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# Discussion Paper

## Measuring LGBTI Inclusion

Increasing Access to Data and Building the Evidence Base

June 2016

United Nations Development Programme





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# **Measuring LGBTI Inclusion: Increasing Access to Data and Building the Evidence Base**

Working Draft

June 2016

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDRO	Human Development Reports Office
LGB	Lesbian, gay and bisexual
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
MSM	Men who have sex with men
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
SOGIE	Sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

## Introduction

Recent decades have seen increasing attention to issues of human rights and social inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people around the world. Human rights are a goal in and of themselves, but they are also a means of achieving greater progress in human and economic development outcomes. Given this broader context, regional and national human rights institutions have been joined by UN agencies, development agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions and LGBTI non-governmental organizations in various international forums to discuss how best to further the human rights and social inclusion of LGBTI people.

Human rights reports and other sources of data demonstrate the need for attention, given the evidence of inequality and violations of LGBTI people's human rights in every country in the world. However, relatively little systematic research on the lives of LGBTI people exists, particularly in developing countries. Researchers are hampered by the lack of resources necessary to collect high-quality data on LGBTI people and to analyse existing data. As a result, we have almost no measures of LGBTI inclusion in key areas of human development.

Without good measures of inclusion for LGBTI people, problems are difficult to define and address, programmes are hard to design, and progress is impossible to document. Better measures of inclusion could advance public policy and development programming related to LGBTI people, pointing to needs and revealing good practices. Evidence-based development strategies require a body of evidence based on sound scientific research practices to demonstrate that programmes and interventions achieve the desired outcomes. In recognition of this, one of the three priority action areas in the UNDP HIV Health and Development Strategy 2016–2021, 'Connecting the Dots', is to reduce inequalities and social exclusion that drive HIV and poor health.<sup>1</sup> The Strategy notes that:

“Homophobia and other forms of stigma, violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people contribute significantly to their exclusion from society, limit their access to health and social services and hinder social and economic development. Improved data and analysis of the impacts of inequality and exclusion on LGBTI people and other excluded groups are needed to inform rights-based

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP, 'Connecting the Dots: Strategy Note, HIV, Health and Development 2016–2021', UNDP, New York, June 2016, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hiv-aids/hiv--health-and-development-strategy-2016-2021.html>.

policies and programmes.”<sup>2</sup>

As a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in September 2015, UNDP and OHCHR convened a multisectoral expert meeting, which included data collection specialists, LGBTI rights advocates and researchers, some key private- sector leaders in LGBTI data collection, and UN representatives.<sup>3</sup> Together these experts considered the gaps in data, research and knowledge related to LGBTI inclusion, and debated key questions, each of which is discussed in the next four sections of this research paper:

- How might we conceptualize and measure inclusion of LGBTI people, given current measurement practice?
- What do existing research and sources of data offer in the way of evidence on LGBTI inclusion or exclusion?
- Given what we know, what are the highest priority gaps in data and existing research?
- Moving forward, what are the possible paths and partnerships necessary to address those gaps through new data collection and data analysis?

## 1 Defining inclusion and exclusion for LGBTI people

The key questions are how best to conceptualize the social inclusion or exclusion of LGBTI people and how to measure those concepts.<sup>4</sup> At least two approaches are useful for starting the conversation: the existing ways of measuring inclusion in the human development field for other marginalized groups, and measurements or comparisons that would capture LGBTI-specific considerations.

As a preliminary matter, it is important to at least briefly outline an understanding of the categories ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex’ and who might be included within those categories. Labels and categorizations of sex, gender and sexuality vary across cultures and borders, but the growing global discourse on human rights increasingly uses the LGBTI umbrella term for several reasons.<sup>5</sup>

First, stigma and prejudice<sup>6</sup> are very common against: a) those whose sexual attractions and

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. (p. 17).

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, ‘LGBTI Inclusion Index Concept Note’, UNDP, New York, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this discussion, the practical issues of measurement and data needs will be taken up in later sections.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, the Preamble to the Yogyakarta Principles, available at [http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles\\_en.pdf](http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles_en.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Psychologist Gregory M. Herek (2009) defines stigma as “the negative regard and inferior status that society collectively accords to people who possess a particular characteristic or belong to a particular group or category”. He defines sexual prejudice as “internalized sexual stigma that results in the negative evaluation of sexual minorities”.

behaviour include people of the same sex; b) those whose expressions and identities do not conform to their gender (with respect to their birth sex);<sup>7</sup> and c) those who are born with atypical physical sex characteristics.<sup>8</sup> Second, the need to push back against the discrimination, violence and other effects of stigma has pulled those groups together into a common cause in many social, cultural and political settings. However, despite those similarities, the form that exclusion can take also varies for lesbians, gay men, bisexual people, transgender people and intersex people, so it will also be important to address measures that can be disaggregated to capture the distinct experiences of each group. Relatedly, differences in age, race, sex, disabilities and other characteristics within each of the five categories mean that measures that allow for an understanding of intersectionality could also be quite important.

Based on these definitions, the narrative describes existing measures of social inclusion and then uses them to conceptualize measures of inclusion for LGBTI people in the context of the human development approach.

### **1.1 Key approach to defining inclusion: access to opportunities and achievement of outcomes**

Inclusion and exclusion are terms used in a variety of ways across different fields and different institutional contexts.<sup>9</sup> Simpler concepts that estimate income-related measures, such as poverty rates or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, are not sufficient to capture the range and relationship of multiple disadvantages faced by marginalized people, such as people in low-income countries, women, Roma, racial minorities or LGBTI people. Inclusion and exclusion expand to bring in many dimensions of disadvantages that might accompany, exacerbate or cause poverty but might also exist even for people not considered poor.

This paper grounds a definition of inclusion in the human development approach, which focuses on the dimensions of human freedom that should be protected and expanded to be available to all people. This approach pioneered by Amartya Sen, serves as the guiding philosophy of UNDP's Human Development Reports. In its 'Strategic Plan: 2014–2017', UNDP (2013) defines inclusion as "access to opportunities and achievement of outcomes, as captured in human development indices, especially women, female-headed households and youth." Thus inclusion means that every person has access to opportunities (including the

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<sup>7</sup> The World Professional Association for Transgender Health defines transgender as "[describing] a diverse group of individuals who cross or transcend culturally defined categories of gender. The gender identity of transgender people differs to varying degrees from the sex they were assigned at birth."

<sup>8</sup> This definition of intersex comes from Morgan Carpenter (2015). Other definitions can be found at <https://oii.org.au/18106/what-is-intersex/>. A medical term that is sometimes used is 'Disorders of Sex Development' (DSD). Some activists object to the DSD term because it pathologizes intersex people and sanctions medical intervention (see <https://oii.org.au/16601/intersex-numbers>).

<sup>9</sup> A recent World Bank report compared definitions of exclusion and inclusion used in different studies, finding many key concepts embedded in those uses: participation in society, well-being, voice, fundamental rights, feeling valued, opportunity, social equity, power, living with dignity, access, discrimination, and others (World Bank, pp. 255–258).

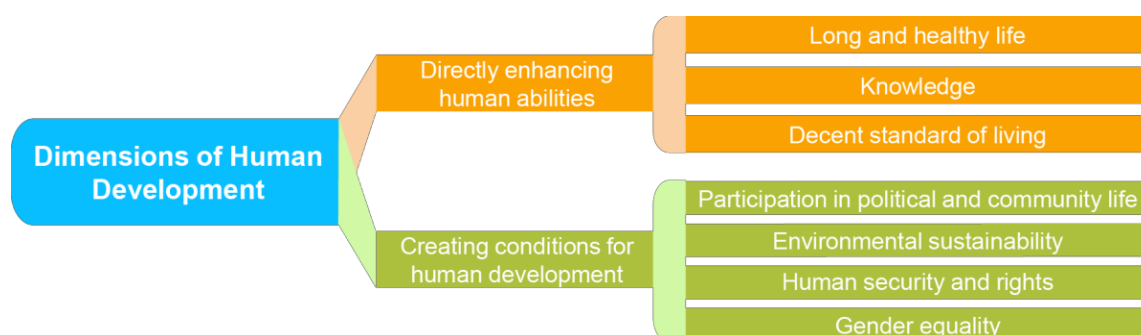


capabilities to do and be as one chooses) and is able to make choices that lead to outcomes consistent with human dignity.<sup>10</sup> While inclusion should be, on one level, universal, UNDP also recognizes that members of certain groups are excluded — women, female-headed households, youth and, potentially, other groups such as LGBTI people.

## 1.2 Outcomes-based measures of inclusion

The core mission of UNDP’s Human Development Reports Office (HDRO) is to measure the extent to which these opportunities and outcomes exist in each country, both universally and with respect to certain groups within a country, mainly women and children. Figure 1 shows how individual abilities and conditions that shape opportunities can be mapped into more specific dimensions of life (listed on the right side of the graphic). Those dimensions, in turn, can be proxied by indicators about a country’s residents derived from survey data and by other country-level data sources.

**Figure 1: Translating the human development approach into the Human Development Index**



Source: UNDP, 2015

The HDRO reports a large number of such indicators separately by country (see Table 1) but also adds up certain individual-level outcomes into indices that become country-level proxies for capabilities:

- The Human Development Index (HDI) uses life expectancy at birth as a proxy for access to a long and healthy life; mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling provide measures for access to knowledge; and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita is a proxy for a decent standard of living.
- The Gender Development Index calculates those measures separately for men and women.
- The Multidimensional Poverty Index uses measures of health (malnourished household member, child mortality), education (no household member having completed six years of schooling, school-age child not attending school) and standard of living (access

<sup>10</sup> This particular framing is reasonably similar to the longer definition proposed by the World Bank’s ‘Social Inclusion’ report: “The process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society” (p. 50). See also Martha Nussbaum (2011) for a more theoretical discussion of the human development approach, also known as the capabilities approach.

to electricity; clean drinking water; sanitation; assets; uses dirty cooking fuel; home with dirt, sand or dung floor).

- UNDP has created an additional measure of exclusion of women, the Gender Inequality Index. That index combines measures of health (maternal mortality, adolescent fertility), empowerment (having at least a secondary education, female and male shares of parliamentary seats) and labour market participation.

Table 1 presents examples of indicators used to measure various dimensions of human development that are tracked by UNDP.<sup>11</sup> Although these indicators are only designed to single out two vulnerable groups — women and children — most of these dimensions and some of the measures could clearly, at least in theory, be used to measure the inclusion of LGBTI people. Differences in these indicators between groups — in this case, between LGBTI people and non-LGBTI people — would indicate exclusion of LGBTI people, who would have fewer capabilities to do and be what they value and less access to the conditions that allow them to act on capabilities. However, as will be discussed in Section 2, we have few or no data by which to make such comparisons in most countries.

**Table 1: Examples of dimensions and indicators used in human development reports and indices**

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Examples of measures relevant to individuals</b>
Health: children and youth	HIV prevalence, malnourishment
Adult health and health expenditures	Adult mortality rate; HIV prevalence, life expectancy; adolescent fertility rate, malnourishment
Education	Literacy rates, drop-out rates; mean and expected years of schooling
Command over and allocation of resources	Labour-force participation rates
Social competencies	Employment to population ratio, youth unemployment, child suicide rate, pension recipients
Personal insecurity	Percentage of homeless people, prison population, refugees, food deficit, homicide rate, social attitudes (justification of domestic abuse)
Population trends	Urban residence, median age, fertility rate
Perceptions of well-being	Satisfaction with own health care, standard of living, job; perceptions about community and government
Political	Shares of parliamentary seats

<sup>11</sup> Note that these dimensions are quite similar to those ‘domains of social inclusion’ sketched out by the World Bank’s ‘Inclusion Matters’ report: markets (land, housing, labour, credit); services (social protection, information, electricity, transport, education, health, water) and spaces (political, physical, cultural, social).

Given these examples based on the human development framework, one useful way to characterize the UNDP approach to measuring social inclusion and exclusion is that it mostly focuses on observable outcomes experienced by individuals. Adding some of those outcomes up to the country level in indices allows us to compare how human development varies cross-nationally. Outcomes can also be compared between individuals in different groups, where any observed inequalities provide evidence of ongoing exclusion in some dimensions of life. In the context of LGBTI inclusion, outcome indicators that show higher rates of food insecurity or higher HIV prevalence for LGBTI people, for instance, would indicate some degree of exclusion and the need for attention by development agencies and other stakeholders.

### 1.3 Opportunities-based measures of inclusion or exclusion

Another approach to measuring exclusion focuses more on the degree to which certain groups have opportunities to produce individual capabilities. The best known of such measures concentrate on the exclusion of women, in particular. In contrast with measures based on social, political or economic outcomes for women, this type of measure captures structural barriers in a country that reduce opportunities and drive inequality in outcomes, such as legal inequality, the degree of political participation or social and cultural practices in countries. As will be discussed in Section 4, this kind of index might already be feasible for a measure of LGBTI inclusion for many countries.

Several efforts have been made to pull together a number of different dimensions of opportunities for women into an overall index for a country: the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), the Women's Political Rights Index, the Women's Economic Rights Index, the Women's Social Rights Index, and the Women's Economic Opportunity Index (Branisa et al., 2014; Economist Intelligence Unit, 2012). The Economist Intelligence Unit developed the Women's Economic Opportunity Index to go "beyond gender disparities to the underlying factors affecting women's access to economic opportunity in the formal economy". It defines women's opportunity as "a set of laws, regulations, practices, customs and attitudes that allow women to participate in the workforce under conditions roughly equal to those of men..."<sup>12</sup>

Consider the SIGI to understand the potential usefulness of these indices. Five sub-indices make up the index (see Figure 2), each one capturing a different dimension and set of factors that deprive women of basic freedoms and opportunities:

- discriminatory family code;
- restricted physical integrity;
- son bias;

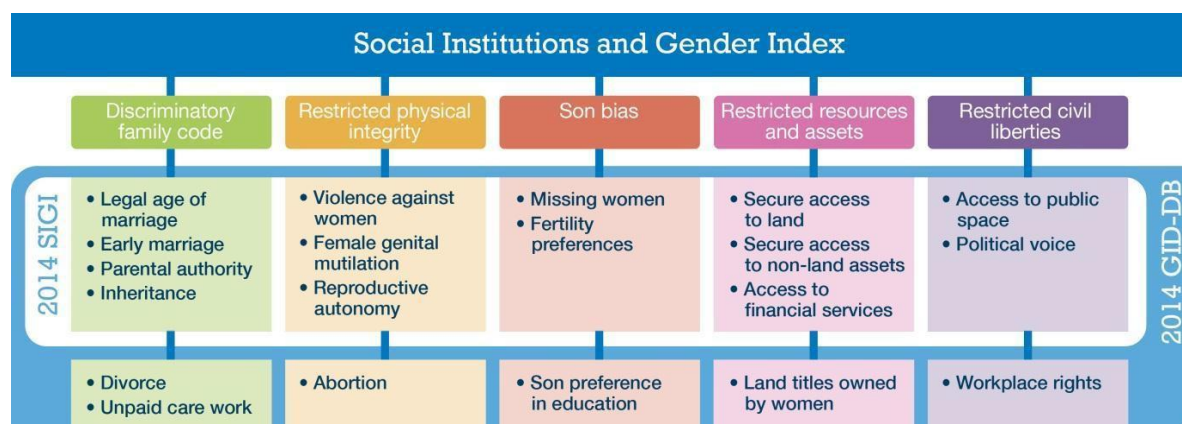
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<sup>12</sup> The dimensions of the index are labour policy and practice, access to finance, education and training, women's legal and social status, and the general business environment. The indicators used within each dimension include a mix of policies (e.g. non-discrimination laws, maternity and paternity leave, ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)), programmes or services to give women access (e.g. in provision of financial services, availability of affordable child care) and outcomes (e.g. literacy rate, mean years of schooling, fertility rate).

- restricted resources and assets; and
- restricted civil liberties.

Figure 2 shows some of the indicators used in each dimension. The other rights indices mentioned above overlap to some extent with the SIGI, but the SIGI also incorporates less formalized norms that shape women's opportunities (Branisa et al., 2014).

**Figure 2: Summary of components of the SIGI**



Source: OECD Development Centre, 2014. The GID-DB is the database used in constructing the SIGI.

Comparing the outcomes-based measures discussed earlier to opportunities-based measures shows that they are highly correlated, although not perfectly so (Branisa et al., 2014; UNDP, 2015). That is, countries with high equality in outcomes-based measures tend to have high equality in institution-based measures. The SIGI has been shown to be correlated with gender equality outcome measures, even after controlling for GDP, region and countries' religious background (Branisa et al., 2014).

Some general observations that emerge from the comparison of various gender indices are worth noting for purposes of an LGBTI inclusion index (discussed in Section 4):

- **Outcome measures are not absolutely necessary.** Nevertheless, most of these indices include data on social, economic, political or health outcomes for the disadvantaged group and for the comparatively advantaged group. Even the opportunities-based indices include some outcome measures.
- **Indices change over time.** The dimensions and indicators used in indices are often revised over time for a particular index. These revisions appear to happen as better data become available, as other indicators seem more desirable or as research reveals shortcomings of components of an index.
- **Availability of data limits the indicators used.** Therefore, trade-offs occur: more indicators can mean fewer countries covered.
- **Updates are important.** Many of these indices periodically update country-level values, but not necessarily every year. Updates allow for assessment of progress and comparisons of how fast different countries are changing.
- **Indices might vary across regions.** The choice of dimensions and indicators sometimes reflects the perceived status of women in the countries or region covered. For example,

the European Union (EU) Gender Equality Index includes a wider range of outcome indicators than other indices, both because of the high quality of data that has been harmonized across EU member countries and because some indicators might capture more subtle variations among countries that tend to rank highly on global measures of equality for women.

#### **1.4 Data on deprivations or negative freedoms as measures of exclusion**

Since the measures discussed above are designed to apply to all individuals, those dimensions and measures could measure LGBTI people's inclusion, defined as access to opportunities and achievement of certain outcomes. Given the existence of discrimination, violence and other deprivations of human rights for LGBTI people in every country known to have been studied, measures of stigma (anti-LGBTI attitudes) and of individuals' experiences of discrimination in specific countries could provide important information with which to assess the degree of inclusion and exclusion of LGBTI people.

Measurements of the existence and degree of social stigma in a country, for example, might come from surveys of public opinion. This approach is not commonly used in the gender indices, although the SIGI includes data from a survey question on attitudes towards violence against women. As will be discussed in Section 4, several international surveys include questions related to LGBTI people and issues.

In addition, some surveys include direct questions on experiences of human rights violations for LGBTI people. For example, the EU's Gender Equality Index incorporates data on whether women have experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence at the hands of intimate partners or non-partners. This approach could also lend itself to measures of LGBTI people's experiences. The EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) conducted an online survey of 93,000 LGBT<sup>13</sup> people in 27 EU member countries and Croatia in 2012. The survey asked participants whether they had personally experienced discrimination, violence or harassment because they were LGBT, including experiences in the workforce, education, housing, the general marketplace and health care. These kinds of data are relatively common for LGBT people, including in developing countries. For example, a study of LGBT people in Nepal found reported discrimination in many kinds of settings, including law enforcement, commercial, health, public transportation and school settings (UNDP, 2014).

## **2 Existing knowledge about key outcomes for LGBTI people**

An exhaustive survey of the world's research on LGBTI people's lived experience is well beyond the scope of this background paper. However, some general research findings can be sketched out to provide a sense of available knowledge about LGBTI outcomes in several important

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<sup>13</sup> Acronyms that do not include some part of 'LGBTI' are deliberately written to clarify which groups a statement applies to. For example, 'research on LGB people' refers to research that only covers lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

dimensions related to inclusion and exclusion: the economy, education, health and violence. Those dimensions capture at least some of the basic freedoms or capabilities described in Section 1. In addition, a brief discussion of the prevalence of being LGBTI is presented. But first, to help make sense of the strength of the existing research, this section begins with some matters of methodological context.

## 2.1 Methodological context for LGBTI research

The biggest challenge for outcomes research is the scarcity of high-quality data on LGBTI people. Two major methodological challenges must be addressed to gather data that allow valid studies of outcomes. One challenge concerns how to define LGBTI people across different countries and cultural contexts. The second challenge concerns designing studies that will provide generalizable data about LGBTI people.

First, terms and concepts that are used by sexual and gender minorities might vary across local contexts, perhaps varying across and even within countries. The LGBTI terms and meanings might not be used locally or might have different local meanings, so researchers must take care in selecting whom to study and how to ask about identities. A related concern is that stigma and fear of discrimination might reduce the likelihood of some particularly vulnerable subgroups participating in surveys or accurately reporting their SOGIESC status.<sup>14</sup> If that happens, then the individuals in a survey might be missing an important subgroup of LGBTI people (see a further discussion of representativeness below). This issue could be a bigger concern in some countries than others, depending on the political and cultural context.

Second, the desire to say something about LGBTI people broadly from a particular study means that the individuals studied (the ‘sample’) must be representative of the larger group of LGBTI people. If a sample is representative, then we can generalize from that sample to the larger group. Representativeness is especially important for the ability to compare LGBTI and non-LGBTI people. Otherwise, any difference in outcomes we see between LGBTI and non-LGBTI people would probably just be the result of the different kinds of people who participate in the survey, rather than a true difference.<sup>15</sup>

More precisely, valid comparisons of outcomes between LGBTI people and non-LGBTI people require samples of individuals that are collected in a particular way. Ideally, data would be gathered through population-based sampling methods (also known as ‘probability sampling’, and sometimes called ‘random sampling’). Examples of surveys done in this way include national labour force surveys and the Demographic and Health Survey. If those surveys included questions on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status, the random

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<sup>14</sup> The more common acronym used is SOGIE, but an additional ‘SC’ is added here to specifically reflect the addition of sex characteristics.

<sup>15</sup> For instance, a survey of LGBTI people might find high levels of income for LGBTI people when compared to the general population because the survey recruited participants from high-income pools of people, such as people who are employed by multinational corporations or who read certain publications or websites. Even with probability sampling, outcomes might be different by chance, but statistical tools allow us to assess how likely observed differences are to have emerged by chance.

samples that would come out of the surveys would be representative of the LGBTI population, and findings could be compared to similar measures for non-LGBTI people.

However, very few countries have any such survey data available for lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and those that do tend to be high-income countries, such as the USA, the UK, Canada, The Netherlands, Sweden (same-sex couples), Greece, France and Australia.<sup>16</sup> In a promising development, Nepal and India have added ‘third gender’ or ‘other’ categories to the sex question on a national census, but the quality of the Nepalese data is doubtful, and little analysis of the Indian data has been conducted.<sup>17</sup> In the last 10 years our knowledge about how to ask questions on sexual orientation and gender identity have increased greatly as a result of all of these efforts, but the quantity of good data remains inadequate (SMART, 2009; GenIUSS Group, 2014).

Instead, it is fair to say that most research on LGBTI people comes from non-probability samples of LGBTI people that are recruited through techniques that do not generate random samples. (Call this the ‘first-generation’ approach, since it is also still present in countries with population-based surveys.) For example, studies might recruit participants from LGBTI organizations, LGBTI events, online communities, public sex environments or friends of participants. Taken as a whole, those participants might not be representative of the larger population of LGBTI people. Research based on this kind of sampling can be quite valuable in demonstrating the challenges faced by at least some LGBTI people within a given country, such as experiences of discrimination, but findings cannot be directly compared across countries or to population-based data. In other words, non-probability samples cannot be used to answer questions such as ‘Are LGBTI people more likely to be unemployed than non-LGBTI people?’ or ‘Are health disparities or employment discrimination for LGBTI people higher in some countries than others?’

Given caveats related to those methodological concerns, the discussion below includes selected findings from studies published in English using both kinds of data — probability-based and non-probability-based samples. As noted earlier, the presentation is selective, to present an illustration of the type of research available, rather than an exhaustive summary. Since most of the probability-based samples come from high-income countries, illustrative findings from non-probability samples were chosen from research on low- and middle-income countries.

## 2.2 How many people are LGBTI?

One common question asked is what proportion of the general population might be considered

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<sup>16</sup> Many of the probability-based data on LGBTI people are actually from same-sex couples, based on the presumption that cohabiting same-sex couples identified in surveys or population registries would identify as LGB. Studies using those data compare people in same-sex couples to people in different-sex couples. However, people in couples might be very different in some ways from people not currently in a cohabiting couple.

<sup>17</sup> Reports suggest that issues of disclosure, harassment by enumerators and errors led to a very small count, and Nepal’s Central Bureau of Statistics did not report the number of third-gender people counted (Bochenek and Knight, 2012).



LGBTI. Having such an estimate can be important in policy discussions, since it gives a sense that the group is sizable enough to matter but not so large as to generate significant costs from greater inclusion. This figure also helps with analysis of inclusion — for instance, in making estimates of the social and economic costs of exclusion. Population-based surveys from the USA and Europe imply that 1–5 percent of people identify in some way as LGBT (Gates, 2011). A larger proportion of people report having had same-sex sexual partners or an attraction to people of the same sex, increasing the prevalence range from 1.8 percent to 11 percent in those surveys.

Estimates for transgender people are harder to come by. A recent study in the Netherlands found that 0.4 percent of the labour force studied was made up of transgender people who had undergone surgery as part of their transition, a similar rate to the 0.3 percent estimated for the US transgender population (ibid.). Adding LGB to transgender people, the Williams Institute at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) uses the Gallup Daily Tracking Poll figure to estimate that 4 percent of the US population identifies as LGBT (Gates, 2014a).

It is very difficult to find widely accepted figures on the proportion of the population that might be intersex. Existing data focus on the proportion of children born with intersex variations, but the ranges reported by medical experts depend on the particular cause. One total estimate that is widely used is 1.7 percent of births.<sup>18</sup>

### 2.3 Economic outcomes: employment, wages, incomes, poverty, food security

Comparing economic outcomes between LGBTI and non-LGBTI people provides a way to assess the degree of inclusion or exclusion of LGBTI people for at least two reasons. First, if the economic outcomes of LGBTI people are less advantageous than those of observably similar non-LGBTI people, then we would likely conclude that some barrier is present that limits the opportunity for LGBTI people to achieve equal outcomes. For example, employment discrimination might mean that LGBTI people hold lower-paying jobs, are more likely to be unemployed or receive lower wages than non-LGBTI people for doing the same work. Second, economic resources themselves provide the means by which people might achieve other outcomes, such as access to food or education.

#### Earnings and household income

A recent review of research from the USA, the Netherlands, the UK, Sweden, Greece, France and Australia found that on average gay and bisexual men earn 11 percent less than heterosexual men with the same qualifications (Klawitter, 2015). Lesbian and bisexual women, in contrast, earn on average 9 percent more than heterosexual women with the same qualifications in those studies (although lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual women earn less than gay, bisexual and heterosexual men). However, lesbian couples tend to have lower household incomes than gay male couples and married different-sex couples (Badgett, 2006). A recent study of Dutch transgender people who underwent surgical transitions and

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<sup>18</sup> Organisation Intersex International Australia cites this figure from Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*, Basic Books, 2000, p. 53.



administrative gender transitions showed that transgender women (male-to-female) earned less after transition, while the earnings of transgender men (female-to-male) did not change significantly (Geijtenbeek and Plug, 2015).

### **Labour force participation**

Research using the same data in the earnings studies shows that lesbians work more in paid labour than do heterosexual women (Klawitter, 2015). This higher labour force participation might explain the higher earnings for lesbians, since added labour force experience is likely to enhance lesbians' unmeasured human capital. Gay/bisexual men and heterosexual men tend to have relatively similar patterns of labour force participation in the USA.

### **Poverty and food insecurity**

Given lower incomes for LGBT couples and individuals, we might expect their poverty rates to be high. Direct comparisons of poverty rates across sexual orientations and gender identities require data from representative samples of a population, which are rare. The only known direct comparisons of poverty come from the USA, where LGB people are at least as vulnerable — and sometimes more vulnerable — to poverty than heterosexual people with similar characteristics. In addition, when compared with heterosexual people, LGB people are more likely to report food insecurity than heterosexual people (Badgett, Durso and Schneebaum, 2013; Gates, 2014b). Several studies of non-probability samples in India document high rates of poverty among LGBT people (Masih et al., 2012; Khan et al., 2005; Newman et al., 2008). A study of low-income LGBTs in Rio de Janeiro found high rates of discrimination and homelessness and low rates of employment (Itaborahy, 2014).

## **2.4 Health disparities**

A growing body of research has found that LGB people often have higher rates of mental and physical health conditions than non-LGB people in several high-income countries with population-based data (Meyer and Frost, 2013). For example, rates of depression, substance use and suicidal thoughts are more common among LGB people than among heterosexual people. A recent World Bank report on India found that several studies of non-probability samples suggest that LGBT people have higher rates of depression, HIV and suicidal thoughts than the general Indian population (Badgett, 2014). In general, psychologists and other health scientists argue that these health disparities likely reflect the impact of 'minority stress', which is defined as the psychological and physical impact of social inequality and of stigma that is revealed in everyday interactions.

Much research also exists on HIV and men who have sex with men (MSM), with data coming from surveys of people recruited in many different ways, including clinical and social contexts and through online methods. Those surveys often include measures of exclusion and sometimes find that exclusion leads to less use of HIV prevention practices, for example.

## 2.5 Education outcomes

The surveys used to estimate the wage impact of sexual orientation also include measures of educational attainment. Using educational outcomes as a measure of inclusion might be complicated. Most studies in the USA find that LGB people have higher levels of education than comparable non-LGB people (Badgett, 2006). Many possible explanations have been offered for that pattern, such as greater acceptance of LGBT people in higher education, and education as a strategy to counter discrimination, but as yet there is little research on this issue even where data exist. In contrast, a simple comparison in a developing country, India, suggests that educational outcomes might be much worse for transgender people, in particular. The 2011 Indian census included an ‘other’ gender option on the census form, and 490,000 individuals reported the ‘other’ option (0.04 percent of the Indian population of 1.2 billion people). Only 46 percent of those using the ‘other’ gender option were literate, compared with 74 percent of the population using the ‘male’ and ‘female’ options (Nagarajan, 2014).

Indeed, we might expect LGBT students to have lower educational attainment outcomes, given other evidence showing that LGBT students face bullying, harassment, discrimination and other challenges. Data on these experiences for LGBT students come from countries as diverse as the USA, Bulgaria, the Philippines and India (Badgett et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2005; Kosciw et al., 2014; UNESCO, 2012).

## 2.6 Violence

Clinical data, crime reports, human rights documentation and some systematic research show that LGBTI people face physical violence in many contexts: the criminal justice system, schools, families, public settings and the health care system.<sup>19</sup> Violence can take different forms, including physical, psychological and structural. The most extreme form of violence, murder, has been well documented for transgender people. Transgender Europe (2014) counts more than 1500 such murders around the world between January 2008 and March 2014. While some data on violence against LGBTI people are collected in virtually every country, they are rarely systematically collected and analysed.

## 2.7 Issues for intersex people

While the research on intersex people has not reached the depth and breadth of that on LGBT people, some serious concerns emerge from existing empirical data (Ghattas, 2013; Carpenter, 2013). Intersex people face challenges to bodily integrity, particularly with respect to genital surgery undertaken without the consent of the individual. In some countries, intersex newborns are killed. Necessary medical services, such as hormone replacement, may not be available. In many countries birth registration must be done immediately, forcing intersex people into either the ‘female’ or ‘male’ category, rather than waiting or using an intermediate category. Intersex

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<sup>19</sup> For a recent review of examples of violence in emerging economies, see Badgett et al., 2014. See also UNDP and Williams Institute, 2014.

people experience violence and discrimination in many contexts, including in employment and the right to marry. They experience depression and trauma. Some of these concerns overlap with the concerns of LGB people, transgender people and people with disabilities, but some are unique to intersex people.

### 3 Identifying important gaps

Given the patchy state of existing research, it is clear that there are many large gaps in our knowledge about LGBTI people's experience. The lack of good data on LGBTI people would be the most important gap to be filled in every country. Here are some other notable gaps that are likely to be especially important for thinking about human rights and human development:

- **Poverty:** Policymakers need more knowledge about poor LGBTI people, particularly how stigma and intergenerational poverty interact to further exclude them. Studying how bullying and discrimination against LGBTI youth contributes to poverty as adults might provide important understandings.
- **Intersex people:** We have very little survey data on intersex people and their lived experience. One area of important missing research might be on the efficacy of different medical approaches to providing health care for intersex people (Carpenter, 2013).
- **Transgender people:** Although research accumulates on transgender people in small samples, we need larger, population-based samples that would allow for comparisons with cisgender (non-transgender) people on different outcome measures.
- **Female-born individuals (lesbians, bisexual women and transgender men):** Surveys of LGBT people in many low-income countries have ended up with relatively few female-born respondents, making our knowledge of lesbian and bisexual women and transgender men lag behind that of gay and bisexual men and transgender women. One reason may be that survey efforts draw on HIV-related organizations and networks for recruiting participants, and those samples commonly include both MSM and transgender women.
- **Diversity within LGBTI communities:** The lived experiences of LGBTI people are also greatly influenced by other factors besides their SOGIESC status, such as living in a rural area, working in the informal sector, being young or old, or through the interactions of SOGIESC with other important identities, such as disability, religion, race or ethnicity.

In addition, much more work is needed to link research to policy action and development practice by national governments, international human rights and development agencies and other stakeholders. Research can serve many purposes in the policy process:

- assessing and documenting the degree of inclusion and exclusion of LGBTI people;
- identifying specific problems faced by LGBTI people;
- designing policies and programmes to improve the lives of LGBTI people;

- evaluating the effectiveness of policies and programmes to promote equality and inclusion;
- monitoring compliance with human rights obligations;
- educating and raising public awareness; and
- benchmarking and comparing the progress towards inclusion made across countries.

## 4 Partnerships and pathways

This overview of the existing knowledge base suggests that much work lies ahead to create measures that will be implementable and will contribute to the full inclusion of LGBTI people in every country. Using available (and future) resources wisely will mean setting priorities and developing a comprehensive strategy to advance our ability to assess whether, where, why and how inclusion is progressing. The rapid advancement of knowledge that is required will need to be accompanied by some goals, such as the expansion of population-based data — which will require longer-term investments. This section presents some ideas for what a path might look like over the next three to five years — going deeper and going broader. Suggestions are then provided about who might partner in these efforts, including governments, civil society, international agencies, academia and the private for-profit sector.

Two strategies for increasing knowledge that can be used to advance policy and practice might be characterized as going deeper and going broader. ‘Going deeper’ means digging into detailed, nuanced data on LGBTI people in a given country to understand their lived experiences in context. This strategy would not prioritize comparability with other countries, at least to begin with. ‘Going broader’ means developing a measure that can be compared across countries, requiring measures that can be meaningfully combined and compared. Because virtually no cross-national data on outcomes are available, the broad measure would not prioritize data on actual LGBTI outcomes.

### 4.1 Pathway 1 for progress: going deeper

Focusing on deeper country-specific knowledge is likely to have multiple benefits for LGBTI organizations, governments and development agencies, providing a window into the problems faced by LGBTI people. Research findings can provide support for new laws and new programmes to increase inclusion and can generate heightened media visibility of LGBTI needs; the research process can create new allies and greater movement capacity. This strategy should involve several components in countries that have achieved the necessary level of acceptance of LGBTI people for productively engaging in such efforts.

#### **Local leadership and participation**

A process is required that involves local LGBTI leadership in defining key research needs and the participation of local researchers in research projects. Both the legitimacy and the quality of country-level research will be greatly enhanced by active local participation. Making local

researchers central to research projects from the beginning will also serve the goal of expanding the research community in each country. However, top-down research agendas might generate mistrust and hold back dissemination efforts.

### **Diverse research designs**

In the short term, this kind of research could include several different approaches to study inclusion, depending on the research questions being asked:

- **Survey research:** Surveys capture the experiences of a much wider range of LGBTI people than other methods. In the short term, surveys in most countries are likely to fall within the ‘first-generation’ research identified earlier that uses non-probability samples of LGBTI people.
- **Analysis of existing data:** There is some low-hanging fruit, as some countries have apparently collected data related to sexual orientation that has not been fully analysed.
- **Qualitative research:** Intensive interviews with LGBTI people allow them to present their experiences in their own words and contexts and to delve deeply into experiences in particular dimensions, such as in jobs or health care settings. Qualitative research can also provide a foundation for the design of survey instruments that best reflect the identity terms used by LGBTI people.
- **Experimental research:** Well-designed experiments have generated important evidence of stigma and exclusion in the context of race, gender and ethnicity discrimination. Such methods could be used to more precisely and persuasively identify areas of exclusion. Experiments can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of development programmes.
- **Case studies:** Intensive studies of particular programmes, policies or campaigns can offer insights into what works to increase inclusion. These studies might include explicit evaluations of the impact of programmes.

### **Leveraging resources at the national level**

One priority should be to educate national statistical agencies of countries about why they should include LGBTI people in their research and surveys. One possibility is to use the first-generation approach as a basis for moving on to the second generation of population-based samples within a few years. For example, Ecuador’s National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) used a snowball sampling method to survey more than 2800 LGBTI people about their living conditions and experiences of discrimination, generating new knowledge that could be translated into more advanced data-gathering efforts.

### **Building up to comparable measures**

In addition, as this strategy develops, we could develop tools that would facilitate common measures across countries, perhaps making at least regional comparisons of LGBTI outcomes possible in a fairly short period of time. A pilot study of a set of countries in one region might be used to explore ways of generating reasonably comparable data.

### **Planning for dissemination**

Communication of research findings to key stakeholders should be built into project timetables and budgets.

## **4.2 Pathway 2 for progress: going broader**

Looking at indicators of opportunities for LGBTI people, rather than outcomes, provides a rich starting point for a cross-national LGBTI inclusion index that draws on existing data and new data that can be collected quickly. Such an index could capture meaningful distinctions in opportunities and stigma faced by LGBTI people across countries or regions.

### **Use existing data creatively**

Table 2 shows several different types of country-level data on legal rights, military service, political participation, employer policies, health, education and public opinion that might provide ingredients for an LGBTI inclusion index.

### **Identifying new indicators that can be collected relatively easily**

Some new indicators might be collected relatively easily. For example, the existence of at least one national LGBTI organization might be a good indicator of political openness for LGBTI organizing. The index might also incorporate negative factors, such as laws or practices prohibiting formal LGBTI associations or the existence of laws that single out and prohibit support for LGBTI people. To obtain an understanding of the situation for LGBTI people that goes beyond formal institutions, an index might also collect data on the climate for LGBTI people using surveys of knowledgeable insiders.<sup>20</sup> ‘Big data’ gathered from Internet searches or social media posts might also provide additional cross-national insights for an index.

### **Smart index design**

Finally, in addition to deciding which indicators must be collected to feed into an index, it is important to note that many other decisions will be necessary to create a single index or sub-indices. Decisions include how each component will be weighted, as well as how to aggregate the data. For example, scores for different components might be added or averaged. Or components could be combined in more complicated ways to capture beliefs about how well- being changes with the values of the index, as would be the case if moving up from the lowest values might improve inclusion and well-being more than improvements at the high end of the scale.

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<sup>20</sup> Such a technique has been used in other situations. The World Bank rates 189 countries on the ‘ease of doing business’ by collecting data on a country’s regulatory climate for small and medium-size enterprises. Some of the data come from surveys of and consultations with legal professionals, public officials and other relevant professionals.

**Table 2: LGBTI-related data allowing cross-national comparisons**

Index or measure	Focus concept	Years available	Producer	Countries
Global Index on Legal Recognition of Homosexual Orientation (GILRHO)	Legal rights	1966–2014	Kees Waaldijk	200
Transgender Rights Index	Legal rights	2012	Transgender Europe	38
LGBT Military Index	Military service	Current	Hague Center for Strategy Studies	100
LGBT Representation and Rights	Political participation	1976–2015 (MPs)	Andrew Reynolds, UNC	34
Corporate Equality Index	Access to employment	2002–2015	Human Rights Campaign	
Global Workplace Equality Index; Workplace Equality Index	Access to employment	2015	Stonewall	
Australian Workplace Equality Index	Access to employment	2010–present	Pride in Diversity	
Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index	Access to employment		Community Business	
HIV prevalence	Health	2005, 2007, 2009, 2011–2014	UNAIDS	141
Implementation of the Right to Education for DESPOGI/LGBTI Students	Education	2015	GALE (Global Alliance for LGBT Education)	105
Public opinion polls	Public opinion — homosexual neighbour; homosexuality justified	6 waves	World Values Survey/European Values Survey	varies
Public opinion polls	Public opinion — socially acceptable	2002, 2007, 2011, 2013	Pew Global Attitudes Survey	varies
Public opinion polls	Public opinion — morality of same-sex relations	1991, 1994, 1998, 2008	International Social Survey Programme	varies
Public opinion polls	Public opinion — believe that discrimination based on sexual orientation is widespread; have LGB friend	2006, 2008, 2009, 2012	Eurobarometer	European only
Public opinion polls	Public opinion — have witnessed discrimination based on sexual orientation	2008, 2012	Eurobarometer	
Public opinion polls	Public opinion — comfort with LGB elected officials	2008, 2009, 2012	Eurobarometer	

### 4.3 Partnerships

This ambitious measurement agenda could be made possible through coordination and partnerships to assemble the resources, plans and staffing necessary. Partners could come from a range of sectors:

- **Civil society:** LGBTI organizations, women's organizations and HIV-related organizations
- **Academia:** research institutes, social scientists and public health scholars and students
- **Business:** sources of data, such as Google or Facebook, and also LGBTI organizations that work with the business sector
- **Development agencies:** multilateral and bilateral development agencies (e.g. UNDP, World Bank, IDB, USAID, SIDA) and private foundations
- **National governments:** statistical agencies, human rights agencies and development agencies
- **Media:** journalists, publications, the entertainment industry and social media.

In some cases, partners might be able to incorporate some of this agenda into their existing statistical and research programmes. For example, surveys already funded by development agencies might be encouraged or required to add questions related to LGBTI people and issues.

Lessons learned from the experiences of past partnerships can be used to glean best practices. Recent partnerships in data collection and analysis include these examples:

- a survey of LGBTI people in Nepal by UNDP, the Williams Institute at UCLA, and the Blue Diamond Society in Nepal;
- a policy audit of social protection policies for lesbian and bisexual women and transgender men by GALANG Philippines, the Institute for Development Studies and the UK Department for International Development (DFID); and
- studies of exclusion of LGBTI people in India by the World Bank, Amaltas and a University of Massachusetts Amherst researcher.

Moving beyond one-off projects to a more coordinated approach for long-term partnerships offers the opportunity to expand the global LGBTI research infrastructure. Such an infrastructure might include the following elements:

- regional and country-level committees led by LGBTI non-governmental organizations to set research priorities;
- a pool of funding specifically for research;
- development of a cross-national network and meetings of existing researchers;
- support for the next generation of researchers in graduate programmes;
- a bank of survey questions, research protocols, training materials and data; and
- training in research methods, delivered online or face to face.



## 5 Outcomes of the multisectoral expert group meeting on measuring LGBTI inclusion<sup>21</sup>

The data collection, development, human rights and LGBTI experts who assembled at the multisectoral expert group meeting convened in September 2015 were able to reach consensus on key recommendations about how to begin conceptualizing and measuring LGBTI inclusion. The outcomes of the meeting included agreement on a working definition, and on the recommended priority dimensions of LGBTI inclusion, as well as the identification of some related indicators relevant to measuring them.

### 5.1 Agreement on a working definition of LGBTI inclusion

Following discussions on how to define LGBTI inclusion, for the purposes of measuring it in a global index, the multi-sectoral experts agreed on a working ‘process’ definition, one that would measure both:

“Access to opportunities and achievement of outcomes for LGBTI people, as captured in an LGBTI inclusion index, as well as human development and other relevant indices, including for those who experience multiple forms of stigma and discrimination. An LGBTI inclusion index should measure the extent to which these opportunities and outcomes exist in each country, both universally and with respect to certain groups within a country.”<sup>22</sup>

This working definition is grounded in the approaches to inclusion used by both UNDP and the World Bank. It makes an important distinction between measures of achievement of important life outcomes for LGBTI people, and measures of equal opportunities for LGBTI people. The experts noted that while this working ‘process’ definition would be relevant to initiate the development of a global LGBTI inclusion index, it could evolve over time as research is undertaken and more data are collected and analysed.

### 5.2 Consensus on the priority dimensions to measure LGBTI inclusion

To identify and prioritize the most important dimensions or aspects of inclusion for LGBTI people, the experts convened independent and simultaneous discussions in three working groups to develop recommendations of a maximum of five of the highest-priority dimensions that should be selected to measure LGBTI inclusion. There were many similarities and significant overlap between the priorities recommended by each of the three groups of experts. All three groups included the following four dimensions among their top priorities for measuring LGBTI inclusion:

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<sup>21</sup> For a more detailed summary, see: UNDP and OHCHR, ‘Meeting Notes for UNDP OHCHR Expert Group Meeting on Measuring LGBTI Inclusion’, UNDP and OHCHR, New York, October 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

- Health
- Economic well-being (including command over resources)
- Political and civic participation
- Personal security and violence.

Two of the three groups of experts also recommended three additional dimensions for prioritization: education, public opinion/social attitudes, and laws and policies. The group that did not include these three additional dimensions noted that they had also discussed these dimensions and considered them very important, but did not include them in their short list of top priorities. Further discussions by the entire group of multisectoral experts suggested that the measures of public opinion/social attitudes and laws and policies could be incorporated into the four consensus dimensions of LGBTI inclusion, rather than being measured as separate dimensions.

The experts also recommended that other key factors should be incorporated into measurements of the priority dimensions of LGBTI inclusion, particularly the importance of capturing intersectionality in the data collected, disaggregated and analysed. These recommendations reflect the recognition that there are some significant differences in the experiences of subgroups that make up the diverse LGBTI community, which need to be taken into account when measuring inclusion. In addition, the need for research and measurement to be sensitive to local variations within and between the population groups was also identified. The experts also noted that given how important it is for LGBTI people to both choose their identities and be open about them, these indicators might be relevant to and, therefore, need to be measured in several of the priority dimensions of inclusion. Finally, the multisectoral experts also identified some potential types of indicators that could be considered for measuring each dimension of LGBTI inclusion.

## **6 The consultation process with civil society to validate the priority dimensions for the UNDP LGBTI Inclusion Index**

Having agreed on a working definition of and coming to consensus on four priority dimensions of LGBTI inclusion, as well as identifying some types of indicators relevant to measuring each dimension, the experts representing LGBTI organizations recommended that there should be further consultations with LGBTI civil society to inform the development of the LGBTI Inclusion Index.

To validate the recommended working definition and priority dimensions of LGBTI inclusion, UNDP supported two additional consultations with civil society, led by the two global LGBTI organizations with consultative status at the UN's Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC): OutRight Action International (formerly known as the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission) and the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA). Both of these leading LGBTI organizations have expansive networks and work with and

advocate for the rights and inclusion of LGBTI people in a wide range of countries

### **6.1 Global online consultations with civil society to validate the working definition and priority dimensions of LGBTI inclusion<sup>23</sup>**

An online survey was the first method used to undertake additional consultations with civil society to validate the outcomes of the multisectoral expert meeting. ILGA led in the development of the online survey which was translated and distributed to global networks in the six UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), as well as in Portuguese. There were 352 responses received from LGBTI organizations, individuals and allies, from 81 countries, representing civil society participation from all five regions.

The survey responses confirmed the relevance of the definition and the four dimensions that had been recommended to measure LGBTI inclusion; economic well-being, political and civic participation, physical security and violence, and health. Education was also identified as an important priority dimension.

Survey respondents also noted the importance of disaggregated data to measure the inclusion of and reflect the differences and diversities of the experiences of the five subgroups of people reflected in the LGBTI grouping (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex), as well as of those who self-identify using additional or national identities. In addition, differences in the grounds of discrimination and exclusion experienced by people within the various subgroups, as well as because of the additional impacts of other factors, including but not limited to race, age, disability, religion, indigenous status, economic status etc., also need to be understood and measured. Trans and intersex respondents highlighted the importance of ensuring that the LGBTI Inclusion Index measures their respective key areas of concern, even if these are not priorities for lesbians, gay men and/or bisexual people.

Many survey respondents registered general comments about the enormous positive potential that the LGBTI Inclusion Index presents, and expressed the desire to engage in subsequent consultation processes.<sup>24</sup>

### **6.2 In-person civil society consultations**

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<sup>23</sup> Additional information on the consultations with civil society undertaken to validate the working definition and priority dimensions of LGBTI inclusion can be found in both: UNDP, 'LGBTI Inclusion Index Concept Note', UNDP, New York, 2016; and OutRight Action International, 'Towards an LGBTI Inclusion Index: Report of the civil society consultations organized by OutRight Action International and ILGA, in partnership with UNDP', OutRight Action International, New York, 2016.

<sup>24</sup> Aengus Carroll, 'Measuring LGBTI Inclusion in the World: Summary, Survey Report on the proposed UNDP/OHCHR Global LGBTI Inclusion Index', ILGA, Geneva, 2015.

OutRight Acton International then organized and convened a three-day in-person consultation of approximately 50 LGBTI organizations and activists from all regions to review and validate the outcomes of the multisectoral expert meeting, discuss the global online survey results and provide additional recommendations to inform the development of the UNDP LGBTI Inclusion Index.<sup>25</sup>

The civil society participants recommended that additional emphasis should be given to certain components in the Political and Civic Participation dimension, including an explicit focus on some of the key concerns of trans and intersex people. They also recommended that education should also be prioritized in the UNDP LGBTI Inclusion Index. The expanded dimensions of LGBTI inclusion recommended by civil society are: 1) economic well-being; 2) political and civic participation (broadly defined to also include anti-discrimination frameworks and legal recognition); 3) personal safety and violence; 4) health; and 5) education.

The kinds of indicators that would be most important for measuring the inclusion of each of the five subgroups in each of these development dimensions were also identified.<sup>26</sup> The focus on the diversity of experiences and intersectionality underscored the emphasis given to highlighting the need for the LGBTI Inclusion Index to capture both aspects of the inclusion of LGBTI people generally, as well as some specific priorities relevant to measuring the inclusion of each of: lesbians, gays, bisexuals and, in particular, transgender and intersex people. Particularly strong calls were made for the Political and Civic Participation dimension to include measurements of non-discrimination and legal frameworks and protections, including in relation to legal recognition (which is of particular importance to transgender people) of protection against surgical interventions on intersex people (particularly children and adolescents), which are undertaken (often without informed consent) with the aim of ‘normalizing’ sex characteristics.

Civil society participants advocated for the selection of indicators to measure each dimension that can be disaggregated to reflect the differences experienced by each of the population groups, and those that will measure the most pressing priorities of each population group in at least some of the dimensions of inclusion.

The participants recognized that, like other indexes, the UNDP LGBTI Inclusion Index cannot prioritize all of the information that LGBTI advocates might ideally want to be able to measure and

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<sup>25</sup> While UNDP and OHCHR jointly convened the multisectoral expert group on measuring LGBTI inclusion, and continue to cooperate and collaborate on the rights and inclusion of LGBTI people, the LGBTI Inclusion Index is a UNDP initiative.

<sup>26</sup> Additional information on the outcomes of the civil society consultation, including the types of indicators identified as critical for each priority dimension, is available in: OutRight Action International, ‘Towards an LGBTI Inclusion Index: Report of the civil society consultations organized by OutRight Action International and ILGA, in partnership with UNDP’, OutRight Action International, New York, 2016.

track over time. However, it will provide an unprecedented opportunity to measure inclusivity and the commitment of SDG-driven processes to leave no one behind vis-à-vis LGBTI people. The UNDP Inclusion Index can be a powerful tool to draw attention to priorities and matters of urgency to LGBTI communities worldwide, and foster inclusive development.

## 7 Conclusion

While there are many gaps in data and knowledge about LGBTI people, there are now models of how to fill those gaps and start to measure the inclusion of LGBTI people and continue to track it in the future. Existing data could be used more fully, and new data can be generated that will illuminate the lived experiences of LGBTI people in their local contexts. The tools exist that are needed to begin planning investments in new knowledge and better use of existing data.

UNDP, together with key partners, has committed to developing an LGBTI Inclusion Index which will have two primary components: the collection and analysis of existing data, and the generation of new data on LGBTI inclusion. Both will increase the evidence base related to LGBTI inclusion and thus inform policy, programmes and advocacy. The priorities for measuring LGBTI inclusion have been determined following extensive consultations with experts in data collection, research, development, human rights, LGBTI activism and advocacy, as well as through additional civil society consultations. The agreed priority development ‘dimensions’ — or core criteria — recommended as the starting point for tracking progress on LGBTI human development around the world are; 1) economic well-being; 2) political and civic participation (broadly defined to also include anti-discrimination frameworks and legal recognition); 3) personal safety and violence; 4) health; and 5) education. The types of indicators most relevant to measuring each of these dimensions have also been identified.

To begin moving down this promising path and start the global measurement and tracking of LGBTI inclusion, the discussions must now also address mobilizing resources, pooling areas of expertise and building partnerships across many sectors to enact an agreed strategy.

Operationalizing the UNDP-led LGBTI Inclusion Index to measure LGBTI inclusion will increase access to data and good practices, and build the evidence base required to inform policy, programmatic and budget decisions to ensure that the inclusion of LGBTI people in sustainable development becomes a reality.

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