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### **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS**

The principles of “do no harm” and “do nothing about them without them” should inform LGBTQI+ inclusion efforts. Often the most effective way to identify where and how LGBTQI+ integration would be most productive, safe, and welcome is to speak with local LGBTQI+ groups/stakeholders and ask them what they see as the priorities and needs for LGBTQI+ integration in a given sector.

USAID recommends staff and practitioners working in this sector consult with local LGBTQI+ Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), leaders, and members in a broad and inclusive manner to ensure that 1) USAID understands local priorities and needs, 2) USAID’s efforts do not raise the risk of harm or backlash, and 3) USAID’s support is welcomed by local groups and designed to be most effective. Meaningful engagement with local LGBTQI+ stakeholders often requires building rapport and trust, which can take time and commitment. Establishing and nurturing trusting relationships with local LGBTQI+ stakeholders help USAID understand the local context and can lead to better long-term partnership and collaboration opportunities. Thorough risk assessments can be undertaken with some guidance from local stakeholders to avoid inadvertent harm to LGBTQI+ communities (Williamson 2021). “Do no harm” approaches can also be customized for the relevant program context and the specific risks LGBTQI+ people face (Williamson 2021). Working with local partners who are acting within the target system can shed light on the behaviors that perpetuate exclusion and shed light on opportunities for wider social change (Williamson 2021).

LGBTQI+ stakeholder engagements should be conducted in a safe and secure manner. As with other marginalized populations, engagement should also be trauma-informed, meaning that it is sensitive to safety and security concerns and mitigates the risk of unintentionally triggering or exacerbating the emotional effects of trauma that the LGBTQI+ stakeholders may have experienced. Throughout the consultation process, those conducting the consultations should carefully manage stakeholder expectations (i.e., do not promise or lead groups to expect funding or programming), and make it clear that USAID aims to address local needs and support local priorities.

#### **Trauma-Informed Engagement with LGBTQI+ Stakeholders**

When setting up LGBTQI+ stakeholder consultations, organizers should consider:

- Using preferred communications platforms to ensure comfort and safety
- Writing personalized messages and individualized emails (rather than mass emails) when first establishing relationships and trust with stakeholders
- Providing information in advance regarding the purpose, length, and use of the outcomes from the consultation
- Consulting many different groups of people to ensure diverse representation
- Asking stakeholders to select meeting locations or verifying with participants that the proposed location is safe
- Informing stakeholders of who will participate in the meeting

- Clearly stating the protocols regarding photos, video and audio recording, and other documentation of participation, and explaining plans for encrypting and protecting data

When commencing LGBTQI+ stakeholder consultations, organizers should consider:

- Ensuring the location is sufficiently private and secure
- Introducing themselves and all participants with names, pronouns, roles, and organizational affiliation
- Thanking stakeholders for their time
- Permitting stakeholders to skip or decline to answer any questions
- Reviewing confidentiality norms prior to commencing dialogue
- Agreeing with participants the mode of taking notes (hand-written, typed, etc.)

When conducting LGBTQI+ stakeholder consultations, organizers should consider:

- Using active listening techniques with nonverbal communications
- Clustering questions thematically and informing stakeholders when moving to new topics to create a sense of predictability
- Attending to stakeholder's immediate needs if they become distressed
- Normalizing empathy and holding space for difficult topics
- Avoiding inquiries about details regarding specific, traumatic incidents in a group setting to prevent re-traumatization
- Inviting stakeholders to ask questions about the purpose of the consultation, use of outcomes, and next steps

## PART 3: HOW TO INTEGRATE LGBTQI+ CONSIDERATIONS IN RFS WORK

### MAKING THE CASE FOR LGBTQI+ INCLUSION

USAID works to advance the human rights of LGBTQI+ people and protect them from violence, discrimination, stigma, and criminalization. This requires USAID to take an inclusive approach to development that works with and for marginalized populations and people in vulnerable situations. USAID staff and partners are often called upon in their work to explain, advocate for, or defend USAID's programmatic and funding approach above and beyond USAID's core mission statement. They may have to communicate these priorities to host country officials, private sector partners, local communities, or even United States government personnel in other agencies. As such, it is important that RFS staff, Mission staff working in RFS sector programming (including Foreign Service Nationals and Mission leadership), and partners understand and can communicate the rationale for supporting LGBTQI+ inclusion. The following points help "make the case" for LGBTQI+ inclusion in RFS sectors work:

- Inclusion is one of USAID's core values. One way that USAID helps its partners lead their own development journeys is to ensure that a wide range of beneficiaries is fully included in USAID's programs. USAID would not be able to achieve many of its development objectives without including marginalized and excluded groups.
- There is a strong, positive correlation between economic development and legal rights for LGBTQI+ people. The presence of an LGBT-inclusive anti-discrimination law is correlated with a \$1,763 increase in GDP per capita across a range of countries (Badgett, Nezhad, Waaldijk, and van der Muelen Rodgers 2014).
- There is a strong, positive correlation between LGBTQI+ social acceptance and GDP per capita. A one point increase on the Global Acceptance Index ([GAI](#)) - an index that measures each country's societal acceptance of LGBT people in 174 countries - is correlated with a \$1,506 increase in GDP per capita (Badgett, Park, and Flores 2018).
- While the causal relationship between inclusion and economic development is complex and not unidirectional, LGBTQI+ inclusion demonstrably leads to economic growth by expanding the number of people participating in the workforce, increasing the number of skilled workers, and decreasing the negative health impacts of discrimination that can lead to decreased workforce participation (Badgett, Nezhad, Waaldijk, and van der Muelen Rodgers 2014; Badgett, Park, and Flores 2018).
- LGBTQI+ inclusion does not necessarily increase the cost of an activity. In many cases, meaningful LGBTQI+ inclusion can be accomplished by contacting and meeting with local LGBTQI+ CSOs, understanding their needs/priorities as they relate to a sector/development programming, and sharing information with them about current and planned programs and activities (i.e., trainings) to ensure they are aware of them, have avenues to participate, and can share relevant information with their membership networks.
- The promotion of human rights and inclusion for LGBTQI+ people increases the overall stability and safety in countries where USAID works. Meaningful engagement and participation of

LGBTQI+ people in development programs will increase their standing in society, enhance social cohesion, and lead to more democratic societies.

- Article 23.I of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) links human rights, development, and employment, stating that, “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work, and to protection against unemployment.”
- USAID’s [Market Systems Resilience Framework](#) outlines the importance of diverse market actors in the face of shocks and stressors. LGBTQI+ inclusion in market systems is a recognized attribute of diversity which in turn leads to private sector innovation, expansion, and improved brand reputation, among other outcomes (Williamson 2021).

## CHALLENGES/ISSUES

There are many challenges to advancing LGBTQI+ inclusion in food security, resilience, nutrition, water security, sanitation and hygiene programs. Some of these include:

- **Challenges in collecting and protecting SOGIESC data.** Often RFS-related programs may only collect binary sex data from program participants - if at all. These data will not enable program staff to understand the ways that gender and sexual minorities and other segments of the LGBTQI+ community are benefitting from programs. Due to widespread discrimination, stigma, and criminalization, collection of data pertaining to an individual’s sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or sex characteristics must be safeguarded and protected in full alignment with the “do no harm” principle. ACDI/VOCA offers some [considerations](#) for collecting these data to inform resilience, food security, and market system development programs, including partnering with LGBTQI-led organizations.
- **Limited existing research on the intersection of LGBTQI+ people and RFS-related issues.** There is a dearth of research material available on LGBTQI+ inclusion in agriculture, food security, resilience, nutrition, water security, sanitation, and hygiene. [The Hidden Mirror: Sexual and Gender Minorities in Agricultural Research](#) notes that there is “very little literature on sexual and gender minorities in agriculture, nor is evidence found of agricultural policies which reference these groups.” Research on LGBTQI+ integration into development programs focusing on nutrition, water security, sanitation, and hygiene is similarly lacking. In [LGBTI and Sanitation: What We Know and What the Gaps Are](#), the authors note that LGBTQI+ individuals are left out of most WSSH considerations, a sentiment echoed in research found in [Transgender Inclusive Sanitation: Insights from South Asia](#). The book [Water Security Across the Gender Divide](#) notes “the roles of LGBT [people] in the water sector are highly under-researched.” Searches on USAID’s [Development Experience Clearinghouse](#) and the USAID-affiliated websites [AgriLinks.org](#), [MarketLinks.org](#), [ResilienceLinks.org](#), [GlobalWaters.org](#), and [AdvancingNutrition.org](#) found no mention of LGBTQI+ inclusion in any of these sectors. The dearth of data should not be interpreted to suggest there is a lack of discrimination, stigma, and violence experienced by LGBTQI+ people. Rather, the lack of data demonstrates the topic is under-researched and USAID should endeavor to more fully understand the unique challenges and needs of LGBTQI+ people in this sector.
- **Limited best practices on which to draw.** There are some documented examples of LGBTQI+ inclusion efforts in RFS sectors from the United States. [Relational Agriculture: Gender, Sexuality, and Sustainability in U.S. Farming](#) advocates for gender and sexuality to be

“understood as central to the study of food systems and food security rather than as a niche topic.” The article [Queer Farmers: Sexuality and the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture](#) argues that “sexuality and heteronormativity are embedded in farmer recruitment, retention, and land acquisition” and offers a lens for envisioning alternatives within the sustainable agriculture space. [Midwest or Lesbian? Gender, Rurality, and Sexuality](#) and [Where We Call Home: LGBT People in Rural America](#) illustrate the importance of analyzing the impact of geographical location on LGBTQI+ people’s experiences. [Lesbianism and Queer Sustainable Farmers Networks in the Midwest](#) emphasizes the importance of LGBTQI+ farmer networks in “bolstering human resources in sustainable agriculture and conservation practices.” [Food Insecurity and SNAP \(Food Stamp\) Participation in the LGBT Community](#) and [Food Insecurity Among Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Individuals in the Southeast United States: A Qualitative Study](#) discuss the substantial barriers that LGBTQI+ people face when trying to acquire adequate food that result in LGBTQI+ adults experiencing food insecurity and participating in SNAP at higher rates than non-LGBTQI+ adults. The two articles also suggest public health based solutions. However, there are very few existing examples of LGBTQI+ inclusion in agriculture, food security, resilience, nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene programs in the developing world.

- **Difficulties reaching LGBTQI+ people in rural areas.** Many RFS-supported activities take place outside of urban areas. For many reasons, including family rejection and the desire to find an accepting community, LGBTQI+ people from non-urban areas may immigrate to urban areas. The LGBTQI+ people who remain living in rural areas are often not open about their identities for many reasons, including violence, discrimination, stigma, and criminalization. These factors combine to result in decreased autonomy over one’s future, especially for LBQ women. Additionally, LGBTQI+ people in rural areas may be somewhat isolated and/or lack robust local social support networks, and therefore are less likely to be able to organize themselves or to participate in formal or informal consultation or decision-making processes. If they have any affiliation with in-country LGBTQI+ groups, they are more likely to be able to organize through informal networks that are accessible through connections with LGBTQI+ CSOs in more urban areas.
- **A population that is overlooked, misunderstood, and discriminated against.** Development partners may overlook LGBTQI+ concerns due to unease, bias, lack of knowledge, and/or uncertainty of the protocols to address issues relevant to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression across different cultural contexts.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR LGBTQI+ INCLUSION

To design LGBTQI-inclusive programs, consider incorporating some of the following approaches. Note that not all of these approaches will be relevant or appropriate in each country context.

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL RFS SECTORS

- **Signal the importance of nondiscrimination and inclusive development.** Mention USAID's commitment to nondiscrimination and inclusive development in solicitations and explicitly list several demonstrative marginalized groups (i.e., persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, Indigenous Peoples) that the implementing partner should make intentional efforts to include.
- **Support groundbreaking research.** While LGBTQI+ individuals make up a sizable number of USAID's beneficiaries, there is almost no research on their access to and inclusion in the sectors covered by RFS. Investing in research can help identify constraints to and opportunities for LGBTQI+ inclusion. Determining the specific constraints that LGBTQI+ people face in accessing and being meaningfully included in RFS programs will be key to developing better-informed inclusion strategies.
- **Engage with local and/or regional LGBTQI+ CSOs.** Engage with local and regional LGBTQI+ CSOs or groups, where they exist. They may be able to provide information or guidance on how to make programs LGBTQI-inclusive. Note that while these groups may be based in cities, they often have LGBTQI+ networks and contacts across the country, including in rural areas, that can help inform the conversation. These CSOs may not be experts on food security, agriculture, nutrition, resilience, or WSSH. However, if you share programming ideas with them, they will likely be able to tell you how to include LGBTQI+ people in related activities.
- **Invite LGBTQI+ people to participate in specific activities.** After establishing contact and building trust with local LGBTQI+ CSOs, share with them information about upcoming activities (i.e., trainings, workshops, research, job fairs, networking) and identify ways to invite LGBTQI+ people to engage as general participants (i.e., the LGBTQI+ CSO can extend the invitation to its network). Note that participants may face barriers to participation such as transportation expenses and/or stigma, discrimination, and violence if required to present an identification document. It is important that anyone who is aware of the individual's status as an LGBTQI+ person *not* share that information with other participants.
- **Train implementing partner staff.** Provide nondiscrimination and inclusive development training to implementing partner staff. USAID Missions have hosted a variety of nondiscrimination and inclusive development trainings for *all* implementing partners to share expectations and raise awareness of USAID's inclusive approach to development. Building the capacity of non-LGBTQI-led organizations and implementing providers to competently serve the LGBTQI+ community is essential. While multiple or continuing training is ideal, even a single session is a good starting point.
- **Support policy work on inclusion.** Continue to work with the relevant government officials, in coordination with the interagency, to create and evaluate policies that support inclusion, particularly LGBTQI+ inclusion.

### Promising Approaches for LGBTQI+ Inclusion

Implementing partner staff should be trained on inclusive development in general and how to safely work with LGBTQI+ people.

The implementing partner should learn the specific risks that LGBTQI+ people are facing in the country at the structural (i.e., policy and legal) and interpersonal levels.

The implementing partner should seek guidance from local LGBTQI+ CSOs or other community-based organizations working directly with LGBTQI+ individuals.

LGBTQI+ people and/or CSO members should be involved in identifying their needs/priorities and recommending how the program should respond to those needs/priorities.

The implementing partner should engage with LGBTQI+ individuals in a way that effectively mitigates risk and is consistent with the “Do No Harm” principle.

Program messaging and community training should be provided in ways that include LGBTQI+ individuals.

### SECTOR-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the above recommendations, which apply to all sectors, the below recommendations are sector-specific.

#### AGRICULTURE, AGRICULTURE-LED GROWTH, AND FOOD SECURITY

LGBTQI+ individuals may experience specific barriers in agriculture and agriculture-led growth not experienced by their peers. With a focus on inclusive employment practices, equitable access to input, output and service markets, outreach to LGBTQI+ CSOs, engaging public and private sector actors around the business case, and nondiscrimination in hiring, USAID can make these programs more inclusive.

- **Support research.** There is significant research being conducted at the nexus of gender and agriculture, women’s access to resources, and the effect of women’s inclusion on GDP. However, most of this work focuses exclusively on cisgender, heterosexual individuals. More research is needed to close the knowledge gap through research on LGBTQI+ inclusion opportunities in agriculture-led growth and food security.
- **Make connections between LGBTQI+ individuals and employment opportunities.** Since LGBTQI+ people in developing countries face discrimination in accessing jobs, and often need income-generating activities and livelihoods support, implementing partners should aim to connect LGBTQI+ individuals with agriculture employment opportunities (i.e., with commercial farmers or agro-enterprises that may have jobs in processing, packaging, storage, equipment services) related to RFS programs. Building a pipeline of qualified LGBTQI+ candidates to

employers that are open to recruiting and retaining LGBTQI+ employees is an important strategy for sustainable livelihoods.

- **Support comprehensive employment nondiscrimination policies and practices.** RFS programs can help support LGBTQI+ inclusion by ensuring agribusinesses supported by USAID have comprehensive (LGBTQI-inclusive) employment nondiscrimination policies and practices. This recommendation aligns with USAID’s nondiscrimination for beneficiaries policies (see Part 4 of this document), which prohibit contractors, grant recipients, and their sub-awardees from discriminating against any foreign aid beneficiaries on the basis of any factor not expressly stated in the award (this includes but is not limited to sexual orientation and gender identity).

### NUTRITION

Due to discrimination from their families and societies, food insecurity can disproportionately affect LGBTQI+ individuals. The limited research that exists on this topic focuses primarily on the United States. A Williams Institute report found that LGB people were more likely to report food insecurity than heterosexual people, and that pregnant women who identify as lesbians experience poorer health outcomes (Gonzales 2018) and give birth to infants with a lower birth-weight (Everett 2018) than heterosexual women. Additionally, crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic have caused a drastic increase in food insecurity among LGBTQI+ people worldwide (Bishop 2020).

- **Support research.** Research on malnutrition among LGBTQI+ people, including pregnant women in developing countries is critical to addressing these challenges. Identify the causes and determine nutrition-specific interventions.
- **Collaborate with LGBTQI-led organizations.** Partner with LGBTQI-led organizations to ensure that LGBTQI+ people are receiving nutrition information and commodities. Taking a decentralized approach to distribution of nutrition resources may be an effective solution for “hard to reach” groups or individuals who may not feel comfortable accessing resources directly from providers.

### WATER SECURITY, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

LGBTQI+ people face numerous barriers accessing WSSH services, and may require different interventions based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

- **Prioritize inclusive messaging.** Ensure that WSSH messaging and public information campaigns show people with diverse gender identities and family structures, and work through local LGBTQI+ CSOs to ensure the messaging reaches a broad audience.
- **Ensure inclusive participation.** Actively seek to include LGBTQI+ CSOs or individuals, where it is safe for them, in governance processes, multi-stakeholder platforms, workforce development, community mobilization, and other efforts designed to address barriers to accessing safe drinking water, improved sanitation, hygiene and menstrual hygiene supplies, and water resource allocations.
- **Ensure WSSH facilities are safe, accessible, and acceptable to LGBTQI+ people.** When designing physical structures, implementing partners should consult with LGBTQI+ CSOs to identify safety issues related to where, when, and how LGBTQI+ and other vulnerable groups will access and use the WSSH infrastructure. Note that LGBTQI+ individuals may feel unsafe



accessing public WSSH facilities but equally may be unsafe collecting surface water instead of using public taps, or urinating or defecating in the open rather than using communal latrines. Consultation can include asking for information on what types of violence, stigma, and discrimination LGBTQI+ individuals and groups might encounter in WSSH infrastructure. According to a 2017 online survey in Malaysia, 40 out of 97 transgender respondents said they had experienced discrimination while using WSSH facilities, and 26 out of 97 faced challenges accessing these facilities in their workplace.<sup>4</sup> Creating a single-user facility that anyone can use may be an acceptable and cost-effective solution, but this also may require behavior and social norms change work in communities accustomed to, or expressing strong preference for, sex segregated latrines, which are often viewed as the best approach for preserving gender norms around privacy and protection. Additionally, mandatory use of single-user facilities for gender non-conforming people can further stigmatization and potentially expose users to violence, so this underscores the necessity to actively consult with community-based and LGBTQI-led organizations. Policy decisions can build on current guidance and programming in female friendly latrines and menstrual health and hygiene management, which can be found at [Global Waters](#), [Sanitation Learning Hub](#), [WaterAid](#), and [LGBTI and Sanitation](#).

- **Seek to provide household services for all.** Consider providing sanitation facilities and related products like menstrual hygiene supplies in locations where LGBTQI+ individuals are known to live, including for communal housing used by chosen families and cultural third gender groups<sup>5</sup> (where these services can be provided safely). Providing household access to safe drinking water and sanitation is the optimal approach, both for ensuring access and use, and for protecting LGBTQI+ from potentially vulnerable situations when using public services. Consider working through local LGBTQI+ CSOs or through informal networks.

### RESILIENCE

USAID defines resilience as “the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.” Shocks and stressors can exacerbate both existing prejudices against and vulnerabilities of LGBTQI+ individuals, and can showcase their abilities to develop and mobilize different resilience capacities. Here are some best practices for integrating LGBTQI+ individuals in resilience activities:

- **Reach out to LGBTQI+ CSOs and networks.** LGBTQI+ individuals may be excluded from development programs and program planning due to pervasive stigma and discrimination, fear of violence, and issues with ID cards or lack thereof. This may cause these communities to instead rely on their own informal networks. Programs should contact LGBTQI+ CSOs to ensure LGBTQI+ individuals are not unintentionally excluded from program planning or excluded as beneficiaries, as well as build off the strengths of preexisting networks and support systems.
- **Ensure that programs embrace the principle of non-discrimination, include all families, and don’t only target men and women.** Programs targeting communities who are vulnerable to or recovering from shocks and stressors often define the traditional family unit as the primary recipient unit for assistance. However, many LGBTQI+ people are forced out of

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<sup>4</sup> A Preliminary Study on Transgender Issues: A Case Study on Justice for Sister (JFS) as a New Social Movement in Malaysia

<sup>5</sup> “Chosen family” refers to people with no biological relation that have been “chosen” by LGBTQI+ people to fulfill a similar, supportive role in life. “Cultural third gender” refers to gender identities that are distinct from traditional male or female identities. For example, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan all have legal recognition of a third gender.

their families, and therefore may be excluded from assistance and/or their chosen family structure is not recognized as a traditional family unit. In scenarios in which programs target “families,” ensure that all families (i.e., same-sex couples, transgender individuals living together) are included in the definition of households/families that are eligible to receive aid/assistance. Additionally, consider using “representative of the family,” rather than “head of household” or other terminology that may exclude some genders and/or narrowly define beneficiaries. Access to food and basic necessities can also be hampered when distribution and/or policies are conducted along binary guidelines. For example, during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, Panama issued guidelines mandating separate shopping days for men and women. This exposed transgender people to increased profiling, harassment, and abuse from law enforcement, particularly for transgender people without a government-issued identification card that matched their lived gender (Bishop 2020).

- **Ensure people without national identity cards that reflect their gender can access programs.** In many countries, transgender people are prevented from updating their gender markers on national identity cards to reflect their gender, and in some cases, they may not have identity cards at all. Most governments are unwilling to amend or reissue national identity cards for transgender people, or impose high barriers to do so. Furthermore, transgender people whose gender expression differs from the gender marker on national identity cards may experience discrimination, violence, or other consequences when seeking services or assistance. As a result, projects that require beneficiaries to present a national identity card may exclude some LGBTQI+ people. For example, after floods in Pakistan in 2011, transgender individuals were denied access to assistance and shelter because their gender expression didn’t match the gender listed on their official identity cards. In Jakarta in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a local CSO found that 640 transgender people in Jakarta who lost their jobs were unable to access food benefits due to their gender identity or lack of identity cards (Bishop 2020). Implementing partners should be aware of this reality and should attempt to accommodate and include individuals who would otherwise be eligible to receive assistance, but lack an identification card that reflects their lived gender.
- **Monitor hate speech, discriminatory policies, and other efforts to target the LGBTQI+ community during shocks and stressors.** In some countries, government officials or non-state actors may scapegoat, blame, or target the LGBTQI+ community during a crisis. It is extremely important to proactively monitor discriminatory policies and hate speech that may arise following a crisis, as well as actively consult LGBTQI+ community-based organizations to understand how USAID can provide support. In instances like these, community-led organizations may recommend withdrawing or reducing public support for their issues.

## EXAMPLES OF LGBTQI+ INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

USAID aims to promote nondiscrimination and inclusion in its programming. Some examples of inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals in USAID and other programs are listed below:

### USAID Programs

#### Agriculture

- The [Mas Riego Program](#) in Guatemala aimed to increase farmers’ incomes and their use of climate-smart strategies, including drip irrigation, rainwater harvesting, reduced tillage, mulch

use, and diverse crop rotation. USAID's implementing partner worked with a local LGBTQI+ CSO to develop and provide program staff with a [one-day training on human rights, including discussion of the local LGBT community](#).

### Resilience

- [USAID's Disaster Risk Reduction \(DRR\) Program](#) in Nepal, implemented by the Nepali CSO National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET), reached out to a local LGBTQI+ CSO and provided community-based disaster risk reduction training to their members. NSET also set up a half-day workshop for organizations working on DRR and LGBTQI+ CSOs called "How to Make Disaster Risk Reduction LGBT-Inclusive."

### **Non-USAID Programs**

- [Lavender Acres](#) is a pig farm in Uganda owned and run by transgender individuals. Its origins come from the donation of a farm and became reality because of a Ugandan LGBTQI+ individual who wanted to help change the stereotype of what transgender individuals could do in Uganda. It currently houses and trains 10 people, teaching farming skills and business management skills.
- [Micro Rainbow International Foundation](#) provides economic empowerment and advocacy support to LGBTQI+ people in select developing countries. Given that LGBTQI+ people in rural Cambodia lacked access to the land and loans required to engage in farming, Micro Rainbow helped them access land and loans. Beneficiaries were identified and selected through radio advertisements and through referrals from LGBTQI+ CSOs based in the capital city. Micro Rainbow helped each beneficiary obtain credit to start or expand their farming enterprise.
- The [California Rural Legal Assistance LGBT Program](#) supports low-income individuals from rural areas in California. Its LGBT Program provides legal assistance to LGBT people to protect them against discrimination in rural agrarian activities and provide general community support and leadership classes.

### **ILLUSTRATIVE CUSTOM INDICATORS<sup>6</sup>**

Below is a list of illustrative LGBTQI+ inclusive custom indicators for RFS-sector programs:

- Number of research reports conducted that identify the barriers faced by LGBTQI+ people in RFS sectors and opportunities for meaningful inclusion
- Number of LGBTQI+ CSOs consulted in the project implementation stage to share information about project activities and engagement/employment opportunities (and to have this information shared with broader in-country LGBTQI+ networks)
- Number of project staff trained on nondiscrimination and inclusive development
- Number of agribusinesses/water businesses/sanitation businesses that develop comprehensive employment nondiscrimination policies and practices
- Number of activities that help include as beneficiaries LGBTQI+ individuals who do not have accurate national identity cards
- Number of activities that distribute assistance to non-traditional families (i.e., those led by or comprised of LGBTQI+ people)

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<sup>6</sup> While disaggregation by sex (male/female) is mandatory (ADS 201.3.5.7 (G), ADS 205.3.6), at this time we do not recommend using indicators that *require* beneficiaries to self-identify as LGBTQI+. While it is possible to conduct anonymous surveys, data security remains a concern.

- Number of emergency shelters, water points, and latrines that are accessible to and safe for LGBTQI+ people (i.e., have intentional plans or designs to include LGBTQI+ people)
- Number of participatory processes (government, non-governmental or USAID led) that include LGBTQI+ organizations or individuals

## PART 4: CONCLUSION AND RESOURCES

RFS and the Mission programs it supports cover a broad range of sectors and have much potential scope for LGBTQI+ inclusion in their activities. It is important to reference the intentional inclusion of marginalized groups<sup>7</sup> (i.e., LGBTQI+ people, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, religions/ethnic minorities) in sector policies, guidance documents, and practices. Marginalized groups, including LGBTQI+ people, may face many barriers to full participation in the development programs run by USAID. Recognizing these barriers is the first step towards eliminating them. By making concerted efforts to include LGBTQI+ individuals in the full range of training, workshop, programs and research managed by RFS and related Mission programs, USAID can meaningfully increase LGBTQI+ inclusion.

### NEXT STEPS

USAID offers the following recommendations to Mission and technical staff throughout the Agency.

**Engage in consultations with LGBTQI+ organizations.** When preparing to integrate LGBTQI+ considerations, it is important to engage with LGBTQI+ CSOs, leaders, and community members to better understand the local context and priorities. In designing and setting up programs, consult with local and regional LGBTQI+ CSOs in focus countries to learn what issues and constraints LGBTQI+ people face related to WSSH, nutrition, agriculture-led growth, and resilience, and determine what role they would like USAID to play to advance LGBTQI+ inclusion in these sectors. Also, USAID can share its upcoming programs with these groups and ask them if they see any opportunities for engagement. Even in situations where programs take place in areas without LGBTQI+ CSOs, it is likely that LGBTQI+ CSOs in nearby urban areas (or the capital city) have strong connections with informal networks of LGBTQI+ people in rural areas.

**Train implementing partners.** Missions working in RFS sectors have already conducted some inclusion training for implementing partners (for example, “Mas Riego” in Guatemala). This could be expanded to other implementing partners, including providing a training on USAID’s nondiscrimination for beneficiaries policy, and on the importance of and ways to better advance inclusive development.

**Support research on LGBTQI+ inclusion.** Research on LGBTQI+ inclusion in agriculture and food security, nutrition, resilience, water security, sanitation and hygiene is almost entirely absent outside of the western context. RFS could consider expanding its research agenda to look at LGBTQI+ inclusion in its programming.

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<sup>7</sup> USAID’s Definition of Marginalized Groups: “People who are typically denied access to legal protection or social and economic participation and programs (i.e., police protection, political participation, access to healthcare, education, employment), whether in practice or in principle, for historical, cultural, political, and/or other contextual reasons. Such groups may include, but are not limited to, women and girls, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, displaced persons, migrants, indigenous individuals and communities, youth and the elderly, religious minorities, ethnic minorities, people in lower castes, and people of diverse economic class and political opinions. These groups often suffer from discrimination in the application of laws and policy and/or access to resources, services, and social protection, and may be subject to persecution, harassment, and/or violence. They may also be described as ‘underrepresented,’ ‘at-risk,’ or ‘vulnerable.’”

## **NONDISCRIMINATION FOR BENEFICIARIES**

Nondiscrimination is a basic principle of development. USAID has strong and comprehensive nondiscrimination policies pertaining to beneficiaries in its contracts and grants. Historically there have been credible reports of USAID implementers discriminating against beneficiaries in accessing services, particularly with respect to LGBTQI+ individuals.

Under these policies, USAID employees, contractors, and grant recipients are explicitly prohibited from discriminating against any foreign aid beneficiaries on the basis of any factor not expressly stated in the award. That means all beneficiaries should be able to participate in USAID programs without discrimination based on their race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy status), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, or veteran's status.

These policies apply to all contracts and grants (and their sub-contracts and sub-grants). Discrimination against a beneficiary is considered noncompliance and can be treated as such. These policies can be found in ADS 200 (USAID employees), ADS 302 (contractors), and ADS 303 (grant recipients). More information can be found at [policies on nondiscrimination for access to services for beneficiaries](#).

## RESOURCES AND TOOLS

**[USAID's LGBT Vision for Action](#)**. A foundational document that communicates USAID's position on LGBTQI+ issues, both internally and externally.

**[USAID's Support for LGBTQI+ People Fact Sheet](#)**. A document that highlights USAID's approach to promoting and protecting the human rights of LGBTQI+ people around the world and describes eight ways USAID supports LGBTQI+ people.

**[Two Page Description of USAID's LGBTQI+ Portfolio](#)**. A document that outlines the realities faced by LGBTQI+ people around the world and USAID's approach to supporting LGBTQI+ people.

**[Suggested Approaches for Integrating Inclusive Development Across the Program Cycle and in Mission Operations](#)**. This document explains what Inclusive Development is and why it is important to USAID's work. It serves as a framework for applying various USAID policies and guidance that promote inclusion of marginalized groups, and provides guidance to help Missions and Operating Units to integrate Inclusive Development across the Program Cycle and operations.

**[Nondiscrimination for Beneficiaries](#)**. Frequently asked questions on USAID's policy on nondiscrimination for beneficiaries. USAID has a robust Nondiscrimination Policy for Access to Services for Beneficiaries; it includes protections on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

**[Pride Month Blog Series: Why the Inclusion of LGBTQI+ Populations in Agriculture and Market Systems Matters](#)**. A blog by ACDI/VOCA VP of gender and social inclusion Jenn Williamson on economic and social benefits of including LGBTQ+ groups in not only agriculture, market systems and development programming, but society at large.

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