

what?

Voices of Women is a young, emerging group in Amsterdam. It trains refugees, asylum seekers, trafficked women, sex workers, and undocumented and migrant workers to use different forms of media to present themselves accurately in the face of overwhelming stereotypes and misrepresentation in the mainstream media.

why?

Although sex work is legal in the Netherlands, it is a profession that is still strongly stigmatised. Sex workers are misunderstood, widely portrayed as victims, and are discriminated against as women and as workers. Sex work happens when there is genuine consent. This means a person is not manipulated or frightened into providing sexual services. If there is no genuine consent, then the situation is one of bondage or trafficking. The Netherlands is one of the world's prime destinations for trafficked women, yet very few women come forward each year to seek help from authorities.

what now?

Mama Cash stands with sex workers' movements worldwide and insists that sex workers must have the same rights and responsibilities as other workers. At the same time, we totally condemn trafficking and seek justice and freedom for all women who have been forced or coerced into any working situation that they have not freely chosen.

Along with Voices of Women, other grantees, and funding partners worldwide, Mama Cash is expanding its commitment and widening the circle of support to ensure that women in the sex industry can exercise and enjoy their rights and that trafficked women can win their rights and their freedom.



we give media tools to sex workers and trafficked women



Voices of Women is one of the few initiatives in the Netherlands that gives marginalised women media tools so that they can create and present their own stories.

Voices of Women • The Netherlands

“We work with women who have been trafficked and with current and former sex workers. Some of the women have been trafficked into the sex industry, and some of them were forced into other kinds of labour, such as bonded domestic work. Most of the women have migrated from other countries to the Netherlands.

On one level, we train women who are marginalised in the Netherlands to tell their stories using powerful media tools such as radio, photography, and video. We want to give them the skill and opportunity to express the complexities of their lives.

But we don't stop there. Our goal is to use media to create a more humanised and multi-faceted picture of the sex industry. We want to show this industry as a complex fabric, composed both of women workers who are entitled to demand their rights as workers and women who have been forced into the industry.

Many people looking in from the outside have quite a polarised view. Women are either victims, or they are making choices. But as in any other area of life, there are many grey zones. We will create a moving exhibition that tells the stories of sex workers and trafficked women in their own voices and images. In the long-term, we want to create an independent media centre run by and for women from these communities.”

Legislation currently before the Dutch parliament would mandate the registration of all sex workers, despite strong opposition from sex workers themselves to the terms of the proposed law.