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THE MULTI-DONOR LGBTI GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE

Lived Realities for LGBTI People around the world

Violence, discrimination, stigma, and criminalization negatively impact the lives of millions of LGBTI¹ people around the world. LGBTI people face criminalization in approximately 70 countries – several of which can impose the death penalty – and anti-LGBTI violence can be life-threatening. Further, access to employment, housing, and essential services such as education and healthcare is often denied to LGBTI people. Despite these extremely difficult realities, there are brave, passionate, and resilient LGBTI leaders and civil society organizations in nearly every country that work tirelessly to advance human rights. It is due to their efforts that meaningful change is possible.

Partnership Approach

The Multi-Donor LGBTI Global Human Rights Initiative (GHRI) is a five-year (2019-2024) public-private partnership that leverages financial and technical contributions from multiple parties including the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Global Affairs Canada, the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (Astraea), Equality Without Borders, the Williams Institute, and Franklin & Marshall College.

¹ LGBTI is an acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex. Variations of this acronym (that add or drop letters, like Q for “queer” or “questioning” or A for “asexual”) exist as well. Regardless of the acronym used, the intention is to refer to the community in a way that is broadly inclusive of those who are minorities based on their sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, and sex characteristics.

GHRI Goal and Objectives

The GHRI supports locally-led efforts to protect LGBTI people from violence, discrimination, stigma, and criminalization through research and data collection to inform policy, social and behavior change communication efforts, country-specific projects, and emergency response. The GHRI currently works in nine countries in four regions (Africa, Asia, Europe and Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean) with the potential to expand.

- 1. Research and Data Collection to Inform Policy:** The GHRI supports the development, dissemination, and use of research and data to better understand the lives, needs, and challenges faced by LGBTI people around the world. Recent examples include the [LGBT Global Acceptance Index](#) (which tracks stigma levels across time and geography), and the [Global Barometer of Gay Rights](#) and the [Global Barometer of Transgender Rights](#) (which measure the extent to which countries protect or persecute LGBT people across time and geography).
- 2. Social and Behavior Change Communications Efforts:** Negative beliefs about LGBTI people can lead society to reject and exclude them, all too often resulting in violence and discrimination. The GHRI supports anti-LGBTI stigma reduction by supporting local LGBTI groups to engage in strategic messaging that can positively influence the beliefs and attitudes of decision makers and society at large, creating a more inclusive environment for LGBTI people.
- 3. Country-Specific Programming in Focus Countries:** The GHRI seeks to help local LGBTI groups advance their own priorities, particularly in countries with contexts that feature anti-LGBTI violence, discrimination, stigma, and criminalization. Local groups have the best understanding of a country's social and cultural context, and know what interventions and approaches are most appropriate, most likely to be effective, and least likely to inspire backlash. The GHRI consults with local LGBTI organizations to understand their needs and priorities, and programs accordingly.
- 4. Emergency Response:** The GHRI provides urgent support to LGBTI groups facing threats, acts of violence, detention, and arrest - and responds to requests for medical, legal, and relocation support. Emergency Response programming also helps build resilience in LGBTI organizations to withstand shocks and crises (i.e., COVID-19) over time.



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