

## **SCM PROGRAMME REPORT FOR MAY 2010 – SEPT 2011**

In the period of May 2010 – Sept 2011, the Student Christian Movement of Singapore organized the following programmes and activities:

### **a. SOCIAL EXPOSURES & OUTREACH IN GEYLANG ON THE ISSUE OF SEX WORK**

Social exposures on the issue of Sex Work/Sex Workers are organised under the programme, Project X. So far there has been an ongoing steady stream of university students and young working adults who have participated in the social exposures or volunteering with the project.

#### **1. Volunteers' Training**

Two volunteers' training were held since May, once in May and the 2<sup>nd</sup> one in November. These volunteers' trainings help to equip the volunteers in their outreach efforts. Currently, Project X has a regular pool of 4 volunteers on the streets while the other 3-4 help with background work such as administering the website, decision-making and networking. The 3<sup>rd</sup> volunteers' training will be held in September 2011.

#### **2. Volunteer Touch Base Session**

The volunteers met once every month to share on their outreach experience and to brainstorm on approaches to improve the project. They have suggested to work on a Guidebook for Volunteers and a Healthguide for Sex Workers, both which are currently in the process of final editing.

#### **3. International Day Against Violence Towards Sex Workers – 17 December 2010**

Project X commemorated the International Day Against Violence towards Sex Workers with a gold/brown ribbon that symbolises the invisibility yet real experiences of violence face by the sex workers. Flyers and ribbons were distributed in Geylang to remind the public of this issue of violence.

### **b. NETWORKING & PUBLICITY**

#### **1) Radio 938 Interview – August 2010**

Project X was interviewed by a radio presenter from 938 in August 2010, however, the interview was canned from broadcasting as the final decision from the radio station saw it to be an extremely sensitive topic for public listening. Similarly, there were two other Straits Times journalists who wanted to highlight the stories of the sex workers but were unsuccessful.

#### **2) Project X Photo Exhibition/Sharing in Singapore Film Society Screening – November 2010**

The Singapore Film Society screened a Korean movie 'Sex Volunteer' in November 2010 and requested Project X to share on its work with the sex workers. The set of photos that were taken by two sex workers were exhibited and one of the volunteers, Dixie, shared her experience working with the sex workers.

#### **3) Collaboration with marine parade family service centre, july-august 2011**

Marine Parade Family Service Centre (MP FSC) is offering its social work intern from Vietnam to help Project X in its outreach work to the Vietnamese sex workers. SCM helped to guide the social work intern to understand issues of migration and poverty faced by the Vietnamese women.

#### **4) Oak 3 film productions featuring project x in its social documentary project neighbourhood, september 2011**

Oak 3 films approached SCM to share on its experience on its Project X groundwork in Geylang which is the focus neighbourhood in its first episode on the social documentary, Project Neighbourhood. The programme will be broadcast in Okto channel on 29 September 2011.

**c. COLLABORATION WITH DRAMA BOX ON THE FORUM THEATRE ON ISSUE OF SEX WORK/ERS, HOW MUCH? PHASE I**

Initiated in December 2009, SCM started to collaborate with Drama Box on a forum theatre performance on sex work/sex worker in March 2010. The devising period began in October 2010, 4 volunteers and Wendy participated in the devising which subsequently saw 2 volunteers and Wendy being selected as the actors.

The actual performance was held from 8-10 April 2011 in three venues, namely NTU (intended audience was students), Toa Payoh CC (intended audience was public and civil society) and Free Community Church (intended audience was public). The total four shows had near full-house capacity and they came back with comments of a good effort done on a topic that rarely surfaces into the public domain.

This forum theatre resulted in a couple of students and young working adults displaying interest in volunteering with Project X as well as a couple of NGOs such as AWARE coming forward to lend their support and resources.

Drama Box has an intention to work on a Phase II of this topic and wants a further collaboration with SCM. Discussions are currently being held to work on Phase II which will showcase at the end of 2011.

**d. COLLABORATION WITH DRAMA BOX, ON PLAY, HOW MUCH? PHASE II, SEPTEMBER 2011**

Phase II highlighted the issue of Violence Against Sex Workers, with fringe activities leading to the climax of the issue to be performed in a Play. The panel discussion focused on approaches to regulate sex work in Singapore as to minimise the violence and discrimination sex workers face if the work has no form of legitimacy.

**e. RAISING AWARENESS IN THE SCHOOLS**

**1. NUS Sociology students' research on topic of sexual deviance - February 2011**

The sociology students approached SCM to give an input on the topic of sexual deviancy in relation to the work done with the sex workers.

**2. SMU first-year students in Leadership Management class presentation on sex workers in Singapore – March 2011**

The SMU students did social exposures in Geylang to come up with a class presentation on the issue of sex workers in Singapore. Prior to the class presentation, the students also set up a booth in SMU campus to share their experience. The set of photographs taken by the sex workers were also displayed. This effort created public awareness and discussion among the SMU students.

**3. Meridian Junior College students' project on Human Rights in Singapore, June 2011**

SCM shared its work on the sex workers to a group of students from the Meridian Junior College who were on a school project on Human Rights.

**4. Interview by NUS 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students on Human Rights and Activism, Sept. 2011**

SCM was approached by three 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students who are doing modules on Human Rights and Activism to share on its experience working on issues relating to the marginalised communities.

**f. TALKS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**1. Law & Order 101 – January 2011**

Wendy gave a presentation on the laws and penal codes that affect sex work in Singapore. This presentation helped the volunteers with basic knowledge on laws that govern sex work and to understand the limitations of these laws.

2. **A sharing with Prof. Josephine Ho and Prof Karl Ning – March 2011**

Prof. Josephine Ho and Prof. Karl Ning hail from the Centre for the Study of Sexualities in the National Central University of Taiwan. They were invited by the Asian Institute of Research in Singapore to present on their researches. SCM was able to invite both of them to share on the democracy process in Taiwan as well as the process of decriminalising sex work in Taiwan. Members of the local civil society as well as volunteers of Project X attended the sharing.

3. **Panel Discussion in Forum Theatre – 8 April 2011**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> performance of the Forum Theatre, SCM invited two speakers, Prof. Sallie Yea from NUS Geography Department who spoke on Sexuality & Intimacy; and Ms. Vanessa Ho who spoke on Sexual Deviancy.

4. **Sharing of Project X in Post Museum – 19 May 2011**

Post Museum is a space for local NGOs to converge, invited SCM to share on Project X in its series of public awareness talks. 20 people from the public attended the talk and had very exchange on the issue itself.

5. **Singapore Drama Educators' Association Conference, 4 June 2011**

The Singapore Drama Educators' Association (SDEA) organised an international conference for drama/theatre practitioners around the world. The conference invited SCM to present on Project X as it has worked with a drama company (Drama Box) in producing a Forum Theatre based on a marginalised community. The presentation encouraged other drama/theatre practitioners to work with the civil society on creating social awareness and develop social transformation using drama and theatre.

6. **Session with Yim, founder of Ziteng, Centre for Sex Workers in Hong Kong, 7 June 2011**

Yim, the founder of Ziteng, Centre for Sex Workers in Hong Kong which is also one of the funding agencies of SCM, came to Singapore on a working trip. A dialogue session was arranged to share her experience and work in Hong Kong with the volunteers, friends and supporters of SCM.

7. **Session with AWARE's Roundtable Talk, 21 July 2011**

AWARE invited SCM to share on Project X to its members in their monthly Roundtable Talk series. AWARE has offered its legal service to any cases of sexual assault that Project X may come across. Both AWARE and SCM is keeping options open for future collaboration.

**g. HEALTH GUIDE FOR SEX WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS' GUIDEBOOK , AUGUST 2011**

Ground volunteers of Project X have discussed and agreed that Project X needs to develop a new volunteers' guidebook that contains templates for the various topics of fact-findings such as occupational hazards and violence against sex workers. This guidebook will help ground volunteers to be more organised when they are collating data of the various fact-findings. In addition, the volunteers wanted a Health Guide for the sex workers that will help them to protect themselves while at work. The health information contains issues such as urinary track infection, sexual assault, sexually transmitted diseases and abortion/pregnancy.

**h. PROJECT X VOLUNTEERS' TRAINING, SEPTEMBER 2011**

Project X conducted its 3<sup>rd</sup> Volunteers' Training 16 Sept. The training has used its newly published Volunteers' Guidebook as a training guide. This 3<sup>rd</sup> saw 3 new volunteers willing to take up the challenge of groundwork.

**i. UNDERSTUDY FOR SCM, SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2011**

SCM has enlisted Vanessa Ho to be an understudy for the period of September – December, in the aim to train new activist and to encourage new talent into the work of SCM. Vanessa graduated with a Masters in Gender Studies.