Cycles of Displacement

Understanding Exclusion, Discrimination and Violence Against LGBTQI People in Humanitarian Contexts

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

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Executive Summary

While systematic evidence on violence against LGBTQI people in conflict and humanitarian settings is limited, local LGBTQI serving organizations and international humanitarian organizations have documented and exposed the threats to the physical and psychological safety, human rights, health, and economic security of LGBTQI individuals as they navigate conflict and displacement. Six of the current most pressing humanitarian crises are unfolding in contexts with laws that criminalize same sex relationships.[1]

Nevertheless, humanitarian responses continue to exclude LGBTQI people and communities, subjecting them to even higher risk of harm. In an effort to improve our approach as a humanitarian agency to reach, support, and advocate with and for LGBTQI people affected by humanitarian crises, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) undertook research to better understand the experiences of LGBTQI people in conflict and humanitarian settings. Through key informant interviews with 35 actors from LGBTQI-led and serving organizations, researchers, and activists supporting communities in humanitarian contexts in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia and the Pacific, this research explored the experiences of LGBQI people living through humanitarian crises and sought recommendations for initiating and improving research and programs with LGBTQI communities.

In our commitment to putting the voices of LGBTQI serving organizations at the front and center of this work, this report opens with commentaries and calls to action from four representatives of LGBTQI-led organizations working in contexts of conflict and displacement. Highlighting perspectives from Kenya, the Bahamas, the Philippines, and Tunisia, these commentaries set the tone of the report by responding to the research findings and outlining what LGBTQI-led and serving organizations want from and expect of international humanitarian actors moving forward.

[1] See Salazar Godoy, N. (2020).

The report then presents the study findings on the forms and manifestations of violence and discrimination against LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings, with a focus on family violence. While the research primarily explored family violence in the context of conflict and displacement, many key informants also recounted examples of violence and discrimination that go beyond the family as perpetrators; therefore, this report also describes non-family violence and discrimination occurring in humanitarian contexts. A theme that arose continuously throughout this study is how separation from family of origin (often at a young age) may lead to or put an LGBTQI person at increased risk of other types of violence and far-reaching discrimination. This displacement creates conditions in which LGBTQI people are at high risk of poly-victimization, where each experience of violence or discrimination is compounding and linked with prior experiences.

Key informants emphasized that families of origin are often the first and ongoing site of violence, where LGBTQI people experience different manifestations of violence from a very young age. These forms of violence are then further molded by displacement due to conflict, natural disaster, or environmental hazards, which augment a continuation of prior displacement from family, community of origin, and places of shelter. Displacement due to humanitarian causes can exacerbate pre-existing forms of family violence and stigma, in addition to depriving LGBTQI individuals from the relative privacy and security they may have sought or built within their social networks before the onset of a crisis.

Key informants also highlighted the many ways in which humanitarian architecture can contribute to non-family-based violence in humanitarian settings. Access to basic needs such as food, shelter, income, and health and other essential services are often governed by binary and exclusive concepts of gender and the household, which serve to exclude LGBTQI people, especially trans people. The report explores the ways in which gender and heteronormative humanitarian response systems, as well as oppression related to age, gender, and the religious and legal context within a setting, intersect and influence family- and non-family-based violence, discrimination, and exclusion for LGBTQI people living in humanitarian settings.

The report ends with suggestions for approaches and services that humanitarian actors can employ in supporting LGBTQI rights, and specific calls to action for donors, humanitarian organizations, and researchers to better learn about and meet the needs of LGBTQI people living in humanitarian contexts throughout the world. The findings and recommendations highlighted in this report are complemented by recommendations for ethical research and learning with and for LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings in a secondary report.[2]

[2] See Roth, D., Blackwell, A., Canavera, M., Falb, K. (2021).

LGBTQI-Led Organizations in Contexts of Conflict and Displacement: Commentaries and Call to Action

These commentaries and calls to action are a community-led contribution to the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Scoping Study on LGBTQI people's experience in humanitarian settings entitled "Cycles of Displacement: Understanding Violence, Discrimination, and Exclusion of LGBTQI People in Humanitarian Contexts."Led by human rights defenders across four countries, these commentaries spotlight the realities of LGBTQI violence and discrimination in humanitarian settings.

Led by human rights defenders across four countries, these commentaries also strive to answer two fundamental questions: (1) what do LGBTQI-led and serving organizations want from and expect of international humanitarian actors in emergency contexts? and (2) what is our call to action for the humanitarian community in support of LGBTQI people?

Alesandra Ogeta, Jinsiangu, & Seanny Odero, Trans*Alliance, Kenya

This report highlights discrimination and violence against LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings, including in the context of family violence. The report recognizes that "LGBTI people in humanitarian contexts face double displacement within and outside of both their families of origin and their chosen families." As in many places around the world, in Kenya LGBTQI people grow up in violence from the outset, especially if their identities and sexualities are perceived to be non-normative. Normativity usually stems from patriarchal social norms which are typically prejudiced, leaving LGBTQI people vulnerable to sexual assault and rape, exploitation, abuse, trafficking, domestic violence and disruption of basic security, health, justice and social services.

In Kenya, state-condoned violence targeted at LGBTQI people has reached fever pitch in humanitarian settings. Kenya hosts a significant number of displaced people, several thousand of whom are claiming asylum from neighboring African countries on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity, including political asylum seekers. As a program supporting refugee initiatives in Kenya, Jinsiangu and Trans*Alliance Kenya have witnessed cycles of displacement that have provided an enabling environment for violence to thrive and limited life sustaining help for LGBTQI people in emergency situations. In Kenya, we have witnessed increasingly antagonistic dynamics between LGBTQI refugees, humanitarian actors and implementing agencies, and the government of Kenya, which has culminated in forced evictions from refugee camps. An attempt by humanitarian actors to directly link LGBTQI refugees to Kenyan LGBTQI groups has met serious resistance, perceived by LGBTQI refugees as irrelevant to the issues they face.

There has been increasing consensus among LGBTQI refugees in Kenya to affirm their SOGIE status and to focus on resettlement outside of Kenya and Africa entirely. There is a general feeling that existing asylum processes are failing to meet the rights that LGBTQI refugees feel entitled to; and this had resulted in public outrage and demonstrations outside UNHCR's offices in Nairobi and in Kakuma that saw LGBTQI refugees calling international attention to discrimination and abuse by social service providers, and the increasing number of homophobic attacks refugees experience in their protection centers. Humanitarian actors and the government of Kenya attempted to do damage control to de-escalate the tensions, but their efforts proved futile. An advisory issued by Africa Human Rights Commission stated that the remaining refugees' refusal to move was only generating further negative attention, making them more vulnerable. The same advisory questioned why LGBTQI refugees could not 'keep quiet,' and further isolated them by denying them access to services and social protection measures.

Moreover, LGBTQI individual rights are not recognized by the Kenyan state, and this seriously inhibits humanitarian capacity to protect; it problematizes both their obligation to protect—under what circumstances—and the consequences of fulfilling these obligations from a legal perspective. A case in point, in May 2019, the Kenyan court declined to repeal sections 162 and 165 of the penal code criminalizing same sex conduct. The ripple effect saw the Kenyan government subsequently place an eviction notice on safe housing, indicating LGBTQI refugees must leave their protection centers. Humanitarian response at that time was to provide short-term funding for LGBTQI refugees to find alternative accommodation—a decision not accepted by several refugees, who were fearful of the 'hostile' Kenyan reaction and recounted a mob killing and isolated incidences in protection centers in Kakuma. Underlying tensions remain between humanitarian actors and refugees as there is a gap between LGBTQI people's recognized rights, the understanding of those rights (which differs between states, agencies, and refugees), and the actual realization of those rights. The result is that international human rights norms are often disregarded.

LGBTQI refugees in Kenya face heightened risks of gender-based violence (GBV), a result of multiple and complex unmet social, medical, and economic needs, as well as intersecting oppressions based on race, ethnicity, nationality, language, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. Many LGBTQI refugees have inadequate access to information about how and where they can claim asylum. LGBTQI asylum-seekers and refugees often feel unable to approach or discuss their situation with designated authorities. They frequently perceive that authorities or other actors have no experience or exposure to LGBTQI issues, and may, additionally, be unable or unwilling to protect them. Abusive treatment by other asylum-seekers at and near reception centers and insensitive treatment at the hands of employees during registration and screening have been documented. Lack of systematic and comprehensive data on the number and types of claims makes it difficult to assess the overall recognition rate. Adjudicators and lawyers lack a sufficient understanding of SOGIE issues and the complexities encompassed within the concept of gender identity and the varied experiences of transgender and intersex people. Continued use of the "discretion" requirement, under which asylum applicants are expected to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity, was also identified as an area of concern.

Many LGBTQI asylum claims in Kenya arise due to persecution perpetrated by the victim's own family, neighbors, work colleagues or other non-state actors. Crimes committed in the name of honor, rape, domestic violence, incest and forced marriages are often perpetrated by non-state actors against LGBTQI persons who fail to conform to expected roles. These harms often occur in the home or outside of public view. If the State criminalizes same-sex relations, contacting authorities for protection is especially difficult, thereby highlighting the central role of family-centered approaches in health and rights programs. Families share knowledge of their children and are active decision makers helping identify goals for their children, and underpinning the principles of trust and equal partnerships. Procedural issues—including (1) incidents of bias and invasive questioning by interviewers, (2) a lack of confidentiality and privacy, (3) the culture of disbelief associated with asylum claims based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and (4) the use of forced medicalization and

pathologization processes targeting transgender and intersex persons—raise several human rights, human dignity, and ethical concerns, including the rights to privacy and bodily integrity.

Detention of LGBTQI asylum-seekers and refugees in Kenya exposes them to a heightened risk of further abuse, including sexual assault. Transgender detainees can be kept in isolation and denied access to critical medical care such as hormonal therapy. Refugees and asylum-seekers in Kenya who have medical issues relating to their HIV status may have particular medical needs that are not being met in detention, or could be subject to discrimination due to their HIV status. Access to LGBTQI detainees by lawyers and other supportive persons is often denied or made more difficult by the fact that the detention center is in a remote location. Lack of access to legal and other support increases the likelihood of refoulement as the claimant's ability to make a viable claim is compromised by detention. Many LGBTQI refugees in Kenya are attacked and harassed by local people and other asylum-seekers and refugees. There is also lack of sufficient police protection. LGBTQI individuals are reluctant to report abuse for fear of retaliation by their abusers or a belief that police will either not act or will inflict further harm on them. They may fear arrest and detention. This visibility presents immediate security challenges for refugees in Kenya. The mistreatment by private actors, combined with a lack of protection by authorities, leads to a feeling of isolation and highlights the multiple discriminations this population faces. Long waiting times for completion of the asylum process is a significant protection issue, exacerbating the security issues and multiple discriminations LGBTQI asylum-seekers and refugees may encounter in Kenya. This is a concern that LGBTQI asylum-seekers and refugees share with many other groups at heightened risk.

Many LGBTQI refugees in Kenya experience widespread discrimination when accessing housing, employment, education, health, and psychological care and other social services. Many are evicted from their housing and fired from jobs once their sexuality or gender identity is revealed. The frequent lack of any financial support from families or communities results in double marginalization, where the combined effect of being a refugee and being LGBTQI is compounded. Without access to a means to support themselves, LGBTQI refugees resort to sex work to survive. LGBTQI individuals who are HIV positive can suffer the double stigma of being a sexual minority and living with HIV. This can create barriers to accessing critical HIV prevention and care services. Humanitarian actors and its agencies ostensibly also offer links to services run by Kenyan LGBTQI organizations, many of which do important advocacy and activist work around sexuality. Yet most of them do not work on the specific challenges of refugee marginality. Many NGOs and other service providers may be reluctant to help LGBTQI asylum-seekers and refugees in Kenya given the conservative attitudes of NGOs and lack of understanding of issues relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. Sometimes, agencies themselves have a policy on assisting LGBTQI persons, but their front line workers (or country staff) remain prejudiced and unwelcoming especially in contexts where same-sex conduct is criminalized. Adverse attitudes and/or lack of understanding of the dynamics and risks associated with persons making claims based on sexual orientation and gender identity remain widespread and widely misunderstood.

In conclusion, overall, the humanitarian context narrows and restricts how LGBTQI people in Kenya can live and build safe spaces and communities, triggering and exacerbating existing gender inequality and power dynamics within the family as well as creating or exacerbating new pressures that play into family dynamics. The evidence presented herein demonstrates that the framing LGBTQI refugees' rights as conceived by the humanitarian imagination differs from those rights as implemented by aid organizations within local communities; this illuminates the inadequacies of the narrative of 'protection of rights' when engaging with LGBTQI refugees Through this lens, dynamics between humanitarian actors, their implementing partners, and the refugee community are seen in terms of the power relations within which they are embedded, and that protection is based on certain assumptions and perceptions of how beneficiaries will behave. We have also witnessed increased attention drawing on rights claims in order to link to global LGBTQI politics and vocally resisting attempts at conciliation. Notably, expanded accessibility of communication technology means that sexuality activists in the minority north can also have a presence in camps like Kakuma and get to experience the lived realities of LGBTQI refugees in protection centers.

Additionally, LGBTQI refugees in Kenya have also utilized their support from international allies—including LGBTQI groups in Canada, the United States and Europe, and individuals who have expressed an interest in advocating for LGBTQI refugees after hearing about their plight through fora such as social media—in order to put pressure on humanitarian actors and their implementing agencies to act; yet, these self-protection strategies have arguably rendered the LGBTQI refugees who practice them even less "protectable" by both humanitarian actors and local Kenyan LGBTQI rights organizations, compounding the difficulties they face in remaining in Kenya. Lastly, international solidarity has come to be perceived to be located not within global protection institutions, but rather with individual advocates who might be able to leverage pressure on institutions from an external positioning, and this further undermines humanitarian actors' and their implementing agencies' positions as protection actors.

Therefore, enhancing the protection space for LGBTQI people in forced displacement is a problem as urgent as it is important, both because of the gravity of the risks and rights violations they experience daily, and because humanitarian principles demand a proactive response.

Imperatively, addressing these protection gaps calls for:

- Convening meaningful dialogues between local LGBTQI organizations and humanitarian actors by designing comprehensive referral pathways that give LGBTQI people in forced displacement options in accessing services; developing safe and anonymous feedback mechanisms for LGBTQI people in forced displacement that foster accountability while preserving confidentiality, including (1) conducting preliminary needs assessments to establish formal or informal peer support groups, and to determine how humanitarian actors can support LGBTQI people in displacement in strengthening protective peer networks, and (2) developing protocols for urgent cases, emergency situations, and imminent immediate threats faced by LGBTQI people, and setting aside funds to carry out these protocols.
- Expanding discourse and programming for LGBTQI people in forced displacement outside the GBV context, this meanspushing for technical cooperation, standardized service delivery approaches, mainstreaming LGBTQI protection issues, adopting multi-sectoral approaches, pioneering gender accreditation programs for humanitarian actors, and establishing a culture of learning and continual improvement that promotes respect for diversity, gender equality and LGBTQI rights.
- Implementing inclusive workplace policies, strengthening existing workplace diversity policies, supporting LGBTQI staff members, and regularly communicating the organization's commitment to an office environment free of discrimination. Wherever possible, hire people who are openly LGBTQI to be on staff at UNHCR field offices and partner organizations.
- Expanding the refugee investment eco-system: (1) diversifying a pipeline of opportunities/ humanitarian ventures to include enterprise development, opportunities for private equity, technical assistance, and debt financing; and (2) tapping into blended financing (philanthropic investors, technical assistance funds, risk insurance, and design stage grants) for investments to match the scale of the refugee crisis. The sector needs to mobilize the full capital spectrum—and will need a diverse coalition of capital and partners to work together to do so.

Alexus D'Marco, D'Marco Foundation, The Bahamas

This report is the soundtrack of the lives of many LGBTQI persons from around the world and especially in The Caribbean, who often have a difficult task in being their true self. Onset displacement is amplified in that it starts from the home, and at a very young age, for many that identify as LGBTQI. The difference between one's sexual orientation and one's gender identity is not seen as a separation to the outside world. At a very young age, basic human rights needs such as access to food, shelter, and education is denied to LGBTQI youth, thus beginning the start of "The Cycles of Displacement." As a trans woman and trans activist living in the Caribbean, I too have been displaced. In society, we face many serious risks, including lack of access to justice systems, education, employment, housing and healthcare. The LGBTQI experience comes with severe discrimination and violence, as well as marginalization, abuse, and poverty.

As noted in the report from one of the key informants, most LGBTQI people "grow up in family violence from the outset. That's where most comes from—the family. In the Caribbean context once they expect or it is assumed that they are LGBT, then they no longer exist." LGBTQI people are at high risk of abusive treatment by family members and others. Many have experienced this abuse after leaving the family setting and finding a place to stay with a friend, who may be a part of the community; some of these initially displaced LGBTQI people are forced to stay in the cycle of displacement, having to perform sex acts in order to eat, to sleep, and to keep a roof over their heads.

Displacement can lead to violence, especially for young people, who depend on family for support. The issues surrounding the onset of this vicious cycle must be addressed. I can recall how natural disasters such as a hurricane displaced thousands in The Bahamas. I can recall when a lesbian couple that was displaced due to hurricane Dorian suffered rejection when trying to access housing; the landlord said to them, "I'm not renting to no gay women." We see here that the cycle continued from being displaced by the hurricane to being denied housing. The obstacles the displaced LGBTQI human being has to overcome are too many. Accessing local state shelter during a natural disaster is a challenge for many. The privacy of LGBTQI people should be respected at all times, and a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or bodily status should be recorded in a manner that respects this when seeking help or assistance from agencies. We see this right to privacy and human dignity is often ignored by family, state, employers, and state agencies. As NGOs, we should take care to ensure that outreach and registration activities do not increase the risks that LGBTQI persons face in their cycle of displacement.

With COVID-19 upon us we see that community is even more burdened. Many are without housing, food, and employment. The safety and wellbeing for this community has been at risk and is now experiencing even greater risk. The Caribbean, which is now seeing climate change at its worst, has even threatened the existence of this community, who are often excluded in accessing state assistance. Yes, this is the harsh reality of the cycle of displacement. Forced migration is the new way out for many LGBTQI citizens.

It is now time for action; we can no longer do business as usual. The engagement process must include members from the LGBTQI community. Collaborations with decision makers and gate keepers, the state, and state agencies is critical in moving forward.

We must begin to work with our social services, health, justice, education, and housing ministries to combat theses cycles of displacement. Having a seat at the table is important moving forward.

Support must be given to NGOs on the ground to carry out this work, to protect citizens of this community who are experiencing this type of displacement. There must be a clear call to donors who provide funding to states or NGOs for these interventions that no one should be left behind in the response. I expect that through this we can begin to bridge the gap in protections experienced by LGBTQI communities and burn down the bridge of displacement. It takes education and sensitization.

Moreover, the privacy of LGBTQI refugees should be respected at all times. In a Human Rights report in 2012[3], a bisexual refugee and her child living in Uganda were beaten by other refugees in the camp who disapproved of her sexual orientation, as well as removed from the queue for food along with other LGBTQI refugees. They were told that if they formed their own queue, the food providers would not assist them. Thus, they were often denied access to food.

Challenges for LGBTQI people occur throughout the entire cycle of forced displacement. Risks may occur at all stages in the provision of assistance and protection, including during registration, the provision of aid, and with community-based services and durable solutions. LGBTQI people may face the same—or even greater—challenges after the initial emergency phase is over and can be at risk of harm throughout the post-emergency phase. What makes the risks LGBTQI people face unique compared to other persons of concern is that these risks do not necessarily decrease after the initial emergency is over. On the contrary, LGBTQI people may face the same, if not higher risks, after the initial phase of the emergency has ended. This is due to the collapse of normal coping mechanisms, their exposure to formal systems of assistance, the scrutiny and categorizations of their bodies, identities, and families, and the lack of inclusion of their needs in response systems.

Here is my call to action:

❶ Nothing for Us Without Us

There has to be inclusion of LGBTQI community members from the program design, development, and implementation. The community that is affected must be included and their voices must be heard.

❷ Find Practical Solutions

We must begin to find the practical solutions to the community's needs. This includes Programs designed to address the needs of the community and interventions that can bring about change. Safe Housing is a great need for many; this is just one of the practical solutions to address the cycle of displacement.

❸ Collaborate

This is critical for us moving forward, we need to collaborate with our governments, gate keepers, decision makers, and allies to push the needle and to stop the cycle of displacement in our societies. It will not happen overnight, but it is a start. I think holding the State accountable is also important. Keeping records of human right violations against LGBTQI people in countries is also important. NGOs can start using these records to map and present good data on LGBTQI citizens to governments.

[3] See Roeder, L. W. (ed.). (2014).

Justin Francis Bionat, Youth Voices Count, The Philippines

In recent years, the Philippines has been ravaged by typhoons, leaving much of the coastal and lowland communities in need of immediate humanitarian relief as flooding left many individuals without safe shelter. In the Southern Philippines, skirmishes between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and identified rebel groups have forced communities to seek refuge away from the violent encounters. Needless to say, just like many other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the Philippines is a site for immediate humanitarian aid in response to various natural calamities and political conflicts.

Despite some movements towards legal equality, the lack of legal protections for LGBTQI people means that they are especially vulnerable when faced with the countries' many humanitarian emergencies. In order to grasp the current situation in the Philippines, it is important to understand the contextual backdrop of LGBTQI rights in the Philippines. This requires some discussion on available legislation that protects persons of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expression, and sex characteristics. The SOGIE Equality Bill, also known as the Anti-Discrimination Bill (ADB), is a piece of legislation intended to prevent various types of discrimination against people based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. It is currently pending in the legislative body of the Philippine government.

Whether humanitarian crises are brought about by natural or man-made factors, it is clear that the structural and systematic oppression of LGBTQI people is rooted in the lack of supportive and affirming social and legal systems. For example, the lack of protection and reporting mechanisms, legal remedies, and linkage to care and support for cases of discrimination and violence towards LGBTQI individuals leaves them vulnerable to further oppression, especially in humanitarian settings.

In addition to the "pandemic of family violence" described in the report, more serious issues may arise like disownment and homelessness, forced conversion therapy, corrective rape and sexual abuse, sexual health concerns like increased risk of HIV and other STIs, and mental health issues leading to self-harm or suicide.

The unexpected humanitarian crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated human rights issues faced by LGBTQI communities to levels similar to conflict or humanitarian settings. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has a global-scale impact on communities which bring a biomedical and health security issue into the picture.

A study conducted by Youth Voices Count[4], a regional network for adolescent and youth LGBTQI, evinced that during these lockdowns and quarantine measures, social distress faced by LGBTQI adolescents and young people puts them at high risk of domestic violence and gender- based violence (GBV). The limited mobility and forced quarantine measures creates situations wherein disclosure of sexual orientation, gender identity, and sexual behaviors becomes inevitable. This disclosure puts LGBTQI youth at risk for violence, especially if they are unable to escape these abusive environments.

In these situations, there is reinforcement of power, abuse, and control, leading to sexual and gender-based violence especially when any form of legal redress or protection mechanism is unavailable or scarce. Unfortunately, services that respond to domestic and sexual abuse, such as shelters and crisis centers, have been disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Where there are available services, oftentimes they are not sensitized and trained to handle LGBTQI cases or are not designed to be inclusive of LGBTQI populations.

Drawing from the study conducted by the IRC, the narrative and anecdotal approach ensured that the lived experiences and emotions of the key informant interviews conveyed the glaring realities of LGBTQI individuals in humanitarian settings. The "double burden" described in the study is reflective of how the lack of accessible food, health, shelter, livelihood,

[4] See Acaba, J. & Bionat, J. F. (2020).

and protection in conflict and humanitarian settings is coupled with pre-existing negative and dismissive attitudes towards LGBTQI persons. Furthermore, identifying the perpetrators of the violence, whether from immediate family members, close peer circles, or state actors, is key to also identifying the proper redress and solutions to inhumane and oppressive acts.

Violence stemming from abusive and unaccepting households has dangerous long-term effects on the wellbeing and lives of LGBTQI youth. In the Philippines and probably across Asia- Pacific, conditional acceptance may dictate the dynamics and relationships between LGBTQI youth and their family members. In this evolving and uncertain situation, where their sense of identity and accomplishments, such as their education and employment, are sources of acceptance, and these sources of acceptance are no longer there for them, they are suddenly re-exposed to violence and abuse. Anecdotes from the community show that only if the LGBTQI person acts a certain way, contributes to the family coffers, or plays an integral role in the family decision making, are they accepted. With the vulnerabilities very high for LGBTQI youth, there are now increasing cases of family violence, intimate partner violence, and domestic violence. However, the problem is that in the Philippines there is no good data on violence, making it difficult to concretely provide solutions to the issues mentioned.

From these unfavorable realities facing LGBTQI communities in humanitarian settings in the Philippines, it is clear that in order to address these issues we must approach them from various angles. The approach should target the structural and systematic inequalities faced by the LGBTQI population in humanitarian settings by setting up necessary legislation with strong and sustainable protection mechanisms. It is also important to create an ecosystem of care and support around these communities most affected by violence and abuse. In order to build that ecosystem we must assist communities in recovering from the trauma felt from violence. As traumas are collectively created and felt, sustained by societies and structures that see LGBTQI communities as deviants and abhorrent, it is important to change these conditions and reimagine how we can build more affirming and supportive structures and systems.

In an opinion piece by Ryan Silverio, Regional Coordinator of ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, he calls for "accountability, meaningful participation, and serious engagement with LGBTQ+ organizations rather than a top-down, tokenistic approach." He also emphasizes that we must approach humanitarian issues with "intersectional responses, recognizing that more often than not, marginalized persons and groups are those facing serious risks when emergency strikes."[5]

The recommendations provided by Silverio resonate with how an inclusive and gendered lens must be applied in relief response and violence prevention during humanitarian settings for LGBTQI persons. Increased investment from donors and international bodies must be consistently advocated for by civil society to increase community-led responses. This means that the unique needs of the most marginalized communities, particularly LGBTQI, in humanitarian settings must be considered with a high level of priority. The investment, earlier mentioned, that is to be provided to LGBTQI populations must be dedicated to lobbying initiatives which produce new legislation that protect LGBTQI populations from violence and discrimination. It must concurrently mobilize violence prevention campaigns, create infrastructures for survivors of violence, prioritize education and knowledge initiatives to sensitize frontline workers working with LGBTQI populations, and set up sustainable and community-led projects that cater to LGBTQI populations.

With the protection of LGBTQI communities from abuse in humanitarian settings, we might just be able to end that "pandemic of family violence" and ensure that our spaces are supportive and affirming of LGBTQI populations without any hint of prejudice, stigma, and discrimination. We call to "leave no one behind" but only if we take on these steps to support LGBTQI populations in the Philippines and abroad, can we really achieve our human rights objectives.

[5] See Silverio, R. (2020).

Badr Baabou, DAMJ (La Association Tunisienne pour la Justice et l'Egalite), Tunisia

This research report has the merit of being a mine of information on the issue of LGBTQI++ people in humanitarian contexts; in fact, it describes with great fidelity and in a broad perspective, LGBTQI++ experiences by citing the first sources of violence, i.e. domestic violence carried out directly within the home by members of the nuclear family or extra-familial violence, and continuing with reports of contextual violence, such as violence suffered in the primary environment during armed conflicts or during urgent humanitarian situations such as natural disasters, in camps or in reception structures and services, or within the humanitarian structures themselves.

In its second section, this report highlights and analyzes the factors that shape the situation of LGBTQI++, such as religion, gender, age, socio-economic status. It thus includes an analytical reading of the context to first identify and better understand the very sources of multi factorial violence; the goal is to indicate what comprehensive responses to pre-existing obstacles and what types of programs should be put in place to address them.

This report therefore focuses on the manifestations of violence, its causes, and the related factors which allow for a good analysis of the problem; however, given that it is a global report tracing the experience of resource persons from various countries and regions of the globe, we note that it is always important to contextualize the different situations because despite certain apparent similarities, the differences and specificities of each context are important. Each country has its own political, legal and socio-economic context, hence, the importance of an analytical vision that takes into consideration the 'maps of influence' or 'power dynamics' in a given context.

From a methodological point of view, this report has done an important work in reviewing the existing literature on the subject; the report is therefore well anchored in its historical context and values a cumulative approach to knowledge.

Apart from these broad outlines, there are certain points that I feel it is important to address and deepen and which can enrich the work and make the examples illustrating it more exhaustive:

Firstly, I would like to cite one of the manifestations of violence, that of disinheriting the LGBTQI++ person. It is a very common practice and widely practiced in different contexts; meaning, the family or the community puts pressure on the person to comply with the demands and social norms of the group—conforming and self-limiting or controlling. This reinforces isolation and deepens pre-existing problems.

Secondly, the problem of intra-community violence, which is a phenomenon that we must address with courage. In fact in environments hostile to LGBTQI++, where we have a repressive legal framework criminalizing diversity, the police often blackmail people to recruit them as informants. (This is a practice that is widespread in Tunisia, where the police recruit members of the community to denounce their peers. This practice is especially widespread among transgender people and sex workers.) These people, on the other hand, sometimes gain a few privileges or a certain margin of freedom. Here we have a clear illustration of a case where the victim becomes the persecuting executioner.

The last point concerns the lack of mention of women human rights defenders, who themselves may be in unstable contexts and may be displaced, as their visibility and positions are factors that increase the risks they run.

In its final section, the report suggests a comprehensive and empathetic approach that humanitarian organizations should take that respects the needs of LGBTQI people.

In another sense, and in contexts of humanitarian emergencies, we expect humanitarian actors to:

- Play their role to the fullest extent possible and ensure the protection of community members by facilitating access to appropriate resources for social and health assistance. This includes through predefined mechanisms (thought out and designed upstream in an inclusive manner with NGOs and local activists and institutions) and the adoption of selection criteria sensitive to the urgency of requests. This protection work must include an important advocacy component because, in certain difficult contexts and in the absence of a legal framework that protects LGBTQI++ in countries or zones of conflict and/or displacement, humanitarian actors play an important role in acting as a bridge between the authorities and LGBTQI++ and LGBTQI++ organizations.
- Build strong partnerships on a clear egalitarian basis, reinforcing the role played by local LGBTQI++ actors and respecting their reading and analysis of their own context. This type of partnership needs to be strengthened by a mutual exchange of experience and expertise, where sharing is done horizontally and where local organizations are seen as true partners and not only as actors implementing activities and as a source of indicators.
- Participate in strengthening local LGBTQI++ organizations and groups by helping them recruit staff and covering some of the management costs of the association, instead of participating with occasional support that is not sustainable.
- Have clear policies that respect the rights of LGBTQI++ people. This can be reflected in the inclusion of clear clauses, with implicit reference to LGBTQI++ rights, in their charters of ethics and values and their employment policies. For organizations operating in hostile or unfavorable environments, and with teams already in place, we call on them to establish good practice at the level of the implementing staff for the respect of the human dignity of LGBTQI++ people.

Call to action for humanitarian structures:

- Following an inclusive process at all levels, strategic/programmatic planning and operational planning is essential for the success of any work with local communities. Therefore, approach LGBTQI++ organizations and LGBTQI++ leaders when starting new programs in order to identify stakeholders.
- Develop services that are adapted to the needs and specificities of the community by setting out clear inclusive criteria for recruitment processes, and strengthen and encourage the recruitment of LGBTQI++ employees, ensuring a professional environment where they can flourish.
- Ensure funding for medium and small LGBTQI++ organizations.
  - Ensure funding for local associations, to include institutional strengthening and governance strengthening;
  - Help local associations to go to scale;
  - Support and strengthen local coalitions and south-south networks.
- Adopt a comprehensive approach that respects the human rights of LGBTQI++ people and their personal data.
- Adapt an approach to promote and encourage mediation techniques with families in certain contexts where the family does not reject their LGBTQI++ member, and strengthen families to cope with pressure from their local communities.
- Set up a complaint system in humanitarian structures (reception or service structures) allowing victims of violence or discrimination based on SOGIESC to report any violation of their human rights, especially in a hostile context, which represses and further marginalizes them.
- Measure the extent of violence against LGBTQI++ people through annual analytical reports and participate in the dissemination of those reports, with a view to the technical, human, and political capacities of humanitarian structures.
- Speak out and take an active stance in meetings with decision makers and leaders to improve the legal framework and push for the adoption of laws that can reduce the marginalization of community members and combat the domestic, social, and structural violence they face.

Introduction

A Note on Language

The acronym LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex) is used throughout this report as a frame to describe people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). This terminology is Western-centric and may be limiting in the way it attempts to put a spectrum of diversity into categories. However, other terms such as people of diverse SOGIESC, non-normative genders and sexualities, sexual and gender minorities, and others also risk "othering" or depersonalizing groups of people.

Additionally, it is important to note that every individual has all three components that terms LGBTQI and SOGIESC lay out: a sexual orientation, a gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics. These elements interact within individuals and often interplay differently within small groups, communities, and broader societies.

Thus, the authors recognize the limitations of using the term LGBTQI for this report and those working with LGBTQI people should seek to listen to and to understand the variations of sexual orientations, gender identities and/or expressions, and sex characteristics, across diverse social and cultural landscapes.

Violence is a pervasive and wide-reaching phenomenon that transcends geographies, languages, political, religious and cultural belief systems.[6] Globally, 30%[7] of women experience physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetime and 1 billion children (nearly half of the world's children)[8] will experience abuse in childhood. Violence stems from abuse of power and is used in a variety of settings, including within families, between groups including state and non-state actors, as well as across national boundaries, such as in situations of conflict or war. Violence is used as a tool to control and punish people, and to reinforce hierarchy; it is a human rights violation that often has long-lasting effects on its victims and their loved ones. One of the lesser-studied forms of violence is violence perpetrated against individuals who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Intersex (LGBTQI). This violence is perpetrated because of pervasive homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and intersexphobia or interphobia. Violence against LGBTQI people intersects with sexism and ageism to create a unique context and experience of abuse.

Evidence on violence towards LGBTQI people is insufficient to establish global estimates; however, existing data and anecdotal evidence suggest violence towards LGBTQI people is wide-reaching. In the United States, the 2017 National Crime Victimization Survey found that LGBT people are 2.7 times more likely to be the victim of a violent crime than non LGBT people.[9] Even less is known about violence against LGBTQI people in the context of conflict and displacement, where existing supportive family and community structures and dynamics may be uprooted, remade, or exacerbated. A recent World Bank report, *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Contexts Affected by Fragility, Conflict and Violence*[10] highlights that in the eleven most pressing humanitarian crises (in terms of needs by the millions of people for humanitarian assistance), six of these

6 See Flores, A. R., Langton, L., Meyer, I., & Romero, I. (2020).

7 See García-Moreno, C., Pallitto, C., Devries, K., Stöckl, H., Watts, C., & Abrahams, N. (2013).

8 See Hillis, S., Mercy, J., Amobi, A., & Kress, H. (2016).

9 See Flores, A. R., Langton, L., Meyer, I.,& Romero, I (2020).

10 See Salazar Godoy, N. (2020).

SAFE AT HOME

This study was commissioned as part of the IRC's Safe at Home project, which is led by the Violence Prevention and Response Technical Unit, with generous support from United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. The project seeks to build better mechanisms for prevention and response to family violence using an intersectional lens. For this reason, the report contains a specific focus on LGBTQI people's experiences of family violence.

crises are in places with laws that criminalize same sex relationships. Country-level analyses from conflict and displacement settings highlight significant acts of violence towards LGBTQI populations. For example, in Iraq, in 2017 IraQueer and its partners documented over 200 cases of deaths perpetrated on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.[11] Looking at discrimination and exclusion globally, the F&M Global Barometer of Gay Rights (GBGR) reports that between 2011 and 2017, the world mean score for gay rights rose 2.8 percentage points. Yet, 71% of countries received a failing grade in 2017[12] classified as F for "persecuting" LGBT populations. Additionally, *The Social Acceptance of LGBT People in 174 Countries* report (2019) found that while global acceptance of LGBT people is increasing overall, acceptance remains polarized.[13]

While research on violence against LGBTQI people in conflict and humanitarian settings is limited, several international humanitarian organizations have explored threats facing LGBTQI communities from the perspectives of economic development, disaster risk reduction, and human rights, while innumerable local LGBTQI-serving organizations continue to uncover, highlight, and advocate for greater inclusion in humanitarian response and realization of their rights.

A report from the Women's Refugee Commission exploring the forms of violence, discrimination, and inclusion against LGBTQI people in conflict and humanitarian settings suggests that some of the biggest risks of violence lie within families, for example being outed by family members or family use of corrective rape (against lesbians).[14] Another recent report highlighted the challenge of displaced LGBTQI people in integrating into new settings where they may face a myriad of obstacles including

[11] See IraQueer, MADRE, and Outright Action International. (2019).

[12] See F&M Global Barometer of Gay Rights. (n.d.).

[13] See Flores, A. R. (2019).

[14] See Women's Refugee Commission. (2016).

the legal framework, access to education, healthcare, and significant challenges to personal security.[15]

Despite the uptake of the Yogyakarta Principles[16] by UN agencies including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the inclusion of the definition of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) in line with international human rights language, the structural limitations faced by LGBTQI persons in emergency situations, coupled with the discrimination they experience from authorities and agencies, leads to their continued exclusion from protection, health care, and other basic needs in humanitarian settings[17], further contributing to their physical and psychological harm. Organizations have documented the multiple ways in which LGBTQI people are often targeted by security forces during emergencies or discriminated against as they navigate asylum systems, in addition to experiencing discrimination on the part of aid organizations when seeking protection and support.[18, 19] For example, research conducted by Oxfam (2007) revealed that, following the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, transgender women were denied access to temporary shelters because the gender listed on their identification documents did not match their appearance.[20] Implicit discrimination is also common, such as that documented in a report on the 2010 Haiti earthquake response effort, which found that gender-specific food distribution queues excluded LGBT people from accessing aid.[21] Increased consideration and involvement of LGBTQI populations in both research and humanitarian response is needed to adequately understand and respond to the needs of people of diverse SOGIESC.

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15 See Akram (2019).

16 See Yogyakarta Principles. (2007).

17 See Rumbach, J., & Knight, K. (2014).

18 See Human Rights Watch (2016).

19 See Human Rights First (2010).

20 See Oxfam (2007).

21 See International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and SEROvie (2010).

Our Study

The overarching aim of this report is to present some of the existing forms and manifestations of violence and discrimination against LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings, starting first by understanding family violence. The research behind this report was born from the goal of wanting to better understand the experiences of LGBTQI people, but also for the IRC to do better as a humanitarian agency at reaching, supporting, and advocating with LGBTQI people affected by humanitarian crises, and encourage peer humanitarian organizations to do the same. Recognizing that international humanitarian organizations have historically struggled in making themselves welcoming organizations for LGBTQI people, this research sought to understand people's experiences in a way that will help peer organizations to improve their service delivery frameworks and actions in the future.

Between January and July 2020, IRC conducted 35 key informant interviews using a combination of purposive and snowball sampling. The requirement to participate in the study was having experience supporting LGBTQI people in Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, with an emphasis on humanitarian contexts in those settings. The sample included representatives from LGBTQI-led and serving organizations (primarily in the Global South), as well as researchers and activists. IRC held interviews over Skype, Zoom, or WhatsApp and each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Interviews were conducted in English, French, or Spanish. Interviews were not recorded for safety reasons, although detailed notes were taken by the interviewers. Notes were cleaned and uploaded to Dedoose, a qualitative analysis software, without names or identifying information.

All interviews were coded using a deductive coding system, through which a coding structure was developed to reflect concepts from previous research and programs on family violence. The coding structure was then used to code the interview notes and new codes were added as needed based on emergent themes and patterns in participants' responses. Coding was cross-checked by multiple reviewers. The study was considered exempt from review by the IRC's institutional review board (IRB). The interviews were used to inform both this report and *When we know nothing: Recommendations for Ethical Research, Learning and Programming for LGBTQI people in Humanitarian Settings*.

Facing Double Displacement: Family Violence Against LGBTQI People in Humanitarian Settings

This report seeks to shine a light on the diverse, extreme, and detrimental experiences LGBTQI community members may experience within and outside of both their families of origin and their chosen families[22] in humanitarian contexts. It is important to note that while violence and discrimination detailed in this report is overwhelming and disturbing, LGBTQI people live full lives and are resilient. This report draws upon just some of the tribulations that are specific to SOGIESC diversity for people living in humanitarian settings.

[22] This report makes the distinction between families of origin and chosen families. Families of origin are defined for the purposes of this report to include biological kinship and the broader extended family, as well as the caregivers or families of individuals adopted as children. Chosen families are defined as non-familial kinship communities that are deliberately chosen for the purpose of support. While the distinction is important and was made in interviews, violence was described as occurring within both families of origin and chosen families.

Families of Origin as a First and Ongoing Site of Violence

> "Most of them grow up in family violence from the outset. That's where most comes from—the family. In the Caribbean context, once they expect or assumed that they are LGBT, then they no longer exist.
>
> Key Informant

LGBTQI people experience violence from a very young age, often starting at home and at the hands of members of their own family of origin. Research participants described both the depth and breadth of family violence, so pervasive that among many LGBTQI community members it may be normalized and even accepted, what one key informant called "self-stigma."

Family violence may begin in childhood when children start expressing their genders in ways that their family members perceive to be "non-normative," such as perceptions of acting effeminate for males or masculine for females. Children experience gender expression policing when they wear clothes not traditionally assigned to their sex at birth, wear their hair in different ways, have diversity in their speech patterns, and as they grow and mature and begin to learn about their body and body changes in puberty. Males experience emotional violence as they are called names that change from context to context, for example "sissy" or "batty boy." Name-calling, combined with threats, engulf the child and/or young person in a state of toxic stress. Emotional abuse may further evolve towards ignoring the child's needs completely.

In many contexts, key informants told us that male family members bear a sense of responsibility for upholding their family's honor and rooting out homosexuality, with this sense of responsibility likely stemming from patriarchal social norms and values in society which are typically homophobic and transphobic. Young queer family members may face continuous violence from family members, men in particular. In places where female family members may be more accepting, disagreements over how to support their child can lead to heightened family tensions and fracture.

> The mother is more likely to be more accepting than the male partner and other male family members and that can lead to family rupture. Mothers are trying to be on board. Moms saying "I have a trans daughter." Father not on board, leads to a lot of tension for the couple. That for the kid is psychologically really bad. Child associates their being gay with the family rupture. They may start perceiving themselves as the source of family discord- they have guilt or they perceive they may deserve the abuse or violence. That guilt is internalized by the child. It is a threat to mental and emotional well-being, at that moment and later on in life.
>
> Key Informant

As children reach adolescence[23], and their families and communities may perceive elements of their diverse SOGIESC to be more "visible," family members may take extreme actions. For example, forcing the adolescent to stay at home so as not to be "seen" in the community, or kicking the young person out of the home entirely, which was described by research participants as the most common form of family violence.

> Parents even convince their child not to say it [that I was intersex] because they were afraid of the reaction in the community. There is just hate and shame in African countries and in the world. They are stigmatized, and some are attacked just for being intersex. Men wanted to rape me and would say, "You say you're intersex. I want to see how it feels." I know I'm not the only one who's gone through that.
>
> Key Informant

LGBTQI people may also face "corrective" measures ordered and instituted by family members, these include conversion therapy, "corrective" rape, early and forced marriage, and subsequent unwanted pregnancy, and forced sex with women (for males). Families may still go further, ordering gang rape of their family member, torturing them, and even eliciting honor killings.

> Violence is already there—the home is most dangerous place for queer people and usually where they are most tortured. In the Middle East, gay men would be forced to have sex with women in front of family to prove they are not gay. In other countries there is witchcraft or poisoning or like in [country], families would put out a hit on them if they were gay."
>
> Key Informant

Key informants also described how families of origin may be more violent if the LGBTQI family member is more visible in the community, to force them to suppress the visibility of their identity. Many key informants noted that transgender people in particular experience heightened violence for this reason.

> Yeah, I think trans people suffer the most. For trans persons, it's difficult to dress the way they want. They are being economically marginalized from a young age. For a child to say they are trans, it is difficult. They have to be older to have hormone therapy and other interventions. Trans people experience more family violence than say a gay male or a lesbian woman growing up as a young adult.
>
> Key Informant

In addition to the extreme measures that families of origin may take to violate the physical integrity and well-being of their family member, key informants explained that LGBTQI people may also face economic violence, such as being cut from financial support and forced to stop their education. As a result, they may seek shelter among people who may further abuse them and turn towards high-risk forms of livelihoods such as commercial sexual exploitation.

[23] One exception to this is in the case of intersex babies, who are often subject to medically unnecessary surgeries that are a form of genital mutilation and can create lifelong health problems for them. See Open Society Foundations. (2019).

> "In my experience, I don't know any single person in SOGI group who feels someone is safe but is not abused by the same person. For example, a young man may find his cousin a safe place to talk, but eventually that cousin may have physically or verbally abused that young gay man. Unfortunately, there is no such thing unless with people who are SOGI themselves or are serving that population specifically.
>
> Key Informant

While not widely documented, chosen families and queer intimate partnerships are also subject to violence, although, according to one key informant, "It is a bit taboo. People don't feel comfortable to talk about it."

One key informant described how intimate partner violence manifests in their context:

> "The boyfriend or "intimate partner" [of a transgender woman], they can also commit violence or violate them. He can also abuse his partner or her [sic] partner just because of leaking this information. If a partner tells him or her that they are not allowed to discuss these things with anyone, you are not allowed to go anywhere. There may be a lot of restrictions that he makes on the partner. That's the circumstances in which there are chances of violence, this can be verbal or physical violence. There can be violence with the gurus or mentors and also their partners.
>
> Key Informant

Contours of Family Violence in Humanitarian Settings

For many LGBTQI community members, displacement due to conflict, natural disaster, or environmental hazards represents not a first experience of displacement, but rather, a continuation of prior displacement from family, community of origin, and places of shelter. For many, a first experience of displacement is from the home where LGBTQI people may be thrown out and disowned and may face harassment and violence from their family members, even when apart. Indeed, key informants described family violence as a triggering factor for displacement, forcing LGBTQI people to leave one violent environment only to face a new set of challenges and continued violence.

> "I think that a queer person who's left their family unit and is then displaced goes through these multiple cycles of displacement—sub-national displacement. They will leave their home, go to an urban center before they leave the country and go to another country; both cycles of displacement really reinforce this experience of rejection and this experience of removal, not existing within any kind of protective family, community, or protective network.
>
> Key Informant

When further displaced by conflict or natural disasters, respondents described that LGBTQI community members face a variety of threats that vary widely based upon the specific context of their displacement, visibility/invisibility as people of diverse SOGIESC, existing relationships within the family, and the broader social norms and expectations around SOGIESC. For example, whereas the family of origin may have tolerated an LGBTQI family member outside of displacement, relations may become further strained as family members view an LGBTQI person's identity as a risk to their survival and well-being.

> There are other stresses in emergency contexts, people looking for scapegoats and someone to blame, people who don't have outlets for their stress, taking it out on people in ways that are inappropriate and marginalized more likely to cop that. You might have people in camps where people are exposed to a wider range of people than they are in their home, extended family or family and friends, which also changes dynamics. The way a family responds to the people around it in terms of how they respond to an LGBTQI family member could shift. All those relationships pre-emergency contexts play out and shift a lot in emergency contexts.
>
> Key Informant

For those who flee with family, they may lose their network of LGBTQI friends and face isolation and loneliness, but their family may also directly and covertly put new pressures on them that did not manifest before the displacement. For example, respondents described how family members of LGBTQI people may try to force them to gender conforming ways of expression or force them to stay inside the shelter and not go out in the community. LGBTQI people may modify their look or overall gender expression to reduce risk of discrimination, exclusion, and violence and be forced to stay in the closet where they are subject to constant pressure to conform to gender and age norms around marriage, having children, and so on.

Key informants emphasized that in camps, where people are living close together, people of diverse SOGIESC may be harder for families to hide and may be outright rejected by their families for fear of violence or discrimination targeting the family. LGBTQI people who are not out to their family of origin may be forced to hide their identity, and those who are out may be asked to change their gender expression.

> They are forced to remain in the closet, and that is so tormenting. They are isolated. They cannot even express who they are and their love. They are lonely, deeply lonely. They are angry because there is a lot of pressure from their family: you're a man of a certain age. Where's the wife? You're a woman of a certain age? Where are the children? Those who are founded in Christianity specifically, even in Islam … they end up spending a lot of time in the church. There's a lot of homophobia, a lot of denial, a lot of hate... I feel like individuals who flee on their own, not that it's better, but they're already alone, so what more do they have to lose? They express themselves. This other group stuck with their families, grandparents, extended aunties and uncles, they live in this alternate reality. It takes a real toll on their mental health because they don't accept themselves for who they are.
>
> Key Informant

In camp settings, LGBTQI people who experience violence within the family may not be able to access needed service structures to aid in their recovery, as their mobility is often restricted.

> Someone who is at a camp and is starting to face issues from their family won't have the chance to go anywhere. They won't be able to reach someone who can respond directly to their situation. They may not be able to reveal the reason they need help, even economic help. Queer people in conflict face a higher risk of violation.
>
> Key Informant

According to key informants, people of diverse SOGIESC, in some places, even risk being abducted from the camp or place of refuge by family members and returned to their community of origin where they face many types of family violence. They may also be outed to armed actors by family members.

> "In the armed conflict or war places, people feel more comfortable to harm people that they love. They think there is no control or security or authority at all. Have this case with [nationality] specifically. Lots of people escaping because of conflict, they were denounced by the members of their family to armed groups. People are arrested and tortured.
>
> Key Informant

Overall, the humanitarian context further narrows and restricts how LGBTQI people can live and build safe spaces and communities. Displacement and conflict may trigger and exacerbate existing gender inequality and power dynamics within the family as well as create or exacerbate new pressures that play into family dynamics. For example, as armed groups may enter a location with specific goals, families may feel forced to reject their LGBTQI family member or use these triggering events as a way to out and punish their family member for their diverse SOGIESC.

> "Definitely, can only speak to research in [country], remotely in [country] and [country], a bit in [country]. We know that in those contexts, just like it exacerbates gender equality, it [conflict] exacerbates transphobia and homophobia. The family might reject them as one armed group comes in with a specific agenda. It could exacerbate existing tensions, "[My]brother is bisexual and never said anything," tells a community leader to gain land in a land dispute. Similar to GBV in that exacerbates existing inequalities which could hurt people.
>
> Key Informant

> "Conflict—definitely that does have an impact on the relationships people have with their families. It's very hard—honestly very hard—for someone enduring oppression, disrepute, hate, to stay within the same environments where they are dealing with all this. Staying is a recipe for disaster.
>
> Key Informant

Non-Family-based Violence in Humanitarian Settings

Spaces of Discrimination for LGBTQI People Living in Humanitarian Settings

Spaces in which LGBTQI people experienced heightened discrimination according to key informants include:

- Accessing food distributions
- Accessing shelter
- Accessing health services
- Protection structures, including protective social networks and when accessing protection services
- Livelihood opportunities in both the formal and informal economic sectors

SOGIESC-based violence in humanitarian settings has been documented, although not widely. Many key informants cited physical violence, such as attacks, as a common and visible form of violence perpetrated by community members, as well as authorities. SOGIESC-based attacks were also described as a tool of social control by armed actors.

> "In military contexts, LGBT people are targeted, especially if they engage in sex work. They are perceived as being infection carriers (HIV positive), infecting the community not with HIV, but with their gayness. LGBT are immoral and actual disease-carrying agents, the "Boogey man of AIDS." It is everywhere in the social imaginary—it justifies violence, killing, GBV, etc.
>
> Key Informant

Less visible forms of violence described by key informants include coercion, sexual exploitation, and outing. Respondents emphasized that LGBTQI people using social media and dating apps can be particularly targeted.

> "In [country], people talked about being lured—in every setting, like [country], [country]—talking about luring over hook up apps like Grindr, and someone would say, "Hey I'm interested in you," and then they would meet and rape them. Or then they would blackmail the person and say, "You have to have sex with me or I will tell people." This is a huge issue—blackmail and outing. It's a huge issue left, right, and center by the community, host community, as anyone who finds out they are gay can report to family or police or out them in some form or another. This exploitation can be for money or sex or any different things.
>
> Key Informant

LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings may be displaced alone or displaced with family. Those who are alone may have fled their home and community to escape violence or threats of it. These individuals arrive to a new location with limited or no social network and few economic resources. With these challenges, LGBTQI people experience loneliness and isolation, leading to poor psychosocial well-being and potential for subsequent mental health challenges. They may also be at increased risk of exploitation and abuse given their heightened social and economic vulnerability.

Discrimination Against and Exclusion of People of Diverse SOGIESC in Humanitarian Settings

Key informants described that, when not experiencing violence directly, people of diverse SOGIESC face a myriad of other challenges affecting their survival and well-being in humanitarian settings. In fact, humanitarian settings amplify the power structures that exist in typical conditions and may even bring a new vigor to gender inequitable, homophobic, and transphobic belief systems. As these dynamics play out in contexts of increased stress and reduced resources, they also interact with other elements of exclusion based upon race, religion, gender, ethnicity, and so on, further amplifying discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.

Access to basic needs such as food, shelter, income, and good health is significantly more difficult for LGBTQI people who are displaced compared to heterosexual, cisgender, and non-diverse sex characteristic peers. Respondents reported that LGBTQI individuals may face multiple challenges accessing food distributions, including: not having identification or a name that aligns with their gender presentation; being forced out of lines because they are perceived by others as not meriting aid; being deprioritized for food aid when living without dependents; not being able to register as a household because of cisgender, heteronormative conceptions of households; as well as fear that in accessing humanitarian aid, their visibility as LGBTQI people may bring subsequent violence to themselves or their families.

Accessing shelter for LGBTQI individuals is also challenging in humanitarian contexts, according to respondents. In camps, gender expansive individuals may struggle to find shelter when spaces are set up as women's and men's spaces and governed by the gender binary. When gender expansive individuals are able to access these spaces, they face being ridiculed and ostracized, or subject to violence. For those seeking shelter in urban settings, landlords actively discriminate against LGBTQI people if they perceive them to be gay or trans. Homophobia and transphobia in housing may affect ability to access shelter in the first place, and lead to forced exit from housing once it has been "discovered" that a person is gay or trans. In places where homeless shelters may exist, these are often gendered spaces that function on a heteronormative model where LGBTQI people, and especially trans people, are regularly excluded or unwelcome.

Access to safe, long-term, and sufficient employment represents another critical challenge. In humanitarian settings such as camps, a parallel economy may exist separately from the local or national economy. However, LGBTQI people may lack access to both the formal economy and the parallel economy due to discrimination from other displaced community members or may be relegated to specific types of employment associated with their identity, such as

hair stylists or cultural performers. Further still, the types of jobs available to displaced persons in the local economy may be extremely limited, such as physical labor, or service-based jobs where non-LGBTQI people may harass or bully LGBTQI people, or refuse to purchase goods from them. According to key informants, for LGBTQI people displaced to urban settings, finding employment in the formal labor market is also a challenge. First, the local population may hold beliefs about who "deserves" employment and may actively exclude refugees, and further still LGBTQI refugees. Trans people may face difficulty in a hiring and interview process when their name and gender presentation does not reflect their identity card. When hired into positions, LGBTQI community members may not be given opportunities available to non-LGBTQI people—for example, the opportunity to be located in an environment that allows them to be together with their family. Once employed, they face bullying and harassment and may be fired. In the loss of employment, LGBTQI community members might be unable to access legal instruments designed to protect employees for fear that their LGBTQI identity may become more widely known, especially to their families.

> "I've had a lot of participants telling me about their experience going to collect relief, being told they don't deserve relief, 'you're gay, you don't deserve relief', pushing them out of the queue. If someone was openly gay in a camp of IDPs, I would assume they would be far less likely to want to go and collect the aid and the relief.
>
> Key Informant, Global

Respondents described that, with limited livelihood opportunities, LGBTQI people may be forced to engage in commercial sexual exploitation for survival, where they are often further abused, facing high levels of violence, with subsequent effects on their physical and mental health and limited access to protective structures, such as supportive family or community members, or life-saving services such as essential health services. Displaced LGBTQI people who are involved in commercial sexual exploitation may also face threats from LGBTQI who are commercially sexually exploited in the local host community, and who feel their income is undercut because clients can pay displaced people—and especially refugees—less.

When accessing health services, LGBTQI people within and outside of humanitarian settings risk ridicule and denial of services by providers who are supposed to save lives. Key informants reported that they may face negative attitudes from service providers, such as beliefs that LGBTQI people are "disease-spreading" agents. These discriminatory attitudes often prevent LGBTQI people from accessing much needed lifesaving and sustaining support.

> "Discrimination and disrespect is the major dissuader to accessing services. It doesn't have to be so dramatic. In this one clinic in [name of city], they outright deny or report to the police, but other things like oh they might laugh at you is a major reason not to come forward. LGBT have experienced a lot of discrimination and harassment and subtle attitudes have a major impact.
>
> Key Informant, Global

Additionally, LGBTQI people, because they are perceived as not having their own families, may be expected to take on additional caregiving roles in humanitarian settings, especially if they have aging parents. Respondents emphasized that responsibilities such as seeking food aid, providing economic resources, and rebuilding family homes could all fall to the responsibility of the LGBTQI family member, adding additional stresses to their well-being.

Factors that Influence Family and Other Forms of Violence, Discrimination, and Exclusion in Humanitarian Settings

The manifestations of family and non-family violence vary greatly depending on other aspects of an individual's identity and circumstances including their gender, age, religious origin, socio-economic status, location (urban v. rural settings), and legal context. These aspects intertwine to form unique patterns of victimization that combine homophobia and transphobia with other forms of oppression. In humanitarian contexts, the aid architecture itself may be a strong risk factor for violence.

> "With respect to refugees, you have a profile of being non-conforming vis-à-vis your sexual orientation, your gender identity or expression, your sex characteristics–then you may be a foreign national, and you may be a refugee, which to me is different than being a foreign national. Being a refugee has a whole set of legal, social factors that come into play. Are you a member of an ethnic or religious minority? Do you have a disability? Are you older, younger? All of these factors combine to really relegate an individual to a certain path in life lacking essential opportunities [they might have] if they didn't belong to all of these groups at once, so it's important that people understand that.
>
> Key Informant

Cisgender and Heteronormative Humanitarian Response Systems

According to key informants, LGBTQI people with and without family may be denied access to food distributions and face violence that might have been avoided should the humanitarian response have developed a diverse SOGIESC-inclusive approach. For example, trans men and trans women may face challenges accessing appropriate water and sanitation points, defined as for "men" and "women," and may face sexual abuse and other violence when trying to access these spaces. In camp settings where tents are segregated by "men" and "women" identifiers, trans women and trans men find it difficult to access shelter. LGBTQI-led households may also not be able to register for aid, as they do not conform to the gender binaries of male- or female-headed households and traditional family structures set up by aid organizations or may not have ID cards that align with their names.

Age

Relationships of dependence linked to age may be a risk factor for family violence. Key informants stressed that young people of diverse SOGIESC are at heightened risk of family violence while still living with their natal family or other caregivers who provide economic support, including access to shelter, food, and payment of fees for education or training opportunities. Young people may face strict enforcement of SOGIESC social norms and have limited capacity for negotiation. For individuals who come out after adolescence, family violence risk may be less, as they may have increased ability to provide for themselves and live away from their family and community of origin.

> "For age, for people under 18, there are more chances of violence. When a transgender person becomes an adult or over the age of puberty, there are fewer risks. For those under 18, there are more chances for experiencing violence just because of their vulnerability and less experience. Children and people of old age are more vulnerable. When they are children and when they get

> to about 60 years old, they are more dependent on others and friends and mentors and [students], and they are most vulnerable, and the chance of violence is also increased. We can say that children and people of old age are most vulnerable."
>
> Key Informant

People of older age may also come to exhibit dependency on family members, thus creating spaces for vulnerability to family violence.

> "People of older age, may also come to exhibit dependency on family members, thus creating spaces for vulnerability to family violence.
>
> Key Informant

Age also plays a role in SOGIESC-based violence outside of the family. Children and youth who have been excluded from their families and communities, who may lack education and training, may face violence from people who exploit their emotional and economic vulnerability. Many young queer people, and especially trans women, are forced into selling sex as the only means of survival.

Gender

Individuals who do not conform to normative expectations of gender expression face significant family violence; this is likely linked to people's perceptions of their gender expression. Several key informants reported that trans people, and especially trans women, may be at the receiving end of enforcement of gender expectations most often led by male family members, who reinforce adherence to patriarchal culture. However, violence against trans women depends significantly on the cultural context. In some places, third gender people are accepted in society and perform important historical and spiritual functions but may also be relegated to specific and confining roles.

> "I cannot articulate the amount of violence that trans people experience because they do not conform to a certain binary. The extent of violence that trans people does not have an age where it's milder. Trans persons are ostracized from when they are children, like babies, and even into their 40s. I think displacement in reference to this group of people is on the extreme purely because they don't conform to what seems to be as basic as gender. I find that that's the beginning of violence because you look a certain way that does not conform.
>
> Key Informant

Additionally, lesbians and bisexual women may experience violence that is both violence based on gender, driven by patriarchal systems of power that continually reinforce men's position over women, as well as violence based on sexual orientation and gender expression. However, how sexuality and gender expression interact to inform an individual's experience of family violence likely varies significantly by context and is under-studied. For women, intense social pressures linked to gender norms, such as pressure to get married and have children, lead to family violence such as "corrective" rape and forced marriage.

> "If you are a young or adult gay man, you receive patriarchal support and are less a victim of violence. But for a biological female queer or lesbian or trans man or intersex, risk of violence is higher. Physically, mentally, or sexual. Their male family members try to "help" them; they think they never experienced vaginal sex[24] so they try to "fix" this disorder through corrective rape.
>
> *K*ey Informant

> "Even within the trans community, the violence varies. A trans man can find more acceptance than [a] trans woman as we know masculinity under patriarchal system is praised, but a trans woman [represents] a loss of status / masculinity. Also depends on masculine or feminine gay man or masculine or feminine lesbian woman. Many things at play even for cis versus trans.
>
> Key Informant

[24] In this quote, vaginal sex is used to refer to penetration by a penis. While the key informant stated that the male family members were trying to "help" them, help is placed in quotations because it is referring to a form of violence used as punishment.

> The violence that girls might experience is associated with social expectations around girls and community and those social and gender expectations might lead to particular forms of violence—e.g. corrective rape—because they are not fitting into specific expectations: marrying, having children, doing tasks that fit within gender roles. There will be both gender aspects and development aspects.
>
> Key Informant

Outside of the family sphere, individuals who present non-conforming forms of gender expression face significant community violence and lack access to typical protective structures, in addition to potential family break or estrangement. Individuals with non-conforming gender expression may face significant discrimination, and further violence when accessing structures that should be protective such as health structures, police, job training opportunities, and so on.

Socio-economic Status

Access to education and employment—and with it, social standing—also appears to be a key mediator of violence victimization for people of diverse SOGIESC. People who come from middle- or high-income families were perceived by key informants to experience less violence. In other cases, the ability to earn an income once outside the family home and return those earnings to the family was described as a mechanism to avoid family violence. Thus, economic and social class can be viewed as a buffer to violence in some contexts, although the buffering effect of elevated socio-economic status may vary as it comes into contact with family religion, gender norms, and other systems that support marginalization of LGBTQI people.

> The big thing in [country] is social class. A queer person who is more well to do, is less likely to have these experiences, less likely to be displaced from their families, have a better support system. Members of the communities who are poor or who are younger are likely to face these challenges.
>
> Key Informant

> In many cases in [country], mostly in the middle-class group, they are struggling financially and have faced a very serious challenge. But most LGBTQ people get acceptance from their family when they get a job and can provide for themselves and prove they can be anything they want and support the family.
>
> Key Informant

Religion

A family religious belief system and/or the religiosity of a specific context links into how LGBTQI people experience violence and discrimination. Key informants explained that, where religious leaders are openly homophobic and transphobic, their far reach and influence can do significant harm to LGBTQI people, both directly and indirectly. Religious leaders may, for example, blame LGBTQI people or other marginalized groups for conflict and natural disasters. These leaders may even incite violence and repudiation for this perceived reason, or they may suggest detrimental "therapies" such as conversion therapy, rape, etc.

> Some pastors say that gay people are the root of conflict in our country, and that it is their practices that is the cause of conflict. Gay people are porte malheurs [people who bring bad luck].
>
> Key Informant

> Religious fundamentalism is at the helm of everything that oppresses LGBTQ people. Here, we are thinking, fundamentalism within Islam, Christianity, all of this is really harmful.
>
> Key Informant

> One specific case we have right now involves an adolescent at an orphanage in the [country]. He had to flee the household at 12 years old, it got intolerable, was living on the streets awhile. Was eventually put into an orphanage by the child protection services. Fled because his father tried to kill him because he was an effeminate boy. Awarded

him to a Pentecostal orphanage. Run by a Pentecostal pastor, believed her role was to reform this kid. She wasn't able to cure him or reform him. She waited until he turned 18, didn't prepare him to leave or assist him to get his identity papers; she accused him of having raped 4 minors at the orphanage. Had the police arrest him, if an organization hadn't found out about it and taken action… Obviously someone like an orphan who is a ward of the state is in an extremely vulnerable situation compared to someone who is an adult.

Key Informant

Urban vs. Rural Setting

The density of a population and how rural or urban it is may also impact how LGBTQI experience violence in humanitarian settings. Key informants cited rural areas, in particular, as contexts that amplify LGBTQI experience of violence and discrimination. Rural contexts may be demographically smaller and less anonymous, therefore making the perception of SOGIESC diversity dangerous. These contexts may also lack a full range of services including health and violence response, and they may be more economically marginalized or rely on one form of livelihood that is not accessible to LGBTQI people.

"People living in urban and peri-urban areas—not to say they are any better than most—but the level of information and access to services, access to mental health services, access to sexual and reproductive health services, and everything that's happening—sexual violence, physical assault, etc.—the services are available. Since LGBTQ people are the "scum of the earth," services might not be accessible. But where people go through a lot is in settings that are very rural, conservative, religious and traditional.

Key Informant, Africa

Legal Context

The legal framework of a country has a significant impact on the ability of LGBTQI people to live life freely. In some parts of the world, homosexuality may be criminalized under the penal code. This criminalization could be a relic of colonialism or a legislative act in the present period that impacts people with diverse sexual orientations. In other places, while laws may not specifically criminalize trans identities, the legal framework may not allow for trans people to change the gender they were assigned at birth on their legal documents or recognize third genders. Even in places where sexual orientation, gender identities, and sex characteristics are not directly criminalized, key informants described how broader "morality" laws may be applied against all these issues, and LGBTQI people may be subject to arbitrary detention by police or other law enforcement who use such laws to discriminate against and arrest them. In some settings, both national law and international humanitarian law are at play. Where there are no laws prohibiting diverse SOGIESC in the penal code, local actors may also search to create new laws that deeply impact LGBTQI well-being, such as laws against gay marriage or laws that lead directly to discrimination in employment. LGBTQI movement builders such as non-government organizations may be prohibited from forming, or they may face significant bureaucratic obstacles. Additionally, the interpretation of existing law also poses a threat to LGBTQI well-being, as well as lack of protections for SOGIESC-based discrimination.

"[Country], a couple of years ago, passed a bill of law that did two things. It would make gay marriage an impossible issue in [Country] by stating it was illegal. [It has effects] in less obvious ways, still has not been approved fortunately. It also foresaw that LGBT persons would require a certificate of good conduct, so the law proposed that LGBT persons weren't eligible to receive a certificate of good conduct; this is a job requirement of most employers in [Country]. The bill suggests or proposes that LGBT persons not be eligible for that. There was also a point in the bill that would make advocacy of LGBT issues illegal in [Country].

Key Informant

Approaches and Services Humanitarian Actors Can Employ in Supporting LGBTQI Rights

Don't Wait Till a Disaster to Engage LGBTQI Actors

Humanitarian agencies can better prepare to support LGBTQI in humanitarian settings by partnering with local actors before an emergency unfolds. This may include seeking partnerships in disaster preparedness, working together to develop emergency response plans to transform essential services that will be all the more valuable at the onset of an emergency (for example, health and violence response services). Or it may mean simply building and maintaining an equitable and horizontal relationship, so that when a humanitarian emergency arises, international humanitarian organizations can be more agile in responding to LGBTQI-specific needs in a timely manner; in partnership with the community's existing leaders or existing LGBTQI groups, those LGBTQI groups can make safe referrals to a humanitarian agency with confidence that community members will be received and treated with dignity and respect.

Give Power to LGBTQI Actors

The best way for humanitarian agencies to support LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings is to re-distribute some of their own power to local actors. This starts first and foremost with money. Any humanitarian agency that receives funding to work in support of LGBTQI rights should partner with local LGBTQI actors and distribute a significant percentage of their budget to those local actors. Even where funding is not explicitly allocated for LGBTQI issues, humanitarian agencies should seek out a variety of partners, not just the traditional partners, to execute activities, and LGBTQI organizations should be among those partners. Secondly, the *what* and *how* of humanitarian assistance to LGBTQI actors should be determined by LGBTQI people affected rather than by specific donor agendas. In addition to partnership and financial support, humanitarian agencies may help grassroots actors to build capacity in financial management, compliance, human resources, IT infrastructure and other fundamental structural aspects of their group or organization so that they themselves can win funding, increase their reach and assure a path to sustainability.

Humanitarian actors, and especially donors, can use their influence at the policy level to support LGBTQI actors in policy change processes.

Provide Supportive, Empathetic, and Empowering Services Within Existing Structures

Services to LGBTQI should follow the same norms and practices as services given to heterosexual and cisgender persons. Yet, this is rarely the case. LGBTQI persons report experiencing negative attitudes, harassment, threats, and blame within traditional service structures, such as health facilities and social services. In order to effectively prevent these experiences, humanitarian agencies must make an investment in their personnel and practices.

Preventing discrimination and violence within service structures starts with working with service providers. When new service providers are being hired and service provision set up, humanitarian actors must assure due diligence in their hiring practices, meaning that requirements of employment demand LGBTQI-friendly attitudes. This practice can be institutionalized through hiring processes that systematically include ways to assess for attitudes to LGBTQI community members and assure that the attitudes that are expressed are LGBTQI-friendly and inclusive. Ways to do this might include giving individuals scenarios in interviews and asking them how they would respond or asking them to complete a questionnaire as part of their recruitment process.

Where a service provision structure is already in place, all service providers should receive SOGIESC training provided by local LGBTQI actors. Trainings should focus on building a common foundation and understanding of SOGIESC in the context, helping service providers to have a vocabulary to understand the diversity among their service population and how that might affect their experiences as they seek a service. Trainings also provide a safe space for participants and LGBTQI groups to interact, helping to normalize diverse SOGIESC and reduce the "othering" and stereotyping that is commonplace.

Training modalities may vary but should include breaking down language and core concepts such as 'sexual orientation,' 'gender identity,' 'gender expression' and so on. These core concepts may be also complemented by data and case studies that help to unpack scenarios that LGBTQI persons face in humanitarian settings and how that affects access to and quality of service provision.

However, trainings should only be a first step in breaking down attitudinal and other barriers, and they will be limited in effectiveness. Humanitarian organizations must simultaneously demand that service providers who receive LGBTQI persons treat them with dignity and do not discriminate, a core tenet of service provision that should be applied universally. Service structures should maintain anonymous mechanisms to collect feedback on their clients' experiences, for example a suggestion box in a bathroom or other private space. Service providers who do not conform to the values set out by the service providing structure should not be able to retain their jobs.

Key informants highlighted a variety, and sometimes conflicting, approaches to eliminating negative attitudes in service provision. Some examples include setting up a supervision structure whereby service providers and supervisors, during case supervision, are given space to reflect on how the service was provided to the client and use that discussion space as a learning opportunity and a way to reinforce organizational values. Another approach included application of a zero tolerance policy for discrimination and exclusion resulting in immediate removal when that policy is violated. Other key informants highlighted the need to have a process of values-clarification, supporting individuals to understand everyone has a SOGIESC and that SOGIESC—like ethnicity, language, race, etc.—is diverse. One key informant commented, "Training partners, and getting LGBTQI and SOGIESC activists to come and host trainings, people get a real-life perspective. People forget who they are talking about are real people; they become a category of vulnerable people-They are real people with capacities, too. They are not just helpless; we're not using their capacities."

Service-providing structures who have done the work to assure their services are LGBTQI- friendly and affirming should find ways to communicate this. In some places, service providers might not be able to advertise openly that they are an LGBTQI-friendly and affirming space, but small symbols may be effective. For example, in many places around the world the rainbow flag is recognized as an LGBTQI symbol. Service providers might have a rainbow poster in their lobby, or may make smaller gestures such as having rainbow buttons or lanyards attached to their badges. As one key informant explained, "Buttons are a subtle but very loud visibility, so if someone actually knows it, even somewhere deep in the darkness, it will speak loudly to them."

Fund Research and Programs that Local LGBTQI Actors Value

This study asked key informants, "What is your dream research project or program?" The responses were many and varied, reflecting the different contours of LGBTQI experience across contexts. Humanitarian agencies operating across different settings should ask local LGBTQI actors this same question, and then fund them to do the work.

Among research and learning aspirations, study participants' unique perspectives provided a window into the expansive possibilities for better understanding LGBTQI experiences. Overall, there was some consensus about the lack of demographic data, and the idea it could be collected more effectively and systematically through service provision. Study participants also felt there is a limited understanding of experiences of LBQ women and transmen and expressed the need to understand LGBTQI experience in humanitarian contexts from an intersectional lens as well as some consensus on the need to better understand legal frameworks. Illustrative research and learning questions also reflected context-specific evidence gaps, such as in understanding linkages between violence and religion, the generational impact of chronic displacement on LGBTQI persons, LGBTQI experience of homelessness, LGBTQI experience of hazards, LBGTQI experience in migration flows, legal impediments to gender identity recognition, good practice examples of how LGBTQI can rebuild their lives post-disaster, and more.

When asked about their dream programming, key informants put emphasis on four main types of programming: livelihoods, mental health and psychosocial support, access to shelter, and advocacy. Livelihoods and access to economic opportunity included both creating training and vocational opportunities and reducing stigma and exclusion in employment. Participants emphasized the value of peer support groups to mental health and also suggested peer support for family members with LGBTQI children and adolescents. Community-based mental health programming was also suggested as a model. Access to shelter was frequently described as crucial to LGBTQI well-being, and particularly children and youth who have just come out or are transitioning, many of whom may have been forced out of their homes. Advocacy actions varied based on the context, examples include campaigns to end unwanted surgeries on intersex people, advocacy to change the penal code or broaden gender identity markers in legal documentation, and creation of laws that bar employers from discriminating against LGBTQI persons in employment. Key informants described creating shelters for street connected youth, as well as adults. Other program examples included supporting access to education, including LGBTQI children and youth school retention as well as building LGBTQI inclusive school environments.

Call to Action

Donors

- Ensure that grants made to improve the lives of LGBTQI people affected by humanitarian crises have involved LGBTQI people in the program design, development, and implementation:
    - Seek evidence of meaningful, safe consultation with local and (where appropriate) national and regional LGBTQI people and (where appropriate) organizations in program design and implementation.
- Earmark a certain percentage of grant funds—starting at 20% but potentially much higher—for actions led by local and (where appropriate) national and regional LGBTQI people, including mechanisms for ensuring that grants to "international" organizations include percentages for local and (where appropriate) national and regional LGBTQI people.
- Consider funding participatory grant-making mechanisms, drawing upon expertise developed by some regional initiatives and potentially working in partnership with them (such as the Other Foundation for Southern Africa, UHAI-EASHRI for East Africa, and ISDAO for West Africa), for LGBTQI people affected by humanitarian crises. Move towards a model of LGBTQI leadership for LGBTQI programming, not merely partnership with "international" humanitarian organizations.
- In grant communications, ensure that individuals' and organizations' safety are not put at risk due to their receiving of donor funding; i.e., do not publish any names, organizations, data, or reports without explicit permissions.
- Consult with a range of global LGBTQI individuals and organizations affected by humanitarian crises on potential funding policy changes before enacting them.

Humanitarian Organizations

- Establish partnerships early, and include systems for equitable partnerships, including transparent financial information, when "international" organizations partner with local, national, and regional organizations. Avoid languages and processes of "capacity-building" from "international" organizations to local, national, and regional organizations and use instead processes that focus on capacity sharing of respective competencies.
- While recognizing the need to be in touch with LGBTQI people if one is designing programs to serve them, do not seek to "find" or to "identify" LGBTQI people but rather, establish internal mechanisms and processes for ensuring that ones' services are welcoming and accessible for LGBTQI people. Some of these may include:
    - Partnerships with LGBTQI-led organizations, where possible, ensuring that the voices of multiple LGBTQI individuals and organizations also have their space, especially the voices of women, trans and non-binary people, and intersex people;
    - Self-assessments or audits, designed in partnership with LGBTQI individuals and, where appropriate, organizations to determine the extent to which services, recruitment processes, and other elements of the organization are safe, accessible, and welcoming for LGBTQI people and financed action plans for remediation where deficiencies are discovered;
    - Enhanced human resource processes:
        - to ensure that all staff are adequately trained on issues of SOGIESC, that LGBTQI people are able to be considered for positions on equal footing with their cisgender, heterosexual, gender-conforming, and dyadic peers;
        - to provide accountability when staff members act in ways that do not uphold principles of impartiality and benevolence;

- to ensure safe space for LGBTQI people to exist within the organization, to convene and communicate confidentially as desired, and to have redress avenues and protection available for potential retaliation against them if perception of their diverse SOGIESC creates harm.

- For family violence programs, ensure that nuanced conceptualizations of family—which understand that families may be harmful for LGBTQI people—centralize the safety and confidentiality of LGBTQI people.

Researchers

- Safely and ethically pursue a robust research agenda on the experiences of LGBTQI people in humanitarian settings. Avoid the imposition of the LGBTQI and SOGIESC frameworks, seeking instead to understand locally relevant concepts of sexuality, gender, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

- Whenever possible, partner with LGBTQI people and organizations to undertake and research and learning processes. Involve LGBTQI people and organizations at all steps of the research process, not simply research design and analysis. Seek and promote leadership from LGBTQI researchers, especially from the contexts where the research and learning will happen. (Model from Kenya)

    - When disaggregating data for all relevant categories related to SOGIESC, ensure that data protection and confidentiality remain priority concerns and that disaggregated data will not cause harm for interlocutors.

    - Before undertaking any data collection, conduct a thorough risk assessment about potential harms to LGBTQI people due to the conducting of the research—again, following the leadership of LGBTQI people and (where appropriate) organizations—and ensure that robust safety protocols are in place. Do not hesitate to stop data collection if potential harms emerge.

    - Where IRBs do not have specific expertise, ethical protocols should be reviewed by community advisory boards that are comprised of individuals with learned experience or those that demonstrate commitment to LGBTQI+ rights.

- Publish findings only after a risk assessment of publication has been conducted, ensuring that local experts and LGBTQI people and organizations have had a chance to review and amend publications as needed.

Conclusion

This scoping study reveals the double burden that LGBTQI people living in humanitarian contexts experience throughout their lives. They face violence and discrimination from a very young age, often starting in their home at the hands of their own family members. As children grow and mature, they may experience increasing gender-expression policing, name-calling, and other forms of psychological, physical, and economic violence at the hands of their family members. This violence often escalates over time, until a young person is kicked out of their home entirely and forced to seek shelter and support in spaces or livelihoods that can expose them to additional abuse. When further displaced by conflict or natural disasters, LGBTQI community members face a variety of threats and physical and psychological violence at the hands of their families of origin, their chosen families, authorities, asylum systems, and even humanitarian organizations. In humanitarian settings where access to basic needs and livelihoods are often limited and stressors are exacerbated, LGBTQI people can experience new manifestations of violence, while also losing access to critical social support structures and services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen this double burden play out for LGBTQI populations living in conflict and humanitarian settings, without adequate aid response or protections to ensure their safety and wellbeing. With natural disasters and infectious disease outbreaks increasing due to climate change and globalization, and the number of displaced persons worldwide at an all-time high, it is more urgent than ever to invest in resources in better understanding and meeting the needs of LGBTQI people living in humanitarian contexts across the globe.

Glossary

The below definitions are provided to help elucidate language in the report. IRC does not seek to define these terms itself, and has cited the source of all terms included.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQI): LGBTQI+ is the most frequently used acronym to refer to diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and sex characteristics.

Cisgender: Refers to people whose gender identity aligns with the gender assigned to them at birth. Cisgender can be shortened to "cis." [genderspectrum.org, adapted by Dynarski]

Cisnormativity: The assumption that all, or almost all, individuals are cisgender. Although transgender-identified people comprise a fairly small percentage of the human population, many trans people and allies consider it to be offensive to presume that everyone is cisgender unless otherwise specified. [queerdictionary.blogspot.com]

Family Violence: For the purposes of this report, family violence is defined as violence occurring within the family system that is perpetrated by one family members towards another family member.

Gender: The socially and culturally constructed and reinforced ideas of what it means to be a certain gender (third gender, male, or female) in a specific context. Gender is often assumed to be along binary lines (i.e. man/woman), but is in fact a galaxy. Gender is rooted in social norms rather than in biology. Gender is constructed and reinforced through norms and expectations whereby an individual is expected to act in a certain way based on their perceived gender, regardless of whether those actions align with an individual's interests, wants, or needs. Gender is a relational concept that cannot be understood in a vacuum; it is best understood when examining interactions and relationships between individuals and between or within social groups and institutions. [Edge Effect, 42 Degree Library]

Gender Galaxy: The idea that gender is not a binary, nor a spectrum, but a space of infinite and fluid possibilities for gender identity and expression. There are many interpretations and imaginations of the gender galaxy, but all are based on the idea that gender

identity and expression may not be fixed, nor are they 'somewhere' between two poles (as conceptualized on the gender spectrum). [Bockting, Benner, & Coleman, 2009, adapted by IntraSpectrum Chicago]

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of being a girl, woman, man, or boy, someone in between, or beyond these two identities. [Irvine and Canfield, adapted by Dynarski]

Gender Expression: Refers to an individual's presentation—including physical appearance, clothing choice, and accessories—and behavior that communicates aspects of gender or gender role. Gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identity. [American Psychological Association and National Association of School Psychologists]

Gender Expansive: An umbrella term used for individuals who broaden their own culture's commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender-expansive individuals include those with transgender and non-binary identities, as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society's notions of gender. [genderspectrum.org]

Gender Non-conforming: People who express their genders in ways that are not consistent with the societal expectations of the gender assigned at birth [Irvine and Canfield, adapted by Dynarski]

Heteronormative/ity: Heteronormativity is the belief or assumption that all people are heterosexual, or that heterosexuality is the default or "normal" state of human being. A heteronormative society operates on the assumption that heterosexuality and specific gender features are the human "default." [queerdictionary.blogspot.com]

Intersectionality: Intersectionality is a framework that acknowledges and critically considers how different characteristics—such as gender, sexual orientation, physical/mental ability, age, rurality, geographic location, nationality and/or religion—interact to shape an individual person or group's experience of the world. In this way, intersectionality does not consider one characteristic to be a person's primary "source" or marginalization, but seeks to understand how multiple characteristics can compound and shape marginalization or, equally, *create opportunities for empowerment and resilience*. An intersectional analysis of refugee food distribution would, for instance, consider how a person's gender identity and expression; sexual orientation; age; marital status; whether or not a person cares for children; whether the person is in a romantic partnership or is single; religion; ethnicity and physical and mental dis/abilities might change their ability to access food. [Edge Effect, 42 degree library]

Non-binary: People whose gender is not male or female [National Center for Transgender Equality]

Poly-victimization: The repeated (more than once) experience of violence.

Queer: An umbrella term for people or communities who are/identify as non-cisgendered or non-heterosexual. Queer was previously, and by some continues to be, considered a deeply derogatory slur towards gay men. It is, however, being reclaimed within the diverse SOGIESC community, especially amongst younger people. The term 'queer' conveys a sense of politicality, community, and connectedness that other terms do not convey; it covers sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics in a way that other terms do not. Individual people may refer to themselves as queer or as being members of the queer community while others may not; some agender and asexual people may identify as queer. [Edge Effect, 42 Degree Library]

Sex Characteristics: Sex characteristics are the genetic, hormonal, and anatomical characteristics used to classify physical sex at birth. Determination of sex is usually based on pre-determined anatomy of external genitalia, but also informed by internal reproductive organs and hormones. The medical community's understanding of the diversity of human sex characteristics is expanding. [Edge Effect, 42 degree library]

Intersex: An umbrella term that refers to peop le who have one or more of a range of variations in sex characteristics that fall outside of traditional conceptions of male or female bodies. [interAct]

Endosex: Endosex is a way to describe sex characteristics that categorize as typical anatomical females or males. An endosex or dyadic person is

not born intersex. Endosex people can have any gender identity, sexual orientation, or gender expression. The term "endosex" is sometimes preferred over "dyadic," because it does not reinforce a binary system. [adapted from anunnakiray.com/biological-sex/]

Sexual Orientation: A person's capacity for profound emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with individuals or people of a different gender, the same gender, or more than one gender. Sexual orientation can change overtime. [Edge Effect, 42 degree library]

Bisexual: A person who can be attracted to more than one sex, gender, or gender identity. "Bi" is often used as an abbreviation. Related terms include pansexual, queer, fluid, omnisexual, nonmonosexual, in the middle sexualities, heteroflexible, homoflexible, polysexual, and many others. [Human Rights Campaign Foundation *et al.*]

Gay: A person who is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to individuals of the same gender, typically in reference to boys and men, but also girls and women. [Irvine and Canfield, adapted by Dynarski]

Lesbian: A girl or a woman who is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to other girls and women. [Irvine and Canfield]

Transgender: A person whose gender identity does not correspond with the gender assigned to them at birth. Transgender can be shortened to "trans." [Irvine and Canfield, adapted by Dynarski]

Third gender: Can be used to describe people or communities who identify outside of the gender binary but is more often used to refer to a person or group of people who have a specific gender identity that may or may not be legally recognized. Third gender groups include the *metis* of Nepal and the *hijra* of Bangladesh, both of whom have legal third gender recognition as well as specific social, cultural, and economic roles that they play in their respective societies. Third gender is not interchangeable with non-binary, gender queer or gender-fluid. [Edge Effect, 42 Degree Library}

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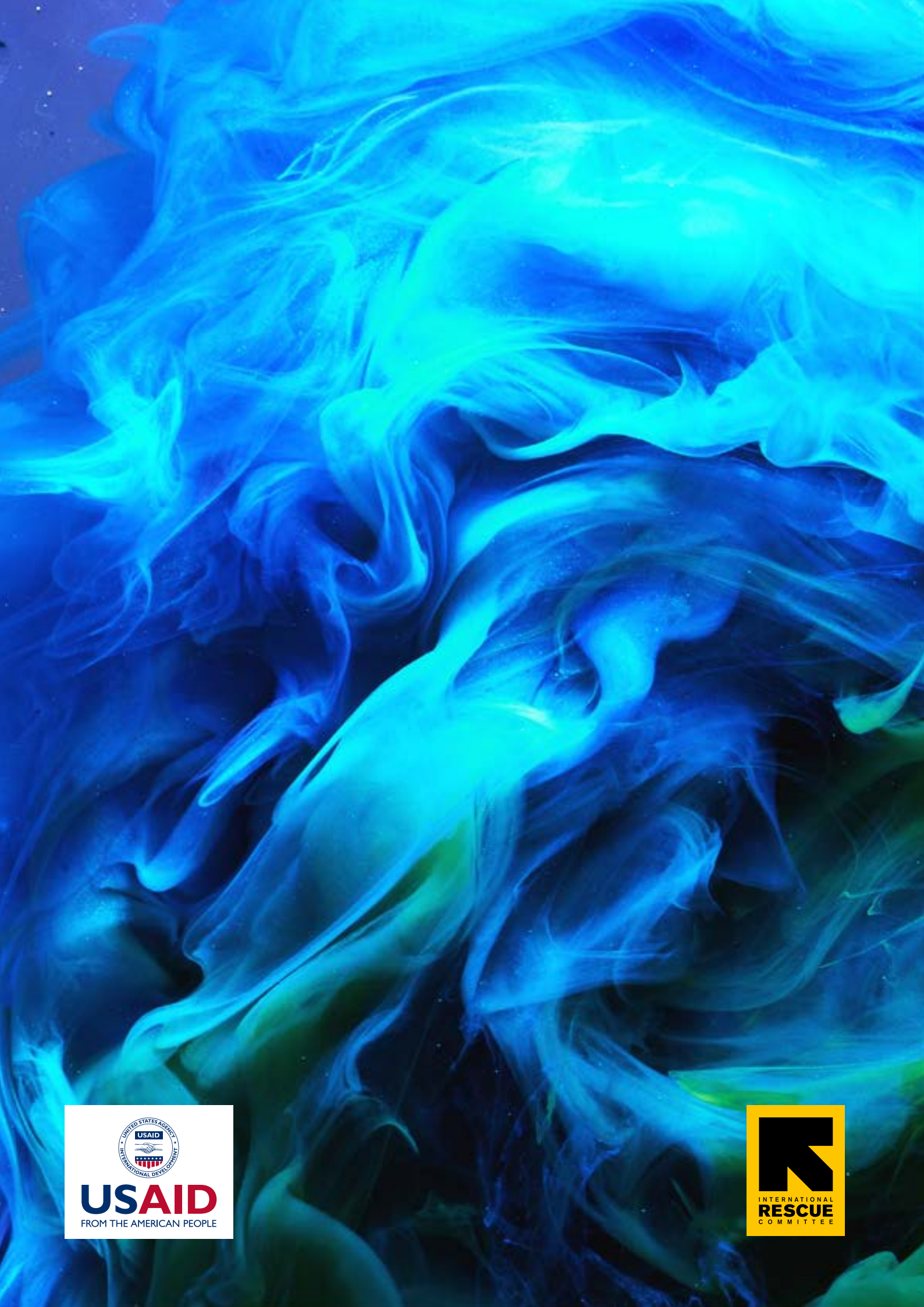
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