



Empowering communities to be healthy and free of TB and HIV

Engaging with police in key population programming in Nelson Mandela Bay

Lessons, challenges and solutions.

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Background

- 2014 set the HIV Prevention Program to Key Population in Nelson Mandela Bay
- Conducted sex work mapping and engagement with sex workers and other stakeholders
- In May 2014 Community engagement workshop held to ascertain more sex work location and general issues experienced by sex workers
- SAPS was mentioned as one stakeholder which needs to be engaged with regards human rights violations



Stakeholder Meetings

- Roadshow was done to introduce the program to police stations
- Health benefits of the program were a selling point
- There was a general acceptance of the program
- In some police stations follow up meetings were setup for further engagement



Challenges

- Reports of human rights violations by police were reported by some sex workers
 - Sex workers couldn't open cases because of fear of stigma and knowing the work they do is illegal
 - There were reports of condoms being confiscated by police even after they were engaged
 - There was buy-in by the senior members but issues were experienced from lower ranked police who are patrolling the streets
 - Sex Workers reporting that Police were following mobile services to issue them with fines
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Solutions

- When engaging the police it is important to establish relationships not only with high ranking police but with the lower ranking officers who are patrolling the streets
- Always put emphasis on the health benefits of the program as the reason to do the work with sex workers
- Continuous meetings to share program developments and its success



Lessons Learned

- Police generally have an understanding of the need to provide HIV prevention program to sex workers
- Always put emphasis on the health benefits of the program as the reason to provide services to sex workers
- Continuous meetings to share program developments and its success
- With the permission from the service users invite police to attend monthly meetings

