



WHERE ARE THE GLOBAL COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR LGBTI COMMUNITIES?



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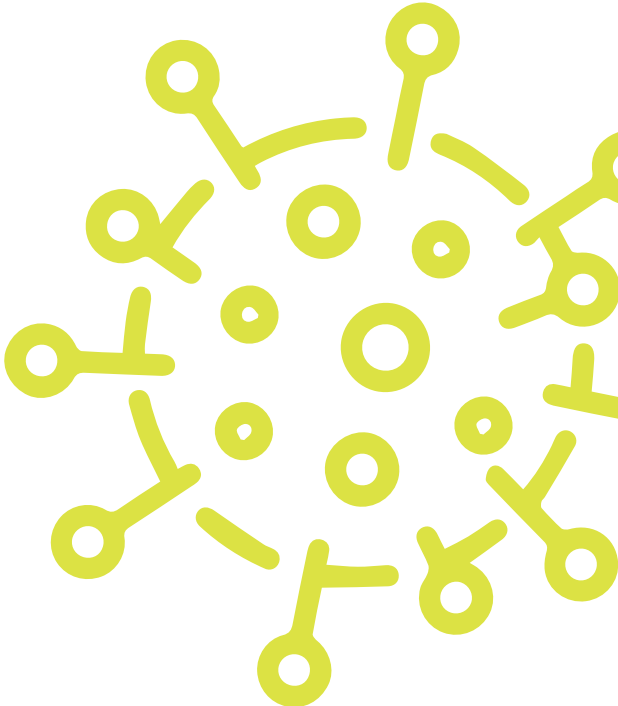
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FOREWORD

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

At the time of the publication of this report, more than 2 million people around the world have died from COVID-19, with more than 96 million documented cases.¹ Untold economic and social hardship and political unrest have ensued, placing marginalized communities, including LGBTI people, at even greater risk.

In the face of the ongoing pandemic, I am eager to share with you the second report in GPP's commitment to monitor LGBTI-specific COVID-19 responses by philanthropic, humanitarian, and donor government institutions.

This report confirms what many in the sector have discussed anecdotally:

1. Governments, donors, and service providers have largely failed to acknowledge or address the specific needs of LGBTI people in response to COVID-19;
2. LGBTI organizations have mobilized to fill this void out of necessity, providing for basic needs, support, and protection for their communities; without sufficient support from traditional development agencies.
3. Philanthropic support for LGBTI communities has remained stable, with funders offering flexibility to meet the moment; however, this results in significant human rights-focused funding being redirected to humanitarian service provision.

The report analyzes 4,467 recorded COVID-19 resource mechanisms and finds that only one explicitly described funding to support LGBTI communities. None of the almost 3,000 recorded resource mechanisms tracked to the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) explicitly described funding to support LGBTI communities.

The risks to LGBTI rights and well-being have been multiplied and enabled by the pandemic. Yet the exclusion of LGBTI communities as a priority population within COVID-19 response plans and public statements of the world's largest humanitarian donors and implementing agencies suggests that humanitarian resources are not systematically or directly targeting or addressing the needs of LGBTI communities.

These findings offer an opportunity to break down the invisibility of LGBTI issues within the international humanitarian system.

We invite you to explore our documentation of an emerging pattern demonstrating a pivot within the global LGBTI movement since the start of the pandemic.

Many LGBTI organizations, with the flexible support of their funders, have shifted programmatic focus in 2020 to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and address the humanitarian needs of their communities.

In our survey of the top LGBTI funders, who account for just under half of all funding for LGBTI issues outside of the U.S., we found that



Organisation for Gender Empowerment and Rights Advocacy in Uganda (OGERA)

¹ As of January 21, 2021.

most respondents indicated plans to continue their support, and many will slightly increase their LGBTI funding in 2021. While we celebrate this ongoing commitment, we also note a dangerous funding gap emerging. As already overburdened LGBTI organizations and their funders shift to support the urgent needs of LGBTI response to COVID-19, the work—and funding—of ongoing campaigns for essential LGBTI human rights and other longtime priorities will be dangerously under-resourced.

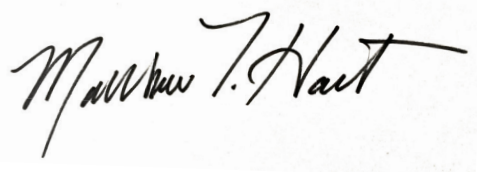
The July 2020 update of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan made clear that LGBTI persons are an at-risk group whose needs should be considered in humanitarian responses. This explicit acknowledgment provides some framework, a mandate, and a space for global leadership.

For humanitarian donors and implementing agencies reading this report, the needs of LGBTI communities must be acknowledged and addressed within the global COVID-19 response and more broadly within the international humanitarian system. Lack of focused and timely humanitarian action will lead to greater suffering among LGBTI communities and will impact the capacity to advance human rights and respond to anti-rights attacks.

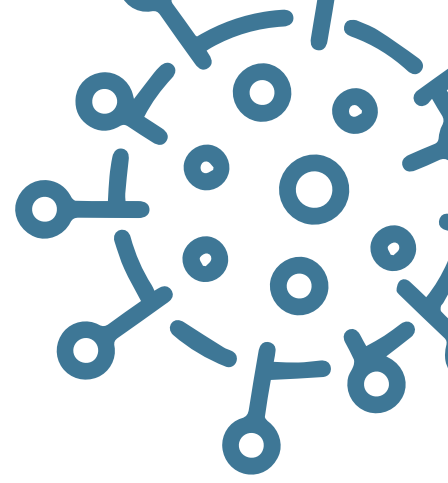
For funders currently supporting LGBTI organizations, we encourage you to **stay the course.** Maintain or increase funding and remain flexible with grantee partners as they adjust to emerging on-the-ground community needs. Importantly, **advocate.** Join GPP in efforts to mobilize LGBTI-specific inclusion in humanitarian funding mechanisms. Addressing humanitarian needs may require new skills and relationships for both LGBTI groups and funders as well as humanitarian actors.

Only by working together can we make the critical systemic and structural changes needed.

Yours in solidarity,



Matthew Hart,
Director, Global Philanthropy Project



“Civil society organizations, which operated under duress before the pandemic, have been frantically working to fill in the gaps left by States: organizing the collection and distribution of food and water, hygienic materials and masks; activating communication, solidarity and social protection networks; and supporting each other. Local and global organizations have also created best practices through rapid response funds that allow advocates to keep their phone lines open and their computer screens lit and connected, thus providing vital lifelines of communication.

This complex system of early warning, sense of community, advocacy and follow-up that has been forged over the last five decades by the dedication of human rights defenders who advocate for the human rights of LGBT persons all over the world is an asset of profound value for the global community. It has demonstrated its unique capacity to effectively and efficiently respond to needs at the most intimate and local levels, and demonstrate those needs in national, regional and global terms, and it has been instrumental in the unique global alliances created to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic, to ensure recognition of the rights of LGBT persons as human rights, to condemn and eradicate the scourge of criminalization, and to initiate social transformation of unprecedented depth and width by promoting their inclusion in education, health, employment, housing, water and sanitation and all other realms of society.”

– Statement by human rights experts on the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, May 17, 2020

INTRODUCTION

As COVID-19 spread across the globe in 2020, and its health and broader political and socioeconomic implications became evident, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI)² communities organized. To meet new challenges, LGBTI organizations across the world stepped up, aware that legal and social discrimination and marginalization would make their communities particularly vulnerable to impacts of the pandemic. LGBTI community response included: delivering essential food to communities of unemployed trans men in rural Guatemala; providing housing for LGBTI communities escaping unsafe living environments in Macedonia; ensuring that lesbian, bisexual, and queer female sex workers have access to essential medicines in Uganda; and other examples in communities around the world.

As governments, donors, and service providers have largely failed to acknowledge the specific needs of LGBTI people in responding to COVID-19, LGBTI organizations have filled the void to provide basic protection and support for their communities. Many of these organizations have traditionally focused on advocacy and community organizing to advance and protect the human rights of LGBTI people. Now, in the era of COVID-19, they have become direct service providers, out of necessity—albeit with limited resources and capacity.

In April 2020, the Global Philanthropy Project launched a short survey to understand the initial response of global LGBTI philanthropy to the pandemic, soliciting data from all GPP member organizations as well as non-GPP members within the top 20 funders of global LGBTI issues. A key outcome from that report was an identified role for GPP to monitor shifts in resources flowing to LGBTI movements and communities, as well as the broader impact of COVID-19 on international development and humanitarian assistance funding.

Six months into the pandemic, GPP conducted a second phase of the COVID-19 Global LGBTI Funders Survey, this time including the leading government, multilateral, and philanthropic funders of global LGBTI issues. The 24 funders who participated in the survey represented just under half (47 percent) of all funding awarded on LGBTI issues globally (excluding domestic U.S. funding) and 4 in every 10 (40 percent) of grants given in 2018.³

A clear pattern emerged from this research, demonstrating that a pivot has occurred within the global LGBTI movement since the start of the pandemic. Many LGBTI organizations, with the flexible support of their funders, have shifted programmatic focus in 2020 to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and address their communities' humanitarian needs. Most of the funder survey respondents have indicated plans to continue their support of global LGBTI issues, with a slight increase expected in the total planned funding in 2021. However, data from the funder survey and other sources highlighted the significant resource gap facing LGBTI organizations. In other words, considering the urgency of humanitarian service provision undertaken by LGBTI civil society organizations, steady or slightly increased levels of funding support will likely be insufficient to meet the needs of the sector in 2021.

GPP has continued to monitor international development and humanitarian assistance mechanisms and the plans and statements of the largest humanitarian donors and implementing actors. Unfortunately, LGBTI issues continue to be invisible within the global humanitarian response to COVID-19. Indeed, LGBTI organizations, experts, and allies have advocated over many years for greater acknowledgement of the needs of LGBTI communities within the international humanitarian system. The global scale of the COVID-19 pandemic, extending dual health and economic crises beyond existing humanitarian hotspots and exacerbating existing inequalities, now presents an unprecedented challenge to the world community. The situation calls for effective humanitarian responses targeted to those most in need, ensuring that no one is left behind. Within this context, as the global community determines how to tackle the pandemic as it moves into a second year, humanitarian actors have an opportunity and responsibility to recognize LGBTI people more explicitly as an at-risk group. Key to this is direct engagement with and support for the LGBTI organizations that have been addressing hunger alleviation, access to medicines, and shelter for the LGBTI communities since the start of the pandemic.

This report is divided into three main sections. The first section of the report focuses on the responses of LGBTI organizations and their existing funders to the impacts of COVID-19 on LGBTI communities. The second section explains why the needs of LGBTI communities should be acknowledged and addressed by humanitarian actors, and details their exclusion from resources for the global humanitarian response to the pandemic. The last section reviews the current state of COVID-19 funding for LGBTI communities and outlines implications for the global LGBTI movement for human rights.

2 GPP uses the term LGBTI; however, we note that many grantmakers and civil society groups use alternate terms to name these populations, including LGBTIQ, LGBT+, and SOGIESC, referring to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics.

3 Based on additional analysis from the [2017–2018 Global Resources Report: Government and Philanthropic Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Communities dataset](#), provided by Global Philanthropy Project.

Methodology

GPP conducted a phase-two survey (“GPP COVID-19 Survey”) in September 2020 to understand the levels of 2021 funding anticipated by the leading funders of global LGBTI issues and how their existing grantee partners had been impacted by the pandemic. The survey was shared with all GPP member organizations, non-GPP members within the top 20 funders of global LGBTI issues, and 15 government and multilateral donors that have previously reported LGBTI funding data to GPP’s biannual tracking research, the [2017–2018 Global Resources Report: Government and Philanthropic Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Communities](#) (hereafter GRR or Global Resources Report).

The survey was conducted through SurveyMonkey. In total, 44 survey participants were asked to provide their planned 2021 budgets for LGBTI grants, including total budgets as well as breakdowns by geographical regions and population groups (questions 2–6). Participants were also asked a series of questions about feedback received from grantee partners since the start of the pandemic regarding concerns about loss of income, shifts in programmatic activities, and requests for different forms of support from the funder (questions 7–19). Respondents were asked to answer these questions using a Likert scale.⁴ The number and type of response are shown in the chart below. All figures provided by respondents to the survey and included in the analysis in this report are inclusive of any funding for regranteeing and excludes domestic U.S. funding, unless otherwise stated.

Figure 1 – Respondents to the GPP COVID-19 Survey

Survey Respondents	Invited to Respond	# Response: Planned 2021 Budget	# Response: Grantee Feedback
GPP Members	20	18	17
Top 20 Foundations leading LGBTI funders⁵	9	1	2
Government Donors	13	4	2
Multilateral Donors	2	1	1
Total Responses	44	24	22

In addition to the GPP COVID-19 survey, we analyzed international development and humanitarian assistance mechanisms using data from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)’s [Financial Tracking Service \(FTS\)](#), as well as the [International Aid Transparency Initiative \(IATI\)](#) and [Devex’s Funding the Response to COVID-19 Interactive Tool](#). A word search of each of these databases using “LGBTI” and other associated terms⁶ was conducted to identify any resource mechanisms that explicitly included LGBTI communities (either in the project/grant/commitment title or project description). We also conducted a desk review of key response plans, public statements, and websites of the five largest humanitarian donors and 20 largest recipients of resources for COVID-19-related humanitarian response to identify whether LGBTI communities were recognized as priority/at-risk populations by these actors.

The analysis in this report is also informed by a desk review of available evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTI people, statements and reports from UN agencies and individual mandate holders, and research reports and policy papers from civil society. We additionally reviewed existing literature on the humanitarian needs of LGBTI communities. Lastly, the data and analysis in this report are illustrated through several examples of how LGBTI organizations have responded to the impact of COVID-19 on their communities, which were identified and developed in partnership with GPP’s members and the LGBTI organizations themselves.

⁴ For each of these questions (Q7–19 of the survey), respondents were asked to answer if none (0 percent), a few (1–24 percent), many (25–74 percent), or most (75 percent) of their grantee partners had provided feedback indicated in the question. Respondents could also answer N/A or skip the question.

⁵ Excluding GPP members.

⁶ Search terms used to identify possible resource resources directed towards LGBTI communities included “LGBTI,” “LGBT,” “SOGI,” “Sexual Orientation,” “Gender Identity,” “Gay,” “Lesbian,” “Trans,” “Intersex,” “Sexual and Gender Minorities,” “Sexual Minorities,” and “Gender Minorities.”

PART I

THE COVID-19 RESPONSE OF LGBTI ORGANIZATIONS AND FUNDERS

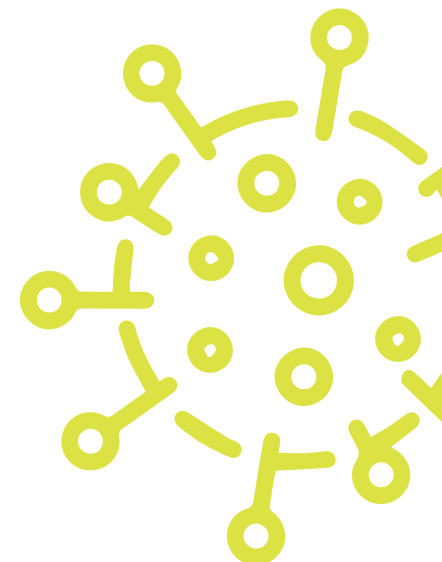
LGBTI organizations are at the forefront of addressing the impact of COVID-19 on their communities.

The disadvantages experienced by many LGBTI people across the world—resulting from widespread legal, political, and socioeconomic discrimination, as well as stigma and marginalization before the pandemic—have been amplified in 2020. As COVID-19 has continued to cause death and serious illness, and efforts to contain the virus have led to significant economic downturn across all regions of the world, LGBTI communities have been hard hit. According to *Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People*, released by OutRight Action International in May 2020, within the first few months of the pandemic, it was already evident that LGBTI communities across diverse contexts were facing:

- devastation of livelihoods and rising food and shelter insecurity;
- disruptions in access to health care, while also being reluctant to seek care in some instances;
- elevated risk of family or domestic violence;
- social isolation and increased anxiety;
- societal violence, stigma, discrimination, and scapegoating;
- abuse of state power; and
- concerns about the ongoing survival of LGBTI community infrastructure.⁷

A rapid online global survey of more than 20,000 LGBTI people conducted in April and May 2020 by UNAIDS, the LGBT+ Foundation, and researchers from the John Hopkins School of Public Health found that almost half of the respondents (47 percent) faced economic difficulty, with a quarter unable to meet basic food needs. Almost 1 in 8 (13 percent) had already lost their job, and another 21 percent expected to do so. A fifth (21) of all participants living with HIV had experienced challenges in accessing antiretroviral therapy since the pandemic began.⁸

The impact of COVID-19 on LGBTI people has also been recognized beyond the LGBTI community. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) conducted a survey of 852 women from refugee, displaced, and post-conflict settings across Africa in order to examine the extent to which humanitarian response to COVID-19 had taken the safety of women and girls into account. The IRC survey results were released in October 2020. IRC found that 15 percent of respondents identified as women and girls with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities have experienced additional risks during the pandemic, with the report stating that this was notable given “contexts of widespread homophobia, transphobia and the resultant invisibility of individuals with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC).”⁹



⁷ Amie Bishop, 2020, [Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People](#), Outright Action International, pages 5–7.

⁸ UNAIDS, 2020, [Survey shows that the COVID-19 pandemic increases vulnerability of LGBTI people](#).

⁹ Nancy Abwola and Illaria Micheli, 2020, [What Happened? How the Humanitarian Response to COVID-19 Failed to Protect Women and Girls](#), International Rescue Committee, page 8.

Spotlight on Samabhabona, India

Samabhabona is a grassroots organization in the Indian state of West Bengal working to address the disadvantages experienced by trans people, specifically those neglected from accessing mainstream support because of caste, class, gender, sexuality, mental health, and physical disability. As COVID-19 spread across the country, already marginalized groups such as the trans community faced increased challenges in accessing food and basic health care. In cases of unbearable living situations, many require re-housing and shelter for the foreseeable future.

To address these significant needs, Samabhabona began fundraising as soon as the lockdown was announced, collecting individual donations online. They also sought support from the International Trans Fund, which was able to provide them with the resources to equip trans persons with relief supplies for economic hardship. Since the start of the pandemic, the organization supported more than 900 individuals across West Bengal to access food, essentials, and medical support. This included ensuring that trans persons with medical expenses can receive their medication either free of cost or subsidized.

The organization has worked with more than 50 community members to deliver medical supplies to them directly. It has also provided online peer support, rehabilitation, and shelter to the community, helping numerous homeless trans persons and older trans people who had been neglected by mainstream services.

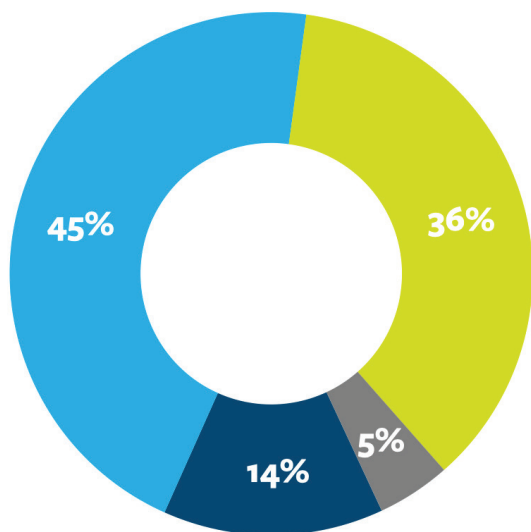
For further, detailed information on the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTI communities, please see Appendix 1: Where to Find More Information.

While LGBTI organizations increasingly undertake a diverse range of programmatic activities and work across a multiplicity of fields, they share a common purpose of improving the lives of LGBTI people by working to overcome societal exclusion. As the impact of the pandemic became evident, LGBTI organizations in every region of the world shifted their programmatic focus toward stopping the spread of COVID-19 among their communities and addressing humanitarian needs such as access to food, shelter, health care, and medicines.

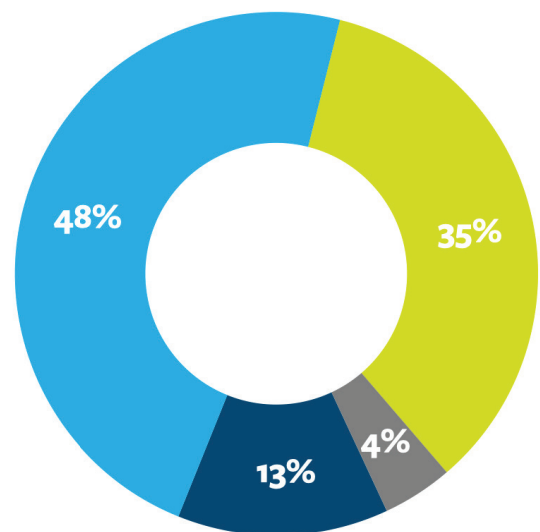
More than 80 percent of the LGBTI funders who responded to the GPP COVID-19 Survey said that many or most of their grantee partners had shifted focus from existing programs to providing services to prevent or reduce the spread of COVID-19 among their community. Similarly, more than 80 percent of funders said that many or most of their grantee partners had shifted focus from existing programs to providing livelihood, shelter, legal assistance, or other forms of humanitarian/emergency needs support to address the impact of COVID-19.

SHIFTS IN GRANTEE PARTNER PROGRAMS

How many of your grantee partners have shifted programs to reduce the spread of COVID-19?



How many of your grantee partners have shifted programs to address humanitarian/emergency needs?



■ None ■ A few (1-24%) ■ Many (25-74%) ■ Most (75%+) ■ N/A

Spotlight on Trans-Formación, Guatemala

LGBTI organizations across the world have demonstrated resilience and agility in rising to meet the needs of their communities. One example is Trans-Formación, a Guatemalan NGO working primarily with trans men within the urban center of Guatemala City. The lack of a gender identity law in the country, as well as broader socioeconomic discrimination, means that trans people face ongoing marginalization within Guatemalan society. Despite this, many of the members of Trans-Formación in the capital were able to seek support from their families of origin when the economic impact of COVID-19 hit.

After being contacted by a trans woman activist working in a rural part of the country about the dire situation facing a community of trans men in her area, Trans-Formación pivoted its activities toward providing basic humanitarian support. Many of the trans men living outside of the urban centers lacked any safety net, working in informal street economies that were effectively shut down with the onset of the pandemic.

Trans-Formación launched a fundraising campaign, raising resources from individual donations from their own members, as well as allies, including families of the group members. These resources were used to purchase food and other basic necessities, which Trans-Formación then

distributed to the community of trans men in rural areas, particularly around the town of Chinautla. This community had never heard of the work of Trans-Formación prior to the pandemic but have continued to call on the group for more all-encompassing, holistic support, including for their health care. This is particularly important to note because Guatemala's hospitals and health care systems are completely focused on dealing with COVID-19.



This significant shift in the programmatic focus of LGBTI organizations is also evident from the scale and focus of applications for funding received through OutRight Action International's COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund. Recognizing the devastating impact that COVID-19 was having on LGBTI communities across the globe, OutRight Action International launched this emergency fund in April 2020 and within three weeks received more than 1,500 applications from 131 countries.¹⁰ Of those applications, more than 80 percent were focused on providing basic humanitarian relief to LGBTI people. Reflecting the exacerbation of existing economic disadvantages faced by many LGBTI people, more than half (55 percent) of the applications focused on action to alleviate hunger among local LGBTI communities. A further 11 percent sought support to prevent the spread of the virus among LGBTI communities, 9 percent sought to provide shelter/housing support, and 8 percent were related to health care.¹¹

Spotlight on Myanmar MSM and Transgender Women Network, Myanmar (MMTWN)

MMTWN was represented as a national network in Myanmar and established in 2009. More than 500 men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women are members of MMTWN, and the network now has members in 16 towns across Myanmar. MMTWN works to create an enabling environment, reduce stigma and discrimination, and promote equal rights and opportunities in health, education, and employment for MSM and transgender women. In Myanmar, many MSM and transgender women are affected by lockdowns and restrictions in their daily income, as they are working in food vendor shops and beauty parlors and as spirit dancers. Often, they are the breadwinner in the household and their daily income is important to support basic food needs for family members. Additionally, some of the network's members are taking antiretroviral medications (ARVs) and were cut off from supplies. The network used emergency funding from OutRight Action International to provide food supplies, COVID-protection materials, and ARVs to about 300 network members.

¹⁰ Outright Action International, 2020, [Responding to a Crisis: Insights from OutRight's COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund](#), page 3.

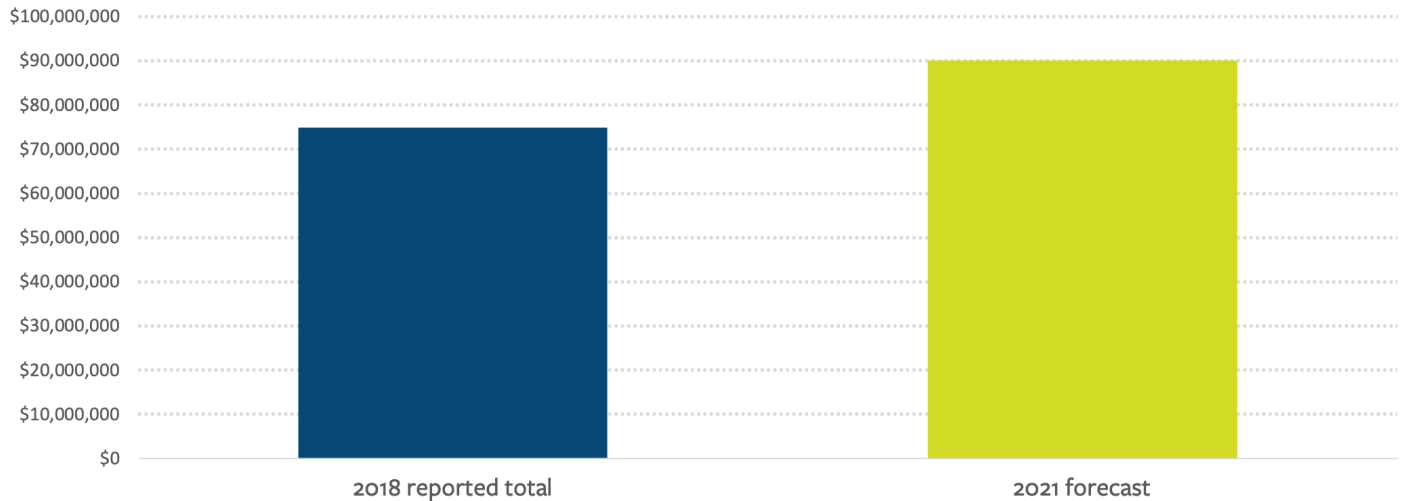
¹¹ Note 8, page 5.

Leading Funders of LGBTI Issues Globally Plan to Stay the Course

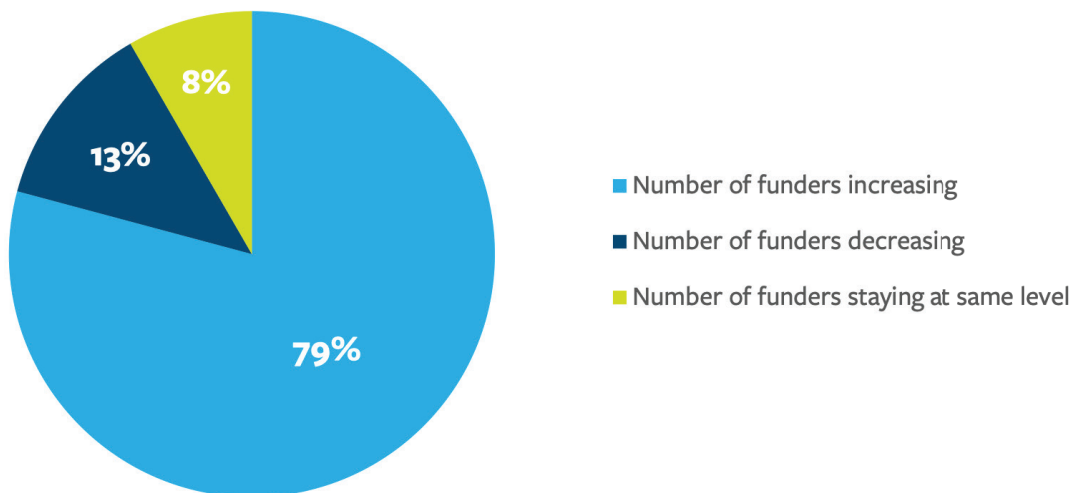
As many LGBTI organizations have shifted toward addressing the immediate health and secondary impacts¹² of COVID-19 on their communities, these organizations and LGBTI funders face concerns about what COVID-19 will mean for the global LGBTI funding landscape. According to an April 2020 rapid consultation with 34 member organizations of The Commonwealth Equality Network (TCEN), 81 percent reported concerns about loss of income because of the pandemic.¹³

Among the 24 LGBTI funders who provided GPP with forecasted budgets for LGBTI grants in 2021, the total funding for LGBTI issues is expected to increase by 20 percent from 2018 levels (US¹⁴\$90m in 2021 vs \$71.1m in 2018). Nineteen of those funders indicated that their LGBTI funding will increase in 2021 compared to 2018, while three said their funding will decrease and two said it would stay the same.

2021 FORECAST VS 2018 REPORTED FUNDING ON LGBTI ISSUES



FUNDERS FORECASTED CHANGE IN LGBTI FUNDING IN 2021 COMPARED TO 2018 FUNDING



¹² Secondary impacts are those caused by the pandemic indirectly, either through the effect of fear on the population or as a consequence of the measures taken to contain and control it.

¹³ The Commonwealth Equality Network and the Kaleidoscope Trust, 2020, "LGBTI+ in the Commonwealth in the COVID-19 Era," page 8.

¹⁴ All currency is listed in US dollars.

The increase between the funding that these institutions awarded in 2018 and what they plan to award in 2021 is in line with the increase in global LGBTI funding recorded between 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 (20 percent). As the growth in funding between 2013–2014 and 2015–2016 was around 4 percent, this may suggest that COVID-19 has had some impact in slowing down the pace at which LGBTI funders are scaling up their support for LGBTI organizations.

RATE OF GROWTH IN LGBTI FUNDING



As the 24 funders who were able to provide us with forecasts for their 2021 LGBTI grants budgets represented just under half of all global LGBTI funding and around 4 in every 10 grants awarded on LGBTI issues in 2018, the findings from our survey suggest that many of the leading funders will continue to stay the course in supporting LGBTI organizations as they grapple with the impact of COVID-19.

Not all the 24 funders were able to provide planned 2021 LGBTI budgets by geography or population group, which limits the ability to understand the likely funding picture in 2021 for each region and for the different parts of the LGBTI movement. Among those that did provide budget information at that level, in every region more funders were planning to increase funding in 2021 compared to their 2018 actual amounts spent on LGBTI grants than not, except for Asia and the Pacific. Likewise, there were more funders planning to increase their 2021 budget than those planning to decrease in 2021, for each of the population groups (general LGBQ, LBQ women, Trans people, Intersex people¹⁵).

Beyond these findings, a few additional factors point to ongoing uncertainty about impacts on LGBTI organizations in the coming years.

First, the financial position of philanthropic foundations is often closely tied to the performance of financial markets, which have been incredibly volatile in 2020 and may well be unstable in 2021 as the pandemic continues.¹⁶ Second, several funders that were among the largest supporters of LGBTI issues globally in 2018 did not participate in the survey because they were not able to provide forecasts on 2021 spending for LGBTI issues. A number of these indicated that they do not have a specific LGBTI budget because they fund LGBTI issues within a broader portfolio and/or based on the applications they receive within a given year. While not conclusive, the lack of a dedicated LGBTI portfolio within an institution may make funding for LGBTI issues more vulnerable when internal decisions are being made about how best to respond to the pandemic.

Finally, of the 15 government and multilateral donors invited to participate in the GPP survey, only 5 were able to provide 2021 LGBTI budget forecasts. Others responded that their budgets were still being determined, subject to decisions through their legislature or within donor agencies. Over the course of 2020, given the challenging global economic environment resulting from the pandemic, a number of donor governments paused funding for grants and programs focused on LGBTI populations. In at least one instance, a donor government provided reduced ongoing support for an existing major LGBTI project. As several of the largest government donors supporting global LGBTI issues tie their official development assistance (ODA) budgets to their gross national income, the projected downturn in these economies over the next year will result in fewer resources for international development cooperation. In July 2020, the *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2020* estimated a potential decrease in total ODA from \$153 billion in 2019 to \$139 billion in 2020. This estimate was based on a worst-case scenario of a second outbreak, a projection which has been realized and in many regions surpassed at the time of writing this report.¹⁷

¹⁵ Funders were also asked about budgets for funding for gay and bisexual men; however, only two of the respondents provided any information, and the main funders of grants targeting gay and bisexual men during 2018 did not respond to the survey. This meant it was not possible to draw any analysis from the survey.

¹⁶ For private foundations, there is a direct impact of stock market performance through the value of existing investments, whereas public foundations are more often indirectly impacted by how the stock market influences giving from institutional funders and individual donors.

¹⁷ Amanda Thomas and Angus Urqhart, 2020, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2020*, Development Initiatives, page 61.

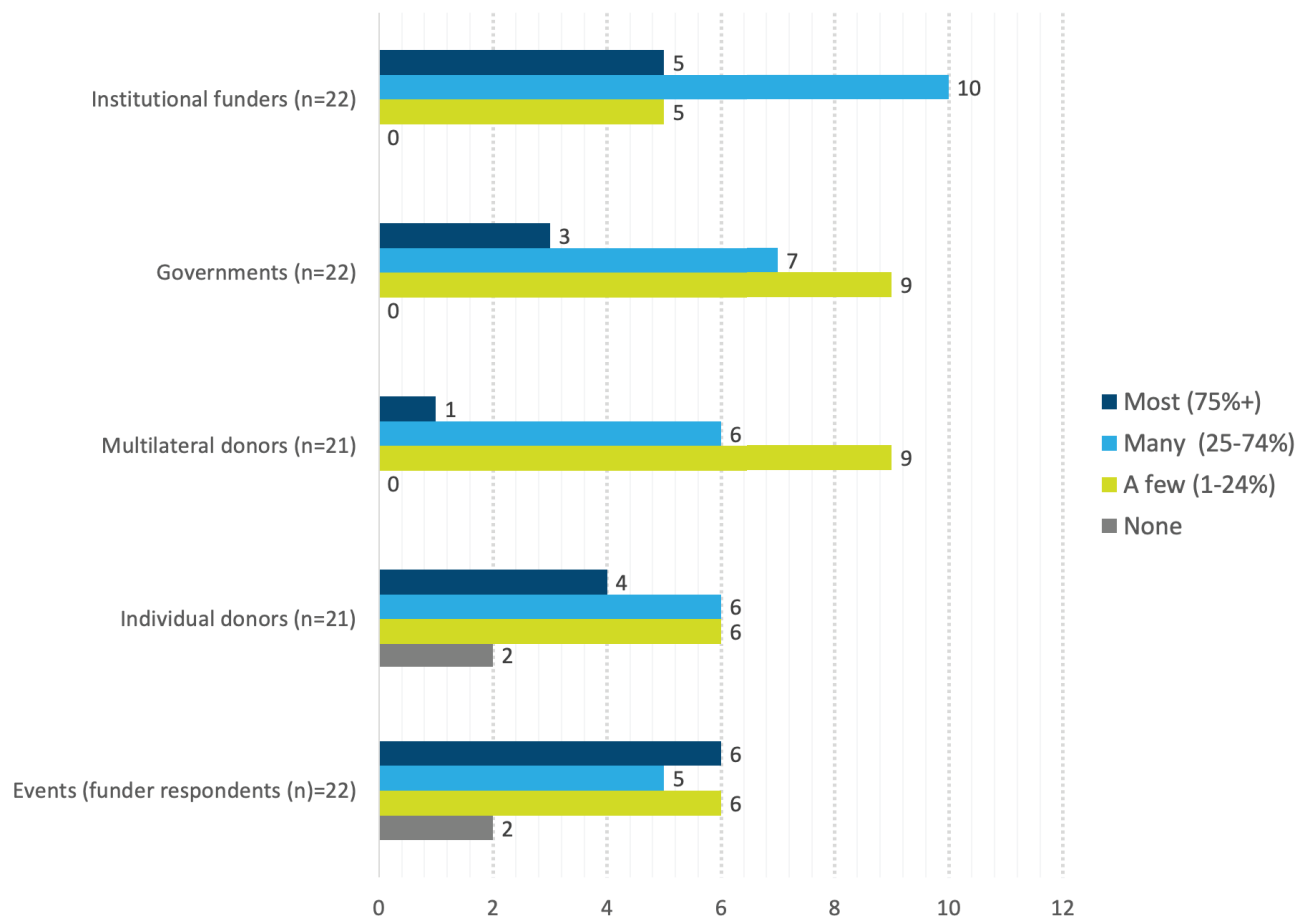
Spotlight on Pembe Hayat, Turkey

Funding through embassy small grants programs is an important source of income for many LGBTI organizations working at the local or national level. As many of the largest government donors pledged significant resources to address COVID-19, both internationally and within their own countries, some LGBTI groups felt the impact through the loss of funding from their local embassy. One such group was Pembe Hayat, a vibrant transgender rights community-based group in Ankara. Founded in 2006, Pembe Hayat was the first rights organization for trans people to be established in Turkey. It aims to increase visibility and raise awareness about the prejudice, discrimination, hate speech, hate crimes, police violence, ill-treatment and torture, and social exclusion experienced by trans individuals and sex workers, and to influence decision-makers. Pembe Hayat also organizes the well-known KuirFest (Pink Life Film Festival).

Pembe Hayat has faced a significant reduction in its income since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may seriously hamper its future ability to operate. The organization has already lost 25 percent of its projected 2020 funding, principally because of canceled funding rounds from a number of embassies in Turkey that have previously provided vital support to the group. One embassy that was originally planning to fund the group informed them that they were instead planning to support another organization for COVID-19-related work. As the major government and multilateral donors determine their future ODA levels, the amount of resources that is allocated to funding through embassies will have serious impacts on the ability of local LGBTI organizations, who are at the forefront of protecting the human rights of their community, to continue their vital work.

This uncertainty was reflected in survey responses from funders about the concerns their grantee partners had shared with them regarding resource reductions due to the pandemic. As figure 3 below shows, most survey respondents¹⁸ indicated that many or most of their grantee partners were concerned about loss of income from each of the possible resource streams. In the case of multilateral funders, the majority of respondents said that only a few of their grantee partners had raised concerns about loss of income from this stream. Several funders indicated that this was because fewer of their grantee partners receive funding from multilateral funders, which corresponds to findings in the Global Resources Report.

GRANTEE PARTNER CONCERNS ABOUT RESOURCE REDUCTIONS, BY SOURCE

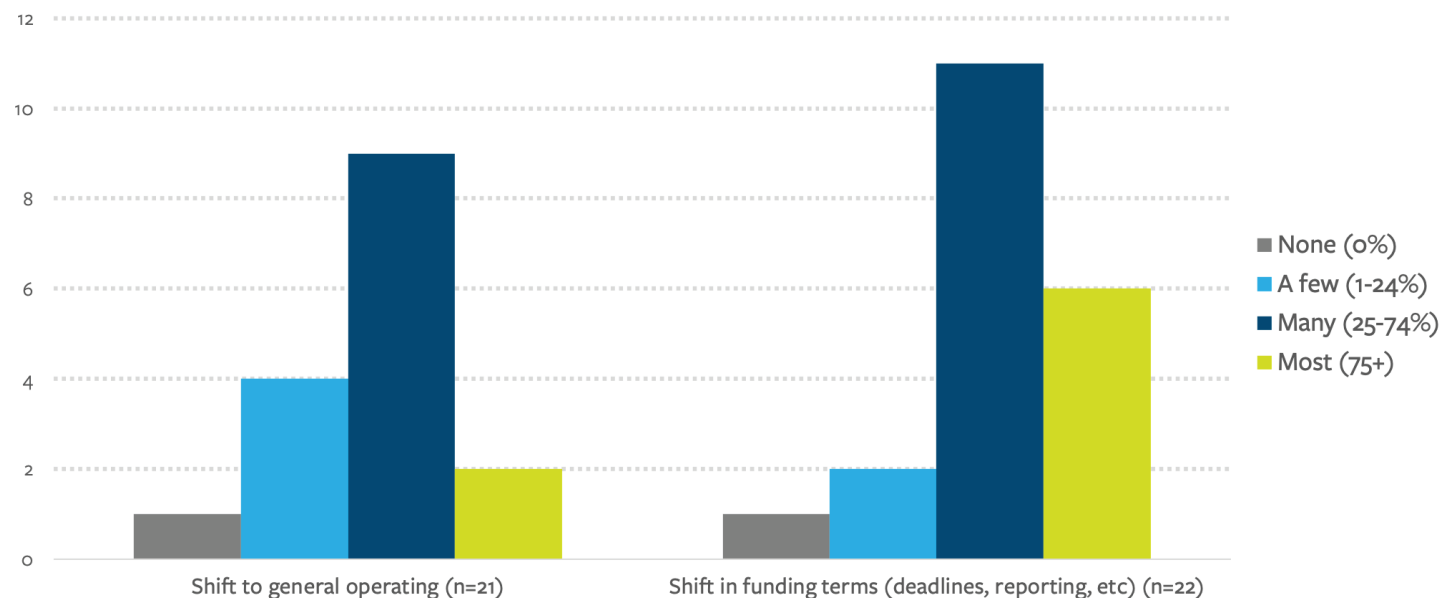


¹⁸ The survey questions about feedback from grantee partners about the impact of COVID-19 were answered by 22 funders, with two respondents skipping this section of the survey.

Existing LGBTI funders have generally been flexible with grantee partners, enabling them to pivot to address humanitarian needs.

When GPP surveyed 26 of the largest philanthropic foundations supporting global LGBTI issues in April 2020, it was evident that existing funders were already adopting flexible practices to enable their grantee partners to respond to the emerging challenges of the pandemic. Eighty-five percent of the respondents had adopted flexible funding practices by extending grant timelines and/or reporting requirements, and almost 70 percent had allowed their funding to shift from project or programmatic funding to general operating expenses.¹⁹ As the pandemic continued and is now accelerating in some parts of the world through a second outbreak, funders reported in the second phase GPP COVID-19 Survey in September 2020 that grantee partners continue to request the need for flexible funding practices, as outlined in figure 4 below.²⁰

Grantee Partner Requests for Flexible Funding Practices



It is important to note that the existing funders of LGBTI organizations, including the 24 who participated in the GPP COVID-19 survey, are largely human rights funders and/or adopt a human rights-based approach to their grantmaking.²¹ The representatives from the four donor government survey respondents all work within human rights-related programs in their respective agencies. Collectively, in 2018, these 24 funders awarded around two-thirds of their grants for civil/human rights issues (62.5 percent) and only 5 percent for economic issues or health and well-being. More than half of their grants in 2018 (51.6 percent) supported advocacy, while only 1.3 percent of grants supported direct service delivery.²²

By shifting funding toward general operating expenses (or continuing this practice, as several funders indicated), existing LGBTI human rights-focused funders supported many grantee partners to undertake the delivery of direct services and humanitarian support.

¹⁹ David Scamell, 2020, [GPP Briefing: COVID-19 LGBTI Philanthropic Response Survey Results](#), page 5.

²⁰ For the question on grantee partner requests to shift funding to general operating, five responders answered "N/A," and for the question on shifting terms of funding agreements, two responders answered "N/A."

²¹ Some funders included in the survey do humanitarian response grantmaking, using a human rights-based approach.

²² Based on additional analysis from the [2017-2018 Global Resources Report: Government and Philanthropic Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Communities dataset](#), provided by Global Philanthropy Project.

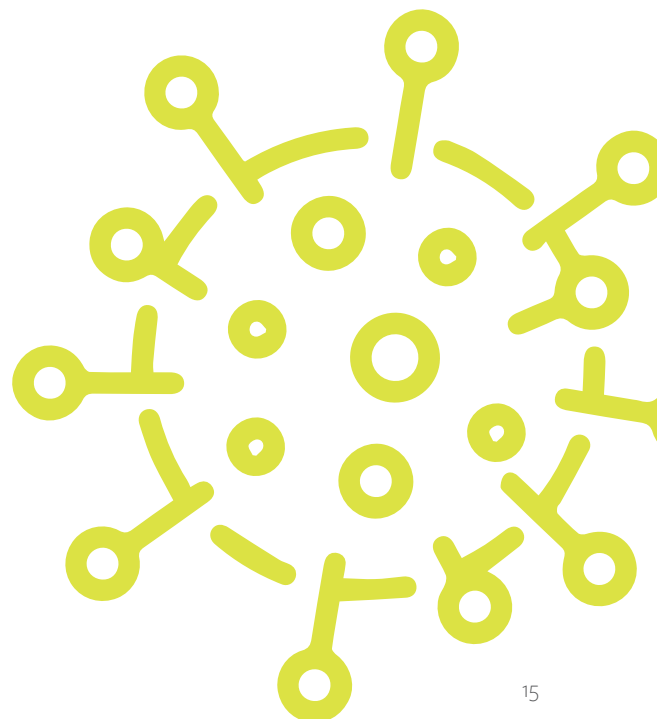
Spotlight on Gender Dynamix, South Africa

Gender Dynamix (GDX), the first registered organization in Africa focusing solely on trans and gender diverse communities, has a long history of advocacy, research, and community development for trans and gender diverse people in South Africa and across southern Africa. When COVID-19 hit, Gender Dynamix quickly had to upscale its digital presence to inform, educate, and connect with community members as the pandemic progressed. This culminated in GDX, Iranti, and the Southern Africa Trans Forum (SATF) convening an online conversations platform called “Amplifying Trans and Gender Diverse Voices from Southern Africa” as a space to connect and hold community. GDX also developed a Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming COVID-19 Information Kit, which includes information on mental health, HIV, smoking, and gender-affirming practices such as binding, which has been distributed to almost 1,000 people. In addition to the kit, Gender Dynamix has continued to publish a range of digital resources ensuring that the trans and gender diverse community in southern Africa has information on the epidemic that is relevant to their lives.

The online conversations identified a number of key priorities for the trans community in southern Africa: the need for increased food security, personal protective equipment, access to emergency shelter/accommodation, access to mental wellness and leadership support, and access to information for purposes of advocacy. To address these needs, GDX partnered with the SATF and worked directly with trans-led, trans-specific, and trans-inclusive organizations across the region through a comprehensive COVID-19 emergency response program. To date the response has entailed the distribution of more than 1,000 food vouchers, 300 mental wellness support sessions, 200 leadership support sessions, 500 data vouchers, PPE, and emergency shelter/accommodation support.

IN SUMMARY:

- LGBTI communities have been hard hit as COVID-19 has continued to cause death and serious illness, and efforts to contain the virus have led to significant economic downturn across all regions of the world.
- LGBTI organizations in every region of the world shifted their programmatic focus in 2020 toward stopping the spread of COVID-19 among their communities and addressing humanitarian needs such as access to food, shelter, health care, and medicines.
- Surveyed LGBTI funds have generally been flexible with grantee partners, enabling them to pivot to address humanitarian needs.
- Many of the leading funders will continue to stay the course in supporting LGBTI organizations as they grapple with the impact of COVID-19.
- Despite the ongoing commitments of current LGBTI funders, the global LGBTI funding landscape is uncertain in 2021. Volatile financial markets and the economic downturn in Global North countries will have serious impacts on the size of ODA budgets for the major government and multilateral donors.



PART II

LGBTI ISSUES AND THE GLOBAL COVID-19 HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The needs of LGBTI communities must be acknowledged and addressed within the international humanitarian system.

The pandemic has hit an international humanitarian system that was already more stretched than at any point in recent history. There are a record number of refugees and internally displaced persons in the world, fueled by ongoing conflict and civil unrest across diverse regions of the world, and by the effects of climate change accelerating the frequency and scale of disasters. COVID-19 has exacerbated the severity of the humanitarian challenges facing the world.²³

According to the fundamental humanitarian principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, “human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found” (principle of humanity) and “humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinion” (principle of impartiality).²⁴ Guided by these principles, awareness has been increasing within the international humanitarian system about the importance of understanding and recognizing which specific populations are impacted by humanitarian crises.

Steps have been taken within the international humanitarian system to acknowledge how gender affects the impacts of humanitarian crises on different people and communities, including sexual and gender minorities. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action has led the development of a gendered analysis and integration of women’s empowerment in humanitarian action since it was formed in 2006. In 2018, IASC published the Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action, which is the definitive guide for front-line humanitarian actors across all sectors, including United Nations agencies, local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies, on integration of gender into humanitarian action.

The guidance makes clear that gender analysis to inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of humanitarian programs must consider a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity and how this intersects with the needs, roles, and dynamics of women, girls, men, and boys.²⁵ It also notes that, as LGBT communities are not homogenous, “considering each subgroup separately is essential to shining a light on the nature of their respective vulnerabilities and protection needs”.²⁶ The guidance builds on growing evidence from recent humanitarian crises demonstrating how existing vulnerabilities of LGBTI communities are exacerbated in times of crisis and can result in particular challenges in accessing services within humanitarian responses.²⁷



Illustration from Samabhabona report “The Situation in West Bengal for Trans Persons”

23 Amanda Thomas and Angus Urqhart, 2020, [Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2020](#), Development Initiatives, page 14.

24 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2012, [What Are Humanitarian Principles?](#) page 1.

25 Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action, 2018, [The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action](#), page 97.

26 Lamontagne, Erik et al., (2020). [COVID-19 pandemic increases socioeconomic vulnerability of LGBTI+ communities and their susceptibility to HIV](#), UNAIDS, page 301.

27 See for example: APCOM et. Al, 2018, [Pride in the Humanitarian System: Consultation Report](#), page 7; Amie Bishop, 2020, [Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People](#), Outright Action International, page 14.

Spotlight on Bilitis, Bulgaria

Bilitis is the oldest LGBTI organization in Bulgaria, formed in 2004 to advance the rights of Bulgarian LBQ women and trans and intersex people. In recent years, Bilitis has played a leading role in advocating for inclusive hate crime legislation, registered partnerships, and legal gender recognition in Bulgaria. As the health, social, and economic impacts of COVID-19 hit Bulgaria, Bilitis pivoted to supporting members of the LGBTI community not able to cover their basic humanitarian needs because of the pandemic and people in need of psychological support during the lockdown. Prior to the pandemic, the needs of LGBTI people had not been included by government-funded services. With limited government support available for vulnerable people dealing with the pandemic, Bilitis stepped up to support its community.

Within two weeks of the pandemic being declared, Bilitis launched a series of free online psychological support meetings for community members in need. The sessions, called #WithCareForThyself, were led by an experienced psychologist and psychotherapist. The nine meetings covered topics ranging from adapting to change to managing fears and anxieties and taking care of yourself during the lockdown. Furthermore, Bilitis has specifically focused on providing humanitarian support to people who have become homeless or are living in very poor conditions and in need of medicines, food, or temporary shelter. They also purchased vouchers for food and medicines, which can be distributed to community members in the winter months.

Through support from Mama Cash and funds raised from the community, Bilitis has supported more than 100 people since the start of the epidemic. Of these, 30 people participated in the psychological support meetings and 40 trans* and non-binary people requested binders. The rest received support to cover their expenses for food and accommodation.

At the same time, LGBTI organizations with direct experience of humanitarian crises and/or expertise on humanitarian response, along with allies, have been advocating for greater recognition of the specific needs of LGBTI communities within the international humanitarian system. In June 2018, more than 120 representatives from civil society organizations in Asia and the Pacific met in Bangkok for the Pride in the Humanitarian System consultation. These organizations included those working with and led by communities diverse in sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), along with international NGOs, UN agencies, and other donors. The meeting was organized by the Asia-Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM), the Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTAN), ASEAN SOGIE Caucus (ASC), Edge Effect, International Planned Parenthood, and UN Women. This Pride in the Humanitarian System consultation led to a series of recommendations to humanitarian actors:

- Meaningfully engage and include people of diverse SOGIESC as leaders, participants, staff, and volunteers in all aspects of humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction;
- Strengthen engagement between diverse SOGIESC civil society and humanitarian actors for mutual capacity development opportunities and facilitation of sharing of good practices and learning;
- Expand the evidence base of experiences of people of diverse SOGIESC in disasters, crises, and emergencies, and ensure safe and sensitive collection of data for evidence-informed policy, practice, and advocacy; and
- Revise and/or develop humanitarian policies, plans, and guidance for diverse SOGIESC-inclusive responses, including developing indicators for monitoring progress.²⁸

As the global COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March 2020, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs released the UN COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP), which outlined a coordinated response plan for the international humanitarian system. The GHRP also formed the basis of the UN's coordinated appeal for humanitarian assistance to address the anticipated impact that COVID-19 would have on the world's most vulnerable. The GHRP focused on 63 priority countries identified as being most in need of humanitarian assistance because of COVID-19, most of which already faced severe humanitarian and development challenges pre-pandemic.

In the original GHRP, LGBTI people were only mentioned once under the section on the expected evolution of the pandemic, with the plan stating that "greater harm can also be expected for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people who typically face prejudice, discrimination and barriers to care, due to their sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity."²⁹ An update to the GHRP was published in July 2020. Given the documented impact that COVID-19 was having on LGBTI communities across the world, the updated GHRP provided more detail on how LGBTI people were a specific at-risk population in the pandemic.

²⁸ APCOM et. al, 2018, [Pride in the Humanitarian System: Consultation Report](#), pages 7–8.

²⁹ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2020, [Global Humanitarian Response Plan COVID-19](#), page 18.

The July update notes that well-documented health care discrimination against LGBTI communities can elevate their risk of COVID-19, and the closure of health and community centers exacerbates their risk of violence while many LGBTI people are required to remain in their home with non-accepting family members. In addition, the update acknowledged that the stress COVID-19 has placed on health systems was impacting the ability of HIV-positive members of the LGBTI community to access treatment in some settings, and gender-affirming hormone treatment for some trans communities had also been disrupted.³⁰

The heightened vulnerability of LGBTI communities to COVID-19 in the most at-risk countries identified in the GHRP is evident in the significant legal and social discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics that exists in many of these countries. Analysis of the 63 priority countries in the GHRP indicates that same-sex relations are criminalized in just under half (29 out of 63 countries). Only 17 scored more than 5 out of 10 for social acceptance of LGBT people between 2014–2017, as outlined in the Global Acceptance Index (GAI), which was based on a comprehensive analysis of public belief surveys regarding LGBT people and policies in 174 countries.³¹ Just under half (n=29) of the priority countries in the GHRP ranked in the bottom third of all countries in the GAI. Information on each of the 63 countries included in the GHRP can be found in Appendix II - UN COVID-19 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND LGBTI INDICATORS.

Criminalization of same-sex relations acts as a barrier for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people to be open to others about their lives, including their household situation, which can hamper the ability of humanitarian actors to properly address their needs. Even in countries where same-sex relations are not criminalized, widespread discrimination against LGBTI people can also have the same effect. Previous humanitarian disasters offer numerous examples of failure to properly incorporate the needs of LGBTI people into formal responses. Such disasters also offer examples of LGBTI people avoiding engaging with such mechanisms due to fears of or experiences of discrimination.³²

The widespread legal and social marginalization of LGBTI people in many of the most at-risk countries prioritized in the GHRP does present a challenge to humanitarian actors in responding to COVID-19, particularly given that LGBTI issues had largely never been prioritized within the international humanitarian system prior to the pandemic. Yet, as the GHRP acknowledges that LGBTI communities are a group in particular need of protection against the impact of the pandemic, it is imperative that humanitarian actors take steps to address their needs.

Success will require humanitarian response actors to actively seek out and support local LGBTI organizations in the most at-risk countries. LGBTI organizations are working in every region of the world to address their communities' needs, and as outlined above, many of these organizations have pivoted to providing humanitarian relief since the start of the pandemic. They are uniquely placed to inform the development and implementation of humanitarian programs directly addressing LGBTI people, as well as to act as a connector between humanitarian actors leading national COVID-19 humanitarian responses and local LGBTI communities.

Given the significant criminalization and marginalization of LGBTI people in many of these countries, there may be an assumption that LGBTI organizations are too hard to reach or do not have the capacity to partner with and/or receive financial support from humanitarian actors. However, analysis from the 2017–2018 Global Resources Report shows that LGBTI-led organizations received grants in 50 of the 63 GHRP priority countries. Analysis by OutRight Action International showed that they received applications for funding under their COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund from 45 of the 63 GHRP priority countries. Many of these countries contain visible and organized LGBTI movements with histories of receiving external funding from government donors and philanthropic foundations.

Concurrently, LGBTI organizations working at the international and regional level have a key role to play in increasing inclusivity of LGBTI issues within the international humanitarian response. These organizations have the vantage point of assessing trends on LGBTI humanitarian issues across multiple countries and particular regions, which can be invaluable analysis to inform the organizational strategies, policies, and practices of international humanitarian response actors.

30 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2020, [Global Humanitarian Response Plan COVID-19: July Update](#), pages 45–46.

31 Andrew Flores, 2019, [Social Acceptance of LGBT People in 174 Countries: 1981 to 2017](#), Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

32 See for example: APCOM et. Al, 2018, [Pride in the Humanitarian System: Consultation Report](#), page 7; Amie Bishop, 2020, [Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People](#), Outright Action International, page 14.

Spotlight on Organisation for Gender Empowerment and Rights Advocacy, Uganda

The Organisation for Gender Empowerment and Rights Advocacy in Uganda (OGERA) is a health and human rights organization based in Kampala. OGERA works with female sex workers with a focus on LBQ women and urban refugees living and working in Uganda. With the sex worker community having been left out of government planning and implementation of pandemic response interventions in UGANDA, OGERA noticed that many sex workers were not able to access condoms, and those enrolled on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) had stopped taking the medication, which led to an anecdotal rise in new HIV infections. For those on HIV treatment, the lack of access to food and health services during the height of the lockdown make adherence very challenging. As a result, OGERA registered four HIV-related deaths among its community.

OGERA has supported 389 community members with temporary accommodation and food relief, as many sex workers in urban areas were evicted from the lodges and brothels they worked from. They also expanded their home-based care services during the lockdown, primarily delivering anti-retroviral (ARV) and PrEP refills, as well as other medication. In addition, more than 260 members received HIV testing and counseling during the lockdown.

LGBTI communities have not been included in the resourcing of the global COVID-19 humanitarian response.

While denying the existence of LGBT persons in any society is a violation of their human rights in all times, it is a particularly shocking form of negligence in times of the pandemic, when the understanding of the lives of all affected persons is the key to effective and efficient responses.

– ASPIRE Guidelines, UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity³³

At the time of writing,³⁴ just over \$6 billion had been committed by government and multilateral donors as well as private sources to address the humanitarian impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, based on data available from OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) database. Just over half of that funding (\$3.4 billion) was tied to the GHRP, with the remainder disbursed through a range of other humanitarian funds/appeals. The FTS shows that 4,467 individual resource mechanisms (commitments, paid contributions, and pledges) have occurred to address the COVID-19 emergency.

Of those 4,467 recorded resource flows addressing COVID-19, only 1 explicitly described funding to support LGBTI communities. This was a funding commitment of \$177,593 from the Lebanese Humanitarian Fund to the Mena Organization for Services Advocacy Integration and Capacity Building to assist LGBTI communities in Lebanon to deal with COVID-19 and the socioeconomic crisis in the country. **None of the almost 3,000 recorded resource mechanisms under the GHRP explicitly described funding to support LGBTI communities.**

The lack of explicit funding to support LGBTI communities extends beyond humanitarian assistance tracked through the FTS. A review of all COVID-19 funding reported to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), which tracks humanitarian and development funding, showed no new funding that explicitly supported LGBTI communities. Similarly, a search of the Devex funding database, which tracks international development funding activity, found no results on funding to address the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTI communities.

As the project description for individual resource mechanisms on the FTS database can often provide limited detail, we additionally conducted a review of the response plans, public statements, and official website information on the COVID-19 humanitarian response from the largest donors identified through the FTS. Among the top five donors, who account for more than half of all humanitarian resources committed to addressing the impact of the pandemic, none explicitly identified LGBTI communities as a priority, vulnerable, or at-risk population in their COVID-19 humanitarian response.

33 Victor Madrigal-Borloz, 2020, [ASPIRE Guidelines on COVID-19 response and recovery free from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity](#), Mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, page 3.

34 As of November 11, 2020.

Figure 5: Top Five Donors of COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Funding (as of November 11, 2020)

Donor	COVID-19 Funding Given ³⁵	Inclusion of LGBTI in response documents?
United States	\$1,039,626,677	Not included in the list of vulnerable populations (women, children, persons with disabilities, elderly-headed households) in joint USAID/State Department strategy ³⁶
Germany	\$870,942,540	No mention in Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Emergency COVID Support Programme (specific vulnerable or marginalized populations not listed) ³⁷
Japan	\$641,155,029	No mention on Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (specific vulnerable or marginalized populations not listed) ³⁸
United Kingdom	\$470,799,596	No mention on Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office website, though people with diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) listed as a population that should be considered in proposals to the U.K. government for general humanitarian funding ³⁹
EU Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department	\$449,863,060	Not included in the list of vulnerable populations (migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and their host communities, women, and girls) in Joint Communication on the Global EU Response to COVID-19 ⁴⁰

The lack of explicit inclusion of LGBTI communities as a priority population by the main donors of the global COVID-19 humanitarian response sends a signal to those receiving funds and implementing humanitarian programs. This may suggest that donors do not believe LGBTI communities are at specific greater risk than the general population, or it may be due to the historical and ongoing invisibility of LGBTI issues within the international humanitarian system. Regardless of the cause, lack of explicit inclusion sends a message to implementing partners who respond to the strategies and statements of those that provide their funding.

Consequently, a review of the top 20 recipients of humanitarian funding for global COVID-19 response as tracked through the FTS paints a similar picture.

35 As of November 11, 2020.

36 <https://static.politico.com/4f/68/adfdb19f4c9d996b4ced73de52e9/tab-2-strategy-for-supplemental-funding-for-covid-19-final-1.pdf>

37 https://www.bmz.de/en/zentrales_downloadarchiv/Presse/bmz_corona_paket_EN.pdf

38 https://www.mofa.go.jp/ic/ap_m/page23e_000595.html

39 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927351/Guidelines-for-NGOs-applying-for-CHASE-Humanitarian-Response-Funding-Oct_2020.pdf

40 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020JC0011&from=EN>

Figure 6: Top 20 Recipients of COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Funding (as of November 11, 2020)

Recipient	COVID-19 Funding Received ⁴¹	Inclusion of LGBTI in response documents?
World Health Organization (WHO)	\$1,363,218,087	No mention in COVID-19 strategy (specific vulnerable or marginalized populations not listed) ⁴²
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)	\$899,394,209	No explicit mention , but the UNICEF Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic brief refers to engaging women and girls from “other marginalized groups” ⁴³
World Food Programme (WFP)	\$754,388,437	No mention in WFP’s Medium-Term Programme Framework (women, girls, older persons, people with disabilities, and people living with HIV and tuberculosis are populations listed as at-risk of being left behind in COVID-19 response) ⁴⁴
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	\$591,157,484	No specific mention on LGBTI issues and COVID-19 response on website ⁴⁵ ; UNHCR has specific guidance on claims to refugee status based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity ⁴⁶
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	\$173,609,119	No mention in Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (women and girls at risk of or survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), children, persons with disabilities, unaccompanied and separated children, elderly, victims of trafficking listed as specific at-risk populations) ⁴⁷
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	\$133,347,539	No mention in COVID-19: A Global Crisis Requiring a Global Response ⁴⁸
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	\$120,443,638	No mention in COVID-related reports or mention on website ⁴⁹ ; IFRC includes sexual and gender minorities as a specific population for inclusion in its Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies ⁵⁰

41 As of November 11, 2020.

42 <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/covid-19-strategy-update>

43 https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2020-AS-UNICEF_COVID-19_Response_update_paper-EN-2020.06.19.pdf

44 <https://www.wfp.org/publications/responding-development-emergency-caused-covid-19-wfps-medium-term-programming>

45 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/covid-19>

46 <https://www.unhcr.org/publications/legal/509136ca9/unhcr-guidelines-international-protection-9-claims-refugee-status-based.html>

47 <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/iom-global-strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-coronavirus-disease-2019>

48 <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/icrc-operational-response-covid-19>

49 <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/emergency/global-covid-19/>

50 <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/11/Minimum-standards-for-protection-gender-and-inclusion-in-emergencies-LR.pdf>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	\$87,852,805	No mention in UNDP's Integrated Response (specific vulnerable or marginalized populations not listed) ⁵¹ or Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030. ⁵² ; LGBTI-inclusive language included in the joint statement as part of the UNAIDS Interagency Working Group on importance of key populations accessing HIV services during the pandemic. ⁵³
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	\$82,774,739	No mention in UNFPA Global Response Plan (women, adolescents, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, people of African descent, refugees and migrants, and key populations listed as groups most vulnerable to secondary impacts of COVID-19) ⁵⁴ ; LGBTI-inclusive language included in the joint statement as part of the UNAIDS Interagency Working Group on importance of key populations accessing HIV services during the pandemic ⁵⁵
Save the Children	\$56,787,423	No mention in Global Response Plan to COVID-19: Protecting a Generation of Children (refugees and displaced children, street children, girls, and children with disabilities listed as specific at-risk groups) ⁵⁶
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)	\$49,800,000	No mention on website ⁵⁷
Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	\$48,521,135	No mention in the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (specific vulnerable or marginalized populations not listed) ⁵⁸
International Rescue Committee	\$41,800,939	No mentioned in The Global Crisis of COVID-19: A Comprehensive Response (specific vulnerable or marginalized populations not listed) ⁵⁹ ; LGBTI-inclusive language included in What Happened? How the Humanitarian Response to COVID-19 Failed to Protect Women and Girls report ⁶⁰

51 <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/turkey/UNDP-TR-COVID19-RESPONSE-ENG.pdf>

52 <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hiv-aids/beyond-recovery--towards-2030.html>

53 <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/----statement-of-the-joint-un-programme-on-hiv-aids--unaids--.html>

54 https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA_Global_Response_Plan_Revised_June_2020_.pdf

55 See note 45 above.

56 <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/save-childrens-global-response-plan-covid-19-protecting-generation-children>

57 <https://asean.org/>

58 <http://www.fao.org/3/cb0285en/CB0285EN.pdf>

59 <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-crisis-covid-19-comprehensive-response-fall-2020>

60 <https://www.rescue.org/report/how-humanitarian-response-covid-19-failed-protect-women-and-girls>

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	\$30,733,749	No mention on website ⁶¹
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	\$30,361,293	No mention on website ⁶²
Norwegian Refugee Council	\$28,697,609	No mention on website ⁶³
Catholic Relief Services	\$24,669,863	No mention in COVID-19 Global Emergency Update (elderly adults and vulnerable children, refugees and migrants, and people with compromised immune systems and their caregivers listed as high-risk populations) ⁶⁴
Qatar Charity	\$23,557,268	No mention on website ⁶⁵
OXFAM International	\$20,316,580	No mention on website ⁶⁶ ; OXFAM has an existing Sexual Diversity and Gender Identity Rights Policy ⁶⁷
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development	\$17,566,763	No mention on website ⁶⁸

Despite the lack of inclusion of LGBTI communities in response plans and public statements, some of the leading humanitarian actors above have at least occasionally partnered with local LGBTI organizations to address the humanitarian needs of LGBTI communities in particular contexts. For example, the World Food Programme has provided cash assistance vouchers to 800 LGBTI community members in Honduras,⁶⁹ while UNFPA has worked in partnership with Kyrgyz Indigo to distribute packages of food and other essential supplies to LGBTI people in Kyrgyzstan, including antiretroviral therapy medications (ARTs) for people living with HIV and hormone therapy for trans people.⁷⁰ A number of the UN agencies in the top 20 recipients list have scaled up their programming on LGBTI issues in recent years and are partners in the UN's Free and Equal campaign (WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, and FAO).

Still, the exclusion of LGBTI communities as a vulnerable or at-risk population within COVID-19 response plans and public statements suggests that humanitarian resources pledged by the world's largest donors are not systematically or directly targeting the needs of LGBTI communities.

61 <https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/covid-19-stay-up-to-date-with-the-latest-on-unops-support-to-response-efforts>

62 <https://www.unrwa.org/>

63 <https://www.nrc.no/emergencies/coronavirus/>

64 <https://www.crs.org/resource-center/covid-19-response-global-emergency-update>

65 <https://www.qcharity.org/en/qa>

66 <https://www.oxfam.org/en/oxfams-response-coronavirus>

67 https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/story/sexual_diversity_and_gender_identity_rights_policy.pdf

68 <https://www.acted.org/en/>

69 <https://insight.wfp.org/honduras-the-wfp-e-card-means-more-than-putting-food-on-the-table-for-lgbt-people-it-means-427253a2dd4b>

70 <https://www.unfpa.org/news/kyrgyzstans-lgbtqi-community-risks-escalate-under-covid-19-pandemic>

Spotlight on Associação Brasileira de Intersexos (ABRAI)

Formed in 2015 by a group of intersex activists and the mother of an intersex child, Associação Brasileira de Intersexos (ABRAI) works to bring visibility and awareness about intersex issues to policy makers, intersex people and their families, and the general public in Brazil. As the country with one of the worst COVID-19 epidemics in the world, the impacts on members of the intersex community that ABRAI serves have been significant. In response, the organization shifted the focus of its programs to fund emergency food donations, as well as distribution of diapers and hygiene products to intersex people and families with intersex babies who lost their income because of COVID-19. ABRAI have also provided medical packages and inhalers to intersex community members who fell sick from the virus.

A note about development assistance funding

The COVID-19 pandemic requires an urgent humanitarian response to address immediate needs such as access to food, shelter, security, and essential medicines and health care. At the same time, the pandemic requires a longer-term development and human rights response supporting economic recovery, the re(building) of public health infrastructure, social cohesion, and civil society and human rights institutions protecting those it has made even more vulnerable.⁷¹ This report has focused on assessing the inclusion of LGBTI communities within humanitarian assistance for COVID-19 for a few reasons. First, data from the GPP COVID-19 survey as well as other sources, such as OutRight's COVID-19 Emergency Fund, indicated that addressing immediate humanitarian/emergency response needs of LGBTI communities has been a central concern of LGBTI organizations in 2020. While many LGBTI organizations are considering the longer-term socioeconomic development implications of the pandemic or will transition to focus on these in the future, the significant current focus of LGBTI organizations on responding to humanitarian need was a striking finding in our research. Second, the FTS provided GPP with a relatively comprehensive data source through which to assess the field of humanitarian response to the pandemic. Other sources such as IATI and Devex provide data on COVID-19-related development assistance flows, but generally were not as comprehensive as FTS. As attention turns to economic recovery and resilience and to more just economic development in a post-COVID world, consideration must be given for how LGBTI communities are included in such efforts.

IN SUMMARY:

- The UN COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) identifies LGBTI people as a specific at-risk population in the pandemic. Despite this, LGBTI communities have not been included in the resourcing of the global COVID-19 humanitarian response.
 - Of 4,467 recorded resource flows addressing COVID-19, only 1 explicitly described funding to support LGBTI communities.
 - Among the top five humanitarian donors addressing COVID-19, none explicitly identified LGBTI communities as a priority, vulnerable, or at-risk population in its response.
 - Among the top five humanitarian donors addressing COVID-19, none explicitly identified LGBTI communities as a priority, vulnerable, or at-risk population in its response.
- The exclusion of LGBTI communities as vulnerable or at-risk populations within COVID-19 response plans and public statements suggests that humanitarian resources pledged by the world's largest donors are not systematically or directly addressing the needs of LGBTI communities.

⁷¹ For a good summary of how humanitarian assistance and development assistance interact in COVID-19 responses, Amanda Thomas and Angus Urqhart, 2020, [Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2020](#), Development Initiatives, page 60.

PART III

POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL LGBTI RIGHTS MOVEMENT

There are many possible long-term implications resulting from the dynamics explored in this report, including:

- LGBTI organizations shifting programmatic focus to address humanitarian needs;
- Global LGBTI funders providing support through flexible funding practices; and
- LGBTI communities impacted by the lack of explicit inclusion in much of the humanitarian response to COVID-19.

At the time of writing this report, the pandemic is evidently ongoing and worsening in many regions. In North America and Europe, the virus spirals out of control, cases are on the rise in the MENA region, and more than 100,000 people in Asia are still being diagnosed each day. While progress is being made on a vaccine development and distribution efforts, political, economic, and logistical factors will complicate any rollout, extending the treatment timeline and likely resulting in disparities in treatment access. The economic and social implications of COVID-19 will remain for far longer. In October 2020, the International Monetary Fund predicted that “the pandemic will reverse the progress made since the 1990s in reducing global poverty and will increase inequality”.⁷²

Spotlight on Grupo Lésbico Artemisa, Nicaragua

The Artemisa lesbian group was formed five years ago in Managua and is currently working in Managua and two other cities (León and Chinandega) to support young lesbian women in Nicaragua, offering them a space for reflection, acceptance, and non-discrimination. ARTEMISA applied to OutRight Action International emergency funding to support 50 members who became impoverished due to the COVID-restrictions. To get the community members and their families through the first shock, the group distributed 50 packs of basic food products (rice, beans, oil, sugar, cans of tuna, etc.) and 50 pandemic prevention packs (alcohol gel, mask, gloves, etc.). The situation since then has only become worse when two major hurricanes struck Nicaragua in November, and OutRight is contemplating another emergency grant to the group, as well as other groups in Nicaragua.

Already overburdened LGBTI organizations will be stretched even further.

Within this context, LGBTI organizations will remain under pressure to address their communities’ immediate needs. Although resources for LGBTI organizations have grown in recent years, so too has the number of organizations working at the local, national, regional, and international levels to advance the rights of LGBTI people. Many of these organizations were already struggling pre-pandemic to secure enough funding to tackle the issues facing their communities. Now, difficult choices will need to be made about what work is prioritized as LGBTI people continue to be excluded from health and other social services, pushed into poverty as a result of the economic consequences of the pandemic, and targeted for discrimination and familial and state-sanctioned violence. As one funder responding to the GPP COVID-19 Survey shared, “from conversations with some of our partners, they were worried that without an injection of new resources, shifting their existing budgets to COVID-19 responses without new additional money would mean funding for non-COVID-19 work would reduce.”

LGBTI organizations have diminished capacity to advance human rights and respond to anti-rights attacks.

As LGBTI organizations have stepped up in supporting the basic needs of their communities during the pandemic, conservative state and non-state actors have continued their attacks against LGBTI people. Already by May 2020, OutRight Action International had documented examples from nine countries of LGBTI people being blamed for the pandemic by conservative religious figures.⁷³ In the last year, the Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide (TvT) research project had found that 350 trans and gender diverse people worldwide had been murdered, a 6 percent increase

⁷² International Monetary Fund, [World Economic Outlook October 2020, Executive Summary](#), page XV.

⁷³ Amie Bishop, 2020, [Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People](#), Outright Action International, page 52.

from the previous year.⁷⁴ Police raids on private gatherings of gay men in Algeria in July 2020⁷⁵ and Indonesia in August 2020⁷⁶ highlight the ongoing police intimidation experienced by LGBTI communities in different parts of the world.

While many LGBTI organizations face challenges in accessing the resources they need to respond to immediate humanitarian needs and defend their human rights, conservative actors are receiving significant external funding enabling them to attack LGBTI people and other communities. According to a forthcoming report from GPP comparing the resourcing of the global anti-rights movement and the work of progressive funders to counteract this movement, between 2013-2017, LGBTI movements worldwide received \$1.2 billion, while the anti-gender movement received \$3.7 billion—more than triple the LGBTI funding.⁷⁷ We anticipate that this pattern of funding inequity is maintained and likely exacerbated by the pandemic response in 2020.

The programs, strategies, and networks built to advance LGBTI human rights will come under enormous strain while LGBTI organizations struggle to access resources from sources such as humanitarian funders, and while LGBTI communities continue to experience a lack of access to food, shelter, and medicines as the pandemic rolls on. There is a real danger that the demands on LGBTI activists from the pandemic will only intensify the levels of burnout and trauma previously documented in the global LGBTI movement.

Spotlight on Transvanilla, Hungary

COVID-19 has provided the opportunity for numerous states to limit or attempt to limit human rights. Under the guise of protecting public health, governments across the world have extended their powers. One day after the Hungarian government was granted authority to rule by decree in order to fight the coronavirus in March 2020, a bill was introduced into parliament that subsequently became law, prohibiting the ability of trans people to have their gender legally recognized. Transvanilla led the advocacy attempting to stop the passage of the bill, challenging it before the Constitutional Court of Hungary.

At the same time that they have been fighting to stop a law that will fundamentally impact the ability of trans people in Hungary to access employment, education, housing, health, and other social services, Transvanilla has also worked to address the immediate humanitarian needs of the trans community. With support from the International Trans Fund, Transvanilla created a COVID-19 fund to aid trans and gender non-conforming persons and their families affected by coronavirus. This fund provides emergency kits, hygienic products, and food, and fulfills other needs based on individual requests. Given that the Hungarian government did not provide comprehensive support to those who lost their jobs or faced economic hardship because of COVID-19, Transvanilla filled an important gap for their community.



The pandemic presents a mandate and an opportunity to break down the invisibility of LGBTI issues within the international humanitarian system.

The July 2020 update of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan made clear that LGBTI persons are an at-risk group whose needs should be considered in humanitarian responses. Now is the time to break down the invisibility of LGBTI issues within the international humanitarian system. As Edge Effect, a leading organization working for SOGIESC inclusion in humanitarian action, noted in its briefing on the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTIQ people: “this crisis is an opportunity to model diverse SOGIESC inclusion within relief and recovery, to build awareness of LGBTIQ+ issues, establishing new partnerships, and create new expectations for future programs.”⁷⁸

One of the key aspects of the Grand Bargain agreement among the leading humanitarian aid organizations and donors that emerged from the World Humanitarian Summit in 2015 was a commitment to greater support for local and national actors in responding to humanitarian challenges.⁷⁹ LGBTI organizations working at the local and national level are generally the most, and sometimes only, trusted mechanism through which LGBTI people can be reached for direct support. When the pandemic hit, LGBTI organizations across the world were already embedded within their community

⁷⁴ Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide, [Trans Murder Monitoring Trans Day of Remembrance 2020 Update](#), Transgender Europe, November 11, 2020

⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch, [Algeria: Mass Convictions for Homosexuality](#), October 15, 2020

⁷⁶ Human Rights Watch, [Indonesia: Investigate Police Raid on ‘Gay Party’](#), September 7, 2020

⁷⁷ Global Philanthropy Project, [Meet the Moment: A Call for Progressive Philanthropic Response to the Anti-Gender Movement](#), November 12, 2020

⁷⁸ Edge Effect, 2020, [Briefing Note: Impacts of COVID-19 on LGBTIQ+ People](#), page 1.

⁷⁹ See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/about-the-grand-bargain> for more details on the Grand Bargain.

as frontline defenders against human rights violations facing people because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, or sex characteristics. Additionally, many LGBTI organizations are known and trusted within broader movements for human rights and progressive political aims, working in collaboration and network across issue areas.

Such trust has been pivotal for many LGBTI organizations shifting toward humanitarian programs in 2020. LGBTI organizations have been the leading actors identifying the specific ways in which the immediate health and secondary impacts of the pandemic are impacting LGBTI communities because they are hearing directly from community members themselves. Further, they have a strong understanding of the legal, policy, and cultural contexts facing their communities that should underpin effective needs analysis in the humanitarian program cycle.

Some humanitarian response actors may assume that LGBTI organizations are too small to manage the type of grants awarded for humanitarian response. Although the humanitarian assistance funding committed thus far to respond to COVID-19 includes many large individual resource mechanisms, almost one in five (18 percent) of the individual resource mechanisms for COVID-19 humanitarian resources tracked through the FTS was for \$75,000 or less. This was the size of the average grant for LGBTI issues in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2017–2018, with the other regions attracting average grant sizes between \$43,000–\$62,000.⁸⁰ Beyond these numbers, a sophisticated funding infrastructure has emerged in recent years that enables larger-scale donor funds to be dispersed to local and national LGBTI organizations through intermediary funding mechanisms. Many of these intermediary organizations are LGBTI-led with focus on distribution of funds by regional or population focus (as in a focus on Southern Africa, or the Trans community).

LGBTI organizations working at the international or regional level that have experience in addressing humanitarian issues should also be included within the international humanitarian response. In challenging contexts, particularly places of conflict, where local LGBTI communities are not yet able to formally organize, international or regional LGBTI organizations can give shelter to underground/informal LGBTI community activism. Further, they can be an important source of information, support, and advice for humanitarian response actors working in such contexts.

Spotlight on Initiative Sankofa d’Afrique de l’Ouest (ISDAO), West Africa

ISDAO is an LGBTI community-led fund that was first conceived in 2013 as a mechanism to increase funding for LGBTI organizing in West Africa, a region that had been severely under-resourced. ISDAO emerged as an activist-led fund dedicated to strengthening and supporting a West African movement for gender diversity and sexual rights by adopting a flexible approach to grantmaking and building a culture of philanthropy committed to equality and social justice. ISDAO has witnessed COVID-19 having a significant impact on LGBTI communities in the region, as well as the capacity of LGBTI-led organizations to address the needs of the communities they serve. In particular, the lack of support and resources for social welfare and livelihoods has remained a major challenge even as economies in the region have started to reopen, given that many LGBTI people earn income through the informal and hospitality sectors, which are last to reopen. In addition, restrictions around access to community safe spaces, including the offices of LGBTI organizations, are hindering the ability of LGBTI community members to break the isolation within the places they live.

ISDAO’s response to COVID-19 has been centered around community needs and context, as identified by their grantee partners. This included allowing grantees to shift their current resources to any area of needs that affect the community because of COVID-19, and supporting flexible reporting for all grantee partners. ISDAO also created two new sources of funding for grantee partners—a Creating Resilience fund that provided flexible, one-time grants of up to \$2,500 to be used for any purpose and a RESPOND! Fund to provide funding to grantee partners specifically for safety, security, and emergency response.

Addressing humanitarian needs may require new skills and relationships for both LGBTI groups and funders as well as humanitarian actors.

If the LGBTI organizational shifts toward humanitarian programming in 2020 continue in 2021 and possibly beyond, consideration will be needed for what new skills and resources LGBTI organizations need for this work and how funders can most effectively provide support. As stated above, most of these are human rights funders, with networks at both the institutional and program officer level focused on the human rights philanthropic and practitioner field. Very few would consider themselves humanitarian funders, and connections with humanitarian donors and implementers are limited.

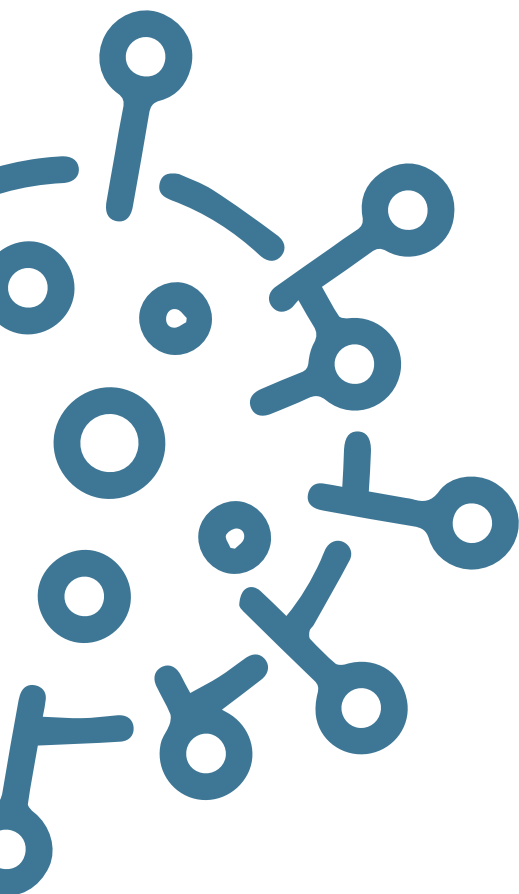
Meanwhile, humanitarian funders and implementers with limited experience working on LGBTI issues will need to increase their institutional knowledge and competency about the specific needs of LGBTI communities in humanitarian

⁸⁰ 2017–2018 Global Resources Report: Government and Philanthropic Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Communities dataset, provided by Global Philanthropy Project.

contexts. An important part of this process must center on how to effectively work with LGBTI organizations and communities. There is an existing global LGBTI funding infrastructure that can be drawn on by humanitarian funders seeking to increase their resources toward LGBTI issues within humanitarian responses. LGBTI organizations are often experts in negotiating legal, political, and social environments to meet their communities' needs.

IN SUMMARY:

- As the pandemic continues into 2021, LGBTI organizations face ongoing urgency to address their communities' immediate humanitarian needs.
- LGBTI organizations' struggle to access humanitarian response resources will strain the ongoing programs, strategies, and networks built to advance LGBTI human rights as well as the ability to mount successful humanitarian interventions.
- This funding crisis presents a mandate to break down the invisibility of LGBTI issues within the international humanitarian system and mobilize humanitarian funding through the existing infrastructure of LGBTI civil society and funding mechanisms; this includes LGBTI organizations working at all levels (international to local) experienced in addressing humanitarian issues, and LGBTI funding infrastructure enabling larger-scale donor funds to be dispersed to local and national LGBTI organizations through intermediary funding mechanisms.



CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic changed our world in 2020. Unprecedented global, regional, country-based, and local responses have been activated to tackle the spread of the virus and limit the loss of life and serious illness. Governments as well as non-state actors such as civil society and the private sector are faced with tackling dual health and economic crises, which are likely to continue into 2021 and beyond. While the pandemic has touched almost all the world's population since it started, it is evident that COVID-19 has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities of groups already on the margins.

LGBTI communities in every region of the world have been hard hit by COVID-19. Their first defense in many places has been LGBTI organizations that have sought to stop the spread of the virus and address basic humanitarian needs within their communities as the pandemic marched on. Existing funders of LGBTI issues have worked to ensure access to flexible funding their grantees need, and most plan to stay the course in 2021. However, the scale of the need facing LGBTI communities means that LGBTI organizations are stretched between protecting the rights of their communities in the face of rising conservative attacks and working to improve their access to food, medicines, and shelter.

The existing global LGBTI funding infrastructure alone is not equipped to provide LGBTI organizations with all the resources and capacity needed to meet the demands of this moment. Donors and implementers leading the global humanitarian response to COVID-19 can and must follow the lead of the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan in recognizing that LGBTI people face particular vulnerabilities in the pandemic and integrating their needs in humanitarian responses going forward. In this task, donors and implementers can draw on a global LGBTI movement that over decades has built a sophisticated, nimble ecosystem of actors advancing rights, building community resilience, and meeting the challenges facing LGBTI communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GPP wishes to acknowledge and thank each of the institutions that participated in the funder survey. The information underpinning this report will provide valuable data and evidence for the global LGBTI funding field, civil society, policy makers, and other actors working to improve the lives of LGBTI people across the globe.

We thank the LGBTI organizations featured as case studies in this report. Your willingness to share your story and photographs with us helps to illustrate the impact that COVID-19 has had on LGBTI organizing, and importantly, the diverse and strategic ways that LGBTI communities in different contexts are rising to meet the challenges of this moment. We also thank OutRight Action International for providing data analysis from their COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund.

This report was written by David Scamell, GPP Senior Consulting Advisor on Government Relations and Field Engagement, with Ezra Nepon, GPP Senior Program Officer for Knowledge and Learning.

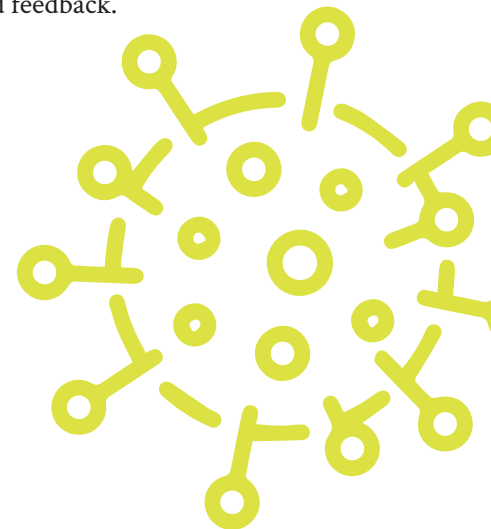
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APPENDIX I: MORE INFORMATION

Impact of COVID-19 on LGBTI Communities

[Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People](#), OutRight Action International

[ASPIRE Guidelines on COVID-19 response and recovery free from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity](#), Mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity

[LGBTI+ and the Commonwealth in the COVID Era](#), The Commonwealth Equality Network and the Kaleidoscope Trust

[COVID-19: The suffering and resilience of LGBT persons must be visible and inform the actions of States: Statement by human rights experts on the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia](#), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

LGBTI Issues in Humanitarian Response

<https://www.42d.org/>, online hub with a range of resources on SOGIESC inclusion in humanitarian and development assistance, produced by Edge Effect

[Pride in the Humanitarian System: Consultation Report](#), coordinated by Asia-Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM), Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN), ASEAN SOGIE Caucus (APTN), Edge Effect, International Planned Parenthood, and UN Women

[The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action](#), Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action

[Taking Sexual and Gender Minorities Out of the Too-Hard Basket](#), Humanitarian Advisory Group

APPENDIX II:

UN COVID-19 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND LGBTI INDICATORS

Note: Countries are listed in order based on their categorization in the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

Existing Humanitarian Response Plans	Country	Same-sex relations criminalized	Global Acceptance Index (2014-2017)	LGBTI Orgs Funded in 17-18	Proposal Received by Outright from an LGBTIQ Initiative
Individual Country Humanitarian Response Plans	Afghanistan	Yes	156	No	No
	Burkina Faso	No	138	Yes	Yes
	Burundi	Yes	160	Yes	Yes
	Cameroon	Yes	145	Yes	Yes
	Central African Republic	No	148	No	No
	Chad	Yes	152	No	No
	Colombia	No	37	Yes	Yes
	Democratic Republic of Congo	No	121	Yes	Yes
	Ethiopia	Yes	170	Yes	No
	Haiti	No	106	Yes	Yes
	Iraq	Yes	129	Yes	Yes
	Libya	Yes	108	No	No
	Mali	No	154	No	No
	Myanmar	Yes	69	Yes	Yes
	Niger	No	153	No	No

	Nigeria	Yes	146	Yes	Yes
	Occupied Palestinian Territories	Yes	124	Yes	No
	Somalia	Yes	171	No	No
	South Sudan	Yes	161	Yes	Yes
	Sudan	Yes	132	No	Yes
	Syria	Yes	48	Yes	No
	Ukraine	No	122	Yes	Yes
	Venezuela	No	39	Yes	Yes
	Yemen	Yes	104	Yes	No
	Zimbabwe	Yes	149	Yes	Yes
Regional Refugee Response Plans	Rwanda	No	143	Yes	Yes
	Uganda	Yes	113	Yes	Yes
	Tanzania	Yes	126	Yes	Yes
	Angola	No	103	Yes	No
	Zambia	Yes	147	Yes	Yes
	Kenya	Yes	119	Yes	Yes
	Egypt	Yes	169	Yes	Yes
	Jordan	No	114	Yes	Yes
	Lebanon	Yes	97	Yes	Yes
	Turkey	No	85	Yes	Yes
Venezuela Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan	Argentina	No	23	Yes	Yes
	Aruba	No	N/A	No	No
	Bolivia	No	44	Yes	Yes

Brazil	No	25	Yes	Yes
Chile	No	27	Yes	Yes
Costa Rica	No	34	Yes	Yes
Curaçao	No	N/A	No	No
Dominican Republic	No	55	Yes	Yes
Ecuador	No	41	Yes	Yes
Guyana	Yes	78	Yes	Yes
Mexico	No	32	Yes	Yes
Panama	No	49	Yes	Yes
Paraguay	No	58	Yes	Yes
Peru	No	53	Yes	Yes
Trinidad and Tobago	No	77	Yes	Yes
Uruguay	No	14	Yes	Yes
Others				
Bangladesh	Yes	71	Yes	Yes
Benin	No	105	Yes	Yes
Djibouti	No	151	No	No
Liberia	Yes	157	Yes	Yes
Mozambique	No	63	Yes	Yes
North Korea	No	N/A	No	No
Iran	Yes	164	No	No
Pakistan	Yes	165	Yes	Yes
Phillipines	No	28	Yes	Yes
Sierra Leone	Yes	134	Yes	Yes
Togo	Yes	139	Yes	Yes

ABOUT GPP

Global Philanthropy Project (GPP) is a collaboration of funders and philanthropic advisors working to expand global philanthropic support to advance the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people in the Global South and East.

Established in 2009, GPP's 21 member organizations include many of the leading global funders and philanthropic advisors for LGBTI rights. As the first international cohort of LGBTI funders, GPP is internationally recognized as the primary thought leader and go-to partner for donor coordination around global LGBTI work.

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