

# GBV AoR HELPDESK

## Gender Based Violence in Emergencies



### Research Query: Responding to violence against women based on their diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions – an annotated bibliography of resources

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#### The GBV AoR Help Desk

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#### Understanding Intersectionality

In order to understand how to respond to violence against women based on their diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expression (SOGIE) there is a need to understand the concept of intersectionality. Intersectionality is a framework for understanding that people experience overlapping (i.e., intersecting) forms of oppression, discrimination and marginalization based on their co-existing identities.<sup>1</sup> All women and girls face oppression, discrimination and marginalization based on gender inequality, but not all women and girls experience oppression and inequality in a homogeneous way.

Power differentials are frequently abused by people with more power against those with less power. Systemic and

<sup>1</sup> The term 'Intersectionality' was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, emerging in the context of understanding the lived experiences of black women in the intersection of gender-based oppression and racism. Others who have explored the particular intersectionality between oppression based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and other systems of oppression include Audre Lorde and Judith Butler. For a discussion on applying an intersectional approach to GBV programming, see UNFPA (2019) [The Inter-agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming](#).

societal-wide oppressions exist, play out and replicate in every context, and may vary according to time and location. There are many determinants of inequality, these can be split into three different categories<sup>2</sup>:

- **Identity-based determinants** such as: gender, race, language, color and caste, class, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, and age.<sup>3</sup> Identity-based determinants may be context-specific or global in nature.
- **Geographical determinants** such as: being from a rural, remote or urban location, or displacement status, access to services.
- **Social determinants** such as: income and income distribution, education, job security, working conditions, early childhood experiences, food security, health and housing.

The more identity-based, geographic and social determinants of inequality an individual experiences, the less power they are likely to have; *and* the more likely this inequality is to be abused by individuals with more power. The concept of gender-based violence (GBV) centres oppression, discrimination and marginalization based on gender inequality. Whilst all violence is in some way gendered, not all violence is based within the oppression of global patriarchy. All acts of violence against women and girls are considered to be GBV. However, this violence may *additionally* be based on other forms of inequality as well.

GBV in emergencies practitioners most often focus on women and girls in their response to GBV due to structural and systemic gender inequality and discrimination that lead to their documented higher risk of GBV, and their lack of safe and equitable access to humanitarian assistance. Whilst this paper acknowledges that men and boys with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities *may* experience violence based on their perceived transgression of gender norms, the focus of this paper is on the much-neglected area of women and girls who experience violence based on gender inequality and inequalities based within heteronormativity and cis-normativity.<sup>4</sup>

Lastly, it should be acknowledged that women and girls with diverse SOGIE may additionally face other intersecting inequalities. Patriarchy, heteronormativity and cis-normativity may additionally intersect with other inequalities based on identity, geographic or social determinants.

## Overview

The evidence regarding violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIEs is growing but remains limited.<sup>5</sup> The

### **SOGIE vs LBTQI:**

This paper uses the term Sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression (SOGIE). Whilst the acronym LBTQI is well known, it is an acronym which acknowledges the different sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions within a 'Western' framework. Using the term SOGIE acknowledges that there are orientations, identities and expressions that exists across the world which do not necessarily fit within the LBTQI framework, and that there are histories of struggle, oppression and acceptance which also do not fit within the history LBTQI. Lastly, the use of the term SOGIE acknowledges that understanding and inclusion of orientations, identities and expressions with regards to sexuality and orientation are constantly evolving, the term is therefore inclusive of an evolving framework.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the determinants listed are not intended to be exhaustive and that other frameworks to understand intersectionality exist.

<sup>3</sup> Different risks present at different times in the life cycle, childhood, adolescence and older age are often associated with decreased power.

<sup>4</sup> Further, this paper recognizes that trans men and non-binary individuals who are (incorrectly) perceived to present as female by a perpetrator may be at risk of gender-based violence in multiple ways. For example, trans men can be perceived as (gender non-conforming) women, and/or as lesbians or bisexual women, and/or as (gender non-conforming men), therefore being at risk of intersecting gender-based, transphobic and homophobic violence.

<sup>5</sup> For a summary of evidence from low and middle income countries, see Lee and Ahlenback (2020) [Reaching women and girls at most risk of VAWG](#). It should be noted that most of this data is focusing on lesbian and bisexual women and to less extent trans people, while data related to the experiences of intersex people remains extremely limited.

available data suggests high levels of violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIEs, and highlights that this group face similar forms of violence as other women and girls, such as intimate partner violence and forced marriages. The evidence suggests that they additionally face unique and targeted forms of violence related to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression such as “corrective” rapes and “conversion” therapy (see e.g. Word Bank, 2015; IGLHRC, 2014). GBV in general has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizations working on SOGIE rights have, from the early stages of the outbreak, warned about elevated risk of violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIEs and there is now emerging evidence which demonstrates these warnings have come to pass (see e.g. Bishop, 2020).<sup>i</sup>

Despite there being a broad understanding that women and girls with diverse SOGIEs are at heightened risk of violence due to multiple and intersecting factors, there is limited evidence and documented practice of responses to this violence. This may be partly due to limited attention to SOGIE in GBV programming, including in humanitarian settings (Lee and Ahlenback, 2020; International Alert, 2017). For instance, a systematic review of medical, mental health and psychosocial support to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) found that none of 26 identified evaluations of CRSV response interventions included women and girls with diverse SOGIE (Kiss et al., 2020). There is also limited dedicated programming for women and girls with diverse SOGIE within the broader support to SOGIE rights globally; out of the already limited funding for SOGIE causes (an estimated 0,04% of ODA), women and girls with diverse SOGIE were granted just 8% of this funding (Othen-Reeves, 2020). This also further demonstrates that patriarchal norms play out within the SOGIE rights movement, as they do across all movements, sectors and institutions.

This annotated bibliography gathers resources related to responding to violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIEs. It does not synthesize good practice or evidence of ‘what works’ to respond to this violence, as this evidence is limited. Furthermore, given the sensitivity of working on SOGIE issues in many contexts, interventions must by nature take a localized approach, tailored to the context and developed in collaboration with women with diverse SOGIE and their organizations. Therefore, this report summarizes some of the resources that have been produced to date, and can signpost humanitarian actors and GBV practitioners who are looking for information on responses to violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIEs, to relevant resources.

## Key considerations for addressing violence against women and girls of diverse SOGIE:

- **Consult with local SOGIE focused organizations and networks** before initiating any effort to address violence against women with diverse SOGIE. They are best positioned to assess risks, identify needs of women and girls based on SOGIE, and advise on appropriate strategies to address violence. It is important to ensure continuous meaningful engagement with local organizations and carry out ongoing risks assessments to maintain a **do-no-harm approach** throughout any intervention, as risks can change.
- **Understand the legal, social and political environment** for women of diverse SOGIE and their organizations.
- **Create space for discussion and open conversation with staff and partners.** Do not assume that staff members have negative social norms towards women and girls with diverse SOGIEs no matter the national legal framework or social norms. Seek to understand staffs’ SOGIE awareness and ground the conversations in the principle of ‘non-discrimination’ while prioritizing safety.
- **Pay attention to the unique and intersecting risks** of violence that women and girls with diverse SOGIEs face, i.e. how GBV may intersect with issues rooted in homophobia, transphobia, and endosexism, as well as other forms of discrimination that may elevate the risk of experiencing violence.
- **Assess barriers to accessing GBV services and support** that women and girls with diverse SOGIEs who are survivors of violence may face, and map out safe referral pathways.

### Suggested reading:

- Humanitarian Advisory Group (2018) *Taking sexual and gender minorities out of the too-hard basket*
- ADPC, OCHA & UN Women (2017) *Integrating gender into humanitarian action: Good practices from Asia-Pacific*

The box on the previous page outlines **key considerations** for those who consider engaging in addressing violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIE. Again, we strongly advise that you consult with women and girls with diverse SOGIE, SOGIE experts and organizations in your context.

## Methodology

**Research strategy:** Resources were identified through online desk-based research. The research focused on identifying resources related to response to violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIE. The search strategy used key words, phrases and acronyms associated with women and girls with diverse SOGIE including LGBTQI+ (and its variations), variations of search terms on violence (e.g. GBV and VAWG and specific forms of violence), and search terms related to response (e.g. response, services, support, programmes, research, guidance etc.). Due to the scarcity of resources, the searches were also broadened from focusing on humanitarian/ emergency settings to also consider development settings.

**Limitations:** The resources in this annotated bibliography are limited to English documents, and only include publicly available online materials. It is likely that SOGIE organizations and GBV actors have produced more resources, but which are not available online. The research focused on resources published between the years 2011 to 2021.

**Availability of resources:** The resources on responding to violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIE in humanitarian settings remain scarce – both specific interventions focusing on women from these groups, and within GBViE programmes that focus on women and girls in their diversity. A small number of evaluated GBV programmes (in non-humanitarian settings) which included addressing violence against women and girls with diverse SOGIE were identified. The majority of these were supported by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTF).

## Resources<sup>6</sup>

### Humanitarian/ emergency settings

#### [IMC, IRC, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, USAID \(2017\) \*Interagency Gender-Based Violence Case Management Guidelines\*](#)

This resource sets out standards and good practice for providing quality and compassionate care and support to GBV survivors in humanitarian settings. The resource largely focuses on women and adolescent girls, which is followed by a section on GBV case management with other groups, including working with LGBTI persons who have experienced violence. The section on working with LGBTI survivors focuses on i) terms and definitions that are important for working with LGBTI survivors, ii) barriers that LGBTI survivors may face to accessing care, and iii) providing care and support in a safe and welcoming manner for LGBTI survivors. This includes special considerations for how to carry out safety planning with LGBTI survivors.

The guidelines can be used by any organizations that provide care, support, and protection services to GBV survivors in humanitarian settings, including those providing comprehensive case management and those providing specialized support to survivors (e.g. medical and legal service providers, women's rights organizations, and community support groups). The resource should not be seen as a standalone tool but should be used in conjunction with other GBViE resources including the [Caring for Survivors of Sexual Violence in Emergencies Training Package](#) and the [Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for health and psychosocial service providers in humanitarian settings](#).

#### [IPPF \(2019\) \*LGBTIQ+ Inclusion in Humanitarian Action: LGBTIQ+ Vulnerabilities and Capacities in Crisis\*](#)

This resource from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) sets out the organization's commitment to LGBTIQ+ inclusion and outlines recommendations for how the Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health (MISP for SRH) can be LGBTIQ+ inclusive. The recommendations cover actions in the areas of i) coordination, ii) prevention and response to sexual violence, iii) prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), iv) prevent excess maternal and new-born morbidity and mortality, v) prevention of unintended

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<sup>6</sup> This section uses the same acronyms and terminology related to SOGIE and GBV as in the listed sources.

pregnancies, and vi) planning for comprehensive SRH services. The recommendations focused on preventing and responding to sexual violence focus on ensuring privacy for LGBTIQ+ persons; strengthen awareness of informal networks that LGBTIQ+ survivors of sexual violence may turn to; create safe and stigma free spaces for LGBTIQ+ survivors; and develop inclusive referral mechanisms. The resource also includes brief case studies of LGBTIQ+ inclusive humanitarian response in the Asia and Pacific Region.

#### [IRC \(2019\) \*Inclusion of Diverse Women and Girls Guidance Note\*](#)

This guidance aims to support GBV actors to reflect, learn, and take action to implement inclusive GBV programming that reach and support diverse women and girls throughout GBV emergency preparedness and response. It encourages GBV actors to examine their own attitudes, skills, and knowledge, and to take concrete actions to ensure that GBV programming is inclusive and addresses the needs, barriers, and risks that diverse women and girls face. One section focuses specifically on women and girls with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (SOGIs). It explores experiences and GBV risks facing women and girls with diverse SOGIs, as well as common barriers that women and girls with diverse SOGIs may face when accessing GBV response services and GBV programming activities.

The second part of the guidance note outlines key actions to create inclusive GBV programming, covering the areas of assessments; programme design; case management; psychosocial support; safe spaces; health response; referral systems; community outreach; risk reduction in emergencies; information management and sharing; coordination and advocacy; and emergency preparedness and contingency planning. The document also contains a section on tips on terminology to use and avoid. The guidance note targets GBV specialist actors who are already trained and have skills in GBV response. It is accompanied by IRC's GBV Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme's [Emergency Assessment Tools](#) and [Training Package](#), and should not be used as a standalone document.

#### [Roth, Blackwell, Canavera and Falb \(2021\) \*Cycles of displacement: Understanding violence, discrimination, and exclusion of LGBTIQ people in humanitarian contexts\*](#)

This report from the International Rescue Committee (IRC) presents findings from a study on the forms and manifestations of violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ people in humanitarian settings, with a focus on family violence but also exploring other forms of non-family violence and discrimination that were recounted by key informants during the research. The report highlights the risk of poly-victimization in ongoing cycles of displacement that many LGBTIQ people in humanitarian contexts experience – often starting with violence in the family at an early age and displacement from the family of origin. Displacement due to humanitarian causes can then exacerbate prior forms of family violence and stigma, and lead to cycles of displacement and risk of poly-victimization throughout LGBTIQ peoples lives. Research findings also point towards the ways in which humanitarian assistance can contribute to violence against LGBTIQ people in humanitarian settings. For example, access to shelter, food, livelihood support and health services are often governed by binary concepts of gender and heteronormative assumptions about household compositions, which risk excluding LGBTIQ people.

The report opens with commentaries and calls to action from four representatives of LGBTIQ-led organizations working in contexts of conflict and displacement, outlining what LGBTIQ-led and serving organizations expect of international humanitarian actors moving forward. The report ends with suggested approaches and services that humanitarian actors can employ in supporting LGBTIQ rights, and specific calls to action for donors, humanitarian organizations, and researchers. The report is complemented by recommendations for ethical research and learning with and for LGBTIQ people in humanitarian settings in the report [When “We Know Nothing”: Recommendations for Ethical Research and Learning with and for LGBTIQ People in Humanitarian Settings](#).

#### [UNHCR \(2021\) \*Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer \(LGBTIQ+\) Persons in Forced Displacement\*](#)

In 2021, UNHCR published an updated guidance on Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ+) Persons in Forced Displacement. The guidance notes that forcibly displaced LGBTIQ+ persons face distinct protection risks and are at heightened risk of exclusion, exploitation, violence and abuse throughout the cycle of displacement – including in their countries of origin, while they are in transit and once they arrive in countries

where they seek asylum.

The guidance sets out three key principles for working with displaced LGBTIQ+ persons, which come with a set of suggested actions for translating these principles into practice. It further provides guidance for addressing operational protection risks, including creating a safe environment for safe disclosure of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC); ensuring physical security from exploitation and abuse, including GBV; and providing access to LGBTIQ+ inclusive services and programmes. The guidance stresses that local LGBTIQ+ organizations are important partners in identifying the needs and priorities of LGBTIQ+ persons in displacement, especially as LGBTIQ+ persons are often marginalized within the general displaced population and may not feel safe disclosing their SOGIESC.

The guidance is primarily intended for UNHCR staff, however, it is a useful resource for anyone who works with LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees. It includes a comprehensive glossary of terms related to SOGIESC and a list of useful UN resources related to LGBTIQ+ persons' human rights and SOGIESC inclusion.

#### [UNHCR \(2021\) \*Global Roundtable on Protection and Solutions for LGBTIQ+ People in Forced Displacement\*](#)

Following the publication of the guidance on working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ+) persons in forced displacement (see above), UNHCR and the UN Independent Expert on Protection Against Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity organized a roundtable discussion in June 2021. The event gathered more than 500 people from around the world from governments, civil society, and the private sector, as well as LGBTIQ+ people who have experienced displacement, to discuss experiences, policies and programmes that have worked and ways to implement solutions. UNHCR has published a [Discussion Paper](#) and [Summary Conclusions](#) from the event.

The Summary Conclusions paper aims to reflect the collective understanding that emerged from the roundtable discussions and serve as a roadmap for further action with regard to the protection of and solutions for LGBTIQ+ forcibly displaced and stateless persons. The document includes priority recommendations in 13 thematic areas, covering areas such as addressing drivers of displacement; building the evidence base; and response services to people in forced displacement including shelter, protection, livelihoods and health services. One of the thematic areas is around GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and response, which includes three key recommendations. These highlight the importance of taking a community-based approach to preventing, mitigating and responding to GBV against LGBTIQ+ refugees, internally displaced persons, and asylum seekers; making funding more accessible and targeted towards LGBTIQ+ people's needs and priorities; and ensuring that asylum processes are LGBTIQ+ inclusive and recognize the myriad of protection risks and forms of violence that LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers face. This includes recognizing gendered risks and less visible forms of violence such as family violence and marital rape.

#### [UNHCR \(2019\) \*SGBV response, risk mitigation and prevention in humanitarian crises: A synthesis of findings from evaluations of UNHCR operations 2019\*](#)

This synthesis of findings from evaluations of UNHCR's operations to respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) includes a section on addressing SGBV against LGBTI people (2.4). This is an area of focus in UNHCR's SGBV strategy, however, it is noted that much work remains to be done as action on LGBTI risks was found to be one of the least prioritized of the six focus areas in UNHCR's operations. A 2017 evaluation noted that restrictive legal environments are seen as a barrier to taking more action, however, there are examples of work going on in restrictive legal and social environments. One such example comes from Lebanon, where UNHCR has found ways to support LGBTI persons of concern (PoC) at risk of SGBV. The work started with internal training and establishing an enabling environment for LGBTI people to approach UNHCR for support. An evaluation noted positive feedback from LGBTI people, who reported an improved environment and positive changes in UNHCR reception and staff attitudes. UNHCR also supported the establishment of a peer-group that provides peer-to-peer support, safe spaces, life skills, and access to protection and assistance and services. The participants in the group reported increased understanding of SGBV and services.

The report also includes examples of good practice from Jordan and Brazil (the Venezuelan response). In Jordan, LGBTI focal persons have been assigned in all UNHCR offices, and UNHCR has established referral pathways and

trained partner staff in interviewing skills and facilitating referrals for LGBTI people. In Brazil, UNHCR collaborated with partners to ensure that LGBTI SGBV risks were considered early on in the response, as part of building a safe and secure environment. The synthesis does not discuss findings or approaches specific to LBTQI women.

#### [UNHCR and IOM \(2021\) \*SOGIESC and Migration Training Package\*](#)

This Training Package, jointly developed by UNHCR and IOM, prepares participants for working with migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, and stateless and internally displaced people with diverse SOGIEESC. The training package covers a wide range of topics, including terminology; international law; the types of protection issues LGBTIQ+ people face; how to create safe spaces; and considerations when interviewing and assessing protection needs of LGBTIQ+ people. The resource includes focus on SGBV against people with diverse SOGIEESC – aiming to raise participants' knowledge of forms of violence that people with diverse SOGIEESC are at risk of; who the potential perpetrators are; and what barriers to help-seeking, reporting and justice that LGBTIQ+ people may encounter.

The training package consists of a comprehensive training manual and facilitation guide, training materials for different modules, training aides, webinars and videos. The training was primarily developed for UNHCR and IOM staff and partner organizations, however, it is relevant for a wide range of practitioners working in the fields of migration and humanitarian assistance.

#### [Women's Refugee Commission \(2021\) \*Addressing Sexual Violence against Men, Boys, and LGBTIQ+ Persons in Humanitarian Settings, A Field-Friendly Guidance Note by Sector\*](#)

Following an exploratory research in three refugee settings in 2018-2019 which found high unmet needs among men, boy,<sup>7</sup> and LGBTIQ+ survivors of sexual violence, the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) developed this Guidance Note to respond to those needs. The Guidance Note recognizes the tendency to lump together LGBTIQ+ people as one homogenous group in humanitarian settings, and stresses the need to take disaggregated approaches to working with diverse sexual and gender minorities. The document notes that the needs of lesbians, trans men, trans women, intersex persons, and non-binary persons have been particularly overlooked.

The Guidance Note outlines entry points and key actions and considerations in health interventions (including sexual and reproductive health, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), protection interventions, child protection, GBV interventions, livelihoods, WASH and shelter to address sexual violence against LGBTIQ+ survivors. The Guidance Note includes case studies and signposts to relevant resources for each intervention area.

The section on GBV focuses on how GBV actors and interventions can be inclusive of women and girls of diverse sexualities and gender identities – recognizing that LBTQ women are at high risk of violence. This section outlines LBTQ women's GBV related needs, and key actions for GBV actors to meet these. The actions are grouped in the areas of i) understanding of the issues, ii) capacity development, iii) coordination and collaboration, iv) inclusive GBV programming for LBTQ women, v) case management, vi) and coordination of services. It outlines considerations for GBV service providers, including barriers to service uptake for LGBTIQ+ survivors.

#### [World Bank Group \(2020\) \*Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Contexts Affected by Fragility, Conflict and Violence, Discussion Paper\*](#)

This discussion paper by the World Bank focuses on the risks and challenges that sexual and gender minorities face in areas affected by fragility, conflict and violence (FCV), including barriers to accessing services and the risk of SGBV. The paper is based on a literature review and case studies in more than 10 countries where the World Bank operates. The section on SGBV against sexual and gender minorities highlights the lack of response to this violence by humanitarian actors, as well as the absence of global protection frameworks and laws that protect sexual and gender minorities in FCV affected contexts. The paper concludes with a discussion of potential entry points for the World Bank to engage on the issues discussed, which includes developing SOGI profiles, and generate evidence and knowledge on SGBV against sexual and gender minorities.

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<sup>7</sup> Given the focus of this annotated bibliography on resources on responding to violence against LBTQI women, this summary does not focus on the findings and considerations related to men and boys survivors of sexual violence, but will focus on LGBTIQ+ related considerations and findings, and particularly related to women and girls with diverse SOGIE.

## **Other settings (non-humanitarian)**

### **[Koprivica \(2019\) Project Evaluation Report: No More Victims: Roma Women and Girls Respond to Violence, Draft Final External](#)**

This evaluation report focuses on a programme in Serbia (in the autonomous province of Vojvodina) which aimed to address early, forced and arranged child marriages of Roma girls through improving access to services and justice for Roma girls at risk of early and forced marriage, and influencing the Office for Roma Inclusion in Vojvodina to prioritize this issue. The programme adopted an intersectional approach and targeted Roma women and girls who experienced multiple forms of marginalization, including Roma women with disabilities and LGBTI Roma women, reaching 440 LGBTI women, and 66 women with disabilities.

The evaluation highlights that diversity within the programme team strengthened the intersectional approach of the programme. For instance, facilitators and psychologists working with the programme included women with disabilities and lesbian women. The telephone helpline also provided services in languages spoken by different ethnic minorities. The evaluation notes challenges around collecting disaggregated data for these groups, and recommends that methodologies for collecting disaggregated data on women who experience multiple forms of marginalization is further improved in order to strengthen the approaches for working with LGBTI women and women with disabilities.

### **[Mecaj \(2017\) Final Evaluation Report: Reduce Violence against Women with focus on LBT community in Albania](#)**

This evaluation report assesses a programme that aimed to improve LBT women's access to GBV response services and support from institutions and women's groups in Albania. The programme focused on awareness raising and advocacy with local service providers and decision makers. The approach to this was informed by findings from a programme research that looked at LBT women's experiences of GBV services.

The evaluation found evidence of enhanced awareness, knowledge and skills of health care and educational professionals to respond to violence against women in general, and LBT women specifically. Service providers reported an increase in the number of LBT women survivors of violence identified and referred to appropriate services by health professionals. However, the evaluation raises concern about the sustainability of this outcome due to an apparent lack of motivation among public service providers to facilitate future trainings (which were planned to be conducted by a group of trainers that were trained during the project) and a lack of resources to carry out the trainings. The evaluation also found that local WROs reported increased awareness, knowledge and skills to better respond to LBT women who experience violence. WROs reported that they had integrated violence against LBT women into the regular curriculum used in trainings and awareness raising on GBV at local level.

### **[OurRight Action International \(2018\) Enhancing Domestic Violence Protections for LGBTI People in the Philippines and Sri Lanka](#)**

OurRight International, in partnership with EnGenderRights in the Philippines and Women and Media Collective in Sri Lanka, implemented a 27-month project in to improve domestic violence protections for LGBT people. The project aimed to tackle three key barriers to family violence and domestic violence protections for LGBTI communities: the lack of technical knowledge and capacity in how to handle cases of domestic violence against LGBTI people; the absence of protocols and manuals for service providers and first responders to domestic violence; and lack of knowledge within the LGBTI community of where and how to seek help for domestic violence.

In Sri Lanka, the project focused specifically on LBT people, following findings from a [2014 study](#) which found high levels of family violence against lesbian and bisexual women, and trans people in Sri Lanka. The project worked with local women's rights organizations (WROs) and mental health professionals to increase their knowledge and capacity to work with LBT people who have experienced violence, and developed a manual for counselors and a resource for WROs to support them to engage better with lesbian women, bisexual women, and trans persons. In the Philippines, the project supported 187 service providers in Quezon City to build capacity to be recognized as 'LGBTI friendly', and community forums were convened to sensitize key stakeholders and the public about the project and LGBTI people's right to protection from domestic violence.

An evaluation of the project found that the tools and manuals developed were well-received, and participants in

trainings reported increased awareness and greater confidence in their abilities to work with LGBTI/LBT survivors of domestic violence.

[Ritcher, Phuengsamran and Darawuttimaprakorn \(2018\) \*Final Evaluation: The Empowerment and Capacity Building of Lesbian and Transgender Women to Mitigate Violence, Stigma and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity \(Thailand\)\*](#)

The Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand (RSAT) implemented “The Empowerment and Capacity Building of Lesbian and Transgender Women to Mitigate Violence, Stigma and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity” project for three years (2015-2017). This evaluation report reviews the extent to which the programme achieved its overall goal to give lesbian and transgender women in four regions of Thailand greater freedom from violence, stigma, discrimination and human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and provide them with improved access to support when violence has occurred.

The evaluation found that the programme contributed to increased awareness of sexual orientation and gender identity and about sexual minorities among government stakeholders at national level, and groups of lesbian and transgender women leaders were formed to carry out advocacy with the government on key issues. For instance, the groups successfully advocated for trans women to have the right to wear female school uniforms in several schools, and the groups supported survivors of violence to pursue legal justice. The evaluation also found that by participating in several government committees on gender equity and human rights, RSAT has built a foundation for continuing to facilitate lesbian and transgender women’s voice in policy processes and dialogues. Although lesbian and transgender women who participated in the programme (mainly through workshops on rights) reported that they improved their understanding of SOGIE issues and GBV, the evaluation did not find that they experienced that the response to violence had improved, highlighting persistent barriers to support seeking and access to services.

[Stonewall \(no year\) \*LGBT Access to Justice Toolkit: Challenging violence through LGBT community engagement, Learning from LGBT Rights Campaigners in the Western Balkans, and the UK\*](#)

In June 2016, Stonewall launched a two year programme to address violence against LGBT communities in the Western Balkans and Turkey by engaging police forces, the judiciary and wider state institutions across the region and in the UK. This toolkit compiles some of the good practice that emerged from the programme, which is presented in case studies from programme partners. The toolkit focuses on community responses to violence (including campaigning, advocacy, research and documentation); transforming institutions (e.g. changing cultures in the police and justice institutions); and institutional responses (such as the development of LGBT staff networks, and strengthening the police and justice actors’ in their roles in responding to violence against LGBT people). For example, one case study highlights the work with the police in Montenegro, where the programme developed LGBT focused guidelines and trainings, and supported multi-stakeholder coordination of the handling of cases of LGBT violence. In Macedonia, the programme supported a review of the police training materials for new officers, which were found to include discriminatory views towards LGBT people and harmful stereotypes. The case studies highlight several learnings from the programme’s experience of working with the police and justice actors, for instance in terms of how to frame discussions on LGBT rights, and the importance of engaging LGBT CSOs in the work.

[United Nations \(2016\) \*Living Free & Equal: What states are doing to tackle violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people\*](#)

This report identifies state responses to violence against LGBTI people in countries across the globe, spanning a range of sectors and approaches, including legal and policy reform, school-based interventions, public awareness campaigns, and training of law enforcement personnel. For the latter, the report stresses the need that training initiatives should be part of a broader set of actions to tackle violence, for instance establishing accountability measures and awareness raising campaigns. It is noted that although law enforcement actors are critical to involve in efforts to respond to violence against LGBTI people, there is very limited information of the effectiveness and impact of trainings. This is true for most of the state approaches identified in the report, although some general elements of good practice are emerging.

The report recognizes the need to address the situation of LGBTQI people in their diversity, especially those who

face intersecting forms of discrimination, including trans men, trans women, intersex people, bisexual people, non-binary people and lesbians. It highlights as an example that in South Africa, the National Intervention Strategy for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Sector specifically addresses the situation of black lesbian women who are at high risk of violence including so called “corrective” rape.

[USAID \(2014\) \*Equal Rights, Equal Justice: Toolkit for addressing gender-based violence through rule of law projects\*](#)

This toolkit was developed as a resource for USAID staff in designing and expanding GBV prevention and response efforts to be integrated in Rule of Law programming. The toolkit suggests entry points for GBV integration within Rule of Law programmes, which are highlighted by examples from various countries where USAID works. The toolkit recognizes the diversity of GBV survivors, including LGBT persons. Although the focus of the toolkit is on women and girls in general, there are some consideration of entry point to address violence against LGBT persons. One such entry-point is to support the capacity of lawyers and human rights organizations to provide legal support to LGBT survivors of violence – examples of this approach have been seen for example in Sri Lanka, Moldova and Cameroon. Another example comes from Nigeria, where paralegals were trained in conducting mediation services for LGBT people, and in how to respond to violence against LGBT persons.

[World Bank \(2015\) \*Violence against Women and Girls Resource Guide: Brief on Sexual and Gender Minority Women, Violence against women and girls Resource Guide\*](#)

This brief explores what is known about violence against sexual and gender minority women, including the causes, types, and consequences of this violence. The brief outlines key ethical and safety recommendations for VAWG interventions, including specific considerations for interventions that address violence against LBT women. It goes on to outline what a rapid situation analysis of the situation of LBT women can look like, with a list of key questions to be asked. The brief thereafter identifies entry-points to integrate prevention and response to violence against LBT women in development interventions. This includes interventions targeting the law enforcement sector, education sector, health sector, justice sector response, and policy level and legislative change.

The brief includes case studies with examples from across the globe of how violence against LBT women has been addressed (as well as broader welfare and rights issues), including a project in South Africa where LBT women were supported to advocate for better policies and increased safety for LBT women in townships. Furthermore, the brief includes a glossary of key terms and recommended reading.

[Yang \(2017\) \*Project Evaluation: Promoting Justice for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence in China\*](#)

This evaluation assesses a GBV programme in China which included LBT women as one of four target groups; reaching 120 LBT women. The goal of the programme was to empower female survivors of domestic violence; LBT women; women and girls living with HIV/AIDS; and young women, to advocate for their rights and engage in efforts to better inform domestic violence laws and policies. In addition to working with survivors, the programme trained the police, social workers, lawyers, judges and helplines to better handle cases of violence against the target groups, and raise the awareness of policymakers and government stakeholders on the rights, needs and priorities of these groups.

The evaluation assesses to what extent the objectives of the programme have been met, and documents good practice generated by the programme. Among the findings are that the programme was successful in terms of raising awareness of domestic violence among LBT women, and that the programme enhanced service providers’ understanding of violence against women from different high-risk groups, including LBT women. The evaluation highlights that the approach of working with four NGOs that worked with one target group each allowed the NGOs to collaborate in a way that they would not have done outside the programme, with the organizations reporting that they benefited a lot from the exchange of experiences and learnt from each other’s strategies.

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## COVID-19 resources

<sup>i</sup> For an overview of how COVID-19 has impacted women and girls of diverse SOGIEs, see Edge Effect (2020) [Briefing Note: Impacts of COVID-19 on LGBTIQ+ people](#). This resource contains recommendations for donors, governments and organizations on how to ensure that people with diverse SOGIE are recognized and supported by humanitarian relief and recovery during COVID-19.

The office of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity published the [ASPIRE Guidelines – Guidelines on COVID-19 response free from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity](#) to offer high-level advice for policy makers on how to design an inclusive COVID-19 response. The guidelines were developed in consultation with global SOGIE activists and advocates.

Developed by MADRE, Media Matters for Women, MenEngage Alliance, Nobel Women’s Initiative, OutRight Action International, Women Enabled International, and Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the Toolkit [A Practical Approach to Prevent, Address, and Document Domestic Violence under COVID-19](#) provides guidance on addressing domestic violence during COVID-19. The guidance is based in global best practice but adapted to be implemented by local groups and organizations. The toolkit takes an intersectional approach and includes guidance on how LGBTQI persons and other communities at increased risk of violence can be reached by domestic violence prevention and response activities. The toolkit provides programmatic guidance to local organizations, as well recommendations for governments, UN agencies, and international organizations.

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