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## **GBVPF 2020 MEDIA PRESSER RELEASE**

### **#16DaysOfActivism**

***“I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who it is for or against. I'm a human being, first and foremost, and as such I'm for whoever and whatever benefits humanity as a whole. Malcolm X***

The United Nations in 1991 recognized the 16 days of activism in the quest to advocate against Gender Based Violence, the campaign has taken place every year, starting on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November the day on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and ending on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, the World Human Rights Day.

As part of the annual global campaign against Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), the GBV Prevention Forum has been involved in activities and campaigns tailored to end VAWG in communities.

Gender based violence has affected almost all areas of development including asset ownership and employment as well as Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) have continued to persist in Uganda.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) in all its manifestations (physical, sexual, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), emotional and psychological) remains critical in human rights, public health and economic

GBV is perpetrated against men, women, boys and girls however, the vast majority of cases reported involve women and girls (UBOS, 2019).

The year 2020 needs no definition or introduction, it should be noted that the world has experienced dramatic changes in the world order, and this has taken the whole world on a toll on almost every single person. It is widely recognized across the world that crises like the COVID19 pandemic, Civil wars and Climate Change effects do not impact on all forms of gender equally.

The COVID19 pandemic has brought the silent pandemic of VAW to the surface, women's unpaid care work has long been recognized as a driver of inequality with direct links to wage inequality and cultural practices, lower income, physical and mental health stressors. Before the COVID19 crisis, women did nearly three times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men and this tripled during the COVID 19 lock down.

Those suffering or at risk of any form of violence may have backtracked even further into silence during the COVID19 confinements. In a number of communities in Uganda, our GBV Prevention Assessment Report indicated that more than 65% of women were exposed to Violence during the time of the COVID19 pandemic. From our study and report, it is therefore important for the community to raise the issue of establishing mechanisms that prevent VAWG in our communities, Organizations and Homes as well as sending out a message that VAWG is unacceptable. This year 2020, given the current circumstances and

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global context, our campaign aims at *Enhancing a Substantial Strategy towards Sustainable GBV Prevention Mechanisms*.

The Forum aims to equip stakeholders, within the region and beyond, in GBV prevention policy advocacy, gender rights and fast-tracking of CEDAW, Maputo Protocol and the Beijing Plan of Action<sup>1</sup>.

The forum will be held during the commemoration of the **16 Days of Activism**<sup>2</sup>, in December 2020, in the city of Kampala, Uganda.

As part of the outcomes, the campaign will lead to the introduction of GBV Prevention Dialogues across Uganda, GBV Caravans in the region and GBV-Prevention Advocacy

Ambassadors who will be trained by key stakeholders and partners. The Forum focuses on reaching out to the youths, particularly young women and girls from twelve (12) countries within the Eastern Africa region.

The main objective of the forum is to advance youth participation in both formulation and implementation of Gender Based Violence Prevention initiatives at International, Regional and National, levels. Furthermore, the following aims to be achieved:

- To provide a platform for all stakeholders to deliberate on gender-strategic measures for the promotion of sustainable GBV prevention mechanisms;
- To establish GBV prevention evidence research and baseline information on the most impactful and sustainable GBV prevention and advocacy initiatives;
- To create output documents for policy formulation;
- To engage policy makers, opinion leaders and experts from governments and regional bodies on measures to effectively promote consultation and inclusion.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS: -**

- Need to work with families, communities and district stakeholders to support the full establishment of low cost but high-quality community engagement approaches and strategies to curb the escalation and prevalence of GBV related cases, especially in Northern Uganda.
- Conduct community gender dialogues and discussions to increase gender awareness and responsiveness among community members at local levels, these dialogues inform a bottom-up approach to addressing GBV and effecting policies as well as informing strategic approaches at National, Regional, Continental and International level.
- There is need to establish shelters for GBV victims, these are basically to enhance and provide psychosocial support to victims of SGBV, much as government operates remand homes for children, there is need for government to establish GBV shelters across the country. The Forum operates a shelter at Rescue Women Foundation home in Wakiso, however such shelters need more support and frequent supervision.
- There is an exigency to fully explore the law on domestic violence against women and girls by appealing to the government to make laws that will best handle the perpetrators of GBV.
- Provision of health protection interventions during emergencies. A health care support system that will minimize any fatalities caused by domestic violence against women and girls.
- To establish educational centers that will be open to the public as well as mandatory. This will help curb on GBV especially in rural areas.
- Political will in woman empowerment, equality and social justice for women in social transformation by government to enforce the law on female genital mutilation on commercial sex exploitation against girls and women should be stop.
- Enhance Political will in woman empowerment, equality and social justice for women in social transformation by government to enforce the law on female genital mutilation on commercial sex exploitation against girls and women should be stop.
- There is need for continued engagement of men and boys to help change social and cultural norms. This will in return uphold gender equality in rural communities and thus will enable the vice to stop. Communities should pledge not to stop until the world upholds the inherent dignity and rights of every woman and girl.
- There is need for companies to work out their corporate culture on how GBV can be prevented at work for different companies on their way to work.