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# QUALITY EDUCATION



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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 4:**

*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities.*

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 establishes that education represents the setting in which every person is provided with the necessary skills, abilities, and knowledge to develop one's full potential.



# 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 often face exclusion from education opportunities and discrimination within educational systems with limited ability to achieve full economic and social potential as a consequence. In order for SDG 4 to be achieved, specific issues faced by LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people and the barriers to inclusion must be addressed. These barriers include or are rooted in:

**Discrimination in schools:** Education authorities and schools may actively discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, including by refusing admission. LGBTQI and gender non-conforming students also face discrimination from classmates, teachers, and administration.

**Trans and non-binary children are especially vulnerable:** These children and students may face specific prejudice and increased risks. They are more likely to face stigma and harassment, be excluded from educational opportunities, and, for example, be forced to wear clothes and uniforms inconsistent with their gender identity or expression.

#leave  
no one  
behind

**Lack of documentation causes**

**exclusion:** Not having the possibility of holding personal documentation reflecting one's gender identity constitutes a serious obstacle to admission to educational and training institutions. Mis-matching certificates and diplomas can also impact access to future employment.

**Bullying leads to absenteeism**

**and dropout:** LGBTQI and gender non-conforming youth can become victims of bullying and endure harassment and violence based on their appearance, gender expression, or behaviour. Victims of bullying may suffer long-term mental and physical harm. LGBTQI youth also experience higher dropout rates than their non-LGBTQI peers.

**Inadequate sexuality education:**

Sexuality education should be comprehensive and inclusive. However, it is often restricted to its biological aspects or to the inherent risks of heteronormative sexual activity and excludes many issues relevant to LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people.

# A TIME FOR ACTION

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



Implement inclusive education by promoting a welcoming and supportive environment where all students regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics are respected and stereotypes are contested.



Track the educational outcomes of LGBTQI and gender non-conforming students. Quality education cannot be ensured unless outcomes are tracked.



Adopt local laws and regulations that provide for name and gender marker change procedures to ensure that trans people are not misgendered and excluded from education.



Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination policies and action plans that respond effectively to bullying and violence and prevent all forms of discrimination against LGBTQI and gender non-conforming students.



Implement evidence-based and scientifically sound sexuality education. These programmes should promote recognition and acceptance of diversity in sex, sexuality, and gender.



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# 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.

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**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development

# 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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