APFSD 2024 LGBTI Constituency Statement

Agenda Item 3: Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through voluntary national reviews

21 February 2024, 9-11am
Bangkok, Thailand

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The LGBTIQ constituency of APRCEM affirm that the SDGs must be centered around the demands of the ones furthest behind, including LGBTIQ people, whose development concerns cut across goals, targets, and indicators, and other binding human rights treaties. Governments must be accountable and responsible to act and address SOGIESC human rights issues in SDG nationalization plans, ensuring no one is left behind in sustainable development policy design and implementation. We also express our demands for Development Justice and equitable multilateralism, centering the needs of the most marginalized communities, including LGBTIQ people.

The disproportionate economic and social marginalization of LGBTIQ individuals across Asia Pacific, driven by a variety forms of oppressions stemming from colonial legal criminalisation, discrimination in the World of Work, and bullying in educational settings. International Financial Institution’s loan conditionality, military conflicts and expenditures, and anti-right and anti-gender fundamentalist movements contribute to the destabilization of institutions responsible for service provision and drive lack of income and social protection, impoverishment, and the displacement of LGBTIQ individuals. LGBTIQ asylum seekers suffer from lack of access to health, social protection, and justice.

For this reason, we reiterate that in SDG follow up and review mechanisms at all levels, duty bearer entities and governments are responsible to connect active outreach and meaningfully include LGBTIQ organizations and individuals, especially those who are further marginalized, to ensure their development needs and policy solutions are taken to account, particularly during Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) consultations.

Recommendations to state members

1. Active outreach and meaningful inclusion of LGBTIQ organizations and their development demands in national sustainable development follow up and review processes
2. Partner with LGBTIQ CSOs to enhance the collection of disaggregated data based on SOGIESC, and Integrate qualitative methods for diverse lived realities, ensuring meaningful LGBTIQ+ community participation
3. Implement privacy measures to prevent misuse, safeguarding confidentiality and addressing unique challenges in SDG implementation.
4. Develop and implement anti-discrimination laws and policies to protect the equal rights of LGBTIQ people, as well as, decolonize the legal frameworks by repealing discriminatory and punitive laws, policies, and social practices that undergird violence and discrimination on the basis of SOGIESC, as well as human rights defenders, and CSOs.

5. End the military expenses and ensure full public investment in Universal Health Coverage and access to high quality public services, social welfare, and protections that are able to meet the unique needs of LGBTIQ individuals.

6. Ensure decent work, living wages, fair compensation, rights to decision making and collective bargaining and unionization for LGBTIQ workers and migrants in the World of Work by ratifying relevant ILO conventions, especially C190.

Full version for reference

Introduction
The LGBTIQ constituency of APRCEM reiterates the global pledge to leave no one behind and to reach the ones furthest behind and express our demands for Development Justice and equitable multilateralism moving away from corporate interest and profit driven model, but centering the needs of further marginalized communities, LGBTIQ people.

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Expression, and Sexual Characteristics (SOGIESC) are not explicitly mentioned in the SDGs, but LGBTIQ people are recognized as key beneficiaries and rights holders in the way towards just and sustainable development. We affirm that the SDGs must be centered around the demands of people with diverse SOGIESC, whose development concerns cut across goals, targets, and indicators, and other multilateral and binding human rights treaties. Governments must be accountable and responsible to act and address SOGIESC human rights issues in SDG nationalization plans, ensuring no one is left behind in sustainable development policy design and implementation.

LGBTIQ individuals and communities across Asia and the Pacific—particularly those in developing countries—face significant economic and social marginalization and vulnerability resulting from multiple crises, including military conflicts, public health emergencies, and economic and climate crises exacerbated by authoritarianism, neo-liberal globalization, fundamentalism, and patriarchy. Failing to recognize and tackle the challenges faced by LGBTIQ communities hinders progress toward SDGs and the overarching goal of ending poverty across the regions, and globally.

We reiterate that in SDG follow up and review mechanisms at all levels, duty bearer entities and governments are responsible to connect active outreach and meaningfully include LGBTIQ organizations and individuals, especially those who are further marginalized, to ensure their development needs and policy solutions are taken to account, particularly during Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) consultations.
The disproportionate economic and social disparities and marginalization of LGBTIQ individuals in Asia Pacific—which can be experienced across all stages of life—is driven by a variety of oppressions, but namely neo-colonial capitalistic economy, colonial legal criminalisation, discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, discrimination and harassment in the World of Work, bullying and violences in educational settings.

Developing-country economies are regressed by predatory International Financial Institutions (IFI) development loan conditionalities. Austerity measure requirements inhibit public service provision with respect to health care, social security, and other protections—services that many economically unstable LGBTIQ people depend on for survival and subsistence. Such unjust development exacerbates the lack and monetisation of public services that further perpetuates the poverty and economic instability LGBTIQ persons and communities experience across the region.

These factors sustain the lack of economic opportunity and income for LGBTIQ people in the regions, and many resort to informal economies for livelihoods with high job insecurity. A research survey conducted with trans people across the Asia Pacific found that 81 percent of respondents experienced reduced income, job loss and/or being forced to go on unpaid leave during COVID-19 pandemic.

Military conflicts, arms trading, regime change campaigns, and the aiding and abetting of violent military dictatorships, and relevant expenditures contribute to the destabilization of institutions responsible for service provision and drive the displacement of LGBTIQ individuals, who may already be excluded from humanitarian aid and social protection policies because of their actual or perceived SOGIESC. Furthermore, LGBTIQ asylum seekers suffer from inordinate sexual and gender based violence, lack access to SRHR services, and face compounded challenges when attempting to access social services in both origin and host countries, potentially placing them in a perpetual state of economic and social insecurity exacerbated by lack of legal recognition.

Extremist and fundamentalist beliefs, which manifest in and through political and religious institutions, severely impact the economic and social capabilities of LGBTIQ people. Anti-rights and anti-gender actors influence, fund, and capacitate decision makers and non-state actors across Asia Pacific to develop and put into practice discriminatory laws, policies, and social practices that exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, including access to justice issues. These actors also pursue campaigns of hate, intolerance, and violence against LGBTIQ communities, creating disharmony and threatening the achievement of peaceful and inclusive societies.

**Recommendations**

1. Active outreach and meaningful inclusion of LGBTIQ organizations and their development demands in national sustainable development follow up and review processes,
2. Partner with LGBTIQ CSOs to enhance the collection of disaggregated data based on SOGIESC, and integrate qualitative methods for diverse lived realities, ensuring meaningful LGBTIQ+ community participation.

3. Implement privacy measures to prevent misuse, safeguarding confidentiality and addressing unique challenges in SDG implementation.

4. Develop and implement SOGIESC-inclusive anti-discrimination laws and policies, as well as, decolonize the legal frameworks by repealing discriminatory and punitive laws, policies, and social practices that undergird violence and discrimination on the basis of SOGIESC, as well as human rights defenders, and CSOs.

5. Enact and implement legislation for Gender Recognition based on self-identification, and substantive protection of bodily autonomy.

6. Decrease the military expenses and ensure increased public investment in Universal Health Coverage and access to high quality public services, social welfare, and protections that are able to meet the unique needs of LGBTIQ individuals.

7. Ensure decent work, living wages, fair compensation, rights to decision making and collective bargaining and unionization for LGBTIQ workers and migrants in the World of Work by ratifying relevant ILO conventions, especially C190.

8. Tax the rich and decrease the taxation for marginalized communities.

9. Relief and cancellation of developing country sovereign debt, and international consensus on and respect for principles of the Right to Development.

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**Recommendations to state members**

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9. Implement privacy measures to prevent misuse, safeguarding confidentiality and addressing unique challenges in SDG implementation.

10. Develop and implement anti-discrimination laws and policies to protect the equal rights of LGBTIQ people, as well as, decolonize the legal frameworks by repealing discriminatory and punitive laws, policies, and social practices that undergird violence and discrimination on the basis of SOGIESC, as well as human rights defenders, and CSOs.

11. End the military expenses and ensure full public investment in Universal Health Coverage and access to high quality public services, social welfare, and protections that are able to meet the unique needs of LGBTIQ individuals.

12. Ensure decent work, living wages, fair compensation, rights to decision making and collective bargaining and unionization for LGBTIQ workers and migrants in the World of Work by ratifying relevant ILO conventions, especially C190.