



## UGANDA NETWORK OF SEX WORKER-LED ORGANISATIONS.

### **PRESS RELEASE ON INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS MADE BY UGANDA NETWORK OF SEX WORKER-LED ORGANISATIONS (UNESO)**

Today, 17<sup>th</sup>/12/2020 UNESO commemorates the international day to end violence against sex workers in their diversity under the theme” VOICE, RESPOND AND REPORT crimes committed against sex workers”

This Memorial Day of every 17<sup>th</sup> Dec event draws attention to the high rates of violence perpetrated against sex workers in the world.

Due to stigma and laws that criminalize sex work, the risk of violence is a daily occurrence for many sex workers. Violence often stems from the police and law enforcement, abusive clients and vigilante citizens trying to rid society of what they perceive to be the “undesirables.” This means that *everyday* predators believe that they can physically hurt or emotionally harm sex workers with impunity due to the marginalized positions sex workers are forced to occupy within our societies

Violence against sex workers globally is caused and exacerbated by criminalisation of sex work, stigma, and punitive laws and law enforcement. Worldwide sex workers use 17<sup>th</sup> December to honour those that have experienced violence or been killed during the year, and to call for the decriminalisation of sex work to protect and fulfil their human rights.

Security is a human right that we all deserve, including sex workers, therefore UNESO pledges to continue advocating against all forms of violations committed against sex workers, work to prevent and report all crimes while working closely with the sex worker –led organizations, sex worker serving organizations, allies, and partners

UNESO demands the following actions be taken to ensure the rights of sex workers are respected:

- An end to the criminalisation and legal oppression of sex workers, clients, and third parties
- Equal protection from law enforcement and the criminal justice systems;
- Equal access to rights-based health and social services for sex workers, including sexual and reproductive health.
- We call upon the government of Uganda, all relevant ministries and CSOs to commit to listening to sex workers and sex worker-led organizations. End victimization by refusing to be silent.

Let’s work together to ensure no more sex workers face violations at the hands of predators or due to ill-informed policies.

For more information about the demands of sex workers, please contact UNESO at [uneso2015@gmail.com](mailto:uneso2015@gmail.com)

Email: [uneso2015@gmail.com](mailto:uneso2015@gmail.com)

Contact: +256 782669542 / +256 755553397

Office Location: Mengo, Prof: Apolo Nsibambi Road