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Towards Inclusivity

(Kampala, March 1, 2019) – Chapter Four Uganda joins the international community in celebrating the UN’s “Zero Discrimination Day”. This day was first commemorated in 2014 by UNAIDS in a bid to combat discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. Its significance has now been embraced by human rights advocates across the globe to fight against discrimination faced by women, refugees, sexual and gender minorities, and persons with disabilities, among others.

The principle of equality and non-discrimination guides our work at Chapter Four Uganda. This fundamental right is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, and international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The fundamental rights and freedoms that are stated therein accrue to everyone without distinction.

“All citizens of Uganda should work together in their respective spheres of influence -- from domestic settings, to work places, to institutions of learning -- to ensure that discrimination in all forms is eliminated,” said Rosemary Karoro of Chapter Four Uganda

Discrimination has far-reaching consequences, not only on the individual affected but also on the society. Discriminatory and unequal treatment negatively impacts a victim’s mental health and wellbeing, employment, housing, social relationships, and access to medical services, education, and public services.

The prevalence of intolerant attitudes, coupled with unjust policies and practices within state and non-state institutions have exacerbated discrimination against marginalised groups. In 2007, the National Gender Policy was reformulated, paving the way to various legal reforms such as the Equal Opportunities Commission Act 2007. This has led to increased accountability for the elimination of gender based discrimination in access to social and economic opportunities.

“In commemoration of Zero Discrimination Day, we call upon all Ugandan institutions and her citizens to take all measures necessary to eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality. Our country is stronger when we are not living on the margins. This is a call to our humanity; a call towards an inclusive Uganda,” said Nicholas Opiyo of Chapter Four Uganda.

Ends.