



Dignity, Equality and Freedom

IRANTI AND PARTNER ORGANISATIONS LAUNCH #NoOneIsOneThing SOCIAL MEDIA AWARENESS CAMPAIGN DURING LGBT(QIA+) HISTORY MONTH

To commemorate LGBT History Month, on 17 February 2021 Iranti kicks off the next leg of the Safety, Dignity and Freedom (SDF) campaign. The first phase of the 2021 campaign, titled *#NoOneIsOneThing*, uses social media as a platform to share information about LGBTQIA+ identities, showcasing the multi-dimensional, complex intersectional identities which all LGBTQIA+ people embody.

The purpose of this phase is to create effective, informative, and transformative messaging focused on the LGBTQIA+ community within the five SDF partner countries of South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi. In the production and launch process of the SDF study and media guide in 2019, we noted the role that media reporting can play in the perpetuation of stigma, discrimination, hate and violence towards LGBTQIA+ people. As such, we realised that as LGBTQIA+ people in advocacy, we have a role to play in the education and sensitisation of media entities and practitioners to ensure better, safer, more inclusive reporting practise; this campaign is a continuation of the initial work done by the SDF collective over the last three years.

The campaign aims to remind our friends and families that we are more than just our LGBTQIA+ identities. The campaign envisions a shift in perceptions, challenging and changing mindsets and also providing fun and educational ways to clarify misconceptions about LGBTQIA+ people. This will be achieved through creative, relevant, and relatable content such as online memes, GIFs and short videos which discuss various LGBTQIA+ topics and issues. Some of the content may be controversial, but we hope that this will elicit conversations and get people asking questions, engaging with LGBTQIA+ people, broadening ways of thinking, and ultimately being more accepting of us as a community. It will also portray us as more than our LGBTQIA+ identities - we are here, and we're not just queer – we are family, we are doctors, we are chefs, we are mechanics, poets, lovers, friends, parents, children, teachers and neighbours. No One Is One Thing.

Phase two of #NoOneIsOneThing will see a self-documentation short-course run by Iranti, to engage and involve young LGBTQIA+ people in the five partner countries in the production of LGBTQIA+ media content. The creators who participate in the training will use the skills gained to document aspects of their everyday lives which iterate the message that #NoOneIsOneThing: **We ARE whole people with intersecting identities and dreams.**

In phase three, we continue engagements with media practitioners which were initiated in 2018 and strengthened in 2019 with the launch of the SDF report and media guide. After the launch of both documents, it was noted that gaps still remain in mainstream media reporting practices, and that these gaps need to be addressed. In 2021 we plan to use the self-documented stories created in phase two, along with the media guide and recommendations from the report, to engage media practitioners on how to create better, more inclusive, less stereotypical and single-dimensional media outputs about the LGBTQIA+ community. We aim to have reports in mainstream media that once again reiterate that **we are more than our labels. We are people.** We exist beyond our LGBTQIA+ identities. We are here, and we're not just queer.

Please tune in to our social media channels to see what Iranti and partners have in store. We call on our partners, allies and members of the LGBTQIA+ community to share this campaign on social media platforms.

For more information, comments or queries, contact Jade Jacobs at jade@iranti.org.za.