

Civil society and non-state donor recommendations from the conference to advance the human rights of and promote the inclusive development for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (and intersex)* persons Washington DC, November 2014

Introduction

Since the first global donor forum, held in Stockholm in 2010, there has been considerable progress in recognizing, among concerned national governments and NGOs, that support for LGBTI human and civil rights must be more central within bilateral and multilateral assistance programs and priorities. Even the conference title, “Conference to Advance the Inclusive Development for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons” evolved to recognize the financial and non-financial means that governments can support human rights and human development of LGBTI people. The following guidelines and recommendations from civil society actors represented at the Washington conference are based on that recognition, build on that progress, and point to areas for continued improvement.

Guiding principles

These principles underlie the recommendations below:

1. **Proactively extend, focus and adapt funding.** Assistance should be undertaken with a specific commitment to provide funding that surfaces and addresses the particular and linked experiences of people generally taken together as, 'an LGBTI community.'¹
2. **Acknowledge intersecting marginalisation.** This funding approach will require thoughtful and cross-cutting attention to intersecting forms of marginalisation across sectors within this community. Assistance must integrate an intersectional lens to address experiences of marginalisation within LGBTI communities and the socio-economic contexts in which people are located; this approach must also address inter-linkages with gender, race, class, age, health status, nationality, migration status, and many other social factors.
3. **Recognise differential experiences.** Assistance will also require sensitively captured and disaggregated data that recognises different challenges for each sector within LGBTI communities, with particular emphasis on experiences of traditionally marginalized groups, including lesbians, transgender and intersex people.
4. **Take into account global geopolitics.** To best address the realities and complexities in people's lived experience, global geopolitics and other power imbalances always must be taken into account in analysis and in implementation.

Key Recommendations

1. Policy

Increase the level of funding for LGBTI rights overall by integrating the human rights concerns and needs of LGBTI persons within all bilateral and multilateral assistance programs, including development assistance, poverty eradication, human rights, education, health, women and gender, civic participation, children's rights and people with disabilities. This recommendation is consistent with affirmations #4, 5, 6, 10 and 11 of the [Joint Communique](#).

* The name of the conference included Intersex only after the governments released their [Joint Communique](#) after the conference ended. Assuming that will be the name of the conference going forward, these recommendations use the updated title.

¹ Principles 1, 2 and 3 resonate with affirmation #2 of the [Joint Communique](#) on recognizing diversity.

Stronger and coordinated efforts to promote human rights protection of all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and bodily diversity, must be at the heart of these efforts. These efforts should include support for free speech, assembly, and expression and fair access to employment, education healthcare and welfare. This recommendation is consistent with affirmations #1 and 3 of the [Joint Communiqué](#).

Increased funding and parallel diplomatic engagement should address the human rights and development needs of LGBTI persons, based on needs assessments and research that is community-based and participatory. Assessments and research must include economic and sociopolitical context. This recommendation is consistent with affirmation #7 of the [Joint Communiqué](#).

Bilateral and multilateral funding agencies should enact policies and procedures to ensure that they themselves, as well as those funded to implement programs (contractors and sub-contractors, grantees and sub-grantees) do not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression and bodily diversity in employment or service provision. In parallel, funders should provide technical assistance to their own staff, and their contractors and grantees on *how* to integrate non-discrimination provisions in their policies, documents and practices, and promote affirmative policies and community-based leadership. This recommendation is consistent with affirmations #4, 5, and 11 of the [Joint Communiqué](#).

Economic programmes and cooperation, such as trade agreements, should not ignore human rights concerns but instead be taken as opportunities to address these concerns. This recommendation is consistent with affirmation #1 of the [Joint Communiqué](#).

2. Coordination²

Greater clarity, transparency, and consultation are needed among and between governments, private donors and wider civil society organizations, including LGBTI organizations. This must include agreement on fundamental goals and objectives and should seek both to avoid duplication of efforts and to diversify the distribution of funding.

Civil society advocates and organisations should be actively involved, alongside private foundations and other funding agencies, in shaping donor strategies and structures to maximize effective coordination of responsive funding. In particular, the geopolitics of trans, lesbian and intersex movements are complex and carry global funding implications. The particular issues of trans, lesbian and intersex groups are not sufficiently visible in current funding programmes. This requires critical and collaborative engagement to formulate assistance that disaggregates between sectors in the ‘LGBTI community’. Trans-, lesbian- and intersex-led organisations must be part of LGBTI and related decision-making processes at all levels.

Equal participation of groups from the global South is needed in government/civil society deliberations, as well as marginalized communities from the North, in particular trans, lesbian and intersex groups, along with South-South coordination of groups working on LGBTI issues. Both should be encouraged actively.

Collaborative bilateral/donor/civil society mechanisms are needed to monitor and evaluate the destination and expenditure of LGBTI funding. Without compromising the security of grantees, governments should be more transparent about their funding and funding mechanisms. To the degree feasible, data should be disaggregated for L, G, B, T, and I populations.

Coordination must involve a regular scan and evaluation of available funding by region, theme, and purpose and should be carried out with a view to expanding the number of government and donor LGBTI allies. This must be a shared effort among governments, private foundations, and civil society and must involve a regular and

² Recommendations related to Coordination relate to all of the affirmations of the [Joint Communiqué](#) so are not mapped individually.

institutionalized sharing of knowledge, best practices, strategies and lessons learned regarding effective support and diplomatic engagement.

Cooperation among governments and multilateral organizations should build on existing diplomatic coordination mechanisms, as well as coordination at the country level through embassies and other multilateral offices.

Governments and development agencies, as well as other multilateral platforms and organizations, should seek to increase support from existing donors and to attract new donors, including from the private sector, to advance LGBTI rights. In pursuing public/private partnerships, governments should be cautious that private stakeholders not re-direct support away from civil society and into government-led initiatives. Consideration should be given to how multinational companies might be allies in raising with governments issues restricting the rights of LGBTI persons in the workplace.

3. Partner Relationships³

In general, LGBTI civil society organizations in the global South and East should be prioritized. However, those in middle- and high-income countries are increasingly under tremendous pressure and should not be excluded from global funding for LGBTI rights, such as marginalized civil society organizations in the Global North. Groups that face multiple discrimination -- such as trans, lesbian and intersex-led organisations or groups working at the intersection of LGBT rights and race, for instance -- should be prioritized regardless of location. International and regional organizations that work in close collaboration with local groups and/or that fill a gap in the human rights movement should also be valued. The donor community must learn to work better within the structural and skill limits of intermediary organizations, and with a view to the relative and sometimes unique benefits of each. Where civil society organizations lack effective capacity, efforts should be redoubled to develop that capacity, and/or to work with intermediaries (regardless of location) that have the capacity to service global South and East groups.

There is no one-size-fits-all organizational approach to advancing the rights and development concerns of LGBTI populations around the globe. The role of different types of intermediaries is an area that requires further study to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of various models. A concern and priority regardless of methodology is for the funds to reach the most affected individuals and groups.

In grant-making, donors should place greater priority on ‘knowledge sharing’ over ‘knowledge transfer’. This should include donor assistance to implementing organisations in the technical knowledge required for writing competitive grant applications (e.g., an adequate understanding of the donor-ascribed meaning of terms such as ‘outputs’, ‘objectives’, as well as how implementing organisations best can communicate context-specific information to donors). Each grant should have a genuine ‘lessons learned’ component, not just a monitoring and evaluation report.

Donor-grantee relationships should focus not only on money transfer, but on investing in human capabilities. For instance, biannual Skype calls might be arranged with partners (whether directly or through intermediaries); skills-building such as community organizing should be addressed; and best practices might be shared horizontally, across implementing partners funded in different regions but working in similar and related fields. In these efforts, great effort should be made to avoid placing upon grantees the burden of too many convenings where participation is implicitly or explicitly mandatory.

Donor-, government-, and institution-funded research and learning must be ‘mainstreamed’ with a view to connecting LGBTI advocacy and assistance programs to larger funding streams and policy priorities.

³ Recommendations related to Partnership Relationships relate to all of the affirmations of the [Joint Communiqué](#) so are not mapped individually.

4. Grant-Making and On-the-Ground Support⁴

There is an ever-pressing need for on-going structural, accessible, flexible and multi-year support to institutions and to civil society aimed at advancing LGBTI rights. As a rule, project funding should be given for 2-3 years, not less, to ensure sustainability.

Project funding should not rely on donor-driven assumptions, without due deference to partner knowledge, as otherwise it can generate ‘project silos’ that may be divorced from any genuine needs assessment. Funding limited to specific donor-driven projects can reduce the efficacy of LGBTI civil society organizations by inadequately resourcing (a) overall administrative costs and (b) long-term strategies needed to tackle systematic LGBTI rights violations. HIV-specific prevention and research funding, too, should be more responsive to LGBTI advocacy and needs, especially the most vulnerable in these communities such as transgender women, LGBTI adolescents and LGBTI communities where anti-gay laws affect their access to treatments.

To the greatest possible extent, governments, funders, civil society organizations and other implementing organizations should involve local LGBTI communities and their allies in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of human rights and development assistance efforts at every level.

In meeting the various needs of LGBTI people on-the-ground, governments can recommend mechanisms for providing ‘safe spaces’ for LGBTI activists to meet, for example, in embassies; formulating joint statements on LGBTI rights along with foundations, other governments, NGOs etc.; and showing visible signs of support (e.g. joining LGBTI marches, monitoring trials, visiting imprisoned LGBTI activists and support for trans-, lesbian- and intersex-led actions). Funding should be flexible in responding to communities needs which may change as political climates and contexts change—even within a particular grant cycle.

Safety and security of activists and communities needs to be an integral part of all community support, diplomatic interventions and grant-making. In addition to considering how programs and activities impact general security for activists and communities, all organizational grant-making should consider whether funding for security needs to be included in the grant.

5. Content and Thematic Priorities

Programmes and support must be designed with respect for local sexual and gender identities and diversities, some of which differ from Western notions of sexual and gender identities and bodily diversity. We need to have a conversation about gender norms, as well as social norms concerning bodies, sexualities and genders. Bilateral and multilateral assistance and private foundations should be gender-conscious, taking into account the potentially devastating side effects of overlooking gender for women and all gender non-conforming people. Donors need to work beyond binaries of male and female, to include people across the sex and gender spectrums.

Within the broad constructs of LGBTI rights, lesbian, trans, lesbian and intersex-specific issues have not been adequately funded and/or addressed politically and publicly by governments, private foundations or civil society. To progress on LGBTI rights, this urgently must change. As governments, donors and civil society add the “I” to “LGBTI,” there must be deliberate discussion of what this means in each region and country of engagement. This must include recognition that the intersex movement is in many ways a distinct movement, with distinct issues and an often different group of people.

The use of social and new media and technical solutions in LGBTI work has not been explored sufficiently, in comparison with investments by bilateral agencies and private foundations in the use of these to advance other social justice causes. Though not a substitute for the core support that so many LGBTI groups urgently need; this gap must be bridged. Funding resources should include investment in new technologies, social media, digital

⁴ Recommendations related to Grant-making and On-the-Ground Support relate to all of the affirmations of the [Joint Communiqué](#) so are not mapped individually.

research methods, and communication capabilities, all needed not only to build LGBTI civil society, but to guarantee its sustainability and the ability to meet its goals.

Implicit throughout these five recommendations is awareness that LGBTI communities and movements have diverse priorities, strategies and methodologies. These diversities should be valued, funded, and recognized as crucial to our collective impact. In this regard, we encourage regionally sensitive investment in:

- LGBTI-affirming faith-based leadership;
- Monitoring rising violence against LGBTI persons worldwide, with due attention to legal reform, strategic litigation efforts, and the pro-active prosecution of perpetrators;
- Educating health staff/doctors in issues related to dignity and respect for the diversity of our bodies (intersex) and gender identities/constructions, as well as implementing programmes focused on preventing, monitoring and responding to institutional violence in medical settings; and
- Migration and refugee needs, including access to healthcare, access to work, and the right to identity papers and social systems in the country of arrival, as well as the right to asylum in cases of LGBTI-specific persecution.

Key Recommendations for Next Conference in Early 2016

Finally, in preparation for the next LGBTI donor conference, organized by the Government of the Netherlands:

- Governments should fund a preparatory NGO forum.
- Governments should prepare a report that quantifies their actual funding of LGBTI human rights, including HIV-related funding that has a genuine human rights component for these populations, as well as through which types of funding mechanisms and intermediaries.
- Governments should participate in efforts by the Global Philanthropy Project to produce a case studies/good practices report.
- LGBTI groups must be engaged in identifying case studies and good practices; and space should be created for those examples to be shared.
- A report should be prepared about the role of different types of intermediaries in order to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of various models.

This work cannot be done without adequate resources.