

# what are you doing to promote BI VISIBILITY?



*A report on Bi Health findings in Uganda (2015)*

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## Background to the study

The hypothesis of this study is that Bisexuals in Uganda have a different experience of mental health and quality of life than lesbian and Men who have sex with Men and heterosexual people. This study is based on information from 4 health practitioners who worked with Bisexuals for one year and Triumph Bisexuals field Team that engaged with Bisexual women and Men in Areas of Mukono, wakiso, and Kampala and the 32 LGTI organizations in Uganda we engaged in training workshops. Until now, we knew very little about these issues among LGBTI community, but this one year engagement shows that Bisexual, people suffer intolerance of their sexuality, discrimination and victimization, and appear to have higher rates of anxiety, depression and suicidal behavior.

## Objectives

To fight Bi Phobia and see an improved involvement of bisexuals in the fight for social Justice and health rights as well as to increase public awareness of the vulnerability of Bisexuals in in Uganda. Through evidence based research, publications and organising workshops and meetings.

## Methodology

A cross-section of bisexual women and men in Kampala, mukono and wakiso were directly involved in accessing the mental health support and counseling. A total of 109 Bisexual women and men benefitted. Further still Lesbian, Gay and Transgender people were directly involved in workshops and training from 32 LGTI organizations. Three counselors from Butabika national mental hospitals were hired for one year to provide counseling and support.

## Main findings.

### **QUALITY OF LIFE AND WELL-BEING**

**FINDING:** A higher percentage of bisexual adults (13.3%) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their lives due to fear of coming out and being exposed to the public.

## **VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

**FINDING:** Bisexual men reported experiencing intimate partner violence 10times than Bisexual women.

**Finding:** Bisexual women reported unfair treatment in fighting for custody of their children. (Unfairness in laws).

**Findings:** Bisexual women reported 10times many case of eviction from family land, houses and cases of being homeless.

**Findings:** Bisexual women reported more cases of Blackmail from family and friends, loss of property more than Bisexual men.

## **MENTAL HEALTH.**

**FINDING:** According to counselors in one year they had a number of important findings:

- Sexual orientation influenced experiencing emotional stress.
- Bisexual woman and men who were "out" had no mental issue problems.
- Bisexual women were more than twice as likely to have had an eating disorder compared to lesbians.
- Bisexual women and men who were not "out" were more likely to have had a suicide attempt compared to Bisexual women and men who were out.

**FINDING:** Over 2 times the percentage of bisexual adults (37.3%) reported.

**FINDING:** Bisexual men and women report consistently higher levels of depression and anxiety.

**FINDING:** Bisexual men and women report higher levels of self-harm, suicide attempts, and thoughts of suicide higher than gay men and lesbians.

**FINDING:** For some gay and bisexual men, the pressure to achieve the perfect body has resulted in compulsive exercising, steroid use, poor body image, and eating disorders.

**FINDING:** Bisexual women have the lowest levels of social support. Their quality of life is low.

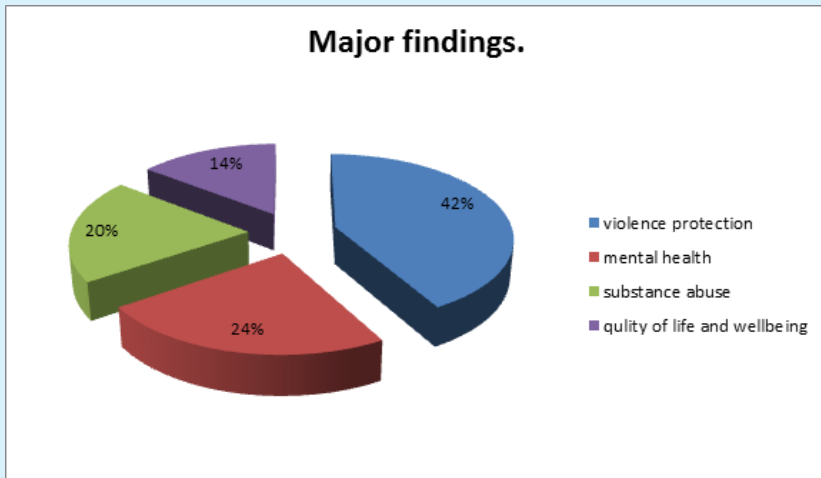
**FINDING:** Bisexual men have lower social support.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE.**

**FINDING:** Bisexual adults had higher rates (22.6%) of drinking.

**FINDING:** Bisexual women reported more hazardous drinking indicators and depression.

**FINDING:** Bisexual women report the highest rates of alcohol use, heavy drinking, and alcohol-related problems.



*"Sometimes life gets hard when your friends, are pointing fingers at you just want to jump of a flat and die" Mary she lost her 7year son to her husband after they discovered she was bisexual.*

*"My parents told me, the locals will burn down the house if I don't go away I was left with no place to stay but on the streets."*

*Jane she has been homeless now for two years.*

*"I thought I was alone in this world I have never understood what I was up to now and counselor was so good to me now I know am not mad." Joyce after meeting with the counselor.*