**For immediate release**

**Sauti za Busara 2020 takes on sexual harassment in music industry**

**January 24, 2020**

**Zanzibar.** Many female artistes in Africa and beyond struggle under the weight of sexual harassment in an industry that remains predominantly male dominated.

The survivors of these injustices are often unable to speak out because the consequences for their careers or personal lives can be devastating.

Even those who choose to go public with their stories are rarely taken seriously for the authorities to take relevant action against such abuse.

In most cases faced with limited choices, victims end up leaving their place of work or the industry in general, yet there are very few consequences for the perpetrators.

This year at the Sauti za Busara 2020 festival which takes place in Stone Town, Zanzibar during February 13 to 16, organisers decided to take up the thorny issue under the theme ‘Raise Your Voice, Say No to Sexual Harassment’.

Speaking today Yusuf Mahmoud, the festival director said the main objective of the campaign is to change attitudes, promote dialogue, and to encourage respect for women by raising awareness about sexual harassment.

He says this is imperative to promote behavioural change and as a result, messages focussing on the issue will air throughout the festival.

“Many of the festival artists, both local and international have agreed to ensure this campaign is amplified to resonate with festival audiences at home and beyond”, said Yusuf Mahmoud.

The festival has organised corresponding events to promote gender role models, such as stage management training for women, as led by a professional from Zimbabwe, the *Swahili Encounters* artistic collaborations, Circus4Life and other women’s groups that will participate in the opening parade.

"One of our main responsibilities as festival organisers is to help build skills and capacities for Tanzanians in all sectors of the music industry. I am speaking of the performers on stage, and also the many people behind the scenes: managers, producers, sound and lighting technicians and so on”.

He added: “Currently in Tanzania, we see only a handful of women making original and amazing music. This is why for the Sauti za Busara 2020 edition we invited artists like Siti & the Band (Zanzibar), Thaïs Diarra and Mamy Kanouté (from West Africa), Pigment (Reunion), Evon and Apio Moro (Uganda). Others are Circus4Life from Bagamoyo, and women *singeli* MCs and DJs from East Africa. All are passionate women who use music to powerfully communicate and express themselves. At the same time, they're all great entertainers!”

Yusuf Mahmoud said further “the festival is confident these and other artists participating will inspire, offer hope and motivation for the many women and girls in the audience who may also be considering a career in music”.

 ***The 17th edition of Sauti za Busara festival, 13 - 16 February 2020 is powered by Norwegian Embassy, Africalia, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, British Council, Zanzibar Media Corporation, Zanlink, Memories of Zanzibar, Embassy of France, Emerson Zanzibar, Chuchu FM Radio, Mozeti, Music In Africa and more.***

Tickets and info: [**www.busaramusic.org**](http://www.busaramusic.org)

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**Notes to the Editor**

**For hi-res photos, see dropbox folder at** [**www.busaramusic.org/downloads**](http://www.busaramusic.org/downloads)

Sauti za Busara (‘sounds of wisdom’) is an African music festival held every year in February in Zanzibar, Tanzania at the Old Fort (Ngome Kongwe), with fringe events taking place concurrently around Stone Town - including the Carnival Street Parade, *Swahili Encounters, Movers & Shakers* and *Busara Xtra*.

Sauti za Busara is one of the top music festivals in East Africa, with several hundreds of artists participating each year. It showcases a diverse and dynamic programme of exclusively African music - 100% live - and has over the years provided a valuable stage for local Swahili talent, from taarab legends like Bi Kidude and Culture Musical Club, to home-grown Tanzanian pop and hiphop.

More info: [**www.busaramusic.org**](http://www.busaramusic.org)