Sex workers know best!

Study on the effects of hosting relationships on sex worker-led programmes

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About this publication

This study report presents the findings of an operational research (qualitative and quantitative) into the advantages and challenges of hosting relationships for sex worker-led organisations. The research was implemented by Aidsfonds in 2018.

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Executive summary

Almost everywhere in the world, sex work is criminalised and surrounded by stigma and discrimination. Sex workers are confronted with widespread violations of their human rights on a daily basis. This places sex workers in a marginalised position and makes them more vulnerable to HIV and other STIs, as well as different forms of exploitation. Evidence shows that empowerment of sex workers and sex worker-friendly services are essential in order to improve their lives and health (World Health Organization (WHO) 2013).

Against this contextual backdrop, sex workers are organising to claim their rights, to stop violence, to get access to quality healthcare and to define and lead their own organisations and movements. Their struggles to organise for their rights need recognition and support in the form of community-led programming. A large part of the sex worker-led organisations and networks worldwide are hosted by (international) non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or civil society organisations, for a variety of reasons. These relationships can be challenging and demand research into the advantages and challenges of such hosting relationships. The key question of this study is the degree of effectiveness of hosting relationships for sex worker-led organisations to become strong and independent entities that are able to claim their rights to end violence and HIV among sex workers. Through a mixed-method study, twenty-eight directors or coordinators of host and sex worker-led organisations were interviewed. In addition, 44 sex workers took part in the survey, and 72 sex workers took part in nine focus group discussions. The study was conducted in ten countries: Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Myanmar, South Africa, Uganda, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

The study explored hosting relationships in different contexts. In all these contexts, sex work or activities associated with sex work were either criminalised or sex workers faced civil or criminal sanctions for engaging in sex work. One of the main reasons for being in a hosting construction is the limited possibility for registration of sex worker organisations, because of bureaucratic procedures or external threats. Registration is considered critical in order to be able to access national and international donor funds, to be recognised by the government as an official entity, and to be able to open a bank account and receive funds. Weak financial management or governance was the second most mentioned reason for operating in a hosting construction. In other situations, the hosting construction was the result of a sex worker organisation being born out of an NGO-led programme involving sex workers.

After analysis of the data set, three types of hosting were identified: full, partial and fiscal hosting. A fourth type is the partnership model in which sex worker-led organisations have become independent and work together with other stakeholders in partnership. This study report explores the advantages and challenges of each hosting construction, as experienced by sex workers and the directors and coordinators of host organisations.
1. **Full hosting:** In this scenario, the host provides a physical office space, is a fiscal conduit and programmes are implemented jointly. In settings where sex work is criminalised, being fully hosted might be the only way for sex worker-led organisations to secure funds. However, this type of hosting is not the most effective to empower the sex worker community or to support organisational strengthening of the sex worker-led organisation.

2. **Partial hosting:** In this scenario, the sex worker-led organisation has its own space but implements programmes jointly with the host. The host is a fiscal conduit. If sex worker-led organisations are unable to register, partial hosting ensures the organisation can access donor funding. The risk with partial hosting relationships is that the roles and responsibilities of the host and the sex worker-led organisations are not always clear and documented.

3. **Fiscal hosting:** In this scenario, the host provides the fiscal conduit for sex worker-led organisations. The sex worker-led organisations have their own space and implement their own programmes. The relationship between the fiscal host and the sex worker-led organisation is clear. The sole purpose of the relationship is fiscal sponsorship. However, this type of hosting does not necessarily support organisational capacity strengthening or technical support in designing effective HIV programmes for sex workers. Sex worker-led organisations need to acquire funding that allows them to buy technical support, either from their fiscal host or other technical partners.

4. **Partnership:** A partnership consists of a sex worker-led organisation that runs autonomously but strategically works together with other stakeholders, sometimes also including former host organisations. In this scenario, sex worker-led organisations are autonomous and ‘have control’ over their own resources, programming and organisational development. A challenge in this construction is that sex worker-led organisations do not have the protection of larger organisations as they implement their own work in challenging environments where sex work is criminalised or sex workers face criminal sanctions. The organisation is responsible for taking measures to ensure the safety and security of staff and the involved sex worker community.

Read Chapter 5 for a complete list of advantages and challenges for each hosting construction.

For effective hosting relationships in which sex worker-led organisations can become strong and independent entities that are able to claim their rights to end violence and HIV among sex workers, all stakeholders have to consider their part in the process. The qualitative research resulted in a set of recommendations per stakeholder. Both host and sex worker-led organisations should meaningfully involve the sex worker community in creating and managing the hosting construction. During the inception phase of a host relationship, both organisations need to have a conversation to see whether their organisational values correspond. It is also important to clearly define the purpose of the hosting relationship, for example being able to access donor funds, becoming an independent organisation, or implementing joint activities with the host organisation.

If hosting goes beyond fiscal support, host organisations need to provide technical capacity to sex worker-led organisations to become (more) autonomous. This could include capacity strengthening, for example on governance, finance management and fundraising. However, what capacities are needed and who should
provide the technical support has to be directed by the sex worker-led organisations. The host organisations should provide space and resources for staff of sex worker-led organisations to be in control of the planning, implementation and monitoring of the organisation and its activities. It is important for sex worker-led organisations to increase awareness of the hosting construction and practices among the sex worker community, its purpose, and the different roles and responsibilities of host and sex worker-led organisations. The sex worker community needs to be involved in creating and managing the hosting construction, for example through community consultations, advisory groups or membership meetings. Donor organisations have a role in creating and managing hosting relationships, and making sure that the hosting construction has a clear purpose and there are clear agreements on roles and responsibilities.

Donors should provide funding and flexibility to the host and sex worker-led organisations to meaningfully create and manage hosting relationships.

For a complete list of recommendations, you can refer to Chapter 7.

This study shows that whilst hosting relationships offer benefits of capacity strengthening, fiscal sponsorship and ‘safety’ in particularly risky environments, the evidence is mixed about whether hosting relationships enable sex worker-led organisations to become autonomous organisations. In conclusion, meaningfully set-up hosting relationships can be an effective mechanism to support community-led initiatives, but they need to be meaningfully created, managed and exited by sex workers and for sex workers.
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<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired immune deficiency syndrome</td>
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<td>AMA</td>
<td>Aye Myanmar Association</td>
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<td>APNSW</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers</td>
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<td>ASWA</td>
<td>African Sex Workers Alliance</td>
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<td>AWID</td>
<td>Association for Women’s Rights in Development</td>
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<td>BONELA</td>
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<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community-based organisation</td>
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<td>CCM</td>
<td>Country Coordinating Mechanism</td>
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<td>CREA</td>
<td>Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action</td>
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<td>FRIDA</td>
<td>Flexibility Resources Inclusivity Diversity Action</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>NSWP</td>
<td>Global Network of Sex Work Projects</td>
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<td>PCB</td>
<td>Programme Coordinating Board</td>
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<td>SCDI</td>
<td>Center for Supporting Community Development Initiatives</td>
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<td>Sexual and reproductive health and rights</td>
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Available evidence reveals that sex workers are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and that they frequently lack adequate access to services. On average, they are thirteen times more at risk of HIV compared with the general population. Sex workers are often marginalised and stigmatised by the societies in which they live. In numerous ways, these factors contribute to their vulnerability to HIV. Not only inconsistent condom use means that sex workers are at particular risk of HIV transmission, but social and legal factors also provide the basis for increased vulnerability.

In many countries, sex workers operate in a criminalised or legally oppressing setting. Within these environments, human rights violations against sex workers are considered one of the key determinants of HIV acquisition and transmission risk. Violence is the major factor in vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, mostly by police and clients, but also by their community members and health workers. It can be of a physical nature (e.g. beatings), sexual (e.g. rape), economical (e.g. bribes), or emotional (e.g. stigmatisation, discrimination). Together, these forms of violence prevent sex workers from gaining access to health and other services, support and information that they need in order to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS. For example, stigma in healthcare settings, such as offensive remarks from healthcare workers and discriminating policies, limit sex workers’ access to healthcare. Moreover, law enforcement strategies, such as arrests and confiscation of condoms, are key barriers to HIV prevention efforts for sex workers worldwide.

The sex work community has been at the forefront of the response to HIV since the start of the epidemic. Sex workers have organised themselves to deliver services to their peers and advocate for the fulfilment of their human rights. Research and decades of experience demonstrate that in countries where health systems are supported by civil society and communities, remarkable progress can be achieved in the HIV response (STOP AIDS Alliance 2017). Sex worker-led responses specifically have proven to be most effective in addressing underlying social and structural barriers to their health and human rights (WHO et al. 2012; WHO et al.; 2013). Therefore, the success of reaching the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 fast track targets by 2020 – and ultimately the target of ending AIDS by 2030 included in the Sustainable Development Goals – heavily depends on community action.

However, despite plenty of evidence that community responses result in positive health outcomes, sex worker groups and networks face challenges in obtaining funding for HIV prevention programmes. Overall, we see a general decrease in available funding from international donors for key populations. While key population members and their sexual partners account for 47 per cent of new HIV infections globally, an estimated 2 per cent of all HIV funding are spent on these groups (UNAIDS & Stop AIDS Alliance 2015). It is even more challenging to obtain funding for community-led organisations that operate in countries where it is illegal to register. As a result, they have very limited opportunities to access government funding. A study by Red Umbrella Fund reported that only 18 per cent of the sex worker-led organisations and groups accessed funding from government institutions.¹

¹ www.redumbrellafund.org/report/
Moreover, certain conditions related to donor or institutional funding, such as complicated application mechanisms, unrealistic reporting requirements and donor priorities that do not match realities on the ground, pose additional barriers for communities to access funding to run sex worker-led programmes.

Aidsfonds follows the normative guidance given by WHO to implement community-led programmes. In most cases, the organisation works directly with sex worker-led organisations. However, Aidsfonds uses hosting relationships to fund community-led groups in complex environments where they, for example, cannot register as an organisation. Hosting relationships are used for a multitude of other reasons as well, such as when community-led groups do not have an appropriate organisational structure (e.g. financial system) in place or do not meet the capacity criteria to implement quality programmes, but also to strengthen the capacity of sex worker-led organisations. Currently, Aidsfonds’ sex worker programme works with hosting relationships in its three international programmes: Hands Off!, focusing on reducing violence against sex workers in Southern Africa; the lobby and advocacy programme Partnership to Inspire, Transform and Connect the HIV response (PITCH); the Bridging the Gaps programme, focusing on the health and human rights of key populations.

One of the partners of the Hands Off programme identified the need to study the effectiveness of hosting relationships and how these could be improved in future. This need was echoed by Aidsfonds staff, as they often observe challenges between host organisations and sex worker-led organisations. It was therefore decided to document the role of hosting relationships in the HIV response. The research findings demonstrate the different steps host organisations and hosted organisations have taken towards independence, the different existing types of hosting relationships, the lessons learnt, best practices and the advantages and challenges related to each construction.
Chapter 2

Theoretical background

The theoretical background was based on themes and concepts derived from literature. It is important to note that scientific literature on hosting practices in the field of international development is non-existent. The themes and concepts are therefore mostly derived from grey literature and literature from the fields of business management, entrepreneurship and feminist studies. It draws on the Business Incubator Model in which nascent organisations (also called start-ups) are nested (hosted) before becoming autonomous and independent organisations.

2.1 Defining the process of incubation (hosting)

The idea of nurturing nascent organisations in order to help them develop can also be found in business literature. In that context, it is often referred to as the Business Incubator Model. In the Business Incubator Model, one organisation, the business incubator, functions as ‘a vehicle to bring an[other] organisation from its entrepreneurial beginning to become at least a collectivity with the goal of further growth’ (Vinokur-Kaplan and Connor 1997). The business incubator nurtures ideas and innovation, strengthening the nascent business to become independent and autonomous. The incubator ‘insulates the innovation process while ideas are in the early stages of development, protecting them from competing with the priorities of the broader business. It also protects the business until the risks and opportunities have been fully identified’ (Humala 2014 et al. 2014). This incubation process can take different forms, depending on the needs of the emerging business. Options include the provision of facilities such as office space, professional services such as counselling, access to networks and to capital, and the creation of support mechanisms and partnerships (Scaramuzzi 2002).

The measures of success for Business Incubator Models include the extent to which businesses can function autonomously as a result of the incubation and, obviously, the extent to which they are financially sustainable and profitable. Some other measures of success that are named in literature are the generation of jobs, social impact on public opinion, sales and public investment per year. These measures of success are where the model departs from hosting relationships, a point we will come back to later in the findings section.

![Figure 1: The process of incubation](image)

2.1.1 Rigid structure

The incubator often has a much more rigid structure than the incubated organisation. For example, in the established company, the procedures for launching a new programme can be formalised and bureaucratic to such an extent that it hampers the creative process of the starting company. We can recognise this challenge in the context of hosting sex worker organisations. Most funders of community-based organisations and responses to HIV/AIDS
are multilateral institutions, governments or foundations based in the global north. While these donors provide the much-needed funding for community responses in other parts of the world, they often have expectations that the recipients cannot meet, both in terms of the application process and monitoring and reporting results. Consequently, organisations that are able to best align with these expectations tend to receive the most funding, leaving many smaller organisations without financial support. In addition, the time and resources needed to meet the requirements set by donors can drain a starting organisation significantly, leaving less opportunity to work towards their primary aims.

A specific requirement for community organisations is registration. For many ‘grassroots’ movements and organisations defining an organisation (often through registration) is essential to access funds, resources and support. Although a growing number of organisations fund non-registered, informal collectives, there is still pressure from donors for community-led responses and initiatives to demonstrate financial accountability and good governance. Organisational registration is often regarded as a key indicator of such. However, this drive for registration negates the critical role that informal actors and collectives play in leading responses to HIV and advancing rights for sex workers. It is often the case that informal responses do not have an official status and they often include initiatives which governments refuse to recognise officially or register for a variety of political and other reasons (NGO delegation report 2016).

2.1.2 Risk aversion
A second consideration in the incubation relationship is that of risk. An established company will be more risk-averse than a ‘start-up’ (World Business Council For Sustainable Development 2016). An organisation that is just getting started has to take more risks and does not yet have the position to create structures to protect themselves from such risks. In the unstable and repressive legal and political environments in which many sex worker organisations operate, there can be risks both for the host and the hosted organisation. For the host this mostly takes the form of potential losses due to inefficiency or mismanagement on the part of the hosted. Host organisations will take measures to mitigate this risk, which often means the risk is shifted to the hosted. They, however, are even less resilient. One error in handling finances can mean the end of the organisation. Complex application procedures and processes can lead to the view that the incubated organisation is ‘incapable at best, or corrupt, at worst, even though the problem arises from a mismatch of requirements for the tasks at hand rather than from misconduct’ (NGO delegation report 2016).

2.1.3 Funding and resources
Because established companies often have strict accountability structures in place, they are not inclined to fund projects that have unclear expectations of results. New projects, however, by definition cannot accurately predict outcomes. Also, starting organisations have costs that cannot be directly linked to outcomes, such as training and facilities. When larger companies are not prepared for the costs incurred by incubating a smaller company, this may mean resources are strained (World Business Council For Sustainable Development 2016). When community organisations do manage to acquire funding, this is often on a project basis. As a result, they are always in need of long-term funding for core operations, which hampers their ability to become self-reliant. Another important aspect that is often underfunded is advocacy. Funding often is provided for projects that have clear-cut and practical goals, whereas advocacy is a long-term investment that is a core mechanism in the fight against HIV/AIDS (NGO delegation report 2016).
2.1.4 Collaboration
Incubation requires openness and honesty, which may be at odds with formal non-disclosure, intellectual property protection processes within companies. The two companies in the incubation relationship need to create a mutually beneficial relationship based on collaboration in order to stimulate innovation. Also, the roles, responsibilities, and ownership of products of this relationship need to be clarified from the start. A key aspect of this clarity is about ‘graduating’ from the incubating relationship, which can be specified as graduation policies, including time limits, and the type, amount or value of services that are to be provided by the incubator during the incubation process. All these considerations are just as relevant for sex worker-led initiatives as they are for starting businesses. Being hosted by a different organisation can impact the ownership felt by the community in the response to HIV/AIDS and reduce their leadership in the design of the process, implementation and evaluation (NGO delegation report 2016). It is important for sex workers to have a leading role in the actions they are organising.

2.1.5 Capacity
Larger companies and smaller companies will have staff with different training levels and capabilities, and this will need to be managed carefully to ensure staff meet their full capacity (World Business Council For Sustainable Development 2016).
2.1.6 Culture
Related to the aforementioned points is culture. Established companies have an established culture. New organisations are still creating their own culture and need room to do this. For this reason, some social movements choose to remain autonomous. As the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) and Flexibility Resources Inclusivity Diversity Action (FRIDA) noted in their report on the state of young feminist organising, 33 per cent of organisations involved in the study that were unregistered argued it was a political choice to not register (AWID and FRIDA 2017). Young feminist organisations argue that they favour a more informal and collective approach to organising rather than a formal, hierarchical structure of registered organisations.

2.1.7 Creating a conducive environment beyond incubation
The last consideration in an incubation relationship is that of creating a conducive environment beyond incubation (Humala et al. 2014). Organisations never operate in a social or political vacuum. During the incubation process, both organisations need to consider what environment the starting organisation will ‘graduate’ into. What factors in this wider context might be problematic and what can the incubator do in order to ease the transition away from the incubation?

In the context of social activism and human rights advocating, safety is an important aspect of this wider environment. Examples of this are clear in the feminist movements. They have long faced the threat of surveillance, control and physical threat in response to their work. They are routinely monitored by intelligence agencies, paramilitary and political groups, and the expression of that surveillance can be violent (Ford and Steward 2015). This attention to potential dangers as a result of actions taken by a movement and the need to protect against these dangers is also essential for sex worker organisations. Safety and security are also about creating, providing and accessing safe spaces, ‘spaces where we can form a community and develop practical ways to strategize, together, on how to keep going... how to stay safe’ (Barry 2011). As has been mentioned before, a particular safety consideration for sex workers is the fact that they often are criminalised and, therefore, cannot always rely on help from governments and may face persecution, such as arrests, raids of offices, frozen bank accounts and travel restrictions when they openly state their mission of advocating the rights of sex workers and nurturing the needs of those living with HIV/AIDS. Although the Business Incubator Model provides us with a framework to analyse host relationships, it is important to acknowledge that this is a business model and therefore might have its limitations in application in the NGO sector in general, human rights activist organisations more specifically, and the sex worker organisations in particular. This potential misfit is largely due to the different goals of the organisations involved and a lack of appreciation for the complex environment in which sex workers operate. In the next section we will consider these limitations of the Business Incubator Model and take a look at other movements in order to complement the discussion.

2.2 Three stages of hosting
This section considers the key learnings from similar hosting relationships from the field of business and entrepreneurship. It is important to acknowledge that this paragraph is based on a business model and, therefore, the aims of the profit-making and non-profit sector may appear at odds, but there are critical lessons to be drawn that could be applied to non-profit hosting relationships.

In the Business Incubator Model, the incubators are ‘a vehicle to mentor an organisation from
its entrepreneurial beginning to become at least a collectivity with the goal of further growth’ (Vinokur-Kaplan and Connor 1997). The Business Incubator Model nurtures ideas and innovation to strengthen the nascent business to be independent and autonomous.

The model ‘insulates the innovation process while ideas are in the early stages of development, protecting them from the necessities a mature business would require. In turn, it also protects the business until all risks and opportunities have been fully identified and organisations can mitigate these on their own’ (World Bank 2014). The measures of success for the Business Incubator Model are the extent to which businesses can function autonomously as a result of the incubation and, obviously, the extent to which they are financially sustainable and profitable.

• The World Bank (2014) has identified three stages that guide the process of creating effective and sustainable hosts, (also called incubators) (see figure 2):
  • the inception phase (also called admission), because how a construction is created and by whom this is initiated can deeply affect its quality and shape;
  • the hosting practices (also called incubator process), including agreements, values and standard practices; and
  • in some constructions between hosts and sex worker-led organisations there will also be a third stage, the so-called ‘adoption of exit strategy’. This stage is critical for sex worker-led organisations that work toward autonomy and independence (World Bank 2014). However, this is not the case for all informal community-led organisations, as some favour a more informal and collective approach of organising, rather than a formal, hierarchical structure often used by registered organisations (FRIDA 2017).

Figure 2: Schematic overview of the research. Different stages of hosting and strategies and their effects on the quality of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) (including HIV) programmes for sex workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inception</td>
<td>Shared vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosting practices</td>
<td>Agency and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption of exit strategy</td>
<td>Clarity of purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transformative leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collective approach</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge creation and sharing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The means to an end</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exit policy</td>
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</table>
2.2.1 Stage 1: Inception phase
The starting point for an effective hosting relationship is having clarity of its purpose. This interlinks with what a sex worker-led organisation needs to effectively implement a programme: fiscal, physical or technical support, or a combination of the three. This again highly depends on donor demands. The World Bank recommends that the hosted organisation (in this case sex worker-led organisations) should receive the agency and power to select an appropriate host and should be in the lead to develop a clear relationship in which roles and responsibilities are identified and clarified together with the host. In practice, however, sex worker-led organisations are often not driving this inception phase. The research findings show which challenges this causes for the quality of hosting relationships, the SRHR (including HIV) programmes and the sex worker community itself.

Roles and responsibilities
Drawing on the Business Incubator Model, as well as the learning from the feminist movement, the following roles and responsibilities are recommended:

Host organisation:
• Providing leadership, capacity and support to the hosted in an accountable and transparent manner;
• Providing resources and space for the hosted;
• Role-modelling promising practice in organisational development and growth;
• Nurturing and mentoring the leadership of the hosted organisation;
• Developing and documenting learning and knowledge;
• Advocating for a conducive working environment.

The sex worker-led organisation (hosted):
• Developing, learning and strengthening leadership within the sex worker-led organisation;
• Supporting the host organisation in working more effectively on programming for sex workers (and other groups);
• Represent sex workers’ voices in the work and decision-making of the host and hosted organisations;
• Strengthening financial and governance accountability (World Bank 2014 and FRIDA 2017).

Other stakeholders (such as global and regional networks and donors):
Whilst it has been acknowledged that host organisations should play a role in capacity strengthening, donors have responsibilities as well. There are many opportunities and initiatives that offer support to sex worker-led organisations, such as the Sex Worker Academy Africa (SWAA). The SWAA is a ground-breaking learning programme for community empowerment and capacity building, led by and for sex workers. The Academy brings together national teams of sex workers from across Africa to develop organising skills, learn best practices, stimulate national sex worker movements, and strengthen the regional network (Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) 2015). In addition, sex worker-led organisations receive technical support from regional networks (e.g. African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA), Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW) and Sex Workers’ Rights Advocacy Network (SWAN)) and the global network NSWP. Another key element of establishing a good working relationship is having a shared vision between the two organisations. This includes joint working practices, as well as the attainment of joint strategic goals, for example both organisations work towards decriminalisation of sex work. An inspiring shared vision based on personal and collective reflexive learning provides space to ask questions about the kinds of organisations and worlds the group wants to create and creates a more even playing field on which to take collective action (movement building).
This requires strong and transformative leadership from both the host and sex worker-led organisations (Oxfam 2014), even more so in this specific study than in the incubator model, because the hosting relationships between national and international NGOs and sex worker-led organisations are accountable to a wider, marginalised and excluded community. Feminist literature emphasises the need to analyse power dynamics within the collective to ensure that individual actors can actually ‘shape [...] the practice of leadership’ within feminist collectives or organisations. The analysis of power goes beyond the ‘social structures of power and control that create and compound women’s vulnerability and insecurity’ and instead seeks to locate power ‘within’ and ‘to’ as a process of reclaiming agency and asserting power (Just Associates (JASS) 2013). Oxfam America (2013) proposes that there are several common themes of transformational leadership: (1) modelling feminist purpose and principles; (2) inspiring shared vision based on personal and collective reflexivity; (3) empowering and enabling others to act; (4) challenging patriarchal norms and oppressive power; (5) encouraging integration of heart, mind and body. Under each of these themes is a checklist of activities and areas in which capacity needs can be identified and addressed (Wakefield 2017). Capacity development for strengthening sustainable and transformative organisations involves creating access and opportunities for new and emerging feminist activists to represent themselves and have access to spaces of power and influence (Batliwala and Friedman 2013).
2.2.2 Stage 2: Hosting practices
In the second stage, the added value of hosting practices is reviewed in terms of internal functioning (host and sex worker-led organisation) and external outcomes (the end beneficiaries). The internal function of a hosting construction includes key elements such as organisational and technical capacities of both host and sex worker-led organisation, including strategy, governance and sustainability. Grey literature suggests that internal functioning thrives on a collaborative approach that ‘allows organisations to connect to the most promising ideas and owners, supported by the right assets and skill sets. This will result in the following benefits to your company: sustainable business growth, future fit, knowledge creation and sharing, and accelerated development’.

The emphasis on creating a mutually beneficial relationship premised on collaboration is key to stimulating and supporting innovation (Oxfam 2017 and World Bank 2014). As noted above, informal community-led groups are innovative and by their very nature, they challenge the status quo. Therefore, an approach that centres on nurturing is very critical (Oxfam 2017). Moreover, there should be a clear understanding between host and sex worker-led organisations that hosting is a process of learning and developing – making mistakes and embracing the challenge that hosting possesses, as well as the opportunities it creates. The World Bank (2014) recommends that it is important to create and share knowledge between hosts and sex worker-led organisations.

To measure the external performance of the hosting construction and to what extent it has had an added value for the society at large, the World Bank (2014) recommends a performance assessment. By using a performance assessment element, this study reviewed the effects of the hosting process on the quality of the SRHR (including HIV) programmes for sex workers (World Bank 2014).

2.2.3 Stage 3: Adoption of exit strategy
In the last stage, the relationship between the host and the sex worker-led organisation is defined by its end. In other words: when or on which criteria should the hosting construction be dissolved. This needs to be clearly defined and communicated between all involved parties (host, sex worker-led organisation and donor). An exit policy should include time limits, description of the appropriate hosting type, amount or value of services that are to be provided by the host to work towards autonomy or another purpose if autonomy is not the end it itself (World Bank 2014). Services include capacity and organisational development, fundraising and support in registration.

Although a growing number of donors fund non-registered and informal collectives, there is still pressure from most major donors to become registered as a community-led organisation. Donors perceive this as indicators of good governance and financial accountability (UNAIDS and Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) 2016). Therefore, many ‘grassroots’ movements and community-led organisations are obliged to register to access funds and resources and receive national and international support (FRIDA 2017). Literature shows that the formalisation of an organisation through registration compromises the fluid and organic nature of informal collectives and movements (JASS 2013). It negates the critical role that informal actors and collectives play in leading key responses to HIV and advancing rights for sex workers. In addition, many governments refuse to officially recognise and grant registration for a variety of political reasons (UNAIDS and PCB 2016). This leaves community-led organisations with limited support or safety nets. Therefore, the drive for registration is criticised by feminist organisations as it prevents community-led responses from accessing essential and necessary funds and it also does not reflect the nature of these community-led responses (FRIDA 2017).
In contexts of instability and repressive legal and political environments, there may be a risk of either registering or not registering. If groups or collectives are providing services and accessing funds without registration or ‘proper authorisation’, they may be at risk of arrest or detention. In the contexts of this research, sex workers are often ‘criminalised’ and therefore, may face additional persecution by the authorities, such as arrest, raids of offices, frozen bank accounts and travel restrictions (UNAIDS and PCB 2016). On the other hand, receiving foreign donor funds can also be a risk, since local grantees can ‘suffer intimidation, confiscation of assets, detention or prosecution’ as well as reputational damage for receiving foreign funding (interview with participant).

2.3 Barriers of incubation

There are multiple barriers identified that influence the effectiveness of hosting relationships:

- Established organisations (hosts) often have rigid structures that do not allow much flexibility, something that most informal groups and start-ups need to flourish;
- Hosts are more likely to be risk-averse than a new ‘start-up’;
- Lack of funding and resources to build and sustain meaningful host relationships. If hosts (or donors) are not prepared for the costs incurred by incubating a smaller organisation, this may mean resources are strained;
- Lack of collaboration between hosts and sex worker-led organisations. Hosting requires openness and honesty, which may be at odds with fundraising processes that are highly competitive within and between organisations (Vinokur-Kaplan and Connor 1997);
- Lack of leadership leads to risk-averse behaviours and structures. Hosting relationships need leadership that supports both successes and failures. Both hosts and sex worker-led organisations need to be allowed to fail and learn without being judged negatively by its own management or by third parties, like donors. While many organisations claim to embrace failure, their performance management and reward mechanisms often contradict this, leading staff and partners to remain risk-averse (Oxfam 2017);
- Hosts and sex worker-led organisations will have staff with different capabilities. Management needs to ensure staff meet their full capacity (Vinokur-Kaplan and Connor 1997);
- Another risk is having different values, principles and priorities between host and sex worker-led organisations, a so-called culture clash. This can lead to distrust, frustration and ineffective hosting practices (Oxfam 2017).
Chapter 3
Research questions

The main research question is broken down into six sub-questions, which are enumerated below.

3.1 Main research question

What is the effectiveness of hosting relationships for sex worker-led organisations on becoming strong and independent entities that are able to claim their rights to end violence and HIV among sex workers?

3.2 Sub research questions

1. What are the different hosting relationships?
2. What are the advantages and challenges of each hosting construction?
3. What are the most efficient and effective approaches for hosting organisations?
4. What are the most efficient and effective approaches (steps) sex worker-led organisations and networks take in the process of becoming strong and independent?
5. What are the best practices and pitfalls in hosting sex worker-led organisations and networks?
6. How can the different hosting relationships be improved?
Chapter 4
Methodology

The aim of this study was to gain insights in the current situation and the way forward regarding hosting relationships within the context of two large sex worker programmes: Hands Off! and Bridging the Gaps. In order to provide the possibility to ask in-depth questions, a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods were used.

This research was the first research on this subject and had an explorative intention. It is an operational research, meaning findings will be used for programme implementation to improve current hosting relationships and learn from in the future. Therefore, the approach of the research was an inductive approach. Furthermore, the process of sampling, data collection and data analysis was iterative (Gray 2014). This means data was gathered, coded and analysed alternately. Therefore, adaption of the research questions was possible in order to optimise the research throughout the entire research process. This provided richness of data.

4.1 Setting and population

In this paragraph, the settings and population in the research are described. The settings of the research were ten countries, because these countries have partner organisations of the Bridging the Gaps and Hands Off! programmes and ensured a diverse sample of hosting relationships and independent sex worker-led organisations (some of which were previously hosted). The study includes five countries where a larger NGO hosted a registered or unregistered sex worker-led organisation (Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Vietnam). In five countries (Uganda, Kenya, Namibia, Ukraine, and Myanmar) the hosting relationship had previously ended and sex worker-led organisations were registered and functioning autonomously. For most organisations, this was the first time they had hosted another organisation. There were notable exceptions, including in Kenya. In Kenya, organisations have more experience with hosting practices. Here, sex worker-led organisations have become independent and now even host other organisations themselves.

With regard to the population within the research, the inclusion of a broad range of participants from different stakeholders was an important goal in the recruitment process in order to collect accurate and versatile data. The sampling strategy was purposive sampling (Gray 2014). The participants were recruited by the interviewer in cooperation with Aidsfonds, country partners, NSWP and three regional networks: APNSW, ASWA and SWAN. They acted as key informants in order to include people that had the most knowledge regarding the hosting relationships. In addition, sex workers that were members of the sex worker-led network or organisations were involved to enrich and validate the findings (see figure 3). In the four countries where focus group discussions were conducted, one member of the research team liaised with the sex worker-led organisation to identify participants for the focus group discussion. In addition, the research team presented findings to the majority of organisations involved in the study to validate and confirm the findings at an event organised by Aidsfonds for the 2018 International AIDS Conference.
4.2 Data collection

The participants were approached to take part in the research by phone, email or in person. All interviewees were interviewed by at least one member of the research team (consisting of three researchers). The data was collected anonymously and permission was asked to record the interview for data analysis. Sex workers’ safety and security were central in this study. The focus group discussions were conducted in safe spaces. These were identified with the support of organisations in-country. Staff members of the host organisations and sex worker-led organisations did not attend the focus group discussions with sex workers. Interview recordings were encrypted and inaccessible to any individual beyond the research team. Researchers liaised with national and local sex worker-led organisations to provide a clear referral pathway for legal, sexual and reproductive health and HIV services if this was necessary.

During the writing of the report, it was decided not to include the names of organisations and, in most cases, to even leave out references to countries. This decision was made because some participants felt unsafe in regards to what would happen if findings of this study would be shared with their host organisations.

A sex worker mentioned their discomfort about the discussion being recorded:

“For us to mention some of the issues is difficult as it is being recorded. Because we had a meeting with donors and in the evening I got a call asking what we were saying to the donor. Although we had signed a confidentiality form, the information of what we had said was leaked. I was told that I had messed up for myself and a lot more.”
To study the different types of hosting relationships the following methodology was used:

- Four explorative key informant interviews were held with the global and regional sex worker-led networks to inform the design, specify research questions and pre-test research tools. The interviews were open-ended to encourage discussion rather than to specifically elicit responses to each research question.

- Twenty-eight in-depth interviews with directors or coordinators of host organisations and sex worker-led organisations were held. In addition, some programme and finance officers were involved. An interview guide was developed to be specific enough to adequately encompass the key research questions, but flexible enough for unanticipated themes to emerge. The interviews were semi-structured to allow participants to share their experiences.

- Four field visits (in South Africa, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe) were made to conduct nine focus group discussions with 72 sex workers. In South Africa, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe, male sex workers participated in focus group discussions. In Zimbabwe and South Africa, transgender sex workers were also included (see table 1). Main topics were: awareness of hosting relationships, power relations, effectiveness for HIV programmes, building the sex worker movement and improvements for the future.

- A survey with 44 sex workers (see table 1) was carried out. Main topics included: hosting relationships, benefits, challenges and recommendations. The survey was printed and disseminated (online was not possible in most contexts). As a result, it was only possible to share the survey in Southern Africa (Zimbabwe and South Africa), where the researchers deemed it was safe and ethical to conduct data collection in such a way. The survey was developed in English and translated into isiNdebele and isiXhosa.

### 4.3 Analysis

The study findings consist mostly of qualitative data gathered through interviews and focus group discussions. Quantitative data gathered through a survey has been used to validate the qualitative findings. After the interviews and focus group discussions, the recorded data was transcribed into written form. After the transcription, the data was analysed using a theoretical thematic analysis method. This is a method for identifying and analysing themes within qualitative data (Braun and Clarke 2006).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Female sex workers</th>
<th>Male sex workers</th>
<th>Transgender sex workers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overview of participants in focus group discussions
First, the data was coded with a coding sheet. The order of the coding was open coding and selective coding (Gray 2014). The themes found during the analysis process were compared to the themes that were previously developed. During the analysis phase, most of the previously developed themes were recognised in the data, like capacity building and the need to have clarity of purpose of the hosting construction. After the transcription, analysis and summary of the data were finished, the recorded data was destroyed.

4.4 Reliability and validity

Validity can be divided into internal and external validity. Internal validity is, among others, richness of the data (Payne and Williams 2005). The design of the research contributed to the internal validity with open research questions and the use of snowball sampling to collect rich and in-depth information. External validity refers to the generalisation of the results of this research to other populations and countries. The generalisation to other countries was low, because host relationships are highly context-dependent. However, multiple findings were comparable between the ten countries, suggesting that comparable data might be found in other contexts.

It is important to note the limitations of the research methodology:
- It was often difficult for interviewees to distinguish between the programmes for sex workers and the work of the sex worker-led organisations when asked for details about programme design, implementation and reporting to donors. Most sex workers were not aware of how these tasks were shared between the host and the hosted. As a result, attribution and contribution were difficult to ascertain, which meant it was hard to assess the effectiveness of the hosting construction on programming for sex workers.
- Staff members of ten countries have been involved in this study through a questionnaire and in-depth interviews through Skype. However, the sex worker community was only involved in four countries (South Africa, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe) through focus group discussions.
- Identifying neutral translators was sometimes not possible. In some countries, the research team did have to use translators from host organisations, which may compromise some of the findings. However, the authors provided a detailed brief for the translator to emphasise the importance of the translator understanding the subject matter and not compromising the findings with bias.
- The survey consists of a limited sample. It was difficult to share the survey online and with a wider number of sex workers. It takes time and trust to meaningfully involve the sex worker community. In Zimbabwe and South Africa, the research team already had trust relationships with the sex worker community and therefore was able to generate higher amounts of data.

Some sex workers raised safety and security concerns about participating in the research. One sex worker commented: ‘We are so afraid to speak because of the leak and the threats’. It was, therefore, decided not to share the ‘audio records’ with Aidsfonds, but only anonymous transcripts.
Chapter 5

Results

After analysis of the data set, three stages were identified, each with its own set of themes: (1) the inception phase, (2) the hosting practices, and (3) the so-called adoption of exit strategies. The results are described below per stage.

5.1 Defining host relationships

Based on the study findings, four types of hosting relationships were identified (see figure 4). In Aidsfonds programmes, a fifth type was identified, ‘a service provider that meaningfully involves sex worker communities’, but this type is not included in the study as it does not involve a clear hosting construction.

In addition, the study identified a sixth type, ‘nesting’, during the inception phase when sex worker leadership is provided through a service provider or a national or international NGO and, after some time, a sex worker-led organisation would emerge. However, this situation was not very common, and it can be best described as a pre-stage of hosting during the inception phase. For these reasons it was not explicitly included in this study, although the results discuss how sex worker-led organisations emerged. In figure 4, the term ‘space’ is used to indicate that the sex worker-led organisation is being physically hosted at the host organisation’s office or premises.

In some cases, organisations can be categorised in multiple hosting types. The boundaries between these types are fluid and can fluctuate over time. For example, one sex worker-led organisation has secured their own funds to implement programmes, but it is still within a full hosting relationship. It is also not a linear process. Sex worker-led organisation Aye Myanmar Association (AMA), for example, transitioned from fiscal hosting to partnership in two years, whereas some organisations remained in a full hosting situation for almost ten years. The hosting practices or even the type could change based on annual work plans, for example when the focus shifts to different expertise that is new to the sex worker-led organisation. The hosting construction is also influenced by external factors. For example, decrease in funding or changes in funding patterns can lead to decisions to focus on activities related to implementation instead of hosting practices.
5.1.1 Why are hosting relationships necessary?
This study explored hosting relationships in a wide variety of contexts. However, in all contexts, sex work or activities associated with sex work (such as running a brothel) were either criminalised or sex workers faced civil or criminal sanctions for engaging in sex work.

• One of the main reasons was the context which prevented sex workers from registering. In Vietnam, sex worker-led organisations are not able to register, or in the case of Botswana, the registration was blocked by the authorities. In other countries, such as South Africa, it took some time for organisations to get registration. There are also countries where sex worker-led networks were able to register without major challenges. For example, in Zimbabwe, the host organisation has supported the registration process of two sex worker-led organisations. In other contexts, it is still considered too difficult and risky for the sex worker-led organisations to register due to external threats, including raids and arrests by the police, further sanctions or risk to the community as a result of exposure or media attention. Registration is considered critical to be able to ‘access national and international donor funds’, for ‘recognition by the government of the work that we are doing so we can work more freely’ or to be able to open a bank account and receive funds.

• Another reason is that poor financial systems are in place. Some sex worker-led organisations are registered, but are still part of a hosting construction because the organisation does not meet the donor threshold or minimum standards to receive and manage funds. All sex worker-led organisations commented that financial systems and governance had been a weakness at the beginning of the establishment of their organisation or collective and some sex worker-led organisations mentioned this continued to be a weakness in their organisational development from the perspective of the donor.

• Hosting can be the result of involving sex workers in an NGO-led programme. In at least four countries, the current host played an important role in the development of the sex worker-led organisation, for example sex workers mobilised (1) as a result of being involved in a sexual and reproductive health, HIV or legal programme for sex workers funded by a host organisation, (2) as a desire by sex workers to have more ownership and control in response to an existing programme for sex workers ran by the host and (3) as a recognition by a host organisation that sex workers were the experts of their own needs and therefore needed a sex worker-led approach.

“Some organisations won’t be able to establish themselves without the support of larger and more experienced organisations.”

Most of the sex worker-led organisations mentioned the inability to register as the main reason for the need of a host construction. As one sex worker coordinator commented: ‘We can’t get donor funds, because we don’t have systems and structures in place, so we need support’. This is exacerbated by increased donor restrictions, which have been implemented in response to concerns about mismanagement of funds and corruption in the civil society sector. It is becoming more important that sex worker-led organisations are able to demonstrate a high level of competence around financial management as they are ‘competing with larger and more established organisations’, according to one regional representative. However, leaders of the sex worker-led organisations also acknowledged they could not secure funding without having robust financial systems in place and host organisations were important in supporting sex worker-led organisations to manage funds.
5.2 Full and partial hosting

In this paragraph, two types of hosting will be discussed: (1) Full hosting: The host provides a physical office space, is a fiscal conduit and programmes are implemented jointly and (2) Partial hosting: The sex worker-led organisation is in its own space, but implements programmes jointly with the host, and the host is the fiscal conduit. In this research, six out of twelve sex worker-led organisations are in full or partial hosting relationships.

5.2.1 Clarity of purpose

In all five countries with full or partial hosting, the host organisation, the sex worker-led organisation and the community it represents have different understandings of the hosting construction. However, in four countries the purpose of the hosting relationship had been clear for the host and sex worker-led organisation from the beginning. All four of these organisations have now become autonomous organisations. In one country, the purpose of the hosting construction changed over time. This created challenges, such as conflict and misunderstanding between the two organisations. In general, the hosts define the purpose of the relationship in terms of strengthening the capacity of sex worker-led organisations. Some respondents from host organisations understood the relationship to be about ‘educating’ the sex worker-led organisation on how to run an organisation. For one organisation hosting sex worker-led organisation(s) became a strategic objective and thus core to its very existence and purpose. This latter organisation was an autonomous sex worker-led organisation that intended to host organisations in the future.

None of the host organisations has policies in place to guide the hosting relationship, for example, a document that explains roles and responsibilities between the host organisation and the sex worker-led organisation. Yet, all
organisations have terms of reference for the hosting construction, but these are more an overview of the relationship rather than a practical guide for implementation. One host organisation mentioned that ‘our board are working on a policy because it has come up that we need an overall standard policy within the organisation for hosting these collectives as we go further’. One interviewee from a regional organisation underlined the importance and need for hosting to support nascent and emerging collectives. However, as one sex worker coordinator highlighted, the hosting relationship often does not meet expectations and can be disempowering and exacerbate feelings of low self-esteem:

“There was no technical support and mentoring as agreed upon. Some of us are coming from the streets, we are coming from the brothels. So, we were not familiar with being employed, reporting, office work. So, we also have that low self-esteem, we are afraid to ask for help. Asking for help is good, but not all of us can do it.”

This quote shows that host organisations and sex worker-led organisations do not necessarily share the same expectations and values. It is interesting to note that this quote also indicates
that the formality and rigidity of registered NGOs, as identified in the literature, can be barriers to incubation.

Although all interviewees indicated to be aware of the hosting situation, there were misunderstandings about the purpose of being hosted. In total, 25 per cent of sex workers indicated that they did not understand the relationship at all (see figure 5).

Having multiple understandings between different stakeholders can lead to different expectations. The relationship between a host organisation and a sex worker-led organisation becomes problematic when the ways of working are not formalised and documented, for example, what steps to take in conflict resolution. Most sex worker-led organisations identified a need for clarity on how to approach conflict resolution between the host and sex worker-led organisations.

Mechanisms were not always formalised or explicit; often, a person within the organisation (manager or director) will mediate and support in case of any complaints or disputes. However, the mediator is normally a manager or more senior person within the host organisation rather than an individual from the sex worker-led organisation. Both host organisations and sex worker-led organisations mentioned seeking guidance from the host about resolving problems within the host construction. As one programme manager from a host organisation commented: ‘We have to support them a lot with solving problems in the network’. The learning and development during the process of conflict resolution or mediation are not documented and most interviewees were not able to identify key learnings.

The World Bank (2014) and WHO et al. (2014) state that a shared vision is needed to build trust to cultivate a programme that is eventually run entirely by the individuals that established the programme, in this case, sex workers. Building trust involves treating sex workers with dignity and respect, listening to and addressing their concerns, and working with them throughout the process of developing and implementing an intervention. One respondent mentioned the need for this shared vision to be reflected throughout both organisations and not just at the leadership level. It is important not to assume that NGOs are democratic and anti-oppressive spaces. A shared vision in hosting sex worker-led organisations is more than just ensuring programmatic outputs, but rather creating a safe and conducive working environment for sex worker leaders to feel supported and nurtured. The sex worker-led organisations did not necessarily feel protected by formal agreements such as the terms of reference. Some of the sex workers did not feel that the relationship between the host and the sex worker-led organisation was understood by all the staff of the host, as one sex worker coordinator commented:

“It depends on an individual staff member and the relationship would be sometimes good and sometimes not good, but this (difficulty in the relationship) will just be caused by one individual in the host organisation.”
5.2.2 Capacity strengthening
In this study, two forms of capacity strengthening were identified: (1) formal training programmes and workshops on specific technical topics, and (2) organisational capacity building through mentoring, shadowing and coaching. Many host organisations identified providing capacity strengthening as their key role in the hosting construction, as one manager explained: ‘Our main support is capacity strengthening – support sex worker CBOs with capacity building’. However, the capacity strengthening was generally limited to training on HIV, safer sex and safety and security.

Formal training programmes
The majority of sex workers surveyed (68 per cent) have received some form of capacity strengthening from the host organisation. Topics include safety and security, SRHR, violence prevention, and safer sex and HIV awareness. The majority of sex workers (29 per cent) received capacity strengthening on safe sex and HIV awareness and 24 per cent had received training on safety and security (see figure 6). The majority was very positive about the quality of capacity strengthening received.

The least amount of training had been on lobbying and advocacy. Of the respondents, six per cent had received training on other topics, which included leadership, economic empowerment and working with the media.

Mentoring, coaching and shadowing
Another form of capacity strengthening that sex worker-led organisations received from their host is organisational capacity strengthening. Organisational capacity is mostly strengthened by using coaching, mentoring of sex worker leaders and coordinators and by shadowing a staff member of the host organisation. Most sex worker-led organisations received support on financial management. The staff members of both organisations have regular meetings to develop joint budgets, work plans and proposals for funding. Most hosting relationships use a combination of coaching, mentoring and

Capacity strengthening received

![Figure 6: Types of capacity strengthening activities received (n=44)](image-url)
shadowing with the goal of learning through practice. Formal training was less common, and there are no documented training programmes on financial management. In none of the organisations is there an agreed-upon plan for capacity strengthening. This is not yet formally organised between the host organisations and sex worker-led organisations. Yet, the World Bank (2014) and WHO et al. (2014) recommend multiple forms of capacity strengthening to build effective hosting relationships: leadership, organisational development, financial management and economic empowerment. None of the partners involved included capacity strategies for sex worker-led organisations to become financially independent, for example developing an asset list, which is critical for the exit phase.

5.2.3 Power relations and agency
Money and power are often directly linked in responses of sex worker-led organisations when discussing power relations between host and sex worker-led organisations. Especially, access to resources (including money) highlights existing power imbalances between the organisations. Having access to and ownership over funding underlines the extent to which sex worker-led organisations feel valued by the host and donor. If access and ownership are granted, sex worker-led organisations feel their contribution to the programme is recognised and acknowledged. One sex worker coordinator commented: ‘Grants are coming, money is coming, but you are not recognised. They will never mention that we did such work. And they [host organisation] get the money’. Sex worker-led organisations in a full hosting relationship feel that mostly the host organisation is benefitting from resources and funds received for sex worker programmes. In one of the organisations, sex worker staff felt that the resources were not divided or shared equally between host and sex worker-led organisation. One coordinator stated:

“In the sex worker movement there is a big challenge between us and the hosting organisation because the host organisation is the one who is benefitting from the funding, while sex workers are doing the work on the ground but they do not benefit financially.”
In addition, two sex worker coordinators commented on the differences in salaries:

“Sex workers are the ones doing more work, they are supposed to be credited and acknowledged. Even when it comes to salaries, you will find out that they are the ones getting the least amount of money. Whilst the host organisation managers are the ones being paid and benefitting from the money that was set out to fund the sex worker movement.”

In terms of resource mobilisation, some sex worker-led organisations noted the lack of control they had over funds. This was primarily due to the funds going directly to the host organisations as they are the contract partners with donors, because the sex worker-led organisations are not registered and hence do not have access to bank accounts. Even several registered sex worker-led organisations did not meet financial requirements of donors. A sex worker coordinator stated: ‘Funding will go directly to housing organisations [contract partners] and sometimes we do not have control over our finances, which is the main challenge we are experiencing’.

Sex worker-led organisations prefer to have their own processes in place to reach some level of control over finances. The lack of control over funding is synonymous with a broader feeling that whilst being hosted, some sex worker-led organisations do not feel they are able to work independently as a separate organisation. In addition, sex worker-led organisations feel lack of transparency in proposal writing for additional funds hinders them from becoming independent. Often they are not consulted or informed about proposals. One coordinator explained:

‘Transparency is also critical. When writing proposals, the sex workers need to be informed, they need to be told what the funding is for, what is their role'. As a result, one sex worker-led organisation notes, that being hosted can make sex workers feel disempowered:

“Sometimes, the movement might be unable to do what is required of them because the proposals might have been written on their behalf. The involvement of sex workers is important even if the proposal is only for the host organisation. If the proposal is for both the host and hosted organisation, the sex workers need to be consulted so that they can have an input.”

Finally, one of the key issues identified by all sex worker-led organisations, regardless of registration status, is the importance and necessity of having their own space. This is necessary to change the power imbalance between host organisations and sex worker-led organisations, since the sex workers can use this space to strategically work together and make agreements amongst themselves in a safe way. One coordinator mentioned: 'It means the staff from [the host organisation] now have to come to us and this gives us a sense of freedom'.

5.2.4 Transformative leadership
In this study, the issue of leadership is raised in four ways:

1. recruitment of leaders;
2. transformative leadership for movement building;
3. leadership and power;
4. meaningful involvement of sex worker communities.
Recruitment of leaders

This study found that the selection of a sex worker leader or coordinator is often not a transparent process. In one focus group discussion, a sex worker commented: ‘We were only told that [the sex worker-led organisation] now has a coordinator who will work in the host organisation’. Another sex worker mentioned that the decision to have a coordinator was not made by the sex worker community and there was ‘no meeting held’ to agree that this was necessary for the movement. Instead, it was the host organisation that posted a vacancy ‘for people to apply’. Even though this was a specific situation for one sex worker-led organisation, two other organisations indicated that their host had played a prominent role in the recruitment of coordinators for the sex worker-led organisations.

In addition, sex workers commented that there was little involvement in developing the organisation’s vision or strategic goals and most decisions were made ad-hoc without meaningful involvement of the sex worker community. Sex worker activists and coordinators spoke about feeling disempowered because they had not been consulted about ‘collaborative proposals’ and that activities are ‘dictated to us’ after ‘the funding had arrived’. One coordinator said: ‘The involvement of sex workers is important even if the proposal is only for the host organisation’. This remark referred to a host organisation that also implements programmes for sex workers themselves.

Transformative leadership for movement building

The lack of transparency, meaningful involvement of the sex worker community and the concern that some sex workers raised that they are not able to speak freely about the host or their organisation could negatively impact movement building. WHO et al. (2014) state that:

“Sex workers’ right to health is best upheld when healthcare providers and NGOs acknowledge that sex workers not only receive health services but also potentially provide services, and can therefore meaningfully participate in all stages of service development.”

One participant commented about the leadership in the organisation as follows:

“Why should it be me travelling all the time, me being the face of the collective all the time, but when we started it was nothing for us without us. So every time it [the sex worker-led organisation] should not be one person, the collective is not all about one person but about ten, fifteen or 20 people whose voices should be heard.”

One host organisation acknowledged this challenge, and once the board of the sex worker-led organisation identified participants for an opportunity, the host provided support to the sex workers to acquire identity documents.

Leadership and power

The coordinators and directors of the sex worker-led organisations involved expressed the importance of having the sex worker community ‘in control’ over activities and funding. However, sex workers expressed that existing hosting relationships exacerbate power imbalances between the staff of sex worker-led organisations (as being salaried and named ‘staff’, therefore perceived as having secure employment and greater access to opportunities) and the wider sex worker community, particularly around access to opportunities. There is no shared sense of
ownership or control over the sex worker-led organisation itself. Some sex workers voiced that only a few, mostly the coordinators and paid staff, benefitted from resources and opportunities programmes provide, and not the wider community.

There is a lack of transparency about ‘new members’ being recruited for the organisations. This lack of transparency results in members feeling disconnected from each other and the sex worker movement. One sex worker explained: ‘Some people didn’t strengthen anything; instead the movement has collapsed, division has killed the movement’. This refers back to the importance of accountability to the wider sex worker community, but equally to the need for transformative and inclusive leadership to ensure that this ‘division’ or hierarchy is mitigated. This did not occur in all hosting relationships; one host organisation noted: ‘We work more with sex workers and are involved in the network and mobilisation. Rather than just one person, we support the movement and this has made an important change.’ In this situation, the dynamics are shifted from a focus on individual leadership to collective leadership to promote meaningful involvement of the sex worker community.

**Meaningful involvement of sex workers**

The survey results show there is a very diverse response with 37 per cent of sex workers stating not being involved at all and 33 per cent being involved a lot by the sex worker-led organisation.

It shows that the perception on how sex workers are involved differentiates among individuals.

The same question is asked about meaningful involvement of sex workers by the host organisation. Here, the majority of sex workers does not feel meaningfully involved by the host organisation with 33 per cent of sex workers stating ‘not meaningfully involved at all’ and 23 per cent ‘not much’ (see figure 8).

Sex worker activists and coordinators spoke about feeling disempowered because they had not been consulted about ‘collaborative proposals’ and that activities were ‘dictated to us’ after ‘the funding had arrived’. One coordinator made the case that ‘the involvement of sex workers is important even if the proposal is only for the host organisation’, this point referring to host organisations delivering sex worker programmes. Yet, most host organisations stated that their access to the sex worker community has significantly grown as a result of the hosting construction. The benefits for the sex worker community of the host relationship are considerably less clear, as one participant commented: ‘We are not seen as the experts by NGOs except when we are being consulted’.

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**Figure 7: Level of meaningful involvement of sex worker community by sex worker-led organisation (n=44)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 8: Level of meaningful involvement of sex worker community by host organisation (n=44)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A coordinator further explained:

“So, sometimes our expertise and experience are downplayed by the host organisation and that has been unfair. We only get to hear such feedback when there are visitors where we are called in as the experts. That is when our experience and expertise is acknowledged by the host.”

This comment emphasises a critical point about the agency of sex workers in hosting relationships and the extent to which they experience benefits of being involved or not.

5.2.5 A collective approach
Having a collective approach between the host and sex worker-led organisation in programming is experienced as beneficial by staff of both organisations. Benefits are linked to being able to run effective programmes as well as providing direct support and services to the sex worker community.

Both host and sex worker-led organisations described joint planning and reporting as an effective way of working, because activities are needs-based and developed with involvement of the community. Often, it would mean that the strengths of different organisations are combined. This way, the relationship between host and sex worker-led organisations becomes mutually beneficial which stimulates collaboration and improves programme outcomes, for example an increase in number of sex workers reached with information and HIV testing and treatment. However, this is speculative as no interviewees could give specific examples of how programmes have improved. One sex worker coordinator stated: ‘The programme officers [from both organisations] sit down together and write the report to send to the programme manager’. In most full and partial hosting relationships, host and sex worker-led organisations co-implemented activities. Three sex worker-led organisations felt this was an effective way to learn how effective activities are designed and implemented. However, some sex worker-led organisations felt they were just delivering projects for the host organisation and not ‘our own projects’.

Joint advocacy was identified as one of the key benefits of the hosting relationship by both host and sex worker-led organisation. One host organisation commented that it was not always possible or safe for sex workers to openly lobby and advocate for sex workers’ needs and rights, so the host organisation would take a more prominent role in advocacy, particularly at the government level. But, in other situations, the sex worker-led organisations run advocacy programmes themselves and receive access to advocacy spaces through the host organisation. One host organisation noted:

“The benefits are enormous as sex workers have been able to organise. We are part of that, seeing a movement grow to take on the advocacy. Seeing sex workers take on the role of advocating for policy change is crucial in the sense that this change can be crucial to the work of sex workers in the country.”

In addition, three sex worker-led organisations have received support of their host organisations to successfully register as their own organisation. This is noted as a very important aspect of the host relationships for sex worker-led organisations. In these cases, registration does not mean the organisation could function autonomously, but it meant ‘we were now recognised as an organisation for sex workers’. ‘Another benefit is access for sex
workers to critical services: ‘They discuss and attend to health issues, like a sex worker who recently needed an operation, they provided for it’. The importance of accessing healthcare services should not be undermined, but the participant mentioned that this support had not necessarily been made available for all sex workers. Finally, the host organisations are willing to share technical resources with the sex worker-led organisations. As one director of a host organisation commented: ‘They [sex worker-led organisation] can have our policies; they don’t need to be reinvented, they can just adapt them’. In this case, the finance team has supported the sex worker-led organisation to prepare the paperwork, using the host organisation’s policies, for successful registration. A challenge for organisations in full or partial hosting is communication between host and sex worker-led organisations, especially so if there is a collective approach. Several organisations identified changes in leadership as exacerbating the challenges of communication and transparency. It often remains unclear which official communication channels are used to jointly plan, implement, report and have contact with the donor organisations. This causes misunderstandings and sometimes also different expectations between the different organisations. For example, one sex worker-led organisation believed they would plan the programme.
together with the host, but they were only involved in the implementation phase. One host organisation comments: 'Communication lines need to be clear on whom you’re communicating to. You do not want to send communication to the wrong person, and then you cause confusion in the organisation that you are hosting'.

5.2.6 Knowledge creation, reflection and sharing
One of the key elements of the Business Incubator Model is that a collaborative approach allows organisations to connect the most promising ideas and to deliver the following sustainable businesses to growth, be future fit and create and share knowledge together to accelerate development. As the Business Incubator Model highlights, knowledge creation is important, and feminist literature deepens this approach and emphasises shared vision based on personal and collective reflexivity (Batiwala 2011). This study shows there are only a few formal opportunities and spaces for both organisations to learn and reflect on their practice or on the hosting relationship itself. Many of the hosting relationships considered the work plan development as a space for learning, but they did not necessarily share or create knowledge together during such sessions. In none of the full or partial hosting relations is there room to reflect on the hosting construction itself. In some constructions there are mechanisms in place for conflict management, but this highly depends on individuals within the organisations. Often, the conflict management was coordinated by the director of the host organisation without official procedures or a neutral party present.

In addition, sex workers identified the lack of dissemination of knowledge to the wider sex worker community as a challenge. This study shows that capacity strengthening and technical support does not go beyond the sex worker-led organisation. One host commented: 'It [acquired capacity] is not reaching very far, I think, it is something we also need to look into, into building that capacity for the wider sex workers, for those that are not in the office or directly linked to the programme'. This is not the case for all hosting relationships, as some sex worker-led organisations disseminate information to the wider community and identify community empowerment as the core of their work. However, there are no clear or consistent feedback mechanisms in place and one sex worker participant commented in reference to this research: 'We don’t hear what happened with the information'.

5.2.7 Safety and security
One critical issue that emerged for sex worker-led organisations being fully or partially hosted is safety and security. Key to feminist movement building is enabling and empowering activists to address safety and security and ensure they are equipped to deal with the inevitable backlash (Barry et al. 2011 and Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (CREA) 2008). The literature on Business Incubator Models recommends that the host can lobby for a conducive environment in which the hosted organisation can function effectively (World Bank 2014). The study findings highlight two aspects of safety and security in full hosting relationships: (1) a safety net from external threats, (2) the internal threats within the hosting construction. This issue was more pertinent for organisations in a full hosting construction than in other hosting relationships. It is also important to note that safety and security was mentioned mainly by the sex workers in the focus group discussions,
Sex workers know best! Study on the effects of hosting relationships on sex worker-led programmes

but also reiterates the need to involve the wider sex worker community in the process of hosting. On the one hand, for sex worker-led organisation being hosted means being safer from external threats. One sex worker noted: ‘They [host organisation] protect sex workers who are wrongfully accused, the paralegals respond around the clock and you get transport money for incidents that you need to attend to’. On the other hand, some coordinators of sex worker-led organisations linked the issue of safety and security to the fact that they did not have an autonomous or private space. This is seen as a security concern by the coordinators: ‘Sometimes, stakeholders cannot safely share their information because we are all cramped into one space’.

In total, 40 per cent of sex workers felt the relationship with the host made them feel a lot safer. However, 22 per cent of sex workers did not feel safer at all and 30 per cent not much.

One participant comments that sex workers were ‘not safe’ and another one felt there is no confidentiality at the host organisation. The participant states: “No one trusts the host organisation and only a few people will come with their issues and cases there. Because they are afraid that if someone gets drunk after they have told them, that then they will tell the next person and the next person tells the other and maybe that issue was sensitive.”

Also, forms of discrimination were identified where sex workers felt unsafe. One coordinator explained: ‘Sex workers have sent complaints to say that they do not feel safe in those offices’. However, in this particular situation, the sex worker-led organisation took direct action to address the situation and provided sensitisation training to improve the host organisation’s work and attitude towards sex workers. The coordinator states: ‘Sensitisation workshops make the host organisation’s staff members aware that sex workers are human beings as well’. The issue of safety and security also related to the treatment of sex workers by the sex worker-led organisation. In describing a decision made by a sex worker-led organisation to hold joint activities for transgender and cisgender sex workers, one sex worker commented:

“It’s not like they told us when they decided to combine the creative spaces. We as transgender have said time and time again that we are being abused by the cisgender sex workers. So that space is not safe for the transgender sex workers to speak out. We were not consulted. It’s the first time we hear that it’s lack of funding that stopped those meetings.”

As the above discussion has highlighted, it is difficult to generalise about safety and security concerns, since the concepts are interpreted differently. Safety and security also highly depend on the hosting construction.

5.2.8 Performance assessment

In this paragraph, findings on the advantages and challenges of hosting practices are described for full and partial hosting for the internal and external functioning of the sex worker-led organisation. This study shows that hosting relationships led to some improvements in the capacity of sex worker-led organisations.
**Full hosting relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In settings where sex work is criminalised, being fully hosted might be the only way for sex worker-led organisations to secure funds.</td>
<td>This type of hosting is not the most effective to empower the sex worker community or to support organisational strengthening of the sex worker-led organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In full hosting situations where sex worker-led organisations received their own office space, sex workers were able to meet safely in a secure location.</td>
<td>If a sex worker-led organisation is offered a space within the host organisation, it does not necessarily mean it is a safe space. In some cases, it limited the sex worker-led organisation’s potential to run their own activities and implement their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full hosting can create opportunities for sex worker-led organisations to strengthen their capacity by shadowing and mentoring staff from the host organisation. Full hosting can open up advocacy spaces and opportunities for sex worker-led organisations that were inaccessible before.</td>
<td>In some cases, it was difficult for sex worker-led organisations to work independently from the host organisation, because everything was done in collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full hosting can create opportunities for sex worker-led organisations to strengthen their capacity by shadowing and mentoring staff from the host organisation. Full hosting can open up advocacy spaces and opportunities for sex worker-led organisations that were inaccessible before.</td>
<td>There could be competition between the host organisation and the sex worker-led organisation, especially if both organisations run sex worker programmes. This can be a serious barrier to successful hosting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full hosting can create opportunities for sex worker-led organisations to strengthen their capacity by shadowing and mentoring staff from the host organisation. Full hosting can open up advocacy spaces and opportunities for sex worker-led organisations that were inaccessible before.</td>
<td>Especially in full hosting situations, there are a number of governance challenges, including poor communication, lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities, no clear exit strategy and organisational strengthening strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Advantages and challenges of full hosting

**Partial hosting relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If sex worker-led organisations are unable to register, partial hosting ensures the organisation’s access to donor funding.</td>
<td>In the partial hosting relationships, the host feels less involved and responsible over the safety of the sex workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial hosting that does not involve joint planning and implementation are often short-term relationships and not permanent constructions. Partial hosting has a more clear goal of the sex worker-led organisation becoming independent.</td>
<td>Sharing a space provides the sex worker-led organisation with opportunities to meet other organisations and donors. Since sex worker-led organisations in partial hosting have their own space, they sometimes miss out on these opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In all partial hosting relationships, fiscal support and capacity strengthening on financial management is provided. This remains essential for sex worker-led organisations to mobilise and manage resources.</td>
<td>In partial hosting relationships, the roles and responsibilities of the host organisations and the sex worker-led organisations are not always clear and documented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex workers felt that having their own space was a critical step towards autonomy and independence.</td>
<td>The sex worker-led organisation needs to have staff with skills and capacity in place to implement and report on programmes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Advantages and challenges of partial hosting
5.3 Fiscal hosting

In this paragraph, fiscal hosting will be discussed. Being a fiscal host means that you only provide the fiscal conduit for sex worker-led organisations. In this scenario, sex worker-led organisations have their own space and implement their own programmes.

Promising practice: Choosing your own host

Sex worker-led organisation Aye Myanmar Association (AMA) was established in Myanmar in 2009. In the beginning, AMA was not able to access funds without a fiscal host. Therefore, AMA shared a call for interest among its allies. Many organisations that expressed an interest in hosting AMA wanted to have control over the organisation and suggested partial or full hosting. This was not what the AMA leaders had envisioned.

Therefore, AMA chose a host organisation for which the purpose of the relationship was clear and corresponded with AMA’s needs. They agreed to become their fiscal host. AMA staff explained: ‘We were able to choose for ourselves and no one, not a donor or other organisation, chose for us. This made it a success’. This meant that AMA also had the agency to decide what kind of technical capacity and support they needed and which expert organisation could offer this support. The capacity building was not provided by the host, but by other technical experts.

5.3.1 Clarity of purpose

In this research, three out of twelve sex worker-led organisations are in fiscal hosting relationships. All three organisations are autonomous in terms of programme implementation, advocacy and resource mobilisation. One organisation has been in a fiscal relationship since its start, and the other two organisations have moved from full to fiscal hosting relationships. In this research, the three sex worker-led organisations that are fiscally hosted are the most positive about their hosting relationship. Key to this success is that the host organisation, and not a donor, decided to host the sex worker-led organisation. There was willingness to host the organisations without donor funding involved. It also made the purpose of the relationship clear and straightforward, without complicated donor requirements, such as capacity building. In this study, sex workers identified the need for initiatives, projects and programmes to be designed and implemented by sex workers themselves. Key to the success of the fiscal hosting situations is that programmes were designed and implemented by sex workers. As one of the founders of a sex worker-led organisation noted about the former host: ‘There was trust, they [host organisation] believed that we [sex worker-led organisation] could do the work with the community’. In fiscal hosting relationships, there is a clear understanding of the mandate of the hosting relationship; the sole purpose of the relationship is fiscal sponsorship. For sex worker-led organisation AMA in Myanmar, for example, the clarity about the relationship as only being one of fiscal sponsorship made the working relationship much easier. A former director stated:

“It was more empowering because we delivered activities ourselves.”

5.3.2 Capacity building

In the fiscal hosting relationships, capacity building is only given to the sex worker-led organisation upon request. It is not a given that the fiscal host would be the right candidate for the job and the sex worker-led organisations
are able to find technical support based on their own needs. Thus, the fiscal host only provides support through its financial systems and governance by receiving and managing funds from donors. This support is identified by all sex workers as a key area in which sex worker-led organisations need support. Sex worker-led organisations are often able to copy the policies and procedures of their fiscal host to strengthen their own financial systems and governance.

### 5.3.3 Power relations and agency

Sex worker-led organisations that are no longer hosted acknowledge the importance of registration. Registration gives an organisation the independence and autonomy it needs to identify their own organisational needs and technical partners that can support their organisation. One director commented: ‘You can seek advice and this allows you to grow fast, because you identify your weaknesses and strong points and build on these’. This differs from the full and partial hosting relationships where the host organisation does most of the capacity building. It emphasises the importance of sex workers in defining and establishing relationships for themselves based on their own needs. Feminist literature emphasises the importance of locating power within an organisation (AWID 2016). This emerged as a possibility within the fiscal hosting. As one organisation explained: ‘The host did not interfere and was not involved in
[our] activity’. The same organisation has received technical support from the fiscal host, but only upon request and if the expertise matched the needs. If not, the organisation was able to seek other specialist support for which they reserved budget within their programming.

5.3.4 Transformative leadership
All sex worker-led organisations that are fiscally hosted relied on strong leadership to be able to implement programmes and advocacy work without a host organisation. The leaders of the sex worker-led organisations had a clear understanding and vision about the hosting relationship and what their organisations needed. They also communicated the roles and responsibilities of the host organisation clearly to their staff and members. One organisation experienced challenges in meaningfully involving the sex worker community and growing in terms of members. This was partially caused by the high mobility of the sex worker community.

5.3.5 Collective approach
In the fiscal hosting relationships, sex worker-led organisations have the autonomy to decide if they want to implement jointly with the fiscal host or other strategic partners. One organisation comments that when they were initially fully hosted, activities centred on HIV and AIDS only, but when the organisation became fully autonomous, the organisation had the flexibility to implement comprehensive programmes, including much needed interventions on violence against sex workers. Interestingly, this shift in programme focus also meant different safety and security concerns. For example, one sex worker-led organisation coordinator mentioned that now the focus had shifted to safety and security of their own staff rather than just the sex worker community as a whole. The sex worker-led organisation also stressed the importance of being fully hosted initially since the host organisation created opportunities for sex workers to access spaces and particularly to work with the government. It gave the organisation some legitimacy to run programmes for sex workers. The cooperation with the government continued after the sex worker-led organisation became autonomous.

5.3.6 Knowledge creation, reflection and sharing
Sex worker-led organisations in a fiscal hosting relationship do not have specific opportunities for knowledge creation or reflection with their fiscal hosts. The focus is on the host receiving the funding from donors and distributing this to the sex worker-led organisations. Clear agreements were made and documented in contracts. In none of the situations, challenges are identified and thus no reflection is deemed necessary. However, in one organisation that moved from full to fiscal hosting there was shared learning in the beginning, for example on how to jointly report and plan for programmes, but this stopped when the sex worker-led organisation became autonomous.

5.3.7 Performance assessment
In this paragraph, findings on the advantages and challenges of hosting practices are described for fiscal hosting in regards to the internal and external functioning of the sex worker-led organisation. The study findings show that fiscal hosting provides sex worker-led organisations with the freedom to make their own choices and design and implement their own programmes. Table 4 lists all advantages and challenges.
In this paragraph, the partnership hosting type will be discussed. A partnership consists of a sex worker-led organisation that runs autonomously but strategically works together with other stakeholders, sometimes including former host organisations. A sex worker-led organisation is an organisation operated by sex workers for sex workers. In this research, five out of twelve sex worker-led organisations are currently autonomous and work in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders. All five organisations have experienced different forms of hosting and overall identified the following five key steps in their journey towards autonomy:

1. Physical independence/autonomy;
2. Recruitment of staff;
3. Resource mobilisation for institutional costs;
4. Democratic leadership;
5. Ownership of programmes and projects.

Table 4: Advantages and challenges of fiscal hosting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal hosting can provide sex worker-led organisations that are unable to register or have severe security issues due to criminalisation of sex work access to donor funds.</td>
<td>This type of hosting does not necessarily support organisational capacity strengthening or technical support in designing effective HIV programmes for sex workers. Sex worker-led organisations need to acquire funding that allows them to buy technical support, either from their fiscal host or other technical partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex workers are acknowledged and treated as the experts on sex worker programmes by third parties, such as fiscal hosts, donor organisations and strategic stakeholders (e.g. the government). There is no competition between the host and sex worker-led organisations to acquire funds or to gain access to the sex worker community.</td>
<td>Sex worker-led organisations often need to contribute to the administrative costs of the host organisation from their budget. The administrative costs differ per organisation, but range somewhere between 5 and 20 per cent of the total budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relationship between the fiscal host and sex worker-led organisation is clear. The sole purpose of the relationship is fiscal sponsorship.</td>
<td>This type of hosting does not offer support on the safety and security to the sex worker-led organisation. There is no 'safety net' in place when there are raids, mobs or backlashes from the police, community members or other perpetrators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fiscal host provides support through its financial systems and governance. This is identified by sex workers as a key area in which sex worker-led organisations need support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex worker-led organisations can often copy the policies and procedures of their fiscal host to strengthen their own financial systems and governance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Partnership

In this paragraph, the partnership hosting type will be discussed. A partnership consists of a sex worker-led organisation that runs autonomously but strategically works together with other stakeholders, sometimes including former host organisations. A sex worker-led organisation is an organisation operated by sex workers for sex workers. In this research, five out of twelve sex worker-led organisations are currently autonomous and work in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders. All five organisations have experienced different forms of hosting and overall identified the following five key steps in their journey towards autonomy:

1. Physical independence/autonomy;
2. Recruitment of staff;
3. Resource mobilisation for institutional costs;
4. Democratic leadership;
5. Ownership of programmes and projects.
In this chapter, an additional paragraph discusses how the sex worker-led organisations made the step from being formerly hosted towards independence. The different steps are described in more detail in paragraph 5.4.8 Exit strategy.

5.4.1 Clarity of purpose:
There are a variety of reasons for the emergence of sex worker-led organisations. Many of the key informants from sex worker-led organisations highlighted the need for ‘sex workers to take control of issues affecting them,’ as one respondent said. The importance of control was emphasised in this comment by a director of a sex worker-led organisation:

“Because you [sex worker-led organisation] are independent, you are recognised for that and cannot be questioned. Organisational autonomy is paramount to advocating for the community. No undue influence from other organisations. And it gives you power when you are independent.”

Sex worker-led groups and organisations are often established by an individual or a small group of sex workers. A sex worker director comments: ‘Each sex worker has a turning point in their life that can make them realise the need for sex worker-led collectives, spaces and organisations that are owned by sex workers themselves’. In addition, the research findings reveal that sex worker-led organisations see themselves as the experts of sex worker programmes, and they claim programmes are more effective if sex workers are empowered and work for themselves rather than for an NGO. Sex worker-led organisations clearly stated that they play a different role from the NGOs, since sex worker-led organisations focus on movement building.

During focus group discussions, sex workers stressed the importance of solidarity and collective action for marginalised communities, as one sex worker from Vietnam explained:

“They [sex workers] can meet friends in the same situation, and they can share freely with them. They can share their experiences with them and they can help each other. They can find some friends and find solutions together. When a sex worker gets attacked, they can report and inform each other and support each other.”

Most sex workers mentioned that being hosted was a necessity in the beginning of the sex worker-led organisation, because the organisation was not able to register quickly. After becoming an autonomous organisation, WONETHA hosted the regional sex worker-led network ASWA in 2011. The ASWA coordinator in Uganda had a desk in the WONETHA office.

Promising practice: The hosted becomes the host
Ugandan sex worker-led organisation
Women’s organisation network for human rights advocacy (WONETHA) was established in 2008, and they were able to register quite quickly thereafter. After becoming an autonomous organisation, WONETHA hosted the regional sex worker-led network ASWA in 2011. The ASWA coordinator in Uganda had a desk in the WONETHA office. WONETHA ensured that the coordinator was able to join the leadership activities together with the team of WONETHA. The organisation learned a lot from this hosting experience, for example the importance of having clear terms of reference. This helped them in managing expectations and to establish a clear purpose for the hosting relationship together with ASWA. They also had a clear procedure to deal with conflicts and challenges. ASWA now runs its own organisation. Hosting ASWA was an important step for WONETHA in becoming a recognised expert.
registered and lacked financial and governance management to access funds successfully. Also, they all had the clear purpose of becoming independent and communicated this to their hosts when establishing the relationship. Therefore, the host organisations were aware that this was the goal of the sex worker-led organisations. Even though there were no formal work plans to take steps towards autonomy, the sex worker-led organisations did identify specific needs to reach this goal. For example, being able to manage donor funds, mobilise resources from diverse sources, and to implement evidence-based programmes to reach a wide number of sex workers.

The independent sex worker-led organisations in this study have been hosted in different ways, ranging from full to fiscal hosting. Of the five organisations, two were fiscally hosted and three were fully hosted at the beginning. In none of the fiscal hosting relations did the host provide capacity building. If this was needed, the sex worker-led organisations hired experts for the job. The nature of the hosting relationship did not contribute to becoming independent, but the hosting relationship did provide them with access to core funding they needed to become independent. The fully-hosted organisations had a greater sense of urgency to become independent and depart their hosting relationships. There were no differences in the time it took to become independent.

As one sex worker coordinator of a formerly fiscally hosted organisation commented: 'We can’t get donor funds, because we don’t have systems and structures in place, so we need support’. This is exacerbated in light of increased donor restrictions, which were introduced in response to concerns about mismanagement of funds and corruption across the civil society sector. According to one respondent, it is becoming more important that sex worker-led organisations are able to demonstrate a high level of competence around financial management. The respondent said: ‘We are competing with larger and more established organisations’ and, therefore, fiscal hosting was necessary for the long-term security of the sex worker-led organisation. Another reason for the independent organisations to be formerly hosted are challenging environments. One coordinator highlighted the risks of registering: ‘It is not safe for us to register’. They referred to the external threats, including raids and arrests by the police, further sanctions or risks to the community as a result of exposure or media attention. In the Ukraine, for example, social exclusion was identified as the biggest challenge for the sex worker community and their families, particularly the children of sex workers.

However, one independent sex worker-led organisation did not attribute their independence to being hosted, but stated that it was rather a necessity to access donor funding. One director explained: ‘We needed a host and we didn’t have many options, but it wasn’t a good experience’. Another organisation did not receive technical support from its former host on financial systems, but rather on thematic areas. This was not part of the hosting relationship, as the relationship focussed solely on fiscal sponsorship. This sex worker-led organisation achieved independence through community empowerment, organisational strengthening and receiving technical support from other experts.

5.4.2 Capacity building

In terms of capacity strengthening, sex worker-led organisations allocate funds and resources for organisational and thematic capacity strengthening activities. This is done based on a needs-assessment with staff members and the wider sex worker community. Technical support is bought when needed. In addition, one sex worker-led organisation has now grown into an organisation that provides hosting services themselves and provides tailor-made
capacity strengthening to local sex worker-led organisations.

5.4.3 Power relations and agency
This study shows that ending a hosting relationship does not necessarily result in a partnership between the former host and the sex worker-led organisation. In one case, the power relationship was very complex during the host construction and the sex worker-led organisation felt that this had not been resolved by their departure. Yet, there are examples of successful partnerships between sex worker-led organisations and their former hosts, especially if organisations work in different areas (e.g. HIV/AIDS and legal aid). This ensures organisations can complement each other and have less competition over funding. However, often there is overlap between the work of the sex worker-led organisations and their former hosts. Here, organisations become each other’s competitors over funding and access to advocacy platforms, and have overlap in programmes and geographies.

All independent sex worker-led organisations have been able to forge new relationships with relevant stakeholders. Through their key allies, they have gained access to advocacy spaces and technical experts. One sex worker-led organisation has established a technical group of experts themselves who offer advice and guidance. Once the hosting relationship ended, agency over resources and funding shifted from the host towards the sex worker-led organisation. This means that the sex worker-led organisation has to find their own resources. All of the sex worker-led organisations were involved in Aidsfonds projects (often jointly with their former hosts) and these projects continued when they became autonomous. Fully hosted sex worked-led organisations talked about the need to diversify funding sources once they were no longer hosted. Aidsfonds staff provided support to some of the sex worker-led organisations in writing successful grant applications, for example for Red Umbrella Fund funding. In some cases complex power dynamics remained within the sex worker community.
Here, there are issues of legitimacy and representation as multiple organisations claim to represent sex workers. Often these power dynamics are influenced by donors that fuel competition between organisations by working on project-based funds. Donors also provide funding and resources to other groups to create their own network and organisation, even if there is already a sex worker-led organisation in existence. Finally, with autonomy comes responsibility, and sex worker-led organisations expressed the need for the organisation to invest in organisational capacity building. Since organisational capacity strengthening costs time and resources, having access to core funding is highly needed.

5.4.4 Transformative leadership
A key element of successful autonomous sex worker-led organisations is transformative leadership. As one participant commented: ‘The organisation has a strong leader who has experienced a lot in her own life. She is honest and fair’. None of the organisations attribute their leadership capabilities to the hosting construction. The participants in this group agreed that a good leader not only encourages sex workers to get involved, but more importantly encourages them to stay involved. Opportunities should be accessible for the wider community and a transparent process should be in place for paid and unpaid staff recruitment, capacity building activities and participation in meetings and platforms. The participants in the focus group discussions stressed the importance of integrating a values-based approach to engaging with sex workers as key to ensuring sustainability. This means that the leader and staff of the sex worker-led organisations make sex workers feel valued and appreciated for their involvement. This results in sex workers wanting to invest in their sex worker-led organisation and commit to the common goals and ideals of the organisation. One sex worker explained:

“Although it was a time-consuming and resource-intensive process, I participated in a half-year training. The results were visible because all the people involved changed quite a lot in their personal lives. [...] When they see they are loved, taken care of and accepted, they feel they have to do something in return.”

5.4.5 A collective approach
The collective approach of autonomous organisations consists of alliance building with strategic partners (e.g. the government, the police, NGOs, service providers, lawyers and donors) and strengthening the relationship between the sex worker community and the sex worker-led organisation. Two of the autonomous organisations mentioned having opportunities to meet and interact with donors and other organisations whilst being hosted. One organisation specifically mentioned that the host supported access to some opportunities. However, generally there was not a sense of a collective approach for the organisations during their hosting. One sex worker-led organisation has now grown into an organisation that provides hosting services themselves and provides tailor-made capacity strengthening to local sex worker-led organisations. There is an acknowledgement that the sex worker community is a mobile community and one sex worker-led organisation commented that ‘we take time to make sure that someone will commit’ to the programmes.

5.4.6 Knowledge creation and sharing
One sex worker-led organisation mentioned that they initiated much of their own learning and that the capacity strengthening was self-driven. This initiative enabled the sex workers to identify their own needs and be autonomous in their knowledge generation. There is an extensive amount of knowledge generated by sex worker-led organisations. However, little of
this knowledge is documented. None of the sex worker-led organisations mentioned that they reflected upon the learnings about the hosting relationship with their former host.

5.4.7 Performance assessment
In this paragraph, findings on the advantages and challenges of hosting practices are described for being an autonomous organisation in a partnership in regards to the internal and external functioning of the sex worker-led organisation. This study shows that being in a partnership ensures sex worker-led organisations to have control over their own resources, programming and organisation development. This means sex worker-led organisations can develop their own strategic goals and run their own advocacy activities, also on topics that might be too sensitive for their former hosts, like decriminalisation of sex work. Table 5 gives an overview of the advantages and challenges of partnership hosting.

5.4.8 Exit strategy
None of the sex worker-led organisations have developed a formal exit strategy to guide them during the process of becoming independent or changing of host organisation. An exit strategy is recommended to support organisations through the fragile process of becoming independent. Often, organisations already need to take steps to prepare them for independence earlier on in the hosting process. An exit strategy could support organisations in making preparations in a timely manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex worker-led organisations are autonomous and ‘have control’ over their own resources, programming and organisational development.</td>
<td>Sex worker-led organisation do not have the protection of larger organisations as they implement their own work in challenging environments where sex work is criminalised or sex workers face criminal sanctions. The organisation is responsible to take measures for the safety and security of staff and the involved sex worker community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex worker-led organisations are in direct contact with donors rather than through the fiscal host and can mobilise resources independently. To put it differently, there is no competition and power play between host and sex worker-led organisation.</td>
<td>Power dynamics still exist between the sex worker-led organisation and the sex worker community, but there might not be a host organisation to ‘mediate’ or to support a problem-solving process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex worker-led organisations can identify their own allies and networks of organisations with which they want to work.</td>
<td>Donors might be hesitant to directly finance sex worker-led organisations without a host.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Advantages and challenges of partnership hosting
manner. Even though none of the organisations had an exit strategy, sex worker-led organisations did take the following steps in becoming independent:

- Building strategic relations with potential donors and strategic partners that have access to funds (like United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Aidsfonds and NSWP);
- Building capacity on how to write successful grant applications (either the sex worker-led organisation or someone from their network);
- Learning English to be able to effectively communicate with donors and strategic partners;
- Establishing a safe space to work from, either through renting an office space or having space provided by a close ally;
- Having a strong leader who understands how to run an organisation. Often, leadership needed capacity building on organisational and programme management. This was received through the host or other technical partners;
- Meaningfully involving the sex worker community and giving volunteers opportunities to learn and meet other people. This is especially important for organisations that do not yet have enough core funding to pay staff;
- Developing an assets list so when an organisation moves to their own office, it already has furniture and equipment;
- Making use of the policies of the former host so that organisations do not have to reinvent the wheel;
- Being registered. If needed, it can be integrated in the hosting agreement that the host will provide technical support;
- Ensuring that there is a transparent process to select staff and leadership when funds do come in;
- Having know-how on documenting results, so organisations can be accountable to potential donors, while they can also use them in grant applications;
- Making a capacity building plan for the organisation and staff members to strengthen organisational and programme capacity, and including this in budgets.
Chapter 6
Discussion

In this study, three types of hosting have been identified: full, partial and fiscal hosting. A fourth type is the partnership model where sex worker-led organisations have become independent and work together with other stakeholders in partnership.

Most organisations in this study are in full or partial hosting relationships. These constructions are of added value for sex worker-led organisations to increase organisational and technical capacity, opening up advocacy spaces and gaining access to donor funds. They are of added value for host organisations, because it increases their access to the sex worker community, and it means they can share skills and expertise to develop more effective sex worker programmes. However, hosting relationships must be initiated, built and maintained in a way that does not harm the sex worker community. Currently, the full and partial hosting relationships are complex relationships that create new challenges for sex worker-led organisations. This is the result of multiple factors.

Firstly, the full and partial hosting construction often lacked a clear purpose and was borne of the need for a hosting relationship rather than a desire to be hosted. There is no clear division of roles and responsibilities between sex worker-led organisations and their hosts. This often results in conflict and friction, since there are different expectations at play. Secondly, there is an implicit assumption that the host-organisation provides all the necessary capacity building to the sex worker-led organisation. Often this is asked or required by the donor organisation without meaningful involvement of the sex worker community or the sex worker-led organisation itself. Thirdly, competition is fuelled between host and sex worker-led organisations, because they both implement programmes for sex workers. In addition, it often remains unclear who is the owner of the budget and how the budget should be divided between host and sex worker-led organisations. Fourthly, in some cases, processes to select leadership and staff were not transparent and without meaningful involvement of the sex worker community. And finally, there are no clear platforms or mechanisms between sex worker-led and host organisations to generate and share knowledge to complement each other’s strengths and to reflect on how the hosting relationship is developing.

Organisations in fiscal hosting relationships are more positive about the relationship with their host. These constructions are more effective, because the purpose of the construction is clear and straightforward: fiscal conduit. In these situations, sex worker-led organisations have more autonomy over the hosting practices. They have the power to make their own decisions, for example in selecting the host organisation, its purpose and what experts to hire beyond the host to strengthen organisational capacity. Often, these organisations have direct contact with donors, and thus feel more control over funds and resources. The sex worker-led organisations feel equal to their hosts and see the relationship as a business arrangement.

Each relationship is complex, and thus friction can also occur in this type of hosting, but conflict can be managed through the agreements that have been made. To put it differently, sex worker-led organisations in a fiscal host construction do not solely depend on their host to continue to exist. If the relationship does not function, a new fiscal host could be found. Yet, sex worker-led organisations in this situation need to find their
own core funding for their organisation, staff and organisational capacity building. This can be quite challenging since most donors only provide funding for programme implementation. In addition, the sex worker-led organisations can be more vulnerable to external threats, such as police raids, and thus need to have safety and security measures in place.

Sex worker-led organisations that became independent acknowledge that being hosted has had an added value of gaining thematic and organisational capacity strengthening and knowledge on how the donor industry operates. Most sex worker-led organisations mentioned that being hosted was a necessity in the beginning of the sex worker-led organisation, because the organisation was not registered or it did not have a fully-developed governance or financial management system yet to be eligible for donor funding. All organisations had agreed upon a clear purpose of the hosting construction together with their former hosts. It was clear from the beginning that the sex worker-led organisations would work towards becoming independent. The power over resources, capacity building, and programme management lay with sex worker-led organisations. They were self-determined throughout the hosting construction and during the exiting process. This is important as evidence shows that community empowerment is a process whereby sex workers take individual and collective ownership of programmes in order to achieve the most effective HIV responses and take concrete action to address social and structural barriers to their broader health and human rights. Since hosting practices influence the effectiveness of programmes, community empowerment must also be at the foundation of the construction.

The overall findings show that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for hosting relationships, but there are key factors that affect the effectiveness of the construction.
These key factors include:

• To what extent the wider sex worker community is meaningfully involved in creating and managing the hosting construction;
• To what extent the values of the host organisation and the values of the sex worker-led organisation correspond;
• To what extent there is clarity of purpose between the host, sex worker-led and donor organisations involved, especially if sex worker-led organisations have autonomy of the organisation as its purpose. From the beginning of the hosting relationships, roles and responsibilities should be clear and documented;
• To what extent the sex worker-led organisation has autonomy to make their own selection to hire experts to strengthen their organisational capacity. This means that the capacity building budget does not directly go to the host organisation, but only provides capacity building upon request;
• To what extent donors are involved in creating the host relationships. This study found that often hosting relationships are created because of donor requirements. The constructions are often done in a hurry, because the donor needs to allocate funds in a short-term period. This leaves little room to meaningfully involve the sex worker community and to develop a hosting plan based on the needs and demands of the organisations involved;
• To what extent host and sex worker-led organisations monitor and reflect upon their relationship. Since hosting relationships are complex and highly influenced by donors and other external aspects, it is necessary to regularly review whether the hosting construction is still functioning properly or should be changed accordingly;
• To what extent host and sex worker-led organisations are working together as equal partners when they both implement programmes for sex workers with clear divisions of roles and responsibilities;
• The context in which the hosting construction is operating. This is of special importance in challenging environments where sex work is criminalised and where sex worker-led organisations are unable to register.

There is some evidence that hosting relationships play an important role in developing effective HIV and SRHR programmes for sex workers, for example by ensuring increased access for sex workers to programme activities (e.g. community empowerment, HIV testing and treatment), since host organisations gained more access to the sex worker community through the sex worker-led organisations. On the other hand, sex worker-led organisations gained more access to advocacy spaces (e.g. technical working groups of the government for Key Population Treatment Guidelines) and made use of these spaces to advocate for the rights and needs of sex workers. However, it was often difficult for sex worker respondents to distinguish between the programmes for sex workers and the work of the sex worker-led organisations when asked for details about programme design, implementation and reporting to donors. Most sex workers were not aware of how these tasks were shared between the host and the hosted. As a result, attribution and contribution were difficult to ascertain, which meant it was hard to assess the effectiveness of the hosting construction on programming for sex workers.

Whilst hosting relationships offer benefits of capacity strengthening, fiscal sponsorship and ‘safety’ in particularly risky environments, the evidence is mixed about whether hosting relationships enable sex worker-led organisations to become autonomous and stronger. In conclusion, meaningfully set-up hosting relationships can be an effective mechanism to support community-led initiatives, but they need to be meaningfully created, managed and exited by sex workers and for sex workers.
Chapter 7

Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the qualitative research and draw on key issues raised in the literature review for effective and successful hosting relationships. The recommendations are organised per stakeholder: host organisations, sex worker-led organisations and donors. Some recommendations are pivotal for all stakeholders involved and thus described separately (see paragraph below). As a follow-up to this research, Aidsfonds is developing a capacity strengthening toolkit to improve hosting relationships.

7.1 Hosting practices

These recommendations are important for both host organisations and sex worker-led organisations:

- The sex worker community should be meaningfully involved in creating and managing the hosting construction, for example by setting parameters of what is needed from the host organisation in terms of capacity building and what strategic goals and activities will be worked on together.
- During the inception phase of a host relationship, both organisations need to have a conversation to see whether their organisational values correspond, for example to see whether they have the same understanding about meaningful involvement of the sex worker community.
- During the inception phase, host and sex worker-led organisations should clearly define the purpose of the hosting relationship. For example, the purpose could be that the sex worker-led organisation will work towards independence or that the host will only provide fiscal conduit.
- Based on the purpose, terms of reference should be developed that will guide both organisations during the hosting practices. This document should include agreements on roles and responsibilities, on how organisations will work together, how decisions are made, who has ownership over funds and resources, how to contact donor organisations, how to manage conflicts, how the relationship will be monitored and when and how the relationship will be ended.
- Spaces can be created for learning and reflection where both host and sex worker-led organisations can reflect on the current hosting practices. Based on the identified opportunities and challenges, improvements should be planned.
- If the hosting construction has independence as its purpose, a capacity strengthening plan needs to be developed that includes activities that are needed to succeed, for example technical support for registration.
- Donors may be asked for financial and technical support to create effective hosting relationships. If possible, integrate the activities and support needed in programme budgets and plans.
- It is advisable to develop a plan to mitigate external risks and threats, for example a safety and security plan.

7.2 Host organisations

These recommendations are specifically for host organisations:

- If hosting goes beyond fiscal support, host organisations should provide technical capacity strengthening to sex worker-led organisations to
become (more) autonomous. This could include capacity strengthening on governance, finance management and fundraising, for example. However, what capacities are needed and who should provide the technical support should be directed by the sex worker-led organisations.

- It is essential to share knowledge with the wider community. For example the organisational skills and capabilities of the collective as a whole can be developed. This may involve enhancing business and management skills among group members, strengthening leadership and management or developing resource mobilisation activities. This could be done by the host organisation, but the sex worker-led organisation could also be trained with the purpose of training sex workers themselves.
- Space and resources need to be provided for staff of sex worker-led organisations to ensure that they are in control of the planning, implementation and monitoring of the organisation and its activities.
- Sex worker-led organisations can be involved in contacts with donor organisations.

### 7.3 Sex worker-led organisations

These recommendations are specifically for sex worker-led organisations:

- The terms of the hosting relationship must be clear for the host organisation, the hosted and the wider community. An exit strategy should be included in the terms of reference between both organisations.
- Awareness of the hosting construction and practices can be raised among the sex worker community, including its purpose and the different roles and responsibilities of the host and the sex worker-led organisation.
- The sex worker community can be involved in creating and managing the hosting construction, for example through community consultations, advisory groups and membership meetings.
- Leadership must be defined including a broad range of staff and other community members in organisational decision-making and ensuring the sharing of information across the organisation.
- It is important to make sure that leadership is nominated through a democratic and transparent process.

### 7.4 Donors

These recommendations are specifically for donor organisations:

- Donor organisations can be involved in creating and managing hosting relationships. They can have regular meetings with both host and sex worker-led organisations to monitor the hosting relationship. They should be aware of power dynamics and address potential challenges, for example by organising focus group discussions with the sex worker community.
- The hosting construction needs to have a clear purpose and clear agreements on roles and responsibilities. If funds need to be installed in a short-time period and there is no time to meaningfully set up a hosting construction, it might be most effective to create a fiscal host construction.
- Donor organisations can give funding and flexibility to the host and sex worker-led organisations to meaningfully create and manage hosting relationships.
- Opportunities may be provided to include capacity building related to hosting practices in work plans and budgets.
- Donors should encourage cooperation and learning between sex worker-led organisations and networks nationally and internationally. Examples that were given include the Sex Worker Academy Africa and technical support received from the regional sex worker-led networks.


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