

## **UNESO Press statement for International Women's Day-2019**

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** marks the International Women's Day, which celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women of all categories. On this occasion, the sex worker led organizations under the coordination of UNESO are joining women all over the world to commemorate this day.

This year's international theme, "**BALANCE FOR BETTER,**" could have come at a better time, especially when gender mainstreaming is the hype of the day. A lot of efforts and progress have been registered at the local, regional and international levels towards achieving gender equality, empowering women and elevating women politically, economically and socially. Gender balance is essential for economies and communities to thrive and it should be noted that, "Balance is not a women's issue but rather a business issue". The race is on for the gender-balanced boardroom, a gender-balanced government, gender-balanced media coverage, a gender-balance of employees, more gender-balance in wealth, gender-balanced sports coverage .... While these actions have encouraged some women to make gains in their "**THINK EQUAL, BUILD SMART, INNOVATE FOR CHANGE**" as the UN women theme speaks, other categories of women like sex workers in their different diversities still lag behind because of the existing community discrimination on grounds of one's sexual orientation and nature of work. In this regard, UNESO continues to express concern about the situation of other categories of women who are deprived of human rights, social and other services pertinent to their development, and lack of participation in social and political decisions which hamper their empowerment.

It is important to note that UNESO, through its mission and other activities, advocates for the establishment of national plans of actions and strategies that take gender issues fully into account, especially the inclusion of women sex workers in decision-making positions. UNESO also expresses concern on violence against women sex workers in their different diversities which takes a variety of forms and abuse.

In the same vein, policies, plans, actions and programs with the intention of integrating all categories of women in all spheres of life should be implemented at the national level to boost the development of women in Africa and Uganda in particular.

UNESO would like to put a print on the celebration of Women's Day this year with the following words: "**BALANCE FOR BETTER LEAVES NO ONE BEHIND.**"

**Happy Women's Day!!!**