

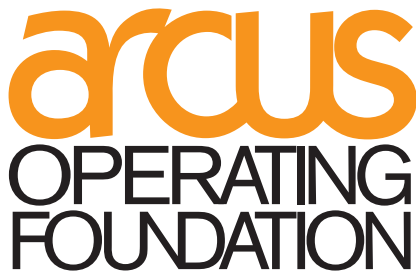
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Saving Lives, Promoting Democracy, Alleviating Poverty, and Fighting AIDS:

The Case for Funding Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual and Transgender Populations



An Arcus Operating Foundation Publication written by Liz Galst



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About the Arcus Operating Foundation

The Arcus Operating Foundation was established in 2007 to support the work and mission of the Arcus Foundation through convenings and conferences, capacity and leadership development, research, publications and projects that increase philanthropic engagement.

Founded in 2000 by Jon L. Stryker, the mission of the Arcus Foundation is to achieve social justice that is inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity and race, and to ensure conservation and respect of the great apes. The Foundation works globally and has offices in Kalamazoo, Michigan, New York City and Cambridge, UK.

About the Arcus Foundation's International LGBT Rights Program

This Arcus Foundation program works to advance LGBT human rights in global policy arenas, to build capacity of pro-LGBT advocates in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, and to substantially increase the funding for organizations that work on LGBT international human rights. For more information, contact Carla Sutherland, director, International LGBT Rights Program, at carla@arcusfoundation.org.

March 2010

The Arcus Foundation's International LGBT Rights Program and the Arcus Operating Foundation would like to thank the authors and participants for their thoughtful contributions to this report.

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Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge the following individuals who contributed their voices and expertise to this report: Joseph Sewedo Akoro (The Independent Project for Equal Rights — Nigeria), Ricardo Eloy Beteta (Asociación Hombres y Mujeres Nuevos de Panamá), Mauro Cabral (Global Advocates for Trans Equality), Sean Casey (Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights), Julie Dorf (Council for Global Equality), Stefano Fabeni (Global Rights), Anand Grover (Lawyers Collective — India), Neil Grungras (ORAM International), Paul Jansen (Hivos — the Netherlands), Alli Jernow (International Commission of Jurists), Sanja Juras (Kontra — Croatia), Mai Kiang (Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice), Kent Klindera (amfAR), Kate Kroeger (American Jewish World Service), Anne Lim (Gay and Lesbian Activist Network for Gender Equality — Philippines), Tara Madden (Front Line), Sara Perle (International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission), Regan Ralph (Fund for Global Human Rights), Janine Rauch (Security Sector Accountability and Police Reform Program — South Africa), Dulce Reyes (Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice), Anasuya Sengupta (Global Fund for Women), Joel Simpson (Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination — Guyana), and Carla Sutherland (Arcus Foundation).

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For the purposes of this report, the abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, or LGBT, is intended to refer to the full spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities as they exist across cultures, regions of the world and languages.

Executive Summary



Joseph Sewedo Akoro,
Nigeria

“There’s no money available in Nigeria for this kind of work,” says Joseph Sewedo Akoro, executive director of The Independent Project for Equal Rights (TIP), one of only a handful of organizations promoting human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people¹ in this country of more than 150 million. The local economy is part of the reason for

that lack of funding. But more importantly, says Akoro, in Nigeria, where consensual sex between men is punishable in some states by death and in others by as many as 14 years in jail, “people are worried about being associated with a group that promotes LGBT rights. People refuse our job offers because of what we do. It’s as bad as that.”

Yet, in this country, as in others throughout the developing world, significant progress has been made in LGBT human rights, health, and poverty alleviation, thanks to the courage and commitment of activists whose efforts have been underwritten by international development aid. In Nigeria, where TIP’s work is supported by intermediary funders, a number of lawyers who once rated homosexuality as more offensive even than bestiality are now offering pro bono services to sexual minorities abused and harassed by police, as a result of a two-day lawyers’ training TIP organized in 2009. LGBT people at high risk of unemployment because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity have benefited from the vocational education TIP offers. And, Akoro says, the organization’s HIV prevention programs “go beyond simply distributing condoms,” offering life-skills classes and workshops on topics such as sexuality and human rights. “Improved self-esteem helps protect against getting HIV,” Akoro says.

Indeed, organizations that are dedicated to empowering and advocating on behalf of LGBT communities in the developing world have advanced vital development priorities, including United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals Three and Six (advancing gender equality and combating HIV/AIDS). They have helped protect minorities, promote the rule of law, reduce poverty, strengthen civil society, increase economic opportunity and promote health in some of the world’s poorest and most politically unstable countries. They have enabled industrialized countries to further their foreign and development policies. And they have allowed donor nations to advance, in tangible ways, the goals they set forth in the UN Statement on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity condemning human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity wherever they occur. (As of March 2009, that statement has been signed by 67 nations.)

“Organizations empowering LGBT populations receive a startlingly small amount of development assistance: less than one one-hundredth of 1 percent of the total aid donated by countries affiliated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.”

Moreover, organizations that promote human rights for LGBT people empower more than their immediate constituencies alone. They help build democracy at its most fundamental level by advancing respect and protection for minorities of all kinds. They fortify fledgling democratic institutions and foster the rule of law. If research on other historically marginalized communities can serve as a guide, fully enfranchised LGBT individuals and groups will likely become important drivers of economic development when they are provided with opportunities to participate, on equal footing, in their countries’ economic and social lives.

By supporting LGBT communities in the developing world, bilaterals can promote abroad the democratic values that are their creed at home: fairness, equality and respect.

Yet, despite their promise and their successes, TIP and organizations like it have received only a miniscule amount of development aid — less than US\$20 million annually, worldwide. This figure represents, startlingly, less than one one-hundredth of 1 percent of the total aid donated by countries affiliated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.² This scandalously low number comes despite the fact that individuals with a same-sex sexual orientation or transgender identity make up between 5 and 7 percent of developing countries' populations, just as they do elsewhere.

As the aid statistics and facts on the ground point out, much more remains to be done. In regions that are themselves vulnerable to poverty, disease, oppression and degradation of the natural resources on which they depend, non-governmental organizations and others have documented the violence, harassment, discrimination, social stigma, poverty and ill health LGBT individuals and their sometimes-underground communities experience, often at alarming rates.

Committing development aid to organizations that empower LGBT communities allows donor nations an unprecedented opportunity to become leaders in one of the great social movements of our time. By supporting LGBT communities in the developing world, bilaterals can promote abroad the democratic values that are their creed at home: fairness, equality and respect.

1) A note on terms: A person's attraction to and/or sex with individuals of the same gender does not necessarily lead her or him to self-identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Likewise, "transgender" is not a term that accurately depicts the wide range of gender roles and identities found among the world's thousands of cultures. In fact, the planet's vast array of sexual orientations and gender identities presents a challenge for the writer. A shorthand is needed. Thus, for the purposes of this report, men who have sex with men will be referred to as gay or bisexual when appropriate; women who have sex with women will be referred to as lesbian or bisexual; and, individuals who are gender-non-conforming will be referred to as transgender.

2) This figure compares 2005 funding data from Funders for LGBT Issues (FLGBTI) and the OECD, respectively. (According to FLGBTI, in 2005, \$10.45 million was provided to LGBT groups in the developing world by "private, public, bilateral and corporate funders as well as individual donors and non-governmental organizations with grantmaking functions." The OECD reported more than \$106.5 billion in total international development aid that year.)

Legal Aid



Joel Simpson, Guyana

Overturing laws that criminalize consensual same-sex sex, as well as laws that limit LGBT rights as parents and as families, is crucial to the social and economic advancement of LGBT individuals and groups in a host of developing countries.

About the role of Guyana's sodomy law, Joel Simpson, co-chair of Guyana's Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD), explains: "The law lends itself to a lot of police abuse. We find a lot of bribes and extortion, a lot of social stigma issues." Indeed, anti-LGBT laws enable police and other government officials to abuse, harass and blackmail LGBT people and to remove children from the homes of their LGBT parents. These laws give moral sanction to the often-inhumane treatment LGBT people receive from a wide range of non-governmental actors, including family members, neighbors, employers and healthcare workers. "The atmosphere created by sodomy laws sends a very clear message that if you're LGBT your existence is not necessarily justified," explains Neil Grungras, executive director of the LGBT refugee agency ORAM International. "These laws send a message to the entire population that LGBT people deserve whatever they get."

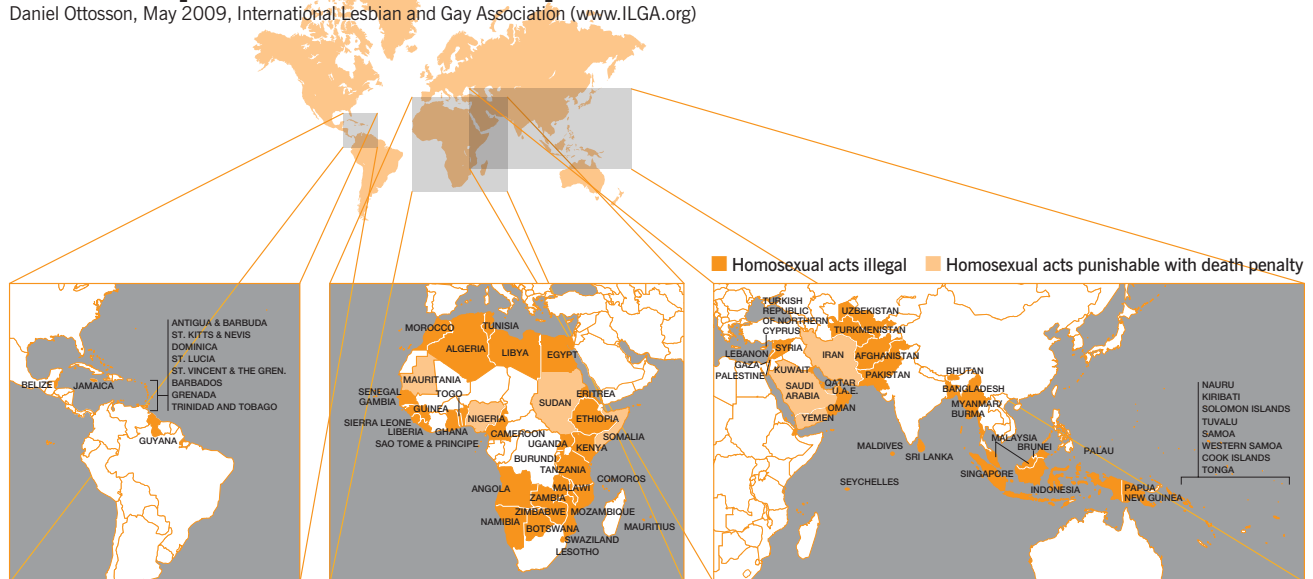
More than 75 nations across Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and the Caribbean punish consensual same-sex sex. Sentences range, deplorably, from one month in prison to the death penalty. This most extreme form of punishment is found in five countries — Iran, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen — as well as in several states within Nigeria and a number of Somalian districts; the Ugandan Parliament is currently debating legislation that would offer similar egregious sentences.

Overturing anti-LGBT laws is a lengthy process that requires significant financial resources, resources that at present only bilateral donors and other large funders can provide. Opponents of full protection for LGBT individuals and communities often deliberately ensure that legal challenges drag on for years. Legislative advocacy is time-consuming. LGBT communities require lawyers who are willing to be associated with a cause that in many countries can lead to death threats and acts of violence.

But the payoff for this legal advocacy can be profound. "The decriminalization has completely changed everything here," says attorney Anand Grover, who directs the Lawyers Collective, an Indian NGO that led the legal challenge that last summer overturned India's sodomy law. (The repeal is not yet complete; several private groups have filed an appeal with the Indian Supreme Court.) The law, known as Section 377, was first codified by the British

State-Sponsored Homophobia

Daniel Ottosson, May 2009, International Lesbian and Gay Association (www.ILGA.org)





Activists celebrate LGBT decriminalization, India

Imperial government in the 1860s. “Section 377 was often exploited by the police and others to harass, extort money from, blackmail and even rape men who have sex with men, mainly those from the lower socio-economic classes who have little knowledge of the law and their rights,” explains the Web site of the Naz Foundation Trust, an Indian NGO that collaborated with the Lawyers Collective on the legal case. “Section 377 was also used by the police to restrict gay-related activities and to justify raids on parties and events.”

The court case, first filed in 1997, led to more than a decade of grassroots organizing around LGBT human rights by many sectors of Indian society, including several sexual minority organizations and sex worker groups. “For the first time, we had mothers on talk shows saying, ‘I have a gay son’ or ‘I have a lesbian daughter,’” Grover recalls. This political activism, in turn, created the cultural space and political momentum to strengthen the legal strategy.

“We used to have a lot of people coming to our office with serious concerns such as blackmail,” Grover continues. “Now, generally, there’s a feeling of being relaxed about being gay, rather than being worried about it.” Such successes have been hard to come by, however, in countries

where human rights lawyers working on LGBT issues are few and far between. In Uganda, for instance, there are currently only two or three constitutional lawyers willing to put forth a legal challenge to the legislature’s proposed Anti-Homosexuality Bill. In Panama, advocates have been unable to find lawyers willing to defend a lesbian couple whose children have been taken from their home by the government. “The government claims the women’s lesbian identities put their children at social risk,” explains Ricardo Eloy Beteta, president of the LGBT organization Asociación Hombres y Mujeres Nuevos de Panamá (AHMNP). “Lawyers are all afraid that taking the case will cause people to discriminate against them.”

Donor aid can combat this problem by incubating support within the mainstream legal community for human rights for LGBT people, as TIP’s experience and that of other organizations has demonstrated. TIP reports that over the course of its program, participating lawyers learned new information and changed their opinions about LGBT issues. Now, several of these lawyers are prepared not only to defend individuals and group members arrested and jailed under laws that persecute LGBT individuals, but also to challenge anti-LGBT laws and legislation.

Donor nations and other major funders of human rights work can also expand the legal resources available to LGBT people in the developing world, even without providing additional financial support, simply by encouraging and/or requiring the human rights defenders and legal aid groups they already fund to work with the LGBT community.

Significant changes in the law's relationship to the LGBT community can come through other avenues as well, specifically, through the training of criminal justice officials — police officers, prosecutors and judges — in the oft-ignored needs and human rights of LGBT individuals and groups. "At present, human rights training for police tends not to include issues related to LGBTs," explains Janine Rauch, technical advisor for the Security Sector Accountability and Police Reform Program in Democratic Republic of Congo. "All criminal justice officials need this type of training, especially those in nascent democracies."

Such is the case in Croatia, where the lesbian group Kontra has used European Commission funding to help survivors of hate violence who have been ignored or further traumatized by police. "If someone gets beaten up, the police revictimize them, and don't prosecute unless there's a lot of pressure" from civil society groups, says Sanja Juras, who heads Kontra's Team for Legal Changes. "We have to put a lot of pressure on the police just to do their jobs."

Training programs should include individuals at all levels of the criminal justice system — officers working local beats all the way up to chiefs of police, prosecutors and judges, says Alli Jernow, senior legal advisor for the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Project of the International

Around the world, development aid can help transform laws and criminal justice systems so that the human rights of LGBT individuals and groups are protected, rather than diminished.

Commission of Jurists (ICJ), an NGO that focuses on protecting human rights through the rule of law. "Otherwise, these investigations and charges go nowhere. The police don't want to investigate. The prosecutors don't want to pursue convictions. And the judges don't understand the nature of the crimes to which LGBT people are subject."

These trainings benefit criminal justice systems as well as LGBT communities, Jernow says. "For the police, it improves their relationship with that community. People are then more likely to come forward as witnesses in general. They're more likely to cooperate with investigations." Moreover, the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes sends an important message not only to hate-crimes survivors but also to the larger community. "(Through these investigations and prosecutions) You're establishing what society says is acceptable behavior," Jernow says.

Laws and the people who enforce them are major deniers of LGBT human rights in many developing countries. Around the world, development aid can help transform laws and criminal justice systems so that the human rights of LGBT individuals and groups are protected, rather than diminished.



Lawyers' training organized by The Independent Project for Equal Rights (TIP), Nigeria

A Safe Place To Be Gay

It is the very nature of hate crimes that they are marked by what experts call “excessive violence,” violence far beyond that necessary to harm the intended victim(s).

Every year, in an effort to understand the scope of hate-crime violence, programs such as the European-based Trans Murder Monitoring Project of TransGender Europe and Kontra document thousands of such crimes against LGBT people and groups in the developing world. (Government statistics, if they’re kept at all, often fail to capture the severity of the problem. “There’s a big difference in the statistics from government sources and the statistics from NGOs,” Juras notes.)

While it is easy to turn away in horror from the problem of anti-LGBT hate crimes, these recent examples can illustrate what LGBT people in the developing world face on a daily basis:



Donny Reyes, Honduras

- Donny Reyes, a Honduran LGBT activist and the director of the Asociación Lésbica Gay, Transexual y Bisexual Arcoiris de Honduras, was brutally beaten and illegally arrested by Honduran national police in early 2007. After his arrest, he was detained in a prison cell with 57 other prisoners where he was beaten and sexually assaulted while a police officer stood guard.
- In Guatemala, in the week between October 26 and November 2, 2009, three transgender women were viciously murdered. One was struck by a car before being shot. Another was killed by gunfire. The third was stoned to death.

- In February 2008, popular Senegalese entertainer Pape Mbaye was forced to flee his home in Dakar after a Senegalese magazine published photographs of what it claimed was an underground gay wedding organized by Mbaye. (Media frequently play a leading role in inciting anti-LGBT violence.)

Shortly after the magazine’s publication, Mbaye and several friends were held by police for four days. (Diplomatic pressure from the Netherlands and Denmark helped secure their release.) Police then advised Mbaye and his friends to go into hiding. But they were discovered and attacked by a mob wielding broken bottles, forks and other weapons. After Mbaye fled to Gambia, the country’s president, Yahya Jammeh, vowed to behead all gay people in his country. Eventually, with the help of the NGO Human Rights Watch, Mbaye was granted asylum in the U.S., but not before being attacked by knife-wielding Senegalese expatriates in Ghana, where he had sought refuge while awaiting approval to enter the U.S.

- On June 4, 2006, during a raid in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, police threatened to rape everyone present in the office of Labrys, the country’s only LGBT organization. Activists with video cameras managed to stop the attack.
- Despite the legal protections South Africa offers against hate crimes, each week at least 10 new cases of “corrective” rape are reported to the gay rights group Triangle Project there. “What we’re seeing is a spike in



Labrys gathering, Kyrgyzstan

the number of women coming to us... who have been told throughout the attack that being a lesbian was to blame for what was happening to them," reports Triangle Project Director Vanessa Ludwig.

Donor nations can help address the many impacts and causes of anti-LGBT violence in the developing world by funding LGBT organizations, other human rights groups and health professionals who provide path-breaking support and activism in this area. Kontra, for instance, is able to devote itself to the needs of hate-crimes survivors, thanks to funding from the European Union. In addition to providing psychological counseling, the organization offers "direct legal help for the victims of hate crimes," Juras explains. "We go with them to the police, if necessary. We are present at all the hearings until the end of the court case. And if the media is involved, we help with that also."

"Local activists identify two areas where change can have significant impact on LGBT people," explains Stefano Fabeni, director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex Initiative at the human rights group Global Rights. "Those two areas are media and police."

Because hate crimes have societal as well as individual causes, last year Kontra mounted a public campaign in four Croatian cities to promote the end of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. This campaign was also EU-funded. Using billboards, posters and postcards, the drive, titled "Different Loves, Same Rights," called for equality between heterosexuals and LGBT people in many spheres of life, including the right "to a life without violence."



Kontra billboard campaign, Croatia

Supporting work against hate violence promotes the rule of law and safeguards minorities. “Doing so,” Lim says, “will protect the democratic institutions that we hold so dear.”

Similarly, the training of journalists and their editors in issues that impact LGBT individuals can help defuse potentially incendiary coverage of both individuals and groups. “Local activists identify two areas where change can have significant impact on LGBT people,” explains Stefano Fabeni, director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex Initiative at the human rights group Global Rights. “Those two areas are media and police.”

In Nigeria, for example, Global Rights’ training for journalists, funded by a European embassy that asked not to be named, has taught reporters to address the lapses of journalistic ethics found in sensationalistic coverage of LGBT individuals and groups. This has been the case despite the virulently anti-LGBT views of many of these journalists. “Mostly, we’ve had positive results,” Fabeni observes. “Not one journalist we’ve trained has said that this kind of coverage is OK according to journalistic ethics.

“Unfortunately, our work is only a drop in the bucket,” Fabeni reports. “In Nigeria, we’ve trained approximately 100 journalists. But in a country this size, there are thousands we need to reach.”

Bilaterals and other large donors can also fund increased security for human rights defenders, as well as other high-risk LGBT individuals and organizations. In Iraq, for instance, a rapid-response grant from the NGO Front Line, which helps protect human rights defenders, enabled the coordinator of an LGBT safe house to be relocated at first to another city and later out of the country, after he began being hunted by militias. Similarly, in Serbia, rapid response funding made possible expert assessment of security measures for LGBT Pride marches.

This type of funding can also benefit LGBT organizations’ staff, offices and Web sites. Tara Madden, program manager at Front Line explains how funding for beefed-up security at an Indian LGBT group’s office has transformed conditions there. The organization “used to be harassed or threatened approximately once a month. They would have people coming round shouting homophobic and abusive words at them and threats such as ‘Leave the locality or we will kill you,’” Madden says. Police officers frequently disrupted the group’s work. “Since the grant was given for security cameras, the group has given photographic evidence of this harassment to the police on three occasions. After giving evidence a second time, people became aware of this new capacity and since submitting the third piece of evidence, they haven’t received any harassment. They also had video evidence of the police officer coming to the office, which they submitted to the police superintendent. Reportedly, the superintendent ordered the police officer not to go to their offices anymore.”

Funding such efforts is the first step in protecting LGBT individuals and groups from hate violence. The benefits of such endeavors extend beyond LGBT communities, however. “Fighting violence against LGBT people is important not only because it will protect millions of LGBTs from being raped, maimed or killed on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity,” says Anne Lim, executive director of the Philippines-based Gay and Lesbian Activist Network for Gender Equality (GALANG). Supporting work against hate violence promotes the rule of law and safeguards minorities. “Doing so,” Lim says, “will protect the democratic institutions that we hold so dear.”



Anne Lim, Philippines

A Hand Out Of Poverty



Gay and Lesbian Activist Network for Gender Equality, Philippines

Because LGBT people are some of the most marginalized individuals within their own countries and communities, they experience some of the direst economic circumstances. Often, their educational opportunities have been brutally limited by anti-LGBT discrimination, harassment and violence in schools and neighborhoods.

That environment of hostility continues as they reach working age. Consider the problems urban butch³ lesbians face as they look for work in the Philippines. “Jobs in shopping malls and retail outlets in the Philippines often require sales ladies to dress in miniskirts, high heels and make-up,” Lim says. Finding it difficult to conform to these requirements, butch women often fail to apply for these positions or are rejected outright by potential employers. However, “when they apply for traditionally male positions, such as grocery baggers, utility persons and drivers, they are also not hired because employers prefer to hire men.”

Work options for LGBT people are further limited because, “in a lot of countries, the economy depends on family connections,” explains ORAM International’s Grungras. “The way you get a job is at your wife’s father’s drugstore.” If someone is gay — if he doesn’t have a wife — “you don’t get the job. If you’re a lesbian — a woman ‘alone’ — you don’t have the right to work at all. You may have

no breathing space unless you marry. Transgender people, of course, are often the most completely marginalized.” Though no one has collected data on LGBT poverty rates in developing countries, anecdotal evidence points to significantly increased poverty rates among LGBT people when compared to their heterosexual peers.



Job training program organized by ALITT, Argentina

3) masculine

Programs designed to address LGBT’s specific job-training needs can help counteract this type of economic marginalization. Consider the job-training scheme organized by Argentina’s *Asociacion de Lucha por la Identidad Travesti Transexual*. To help transgender sex workers find alternatives to their current form of employment, ALITT has taught members the skills they need to work in the textile and fashion industries. To date, 34 out of the 35 individuals enrolled in this training program have left sex work for jobs in the needle trades. (The program now has a waiting list of 250.) One reason the program succeeds is that it provides a safe haven where transgender women are respected for who they are. Moreover, to accommodate the current work schedules of its trainees, it meets during the day. (The vast majority of Argentinean job training programs meet at night, when sex workers are working.)

In fact, LGBT organizations across the developing world provide models of how funders can increase the economic and social standing of LGBT people.

- In the Philippines, GALANG is helping poor lesbians start their own businesses. “Lesbians are passed up for jobs not because they lack skills but because of prejudice against homosexuality,” Lim explains. “Consequently, in choosing between whether to help lesbians look for work or start their own businesses, our bias is for the latter.”
- In Kathmandu, several European intermediary funders have teamed up with the Blue Diamond Society, a Nepalese gay rights group, to underwrite the Cutey Beauty Salon. The salon teaches hair dressing and cosmetology skills to young *metis* — male-to-female transgender individuals — who would otherwise have no economic alternatives but sex work. A number of graduates have gone on to work in salons or start their own cosmetology businesses.
- In Burma, Rays of the Rainbow, a group of LGBT migrant workers, earns money for individual members while simultaneously supporting community development projects through fundraising activities such as fashion shows and drag performances. (The group receives funding from the American Jewish World Service, a US-based intermediary.)

Support for LGBT job training, social enterprises and other forms of economic development can alter the lives of LGBT people at the most profound level, Lim says. Many of the



Rays of the Rainbow, Burma

women GALANG works with, for instance, are forced to live with their parents “in order to have a roof over their head and food to eat every day.” But they often “experience all kinds of verbal and physical abuse from these same family members, and it’s hard to pinpoint the exact cause — whether the family members find the lesbian to be financially burdensome or because they find lesbianism morally revolting.” Interestingly, family members become more accepting when lesbians are able to support themselves and no longer depend on the family’s severely limited coffers.

Kent Klindera, manager of the MSM (men who have sex with men) Initiative at amfAR — the Foundation for AIDS Research, another U.S.-based intermediary — has witnessed similar transformations. “When the LGBT person becomes the breadwinner,” he says, “the family is no longer homophobic. The person becomes more empowered and has more interest in their future. That’s going to help prevent HIV, too.”

Funding LGBT-specific economic development results in a broad range of economic benefits, Lim says, citing her nation as an example. “Getting Filipino lesbians out of poverty will allow more women to take part in shaping the future of our country,” Lim says. “It will free up an entire segment of society to finally do its part in improving the lives of Filipinos in general.”

HIV/AIDS Education For Those At Highest Risk

Men who have sex with men experience some of the highest rates of HIV infection in the developing world. For example, in Ghana, where same-sex sex is illegal, “HIV/AIDS prevalence rates among MSM are four times higher than the general adult population prevalence rate,” reports American Jewish World Service (AJWS), a major funder of HIV prevention among MSM in the developing world. “Yet Ghana’s national strategy for addressing HIV/AIDS neglects to recognize MSM as a vulnerable group,” AJWS observes. (In fact, MSM in the developing world are 20 times more likely to be HIV-positive than members of the general population.⁴)

Similarly, in Panama, where the HIV seroprevalence rate among MSM was 12 percent in 2005, the government has allotted none of its US\$4 million HIV prevention budget to educational programs that address gay men’s needs, says AHMNP’s Beteta. “All the government HIV education campaigns have to do with pregnant women, children and now youth.” This pattern of intentional

disregard for MSM is “almost universal” in the developing world, says amfAR’s Klindera.

Historically, much bilateral funding for HIV prevention and AIDS treatment has ignored the special needs and circumstances of MSM. Among those special circumstances is the fact that many live in intensely homophobic countries where their most intimate forms of expression are punishable by jail sentences and, in some cases, death. The United States, in particular, has failed to implement overseas HIV prevention programs aimed at MSM. Of “the \$3 billion assigned to prevention in (the United States’) PEPFAR⁵ initial outlay, most of which went to Africa, (the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission) was only able to locate one program on the continent that addressed MSM — and that program received less than \$100,000,”⁶ says a recent report published by the US-based Council for Global Equality, a nongovernmental organization advocating for inclusion of LGBT concerns in U.S. development policy.



HIV education program organized by The Independent Project for Equal Rights (TIP), Nigeria

When addressing the HIV and AIDS prevention needs MSM, government aid agencies, if they offer any aid at all, “want to hand these men a condom,” Klindera says. Instead, he says, “What they need is a reason to live, hope for a bright future, and skills to protect themselves. Once they have that, they do try to prevent HIV and they do seek treatment.”

Models of HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment that promote LGBT empowerment offer high rates of success; these programs can benefit greatly from bilateral funding and funding from other large donors. The Asociacion Hombres y Mujeres Nuevos de Panama (AHMNP), for instance, has prioritized empowerment activities for indigenous Kuna male-to-female transgender people. Traditionally, these individuals have worked as sex workers. Using funding from amfAR, AHMNP has trained these Kuna transgender people in HIV/AIDS peer education as well as in community- and self-advocacy. The trainings have “helped them have more status in the community and has empowered them about their own sexual choices,” Klindera reports. As a result, HIV testing in the area has increased significantly. And HIV rates among LGBT people in the traditional Kuna settlement of Kos Kuna, where AHMNP has offered HIV education for more than six years, have decreased significantly. Kuna transgender people have also become more highly valued members of their own communities. “They have been invited into the local indigenous government and asked to be involved in health issues,” Klindera reports.

Historically, much bilateral funding for HIV prevention and AIDS treatment has ignored the special needs and circumstances of MSM.

Research on programs such as AHMNP’s, which advance LGBT human rights and promote the self-worth of LGBT individuals, is still in its initial phases. But early results show impressive gains in health outcomes among transgender individuals and men who have sex with men.

By funding grassroots HIV/AIDS prevention programs that spring from local communities and approach their work from a human rights perspective, bilaterals and other funders of HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment can help decrease the overall rates of HIV and AIDS in the developing world.

4) Baral S, Sifakis F, Cleghorn F, et al. Elevated risk for HIV infection among men who have sex with men in low- and middle-income countries 2000-2006, a systematic review. *PLoS Med* 2007; 4:e3390

5) President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

6) Scott H. Evertz, *How Ideology Trumped Science: Why PEPFAR Has Failed to Meet its Potential*, (Center for American Progress/Council for Global Equality, 2010), 16.

How Bilaterals Can Help

International donor funding can enable LGBT individuals and groups to finally become full, safe and free participants in their respective societies.

Yet questions remain: How can bilateral funders and other large donors best appropriate the resources they have to offer? What are the most effective ways to provide technical assistance and improve organizational capacity; build an infrastructure of lawyer-advocates who support LGBT rights; promote job skills and economic empowerment; prevent violence and respond to its aftermath; advance the social and economic position of lesbians, bisexual and transgender women; and prevent HIV transmission and improve health outcomes for men who have sex with men?

The expertise these intermediaries possess in LGBT issues and their insight into local and regional LGBT organizations make them invaluable resources for bilateral funders.

Many experts in the field believe that several intermediary funders already model effective grantmaking and collaboration with LGBT groups in the developing world. The expertise these intermediaries possess in LGBT issues and their insight into local and regional LGBT organizations make them invaluable resources for bilateral funders. Intermediaries have the staff and/or consultants necessary to identify appropriate grantees; to navigate cultural, linguistic, religious, economic and other differences; to understand potential local conflicts, laws and risks; and to access social and professional networks as well as important local events. Likewise, intermediaries can help organizations build much-needed infrastructure and organizational capacity, and are well-positioned to monitor grants and grantee activities. (Several European bilaterals have also begun using their countries' national LGBT groups to help regrant funding to a small number of organizations in the Global South and East.)

Key components of the grantmaking these intermediaries engage in are active collaboration with community-based and nongovernmental organizations; the building of organizational capacity; and long-term organizational support, as opposed to support given for specific projects only.

Because many LGBT groups in developing countries are small and relatively new, capacity building can help strengthen their impact substantially. "Our country consultants act as supports for organizations in transition that need technical assistance and other capacity-building help," explains Kate Kroeger, American Jewish World Services' director of grants.

Similarly, the Heartland Alliance has recently launched a pro-LGBT MSM HIV prevention program in Nigeria that will provide its Nigerian partner, TIP, with "training on organizational management, governance, monitoring and evaluation, financial management and technical HIV interventions," according to Sean Casey, director and International Program Coordinator of the Heartland Alliance.

A key component of this capacity-building work is the funding of office/meeting space and paid staff. The benefits of this type of funding cannot be underestimated; a sizeable percentage of LGBT organizations in developing countries are run by volunteers working out of their own homes. "Astraea's funding has been fundamental to having a functioning active location and a permanent secretary providing information. Without a space it would be difficult to carry out activities," writes the Paraguayan lesbian group Aireana about the financial support it received from the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, a US-based intermediary. "Thanks to this support, we were able to solicit more funds to sustain activities carried out at our location such as workshops, meetings, open discussions, psychological and legal services and cultural activities."



Aireana, Paraguay

Because many LGBT groups in developing countries are small and relatively new, capacity building can help strengthen their impact substantially.

Similarly, in many developing countries office and meeting space often provides the only safe space available to LGBT people. The Sri Lankan LGBT group Equal Ground writes, “This area is dominated by Muslim militias and LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) cadres who have established a death penalty for those whose sexual orientation and gender identity defer from the hetero-normative and binary gender constructs. We want to establish a field office in this region which will act as a ‘safe zone’ for members of the community and provide a confidential counseling helpline with the goal of improving the mental health and well-being of LGBT and concerned others. The ‘safe zone’ will provide an avenue for members of the community to meet and gather, express themselves without prejudice and participate in activities constructed to make them feel at ease.”

Funding of long-term organizational support (as opposed to project support) is also key to building effective organizations that can promote LGBT rights and health in the developing world. “Having flexible funds is the most important thing for us,” says Kontra’s Juras. With organizational support, “when something is happening in the country, we can react immediately and build campaigns around it,” she says. “We don’t have to be limited to the projects for which we’ve already received support.”



Equal Ground, Sri Lanka

Finally, funding that recognizes women and male-to-female transgender people as full partners in the LGBT movement can help redress the imbalances in financial support and social standing that lesbians, bisexual women and male-to-female transgender people face, even as compared to gay men. “Lesbians in poverty are more prone to physical and sexual violence, suicide and unemployment,” Lim says. These problems effect transgender individuals perhaps most of all. Says one Latin-American transgender person who asked not to be identified, but who speaks for many: “When I was 13, it was impossible for me to stay living in my house, with my family. They didn’t understand. It was too hard. I loved school but it was a nightmare to be there, being harassed, being threatened, even beaten. I left my house and went to the capital. I met other transvesti⁷ there and they took care of me, teaching me how to work — sex work.”

Bilaterals and other large funders are presented at this moment in time with a historic opportunity: They can utilize bilateral funding to advance important development priorities, such as U.N. Millennium Development Goals Three and Six, which call for promoting gender

equality and combating HIV/AIDS. They can protect minorities, promote the rule of law, reduce poverty and promote health, simply by recognizing the existence of people who have been rejected by many of their families, their neighbors and their governments. They can correct past funding omissions in ways that promote the empowerment of a full 5 to 7 percent of the world community. And they can bring closer the day when sexual orientation and/or gender identity is not cause for the denial of the most basic human rights.

“There is no dearth of promising practices in LGBT activism in our region as well as in other parts of the world,” says GALANG’s Lim. “We believe that it is most important to make substantial investments in human resources. The challenge” — to LGBT groups and to bilateral funders alike — “is to find the resources to scale up our respective operations.”

7) “Transvesti” is a favored term of self-identification for many in Latin America.

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Effective Intermediary Organizations

The following organizations have proved to be effective intermediaries in working with emerging and established LGBT groups in developing countries.

American Jewish World Service (AJWS)

The American Jewish World Service is a faith-based organization that seeks to empower people to achieve justice and self-sufficiency through the promotion of human rights, education, economic development, health care and sustainable agriculture.

45 West 36th Street

New York, NY 10018

USA

Tel: +1 212 792 2900

+1 800 889 7146 (toll free)

Fax: +1 212 792 2930

www.ajws.org

amfAR – The Foundation for AIDS Research

amfAR is dedicated to the support of AIDS research, HIV prevention, treatment education, and the advocacy of sound AIDS-related public policy.

120 Wall Street, 13th Floor

New York, NY 10005

USA

Tel: +1 212 806 1600

+1 800 39 amfAR (toll free)

Fax: +1 212 806 1601

www.amfar.org

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

The Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice works for social, racial and economic justice. Its grantmaking and philanthropic advocacy programs help lesbians and allied communities challenge oppression and claim their human rights.

116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor

New York, NY 10003

USA

Tel: +1 212 529 8021

Fax: +1 212 982 3321

www.astraeafoundation.org

Front Line – The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Front Line works to protect human rights defenders at risk. Front Line aims to address the protection needs identified by defenders themselves.

81 Main Street

Blackrock

Co Dublin

Ireland

Tel: +353 (0)1 212 3750

Fax: +353 (0)1 212 1001

www.frontlinedefenders.org

The Fund for Global Human Rights

The Fund for Global Human Rights works to ensure a strong, effective human rights community worldwide.

1666 Connecticut Avenue, NW

Suite 410

Washington, DC 20009

USA

Tel: +1 202 347 7488

Fax: +1 202 347 7487

www.globalhumanrights.org

Global Fund for Women

Global Fund for Women is an international network of women and men committed to a world of equality and social justice.

222 Sutter Street

Suite 500

San Francisco, CA 94108

USA

Tel: +1 415 248 4800

Fax: +1 415 248 4801

www.globalfundforwomen.org

Hivos – The Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation

Hivos contributes to a fair, free and sustainable world, in which all citizens have equal access to resources and opportunities for development.

P.O. Box 85565
2508 CG The Hague
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)70 376 5500
Fax: +31 (0)70 362 4600
www.hivos.nl

Mama Cash

Mama Cash mobilizes resources from individuals and institutions and makes grants to women's and girls' human rights organizations and initiatives.

P.O. Box 15686
1001 ND Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)20 689 3634
Fax: +31 (0)20 683 4647
www.mamacash.org

NESsT (Nonprofit Enterprise and Self-Sustainability Team)

NESsT works to solve critical social problems in emerging market countries by developing and supporting social enterprises that strengthen civil society organizations' financial sustainability and maximize their social impact.

4401 Tahama Lane
Turlock, CA 95382
USA
Tel: +1 209 988 9604
Fax: +1 815 846 1775
www.nesst.org

Health and Rights Initiative

UHAI is a grantmaking initiative to support civil society activism around issues of sexuality, health and human rights in the East African region, with a particular focus on the rights of sexual minorities.

Wing 3C, K Rep Center, Kilimani
Box 27611-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 020 244 1204
Fax: +254 020 386 1576
www.uhai-eashri.org

Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights

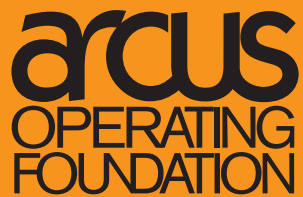
The Urgent Action Fund supports women's rights defenders striving to create cultures of justice, equality and peace. The organization provides rapid response grants that enable strategic interventions.

3100 Arapahoe Avenue
Suite 201
Boulder, CO 80303
USA
Tel: +1 303 442 2388
Fax: +1 303 442 2370
www.urgentactionfund.org

Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights – Africa

UAF-Africa links the activities of women with the resources they require to respond to conflict and to advance women's human rights. UAF-Africa provides financial and technical resources to women's rights organizations, and to innovative, rapid and unique initiatives that support women's leadership in peace-building and justice processes.

CVS Plaza, 2nd Floor
Lenana Road, Kilimani
P.O. Box 53841-00200
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 020 230 1740
Fax: +254 020 230 1740
www.urgentactionfund-africa.or.ke



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New York, New York, 10011
212.488.3000 / phone
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Wellington House
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