

FREEDOM AND ROAM UGANDA

HATE NO MORE CAMPAIGN

A REPORT FROM THE SECOND PHASE

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**THE THIEL
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Foundation**

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BREAK THE CHAINS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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The Global Fund for Women, the Human Rights Foundation and the THIEL Foundation for funding this campaign. We also wish to thank the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law for standing with us during the launch of this campaign. We also wish to thank the various individuals who volunteered to champion the goals of this campaign.

DEDICATION:

We dedicate this Report to the many brave faces both Local and International who stood with the LGBTI community in Uganda in Aug.2012 during the Beach Pride.

INTRODUCTION:

The HATE NO MORE CAMPAIGN was launched on the 10th of August 2011 at Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala. It attracted a lot of mass media and minutes after the campaign it was all over radio stations in Kampala.

The campaign is scheduled to last for four months to stop the misconceptions and myths about same sex relationships in Uganda and hence fight homophobia through awareness.

We have been dismissed from schools, homes, jobs, churches, and other places. We are taunted on streets, at home, in churches and all social places because of our sexual orientation and/or gender identity. In recent years there have been arrests of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual and Transgender [LGBT] people. We live in constant fear and have to hide behind masks to protect our identities. Those that are outside the masks have to face injustices that society points at them. So the hate no more is here to stop such as those and many more hate crime committed against us.

STRATEGY:

The campaign was run on two strategies that is;

POSTER PINING:

In this strategy we had to pin posters in all the leading trading centers in the places visited. Since some posters contained words relating to homosexuality, this activity was mostly carried out at night thus code naming it Night Life. But in one District some poster the team which went there preferred to call friendly posters were pinned during broad day light.

DIALOGUE:

In this strategy we targeted mostly policy makers and people of high moral stands in society who would help to speak up against the hate crimes committed to us. We also targeted Non Government Organizations to help us in this campaign. This we did through dialoguing with the various people in such places. But further still through this strategy we reached out to government parastatols like the Uganda Police Force, Various Residential District Commissioners and other government workers.

FINDINGS:

Unlike the first phase, this second phase of the campaign was targeted towards changing attitudes in main stream human rights organizations, government arms and other entities within the Kampala metropolitan area.

We visited a number of organizations and entities and bellow are the findings.

Most at Risk Populations Network (MARPs Network):

At this organization we found out that a number of staffs were willing to accept the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons even though they were not willing to talk about it outside work.

They expressed gratitude for FARUG to always think ahead and bring on such ground breaking projects which provide lasting solutions to the greater problem of homophobia.

They also agreed after the interaction with our team to carry on the message to others even out their workplace and even asked for extra printed material to share with others. They called on FARUG to always consider and count on them in anything directed towards a fair and just Uganda.

Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF):

HRAPF is a legal entity working for the betterment and fair representation of all Ugandan's regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity before the legal frame work of our country.

We met and spoke with a couple of staff there.

They appealed to our team to always keep in touch with their legal team in case of any hate crime arising in the community.

They expressed willingness to carry on the message in the legal circles and also asked for more material to be availed to them for their reception and resource centers.

They asked for more information about FARUG which our team gladly availed to them and they promised to continuing working with FARUG and the larger LGBTI community in Uganda.

St Paul Equality and Reconciliation Center (SPREC):

At St. Paul we were made to understand that they pretty understood the all LGBTI concept in Uganda and gladly told us that some of their staffs were LGBTI themselves, however they gave us some pretty good recommendations like the need to keep the campaign running saying that the period between the

first phase of the campaign and the second phase saw an increase in the number of hate crimes that the community reported, this directly implied that the first phase had such an impact on peoples' attitudes hence the need to keep the fire burning.

They too asked for extra material to share with their constituencies and help carry on the message to corners our team wouldn't have been able to reach.

Most at Risk Populations Initiative (MARPI) – Mulago

This was again a very interactive session talking to health care providers we have worked with for some time, the rationale for our visit was again due to the general belief that were as most doctors at the center had good understand of LGBTIs and the unique challenges they face, some doctors were not very accepting may be because of their religious and cultural beliefs. They were taken back when they realized that our team was made up of LGBTIs themselves and thanked us so much for the bravely. As a team we can proudly say that no stone was left un turned at the MARPI clinic in Mulago.

Dr. Majorine who leads the community outreaches at the facility that “such campaigns will after time reduce the rape of LGBTIs and especially Lesbians which has increased the HIV/AIDS prevalence in the gay community”.

As a team they suggested to us to carry out more sensitization in the medical sector as many doctors were still discriminating people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Most interesting is the fact that all of them in unison confirmed that “the government still has a big work to mobilize equality for all Ugandans irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity”.

Amakula Kampala:

Amakula is cultural foundation behind the Amakula film festival.

They were especially happy for the courage exhibited by the local LGBTI community in standing up for their rights, one of the staffs thanked the team for passing by because he now thought he was surer about his sexuality after a long search for himself and the dire love he had for masculine women.

They pledged to air LGBTI advocacy movies in their film festivals should the community contact them at any appropriate time.

However they expressed concern for the way young gay boys were drawing attention to them by their public conduct which they thought was putting their lives in danger.

Crested Crane Lighters (CCL):

Crested Crane Lighters is Sex workers led organization, they advocate for the rights of sex workers in Uganda and are based in the slum areas of Kawempe.

They appealed to FARUG that since they are also women at risk, they should be assisted with things like lubricants saying that at times they are not sexually aroused at all yet they still have to sleep with men to make money.

They pointed out that some of the challenges faced by the LGBTI are also faced by sex workers like arrests by police, rape and general public negative opinion and thus they called for a continued working relationship between the two at risk communities.

Association Francois Xavier Boutnengor (FXB):

The Association works in partnership with USAID to promote children's health rights in Uganda.

The team here was generally accepting and also applauded the community for standing up and proud for their rights. They were willing to share the information with others who did not chance to have a talk with our team.

Health Rights Action Group (AGHA) – Uganda:

The team here expressed to us how they have been working to promote health rights for gay men under cover; they mentioned that they were the very first in collaboration with Danish donors to offer medical assistance to gays in Uganda. They mentioned how happy they were for the community to think of engaging medical practitioners in the struggle for equality for all Ugandan Citizens.

They wanted to know more about FARUG, because some of them thought that it was a feminist organization and not an LGBTI organization as our team had mentioned to them, our team happily took them through what FARUG is and its immediate mandate.

They however mentioned that they later pulled out due to the tabling of the anti homosexuality bill and governments continued threats to close down all organizations working for and with homosexuals.

Again they were quick to mention that they will continue working with sexual minorities if we manage to change government's attitude towards the whole issue of homosexuality.

Night Life in Picture



In the first picture is Kasha J Nabagesera and Williams doing night life alongside the northern by pass, and in the second picture is a well decorated Hate no More van which we used .(photos by Gerald Ssentongo of Sexual Minorities Uganda)

Uganda National Health User's and Consumers Organization (UNHCO):

This was perhaps the most homophobic organization we had to go to,

The Director frankly told us that she is against homosexuals and that she can never accept gay advocates in her office, however she behaved diplomatically with us and mentioned that she could have thrown us out of her premises that because we were young she excused us. She went ahead to call her other staffs to witness for themselves real gays, lesbians and bisexuals as she mentioned that they had never seen any.

She mentioned that she is a strong advocate of the anti-homosexuality bill and that she wished gay pay were never permitted marriage rights like the case in the USA.

Platform for Labor Action (PLA):

The team here was generally accepting saying that they have worked with homosexuals before due to their affiliation with the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law, they expressed love for this sensitive yet very timely campaign in the face of all the legal woes the community is currently facing.

One of the team members there wondered why people would focus on a certain group due to their sexual orientation or the way they identified even when even the insane in society were liberated in one way or the other.

They also expressed concern that Uganda could a lot of donor support due to the exculpating rate of homophobia and the ever increasing levels of hate crimes towards the gay community.

They further expressed willingness to help in any way they could to see that this project is a success and that its able to attain it's most desired goal – attitude change among societies.

MUKONO HEALTH CENTRE IV-MUKONO ARCHDIOCESE:

The hate no more campaign team for Mukono district happened to visit and interact with the medical staff of the above mentioned center as the first spot to be approached. A lot was shared as regards the reason why we were in this area and mostly with Mr. Mwesigwa Daniel who is the human resource manager of this health center. We asked his views about hate crimes towards the marginalized groups especially homosexuals but he was rather so homophobic and was not willing to share much on this topic. He further refused to sign our confirmation paper saying we had no clear identification to to this campaign as he continued asking us for identity cards and cover letters from the organization that sent us. After a series of our apologies, he agreed to take our materials and agreed to sign our papers thus cautioning us never to visit offices without identification documents.

MUKONO MAIN HEALTH CENTER:

After our first spot, we continued further for Mukono main health center interacting with a clinical officer who had travelled with the mobile circumcision unit from Mulago hospital thus also talking to the

people who had come for a circumcision workshop about our cause in their area but were rather focused on their workshop as we focused our attention on the clinical officer who shared much time with us. One of the campaign crew members asked him if he would refuse treating same sex partners having a health problem but rather told us that he would not hesitate to treat them since they are also human beings. Furthermore Mr. Isaac Kasozi informed us that he had no problem with people basing on their sexual orientation and said we and our bosses had come up with a good strategy to spread the gospel of stopping hate crimes of all kind in the country while in the end he agreed to take and sign for our materials

Another doctor by the names of Mr. Mugerwa Isaac who was a lab technician was so homophobic and rarely talked to us even though we kept on questioning him more. He said he was not in position to take our materials but we convinced him that taking the material was not associating himself with homosexuality but rather to read more and understand these people and luckily enough after all this he also agreed and signed for our material.

MUKONO DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS/ A VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF THE WOMAN M.P MUKONO DISTRICT:

This was the most interactive and close rapport discussion we had in all office dialogues. The MP herself was not around but the officer in charge we found Mr. William Ndugga was so hospitable and so welcoming. He informed us that according to the unstable conditions in the country, the MP is rarely in office because she is usually off for official duties mostly attending parliamentary sessions and one of our members Tina Ocan was not reluctant to ask Mr. Ndugga if he had ever heard his boss talk about some bills in parliament mostly the anti-gay bill which suggests criminalizing all the involved parties in the act of homosexuality. In response, he told us that he has never heard her talk about it and Barigye Ambrose asked him his view to it and responded saying strongly detested homosexuals because they were the case for the current rise of HIV/AIDS in the country while also we defended ourselves saying that heterosexuals had the highest blame for that. Mr. Ndugga further suggested that we had to spare a day and meet with the MP when she is in office as he pledged to deliver the given printed materials and the message to his boss giving us the MP's contacts by the name of Hon. P. Kusasira, Mr. Ndugga also allowed us to hang our poster in his office saying that visitors into the office had to read and learn about the cause to fight hate crimes towards gays and lesbians and after this we left for other offices.

A VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER MUKONO DISTRICT AT MUKONO HEADQUARTERS PREMISES:

Furthermore, we managed to visit the office of C.A.O Mukono district but the worst part of it came when the office secretary informed us that the C.A.O himself was off for an official duty so we decided to tell her why we were in their place but rather she told us we had to meet the boss himself. We later agreed to seal our materials in the envelop, then we gave them to her and signed for them by the names of Mrs. Margaret Kibalama. She pledged to deliver our message to the boss when he reported to office.

KAUGA PRISONS VISIT, MUKONO DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS:

The crew members further went ahead to visit the district's prison of Kauga though we were scared knowing we would be not left to go out of the prison basing on the message e had on our printed materials but later we picked courage and boldness and knocked the prison main door thus being welcome by a lady prison warden who was on duty. After entering we introduced ourselves and enquired if we could have a talk with the O.C of the prison but rather we were referred to the office of deputy O.C by the names of Sgt.Aswoya Peter whom we introduced ourselves to and was a humble and welcoming man. Later alone we introduced the topic of hate crimes and we asked him his views about the current situation of criminalizing homosexuals and he strongly disagreed with that saying that why he fears the bill is that you cannot know who is gay and who is not saying that either his sister, brother, son, daughter plus other people close to him might be involved in the act without his knowledge and this would call for an intervention of relevant authorities since many would lose their own relatives if the bill is passed. We further asked him if in his prison he was handling such cases of people being arrested for being gay but responded saying they had no such cases, Mr. Peter said that for them they act according to orders from above and their only work is to guarantee safety for suspects and hand them over to court when time comes. He lastly appreciated our strategy and agreed to receive our materials and signing for them thus pledging to share with all officers particularly his boss the prison O.C as we also signed off for other places.

ROCH HILL HOSTEL VISIT:

More so there was a calm welcome at rock hill hostel near Uganda Christian university mukono by the hostel custodian by the names of Mr. Ssebakaki. After our introductory part, he thanked us for this good initiative and asked us if we went back to always update him about where the bill discussion had reached. Finally he disclosed to us that was also gay and concluded giving each one of us a cup of tea while he took our materials and signed for them.

NGO FORUM MUKONO DISTRICT:

Here we were welcomed by Mr. Allan Ramsey the Executive Director of the forum who was so hospitable and straight away took us to the common room for further explanation of our visit and to elaborate more about the campaign. Actually we told him how the current rise of hate crimes committed to the LGBTI community in the country was on the rise and it is high time everyone took responsibility of accepting fellow human beings regardless of their sexual identity and orientation and that we were in the area to sensitize the public and stop these inhuman acts. After all this he welcomed our views and pledged to interact with the youths during a training he was to conduct the very Thursday of that week, signed for the materials and vowed to pass the information to the youths in the training and fellow staff.

PRAYER PALACE – NABUTI VISIT:

This was the most hard and challenging encounters in our entire campaign as a team since we were about to be locked inside the church. At first before our introduction, Mr. Katabira Isaac the church warden welcomed us warmly but after telling him about hate no more campaign and how we were

feeling sorry for the crimes committed to the homosexuals in the country, he turned bitter and locked us in thus calling his fellow church attendants saying we had come to spread homosexuality in their district. We went ahead to defend ourselves arguing that we were not spreading it but rather advocating for a halt in the crimes committed to the homosexuals. They gave us several scriptures of the bible saying that homosexuality was evil and later reconciled with us by asking us to get saved and get rid of our evil ways. All in all they ended up taking our material and told us they would read those materials and understand what the campaign was all about and we left the place for other offices.

GEO-INFORMATICS VISIT:

This was our second last place of visit in our campaign. Mr. Jeff Praise the manager of this company welcomed us in a good mood and asked us our reason for approaching him and we narrated the whole issue about the campaign. He immediately thanked us for arranging such a good project and was wishing to be included in the next campaign, more so he was wishing to visit FARUG and told us was also a gay looking for a stable companion. He conclusively received and signed for our materials.

RED CROSS MUKONO BRANCH:

This was our last area of visit and the branch officer by the name of Ssudi Lubowa was calm and welcoming before our introduction and giving him the topic for our visit in Mukono district. Due to the heavy day's work, most members were tired but we managed to perform our last office dialogue with zeal. Contrary to the expected results knowing Red Cross as a humanitarian based center, Ssudi's response was not that good on hearing us ask him about the current sidelining of lgbti community in the country and was not willing to either listen more to our conversations with him. He said that some of these people like gays and lesbians needed not to exist in society but finally agree to receive our materials and sign for them.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The budget was appropriate to the activities pursued, that means there was no underestimation of the budget by the committee members
- We managed to cover our proposed areas to be visited ranging from pinning posters to public dialoguing.
- The respondents or the people visited and the places were hospitable with few hostility cases reported except at the church where we were almost arrested.
- We managed to acquire contacts from prominent persons like the Woman MP for Mukono District.

CHALLENGES:

- Some officers aligned themselves on asking us introductory documents of which we were not in position to present the plus identity cards.
- Some areas visited were so hostile and not wanting to associate themselves with the word 'homosexual' thus reluctant to give the crew an interactive session.

-The weather was not good as it had been a rainy season

-We had fewer volunteers as we didn't have sufficient financial assistance to take on all who wanted to participate.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

-Due to the reactions from other offices that we never had cover letters and identity cards to do this campaign we would recommend FARUG next time to avail the field crew with such documents.

-Further more like the first phase, we recommend the hosting organization to provide evidence gadgets for field crew like tape recorders and cameras for coverage of the field events thus providing information for future reference.

Appendix:

In the first phase of the campaign we brought you a statement read by Kasha J Nabagesera at the launch of the Hate No More Campaign, in this report and the preceding Reports about Hate No More we will be bringing you mini profiles of LGBTI activist who have caused a change in our community. This time we are starting with Kasha J Nabagesera.

Kasha J Nabagesera – A MIN PROFILE OF AN ACTIVIST:

Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera (known also as Jacqueline Kasha) is a Ugandan LGBT rights activist. She is the founder and executive director of an LGBT rights organization called Freedom & Roam Uganda (FARUG) and 2011 recipient of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.

Life

She has publicly campaigned for an end to homophobia in Uganda, where homosexuality is illegal. In 2010, Ugandan newspaper Rolling Stone published the photographs and names of people it claimed to be gay, under the headline "Hang Them". The names and photographs included those of Nabagesera and her colleague David Kato. The pair eventually sued the tabloid, and in doing so set a benchmark for human rights in Uganda. Nabagesera explains the precedence as an attempt to protect "privacy and the safety we all have against incitements to violence.

Kato was later killed following the legal battle with the publication. Nabagesera has continued the fight for gay rights in Uganda. Under the auspice of FARUG, she has fought to decriminalize homosexuality in Uganda by circumventing the Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Bill; a bill which mandates stiff sentences ranging from prison sentences to the death penalty. Furthermore the bill mandates that citizens who do not expose gay and lesbians to the authorities face up to 3 years in jail.

In 2010, Nabagesera opened the only Ugandan bar for LGBT people; named Sappho Islands, the bar was situated in a suburb of Kampala. It closed in 2011.

Awards

In May 2011, it was announced that Nabagesera would be awarded the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders. She received the award in Geneva on 13 October 2011, she is the first gay rights activist to do so. According to Michelle Kagari of Amnesty International, the award "recognizes [Nabagesera's] tremendous courage in the face of discrimination and violence against LGBT people in Uganda. Her passion to promote equality and her tireless work to end a despicable climate of fear is an inspiration to LGBT activists the world over

Call for support

We would still like to call for more support as we want to try and reach every district in Uganda. As stated above it will not be easy as it also hasn't been busy with the few districts we have so far reached. We have made this campaign an ongoing campaign as regards to the initial 6 months, we haven't achieved even a 1/4 of our objectives. We would like to also take to the islands in Uganda.

We would like to make more t-shirts as they have been a very marketing strategy

We would like financial assistance to be able to continue with this campaign

We would like more volunteers

We would like to make more materials.

We would also like to address the issues raised in these 2 phases as we move on.

Please contact FARUG

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