**MBARARA RISE FOUNDATION – UGANDA (MRF)**

MRF is grass roots lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) non – profit organization, registration number 8002000015131.Established in 2016 and led by members of the LGBTI community, MRF provides a safe and positive environment for our target groups of LGBTI people, in Mbarara and surrounding rural areas of western Uganda. Through various peer interactions and educational programs, the organisation creates opportunities for individual and collective growth that bring about social change through equal rights awareness for all; offer trustworthy, better quality health services; and support and empower LGBTI persons. Its members are all experienced in the field of development and social education that have come together as MRF only to give their voluntary services without expecting any monitory benefits with the only vision of bringing the society that understands, appreciates and acceptances diversity.

**THE CAKE BAKING FOR LGBTQ EMPOWERMENT PROJECT**

MRF is currently training 100 lgbtq individuals in Cake bakery and management, the training will resulted into formation of members gaining skills in bakery and management, income generating activities. This project is supporting MRF members to experience real life experiences in starting businesses and also earning income for them and their family members. Under this project the organization is supporting and building the social economic capacity of the lgbtq to become financially independent and overcome challenges of poverty and unemployment.

**RATIONALE:**

High levels of discrimination, stigmatization and hate crimes based on sexual orientation. This problem leads to mob justice, human rights violations, inhuman treatment, and denial of basic human rights such as right to health, education and shelter. This problem is caused by lack of awareness, misinformation and negative attitudes towards the LGBTI. The protection of right to life is infringed upon when LGBTQ persons who seek health care services encounter stigma, discrimination, harassment, and humiliation. They are often confronted with discriminatory medical policies and practices, homophobic physicians, and the general expectation from health service providers that all patients are heterosexual. In addition, the lack of adequate training for health care workers Regarding specific health issues that relate to sexual orientation or gender identity make Accessing adequate services for LGBT persons that much more difficult. Over the past five years the rate has increased from 6.4 to 7.3%continuing to discriminate against sexual and gender minorities will only make this figure continue to increase.

Poor knowledge about human rights by the LGBTI. This makes the LGBTI vulnerable to human rights abuses and violations and unable to demand for these basic services due to ignorance about human rights and applicable laws. This has lead to an increase in the trend of human rights abuses, violations and denial of basic services. This problem is caused by ignorance of the LGBTI and the fact that most of the LGBTI in the rural areas are uneducated and unemployed and therefore unable to demand for fair treatment.

High levels of LGBTI unemployment in western Uganda .Many LGBT Ugandans are fired from work and expelled from schools and villages on grounds of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This has driven most LGBTI youth into forced sex slave and drug abuse putting them at the risks of acquiring HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. This problem is caused by high rate of school drop outs, dismissal from schools, village and family banishments when their sexual orientation is discovered.

This project will train rural LGBTQ Ugandans on acquiring information, educate and sensitize on both personal and digital security management skills to over 120 Lesbians, Gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in Uganda that consistently face threats to their safety and security, make equal human rights awareness and create safe spaces, Advocacy workshops to discuss LGBTQ rights, have emergence response fund to respond to evicted LGBTQ homeless persons.

With your kind support, we would have together promoted #EQUALITY and #CREATED safe space in Uganda by empowering the LGBTQ community with information to advocate and lobby for equal fundamental rights leading to increased number of LGBTQ/RIGHTS activist at grass root levels, access and provision of health care services by health workers since we will educate them about LGBTQ persons and as per our vision, we would have created visibility of the rural LGBTQ persons.

