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**BY KITSEPILE NYATHI**

NATION Correspondent

HARARE, Tuesday

A Zimbabwe non-governmental

organisation says it has

registered 12,383 sex workers

operating throughout the country

since 2009.

The Centre for Sexual Health,

HIV and Aids Research (CeSHHAR)

said of that number, 2,132

had tested HIV positive while

10,445 had been treated for sexually

transmitted diseases.

The women’s ages ranged between

12 and 60 years and each

of them claimed to entertain a

maximum of 12 men a day when

business is brisk. Ms Sibongile

Mtetwa, the sex work programme

coordinator for CeSHHAR said

the majority of the sex workers

remained unregistered.

“Sex work is common and sex

workers are at increased risk of HIV

but less likely to access prevention

and treatment services,” she told

the *Herald* newspaper.

Ms Mtetwa said her organisation

had started a programme to give sex

workers access to health services

when they contract STIs.

“The overall goal is to improve

respect, protection and upholding

of sex workers’ rights to promote

their universal access to HIV

prevention, treatment, care and

support,” she said.