

# FREEDOM AND ROAM UGANDA NEWSLETTER

## OUR THEME: QUEERING SRHR

### In this Edition

Freedom and Roam Uganda (FARUG) unleashes her second quarterly newsletter as she continues to serve her constituency reflecting on her strategic interventions.

### QUEERING SRHR & BA QUEER TWOGERE LAUNCH

### FARUG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECONGNISED BY GLOBAL NETWORK OF RAINBOW CATHOLICS

### OUR LEGAL DESK OFFICER FEATURES IN THE COMMUNITY PARALEGAL MAGAZINE

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## OUR BIG STORY



### Duo Launch "Queering SRHR publication and Ba Queer Twogere podcast"

FARUG successfully launched her book titled Queering SRHR, A Guide for LBQ Womxn health and her podcast, Ba Queer Twogere. This is aimed at widening the scope of visibility and acceptance towards LBQ womxn in Uganda.

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Our admin and legal desk officer attended a training workshop that was organised by the Human rights awareness and promotion forum (HRAPF). They were equipped with knowledge on budget monitoring for LGBTQ persons in Uganda.

This objected to creating awareness and impacting knowledge about the national budget processes. The training is aimed at increasing the capacity of the LGBTQ leaders to engage in budget advocacy and ensure that the national budget is an inclusive budgeting process that considers the needs of the LGBTQ persons.



FARUG peers engaged in a conversation on healing from post-elections. They discussed the way forward as LBQ leaders. This meeting was organised by Queer women leadership women.

Equipping LBQ women with digital skills for online media activism during lockdown As a Covid response mechanism, FARUG trained **20** LBT persons on Digital Security and safety to aid their activism using online media during the 42days of lockdown.

Community members from different LBT organisations were trained.





## ACCELERATORS PROGRAM

FARUG'S communication officer and programs associate were part of the accelerator training organised by SMUG which is aimed at equipping LBQ communications people with campaigning skills for advocacy. This program created a network of communication personnel across organisations who will work together going forward to boost LGBT social media advocacy and activism.



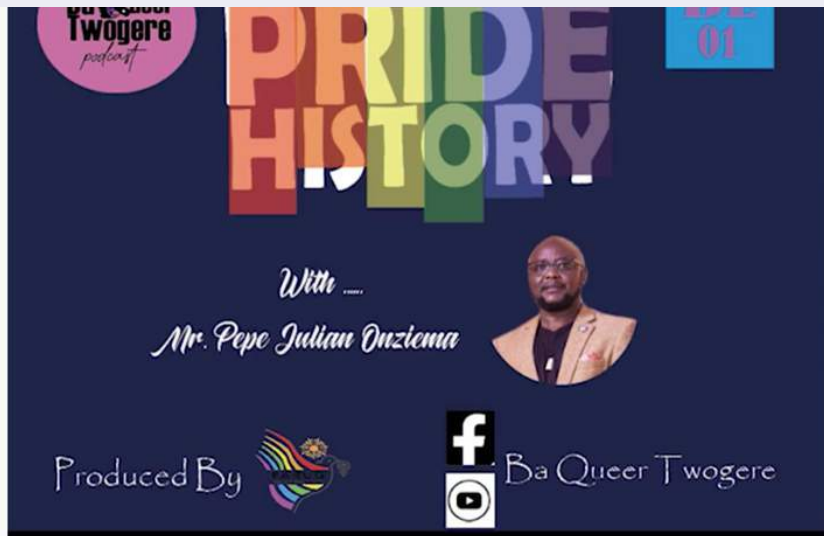
## CELEBRATING EID MUBARAK

We recognize the importance of religion in our lives. LGBTQ people have a right to worship in any religion of their preference. This year, FARUG welcomed all LBQ womxn for Eid prayers and celebrated the break of their fast.

## PRIDE MONTH

Pride month is here and we continue to assert that it takes no compromise to give people their rights, it takes no money to respect the individual. It takes no political deal to give people freedom. As FARUG, since we are in lockdown we could not celebrate physically so we opted to share virtually pride messages throughout the pride month.



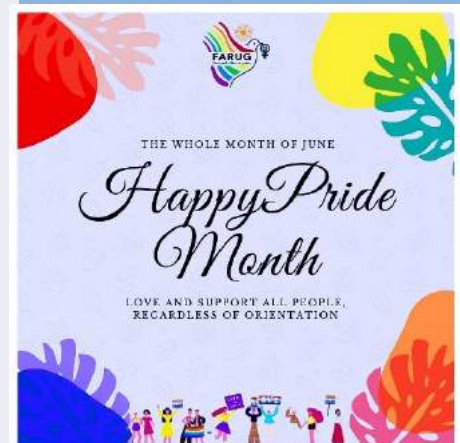


During the PRIDE month, one of the veteran LGBT human rights defenders, Pepe Julian Onziema who also serves as the programs director SMUG shared the LGBT history on 16/June/ 2021. This was aimed at sharing this information with other LGBT activists and human rights defenders to enhance the continuity of LGBT community advocacy. If you missed it, you can get the podcast from this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8uWlyskqTA>

During pride month, we celebrate and commemorate the tremendous strides that LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning), intersex, asexual, and everyone else) people have made.

Pride Month is held every year in June to commemorate the Stonewall Riots of 1969, and while it celebrates the progress the LGBTQIA+ community has made, it also serves to commemorates the community's tragic losses of far too many to hate crimes.

Pride Month serves as a reminder that everyone should be equal no matter their sexuality or gender. We think of the strong and proud men, women, Transmen, Transwomen, and non-binary people of the LGBTQIA community and how they inspire us in the continuing fight for greater equality and freedoms.





## BA QUEER TWOGERE PODCAST

Our podcast, Ba Queer Twogere, is a lesbian visibility podcast celebrating queer love, exploring experiences, representation and bursting queer myths.

FARUG celebrates reaching this milestone.

The podcast now fosters much-needed dialogues to disrupt narratives about LBQ womxn in Uganda. This project is now an integral part of the organisation. For more information, please visit our youtube link below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2okIMvjHIY>

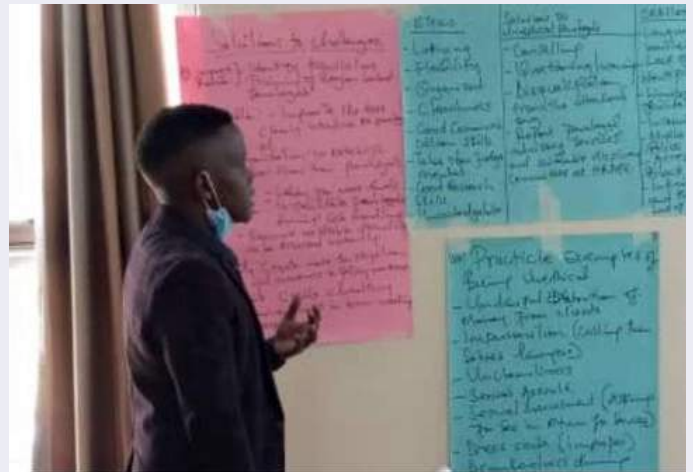


## LGBT LEADERS MEET THE SWEDISH AND DANISH AMBASSADORS

LGBTQ leaders had a meeting with the Swedish and Danish ambassadors. During this meeting, they discussed the challenges faced by the LGBTQ community and how the community is trying to navigate those challenges.

## REFRESHER COURSE FOR COMMUNITY PARALEGALS

Our clinical manager who also serves as a community paralegal participated in the refresher training course for LGBTI Community paralegals. The training was aimed at equipping community paralegals with information on the new developments in different laws that affect LGBTI persons, developments on human rights law as well as learning more skills in monitoring, documentation and report writing. This practice enables community paralegals to offer friendly and meaningful services to the communities they serve.



## THE ACCELERATORS CAMPAIGN

In a bid to create safe spaces for LGBTQ persons, FARUG joined other LGBTQ organisations led by Sexual Minorities Uganda - SMUG. These safe spaces target LGBTQ persons to be free from Homophobia, transphobia and Biphobia. The campaign has accelerators attached to different organisations that were partners and allies of the LGBTQ community with whom they held conversations regarding SOGIE issues aiming at strengthened partnerships as well as pledge for safe space for minorities.

## LGBT SHELTER RAID

**44** LGBT persons were arrested following a raid of Happy family shelter. This raid brought many activists together to see that the accused are released. Unfortunately, only **3** succeeded with getting police bond and the **39** were taken to court which followed a remand to Kitalya national mini maximum prison. From experiences with this prison and LGBT persons, many have faced gross human rights violations in that particular facility. HRAPF, partners and community paralegals worked tirelessly to ensure that all the arrested persons were released from prison.







## SRHR LEARNING CONVERSATIONS

As we ended mental health month, our Social Friday was about improving our mental health by carrying out healthy activities, especially those that bring back the good childhood memories, when we enjoyed life with reckless abandon instead of engaging in unhealthy activities like alcohol and substance abuse.

We also made it a point to remind our members to be vigilant with their security, especially now that the Sexual offences bill was passed. This was supported with a dialogue on sexual offences bill from our legal desk officer and clinic manager.



Kikaawa, the FARUG stationed paralegal and Arthur, the clinic manager taking members through the sexual offences bill during social Friday.



members participating in indoor games at FARUG office premises

## AWARENESS CREATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Our program associate and administration officer were guest facilitators to a meeting with Reproductive Health Uganda that organised an orientation for **18** service providers from across all their branches in Uganda. This was aimed at empowering their service providers to take a Gender Transformative Approach in their work. It was also aimed at creating an enabling space for KPs to access responsive services.



## SRHR BOOT CAMP AT MEMPROW

There was a personal and organization management and SRHR boot camp follow-up conversation at MEMPROW that was intended to assess the impact of her programs at both individual and community levels. The half-day session involved sharing experiences of personal growth and how the growth has impacted the community and the organizations at large.



## CSO CORDINATING MEETING

The ministry of health organised a CSO coordinating meeting that was geared at strengthening CSO engagement, coordination and treatment literacy. In attendance was SBICA (Social and behavioral change activity) that is funded by USAID and targets to engage with CSOs in order to strengthen their capacities regarding different thematic areas of operation in regards to HIV.







## QUEERING SRHR

### Dialogues with health service providers.

As we continue to create safe spaces in health care service provision centers, we continued to reach **122** health care service providers from the districts of Kampala, Wakiso, Lira, Gulu and Mbale. We dialogued about the issues affecting LBQ womxn in accessing health care services. This exercise went hand in hand with sharing and distributing the queering SRHR book on lesbian health. This book contains detailed information on the health-related issues of LBQ women. You can download a copy from our FARUG website

<https://www.faruganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FARUG-GUIDE-ON-QUEERING-SRHR.pdf>

## ANNUAL SRHR CAMP

For our SRHR camp this year, we went upcountry to four districts, i.e Gulu, Lira, Mbarara and Mbale where we reached 90 LBQ women with STI management interventions and menstrual hygiene information and products with support from Global fund for women-GFW..



FARUG Programs Director facilitated a session on understanding LBQ sexual reproductive health rights at the CSSMUA capacity building workshop.

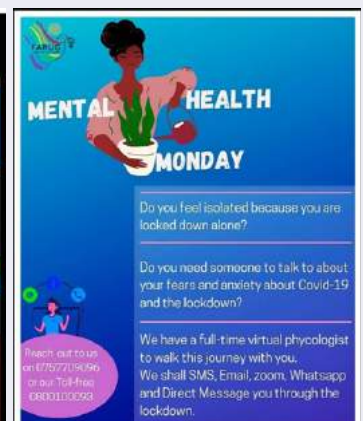


## TRAINING ON LBQ WOMXN HEALTH RELATED ISSUES.

FARUG peers attended a training organised by Transgender Equality Uganda-TEU. The objective of this meeting was to create awareness on LBT womxn issues in areas of health and to ensure a peer-to-peer model is installed at the health centers that address the unique needs of LBQ womxn. This is aimed at improved accessibility and utilization of health services by LBT womxn while at health care provision centers. The training also targeted to improve knowledge of government health workers about LBQ health related issues.

## COVID INTERVENTIONS

Covid -19 has affected many operations in the entire nation. This has not left out LGBT organisations. As Farug, we commit to continue serving the community through other measures that can enable us to reach our people. The services that we are offering in this challenging situation are shared in the pictures attached.



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We further shared different numbers from different partners and LGBT organisations that our members can reach in case there is a need for inquiries during the lockdown.

For LGBTQ legal aid and health-related emergencies during this lockdown, please don't hesitate to contact these toll-free numbers for assistance, inquiries or referrals;

1. Human Rights and Promotion Forum (HRAPF)- 0800-160-683
2. Freedom and Roam Uganda (FARUG)- 0800-100-093
3. Ice Breakers Uganda (IBU)- 0800-100-094
4. Spectrum Initiatives Uganda- 0800-100-040
5. Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG)- 0392-174-432
6. TRIUMPH Uganda- 0800-111-425

You can also DM us @KuchuTimes via any of our social media platforms, call or WhatsApp: 0788-329-702.

Remember, it is our personal responsibility to observe the SOPs to overcome this second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### We continue to share more messages on Covid-19

COVID-19 pandemic has affected us in many ways like facing challenges that can be stressful, overwhelming, and cause strong emotions. We believe some Public health actions, such as social distancing, are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but they can make us feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety.

**Coping with stress during this time of crisis**

It's normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared, or angry. Talking to people you trust can help.

1. Maintain a healthy lifestyle as best as you can with proper diet, adequate sleep and exercise, and social interaction with loved ones, LGBTQ-based organisation at home or online.
2. Seek professional help for physical and mental health needs instead of using smoking, alcohol, or drugs to cope.
3. Lessen the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage of news that you find upsetting.
- 4.

**BE READY**  
Supportive, Confident, Alert, Kind.  
Make sure that proper health and safety guidelines are followed.

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT COVID-19 FROM THE FARUG DROP-IN CENTRE**

During this time of Crisis, we encourage you to Stay Safe!!! Medicines that are taken in isolation hospitals

- Vitamin C-1000
- Vitamin E (£)
- From (10 to 11) hours, sitting in the sunshine for 15-20 minutes.
- Egg meal once ..
- We take a rest / sleep a minimum of 7-8 hours
- We drink 1.5 liters of water daily
- All meals should be warm (not cold).

And that's all we do in the hospital to strengthen the immune system  
Note that the pH of coronavirus varies from 5.5 to 8.5  
Therefore, all we have to do to eliminate the virus is to consume more alkaline foods above the acidity level of the virus.

## MEETINGS

The Executive Director attended a rapid assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on Key Populations that was organised by the Uganda Key populations consortium. This was aimed at advocating for KP inclusion in resource allocation.



Peers from different organisations attended a meeting that was organised by SMUG. They discussed the roles and challenges they encountered and how best they can be assisted in order to attain efficient service delivery.



FARUG clinic manager attended a consultative meeting for the transgender community in Uganda and this was aimed at identifying recommendations for the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) to include in the COVID-19 Response Mechanism-C19RM funding request.





### Duo Launch “Queering SRHR publication and Ba Queer Twogere podcast”

FARUG successfully launched her book titled Queering SRHR, A Guide for LBQ Womxn health

<https://www.faruganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FARUG-GUIDE-ON-QUEERING-SRHR.pdf>

This was in conjunction with launching, Ba Queer Twogere podcast

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJkBLzElMupfZKRx9Lq0C2g>.

These activities took place on 22nd May 2021. This is aimed at widening the scope of visibility and acceptance towards LBQ womxn in Uganda. As FARUG, we wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the partners, allys and friends of FARUG who honored our invite and graced the occasion.

*Thank you for standing with us.*



“

*This is a step ahead for not only FARUG  
but the entire LBQ community*

”

**Joan Amek**

The Executive Director of Rella Women's  
Foundation



“

*The stories of our lives are best told by us*

”

**Solome Nakaweesi**

A friend, partner and lover of FARUG



“

*I'm inspired by the Ba Queer Twogere  
Podcast. It is helping us to raise our  
voices and tell our stories*

”

**Beyonce**

Executive director at Transgender Equality Uganda





“

*This podcast really defines breaking the chains which is the foundation of our formation as FARUG*

”

**Dorothy Amuron**

FARUG Board Chair also the Programme  
Manager at CEHURD



“

*10years ago we couldn't. We celebrate us today for being able to tell our stories*

”

**Jackie Asimwe**  
CivSource Africa



A group photo of the FARUG partners taken during the launch.



## OUR LEGAL DESK OFFICER FEATURES IN THE COMMUNITY PARALEGAL MAGAZINE

Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum - HRAPF released another issue of their book series "I am a community paralegal". This issue featured our paralegal who also serves as the community stationed paralegal at FARUG office premises. FARUG is proud to have such a committed paralegal serving the LBQ community on none discriminative grounds.

## LESBIAN VISIBILITY DAY

The Global Network of Rainbow Catholics recognised the FARUG Executive Director on Lesbian Day of visibility. They embraced this through sharing a message on their social media platforms as quoted herein;

“On Lesbian Visibility Day, we'd like to share with you Joanita's Witness as a committed lesbian Catholic. She is an active member of Freedom And Roam Uganda - FARUG, part of Faithful Souls Uganda and host of the new podcast "Ba Queer Twogere" on Youtube. Do you have any lesbian members as part of your inclusive Christian community? Find her full witness on their website <https://rainbowcatholics.org/grant-me-justice-joanita-ssenfuka/?fbclid=IwAR0PGOGQ14s2eGQQb5zvbmWu0R2USSU9UCmaNqIzMhZ01Orf8QeYNrTCWok>





## LESBIAN VISIBILITY WEEK

During the lesbian visibility week, we celebrated all lesbian womxn who are visible and invisible. This was through running a live Podcast session

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwNcZ8-sdU> that explored all lesbian issues.



## MEDIA AROUND LESBIAN VISIBILITY WEEK

We celebrated the lesbian visibility week in conjunction with a love Friday. Participants explored the aspects of self-love, its meaning, impotence and how it propels an individual to live a more fulfilled life.

The conversation was ended with an Internet Storm of our Campaign "Ba Lesbica Dairies" and our Podcast "Ba Queer Twogere"

## THE PEOPLE'S VOICE TOOL

HEPS-Uganda and Sexual Minorities Uganda - SMUG organised a workshop whose main objective was to develop a people's voice tool to be used in advocacy and HIV/TB response. They also shared the next steps to be undertaken to meet response mechanisms towards responding to gaps around women, girls and children living with HIV.





## MESSAGE SHARED FROM SMUG PARTNERS

Sex can confuse us, please us and allow us to explore. On the other hand, it can cage us, drive us or be something to fear. There are the moving body parts, the uncertainties of whether to stroke or fix and the unfortunate inability to read your partner(s) mind. But there are also the times when you are on your A-game, and you feel like you can give your partner(s) a world of pleasure.

### BACK TO BASICS:

## Who and what am I?

### Man, woman or what?

**A quick guide to sex, gender and gender identity.**

#### Sex

A label that a doctor assigns you at birth, either male or female.

#### Assigned sex

This is a label a doctor slaps on you when you emerge into the world covered in goo, it's based on dated and medicalised understandings of sex & gender, hormones, chromosomes, and genitals. Most people are assigned male or female, and this is what's put on their birth certificates.

We say 'assigned sex at birth' and not 'biological sex' because sex & gender are not linear and this term gives a heads up that someone (often a doctor) made

The assignment of a sex at birth may or may not align with what's going on with a person's body, how they feel, how they identify, or how they will live.

#### Transgender

A term used to describe a person whose gender identity & sex differs from what they were assigned at birth.

#### Cisgender

Folx whose gender identity & sex aligns with what they were assigned at birth.

#### Gender affirming surgery

A permanent surgical body modification in order to better sync up between one's body and one's gender identity.

#### Cissexism

Norms and behaviours that come from the idea that all people are or should be cisgender and that being cisgender is inherently 'normal' and superior which silences and erases trans folx's lives and relationships.

*We thank you for being great partners, allies, friends, well-wishers and members of FARUG. We further remind and encourage you to continue following the presidential directives during the covid-19 pandemic through washing your hands, wearing your mask and keeping social distance to prevent contracting this virus.*

**We continue to look forward to a world where being an LBQ womxn is normal**

**For questions or concerns:**

0800-100-093

[Faruginfo@gmail.com](mailto:Faruginfo@gmail.com)

**For more information about our work please visit our social media platforms**



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"Break the chains"

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