

Asia Regional Network on SOGIE & GBV Membership Statement

This statement is developed by OutRight Action International in close consultation with current members of the Regional Network on SOGIE & GBV who participated in the October 2020 online regional forum and subsequent online meetings. Acronyms used: SOGIE = sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; GBV = gender based violence; LGBTI = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex.

Who We Are

The Asia Regional Network on SOGIE and GBV is a network of individuals with expertise on gender based violence faced by LGBTI communities in Asia—including domestic violence, family violence, and intimate partner violence. The purpose of this Network is to link national anti-GBV initiatives to a regional platform, convene advocacy and learning exchanges, support LGBTI advocates working on GBV, share good practices and information resources based on lessons learned about addressing LGBTI challenges with GBV, and provide expert advice for improving GBV protections and services for LGBTI people. Funded and organized by OutRight Action International, the Network was established in October 2020 and currently has 29 members based in 10 countries in Asia—this information is regularly updated.

OutRight Action International is a leading international organization dedicated to human rights advocacy on behalf of people who experience discrimination or abuse on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. <https://outrightinternational.org/>

Values And Principles

The Asia Regional Network on SOGIE and GBV advocates principles and values of LGBTI feminist intersectionality, which, by definition includes:

- LGBTI led efforts to bring visibility to gender based violence
- Understanding that gender based violence includes violence on grounds of sexual orientation, gender, and sex characteristics.
- Using approaches to stop GBV that are feminist and LGBTI-inclusive
- Recognizing that violence and discrimination against LGBTI people not only based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics, but also on other factors such as their race, ethnicity, skin color, mental and physical disabilities, religion, economic status, and age.

Membership Criteria

1. Existing members of the Network have clarity about and accept the agreed on values and principles.
2. The Network's membership criteria include the following:
 - Individual members only
 - LGBTI advocates who are working on GBV
 - Non-LGBTI members/allies who are already trained in SOGIE & GBV

- LGBTI allies who include but are not limited to representatives of
 - Women’s rights movements
 - National Human Rights Commissions
 - National Women’s Commission
 - Human rights defenders of other vulnerable communities – such as, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, elders, sex workers, migrant workers, refugees, people displaced by climate disaster and/or conflict
 - Medical professionals and mental health professionals who champion LGBTI issues, e.g., banning “conversion therapy”
 - Feminist lawyers who support protections and enabling environments for LGBTI
 - Social workers who champion LGBTI mental health
 - LGBTI supportive experts on GBV in humanitarian crises
 - LGBTI supportive experts on GBV in disaster contexts
3. New members must be recommended by current members of the Regional Network. New members must have clarity of and accept membership criteria, values and principles.

Member Expectations

1. Members attend quarterly online convenings sponsored/hosted by OutRight, e.g., online discussion, webinars, online launch activities, and sometimes member meetings. Timely communication of ability or inability to attend is appreciated.
2. Members contribute and engage in Network activities. There is no fee to be a member of the Network. The bulleted list below provides some suggestions on how members may wish to engage in the Network. **Additional ideas are very welcome.**
 - inform OutRight about topics for online discussion or webinars
 - suggest and find speakers for Network’s online seminars/webinars
 - volunteer yourself to speak in webinars/online discussion
 - help publicize online activities that are open to public
 - if you can, produce fliers/posters for Network activities
 - for 2022, consider partnering with OutRight to plan and host a post-COVID in-person regional forum in your city
 - help find GBV survivor-advocates to be part of OutRight’s Asia speakers’ bureau on LGBTI issues in your country
 - volunteer to review mapping and other research reports that OutRight produces in collaboration with Network experts
 - contribute resources to the Network’s Information and Expertise Hub to be launched April/May 2021 – such as: opinion pieces, your research findings, good models and protocols of your organization for LGBTI inclusive protections and services for GBV, LGBTI inclusive anti-GBV policy recommendations from your city/country, good examples of practices for supporting the sustainability of LGBTI groups and movements working on GBV, service provider training curriculum on SOGIE and GBV, digital stories from LGBTI survivors and advocates

- if you can, contribute language translation skills – e.g., translate transcripts or recordings of Network webinars/online discussion for your-country networks and your advocacy purposes.
3. Help find and recommend new members within the first 6 months of joining the Network. Prioritize diversification of LGBTI representation, LGBTI expertise in GBV, and experts who are strong allies.
 4. We expect members to participate in online and offline annual regional forums organized by OutRight. For in-person regional forums (post-COVID), OutRight will cover participant travel costs, based on available funding.
 5. English is the link language of the Regional Network. We appreciate your recommendations for good language diversity practices. We appreciate your assistance with arrangements for language interpretation, e.g., help identify suitable language interpreters for SOGIE & GBV.

Online Regional Hub on SOGIE & GBV Information & Expertise

1. In April/May 2021, OutRight will launch a Regional Information and Expertise Hub on SOGIE & GBV. It will be accessible to Network members. Non-member/public access to the Hub is vetted.
2. The Hub will house resources in original languages and translated versions if available. OutRight will assist with identifying resources for language translation to English. The Network's members are welcome to translate materials on the Hub to and/or from English.

Process For Adding New Members

1. Current Network members submit recommendations for potential new members via email to OutRight Asia Program staff for review and consideration. There is no membership fee.
2. Before submitting recommendations to OutRight, existing Network members must:
 - Verify that individuals meet membership criteria, are interested and able to participate.
 - Advise OutRight on why the individual is being recommended and what expertise they would bring to the Network.
 - Clarify with the recommended individuals that English is the medium of communication/link language for Network activities.
 - Let them know OutRight staff will review and follow up recommendations.
 - Provide the names, email and other contact information for recommended individuals.
3. OutRight will request potential new members to provide a bio summary of 300 words or less, describing their work, their relevant expertise for the Network, and their capacity to engage in the Network. Information from bios are shared with existing Network members.
4. Where an individual directly requests membership from OutRight, the current Network member in that country is consulted. If there is no in-country member, OutRight will confer with other sources.

5. If there is knowledge that an individual membership applicant does not share the Network's values/principles, there are different options for handling the request. OutRight's Asia Program staff are available to discuss and help with decisions. In some instances, the requests may need to be rejected. In other instances, individuals may be encouraged to re-apply at a later time and show how they can be compatible with the Network's values/principles. If there are concerns about a membership request but no evidence of non-compliance with the Network's principles/values, the membership request could be accepted and, if later there's evidence of non-compliance and incompatibility, the membership could be revoked.
6. In the unlikely event that a rejected or revoked membership applicant contends the decision and requests re-consideration, there will be a process for handling the contestation, which would involve discussion and decision by OutRight Asia Program staff and a team/committee of Network members. This team/committee is not permanent and can be assembled on as needed and voluntary basis. There will be transparency and accountability for arriving at a decision.