



Newsletter

Third Edition: January 20th-20th May 2020

A newsletter of LBQ struggles, activism, events and health.

We welcome you to the first issue of our newsletter for the year 2020!

Please share and get to know more about our struggles as LBQ women as they continuously fight and Advocate for our rights in Uganda. Thank you!

ADJUSTING OUR OPERATIONS UNDER THE PANDEMIC CORONA VIRUS OUTBREAK.

20 March to date.....



Figure 1 FARUG peer setting off to distribute Condoms and self-testing kits to fellow

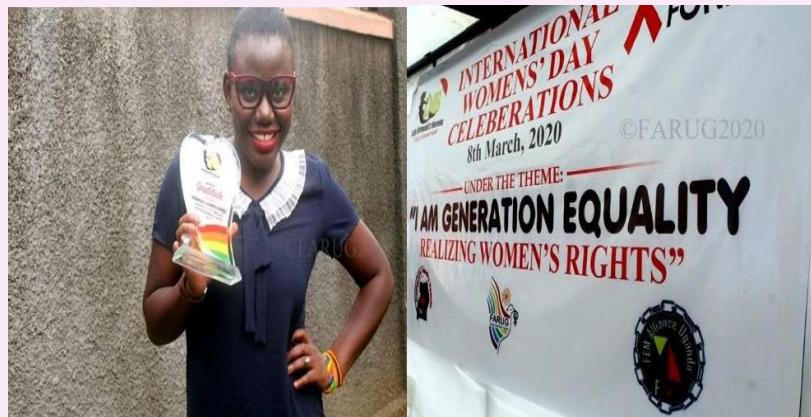
The COVID – 19 pandemics has hampered the implementation of most planned activities. FARUG, in the struggle to keep her members healthy and informed, has put a number of interventions. These include continued distribution of condoms to communities to prevent HIV and STI infections, sensitizations and education of peers on sexual and reproductive health rights through social media platforms, distribution of OraQuick self-testing kits. We have continued providing food support packages as well as promoting a market place in our Whatsapp group to help members with economic empowerment during COVID-19.



Figure 2 Peers continue to distribute protective condoms, ARVs, Prep and STI medicine to target groups.

Our big story

Women's day celebrations 8th March 2020



The theme for the day was: "AM GENERATION"

FARUG together with three sister organizations recognized and celebrated the International Women's Day on the 8th March 2020. These sister organizations were Lady Mermaid's Bureau (LMB), Trans Equality Uganda (TEU) and Fem Alliance Uganda (FEMA) who advocate for the rights of female sex workers, transgender sex workers and transgender women respectively. Experiencing the same hardships and violence, the four organizations came together to amplify the voices of minority women in Uganda.

The occasion was blessed with recognition of different activists and human rights defenders who have been a great pillar and fundamental advocates for the rights of LGBTQ persons and sex workers. The community allies were recognized as well.

LGBTQ and sex workers had a jolly evening as they were entertained by the different talented groups from the community. People interacted and learnt many new things about the community.

Lady mermaids' bureau recognized activist who have done a tremendous work in advocating for the rights of LGBTIQ and sex work persons in the greater central region.

<http://faruganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/WOMENS-DAY-2020-PRESS-RELEASE.pdf>

FARUG APPRECIATES PEERS who served under the EJAF project.

March 8th



Figure 1 Patricia Kimera, Programme director HRAPF hands over certificates to peers.

FARUG, before celebrating the international women's day, she first appreciated her EJAF peers. EJAF is the Elton John Aids Foundation that granted the Uganda key populations community under the Deep Engagement Fund (DEG) to implement HIV related services with the aim of preventing the infection targeting the 90 90 90 Global fund initiative.

This project commenced in February 2018 and ended in February 2020. Key populations civil society organisations (CSOs) were implementers and many peers were recognized under this project.

FARUG in particular trained 10 peers who have been very fundamental in implementing HIV services in the different districts of Uganda. The selected districts had LBQ women who faced problems of accessing free medical care due to discrimination from health service providers working with the available health care giving centers.

This project proved it wrong to many who thought LBQ women are not susceptible to HIV infection. Many LBQ women tested positive and fortunately enough they have been linked to care and management to health centers in their respective localities.

We reached districts such as; Arua, Busia, Jinja, Kayunga, Mbarara, Lira, Gulu, Kampala, Wakiso, Butambala and many more. The implementation of this project has bred many more impactful projects such as adherence quarterly meetings, online counselling, DIC etc. that have continued benefiting the entire LGBTQ community.



Figure 2 Cutting of the cake to appreciate peers.

FARUG DROP IN CENTER (DIC)

The FARUG DIC continues to be open for access to LBQ women who can reach the premises. We operate an emergency number that LBQ women can use for any inquiries and any needs related to legal help, health, psychosocial counselling and GBV/IPV related counselling.

These numbers are;

GBV Number: +256(0) 757 709 096

DIC Number: +256(0) 39 323 912.

Executive Director Holds A Facebook Live Chat.

April 21st 2020

The impact of COVID-19 is felt more strongly by LBQ women because of their sexuality and preferences. The Facebook live chat brought together LBQ women during the pandemic to discuss ways of mitigating the impacts of COVID-19. 28 participants attended this chat. Some of the issue the Director highlighted were, the increased cases of intimate partner violence, homelessness of LBQ women and more rejections from family members. She shared about menstrual hygiene and the need to help LBQ women with pads since they no longer hustle to meet that need.

There was need of food for members and other necessary needs like shelter.

The fact that most LBQ women do not work due to discrimination based on their sexual orientation and/or gender expression, the executive director solicited for support from allies, well-wishers and LGBTIQ community members who could help in any way.



<https://www.facebook.com/FARUG2003/videos/2640174536270433/>

The Key Populations Investment Fund (KPIF)

The Key Population's Investment Fund (KPIF) targets all communities of key populations ranging from sex workers, LBQ women, transgender people, people who inject drugs and many more.

FARUG is implementing a number of activities under this project aimed at sensitizing both her targets communities and the health service providers to create a favorable environment in accessing HIV related services and health care at large. Below are some of the activities implemented,

Dialogues with LBQ women on HIV, STIs & GBV

December 13, 2019

These dialogues are aimed at equipping LBQ women with information on the HIV, STIs and GBV, to learn the implications and how they can prevent these incidences in their lives. The first dialogue brought together LBQ women, a health worker and a gender based violence champion who discussed the different challenges encountered by LBQ women regarding HIV and GBV. 40 LBQ women participated in this dialogue at hotel eight Winx-Ntinda, and they had a very productive discussion.



Figure 1 Jean a GBV peer sensitizing LBQ women on GBV and IPV.

Quarterly meeting of LBQ women living with HIV

February 28, 2020

As a measure of helping our members adhere to HIV treatment, FARUG conducts quarterly meetings for LBQ women living with HIV. These meetings are aimed at members sharing how they are coping with antiretroviral treatment (ART) administration as well as encouraging others to live positively. The first quarterly meeting was facilitated by Men of the Night Executive Director. Members discussed a variety of issues related to proper adherence to their ARTs.



Figure 1 The E.D Men of the Night giving mechanisms of effective adherence to LBQLHIV.

Dialogues with health service providers

February – March 2020

FARUG conducted dialogues with health care service providers and sensitized them about the challenges LBQ women encounter when they seek health care services in their facilities. This is aimed at creating awareness to health service providers on friendly efficient and accessible measures about LBQ women concerns in fighting HIV/ AIDS and STIs.

These dialogues are also aimed at ensuring and creating friendly and meaningful interventions towards prevention, management and care towards HIV among LBQ women.

The health service providers were from government-oriented facilities such as Kitebi H/C IV, Kawala H/C III, Kiswa H/C III, Komamboga H/C III, Kisenyi H/C III and Reach out Mbuya.



KPIF CSO project performance review meeting (Quarter one)



FARUG was part of the KPIF performance review meeting that is aimed at monitoring the progress of projects being implemented under the KPIF managed by Infectious Disease Institute, (IDI) funded by Centre for disease control (CDC).

This three-days meeting involved presentations from different CSOs that are implementing projects that aim at fighting HIV, prevention of GBV and information dissemination.

HIV testing and counselling

Peers have continued to identify hot spots that need HIV testing services. Unlike EJAF, where we reached different districts, KPIF is limited to only Kampala and Wakiso. From the eight outreaches conducted, 269 LBQ women from divisions of Nakawa, Rubaga, Makindye and central division have been tested and know their status.

Those who tested positive have been linked to care. Those who tested negative have been encouraged to practice safe sex by using protective gears like condoms and being faithful to their partner.



Introduction of the OraQuick HIV Self –Test Kit.

May 2020

OraQuick is a HIV self-test kit that is used by individuals who are not comfortable with going to the hospital for the HIV test. This kit is very conducive since it does not involve any pricking of the skin since most people fear blood and pricks.

Peers and staff were taken through the procedure of using this kit and they can now educate their peers on how to use the self-test kit. The introduction of this self-test kit is intended to supplement the fight against HIV infection and increase awareness of one's status.



Figure 1 Staff and peers learning about OraQuick HIV Self – testing kit



Figure 2 KPs have managed to self-test at their places of convenience and awaiting their results

Consultation with the gynecologist

January 31, 2020

With support from Global Fund for Women, FARUG was able to mobilize her members for a consultative meeting with a gynecologist under the FARUG clinic days.

Members learnt more about the gynecological issues affecting women, reproductive health, STIs and UTIs, menstrual hygiene etc. They were advised on where to seek medical assistance and preventive measures to some of the complications. This was done with a team from Reach out Mbuya.



Figure 1 Consultation meeting in progress

Dialogue on cervical cancer.

December 19, 2019

FARUG held a clinic day through a dialogue and the topics of discussion were, cervical cancer, menstrual hygiene management and sexually transmitted infections.

Member were given menstrual and intimate care products to take them through the festive season.



Figure 1 Happy members after receiving their packages!

Our health coordinator demonstrating the safe day's method of family planning (moon bead method) during one of our clinic days at Ice breakers Uganda.



Figure 2 One of the FARUG nurses doing their best! Demonstration of moon bead method of family planning.

ADVOCACY AND DOCUMENTATION

FARUG Executive director completes her Human Rights Advocacy programme 2019 at the Colombia University in New York, USA. This will not only contribute to her development in her advocacy carrier and passion but a fundamental development to the entire LGBTIQ community.



Figure 1 FARUG congratulates you upon this achievement!

FARUG Executive Director shares a presentation at the Key Populations Stake holders meeting #UKPC2020.

February 25, 2020

She emphasized the need for equal accessibility to friendly, non-discriminatory and inclusivity of LBQ women in the fight against HIV/AIDS.



Figure 2 FARUG E.D Ssenfuka J Warry at the #UKP

Press Conference 4th March 2020

FARUG was also part of the press conference held at Trans Equality Uganda (TEU) prior to the women's day celebrations. This conference occurred on 4th March 2020 where Mubiru Arthur and Frank Mwesigwa both Trans men working with FARUG participated. Activists in attendance shared their experience with the journalists on the challenges they face in societies they live. They argued their local leaders to support them in the fight against gender and sexuality-based hate and phobia.



Figure 1 Activists attending the press conference prior to the women's day celebration 2020

SOCIAL WELLNESS AND INVOLVEMENT

Last social Friday of 2019.

December 19th 2019

FARUG held bold learning conversations on movement building #LBQ women in Kampala and we cautioned each other to keep safe during the festive season. All thanks go to OSIEA for facilitating this activity/gathering.

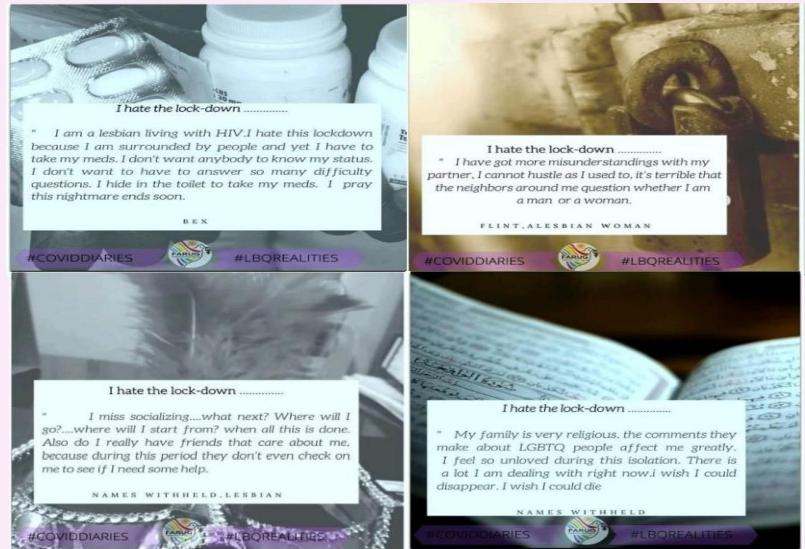


Figure 1 FARUG members in a learning conversation

ONLINE CAMPAIGN AND SHARING LIVED REALITIES FOR LBQ WOMEN IN REGARDS TO COVID-19

We want to know how you are dealing with all things in COVID-19.

This survey is aimed at keeping in touch with members and knowing how they can be helped during this pandemic by sharing their day today lived realities. Below are some of the shared realities;



#EverydayLGBTIQ+ photo voice campaign, 1-31 May 2020

FARUG AND SMUG continue to encourage the LGBTIQ community and allies to show acts, spaces and places of solidarity kindness and resilience as part of their Everyday LGBTIQ+ photo voice campaign aimed at amplifying the strengths, voices and images of LGBTIQ people across Uganda.



THANK YOU!
'Break the Chains'

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