



Network of Key Population Service Organizations Ltd.

PRESS RELEASE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS

Today 17th Dec the sex worker-led organizations under the coordination of UNESO join the rest of the sex worker rights movement across the world to commemorate the **International Day to End Violence against Sex Workers**. The day was created to call attention to hate crimes committed against sex workers and to honor those who have experienced violence and lost during the year.

According to the UNESO Human Rights Violation Report 2022 -2023 provides a record of verified human rights violations perpetuated against sex workers, shows the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment and Life are the most violated human rights among sex workers, for example; physical assault, Sexual assault and murder. The rationale behind the high number of cases of violation of these rights is attributable to the fact that sex work is criminalized, and as a result, the notion that sex workers, being members of the criminalized community are unworthy of the same dignity and respect as other members of society.

Despite the existence of policies and laws that protect and promote the rights of people in Uganda, the lived realities on ground show sex workers still face high levels of violence due to the marginalization fueled by the laws that criminalize them and intimidate them to report cases for fear of being implicated by the law.

As UNESO, the coordinating body of the sex worker movement in Uganda put a print through our mission to continue working with like-minded partners for the realization of sex workers' Rights and advocating to end all forms of violations committed against sex workers.

We therefore call upon

- The government to repeal laws that are used to justify violence against sex workers and deny them equal protection of the law. In particular, they should repeal Sections 136, 137, 138 and 139 of the Penal Code Act and further veto all new laws that promote discrimination against sex workers, and all persons that are engaged in sex work.
- Police Take an affirmative action approach in relation to protecting rights of sex workers.
- Equal access to rights-based health and social services for sex workers, including sexual and reproductive health.

“Sex Workers Human Rights Matter”

