

Triangle Project Condemns Xenophobia, Homophobia and All Forms of Violence and Gender-based Abuses

As the world commemorated International Day Against Homophobia on Saturday, 17th May, Triangle Project pledged to intensify its fight against the rising tide of crimes of hate, violence and brutal attacks on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Intersexed (LGBTI) persons. Homophobia and prejudice are still motivating factors leading to victimization and disrespect for human dignity of many LGBTI persons living in townships across South Africa.

Triangle Project, a human rights organization advocating for the rights of LGBTI persons, continues to strive and work towards the transformation of society where homophobia and prejudice are no longer a threat to the livelihood, personhood and human dignity of all vulnerable persons within the LGBTI community.

“We cannot keep silent any longer when our lesbian sisters are being raped, attacked and brutally murdered because of their sexual orientation. This is a daily lived reality for many lesbian and bisexual women in our townships and rural areas. In a society where a woman is raped every 23 seconds, how can we keep quiet? We have to be outraged to the point where we are prepared to speak out and become activists that confront and challenge the comfort zones our class and privilege has purchased for us. We didn’t fight for our freedom in South Africa to be liberated into a society ruled by fear, intolerance, power, ignorance and prejudice. We can’t condone any form of violence – and more importantly, we cannot become immune to violence or complacent. Internalized homo-prejudice and lack of self-worth results in silence, apathy and detachment from the realities many face on a daily basis,” said Triangle Project’s manager for the Community Engagement and Empowerment Programme.

In our progressive, democratic “rainbow nation”, homophobia, misogyny, gender inequality and xenophobia are holding our communities to ransom and we are consumed with fear in a country which celebrates one of the most progressive constitutions in the world.

Commenting on the recent incidences of xenophobia plaguing our townships, Vanessa Ludwig, the director of the organization, said: “Triangle Project condemns all forms of violence. We are appalled by the escalating attacks on foreign nationals which once again occurs in the most economically deprived and marginalized communities. This notion that one person has the right to violate another person who is perceived as other is being fueled by various fundamentalisms, ethnic and racial intolerance, hetero-sexist attitudes and patriarchal power and privilege. The effect of these violent actions is that the vulnerable are forced even further onto the margins of society and are silenced for challenging value systems which are oppressive and exclusionary.”

Triangle Project condemns xenophobia, homophobia and all forms of gender-based violence. We add our collective voices to the many calling for swift action from authorities and government to stop the violence and murders of innocent and vulnerable persons based on their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity. As a human rights organization, we further commit ourselves to the fight to eradicate and stop all forms of abuse and violence towards all women and children – especially towards LGBTI persons who still live on the margins of our society.

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