

ARBITRARY DETENTIONS AND POLICE RAIDS AS AN OBSTACLE IN IMPLEMENTING HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMS WITH SEX WORKERS

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October 2-5, 2016

Amsterdam, LEPH2016

Kyrgyzstan



- Population: 5,957 млн (WB, 2015)
- Lower-middle income country (WB, 2014)
- Parliamentary Republic (2010)
- Estimated number: 7100 sex workers (2013)

Shah-Aiym Network

- Network unites individuals – sex workers and allies – from 3 countries: Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.
- 2009 – Initiative group started working
- 2010 – official NGO registration



Mission is to achieve recognition and fulfilling human rights and fundamental freedoms for sex workers and decreasing stigma and discrimination which fuel and boost violence against sex workers.

Legislation in Kyrgyzstan

- Individual adult sex work is **decriminalized**: it is not crime, neither administrative offence since 1998
- HIV programs regulations:
 - ✓ HIV Law
 - ✓ HIV State Programs
 - ✓ Joint regulations on HIV prevention while interacting with key populations (by MoH/MoJ/Penitentiary System/ State Drug Control Agency)

HIV programs **with** sex workers

- Outreach work with sex workers on the streets and indoor includes:
 - ✓ Information sessions
 - ✓ Promotion and distribution condoms and lubricants
 - ✓ Counseling on issues sex workers are interested in, including HIV and STI, human rights, services provided by NGOs
 - ✓ Referrals and support&assistance to receive services in NGOs and medical facilities

Monitoring sex workers' human rights violations in Kyrgyzstan

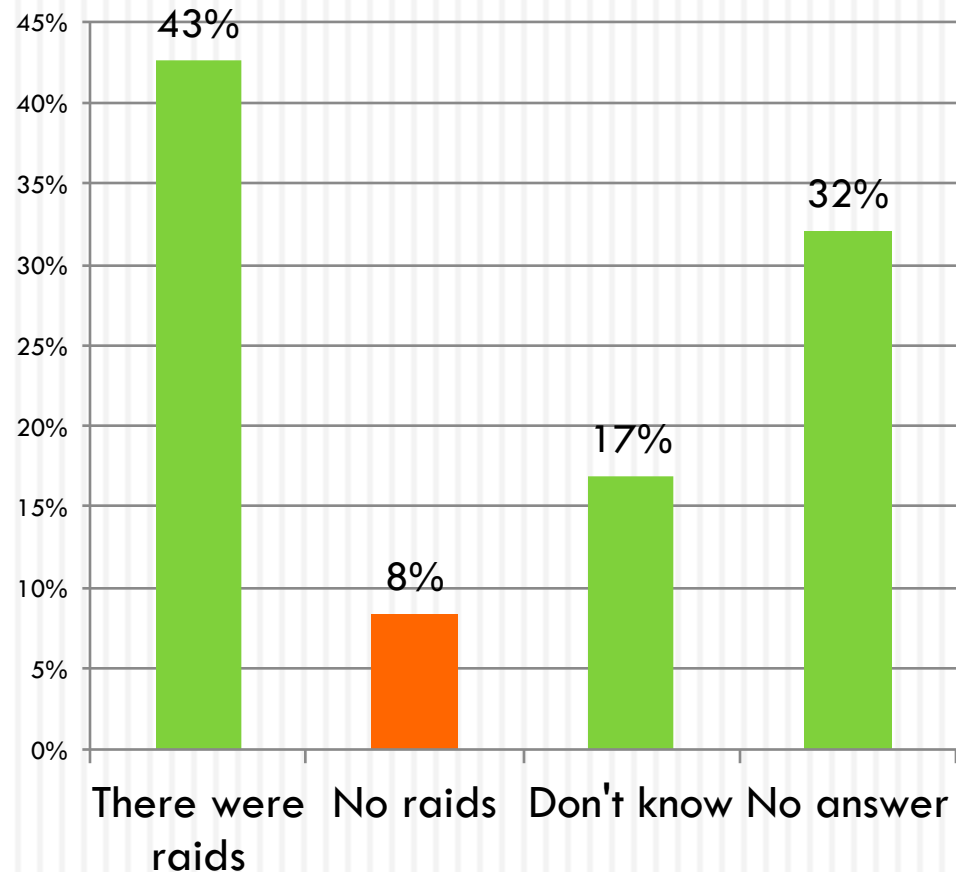
- 2012: The first National Research on sex workers' human rights violations (590 respondents)
- 2015: The second monitoring National Research (514 respondents)
- Since 2010 regular documenting sex workers' human rights violations
- Finance support: Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan, Red Umbrella Fund, Robert Carr Foundation

Police practices

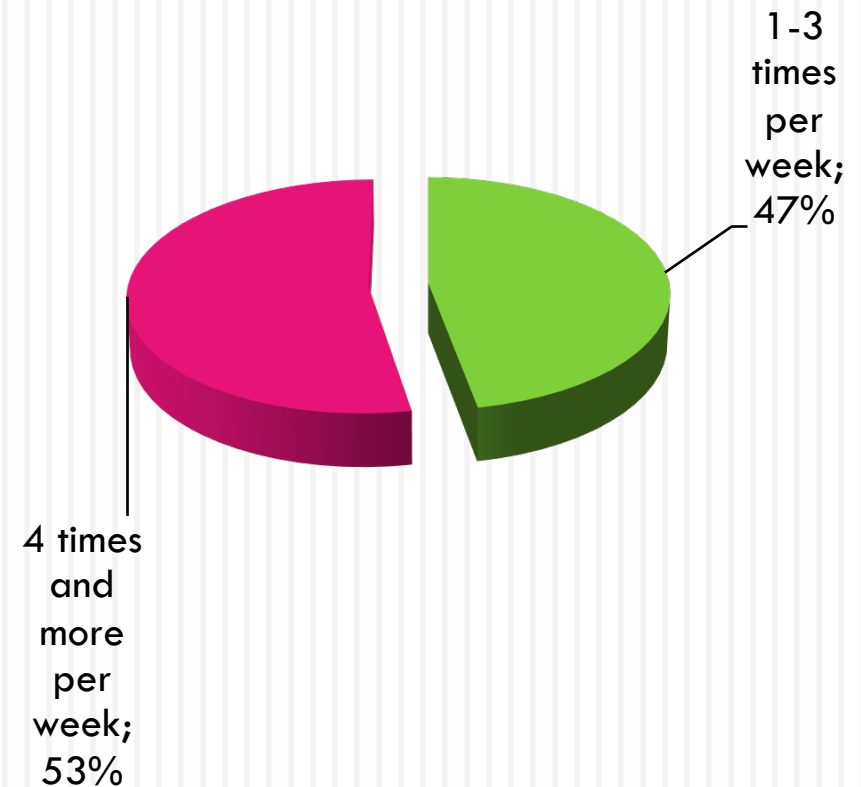
- Raids by decree and without it
- Discriminatorily application of neutral regulations contained in Administrative Code against sex workers (petty hooliganism, disobeying the authority)
- Arbitrary detentions
- Extortion
- Blackmail
- Inviting mass media to participate in raids with following broadcasting on TV and online: sex workers' faces are shown openly

Frequency of police raids during last week (2015)

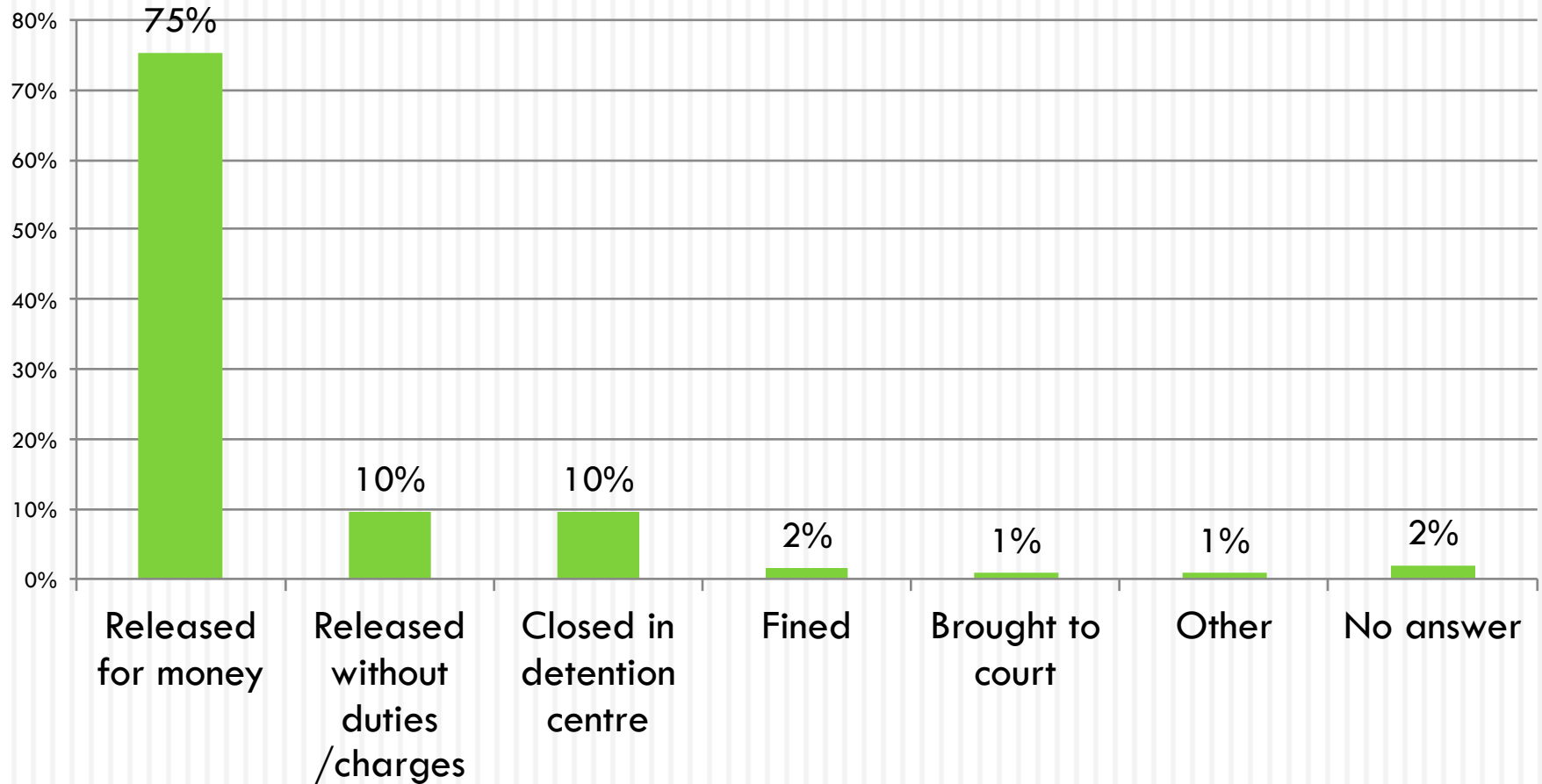
Research data



Documenting data



What happens to sex workers after detention (Research data, 2015)



Recent developments: 2016

- June 14, 2016 Acting head of City Police in Bishkek announced on the press-conference: “Bishkek streets will be cleaned from prostitutes during a week”
- Link: <http://goo.gl/VBecft>
- City police invites Bishkek residents to conduct evening raids, make photos of sex workers and then pass these photos to police
- Link: <http://goo.gl/mmY8cR>

Our actions

- June 17: the first letter to Ministry of Interior requesting internal investigation of police officers' actions and its compliance with legality
- July 28: Amnesty International Letter to Ministry of Interior
- August 9: Appeal to Ministry of Interior signed by 108 sex workers
- August 16: CCM appeal to Ministry of Interior (CCM is the body responsible for oversight of HIV programs)
- Partner Human Rights NGO "Voice of Freedom" started journalistic investigation

Consequences of raids and “cleaning”

- Sex workers go deeply underground: if one outreach worker contacts with 200 sex workers before "cleaning", now hardly possible to find 40 people
- Sex workers started intensively to go abroad for earnings, and it is a risk to get in more dangerous conditions
- Health and HIV issues are not priority due to necessity to earn money and feed families in extremely unfavorable conditions.

Thank you

