



10 ESSENTIALS FOR MEASURING VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS

“There are no accurate estimates regarding the world population affected by violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity,” United Nations’ Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

PRINCIPLES



Ensure **safety and viability** of any intervention by supporting rather than duplicating existing member and community-led organizations and only proceed when intervention deemed as appropriate by local partners.



Adopt a **trauma-informed approach** based upon local sociopolitical and legal contexts and limitations.



Prioritize and respect communities’ rights to participation through **participatory and inclusive** approaches.

- 1** Engage, with compensation, local LGBTQ+ rights activists and CSOs early in the research design process, to determine how to safely and respectfully include data on diverse SOGIESC in data collection initiatives, to identify what data is needed, and how it will be used, and also to establish context-appropriate research methodologies.
- 2** Ensure inclusivity of diverse definitions for LGBTQ+ identities and underrepresented and under-researched individuals.
- 3** Where systematic data collection on VAW exists, including through VAW administrative data record systems, data should be disaggregated by SOGIESC.
- 4** Provide thorough training on LGBTQ+ rights and inclusive language, as well as survivor-centered, trauma-informed data collection approaches to all data collectors, including service providers processing data.
- 5** Ensure data is secure and anonymized, aligning both with international standards as well as recommendations from local data privacy experts and LGBTQ+ CSOs.
- 6** Where robust legal protections are in place, and in consultation with LGBTQ+ people and community organizations, invest in efforts to include LGBTQ+ populations in census data collection and relevant population surveys.
- 7** Provide long-term, flexible financial support to CSOs and member-led research organizations engaged in data collection efforts, including those that are seeking to adapt, enhance, or produce novel methods and approaches to evidence generation.
- 8** Support multi-country studies across regions, which can help to foster exchange of promising and best data collection practices and approaches.
- 9** Support data collection projects that have established ethical approval by local research institutions and/or research ethics committees with inclusive representation.
- 10** Support smaller organizations’ efforts at building strategic alliances, transnational advocacy networks, consortiums, and multi-stakeholder initiatives.

GOOD PRACTICES

SAFETY



Data security and informed consent are of paramount importance in countries where homosexuality is criminalized and where LGBTQ+ people are at risk of harm. A study on violence based on SOGIESC in Iraq undertaken by Human Rights Watch was made possible by **leveraging their connections with a local LGBTQ+ rights organization, *IraQueer*** to identify potential participants while gaining their trust. Extensive measures were adopted to ensure participants' anonymity, such as interviews conducted in writing to avoid voice identification, all names were pseudonymized, and data collectors later vetted the interviews for security.

A five-country study on violence against lesbians, bisexual women, and transgender people in Asia successfully **developed security protocols alongside grassroots advocates with built-in opportunities for iteration**. Describing the overarching macropolitical context of each country, the study outlined how this framework shaped research implementation. Research assistants were hired based on their **trustworthiness and sensitivity to LGBTQ+-specific issues**, safe times and locations were provided for interviews, and data were stored securely by using file encryption and hard-drive backups. Finally, researchers identified LGBTQ+-friendly counselors and feminist psychologists to be available to intervene for interviewees experiencing violence.

DATA DISAGGREGATION



In Argentina, ongoing public health research is helping to advance the de-binarization of healthcare data, to allow people to select their own gender identity from a list of options, including a “none of the above” option. Working together with advocacy organizations and state agencies, and crucially, leveraging an **enabling legislative environment** (in light of Argentina’s 2012 Gender Identity Law) researchers are working to identify safe, context-specific methods for making the experiences of transgender and gender diverse individuals visible.

CSO-LED DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS IN DISCRIMINATORY LEGAL CONTEXTS



In Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, and Uganda, CSOs are leading data collection efforts to improve monitoring of violence against LGBTQ+ individuals in **sociopolitical contexts that lack formal protections for, or even criminalize**, these populations. By taking a regional approach to data collection, they are helping to fill data gaps where state-led efforts are lacking. This data can also be leveraged to hold states accountable to their commitments to LGBTQ+ rights; for example in Botswana, CSO data was used in a 2019 High Court ruling to decriminalize same sex relations.