



# FARUG LIMITED



## WORLD AIDS DAY STATEMENT

“End inequality, End AIDS”

**For immediate release**  
1<sup>st</sup>-December-2021

Under the Global theme of World AIDS day 2021; “End Inequality, End AIDS”, we are honoring the LGBTQ activists, key population (KP) allies, and human rights defenders who have vitally contributed to HIV advocacy and work towards a positive HIV response. This includes addressing stigma, discrimination, and defending the human rights of key populations. This work has increased access to health and HIV services as well as ensured that KPs are included in decision-making spaces in regards to HIV prevention, care/management, and implementation.

Through this journey, there have been quite several challenges ranging from a decline in donor funding for the HIV response, covid-19 outbreak, challenging legal, social, and policy conditions that have hindered participation, especially for the KP community. The LBQ community has been greatly neglected yet they bear a high burden of HIV infection. As LBQ womxn, we have seen how inequality has played out during the Covid-19 pandemic. LBQ womxn had challenges in accessing vaccines, medical care, and testing, many lost their jobs due to the pandemic’s effects on the economy, while others had underlying conditions that made them more vulnerable to the coronavirus.

According to the UNAIDS, every week about 4,500 young women aged between 15 – 24 years acquire HIV. LBQ women are not exempted. To tackle social, economic, racial and gender inequities is to tackle HIV/AIDS by expanding access to prevention and treatment for vulnerable groups. Discrimination and stigma undermine the fight against HIV/AIDS.

However, KP activists, allies, and service providers have continued to deliver HIV prevention and treatment services, advocate for the removal of punitive laws and policies that hinder the HIV response, and provide data through community-led monitoring of health services and systems. Moreover, KPs have played a prominent role in keeping HIV high on the political agenda, by holding decision-makers accountable and ensuring that human rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

We, therefore, call upon stakeholders to support the KP community Drop-in Centers (DICs)/ wellness centers that play an important role in HIV prevention and treatment services. Support KPs to expand the HIV self-testing initiative to communities as well as advance HIV treatment, care, and support. We further for an inclusive fight; do not leave us behind. Without bold action against inequalities, we risk missing the targets to end HIV by 2030, as well as a prolonged COVID-19 pandemic and a spiraling social and economic crisis.

