

LGBTQI people living in the Global South

FACT SHEET



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This scoping review located literature that describe the living conditions for LGBTQI people living in approximately 45 countries from Sub-Saharan and North Africa, the MENA region, the Caribbean, Central, East / South East Asia, Latin America. A total of 61 publications were included in this section of the scoping review. Some studies recommend a shift in terminology from LGBTQI to Sexually and Gender Non-Conforming (SGN) or Non-Normative Sexualities and Genders (NNSG). These terms encompass all sexual and gender minority people, including those who do not align with Western terms but practice sexual and gender non-conformity.

- LGBTQI people living in the Global South encounter complex layers of interpersonal and state violence based on intersecting identity markers that extended beyond sexual orientation and gender identity / expression to include other identity markers (i.e. race, ethnicity, economic status, religion, etc).
- Even in countries with human rights protections that include sexual orientation and/or gender identity, LGBTQI people, especially those who are poor, cis women, trans, HIV positive, disabled, etc., are vulnerable to discrimination and violence.
- The multiple identities that shape the lives of LGBTQI people were always situated within particular geo-political and regional contexts that, in turn, are shaped by global neo-liberal policies, colonial legacies, civil war, armed conflict, police violence, state corruption, religious extremism, etc.
- Trans women are disproportionately at risk of interpersonal and state violence, in particular at the hands of the police. The intersection of poverty, sexual and gender identity / expression made Khwajasaras in Pakistan, transwomen in the Philippines, and Mak Nyahs in Malaysia from the lower economic strata even more vulnerable to arbitrary arrest and humiliation during detention and physical violence from police officers and religious affairs authorities. Although gender identity is explicitly included in the human rights code in Chile, conservative legislators in conjunction with influential Catholic church leaders continue to pathologize and criminalize trans people.
- Trans women are also very resourceful, as they find ways to leave their country to seek asylum and/or access trans-specific health care. In India, transwomen, Kothis, and Hijras have taken up public space in various ways to push for legal recognition and socio-economic equality.

International Policy Implications

Canadian policy makers, especially those involved in developing Canada's international role in LGBTQI human rights, should take into consideration the complexities presented in the literature about LGBTQI realities in the Global South

Key Texts

- Abu-Assab, N., Nasser-Eddin, N., & Greatrick, A. (2017). *Conceptualising sexualities in the MENA region: Undoing LGBTQI Categories: Implications for Rights Based Advocacy Approaches*. London: Centre for Transnational Development and Collaboration.
- Awondo, P., Geschiere, P., Reid, G. (2012). Homophobic Africa? Toward a more nuanced view. *African Studies Review*. 55 (3), 145 – 168. DOI: 10.1353/arw.2012.0067.