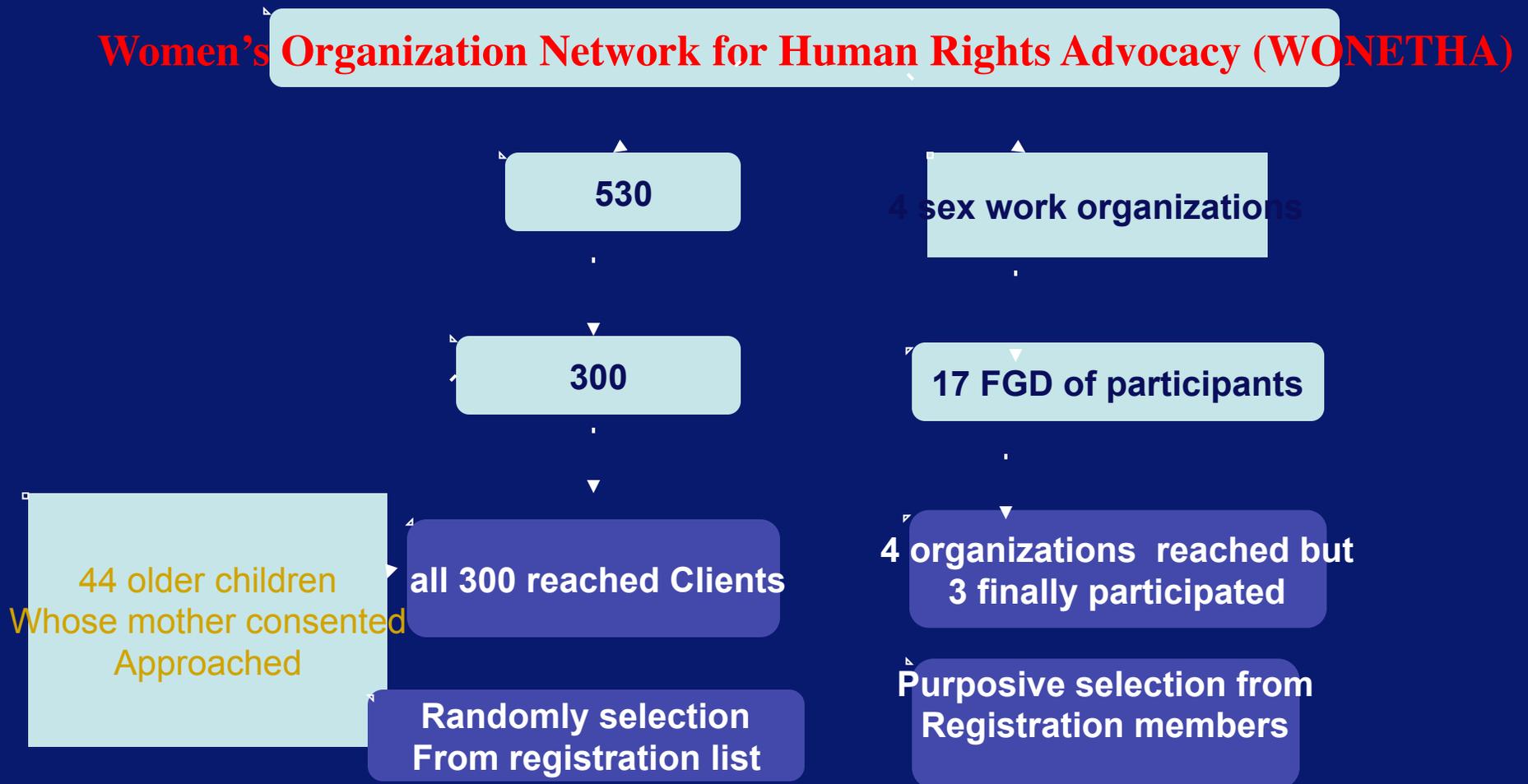
Methodology: Scope

3 Districts covered during survey:



Summary of Sampling plan:

Figure 1 Sampling scheme for the study



Keeping ethics

- ▶ In order not to cause psychological/mental anguish or anxiety to the children. The questions were administered indirectly with no reference to the mothers or care takers conditions occupation in sex worker



Data collection



- ▶ Data was collected through: desk reviews, case studies, Key Informant Interviews (KII), household surveys, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and observations
- ▶ Qualitative data was collected based on FGD standards, recorded as well as notes written out and later transcribed
- ▶ Quantitative data was collected using face-to-face interviews at agreed upon venues convenient for the sex workers to conduct interviews.

Quality control



- ▶ 3 sex workers and 1 controller who directly worked with the consulting firm
- ▶ The collection of qualitative followed preliminary analysis of the quantitative data
- ▶ Data collection teams underwent a four day training, and an additional day for pre-test and pre-test evaluation
- ▶ Pre-test of the research instruments were done



RESULTS

Baseline characteristics



- ▶ The study reached out to 300 registered sex workers and 256 children,
- ▶ Majority 187 (62%), of the respondents reside in Kampala (Capital city), followed by 91 (30%) in Wakiso, and Mukono 22 (7%)
- ▶ majority 287 (96%), of female SW were the heads of the households
- ▶ 147 (49%) of the respondents were single, 118 (40%) were separated/divorced, 16 (5%) were cohabiting and 19 (6% widowed)
- ▶ 272 (91%) of the SW, have spent less than 5 years in sex business and 28 (9%) had been in sex work for over 10 years

Baseline character.....

- ▶ 237 SW household reported have 6 members in their household - similar to an average household size; and 63 (21%) reported having 3 people in the household
- ▶ 44 children (13- to 18) and 212 (1-12) 127 female 95 males - 238 living with biological mothers
- ▶ 184 of children (72%) were in school - 5% in primary school and 9% dropped out of school and 30 % (75) were orphans.

Social Economic variables for the main income earner in the home

	Number (n=300)	Percent
Main income earner		
Self-(Respondent)	289	96.3
Father	4	1.3
Relative in household	7	2.3
Main source of household income		
Petty Business	8	2.7
Causal Laborer	3	1.
Sex work	287	95.7
Medium-large scale business	2	0.7
Current monthly income		
Above 200,000	131	43.7
150,000 – 200,000	52	17.3
100,000 – 150,000	49	16.3
50,000 – 100,000	41	13.7
Less than 50,000	27	9.
Total	300	100

Psychosocial cont...



- ▶ Food security;
 - ✓ *source mainly market; 96% (288)*
 - ✓ *Ever missed meals; more than 5 days - 21% (63 SWs)*
- ▶ Shelter; stable(safe , adequate & dry) - 50%, (150 SW)
- ▶ Not stable 10% (30) and sharing one room

Psychosocial cont...

Psychosocial support & care;

- ▶ feeling troubled 49%(148),
- ▶ response to child abuse 187 (62%) ever reported to LC / police
- ▶ 146 SW interview were HIV+ and with 88 disclosing their sero status to their HIV status to the children. 56 SW responded that at the moment they are not courageous enough to disclose their status to children (too young and some children would blame them and be depressed)
- ▶ 203 (67%) SW said their children were tested. Though only 21 SW mentioned that their children were HIV positive and only 10 children have been told their HIV sero status.,

Psychosocial cont....

- ▶ 15 (71%) out of 21 were reported to be receiving treatment and 93% (14 out of 15) are on ART and attend the clinic regularly. 5 children have not told why they are taking medicine.
- ▶ 70 (47%) children born by SW who tested HIV positive during pregnancy was initiated on Niverapine syrup after delivery as part of the on-going EMTCT programme.
- ▶ 28 (11%) children were reported by their mother has having other chronic illnesses which included sickle cell anemia and asthma
- ▶ 75 of 256 children were reported to be orphans – 30 SW stated that sometimes they can tell or know the father of the child

Objective 2: Children situation concerning attending and completing the school cycle

Child School attendance status and access to day/night care services

Response	Number	Percentage
Attends school regularly	145	56.6%
Misses school once per week	27	10.5%
Misses school twice per week	10	3.9%
Misses school 3 or more times per week	13	5.1%
Not enrolled in school	61	23.8%
Total	256	100
Child has access day/night care services (yes)	167	65.2%

Likelihood of the child/children completing specific levels of education

Child's likelihood	Complete primary and join secondary		Complete senior four		Complete senior six and join university	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Not likely	71	27.7	73	28.5	84	32.8
Neutral	73	28.5	104	40.6	110	43
Likely	112	43.8	79	30.9	62	24.2
Total	256	100	256	100	256	100

Objective 3: Challenges faced by the sex workers in attempt to address the plight of their children

- ▶ Detentions - findings reveal that sex worker's imprisonment is common
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Ltd NGO support (Service providers)

Objective 4: Existing support systems, interventions and opportunities for intervention

- ▶ NGOs; Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL), and Plan Uganda are the only agencies that are known by the sex workers groups as providing some support.
- ▶ UYDEL provides training in hair dressing and management of hair saloons.
- ▶ UYDEL partnered with Plan international Uganda to provide scholastic materials, this however, stopped. When this support ceased, the children dropped out of school as the sex workers could not afford keeping children in school.

Challenges

- ▶ *“Our children do not grow in a nice environment so you find that a mother to give a child something they deserve she has to sleep with five men to make 15,000, (US\$5) if she charges 3000 (US\$ 1) each”*
- ▶ *“We go with the children or lock them in the house and the environment where they stay uses abusive language and you find that they are not even going to school, protecting them from abuse is very hard”.*
- ▶ *“the major source of income to take our children to school is through selling our bodies to be able to raise school fees, food, treatments and be able to pay rent to have a roof over their head”*

Coping with challenges

- There are no visible support structures in the communities to support the children of sex workers. The sex workers simply have coping mechanisms such as:
- ▶ Arrests: If arrested the SW call fellow sex workers or peer educators (paralegal officers. Many of the SW use different names on arrest - so bailing them out is a challenge as the paralegal officers have to identify the persons by name.
- ▶ Sex workers usually keep cash on hand, to bribe law enforcers in case of arrests
- ▶ SW make sure they inform colleagues about the visit and the location so that in case of any violent crimes, it is such friends who can inform the networks.
- ▶ WONETHA client relief project provides emergency support including an advocate to follow up the case and secure police bond and money for the family during the period sex worker is in custody, court

Recommendations – WONETHA or other organizations of sex workers

- WONETHA to support those imprisoned sort out legal issues,
- Government and Non-Government Organizations (NGO) should work closely with the sex workers' organizations to tailor the alternative income activities for individual needs instead of prescribing solutions.
- There is need to Integrate HIV services with all relevant welfare services, including social support mechanisms for sex workers and their families
- Conduct in-depth documentation of violence faced by sex workers and their children and how to defend their human rights for advocacy with the law enforcement agencies
- *Train SW in parenting skills - Train SW on HIV sero - status disclosure*

Recommendations – Sex Workers

- ▶ respect the right of sex workers to make informed choices about their lives; sex workers don't require rescue or rehabilitation, but life skills to enable them to earn complementary/ alternative incomes to secure their future livelihood.
- ▶ Use an integrated approach in designing interventions that include health services, psychosocial support: work with the community-based legal and justice sectors to reduce the violence against sex workers and their children and reduce the risk of HIV transmission
- ▶ Sex workers whose children are living with HIV should be linked to health service providers to ensure that the children and their mothers access ART.

Recommendation – children of sex workers

- ▶ build the capacity of children of sex workers through training and sensitizing about the laws and their human rights to raise awareness and encourage sex workers' children to report and challenge violence and get legal redress.
- ▶ Set up safe spaces (drop-in centers) or shelters in the communities for the children of sex workers when the mothers go to work to protect them from abuse and violence.

Recommendation - families and communities

- ▶ There is need to skill the Para social workers and other frontline workers at community level with Psychosocial skills to be able to support the children of SW and their care givers

Acknowledgements



- ▶ sex workers and their children
- ▶ Community mobilizers
- ▶ Consultants and the Data collectors
- ▶ REPSSI
- ▶ Women's Organization Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA)
- ▶ Other SW Agencies

THANK YOU



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