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Submission on World Bank Safeguard Policy Review, focusing on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression

The proposed draft of the World Bank [Environmental and Social Safeguards](#) lists women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities as “vulnerable groups.” In doing so, however, it fails to fully grasp how each group is uniquely vulnerable to human rights abuses due to societal prejudices and legal barriers.

Persons with a non-conforming sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or varying gender expression (SOGIE) and who are bodily diverse, face a number of difficulties even in open and free societies, subjecting them to abuses and forcing them to conceal their identities for their own safety. Some countries explicitly criminalize same-sex behavior and/or gender expression that differs from the sex assigned at birth; few countries offer specific non-discrimination protections on the grounds of SOGIE. By virtue of their invisibility they experience disproportionate amounts of project risks and impacts, producing unsafe living conditions. These risks typically stem from ignorance, discrimination, prejudice, harassment, and/or violence – sometimes carried out with legal sanction or impunity. Invisibility has significant impacts, including diminished access to much needed services including: health services, education, and employment opportunities. If left unchecked prejudice and/or harassment can lead to significant cumulative long-term effects, including direct or indirect violent actions, extreme poverty and permanent social exclusion.

Along the same lines, a combination of gender discrimination and legal barriers against women and girls contribute to their exclusion and to gender based violence. Gender-based disparities remain in many countries, including in wages, property ownership, labor force participation, and literacy, enrollment in higher education, political participation and representation, life expectancy, legal rights and sex ratios at birth. These pose significant project risks if not addressed fully at each stage of project development.

Many women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities also experience multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization, including because of their ethnic background, religion, language, political opinion, or other status.

The next draft of the safeguard framework must therefore - systematically and proactively - address the unique impacts of each project on women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities, as well as additional impacts these people experience because of other forms of discrimination or marginalization that they face. This can only be achieved by including standalone **Gender and SOGIE Safeguard** with mandatory standards on:

- ❖ **Social Impact Assessments** which are gender and SOGIE responsive. These must identify and assess impacts of proposed projects in terms of lack and barriers to access to needed services, evaluate alternatives, and design appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures;
- ❖ **Baseline Gender and SOGIE disaggregated indicators** to assist in determining whether a project has differing impacts on persons based on their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression or bodily diversity and those who may be vulnerable to abuses and exclusion due to prejudices related to more than one of these factors;

- ❖ **Meaningful Engagement, Consultations and Participation** with women, girls, and persons with a non-conforming sexual orientation, gender identity and/or varying gender expression and who are bodily diverse at each stage of the project are needed. Specific measures must be taken to ensure active participation and confidentiality and security of participants;
- ❖ **Gender and SOGIE Plan & Planning framework** to ensure that these groups receive equal benefits, are protected from adverse effects of a project and are compensated in a satisfactory manner, sufficient planning and dedicated budget are required;
- ❖ **Universal Accessibility and Inclusion Plan** to ensure access to safe services from criminalization, discrimination and violence. This will include having sensitive and trained staff in place to provide quality and comprehensive healthcare, a safe environment with healthcare facilities, access to quality education and a means to maintaining adequate standard of living as well as emotional and over all well-being.

Endorsing Organizations

1. Human Rights House, Albania
2. PINK Embassy, Albania
3. Access Chapter 2, South Africa
4. SANAC Civil Society Forum, South Africa
5. Lebanese Medical Association for Sexual Health, Lebanon
6. India HIV/AIDS Alliance, India
7. METRO Charity, United Kingdom
8. The Bretton Woods Project, United Kingdom
9. IDAHO Committee - International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia
10. Arab Trans Association
11. The Global Alliance for LGBT Education, Netherlands
12. Stonewall Housing, United Kingdom
13. The Initiative for Equal Rights, Nigeria
14. Micro Rainbow, United Kingdom
15. Kaleidoscope Trust, United Kingdom
16. Initiative for Improved Male Health, Nigeria
17. Bank Information Center, United States
18. Gender and Development Network, United Kingdom
19. National Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission, Kenya
20. Center Global, United States
21. Chapter Four-Uganda, Uganda
22. Blue Diamond Society, Nepal
23. ILGA-Europe, Belgium
24. International Rectal Microbicide Advocates – IRMA, Nigeria
25. International Centre for Advocacy on Rights to Health, Nigeria
26. The LGBT Center of Raleigh, United States
27. LGBT United Tetovo, Macedonia
28. ILGA – International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, Switzerland

29. ReconcilingWorks, United States
30. Stonewall, United Kingdom
31. Closet de Sor Juana AC, México
32. Beijing Gender Health Education Institute, China
33. Labris - Lesbian Human Rights Organization, Serbia
34. Queer Zagreb, Croatia
35. Domino and ZbeLeTron, Croatia
36. Sarajevo Open Centre, Bosnia & Herzegovina
37. Queeria - Center for Promoting Culture of Nonviolence and Equality, Serbia
38. Belgrade Pride Parade, Serbia
39. Kaos GL Association, Turkey
40. LGBT Forum Progress, Montenegro
41. LGBTIQ Social Center, Montenegro
42. LGBTI Support Center - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia
43. Thessaloniki Pride, Greece
44. Alliance against Discrimination of LGBT people, Albania
45. Public Information and Need of Knowledge NGO, Armenia
46. Aswat- Palestinian Gay Women
47. Subversive Front, Skopje, Macedonia
48. Israeli Queers for Palestine, Israel
49. Athens Pride, Greece
50. SPoD LGBTI, Turkey
51. CEL, Kosovo
52. QeSH, Kosovo
53. Open Mind Spectrum Albania - OMSA
54. Community Development Center & Network "Today for the Future", Albania
55. Tirana Legal Aid Society, TLAS, Albania
56. Albanian Center for Population and Development, Albania
57. Beyond Barriers, Albania
58. Youth in Free Initiative, Kukes, Albania
59. Albanian Institute for Public Affairs, Albania
60. "Harriet Martineau" Foundation, Albania
61. Focus on Women's Development, Kuçovë, Albania
62. Intellectual Women of Shkodra, Albania
63. Observatory for Children's Rights, Albania
64. Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania
65. Change Centre Albania
66. Supporting women in the family, Albania
67. Association for Integration of Informal Areas, Albania
68. Roma Virtual Network, Israel
69. Gayten-LGBT, Serbia
70. Instituto Runa de desarrollo y Estudios sobre Género, Spain
71. Gender Action, United States

72. Pink Life LGBTT Solidarity Association, Turkey
73. TRANSform, Romania
74. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Transidentität und Intersexualität, Germany
75. Bisexual Alliance Victoria, Australia
76. Transgender Victoria, Australia
77. Instituto Runa de Desarrollo y Estudios sobre Género, Peru
78. Pehchan North Region Office, India
79. Kinnar Bharti, India
80. Parivartan Trust, India
81. Mitr TI +, India
82. Kashish, India
83. Ekta Trust, India
84. Samarpan, India
85. Shaan, India
86. Himayat, India
87. Mansa, India
88. Navjeevan, India
89. Welcome Foundation, India
90. Sangharsh, India
91. Dostana, India
92. Sneh, India
93. Saahil- E-Sasaram, India
94. Asha Trust, India
95. Ibteda-e-anees, India
96. Humkhayal Trust, India
97. Ujala Trust, India
98. Sankalp, India
99. Naya Savera, India
100. Basera Trust, India
101. Rhythm, India
102. Ekta sewa sansthan, India
103. Bharosa TI+, India
104. Rose Foundation, India
105. Gulshan- E –Ishq, India
106. Jagriti Foundation, India
107. Saathi Seva Santhan, India
108. TLF Sexuality, Health and Rights Educators, Philippines
109. Groundation, Grenada
110. Quality of Citizenship, Jamaica
111. Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD), Guyana
112. Human Rights Campaign, United States
113. Colour Youth – LGBTQ Youth Community of Athens, Greece
114. TransAkcija, Slovenia

115. International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, United States

Endorsing Individuals

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