canaries in the coal mines

An analysis of spaces for LGBTI activism in Zambia

COUNTRY REPORT
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This review provides an insight on the extent to which the human rights of lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are respected and upheld in Zambia. It considers the socio-cultural and political realities in which LGBTI people find themselves, and the ways in which LGBTI groups and individuals manage to function in a homophobic context.

Despite gaining independence from Britain in 1964, Zambia held on to some of its colonial-era laws including the Penal Code criminalizing same-sex practices. Homophobia is further ‘justified’ by the fact of Zambia being a Christian nation with same-sexuality perceived as un-Christian. The Penal Code on ‘Unnatural Acts’ has escaped interrogation as part of decolonization efforts, in relation to the argument that homosexuality is un-Christian, un-African, foreign and ‘western’. Efforts to support and defend LGBTI human rights are seen as part of an agenda driven by western donors, threatening local cultures, traditions and values. These beliefs and assertions, contradictory as they are, have gained political, social and community currency in Zambia.

Three of the most dominant church bodies, the Christian Council of Churches (CCC), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and the Zambia Episcopal Fellowship (ZEF) have issued public statements against LGBTI human rights, informing not only public discourse and opinion, but also the Zambian Constitution’s position on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI).

In a context that makes little ‘allowance’ for the human rights of LGBTI people, a range of approaches are being used to develop strategic relationships with potential LGBTI allies to create space for the fulfilment of the human rights of LGBTI people. Allies include the Zambia Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (Zanerela+), an interfaith organization, and TransBantu, an organization working with transgender children and their parents to support parents and broader communities to accept and understand the human rights of LGBTI people.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This country report was written for the Other Foundation by Lilly Phiri informed by engagement with individuals and organizations in Zambia. Lilly is from Zambia and is a PhD candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. A trained Christian minister, she has undertaken academic research on LGBTI issues in Zambia and South Africa. Lilly was recently recognized as one of the top five women PhD candidates at the university. The production of the report was supported by George Murumba and benefited from editorial contributions given by Mark Gevisser. The final text of the report was edited by Sarita Ranchod and Sonja Boezak from Under the Rainbow.
In working toward the social inclusion of LGBTI people, groups and allies have found spaces to:

> Operate between visibility and invisibility in a country where the legal registration of LGBTI organizations is not possible.

> Recognize the value of allies who have access to different influential sectors and opinion shapers who can shift the anti-LGBTI human rights discourse.

> Employ strategies to engage families of LGBTI people and religious leaders in dialogue towards widely recognizing and supporting the human rights of LGBTI people.

> Work with other human rights groups on common issues and concerns to support and ensure the human rights of LGBTI people.

> Develop relationships with other LGBTI-friendly organizations and individuals for broader social change that challenge prevailing discriminatory attitudes and beliefs that threaten the human rights of LGBTI people.
Zambia attained independence from Britain in 1964, and chose to embrace colonial laws such as the Penal Code that criminalizes same-sex relationships, sexual conduct and the visibility of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. Its Constitution defines Zambia as a Christian country. The argument that homosexuality is un-Christian and un-African is backed-up by efforts to suppress and deny the existence and practice of homophobia, denying the human rights of LGBTI people.

Human rights groups in Zambia use the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and Zambia’s Bill of Rights — that declares that all Zambians have a right to respect, dignity and freedom — to tackle the colonial Penal Code and negative public debates that continue to deny LGBTI people their human rights.

There is a relatively small number of these voices objecting to the negative public conversation on recognizing the human rights of LGBTI people. By engaging clergy who support LGBTI human rights, a conversation has been started on Christianity and other religions as safe, accepting and caring havens for all people. There are also youth groups who have added their voices to the fight for LGBTI human rights.

Where discussions on public health include some consideration for men who have sex with men (MSM) as one of the key populations to be considered in combating HIV/AIDS, other sexual minorities are insufficiently considered in existing efforts. Given hostile social and political contexts little is known and researched on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in Zambia, although pockets of information are opening.
Other Discriminatory Sections in the Penal Code

In addition to stipulations in the Penal Code that directly relate to same-sexuality, other sections are also used to deny the human rights of LGBTI people. Section 378 (Personation), has been applied to transgender people. It states: “Any person who, with intent to defraud any person, falsely represents himself to be some other person, living or dead, is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for five years.

Recent applications of the law include the arrest of Philip Mubiana and James Mwape, charged under the sodomy law after being reported by a relative in 2014. High level interventions from the United States, Germany and UNAIDS ensured the couple’s release. Again, in 2015, two men were arrested for kissing in public, and charging for causing a ‘public nuisance’. They were later released after paying an admission of guilt fine. Also in 2015, a transgender woman, Hatch Bill, described by print media as a “fake woman” was charged and found guilty of sodomy.

Although there is no specific law or policy that discriminates based on gender identity, identity documentation such as passports fail to capture the sex of intersex and transgender people, requiring citizens to declare whether they are male or female. Existing laws and policies do not allow for officially changing one’s gender identity.

2.2 African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights

The Banjul Charter, to which Zambia is party, calls for freedom from discrimination, equality, life and personal integrity and dignity. LGBTI people continue to face street harassment and state-instigated homophobia. Harassment experienced by LGBTI people generally goes unreported for fear of secondary abuse by law enforcement officers should incidents be reported to the police. All the international and regional treaties that Zambia is party to promote the inalienable human rights and dignity of all its citizens. Despite this, Zambia has based its discriminatory stance against the human rights of LGBTI people by referring to national laws, highlighting the country’s right to sovereignty, especially regarding what is seen as “western” influences.

Focus Group Participant

In 2014, Whisky Sakala was detained for ‘posing as a woman, dressing in women’s attire, allowing fellow men to buy him [her] beer in a club, and later accompanying one to a room’.
Supported by the Christianity clause in its Constitution, homosexuality and any form of gender nonconforming identity is framed as ‘un-Christian’ and ‘un-African’.

There is, however, a gradual shift in discourse from total refusal by religious and cultural leaders to openly discuss SOGI issues, towards pockets of religious and traditional leaders gradually becoming allies of LGBTI human rights.

For the last twenty years, Zambia has been ruled by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) and the Patriotic Front (PF) two of three major political parties. Zambia’s second president, Frederick Chiluba, an Evangelical Christian, described homosexuality as “the worst kind of depravity.” His comment illustrates how Zambian politicians deploy interpretations of Christian doctrine in their public condemnation of homosexuality. In recent years, there has been a shift, using homophobia as a form of political currency in political campaigns, with one political party accusing another of condoning same-sex practices, branding them unsuitable for political leadership in a Christian nation. Then MMD Vice President George Kunda is quoted as stating that homosexuality could lead to “sadism and Satanism”, calling on his opponents to make their stance on gay rights known.

The state of the human rights of LGBTI people in Zambia was raised by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, during his address to the Zambian parliament in 2012, observing how the constitution-making process offered the country an opportunity to enshrine the highest standards of human rights and protection for all people regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

In a meeting with former president Kenneth Kaunda, Ki-moon reiterated that “homosexuals, lesbians and gays are people whose rights need to be dignified and respected.” His statement raised heated debate on Zambia’s sovereignty, deploying the narrative that SOGI issues are part of ‘western’ propaganda.

In 2013, the current President, who was then Home Affairs Minister, Edgar Lungu, said: “there will be no such discussion on gay rights. That issue is foreign to this country…those advocating gay rights should go to hell. That is not an issue we will tolerate.”

Lungu successfully fused the country’s sovereignty; its political, cultural and religious discourses, and homophobic interpretations of SOGI to appeal to the electorate.

3.1 Media
Mass media, despite limited knowledge of LGBTI issues, strongly contributes to shaping public opinion on LGBTI human rights. Government continues to clamp down on independent media, ensuring that most voices and perspectives in mainstream media reflect the dominant views of the State. Debates on the human rights of LGBTI people tend to appear in mainstream media when LGBTI people have been arrested, or during political campaigns.

Media coverage – that so powerfully influences attitudes and mindsets – maintains narrow perspectives on LGBTI human rights in the public sphere. Newspapers reportedly fear losing profits if they report on LGBTI issues positively. State-owned media tabloids carry stories like Charles Kachikoti’s, headlined: “Why Homosexuality should Not be Legalized in Zambia.”

This approach ensures media and government discuss and portray LGBTI issues based on limited knowledge. In one report, the state-owned Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), privately owned Muvu TV, and several newspapers carried a story in which they consistently called an intersex baby bisexual.8

The absence of affirming and normalizing articles in mainstream media, in addition to the lack of safety and security of LGBTI people, has prompted LGBTI human rights groups towards digital media. It is here that alternative voices and perspectives, in stories, blogs and Facebook pages, can be heard. Personalities such as human rights, media and peace activist, Juliet Mphande, are at the forefront of such efforts.

In collaboration with LGBTI groups, the Zambia Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (Zanerela+), an interfaith organization, is involved in a programme called “Binaries and Boxes” where journalists get to meet and engage in discussion with LGBTI people towards shifting dominant attitudes.

3.2 Religious Leaders and Institutions
Religious institutions in Zambia have been instrumental in shaping anti-LGBTI discourse. Evangelical Christianity’s influence, under the guidance of President Chiluba, himself an Evangelical Christian, ensured Zambia was declared a Christian nation in 1996.

The Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and Zambia Episcopal Fellowship (ZEC) are the major Christian bodies representing Protestant, Evangelical and Roman Catholic Churches in Zambia. These churches are all vocal about the unacceptability of same-sex practices and believe homosexuality should remain illegal.

A 2013 EU offer for financial support to Zambian organizations wishing to promote LGBTI human rights, drew sharp reaction from EFZ, who indicated such aid was not welcome, triggering a 2013 EU offer for financial support to Zambian organizations wishing to promote LGBTI human rights, drew sharp reaction from EFZ, who indicated such aid was not welcome, triggering the politics of sovereignty vs perceived Western agendas.9

This severely constrained socio-political and cultural-religious environment has excluded the possibility of a strong, public, counter-voice from LGBTI people. In efforts to expand tolerant spaces, individual religious leaders are being targeted for opportunities to dialogue by groups such as Friends of Rainha (FoR), an organization promoting and advancing the human rights of sexual minorities.

Even though this positive direction is not to be generalized, similar traces of acceptance can be discerned within Christianity.

FoR, The Lotus Identity (an organization that works for the rights of marginalized people) and The Women’s Alliance for Equality (TWAE) through Zanerela+, have been in dialogue with religious and traditional leaders. Through this process, LGBTI organizations can directly engage religious and traditional leaders who help shape public beliefs and attitudes.

9 FoR participant.
"If a thief stole from me but later came to the hospital with an injury, I would attend to him because of my ethics. But then after treating him, I would hold him on the hand, and drag him to the police station. It is the same with LGBTI people."

Focus Group Participant

3.3 Public Health

As a key population, men who have sex with men (MSM) has placed LGBTI health issues in the public health discourse in Zambia. To date there is little data available on how HIV/AIDS is affecting key populations. Current public health engagement with sexual minorities focuses on MSM.

Public health engagement with HIV/AIDS and MSM has drawn some high-profile figures to comment on SOGI issues. When three men faced fourteen years of prison each, then first lady, Christine Kaseba, at a UNAIDS event in 2013, said:

"The silence around issues of men who have sex with men should be stopped, and no one should be discriminated against based on their sexual orientation...rather, we should address reproductive health issues around this issue."

Her speech was not widely welcomed, but organizations like FoR used it to champion LGBTI rights, having successfully advocated for the National Aids Council (NAC) to recognize MSM as a key population. Transgender men are considered part of MSM for the NAC.

3.4 Human Rights Perspective

The road to the adoption of a new Constitution in Zambia was marked by at least three divergent views on SOGI. 1 overtly/covertly anti-LGBTI human rights; 2 passivity on LGBTI human rights; and 3 overtly/covertly pro-LGBTI human rights.

This anti-LGBTI human rights reaction followed a mass action protest where 115 LGBTI couples tried to register their marriages, contrary to the Marriage Act, and were turned away; and pressure from LGBTI groups and allies for inclusion of the non-discriminatory clause on sexual orientation.

As submissions were made proposing clauses for the new Constitution, the Zambian Human Rights Commission (HRC), a statutory body mandated to protect and promote the human rights of all Zambians, took an overtly anti-LGBTI human rights position. The HRC opposed the draft Constitutional provisions, such as Article 27 that provided protection from discrimination for marginalized groups based on sexual orientation.

Some Zambian human rights organizations have however, overtly championed LGBTI rights. Among them is Zango, a consortium of five youth organizations that in 2014 petitioned the Legal and Justice Reforms Commission to develop an equality clause to outlaw discrimination against LGBTI Zambians.13

The petition was unsuccessful but illustrated there was some support for LGBTI human rights in civil society.
The story of Zambia’s LGBTI movement oscillates between visibility, invisibility and the ambiguous spaces in between. The first public assertions of LGBTI identity in modern-day Zambia were in the 1980s, led by activists such as Francis Chisambisa, a founding member of Zambia’s Lesbians Gays and Transgender Association (Legatra). He fled to South Africa in 1988 when a local newspaper outed him, seriously compromising his safety, and endangering his life.\textsuperscript{14}

4.1 In/Visibility

LGBTI visibility in Zambia comes at a hefty price. It includes living with the constant possibility of arrest, the risk of being outed by media, living in constant fear of being victim to a hate crime, the risk of intimidation and harassment at the hands of the State, and the risk of attack by members of the public who reject homosexuality as un-African and un-Christian.

When Legatra tried to register legally, the then Vice President, Christon Tembo, said “gay lobbyists and other champions of acts against the order of nature will from now on be arrested and charged with conspiring to commit criminal acts.”\textsuperscript{15}

This brutal backlash ensured many LGBTI activists opted for invisibility as a safety precaution in a hostile context, although subtle groundwork continued.

While Kaunda’s sentiments were not welcomed by the populace, it did create some public space for engaging with LGBTI issues.\textsuperscript{16} It also made it possible for LGBTI activists to engage in visible activities such as lobbying for non-discriminatory laws, leading to the formation of FoR in 2007. While Kaunda in his statement importantly acknowledges the existence of homosexuality in Zambia, his statement also appears to pathologize LGBTI people by saying they “deserve help”.

\textsuperscript{14} Fabeni, Johnson and Nana, The Violations of the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Persons in Zambia, 4.


4.2 Organizing

Since LGBTI human rights organizations cannot legally register, the LGBTI movement negotiates systemic red tape by operating both underground and risking visible operations. Being well-informed about the laws used to police and punish LGBTI people is one strategy used by activists to avoid conflict with the State.

The State has sent warning messages to LGBTI human rights activists, such as activist Paul Kasonkomona who was arrested for ‘soliciting for immoral purposes’.

This served to assert the State’s anti-LGBTI position, indicating that overt expressions of SOGI would result in criminal charges.

Friends of Rainka (FoR) aims to protect, advance and promote the human rights of Zambian sexual minorities. It is housed by Panos and is part of a technical working group on key populations. FoR’s work includes engaging with the public health sector on key populations.

TransBantu specifically focuses on transgender and intersex people. Based in Lusaka, it is slowly making inroads in other parts of Zambia. Despite having been evicted from their rented offices twice because of the high traffic in visibly LGBTI people coming and going from the offices, TransBantu has established a programme involving parents of transgender and intersex people, and religious leaders. TransBantu provides outreach, psycho-social and information-sharing support for the parents of transgender and intersex individuals towards social inclusion.

The Women’s Alliance for Equality (TWAE) is the newest ‘kid on the block’ housed by Zanerela+, focusing specifically on women’s and girls’ rights, and introducing a gender perspective.

The Lotus Identity (TLI) caters for all LGBTI people. It focuses on research and documentation of LGBTI activities.

TransBantu, TLI and TWAE are all offshoots of FoR.

Zanerela+, a faith-based organization is working with all the above groups. They have together developed a strategy called ‘Binaries and Boxes’ to engage journalists on SOGI issues, and to meet LGBTI people, towards understanding LGBTI rights as human rights, and to foster social inclusion.

In this dangerous environment LGBTI human rights groups have nonetheless been on the rise, even when there was an increased number of arrests.


18 The Panos institutes work to ensure that information is effectively used to foster public debate, pluralism and democracy. Globally and within nations, Panos works with media and other information actors to enable developing countries to shape and communicate their own development agendas through informed public debate.
Through progressive religious leaders and other non-LGBTI human rights champions, there is increased space for championing LGBTI human rights causes, with LGBTI human rights groups operating both visibly and invisibly whilst attempting to negotiate safe spaces. The fact of LGBTI human rights issues being discussed at all, is a win for the human rights of LGBTI people as their presence in Zambia counters the dominant narratives: that homosexuality is un-African and un-Christian. Because of this increased space, the struggles of Zambian LGBTI people have become more multifaceted and multidimensional.

Widespread, state-sponsored homophobia has demanded resilience of LGBTI human rights activists. Groups have been forced to reformulate strategies for the sake of individual security. Organizations and allies collaborate on areas of common interest to further common agendas.

The collaboration between TWAE and Zanerela+ has resulted in TWAE having office space within Zanerela+, facilitating roundtables and sensitization dialogues between LGBTI people, parents of LGBTI people, and religious and traditional leaders. Zanerela+ is also involved in engaging healthcare workers on their treatment of LGBTI people, as health services are commonly identified as a key space where LGBTI people’s human rights are denied.
6.1 Intimidation and Corruption

“When they arrested me, dressed as a woman, the police officers undressed me to check if I was a man or a woman.”
Focus Group Participant

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution values human dignity as inherent to everyone as a fundamental human right. It mandates that persons, whether arrested or not, are treated with respect and not dehumanized. Human dignity and respect is rarely accorded to LGBTI people at the hands of the police. Laws and policies are used as tools to directly and indirectly police and punish them. Vulnerability to police harassment and arrest enables corruption, as police may deliberately target LGBTI people as ‘soft targets’, seeking a bribe, and thereby formally charge them.

6.2 Right to Health

“Yes, the community experiences stigma and discrimination especially when a male-bodied person has anal warts or when a transgender male needs gynaecological services, as such persons are immediately seen as homosexuals.”
TransBlitz Zambia Member

Currently, LGBTI people cannot readily access services such as voluntary HIV counselling and testing as a couple. Where health personnel refuse to treat LGBTI people for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) without their partners, they often opt to self-medicate to avoid the risk of abuse or arrest. Realizing the right to health for transgender people can require access to hormone therapy that is not currently possible in Zambia.

6.3 Freedom of Association

“No LGBTI parade would ever be allowed, and for security reasons, we can never hold that. The police would maybe give you a permit to go ahead and come and round you up.”
Focus Group Participant

Zambia has ratified the international treaty on freedom of association and protection of the right to organize. Despite this, LGBTI people cannot openly organize to meet. Thus, some of the first SOGI discussions with religious leaders were hosted by foreign missions in Zambia.

6.4 Fear of Being Outed

“We fear participating in community events because you can be outing.”
Focus Group Participant

Being outed during participation in communal events comes with severe risk implications, including the possibility of loss of employment, housing, family support, and if at school, the risk of being forced to drop out of school. Many LGBTI people choose to remain in the closet as negative consequences can also affect the safety and security of their families, and their families being rejected by their communities.

6.5 Social Ex/Inclusion

“I don’t think my family would even allow me to have these practices that go with marriage such as ichilanga mullilo and lobola.”
Focus Group Participant

Everyday practices reflect some of the ways in which exclusion affects LGBTI people. One participant in a focus group discussion said: “I would like to take my girlfriend out on a date to a nice restaurant without people raising questions.” Another said: “I would love to be free to introduce my girlfriend to my family and be free to go anywhere.”

Social exclusion is hampered by the constrained public space for engaging with LGBTI human rights issues, and limited access to information. This has resulted in the education sector categorizing LGBTI people as ‘special needs’, and religious institutions considering being LGBTI in choice, and therefore, wrong.
7.1 Religious and Cultural Leaders

With interpretations of religion and culture as two key pillars that continue to contribute to intolerance and discrimination against the human rights of LGBTI people in Zambia, religious and cultural leaders at national and at community levels are well-placed to influence and shape public opinion – including changing attitudes, beliefs and practices – towards respecting and accepting the human rights of LGBTI people. Targeting and engaging Christian and Muslim clerics at all levels of society is crucial to changing dominant homophobic narratives regarding religion and culture.

The dominant narrative that argues homosexuality is ‘un-African’ needs to be challenged with evidence of indigenous African cultural practices predating Christianity that embraced homosexuality as normal and African. This requires a strategy to make such knowledge widely available in plain language, accessible to ordinary people in the public sphere. To date, efforts to ‘excavate’ these knowledges have tended to take place in academic and research spaces, rather than being easily accessible to parents, community and religious leaders. Using mainstream media strategically to share this kind of knowledge that challenges dominant narratives, holds promise of creating a more rational engagement with African same-sex practices.

7.2 Media

Mainstream media in Zambia has neither advanced nor affirmed the human rights of LGBTI people. Media coverage that shifts homophobic narratives towards increased understanding of inalienable human rights, and sensitization of the challenges LGBTI people face, towards respecting LGBTI human rights, would be key to changing the discriminatory narrative.

With homophobia flourishing in the absence of access to a wide range of information and views, and a clamping down on information that supports LGBTI human rights, it is crucial that media be used to increase access to the kind of information that would increase awareness, leading to more nuanced understandings of LGBTI human rights, for positive social change.

“In my church, we have three LGBTI people who sing in the praise team, we have accepted them and we know they are LGBTI.”

Religious Leader
7.3 Civil Society Human Rights Organizations

Engaging with existing human rights organizations to advance and support LGBTI human rights – as inherent to every person – needs to be strengthened to develop a critical mass of non-LGBTI allies. The fact of the Zango Youth Consortium’s support for the human rights of LGBTI people is a strategic lever to build upon and strengthen.

7.4 Families as Agents of Change: Engaging Religious and Traditional Leaders

Strengthening engagement with the parents of LGBTI people opens the possibility of them becoming agents of change in their communities. Already, TransBantu is engaging with parents of LGBTI people, opening dialogue that includes engaging with religious and traditional leaders, towards enabling alliances between families, culture and faith. Families can best be supported by creating space for dialogue, and improving access to information about SOGI issues to enable open dialogue in families and communities, allowing for parent-parent, and family-family peer engagement.

Traditional leaders wield significant power and influence and have the potential to sensitize their communities on the place of LGBTI people within indigenous cultures. The existence of African indigenous cultures that embraced a wide spectrum of sexualities is not widely known with insufficient accessible, plain language information in the public sphere.

Religious leaders trained by Zanerela+ as well as some individual church leaders like Kayka Kaoma and Talias Shumba, have openly championed the rights of LGBTI people through writing about SOGI issues from legal and religious perspectives, and speaking about SOGI issues in life-affirming ways. Using this leverage, religious leaders could be further supported and equipped with tools for interpreting religious texts in ways that help change perceptions on LGBTI human rights issues. Despite being trained by Zanerela+ through workshops and dialogues, some religious leaders remain locked in the idea of homosexuality as an illness or sin, requiring God to change, or ‘correct’ LGBTI people, illustrating that changing attitudes and beliefs is an incremental process that takes time.

At present few traditional leaders are openly supportive of LGBTI human rights. As attitudes shift, sympathetic traditional leaders could be mobilized to lobby government to repeal homophobic laws through the House of Chiefs, a body of traditional leaders who guide government on matters of tradition and culture.

Building alliances between supportive religious and traditional leaders, as well as families, could create a powerful force for cultural and social change that recognizes, protects and defends the innate human rights of all LGBTI people.
Recommendations for LGBTI organizations and allies:

- LGBTI organizations should continue to cooperate and collaborate to avoid replicating efforts and enable consolidation of the movement. The creation of an umbrella body should be considered.

- There is a need for more research on LGBTI issues in Zambia. Currently only a handful of researchers have taken an interest in SOGI issues. Research needs to be accessible in language and format.

- LGBTI groups need to build alliances with non-LGBTI allies including targeting political leaders.

- Strategies need to target communities to influence attitudes. Effective strategies require factual, accessible, plain language information that challenges dominant views, including by making accessible information on forgotten indigenous cultural spaces that enabled LGBTI communities to flourish.

- Radio is a powerful and accessible tool for reaching people. Creating radio programmes to disseminate SOGI information, and LGBTI-friendly radio programmes would reach a critical mass for dialogue and learning, towards attitude change.

- Prospects should be explored for peaceful demonstrations including allies and key figures in society for the repeal of discriminatory laws.


