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## PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



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A BRIEF ON  
THE INCLUSION OF  
LGBTQI AND GENDER  
NON-CONFORMING  
PEOPLE IN THE  
ACHIEVEMENT OF  
THE SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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## SDG 16:

*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.*

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 includes most efforts aimed at reducing discrimination, violence, and criminality. The UNDP calls it an important 'enabling goal' for the entire 2030 Agenda.

## HOW LGBTQI AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND

An important principle of the SDGs is that no one shall be left behind. Still, LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people worldwide experience violence, harassment, and discrimination that impacts many aspects of their lives. Further, LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people often face barriers in accessing justice. No SDG can be fully achieved if violence and discrimination persists. Barriers to inclusion that need to be addressed include:

**Ill-treatment and arbitrary arrests:** LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people face high rates of arbitrary arrests and extortion and are often subjected to violence in detention facilities. Trans people are being harassed, detained, and imprisoned in facilities that do not correspond with their gender identity. Cases of violence against LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people are underreported in most parts of the world.

**Impunity:** Government officials, law enforcement officials, and public institutions are often not responsive to LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people who make claims of violence or discrimination. In countries that criminalises same sex sexual acts, the perpetrators of violence are not seldom police or government officials.

#leave  
no one  
behind

**Domestic violence:** LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people face high rates of intimate partner and family violence. Still, legal definitions of domestic or intimate partner violence often exclude same-sex couples and marital rape is not criminalised in most countries.

**Stigma and family abuse:** LGBTQI and gender non-conforming youth may be subjected to conversion therapy, abuse, and family rejection. Intersex youth may be subjected to non-consensual and harmful medical procedures. These experiences can severely affect one's mental health and limit one's access to basic human rights.

**Access to state institutions:** Not having the possibility of holding personal documentation reflecting one's gender identity constitutes a serious obstacle to the realisation of one's human rights. It also increases a person's vulnerability to violence, police abuse, arbitrary detention, and mistreatment as well as prevents them from accessing justice because of fear of abuse, stigma, or harassment.

## A TIME FOR ACTION

In order to fully live up to the commitment that no one should be left behind, the world's leaders must act now. RFSL recommends:



Undertake effective, prompt, and impartial investigations into killings, torture, and acts of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as other acts of violence against LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people.



Repeal laws that criminalise consensual same-sex sexual acts, gender identity, or expression. Legally prohibit non-consensual medical procedures, including intersex genital mutilation, forced sterilisation, and anal examinations.



Implement legislation and public policies aimed at eradicating societal prejudice against LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people. Enact hate crime legislation that includes sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics.



Conduct mandatory training for law enforcement, judicial staff, and correctional officials on the access to justice for vulnerable populations.



Take measures to encourage LGBTQI representation among elected officials. Create spaces for LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people to engage with state actors and policymakers meaningfully to share their experiences and realities.



Adopt and implement legislation that fully recognises each person's self-defined gender identity, with no medical requirements or discrimination on any grounds.



## USING THE 2030 AGENDA FRAMEWORK

The 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity for activists and organisations to shape the international development agenda. Here are some tips on how to engage with government agencies and non-governmental organisations to advocate for programmes and policies inclusive of LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people's rights.

- ➔ Find out if your country has a national action plan for the implementation of the SDGs. Use this as an entry point for discussion with decision-makers.
- ➔ Work in broad coalitions and find allies who work intersectionally. Look into possibilities of working with ECOSOC accredited organisations, like RFSL, to enable access to UN spaces and conferences.
- ➔ Spread awareness and create visibility by generating data, research, and reports focusing on issues relevant for LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people. Use inclusive and accessible language.



**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development

# RFSL PROMOTING LGBTQI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS SINCE 1950

The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Rights (RFSL) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1950. Our vision is: An equal world where all LGBTQI people's human rights are respected and where no one is left behind.

## GET IN TOUCH

Are you interested in learning more about how you can work with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda?

Read more at [rfsl.se/international](https://rfsl.se/international) or email us at [forbund@rfsl.se](mailto:forbund@rfsl.se).

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