



International Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa

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Walk the Talk, End Stigma and Discrimination

Today, 1 March 2020, the International Community of Women living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) joins the world to commemorate the Zero Discrimination Day.

On Zero Discrimination Day, 1 March, we celebrate the right of everyone to live a full, productive and dignified life! We also remember all those that passed on because of stigma and discrimination and we renew our commitment to continue to challenge and condemn any acts of Stigma and Discrimination on anybody anywhere.

March 1st 2020 is an important day in the Eastern Africa Region as countries (Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda) convene in Johannesburg South Africa, to join PEPFAR teams to finalize the development of 2020 PEPFAR Country Operational Plans (COP2020). All these Countries in the region have reported high cases of stigma and discrimination as one of the social evils that deter people living with HIV, Key & Vulnerable Populations from accessing prevention, care, treatment and support services. This is a one of the greatest contributory factors why the region is continuously registering high rates of people lost to follow up within the care cascade, unexplained adherence and retention issues (as referenced in the Uganda 2020 Peoples Voice).

On the other hand, stigma and discrimination is yet to have clear interventions– it continues to receive lip service when it comes to resource allocation!

Countries will continue registering new HIV infections amongst young people particularly adolescent girls and young women, Key and Vulnerable populations if it remains business as usual and if we don't walk the talk!

Call to Action

WE call upon all Governments in the region, PEPFAR Country teams, UNAIDS Country Representatives and Civil Society Delegates to the PEPFAR Regional Planning Meetings (RPM) to work together to identify stigma & discrimination reduction interventions and allocate a budget line within the PEPFAR COP 2020, with an ultimate goal of ending Stigma and Discrimination

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