



Terms of Reference (TOR) for a Case Studies Research Project Entitled: “LBQ Women in LGBTIQ Spaces”

Introduction

This research is being commissioned by Outright International and is being managed by the organization’s LBQ Connect and Research teams.

The objective of this project is to develop regional analyses and thematic case studies that document the status of LBQ spaces, organizations, and activists within LGBTIQ movements. This research is specifically focused on LBQ women in LBQ and LGBTIQ organizations in the Global South and East.

The term “LBQ” focuses on sexual identity and includes lesbian, bisexual, and queer women, both cisgender and trans, and all non-binary people on the gender spectrum who relate to an LBQ identity. For many people, labels are often inadequate or unwanted, language is limited, and gender exists on a continuum. The usage of “LBQ women” in this context serves as the operational definition and critical inclusion criteria for participation in the LBQ Connect program.¹

This research will be implemented by a group of consultants working as a team to cover identified focus regions and sub-regions. Each consultant will lead research on a specific region or regions according to their expertise. Outright has preliminarily identified Asia, Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, and possibly Eastern Europe as priority regions. The identification of the specific focus regions and sub-regions will be determined in coordination with the team of researchers and based on global survey results. Prospective consultants must briefly provide a context for why research on LBQ women within LGBTIQ spaces in their chosen region would be useful and necessary. Prospective consultants may work individually to cover their chosen region, but they should be able to collaborate with other consultants within the broader global framework of the project. It is expected that community-based LBQ activists—particularly from the present and past LBQ connect cohorts—will be contracted under the regional/sub-regional researchers. The activists will be a resource not only in understanding local contexts and in providing linguistic support where necessary, but will also ensure a more inclusive and participatory approach in gathering data.

This research aims to produce regional analyses that address the state of LBQ inclusion in larger LGBTIQ movement spaces, tackling issues such as LBQ funding, leadership positions, and programmatic work. The report’s concluding section will focus on broader recommendations, lessons learned, and good practices, possibly organized by region.

¹ This terminology is inspired by the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice and Mama Cash joint-report, [“Vibrant yet under-resourced: the state of lesbian, bisexual, and queer movements,”](#) which was based on broad consultations with activists.

About Outright

Outright International works together for better LGBTIQ lives. Outright is dedicated to working with partners around the globe to strengthen the capacity of the LGBTIQ human rights movement, document and amplify human rights violations against LGBTIQ people, and advocate for inclusion and equality.

Founded in 1990, with staff in over a dozen countries, Outright works with the United Nations, regional human rights monitoring bodies, governments, humanitarian and development institutions, and civil society partners. Outright holds consultative status at the United Nations, where it serves as the secretariat of the UN LGBTI Core Group.

LBQ Connect is a global feminist program aiming at boosting the work and visibility of lesbian, bisexual, and queer activism around the world. The program aims to strengthen LBQ movements and make a concrete difference in the lives of lesbian, bisexual, and queer (LBQ) women by enhancing the capacity of LBQ activists, supporting the work of existing and new groups, collecting data, and raising the visibility of LBQ issues and leaders.

Research Background and Context

LBQ women confront misogyny, homophobia, and heteronormativity and often live in hostile contexts at the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, class, disability, and other identities. In [a 2023 report published by Human Rights Watch](#), researchers identified 10 human rights abuses that most affect LBQ women's lives, including barriers to accessing justice, unequal property rights, violence based on gender expression, workplace violence, and discrimination, unequal parental rights, forced marriage, restrictions of movement and asylum-seeking, healthcare barriers, and more.

[A 2016 report by Human Dignity Trust](#) found that, of 78 jurisdictions that criminalize consensual same-sex conduct, at least 44 of these explicitly criminalize consensual same-sex conduct between women. While most mainstream LGBTIQ activism centers on decriminalizing homosexuality, legalizing same-sex marriage, and pushing for nondiscrimination policies, much of this work, while important, does not sufficiently address other human rights abuses that specifically impact LBQ women, as outlined by Human Rights Watch.

In the last decade, however, LGBTIQ movements have greatly accelerated legal and social progress worldwide, often led by extraordinary LBQ activists doing groundbreaking work. In [a global study on LBQ organizing](#) published by Astraea and Mama Cash, a 2018 activist survey of 378 LBQ groups revealed that 89% of LBQ groups were formed in the last 20 years and 61% of these groups were formed after 2010.² LBQ groups often work within a range of movements beyond LGBTIQ and women's rights communities, including advocacy surrounding health, sex workers' rights, and youth leadership. LBQ organizing is

² Data was collected from a series of surveys conducted in 2018 and does not reflect developments in LBQ organizing post-2018.

intrinsically intersectional, and the expansiveness of LBQ issues presents multiple opportunities for social change.

Still, LBQ activists are often made invisible and remain underrepresented in leadership roles, even among LGBTIQ civil society organizations, and there is a lack of coverage of LBQ-specific issues in LGBTIQ spaces. [Human Rights Watch](#) found that, though LGBT rights research is more likely to “explicitly name LBQ+ women as rights-holders and victims...they are significantly less likely to address the broader societal and legal restrictions on people assigned female at birth.” In mainstream human rights research, including women’s human rights, representation of LBQ women is even more slim.

Similar to other aspects of LBQ women’s experiences, these phenomena are largely undocumented. This research project, conceived in the Outright LBQ Connect program framework, aims to fill this gap.

Research Objectives

This research aims to contribute to the knowledge and resources on global LBQ activism by examining the position of LBQ women and organizations within larger LGBTIQ movements. In doing so, this research seeks to identify the current status of LBQ activism and identify how LBQ inclusion can be bettered within broader LGBTIQ activism. Ultimately, this research hopes to become a helpful resource for activists looking for good practices of LBQ inclusion and leadership.

The objectives of the research can be summarized as follows:

- A. Document the overall contexts within which LBQ and LGBTIQ activism and movements exist per sub-region/region with specific reference to countries that have especially challenging or positive contexts.
- B. Document why some LBQ activists created their own spaces and/or are engaged in social justice movements, including feminist movements, rather than (or in addition to) LGBTIQ movements, in their respective regions, countries, or localities.
- C. Document what other social justice movements LBQ activists are engaged in.
- D. Document intersectional LBQ activist spaces that exist at the intersection of multiple forms of marginalization.
- E. Document LGBTIQ movements with LBQ people in leadership roles or positions.
- F. Describe how LGBTIQ movements’ priorities and programmatic work are connected to, or disconnected from, the lived realities of LBQ people.
- G. Describe what LGBTIQ organizations look like for LBQ women who want to access them in various capacities including as members, participants, beneficiaries, volunteers, staff members, and board members.
- H. Document the experiences, positive and negative, of LBQ activists in LGBTIQ spaces in their regions, countries, or localities.
- I. Understand how political and social contexts, especially hostile environments, impact LBQ inclusion in LGBTIQ spaces and how these contexts influence LBQ activism (inside and outside LGBTIQ movements).

- J. Understand the influence of funding in shaping priorities and leadership of LGBTIQ movements and the impact these have on LBQ activists and issues.
- K. Identify good practices and lessons learned for improved LBQ inclusion and leadership in LGBTIQ movements.

The scope of the research is LBQ women in LBQ and LGBTIQ organizations in the Global South and East with a focus on the following regions: Asia, Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Outright will consider, but not prioritize, research proposals that focus on other regions such as Europe or North America. The identification of the specific focus regions will be determined in coordination with the team of researchers and based on survey results.

Methodology

The research report will be structured around a regional analysis and thematic case studies. The final methodology will be agreed upon by Outright and the consultant. As far as possible, Outright expects that the research would include:

- a. Desk research that includes related existing research, including, but not limited to:
 - Academic literature
 - Reports from global and regional LBQ organizations and funders
 - Civil society reports
 - Human rights reports
 - Journalistic reports
 - Reflections from LBQ activists in mixed media

Importantly, the literature review will prioritize and focus on knowledge that has been marginalized and left out of the dominant development discourse. In order to do this, consultants leading research in regions with multiple languages will be required to be proficient in at least one language in their region/sub-region to access and analyze knowledge materials produced in local languages that are not English.

- b. Region/Sub-Region/Language-focused group discussions with LBQ activists, prioritizing activists from the LBQ connect cohorts
- c. A global survey, prepared by Outright based on input from consultants, disseminated among LBQ activists in the target regions;
- d. Semi-structured interviews (online and in-person when possible) with LBQ activists from a total of at least ten countries, selected based on survey responses, with each consultant responsible for interviews in approximately 3-5 countries.
- e. 2-4 case studies per region.

Interviews will often be conducted in multiple languages, possibly in person, leveraging opportunities such as regional or international conferences. This may require contracting local interviewers -

preferably LBQ activists – who are not researchers to help with outreach and minimize the language barrier.

Consultants should be able to present data using data visualization, analyze data using feminist and intersectional lenses, and ensure equitable representation of diverse LBQ lived experiences in their work. They should also have direct knowledge and experience of LBQ activism.

The report's last section will focus on recommendations, lessons learned, and good practices, possibly organized by region.

Outputs

- a. Regional analyses of: LBQ inclusion within broader LGBTIQ movements, influences of funding on LBQ positions of leadership, LBQ programmatic work within LGBTIQ movements, the creation of LBQ-specific spaces, and LBQ involvement in non-LGBTIQ social justice movements. The prospective consultant(s) will utilize the review of papers, reports, statements of organizations, focus group discussions, and survey and interview responses to produce analysis in the region of their choosing. The prospective consultant must ensure the representation of LBQ lived experiences, positive and negative, in LGBTIQ spaces.
- b. Regional-specific recommendations, lessons learned, and good practices for LBQ inclusion in LGBTIQ spaces in the region proposed by the prospective consultant.
- c. Data visualization.
- d. Data analysis using feminist and intersectional lenses.
- e. Regional reports consisting of 8,000–15,000 words depending on the size and complexity of the region excluding annexes.

Positionality, Safety, and Consent

The researchers will be expected to reflect on the following questions:

- How might we “queer” the binary between the researcher and those informing the research? What ethical practices might help us reflect on the question of asymmetrical power relationships often inherent in research?³
- What makes a “good researcher”? Who can be said to have the “authority” to produce knowledge? Who can be seen as the “authentic” subject(s) whose experience informs queer research?⁴

³ Jourian, T. J., and Z. Nicolazzo. "Bringing our communities to the research table: The liberatory potential of collaborative methodological practices alongside LGBTQ participants." *Educational Action Research* 25.4 (2017): 594–609.

⁴ Henry, Marsha. "If the shoe fits: Authenticity, authority and agency feminist diasporic research." *Women's Studies International Forum*. Vol. 30. No. 1. Pergamon, 2007.

- How can we facilitate an ownership of the knowledge being produced among the participants? What kind of methodological approaches will ensure continuous and informed consent?⁵
- How can we minimize extractive research practices and ensure that the knowledge produced through the research can inform LBQ activism locally, nationally, and regionally?

The consultant recognizes the sensitive nature of the documents, reports, and testimonies (written and oral) that the LBQ-Connect program will be sharing during the course of the consultancy. The consultant commits to the following actions:

- Provide the approach to informed and continuous consent for review and approval before beginning data collection.
- Acknowledge that all data is the property of Outright and will not be used for any purpose outside of the research before, during, or after the activity without the approval of Outright and informed consent from participants.
- Transmit all data and reports using secure email providers.
- Ensure that all project documents and reports are kept on password-protected computers.
- Consult with Outright staff regarding the use of online storage services.
- Ensure that the names of individuals and organizations will not be used in final reports to maintain confidentiality.
- Delete or restrict access to all documents of a sensitive nature once this consultancy is completed. This will be monitored by the research team at Outright.

Outright staff will discuss the details of the security and confidentiality rules with the consultant at the project's inception.

Expected Timeline

The study requires the accomplishment of the following tasks on the following dates:

- a. Submission of the application - January 31, 2024
- b. Completion of the selection process - February 21, 2024
- c. Contract drafting and signature - March 7, 2024
- d. Finalization of research proposal - March 31, 2024
- e. Submission of first draft - May 31, 2024
- f. Submission of second draft - June 30, 2024
- g. Submission of final draft - July 31, 2024
- h. Post-final draft minor revisions - August 31, 2024

⁵ Jourian, T. J., and Z. Nicolazzo. "Bringing our communities to the research table: The liberatory potential of collaborative methodological practices alongside LGBTQ participants." *Educational Action Research* 25.4 (2017): 594-609.

Budget

The maximum budget available for each regional study is between 5,000 and 12,000 USD depending on the geographical scope of the proposal – excluding costs related to translation and interpretation and honoraria for contributors.

The details regarding language and translations will be discussed with Outright staff with the successful candidates.⁶

Responding to this tender

The interested consultants or team of consultants should read thoroughly the research framework and methodology sections below and submit their proposal by January 31, 2024 at

lbqconnect@outrightinternational.org.

We welcome proposals covering one or more of the focus regions.

- a. Details of **approach, methodology, and scope**
- b. Evidence of relevant **previous research work and connection with LBQ+ communities**
- c. Detailed **costing**
- d. Detailed **timeline**

Annex 1: Research questions per objective

These are the proposed research questions per objective.

1. Document why LBQ activists created their own spaces and/or are engaged in social justice movements, other than LGBTIQ movements, in their respective countries.
 - A. Context

What are the structures in place that inhibit, prohibit or encourage LGBTIQ movements in general and LBQ activism in particular?

 - What are the main institutional, legal and policy challenges and barriers (eg: criminalization of same-sex relationships; policy to restrict foreign funding; restrictions on women's independence, etc.) to LGBTIQ and LBQ movements?
 - What are some developments in the region/sub-region or in national contexts that have had positive outcomes for LBQ movements?
 - What are persisting socio-cultural norms that inhibit or encourage LGBTIQ and LBQ movements?

⁶ The language to be used in data gathering and report writing can be discussed further by Outright and the prospective consultant. Please include in the proposal the language you wish to use in gathering data and writing the report.

- What are some of the immediate humanitarian or other crisis contexts that affect LGBTIQ and LBQ movements and activism?
- What are some innovative methods that LBQ and LGBTIQ movements have adopted in response to challenges and barriers?

B. LBQ-created spaces

How and why have LBQ activists created their own spaces?

- In which regions and countries have LBQ activists most frequently created their own spaces?
- What have been the biggest barriers in the creation and maintenance of LBQ-created spaces?
- How do LBQ-created spaces differ from LGBTIQ or other social justice movement spaces?
- What are other intersecting identities and issues that are prioritized in LBQ-created spaces?

What enables LBQ activism and what are the challenges?

- What are the challenges faced by the activists in creating these spaces?
- What are the structures of LBQ activist spaces (for instance, leadership by age/identity, informal collectives, registered and funded organizations, social spaces, etc)? Is there any conscious decision regarding structure that sets LBQ activism spaces apart from LGBTIQ or other social justice spaces?
- What kind of allyship and support can LBQ activists expect from LGBTIQ or other social justice movements?

B. Social justice movement spaces

What is the status of LBQ inclusion in non-LGBTIQ movement spaces?

- To what degree are LBQ activists involved in non-LGBTIQ movement spaces?
- How, if at all, are LBQ activists and LBQ issues included in movement work?
- What are the most common non-LBQ movement spaces in which LBQ activists are involved, and do these vary by country or region?
- What are the challenges faced by LBQ activists in bringing up LBQ issues in other social justice spaces?

2. Describe how LGBTIQ movements' priorities and programmatic work are connected to, or disconnected from, the lived realities of LBQ people.

A. LGBTIQ movements' priorities

How are the lived realities of LBQ people included in LGBTIQ movements' stated priorities?

- How often do LGBTIQ movements explicitly mention women, or specifically LBQ women, in stated priorities such as organization missions or values?
- Are mentions of LBQ women coupled with mentions of issues that relate to LBQ women, such as gender-based violence, forced marriage, and property rights?

- Are mentions of LBQ women accompanied by programmatic work that involves LBQ issues?

B. LGBTIQ movements' programmatic work

How do LGBTIQ movements center the lived realities of LBQ people in their programmatic work?

- Is there programmatic work on LBQ issues, such as gender-based violence, forced marriage, and property rights? Are there other issues coupled programmatically with LBQ women (for instance, sex work, disability, etc)?
- Does related programmatic work explicitly state that it is LBQ in nature?
- Is there programmatic work created explicitly for LBQ women, and is this work led by LBQ women?
- How are intersecting identities, such as race, ethnicity, class, and ability, centered in LBQ programmatic work?
- If there is gender-based programmatic work, is there an even balance between genders?

3. Describe LGBTIQ movements in terms of LBQ people in leadership positions.

A. Established leadership positions

How are LBQ women already involved in leadership positions within LGBTIQ movements?

- To what extent do LBQ women hold leadership positions in LGBTIQ movements?
- Are these leadership positions part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid, and/or volunteer in nature?
- What is the average age of LBQ women in leadership positions within LGBTIQ movements?

B. Access to leadership positions

Are leadership positions accessible for LBQ women?

- Are leadership positions internally filled or are applications open to the public?
- Is previous experience in LBQ organizing considered sufficient to qualify for leadership positions in LGBTIQ organizations?
- Are hiring teams knowledgeable about LBQ issues?

4. Describe what LGBTIQ movements look like for LBQ women regarding access to organizations, considering volunteers, staff members, and board members.

A. Volunteer opportunities for LGBTIQ organizations

- Are there volunteer opportunities for programmatic work related to LBQ issues, if any?
- Is the volunteer selection process equitable?
- Are existing volunteers LBQ and/or are they knowledgeable of LBQ issues?

B. Staff members at LGBTIQ organizations

- Are staff members knowledgeable of LBQ issues?

- Are there LBQ staff members in the organization, particularly in leadership positions?
- How do staff members advocate for the inclusion of LBQ activists and issues in their work?
- Are grassroots/junior/younger LBQ activists experiencing internal mobility and seeing rise to leadership positions?

C. Board members of LGBTIQ organizations

- Are board members knowledgeable of LBQ issues?
- Is the board selection process transparent, and is it consistent with feminist principles?
- Are there LBQ board members involved in shaping the organization's work?
- How do board members advocate for the inclusion of LBQ activists and issues in their work?

5. Document the experiences, positive and negative, of LBQ activists in LGBTIQ spaces in their countries.

A. Experiences of LBQ activists in LGBTIQ spaces

What are the experiences of LBQ activists in LGBTIQ spaces, and how can these experiences be used to further advocate for the inclusion of LBQ women in LGBTIQ spaces?

- What are the most common positive experiences that LBQ activists report having in connection with LGBTIQ spaces, and how can these be sustained in future work?
- What are the most common negative experiences that LBQ activists report having in connection with LGBTIQ spaces, and how can these inform best practices for LBQ inclusion and leadership in LGBTIQ spaces?
- How have LGBTIQ spaces utilized LBQ activists' feedback to improve their organizations?
- How have LBQ activists used their own experiences in LGBTIQ spaces to inform the creation of LBQ organizations?
- Are LBQ activists' experiences in LGBTIQ organizations, both positive and negative, consistent with their experiences in other movement spaces?

6. Understand the influence of funding in shaping priorities and leadership of LGBTIQ movements and the impact these have on LBQ activists and issues.

A. Funding in shaping priorities of LGBTIQ movements

In relation to LBQ issues, how has funding shaped the priorities of LGBTIQ movements?

- How often do organizations receive funding to pursue LBQ-specific issues compared to broader LGBTIQ issues, such as decriminalization work, or issues that may be more relevant to queer men and trans people, such as HIV work?

- What types of funding – including amount, source, and restrictiveness – are most common for LGBTIQ movements?
- How do variations in types of funding impact the visibility of LBQ issues in LGBTIQ spaces?
- How are LBQ activists impacted by the funding of LGBTIQ movements, and how does the funding of LGBTIQ movements relate to the funding of LBQ movements?

B. Funding in shaping the leadership of LGBTIQ movements

In relation to LBQ inclusion, how has funding shaped the leadership of LGBTIQ movements?

- How does the leadership of LGBTIQ movements – including the intersecting identities that leaders hold – relate to types of funding received?
- How do leaders advocate for inclusive funding, specifically with respect to LBQ issues?
- What kind of resources other than funding do LBQ activists and groups have access to?

7. Identify good practices and lessons learned for improved LBQ inclusion and leadership.

A. Lessons learned and good practices

From the experiences of LBQ activists, what are the best ways to improve LBQ inclusion and leadership in LGBTIQ spaces?

- How can LGBTIQ organizations improve LBQ inclusion and leadership in the short-term, mid-term, and long-term?
- How can LBQ women best advocate for their inclusion in movement settings?
- How can LBQ inclusion be intersectional and sustainable in organizations of varying experience, budget, and membership?
- How do recommendations vary by region and country? What can we conclude from these regional variations about resource/funding/other needs for LBQ organizing?