



**RAINBOW IDENTITY
ASSOCIATION**
BOTSWANA

A!GENDA

Issue 9



INSIDE

Page 2 Unmet health needs and barriers

Page 3 Remembering the fallen heroes and heroines

Page 6

Honoring the resilience & dignity of intersex

Page 6 Trans&Intersex bush get together

Page 7 Engagement with religious

Page 7 Buffy the pianist



UNMET NEEDS & BARRIERS TO HEALTH CARE FOR TRANSGENDER & INTERSEX COMMUNITY

Just like everyone else, Transgender and Intersex people deserve respectful, competent health care whether that means accessing routine medical services or receiving transition related care. Unfortunately Transgender and Intersex people continue to

face widespread barriers and discrimination in health care settings. Transgender and Intersex individuals face significant challenges that impact their rights and access to reproductive health care. A primary concern is the discrimination present in medical settings, often resulting in denial of care or subpar treatment. This hostility creates barriers to obtaining necessary medical services, including hormone therapy and reproductive health care (gender affirming care).

Moreover, legal barriers persist for transgender individuals seeking reproductive assistance. Many states lack explicit protections, making it difficult for them to access services like fertility treatments or adoption processes. This absence of supportive legislation exacerbates feelings of isolation and marginalization within healthcare systems.

Understanding the specific needs of transgender and intersex individuals within the context of reproductive health highlights the necessity of tailored policies. Legal frameworks must evolve to accommodate diverse reproductive health requirements and ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender identity, can access necessary healthcare services. Consequently, reproductive health services must address their needs around contraception and prenatal care, further complementing the existing healthcare framework.

Similarly, transgender women require access to services for sperm banking or assisted reproductive technologies if they wish to have biological children in the future. Additionally, access to reproductive health services remains limited for many transgender individuals due to systemic barriers, such as discrimination within healthcare settings and lack of education.

In some progressive societies, recognition of transgender and intersex rights has led to more inclusive health policies. This shift promotes equitable access to reproductive health services, emphasizing the specific health needs of transgender and intersex individuals. Many providers assume that transgender/intersex patients do not need services such as pelvic exams or contraception, or that treating transgender/intersex patients is too complex for their practice. These dynamics contribute to significant disparities in sexual and reproductive health for transgender people.

However, in conservative cultures, misconceptions about gender identity can perpetuate discrimination, ultimately hindering access to vital health resources.

Moreover, cultural background informs the experiences of transgender individuals in healthcare settings.



Remembering the fallen Heroes and Heroines



Rainbow Identity Association came together to honour the lives of transgender persons lost to violence, stigma, and discrimination and to re-affirm our collective commitment to building a world where every trans person can live freely, safely, and authentically.

Each message not only highlighted the urgent need for compassion, inclusion, and the protection of transgender rights, but also emphasised the advancement of these rights across key areas such as HIV & AIDS programming, access to services, and community well-being.

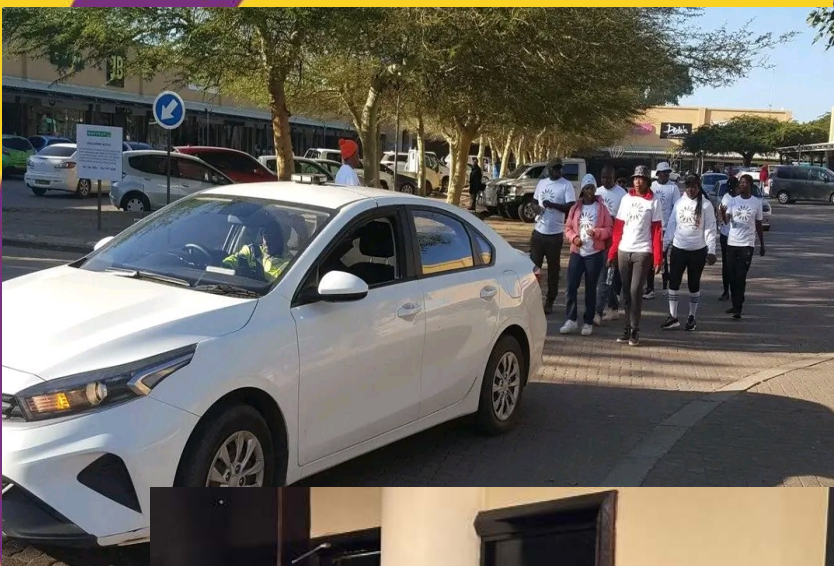
In her address, Dr. Brooks shared a sobering yet important truth that "in advocacy for human rights, we must understand that there is risk and

sometimes even the risk of one's life." Her message resonated deeply on a day like this. But she also reminded us that advocacy is not about fear rather it's about courage, unity, and standing together so that no one carries the burden alone. It is through collective voices, shared responsibility, and strong community support that we continue to push forward safely and powerfully.

Our keynote speaker, the Gaborone City Council Deputy Mayor, Her Worship Honourable Mankie Sekete, encouraged the trans community to be brave, to live without fear, and to stay involved in shaping the spaces meant for them. Her words, "It can't be about you, without you being involved" were a powerful call to action as they called on the community to stay engaged, keep advocating, and continue shaping their journey toward full recognition and equality.

As we continue to honour those we have lost, we commit ourselves to protecting the living, uplifting trans voices, and continuing the work of building a Botswana where safety, dignity, justice, and recognition are guaranteed for all.







Honouring the resilience and dignity of Intersex persons

INTERSEX DAY OF REMEMBRANCE



Rainbow Identity Association (RIA) joined the world in commemorating International Intersex Awareness Day under the theme: Intersex Remembrance – Recognizing and Advancing the Human Rights of Intersex People.

This day served as a moment of reflection, remembrance, and renewed commitment to ensuring that intersex persons are seen, respected, and protected not just on one day, but every day.

Through heartfelt stories, powerful discussions, and shared experiences, we were reminded that human rights, dignity, and the diversity of human biology must always be upheld.

We extend our gratitude to our panel moderator Keikantse Phole and distinguished panelists: Cynthia Richard – National Gender Secretary, Botswana Nurses Union, David Sidney Mangwegape – Nurse Educator & Senior Lecturer, Lobatse Institute of Health Sciences and lastly, Rev. Mampane – Faith Leader & Inclusion Advocate.

Together, let us continue building a world where “People Like Us” are not only acknowledged but embraced.



TRANS & INTERSEX BUSH GET TOGETHER

Rainbow Identity Association hosted a powerful and transformative Trans & Intersex Camp, bringing community members together for three days of connection, healing, learning, and affirmation.

Under the theme “Activating Identities, Reclaiming Voices, Wellness & Creating Change,” the camp created a safe space for participants to explore their journeys, reflect on their experiences, and strengthen their sense of identity and belonging.

Through sessions on mental health, wellbeing, gender identity, community building, and empowerment paired with games, relaxation, and laughter — the camp offered an environment where everyone could breathe, be seen, and just be themselves.

Camps like these are essential because they provide safe and affirming spaces free from stigma and discrimination, strengthen community connections & support systems, promote mental health & emotional wellbeing and lastly empower participants to reclaim their voices and advocate for their rights.

We are grateful to everyone who joined, contributed, shared, and held space. Together, we continue building a community rooted in dignity, pride, and collective strength

BUFFY THE PIANIST

Bafi Kgosiemang, popularly known as Buffy Buffire, is a multi-talented musician, instrumentalist, and entertainer whose musical journey began at just eight years old in Lobatse.

Inspired by global icon Alicia Keys, young Buffy's passion for music was ignited when his parents bought him a toy piano to nurture his gift.



His early experiences playing in church bands soon revealed

his natural ability, catching the attention of audiences and musicians alike by the age of ten.

Over the years, Buffy has mastered multiple instruments, including the keyboard, guitar, drums, and marimba. His artistry extends beyond performance—he is also an experienced sound engineer, singer, vocal coach, and vibrant karaoke host. His versatility spans across genres such as jazz, hip hop, R&B, gospel, country, soft rock, and contemporary music.

Well-known for his innovative concept of remixing and layering pianic melodies, Buffy has carved out a unique sound that resonates with diverse audiences. His musical journey has taken him from intimate settings like weddings, birthdays, and community events to performing alongside jazz bands and hosting his own shows as the main act.

With an ever-growing fan base and a reputation for electrifying performances, Buffy Buffire continues to light up stages across Botswana at venues such as George's Pub & Grill and The Meatin, among others. His unmatched skill as a performer and his ability to connect with audiences make him a rising force in the music scene, embodying passion, creativity, and excellence in every note he plays.



Engagement with religious leaders

The RIA team engaged with church leaders in Palapye for an important conversation not only centred around sensitization around transgender and intersex persons, but also about how the church can play a transformative role in ending stigma and discrimination.

As leaders of faith and influence, the church holds a powerful position in shaping communities. And that also comes with the responsibility to uplift, protect, and affirm rather than exclude. Our discussion also included how they can uplift, support, and embrace diversity, while ensuring they are not contributors to stigma or exclusion, but champions of compassion, justice, and equality. It is essential that the church becomes a place of love, safety, and acceptance,

True faith should unite us, not divide us. And through dialogue, we continue to build understanding, compassion, and solidarity.



DIRECTOR'S DESK

It gives us immense pleasure to present the newsletter of Rainbow Identity Association. Since its establishment RIA has stood at the forefront of the struggle for the health and human rights, dignity and inclusion of transgender and intersex persons in Botswana. Guided by the vision of a society where people of all gender identities can live with respect and fulfillment. This newsletter reflects on our continued commitment to human rights protection, access to quality healthcare and sexual reproductive health services, sustainable livelihoods, social security and gender justice.

The year 2025, was both challenging and transformative, amid growing socio political complexities, the rise of anti gender narratives, shrinking civic space and declining humanitarian and development funding. Rainbow Identity Association remains steadfast in its mission to advocate for the inclusion of transgender and intersex persons in national policies and legal frameworks.

Drawing strength from over a decade of community trust, advocacy and partnerships, we continue to advance our work through resilience, collaborations and principled action. The dedication of our staff, the leadership of board members and the steadfast support of our partners enabled us to make meaningful progress in visibility of transgender and intersex human rights and social justice.

Rainbow Identity Association's work during the year demonstrated significant cross learning between health service, advocacy and legal aid, efforts ensuring that interventions are not only community centered but also policy relevant. The organization's humanitarian response experiences informed its broader strategies on resilience and protection while its capacity building and advocacy initiatives contributed to meaningful dialogue on gender, sex characteristics and rights at national level.

Rainbow Identity Association remains focused on sustainability , institutional strengthen and amplifying community voices. We will continue to build strategic alliance, innovate our approaches and ensure that our programs remain responsive to the evolving realities faced by transgender and intersex persons in Botswana.

Together we reaffirm our shared commitment to uphold human rights, promote equality and advance a more just and inclusive society for all.

Proudly Sponsored by

Plot 22542

Phase 4

+267 3905493

**rainbowidenti-
ty@gmail.com**

**Rainbow Identity
Association BW**

