

Grassroots Civil Society Resolution for Ending Discrimination in Botswana

Recalling Botswana's commitments to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in the year of its periodic review, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the 30 year progress made on the Beijing Platform of Action and Section 3 of Botswana's Constitution guaranteeing [equality](#) for all;

Welcoming the UN General Assembly's proclamation of 2025-2034 as the 2nd Decade for People of African Descent, the African Union (AU)'s 2025 theme of Justice for Africans and People of African Decent through [Reparations](#), Botswana's parliament adopting a motion for government to introduce biannual universal health checks for early diagnosis and treatment and the government for joining the Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate all Forms of HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination.

Affirming our commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), African Union Convention on Ending Violence against Women and Girls, the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development and the Constitution of Botswana.

Concerned about the lack of progress in ratifying the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the African Youth Charter, along with Protocols to the African Charter on the Rights of Older Persons and the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security.

Concerned about the increasingly worrisome lack of [inclusive](#) preparedness and response measures for natural disasters, pandemics, the impact of climate change and lack of meaningful and equitable accountability in [Loss and Damage](#) to address structural [inequities](#).

Further concerned on the lack of; social protections, recognition of [care](#) work, fulfilment of the Abuja Declaration requirement of 15% in state spending allocations dedicated to [public health](#), along with limited investments and socialisation from legislative progress in Disability Rights, [African Women's Rights](#) and [Mental Health](#).

Noting the need to accelerate the roadmap outlined in the country's Sustainability and Transition Readiness Assessment and Roadmap for HIV and TB amidst global funding cuts, [limited progress](#) on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)s and equitable inclusion of key populations in the development of the National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS and the Investment Case for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.

Considering the 10th year commemoration of Zero Discrimination Day under the auspices of the theme: "We Stand Together", in light of the [role of grassroots civil society](#) in advancing human rights, sustainable development, [universal health coverage](#) (UHC), and the limited progression on outcomes of the first ever and last national [youth forum](#);

Further considering the estimated cost of [2% of GDP](#) attributed to gender-based violence (GBV), impacting women and girls in their diversity with little remedy, accountability and justice for victims and survivors. Aggravating an economically, socially and politically unequal, exploitative and extractive landscape for workers, including sex work and care work.

Appreciating the role of grassroots civil society resilience amidst longstanding dwindling resources, co-option and weaponisation. Continuously resisting and reaching the most marginalised, whilst reshaping narratives, protest and organising in overregulated and restrictive environments.

Conscious of the need to eliminate all forms, manifestations and systems that enable and perpetuate stigma and discrimination through socio-behavioural change in line with Botswana's Constitution and Vision 2036, recognising them as impediments to further achieving the SDGs and AU's Agenda 2063.

Grassroots Organisations resolved on the following to ensure zero discrimination in Botswana:

Appreciate human rights-based approach adopted by the Government of Botswana, hoping for consistency, equitable engagement of communities and redistributing wealth to eliminate socioeconomic imbalances.

Acknowledge the structural, multifaceted, and social nature of stigma and discrimination.

Further acknowledge the challenging fiscal and economic environment, hoping for the adoption of working towards a wellbeing economy, improved mental health infrastructure

and safeguarding [UHC](#), HIV, Malaria and TB advancements through the decentralization of public health.

Condemn the lack of meaningful strengthening of anti hate speech, equality and non-discrimination laws for all diverse communities. Including legal gender recognition, gender affirmative care, stringent accessibility

Further Condemn the lack of urgency and prioritisation of preventing, mitigating and ending GBV as acts of parliament, the executive and the judiciary.

Demand for a Presidential Declaration to mobilise resources, accountability, and social participation.

Demand for sign language as an official language, along with ensuring braille and built environment accessibility guarantees in law across all public facilities.

Demand for improved and participatory child protection, village development and community committee structures, including national gender machinery to reflect all experiences through quotas for representation.

Demand for improved, equitable, timely and long-term resourcing for civil society to counter the mobilisation of anti-rights actions, misinformation, disinformation, and ideologies that fuel stigma and discrimination.

Demand for the recognition of all forms of work to ensure opportunity, protection and equitable participation in and out of the workplace.

Commemorating Zero Discrimination Day, 01 March 2025

