A Global Outlook on LGBTI Social Exclusion through 2030

IARAN

Image by Sergey Ponomarev

ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

IRIS INSTITUT DE RELATIONS INTERNATIONALES ET STRATÉGIQUES

CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP

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The Inter-Agency Regional Analysts Network (IARAN) is a global consortium of operational aid agencies and academic institutions, with a team of analysts working around the world. The IARAN has over five years experience in providing strategic foresight analysis to the humanitarian sector.

The IARAN supports humanitarian actors in managing future uncertainty through the use of techniques like scenario analysis and strategic planning so non governmental organisations (NGOs) can be better positioned for the future by examining the different ways it could unfold over the next one to fifteen years. This allows NGOs to be more responsive, resource efficient, and impactful. By looking to the future, we can pre-empt change and save lives.

Image by Sergey Neamoscou

Key Findings

- There are likely hundreds of millions of LGBTI people in the world, nearly all of whom experience some degree of social exclusion.
- The extent of the problem could be classified as a protracted humanitarian crisis.
- The humanitarian sector is not doing enough to mainstream LGBTI-inclusive dimensions into their work.
- The heavy trends that will continue to shape LGBTI social exclusion through 2030 are: how we conceive sexuality, the legacy of colonialism, and the level of interaction the general public has with LGBTI individuals.
- Key leverage points for programs are the criminalization of same-sex relations and media representations of LGBTI individuals.
- Additional leverage points that will be more difficult for actors to affect are: stigmatization, religious acceptance, and political scapegoating of LGBTI individuals.
- These factors are at the center of the system of interactions that contribute to the social exclusion of LGBTI individuals. Influencing them will affect many other down-stream factors that have a more immediate impact on people's lives like: workplace discrimination, rejection by family, denial of marriage rights, etc.
- Institutions such as governments, religious organizations, and the media are some of the most critical in shaping the conditions for social inclusion.
- There will be huge variation between countries, but overall progress to building better social inclusion will be slow. This has serious implications for the health, safety and dignity of LGBTI communities the world over as they suffer the impacts of social exclusion.
- The use of foresight approaches, like scenario analysis, can assist actors working on LGBTI issues to manage future uncertainty and plan more strategically.

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Executive Summary

Social exclusion affects a range of development indicators for this population. Social exclusion exists when individuals are prevented from participating in social, economic, and/or political life. As a result, they may not have access to basic physical needs like sustainable livelihoods, income, housing, education, and healthcare. However, they may also be denied intangibles like human rights, legal protections, and basic dignities. This can have psychological implications like feelings of inferiority and alienation[1].

LGBTI individuals are more likely to experience poverty, lack healthcare, attempt suicide, and be subjected to physical or sexual violence, even in societies that are considered more accepting of LGBTI individuals. There are hundreds of millions of LGBTI individuals around the world, most of whom are at a greater risk of "death, disease, or disruption of their livelihoods[2]" than the rest of the population. As such, this situation should be characterized as a protracted crisis and receive greater attention from the humanitarian sector.

It is too easy for this crisis to be overlooked as LGBTI individuals are spread around the world, representing a small proportion of the population in any given area. Humanitarian attention is focused on crises where the distribution of human suffering forms a geographical cluster. As a result, the humanitarian sector has not focused on LGBTI whole groups, instead only addressing specific instances of persecution, or indirectly through other interventions like HIV programming. However, the 'leave no one behind agenda[3]' for the Sustainable Development Goals provides a framework and an opportunity for humanitarian actors to action commitments to inclusivity, moving beyond rhetoric to close the gap between commitments and implementation that can foster real change for the lived reality of LGBTI individuals around the world. Progress on LGBTI social exclusion by 2030 is essential to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals and tackling the causes of this protracted crisis that affects hundreds of millions of individuals worldwide.

Image by Sergey Neamoscou

Purpose and methodology

The purpose of this report is to support planning on international LGBTI issues. It is intended to be used to raise the profile of this ongoing crisis and highlight the significant implications for these groups, which stem from their ongoing exclusion in many societies across the globe. Additionally, its findings serve to support policy formation, country strategies, and advocacy underpinning the "leave no one behind" agenda, working to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals realize their potential as a vehicle to advance equality.

Scenario analysis is a means of managing uncertainty by examining past trends and emerging issues to explore probable futures. The technique is used to break complex issues down into their components and identify which are the key drivers of change. Scenarios are based on the different combinations of how these drivers may unfold in the future. Each scenario is then a description of a possible future. Scenarios are intended as tools that allow decision makers to plan for a range of contingencies and strategically pursue policies that can lead to a preferred future.

The methods of this report are based on a five-step analytical toolkit developed by the IARAN:

1. **Architecture** – identification of factors that drive LGBTI social exclusion.

2. **Impact-Uncertainty Matrix** – ranking of factors by their impact and uncertainty to identify heavy trends and critical uncertainties.

3. **MICMAC** – a cross impact matrix of the critical uncertainties to identify which are central to the system of interactions. These are then used to form the logic of scenarios.

4. **Hypothesis** – morphological analysis of logical combinations of the possible future outcomes for each scenario logic.

5. **Scenarios** – a narrative description of the future based on the combination of scenario logic hypotheses.

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Figure 1. Representation of how the factors of the study are classified and used through the steps of the analysis.

Key terms

Biological sex

- Based on one's biological characteristics including: chromosomes, genes, hormones, internal and external sex organs, and secondary sex characteristics. Infants are assigned a sex at birth based on their perceived traits. Biological sex is neither immutable nor exclusively male or female. Intersex individuals do not fit into either category, while transgender individuals may change some aspects of their biological sex such as hormones, genitalia, and secondary sex characteristics.

Gender identity

- How one perceives themselves within the socially constructed roles and behaviors ascribed to men and women. This is a personal self-conception that may differ from one's sex and/or how they express themselves publicly.

Gender expression

- How one socially expresses themselves within the socially constructed roles and behaviors ascribed to men and women. This can be done through behavior, fashion, speech characteristics, etc.

Transgender

- When one's gender identity does not match their assigned biological sex. This is a broad term that can reflect a spectrum of experiences. Many transgender individuals take steps to express their gender identity by changing their style of dress and mannerisms, taking hormone therapy, and/or undergoing gender-affirmation surgery. However, the extent to which they do, if at all, is a personal decision unique to the individual.

Cisgender

- When one's gender identity matches their assigned biological sex. This is independent of gender expression.

Sexual orientation

- One who is sexually, romantically, and/or emotionally attracted to based on their sex/gender in relation to one's own.

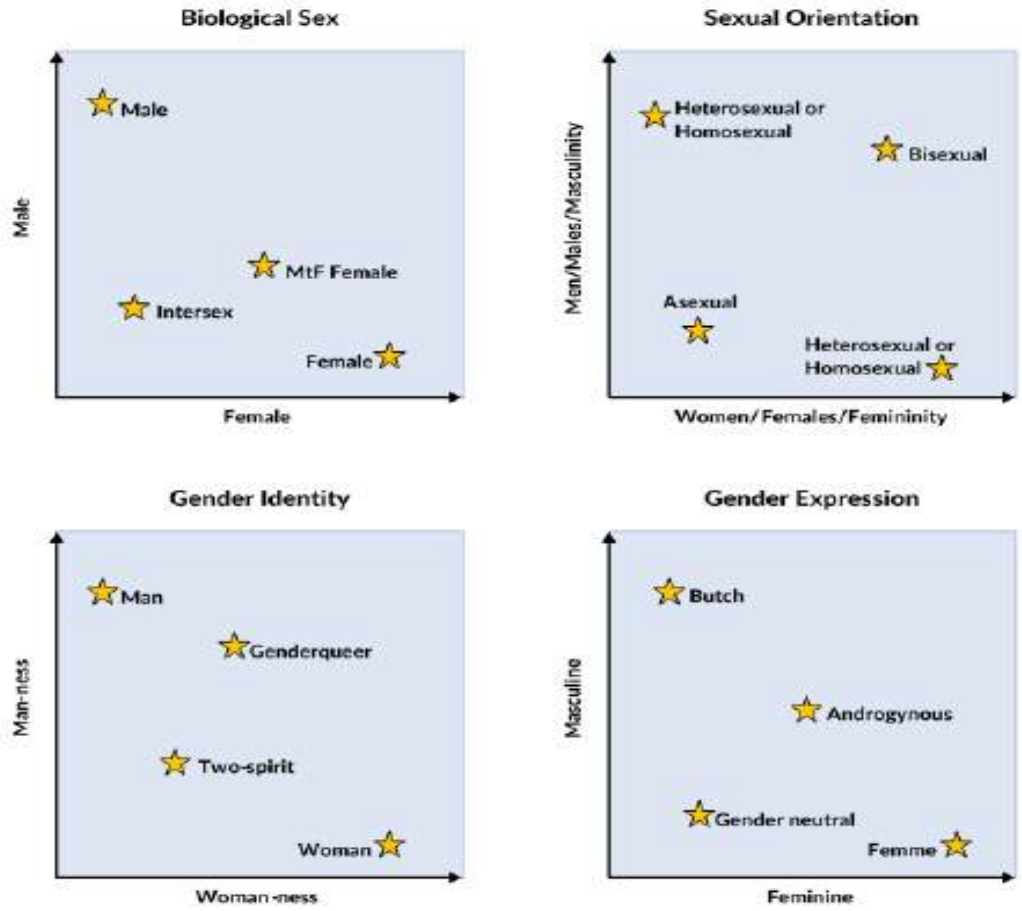

Figure 2. A two continua representation of biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, as an alternative to the dichotomous or single spectrum approaches. [4]

Social exclusion

Social exclusion can be defined as the "the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas."[5] Such a state impacts many areas of an individual's life. They may face unequal access to resources, such as employment, housing, education, and healthcare. They may be denied public participation, preventing them from exercising their agency and rights, and being allowed to engage in human interactions and relationships. Their quality of life may also suffer, from poor physical and mental health to increased targets of crime and violence.

The discussion of how social exclusion affects LGBTI individuals is challenging because it tackles widely held perceptions around gender, gender expression, sexual attraction and behavior, and biological issues. Too often, policy makers and the general public are restricted in their traditional thinking, while solutions to these issues often require thinking outside these social constructions. By listening to the lived realities of LGBTI individuals, we can advance our understanding of the concepts and the challenges they face.

Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional process[6] that impacts the humanitarian conditions for LGBTI individuals around the world. Using the United States as an example, where data is more available, there are many disparities between LGBTI and straight, cisgender individuals. In the United States, sodomy laws were ruled unconstitutional in 2003. Legal protections were expanding in recent years such as nationwide recognition of same-sex marriage in 2013 and adoption rights in 2016, while housing, employment, gender recognition, and hate-crime protections are in place in some parts of the country. In this context, the LGBTI community still shows far worse indicators than the general public. For example, suicide rates are 10-20% for gay, lesbian, and bisexual adults and 41% for transgender adults, while 4.6% for the general adult population[7]. LGBTI individuals are more likely to be unemployed (8% LGBTI vs 12% non-LGBTI) and living in poverty (32% LGBTI vs 24% non-LGBTI).[8] They are also less likely to have health insurance (79% LGBTI vs 86% non-LGBTI).[9]

The more LGBTI individuals are socially accepted, the more their wellbeing improves. For example, greater family acceptance reduced suicide attempts by 54%, substance abuse by 58%, and depression by 51.6%. Such acceptance also increased individuals wider acceptance in society by 26%, and their general health by 18%.[10] These discrepancies show that institutional policies are important, but are not enough on their own to prevent social exclusion because it is the result of many forms of human interaction.

LGBTI individuals also face threats to their physical safety. Violence motivated by homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia occurs around the world. In the US, LGBTI individuals are targeted proportionally more than other minority groups who are often persecuted, such as Jews, Muslims, and African-Americans.[11] There were over 1,000 reported instances in 2016 alone. The LGBTI umbrella covers a wide range of distinct groups each of which also intersects with other demographic factors like sex, ethnicity, age, religion, etc. For instance, gay men are often targeted more than lesbians, and people of color[12] more than whites. Transgender women experience exceptionally high levels of murder and sexual violence, particularly when they are women of color. Social exclusion creates the permissive climate where such violence can be carried out. In many countries such crimes are committed with impunity, as the government refuses to investigate them. In others, government and religious leaders encourage such violence.

Social exclusion also incorporates participation in the economic and political spheres. When LGBTI individuals are pushed to the margins of society and denied access to the same opportunities as the rest of the population, they suffer. Development indicators show worse measures for these groups because they face barriers to providing for their own wellbeing. Their condition often goes overlooked by humanitarian actors because they are, often intentionally, less visible and represent a small portion of the population in any given area. Yet together they represent a large body of people who face a silent crisis.

Image by Sergey Neamoscou

Estimates of the global LGBTI population

Currently, there is no reliable estimate of the global number of LGBTI individuals. Estimates are limited to only a few, mostly Western, countries. Surveys of LGBTI individuals struggle with respondent bias. As there is still a stigma attached to being LGBTI, even in more accepting societies, many people still do not want to speak openly. Methodological techniques can help reduce underreporting, particularly by making surveys as anonymous as possible, and/or by being electronic instead of in person. Another important consideration is that LGBTI related surveys can measure separate issues:

- **Identity:** Does the individual consider themselves to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender?
- **Attraction:** Does the individual feel sexual or romantic attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex?
- **Behavior:** Does the individual have sexual or romantic relations with members of the same and/or opposite sex?

Each measure has their use for analysis of specific issues and their comparison can be quite insightful too. However, most LGBTI work is focused on sexual behavior. This measure most accurately reflects the lived experiences of LGBTI individuals separate from the issues of labels. It also has the greatest relevance to issues like public health and legal prohibitions.

LGBTI rights movements have cited statistics that 10% of the overall population is LGBTI. However, this is not a precise assessment. It is believed that this figure was loosely based on the research of Alfred Kinsey in the 1940s, which was pioneering, although of questionable accuracy. 10% of the population was too large to ignore but too small to pose a threat.[13] Knowing the size of the population is very important when trying to deal with policy issues. As a result, government and academic researchers have been attempting to capture a more accurate estimate of this population using more modern and sophisticated survey techniques.

A meta-analysis found that self-identifying LGB individuals represent about 3.5% of the population. The survey results ranged from 1.2% to 5.6%. Men were more likely to identify as gay than bisexual, while women were more likely to identify as bisexual than lesbian. Figures for same sex attraction (1.8% to 11%) and experience (6.9% to 8.8%) were greater than those who self-identified, suggesting that even in more accepting nations, many individuals may not feel comfortable identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Lastly, the study found that transgender populations were estimated to be much smaller at 0.3%, but included only those who had undergone some degree of transitioning.[14] Some researchers argue that these figures still greatly underreport the actual population size due to the stigma that continues to surround these issues[15]. Additionally, there is particularly little reliable data on transgender and intersex populations.[16]

There is very little data from the non-Western world and generalizing to other regions is problematic. Statistically, rates of LGBTI individuals should be equal for all populations, however, social prohibition can restrict the expression of this. For instance, even within the US, demographics have a great influence on the response rate, such as 12% of non-religious youths identifying as LGB and only 1% of white evangelical youths,[17] or 5.8% of white men reporting having sex with other men but only 2.9% of Asian men.[18] As such, it is with a note of caution that we apply Western data to the global population. Instead of attempting to place a specific figure, we offer a wide range from overly generous to highly conservative. Nevertheless, these figures can still narrow down the likely size of the LGBTI population globally and provide better insight in the scope of the humanitarian issues they face.

High estimate: 14% This figure is based on statistics from the US on the percentage of individuals who have engaged in any same-sex behavior in their lifetime (8.2%)[19] and then additionally increased for potential underreporting (+59%).[20] The rate is likely an overestimate as it accounts for any past experiences, which includes isolated experimentation, rather than regular behavior. Additionally, it assumes a large percent of respondents are not answering questions truthfully.

Low estimate: 0.25% This figure is based on UNAIDS survey data[21] of men who have sex with men (MSM) in non-Western or Latin American countries. WHO's international estimates of this figure are closer to 2-4%[22] (or even potentially 3-16%).[23] The 0.25% figure is likely an underestimate as it is based on one of the most conservative LGBTI estimates available for the wider world. Specifically, it may reflect self-reporting bias in countries where LGBTI individuals are stigmatized and many of these surveys ask about recent sexual behavior (1 or 5 years) which may further restrict the reported rate.

Based on these figures, the global LGBTI population is estimated to be between 19 million and 1 billion people. The exact number is unlikely to be at either extreme, and so can be reasonably assumed to be in the hundreds of millions.

The drivers that will shape LGBTI social exclusion for hundreds of millions of people over the course of the outlook are varied however, the most influential of these drivers are the following:

- Construction of sexual classifications,
- Legacy of colonialism,
- Level of interaction and familiarity,
- Stigmatization,
- Negative representation in the media,
- Criminalization,
- Religious acceptance
- Political scapegoating.

These have been categorized into heavy trends, which will continue to shape the evolution of LGBTI social exclusion in a predicable way and critical uncertainties. For a discussion on how these drivers were selected, please the method section in the Annex on page 26.

Heavy trends in LGBTI social exclusion

For the heavy trends, it is expected that they will continue to progress along their current trajectory. As a result, assumptions can be made more confidently about the evolution of these factors and the role that they play in the broader system. Each of these is explored in more detail in this section.

Construction of sexual classifications

A broad factor shaping the context of LGBTI issues is how we perceive and define sexuality, in addition to sex and gender. Western society has divided these characteristics into two alternatives: heterosexual and homosexual, male and female, masculine and feminine. Sexuality is how humans categorize and define patterns of sexual acts. The words "heterosexual" and "homosexual" were not coined until 1868 and were not normalized until the 1930s. Western society had reached a turning point where it began to classify sexual identities rather than sexual behaviors. This new construction of sexuality has spread around the world where it often conflicts with local conceptions of sexuality. "Gay" or "lesbian" is seen as a specific Western identity that does not describe the lived experience of many non-Western individuals who engage in same-sex behavior. Such individuals may choose to follow social norms, such as entering a marriage with an individual of the opposite sex and having children. Same-sex relations are something separate that they may also engage in but are not defined by. Such conflict around labels is why public health workers use terms like "men who have sex with men" (MSM) to try and identify segments of the population based on behavior. Though these descriptive labels also turn into identities where some individuals who have same-sex relations do not want to be defined as such. The use of local terminology to describe sexual behavioral patterns is often far more effective. If homosexuality and heterosexuality are modern Western constructs, then they are neither universal nor permanent. However, they are so deeply engrained that they will continue to shape how sexuality is conceived well through 2030. Though over a longer period, it is likely to change, as many academics and advocates are already challenging the way the world thinks about sexuality.

One of the major challenges to the conception of sexuality as a dichotomy is bisexuality. Yet, while bisexuality is officially included in the "LGBTI" label, it is a broad catch-all category between these poles that does not recognize the range of experiences or fluidity over time. Bisexuals in fact make up the largest group in the LGBTI community and yet they are the least visible and often feel excluded by it.[24] So even within LGBTI communities there is bias towards falling back on this Western sexual dichotomy.

Gender has also come to be defined as a binary. One's gender identity and expression are widely assumed to be fixed to one's sex. If there are only two accepted sexes, then there are only two accepted genders. Men are masculine and women are feminine. Transgender individuals face very severe discrimination around the world for defying the society's conceptions of gender. However, there are still a number of non-Western cultures that construct gender in three or more categories. In such contexts, transgender people often still do not receive the same treatment as men or women but they have a socially accepted space in which to live and define themselves. There is also a growing trend among the youth in more Western nations to define themselves as nonbinary, or existing outside the gender dichotomy.[25] They may choose to be neither masculine nor feminine (gender neutral), masculine and feminine (androgynous), changing levels of masculine and feminine over time (gender fluid), or any number of other self-described categories. A handful of countries are also providing transgender and/or non-binary individuals the ability to legally define themselves in ways other than as a man or woman. These states represent those that historically define gender outside the Western conception of it, mostly in the Asia-Pacific region, or that are more progressive Western nations that are moving beyond their traditional constructions of gender.

Biological sex is even more widely assumed to be a dichotomy than sexuality or gender. Yet it is also not nearly as divisible as is commonly believed. An individual's sex is typically assigned at birth by a medical practitioner based on the newborn's genitalia, or before birth based on prenatal chromosomal testing. However, the factors that determine sex are more complicated.[26] Biological sex too is a spectrum between what is commonly ascribed as male and female, with around 0.08% to 1.7% of the populations estimated to be intersex, depending on how the concept is defined.[27] This is because the factors that define our conception of sex do not follow only two paths, instead there is a complex web in which chromosomes, genes, hormones, internal and external sex organs, and secondary sex characteristics are expressed and interconnected.[28] Intersex individuals, do not clearly fall within this sex binary, having not clearly defined external sex organs or ones that do not match their chromosomes. Intersex individuals often face social exclusion or discrimination because they exist outside the social narrative on sex. Many also receive surgery at an early age to "normalize" their sex into the prescribed categories of male and female.

Through 2030 LGBTI issues around the world will continue to largely be framed within this narrative of sexuality, sex, and gender as being defined in either-or categories rather than spectrums, though challenges to this perception will begin to emerge.

Legacy of colonialism

The social exclusion of LGBTI individuals is neither universal through history or across cultures. So how then did it grow to become so pervasive? Many scholars have argued that colonialism was a leading mechanism in the diffusion of Christian Europe's perceptions of sexuality and the accompanying value judgments and legal restrictions. During the Late Middle Ages the Catholic Church and then secular powers began a widespread campaign against sodomy that would shape norms around the world for centuries to come. Sex for procreation was acceptable, while all other forms were deemed "unnatural acts" such as anal sex and oral sex. However, such legal or social prohibitions were most often applied to homosexual relations, and between men in particular. These Western norms of sexual behavior were spread around the world during the colonial era between the 15th and 20th centuries. However, during this period, the Age of Reason came to Europe. Many Enlightenment thinkers sought to lift the religious restrictions of the Dark Ages. Following the French Revolution, for example, the new legal codes (1791) removed prohibitions against same-sex relations. Such values and laws were then diffused to the French colonies.

The British, alternatively, maintained anti-sodomy laws until 1967, long after the independence of most of their colonies in the 1950s and 1960s.[29] As a result, British colonialism, in particular, was found to have contributed to the criminalization of homosexual conduct through the imposition of their legal codes.[30] More than half of the over 80 countries that still criminalize these acts are former British colonies.[31] The decriminalization of homosexual conduct is slower in states that have previously been colonized (by any power) than those that were not.[32] This is not to place the burden of responsibility for today's anti-LGBTI policies on former colonial powers while excusing the governments that perpetuate such discrimination, rather it is to set the context for understanding contemporary LGBTI issues.

In one of the ironies of history, LGBTI rights are now sometimes accused of being cultural colonialism from the West.[33] Even though Christian European values shaped much of the rest of the world's views and values on sexuality, they have become engrained in many post-colonial societies. Pressure from Western governments and (Western dominated) international organizations to change local legislation, or attitudes, can be perceived as the imposition of foreign values, much as occurred during the colonial era.[34] Defying the West, by maintaining or strengthening anti-LGBTI policies, can also be perceived as a means of exerting sovereignty and independence. However, such practices overlook other factors. First, the existence of indigenous LGBTI movements within the post-colonial context. There are many LGBTI advocates and movements working to improve their own conditions and operating independently of Western actors. Next, many of the anti-LGBTI movements in post-colonial countries are being supported by Western actors.[35] In particular, far-right Christian organizations in the United States have been very active in proselytizing, training religious leaders, and lobbying governments towards their highly conservative views. For many years to come, there will continue to be this competition between actors to define the place of LGBTI individuals in the post-colonial world.

A subtler impact of colonialism on LGBTI issues is the legacy of language. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa there is a large divide between the LGBTI movements in anglophone and francophone countries. In English speaking countries, advocates have access to a greater amount of research, training, funding, etc. The growing dominance of the English language in science and among international organizations is an asset to those who speak it, but can serve to exclude those who do not. This trend will continue, placing a linguistic barrier to local LGBTI organizations in non-anglophone countries that are looking for international support or to network outside their linguistic region.

Familiarity

Humans far too often fear that which is different and unknown. Discrimination is, by definition, based on the perceived difference between people. With increased contact comes familiarity, which reduces implicit bias and intergroup anxiety.[36] Strategies for reducing other forms of discrimination, like racism, recommend direct contact between groups. Additional indirect contact is important where individuals see positive interactions between members of their group with those of another.[37] Research based on this premise has found that a ten-minute conversation with a trans- or nontrans-canvasser was enough to reduce bias and even change political behavior.[38] Trends like urbanization and globalization are already increasing intergroup contact around the world. LGBTI populations may tend to cluster in enclaves like other minority groups; however, they come from across all demographic backgrounds. Consequently, they have family, friends, coworkers, classmates, etc. who are not LGBTI. This encourages intergroup contact at a much faster rate than with ethnic or religious minorities who can remain largely segregated from each other. Contact will increase exponentially as more LGBTI individuals come forward to their family, friends, and communities and in so doing make it easier for others to do the same. With this will come greater familiarity and a decline in bias and exclusion. Therefore, it is expected that through 2030, greater contact and familiarity with LGBTI individuals will reduce prejudice.

Image by Sergey Neamoscou

Critical uncertainties in LGBTI social exclusion

How the following factors will shape the evolution of LGBTI social exclusion is less predictable. Each driver could unfold in more than one possible way in the future. The combination of these outcomes will shape the future context for LGBTI social exclusion.

Stigmatization

Broadly defined, a stigma is an identifying characteristic that socially devalues the bearer, while stigmatization is the process by which that trait affects the bearer's life.[39] The concept has been incorporated into the fields of psychology and sociology to understand how certain individuals or groups are marked for social exclusion and discrimination. The process occurs through a series of steps. First, humans differentiate each other based on differences. Some of these differences are linked to negative stereotypes. Individuals so marked are ascribed to belonging to an out-group, which is placed separate and inferior to the in-group. As such, their social exclusion and discrimination becomes normalized and legitimized.[40] Across much of the world, identifying with being identified as LGBTI is a stigma. LGBTI individuals are ascribed with negative attributes, differentiated from the wider hetero-normative society, and then face prejudice and discrimination.

Stigma also takes two forms: social stigma and self-stigma. The former operates as described above whereby society marks and negatively interacts with stigmatized individuals. Self-stigma, alternatively, is where the stigmatized individual internalizes the stereotypes and value judgements about them. Such individuals often exhibit depression and self-isolation,[41] while also behaving in ways that reinforce prejudicial expectations about them.[42] Overcoming the LGBTI stigma therefore requires addressing both social perception and how LGBTI individuals perceive themselves. Many LGBTI advocacy groups also work on promoting the health and wellbeing of this community by focusing on these issues of promoting self-esteem and mental health along with a positive group identity.[43]

Stigmas are continually redefined through their unique cultural context.[44] As a result, how they may evolve is subject to great uncertainty. While there has been international progress in destigmatizing the LGBTI community, how this will continue to progress and how it will shape local stigma is far from clear, especially, considering reactionary efforts by conservative elements within societies who are mobilized by the increased visibility of LGBTI individuals. Additionally, social and self-stigma may follow different courses. International LGBTI advocacy campaigns and advances in information technology could encourage self-acceptance among LGBTI individuals in the developing world long before wider social acceptance is realized.

Religious acceptance

Religion is widely used as a justification for the social exclusion and discrimination of LGBTI individuals. None of the major world religions is exempt from this. Even some Buddhist majority countries, like Myanmar, actively persecute the LGBTI community.[45] The Islamic world is the most consistently anti-LGBTI of the major religions.[46] The varying levels of acceptance shown in other religions demonstrates an underlying trend: tolerance of LGBTI individuals is more associated with how religious a society is, not what religion a society is. Research has demonstrated this negative correlation between this level of religiosity[47] and LGBTI acceptance. The more religion is central to people's lives, the less likely they are to be accepting of LGBTI individuals. For example, Muslim majority countries show very low levels of public acceptance towards LGBTI individuals, because countries are also very religious. While Christian majority countries have a very wide range in the level of acceptance, because these rates vary with how religious the country is. A couple of exceptions to this trend exist, such as Brazil and the Philippines being more accepting than would be expected, and Russia being far less so.[48] It must be noted that there is a correlation, and not necessarily a causation, between religiosity and LGBTI acceptance. While greater social acceptance corresponds to more secular societies, the latter is also related to levels of economic development and cultural globalization.

Other research has found that while most forms of religiosity exhibit less acceptance, there is at least one form that is tied to more positive views of LGBTI individuals.[49] This was a "quest" religious orientation, characterized by the searching for spiritual truths and accepting that ultimate truths may never be known (as opposed to intrinsic orientations where an individual finds meaning through living in accord with religious orthodoxy, and extrinsic orientations where religious adherence is used to obtain non-spiritual ends). There are thus ways to reconcile religion with LGBTI inclusion. It is religious tradition, rather than spirituality, that often leads to the social exclusion of LGBTI individuals.

The degree to which religion continues to define life in some countries and the potential for religious institutions to integrate inclusive approaches into tradition and practice is an uncertainty over the outlook period.

Media representation

Media depictions, in film, song, the news, etc., are an important force in shaping how individuals conceptualize and value other groups of people, especially ones that are not familiar. As such, media representations are a leading force in the creation of stereotypes about LGBTI individuals. Stereotypes link stigmas to negative perceptions that lead to the devaluation and social exclusion of individuals so marked. The nature of these stereotypes is therefore an important determinate in how individuals will be viewed and treated within their society. The media is a leading institution in shaping societal stereotypes on differentiated groups of people. How LGBTI individuals are portrayed in news coverage, television shows, music, etc., strongly influences the values that are then ascribed to them. The media can portray such people positively or negatively. However, if the media provides no visibility then that too serves to alienate LGBTI people as being deviant from societal norms and provides the space for negative stereotypes to persist.

In the West, LGBTI individuals still receive limited but increasing representation. For example, in the US film industry, 18.4% of the releases by major studios in 2016 contained a LGBTI character, up from 17.5% the previous year. However, nearly half of those characters had less than one minute of screen time. In fact, only 7.2% of the films had an LGBTI character who was vital to the plot line and whose character was based primarily on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Additionally, of the LGBTI characters, most were white gay men, with still even more limited representation of lesbians, bisexuals, transgender individuals, and LGBTI people of color.[50]

Recommendations exist for how to positively portray LGBTI people in the media. The following suggestions can contribute to reducing the social exclusion of this group[51]:

- Employ the right vocabulary, language, and terminology.
- Avoid specific language that stigmatizes LGBTI people, such as derogatory terms.
- Avoid focusing on medical issues.
- Avoid implying that being of a specific sexual orientation makes one part of a "high-risk group" for sexually transmitted diseases.
- Avoid stereotyping specific sexual orientations, such as bisexuality, as being promiscuous.

The imbalance in LGBTI media portrayals between the West and non-West feeds into the othering of domestic LGBTI groups. As the majority of LGBTI media mainstreaming comes from the West, LGBTI advocates in developing countries are at risk of being perceived as surrogates of Western powers and acting to promote foreign values.[52] Such beliefs ignore the rise of indigenous LGBTI rights movements and marginalize them as not reflecting the changes occurring within their own societies. An increase in non-Western media representation would help to correct this misperception and serve to normalize LGBTI individuals within their own specific cultural context.

Visibility is an important step in removing negative stereotypes and beginning to erase the divide between LGBTI and heteronormative social division. Western LGBTI movements have successfully used visibility in their campaigns. When individuals openly come out as LGBTI, they then force the existing political and social power structures to recognize them and their grievances. This is not without risks. There is a very real risk of being socially excluded, discriminated against, or even violently attacked for those early LGBTI leaders. Along these lines, the public outing of LGBTI individuals is often a weapon used to harm and exclude them from civic engagement. Increasing LGBTI visibility can also risk a conservative backlash. Many of the new anti-LGBTI policies are attempts to suppress emerging LGBTI acceptance. However, without taking action to publicly define their own identities, others will define it for them. A balance is needed between protecting LGBTI advocates and creating LGBTI visibility.

Social media is also providing a new platform for LGBTI individuals. The new technology now allows them to directly produce media. Conventional media can then be bypassed and thus no longer controls LGBTI portrayals. Competing voices can challenge entrenched stereotypes as individuals seek to define themselves. It also provides for greater anonymity and safety, which allows LGBTI individuals to be more truthful in their self-expression, without the same fear of social repercussions.

The representation of LGBTI individuals and communities in the conventional media (either positively or negatively) and the plurality of ways in which social media could be employed to challenge stigmatization and the dominant heteronormative narrative (or reinforce it) can significantly affect the future of LGBTI social exclusion. As a result, the evolution of this driver is highly impactful but uncertain.

Political scapegoating

Around the world there are many examples of political leaders using homophobia as a political tool, often along with other forms of discrimination, to distract the public from corruption and failures of governance.[53] Its use is particularly common among more authoritarian and/or ethnonational governments who maintain support by creating social divisions between their base and other segments of the population. Such leaders justify their political scapegoating as a defense of public morality, public health, or traditional values. In some countries, it is also a means to show that they are not beholden to the West and former colonial powers. The rise in nationalism and the mainstreaming of nationalist policies in many countries across the globe accentuates the dynamics of political othering, including against LGBTI individuals and groups, worsening a political culture of intolerance.

Political leaders can shape the social narrative around sexuality and gender. When they differentiate LGBTI individuals or label them a threat, it furthers their social exclusion and discrimination. It can be socially expected to deny LGBTI individuals access to education, employment, housing, and healthcare.[54] In fact, in dealing with an LGBTI individual, one would then be violating social norms and stigmatized by association.

The political scapegoating of the LGBTI community can also encourage institutional discrimination. Politicians who accuse them of being a public threat often want to be then seen as doing something about it. This can lead to the passing of legislation that allows for disenfranchisement, repression of political rights, or criminalization. Recent examples can be found in Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Egypt, Morocco, Indonesia, Brunei, and Nigeria.[55]

At the most extreme, political scapegoating can lead to violence, sexual violence, and killings, often in ways that are noted as being especially brutal. By labeling LGBTI individuals a threat to society, politicians can normalize family violence against them and encourage institutional persecution. In such contexts, they are often targeted by family or community members, nationalist or religious extremists, or police.[56] Furthermore, there can be a culture of impunity, or complicity, where such hate crimes go uninvestigated by the state.

Criminalization

Criminalization of same-sex relations is a direct form of social exclusion. However, such laws also serve to define how LGBTI people are viewed and by extension treated, even if they are not enforced. The state holds, arguably, the greatest normative power of any social institution. The criminalization of an act is to define it as a threat to the wellbeing of the society and shapes the norms surrounding it. So, while criminalization is a direct form of exclusion, it also serves to legitimize and promote a broader social exclusionary environment. In such instances, LGBTI individuals face the risk of legal sanction but also extra-legal and community violence, human rights abuses, and broader social exclusion.[57]

The criminalization of same-sex relations is most prevalent in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.[58] As of 2017, there are 72 states that criminalize LGBTI relations.[59] The severity and enforcement of these laws varies greatly. In many countries, even the political discussion around LGBTI rights is barred as a threat to public morality or as propaganda that harms children. These "morality" laws are common throughout the Arab states, while about 10% of all countries have some form of "propaganda" law.[60] These laws extend beyond the targeting of LGBTI individuals to include those who advocate for LGBTI rights.[61] Civil society organizations can have their funding blocked, materials confiscated, or even be forced to shut down.[62] Such laws aim to reduce freedom of speech and assembly, intimidate activists, and are established to exclude sexual orientation from public debate, setting the context for continued social exclusion or even persecution.

There has been a general trend internationally in repealing laws criminalizing same-sex sexual behavior, with 20 states having done so since 2006. Despite this, there is also a counter-trend of new anti-LGBTI laws being passed, such as in Uganda[66], India[67], and Nigeria.[68] Other states, such as Indonesia[69], have had similar legislation proposed. While same-sex relations were decriminalized in Russia in 1993, in 2013 the government passed legislation outlawing "gay propaganda" that has since been used to suppress political campaigning and broader LGBTI rights.[70] In the United States, in 2017 alone, over 100 anti-LGBTI bills were proposed at the sub-national level.[71] There are two common themes in these instances. First, they are often followed by broader social violence and discrimination that is legitimized by the state's normative stance. Second, they often result from a backlash against the rising visibility and standing of the LGBTI community by reactionary elements within the country. So, while there is a general trend towards the decriminalization of the LGBTI community, there is also the possibility for counter-trends to undermine these gains. As such, there are different possible futures that this driver may take.

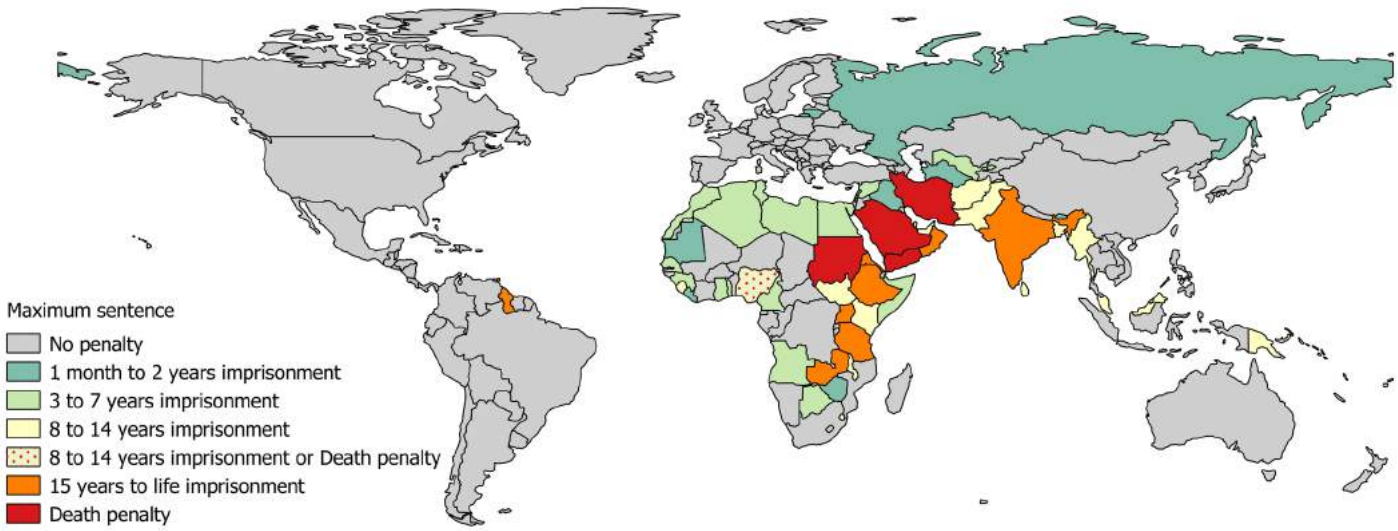

Figure 3. Laws against same-sex practice by maximum sentence. [63]

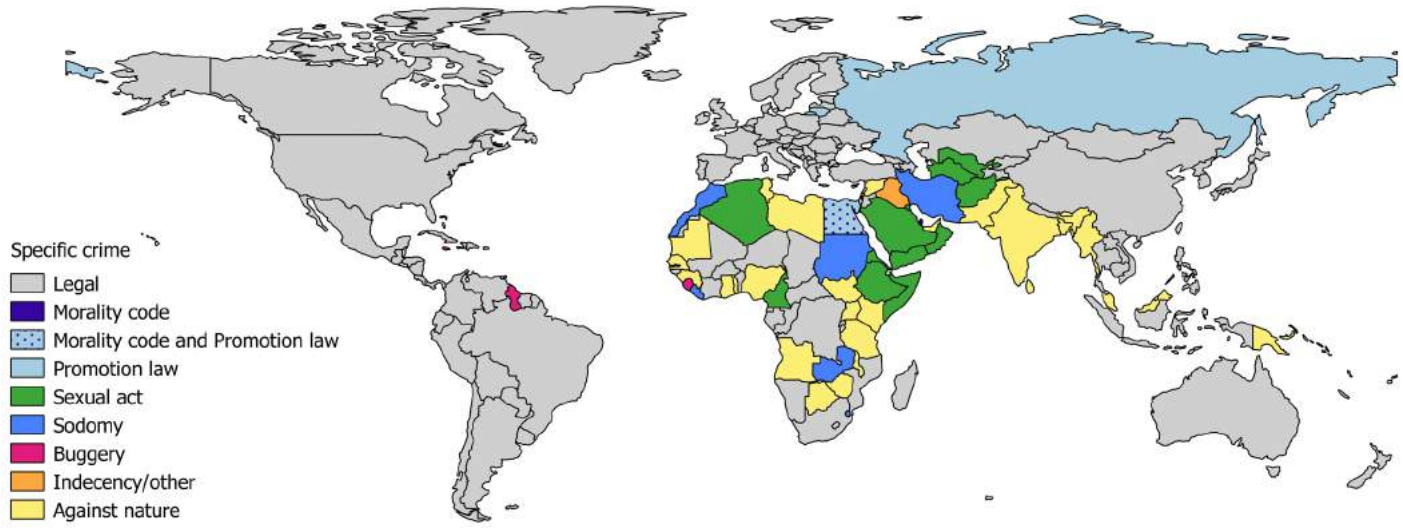

Figure 4. Laws against same-sex practice by maximum sentence. [64]

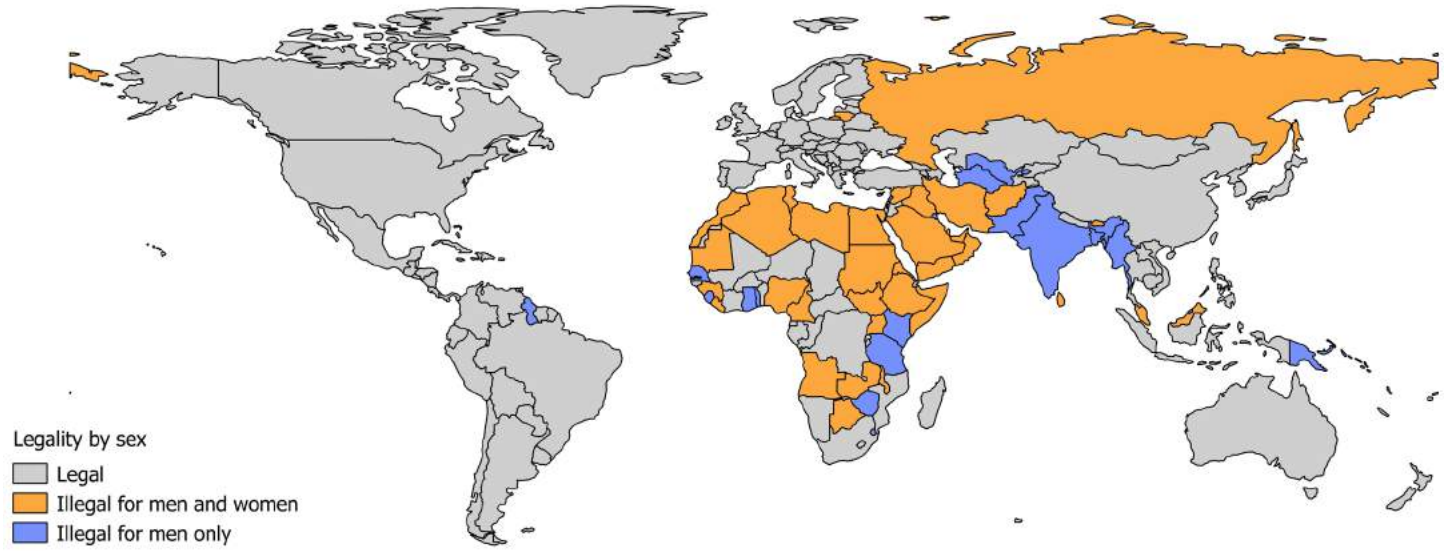

Figure 5 Laws against same -sex practice by whether it targets men and women or only men.[65]

The following figures are intended to give a sense of the scope of the threat facing this population. They are calculated based on the population of countries with sexual orientation laws, multiplied by the estimates of the LGBTI population in the country, and accounting for if the laws target men and women or only men. These figures only include those who are being criminalized by their own government and do not include the presumably far greater number who face social persecution, or issues of discrimination. The total number of LGBTI individuals in the world who face criminalization is estimated between 7 million and 400 million, which is approximately equivalent to the total populations of Sierra Leone on the low end and East Africa on the high end.[72] The number who could face execution is likely from 645 thousand to 36 million, roughly the current population of the city of Washington DC or the whole of Canada.

Comparing the level of criminalization to the population of those countries reveals the extent and severity of the threat. The following table shows the severity of the penalty for those who could be legally prosecuted for their sexual behavior. The most common penalty is 15 years to life in prison, followed by 8 to 14 years.

Table 1. The global number of people estimated to be in violation of sexual behavioral laws, by maximum penalty.

Maximum penalty (implemented)	Low estimate (0.25%of population)	High estimate (14% of population)
Death penalty	**645,000**	**36,100,000**
15 years to life imprisonment	**3,859,000**	**216,120,000**
8 to 14 years years imprisonment	**1,227,000**	**68,720,000**
3 to 7 years imprisonment	**828,000**	**46,360,000**
1 month to 2 years imprisonment	**560,000**	**31,390,000**
Total	**7,119,000**	**398,680,000**

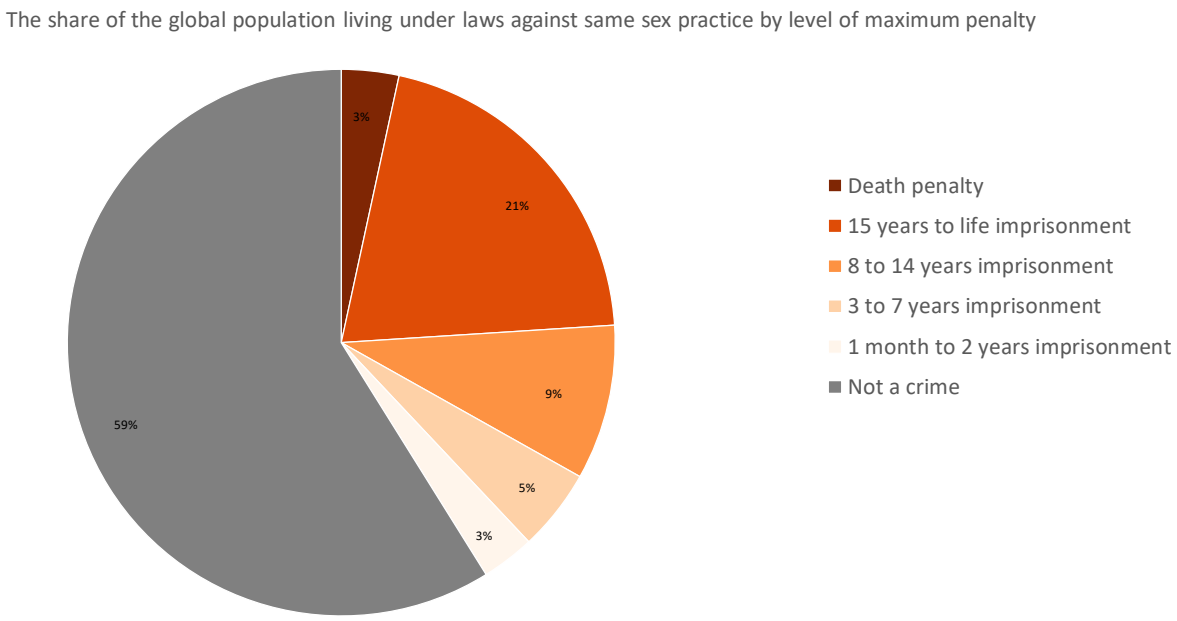

Figure 6. The share of the global population living under Laws against same -sex practice by level of maximum penalty.

The existence of legal prohibitions against same-sex behavior does not mean that they are regularly enforced. Only a small fraction of these populations may actually be arrested or imprisoned. Enforcement also varies extensively by location and the political climate. Additionally, not all LGBTI individuals face the same risks. Men are more often targeted than women, gays more than bisexuals, and transgender more than cisgender individuals. However, such criminalization still creates a climate of fear under which LGBTI people must live, and shapes the social values attached to their sexual or gender identities. They are then more likely to be socially excluded because they technically engage in criminal acts, and so may be denied employment, housing, healthcare and access to other basic services. Additionally, they are more vulnerable to extortion, exploitation, sexual assault, and hate crimes.

Criminalization of same-sex behavior is only one aspect of social exclusion. It is a very direct and apparent manifestation. However, social exclusion also operates in many other subtler ways. For the nearly 60% of the global population who is not affected by these laws, social exclusion is still a very real crisis. There are likely hundreds of millions of LGBTI individuals in the world, and nearly all of them face some degree of social exclusion.

Scenarios

Building from the drivers outlined above four scenarios have been created. The scenarios are not intended to be a prediction of the future. Rather they describe a range of plausible futures. Each describes how LGBTI social exclusion might look, from the perspective of a given country, in the year 2030. As there is great variation around the world in how countries treat their LGBTI population, different scenarios can play out at the same time in different countries. Intentionally avoided were any scenarios that were entirely optimistic or pessimistic, so as to show a range of challenges that could be faced in promoting LGBTI social inclusion. The purpose of this exercise is to help provide insight into how the future might look so that decision makers can begin planning now for the range of possibilities they may face in the near future. To this end, after each scenario is a brief description of its implications and how humanitarian actors could position themselves to support the social inclusion of LGBTI individuals in line with the Sustainable Development Goals' 'leave no one behind' agenda.

Humanitarian actors are defined as all actors who contribute to humanitarian action.[73] This includes but is not limited to; international and national NGOs, the United Nations, national governments, civil society organizations, donors and private sector actors.

Table 2. Summary table of the scenario logics.

		Scenarios			
		Slow going	Progress and persecution	Hollow victories	Institutions as leaders
Heavy trends	Constructions of sexual classifications	Sexuality, sex and gender will largely be viewed as immutable dichotomies			
	Legacy of colonialism	Colonial legacy weakens; nation's decisions are their own			
	Familiarity	Greater familiarity leads to decreased social exclusion			
Axes of uncertainty	Media representation	Negative stereotyping	Positive stereotyping	Positive stereotyping	Negative stereotyping
	Stigma	Social stigma remains pervasive	Social stigma decreases	Social stigma remains pervasive	Social stigma remains pervasive
	Religion	No change in religious acceptance	No change in religious acceptance	No change in religious acceptance	Religious acceptance
	Criminalization	Criminalization remains	Criminalization remains	Decrease in criminalization	Decrease in criminalization
	Scapegoating	No scapegoating	Scapegoating	No scapegoating	No scapegoating

1. Slow going

Gradual progress is being made towards the social inclusion of LGBTI individuals in the country, but the achievement of that goal still remains far off. LGBTI individuals are becoming more visible in their communities, making them seem less different than other members of society. They are becoming more tolerated and incidents of hate crimes and police harassment have dropped. However, social stigmas remain persistent and they are not fully accepted either. These perceptions are slow to change and a number of systemic barriers create inertia to progress. Domestic media continues to negatively stereotype them, while the few positive portrayals are foreign and less identifiable. The dominant religious traditions in the country also continue to shape the public's perception on sexuality. While the government is not actively persecuting LGBTI individuals, it is not acting to normalize them either. For instance, colonial era laws remain that criminalize same-sex relations but they are not enforced. These three leading institutions (media, religion and government) exert a great deal of power over how society views and values these people. Until they begin to change, more substantive progress in social inclusion is not realized.

Implications for LGBTI individuals in 2030:

- LGBTI individuals have been left behind at the close of the SDGs. Their rights are being systematically ignored, resulting in limited overall improvement in the development indicators for this vulnerable population.

Indicators that would show if a country is heading along the path outlined in this scenario:

- No major changes from current trends.

Opportunities to advance LGBTI social inclusion:

- No major actors are actively working against LGBTI interests.
- A wide range of interventions are still possible.
- Humanitarian actors can assist by leveraging their existing presence and positive reputation in the country, working with local partners on service provision and advocacy.

Threats to progress on LGBTI social inclusion:

- The government and other social institutions are not providing assistance, which places a greater burden on LGBTI activists and humanitarian organizations.
- Space for humanitarian actors to program directly for LGBTI engagement is still subject to significant and repeated disruption as laws are applied erratically.
- International actors could be perceived as outsiders engaging in cultural imperialism.

Image by Sergey Neamoscou

2. Progress and persecution

Social inclusion of LGBTI individuals is increasing, but the government is reactively persecuting them. The LGBTI community in the country is making strong progress in gaining social acceptance. They are becoming less stigmatized in large part because of greater visibility within their communities, more positive domestic media portrayals, and the spread of Western ideas challenging views on sexuality and gender. However, in reaction, the government increases persecution of the LGBTI community. While framed as a campaign to defend traditional values and against neo-colonialism, most see it as a move by an unpopular regime trying to shore up support among its conservative base and distract from its corruption and failures of governance. The administration passes vague laws criminalizing "immoral" or "unnatural" acts. Political leaders also make statements condoning extra-legal attacks on suspected homosexuals. Social divisions in the country widen between more progressive and conservative populations. While the current situation is dire, the social conditions are in place for long-term progress if the current administration is politically constrained or democratically overturned.

Implications for LGBTI individuals in 2030:

- LGBTI individuals achieve greater acceptance in their communities and among society in general. However, they are also at risk of arbitrary arrest and hate crimes. Even for those not directly victimized, the climate of fear negatively impacts all their other wellbeing indicators.

Indicators that would show if a country is heading along the path outlined in this scenario:

- More positive media representations.
- Decrease in social stigma.
- Political scapegoating.

Opportunities to advance LGBTI social inclusion:

- Potential to leverage domestic public support to change government policy.
- Private sector actors, particularly multinational companies, can use their position within the country to advance equality by implementing rights charters and education programs (within legal limits).
- International and national NGOs can collaborate and support civil society partners, though they will still be limited by the legal environment, to support the trend to greater acceptance.

Threats to progress on LGBTI social inclusion:

- The government is not a partner and is actively working against LGBTI inclusion.
- Depending on the political party in power, the climate could be increasingly restricted as LGBTI inclusion is a polarizing issue.
- The continued hostile political and legal environment creates challenges for humanitarian actors to create and implement programming directed at improving development indicators and opportunities for LGBTI individuals.

3. Hollow victories

Despite major progress towards LGBTI inclusion, the goal remains unattained. Many of the objectives believed necessary to promoting LGBTI social inclusion have been accomplished. National LGBTI movements are based on campaigns used in Western countries. LGBTI movements and individuals are becoming more outspoken and visible to show their communities that they are just like the rest of society. There are more positive portrayals of LGBTI people domestically, unlike years past when role models were all foreign, showing that national and sexual identities need not be exclusive. LGBTI movements are succeeding in promoting reforms to repeal restrictions on sexual orientation and gender identity that have persisted since the colonial era. Despite all these victories by the LGBTI community, social inclusion has yet to be realized. Stigmas still stubbornly persist and the dominant religious traditions in the country range from indifferent to antagonistic. While individuals may learn to be more accepting, social values are too deeply ingrained. Real progress will likely not come until the next generation, or the one after that.

Implications for LGBTI individuals in 2030:

- Despite the decline in institutional discrimination, LGBTI individuals are still largely socially excluded. Economic and health outcomes remain low, resulting in a failure of the 'leave no one behind' agenda for the SDGs.

Indicators that would show if a country is heading along the path outlined in this scenario:

- More positive media representations.
- Decrease in criminal prohibitions against same-sex relations.

Opportunities to advance LGBTI social inclusion:

- Advocacy and programming can leverage the greater visibility towards promoting greater acceptance by the public, government, and religious organizations.
- Humanitarian actors can make real investments in improving the lived reality of LGBTI individuals through collaborative programming on livelihoods, education and healthcare.
- The "leave no one behind" agenda is mobilized to push governments to close the gap between commitments and implementation of policies and programs.

Threats to progress on LGBTI social inclusion:

- Social exclusion may remain for many more years. It may take a generational shift in value before wider inclusion is possible.
- Limited cooperation from domestic institutions towards meeting the "leave no one behind" agenda.
- While progress is made, commitments by international organizations and companies are undermined domestically to limit their implementation.

Image by Sergey Neamoscou

4. Institutions as leaders

States and religious bodies in the country are leading in the promotion of social inclusion of LGBTI individuals. Political, religious, and other social leaders cooperate to define their nation in the modern world, free it from its colonial legacy, and take greater responsibility for its values and institutions. Instead of rejecting any foreign ideas, these leaders seek to adopt the best practices from around the world. Inspired by current perspectives on sexuality, sex, and gender, institutional reforms are made to promote greater inclusion of all the nation's citizenry. Educational campaigns are launched to educate the public about LGBTI issues. The government issues legislative reforms to dismantle any laws or policies that discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. National religious leaders push their faiths towards a message of acceptance and tolerance. While these dominant establishments carry great influence, they cannot change values overnight. Negative stereotyping of LGBTI individuals is still commonplace and it still carries a social stigma. Yet the institutional framework is in place to allow for greater social inclusion and protections that should come with time.

Implications for LGBTI individuals in 2030:

- Institutional acceptance and protections have been achieved. There is greater progress towards SDG indicators for LGBTI groups, but the persistence of stigma limits improvements to health and economic outcomes.

Indicators that would show if a country is heading along the path outlined in this scenario:

- Greater acceptance from religious institutions.
- Funding is allocated for educational campaigns.
- Decrease in criminal prohibitions against same-sex relations.

Opportunities to advance LGBTI social inclusion:

- The climate is ripe for advocacy and programming efforts from humanitarian actors to educate the public on LGBTI issues.
- Partnerships can be formed with institutional partners and civil society to shift public perceptions of LGBTI individuals.
- Private sector actors can lead in the implementation of non-discrimination policies and processes, laying the foundation for a more inclusive culture.
- Humanitarian actors have greater space to support institutional efforts to provide protections for LGBTI individuals without fear of persecution.
- Humanitarian actors can exploit the support from social institutions and the new legal framework to empower LGBTI individuals and program to support livelihoods, education and healthcare.

Threats to progress on LGBTI social inclusion:

- Social prejudices remain as cultural change takes a significant amount of time.
- Though they have greater institutional protection, LGBTI individuals are still subjected to acts of violence and discrimination.
- Progress could result in complacency even without full inclusion being achieved.

Conclusion

This study focuses on building an outlook for LGBTI social exclusion to 2030. A long-term outlook is necessary as the persecution of LGBTI communities worldwide is a protracted humanitarian crisis.[74] It will not be quickly resolved and challenging the drivers of social exclusion requires sustained leadership and investment. The resolution of the crisis – where all persons are treated equally and with dignity regardless of their gender or sexual orientation – requires structural changes in many societies, legally, culturally, and socially. The "leave no one behind" agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals will not be achieved without addressing the structural inequalities that systematically disenfranchise LGBTI individuals.

This report describes four scenarios of how LGBTI social exclusion could look in 2030 from the perspective of a given country. The scenarios depict a range of plausible futures, each with their own challenges and opportunities. A central intent of this report is to encourage thinking on how the future may differ from today. It is important to avoid a fixed idea of what the future holds. Doing so leads to a rigidity in planning that can leave actors unprepared to handle unexpected change. The use of scenarios, assists planning on LGBTI issues by depicting different futures. Policy-makers can use these to see how their strategy would fair against a range of contingencies and identify programming objectives that can lead towards a preferred future.

This report additionally discusses the central drivers of change that will shape LGBTI social exclusion through 2030. Three factors considered how heavy trends will continue to shape the issue over this period: how we conceive sexuality, the legacy of colonialism, and the level of interaction the general public has with LGBTI individuals. However, these trends could change over a longer span of time, especially through long-term programming.

The other factors have less certain future outcomes and so are considered critical uncertainties. Stigmatization, religious acceptance and political scapegoating are factors that have high influence throughout the system of interactions that contribute to LGBTI social exclusion. However, these are more difficult factors for actors to change within the next twelve years. So, they should be long-term goals. Criminal prohibitions and media representation are also very influential factors, but ones that can be more effectively influenced. They then represent good short-term goals that could leverage systemic change.

This report also included seven additional factors that were part of the analysis but not discussed in detail: workplace discrimination, rejection by family or community, denial of marriage rights, poverty, association with illegal or immoral behaviour, perception of cause or responsibility and discrimination by or against healthcare workers. Such factors are still very important. In fact, these are the issues that typically have more of a direct impact on the lives of LGBTI people. The reason they were not discussed more is because these were found to be outputs of the system of interactions that drive social exclusion. By addressing the factors at the heart that system, these ones will change too. As such, they are the objectives that can be reached by achieving the larger program goals.

This report also attempts to shed light on the scale of the problem facing LGBTI individuals. There have been few attempts to even estimate the number of LGBTI people in the world. We conclude that there are likely hundreds of millions of LGBTI people, with nearly all of them facing some degree of social exclusion. It is easy to see humanitarian crises when they affect everyone in a certain region or when an ethnic or religious minority is being persecuted. Yet, it is easy to overlook the suffering of LGBTI individuals because they are dispersed around the world, representing a small minority of any given population. However, if we think of them collectively, they are a very large and vulnerable group.

LGBTI individuals experience lower development outcomes because social exclusion prevents them from participating in social, economic and political life to the same degree as others. They do not have the same access to employment, education, housing, healthcare, legal protections, social entitlements, etc. As a result, they are left in a more vulnerable position compared to non-LGBTI individuals of their community. Additionally, in crisis contexts, this additional layer of vulnerability is often not accounted for by humanitarian actors when assessing risk. As such, the humanitarian sector needs to consider how more can be done to promote LGBTI social inclusion, which will in turn build resilience among this vulnerable group. The leave "no one behind agenda" for the Sustainable Development Goals is critical to advance progress in how donors, UN agencies, and NGOs can work with civil society and governments to ensure the integration of LGBTI-inclusive dimensions in humanitarian action.

Annex: Scenario analysis methods

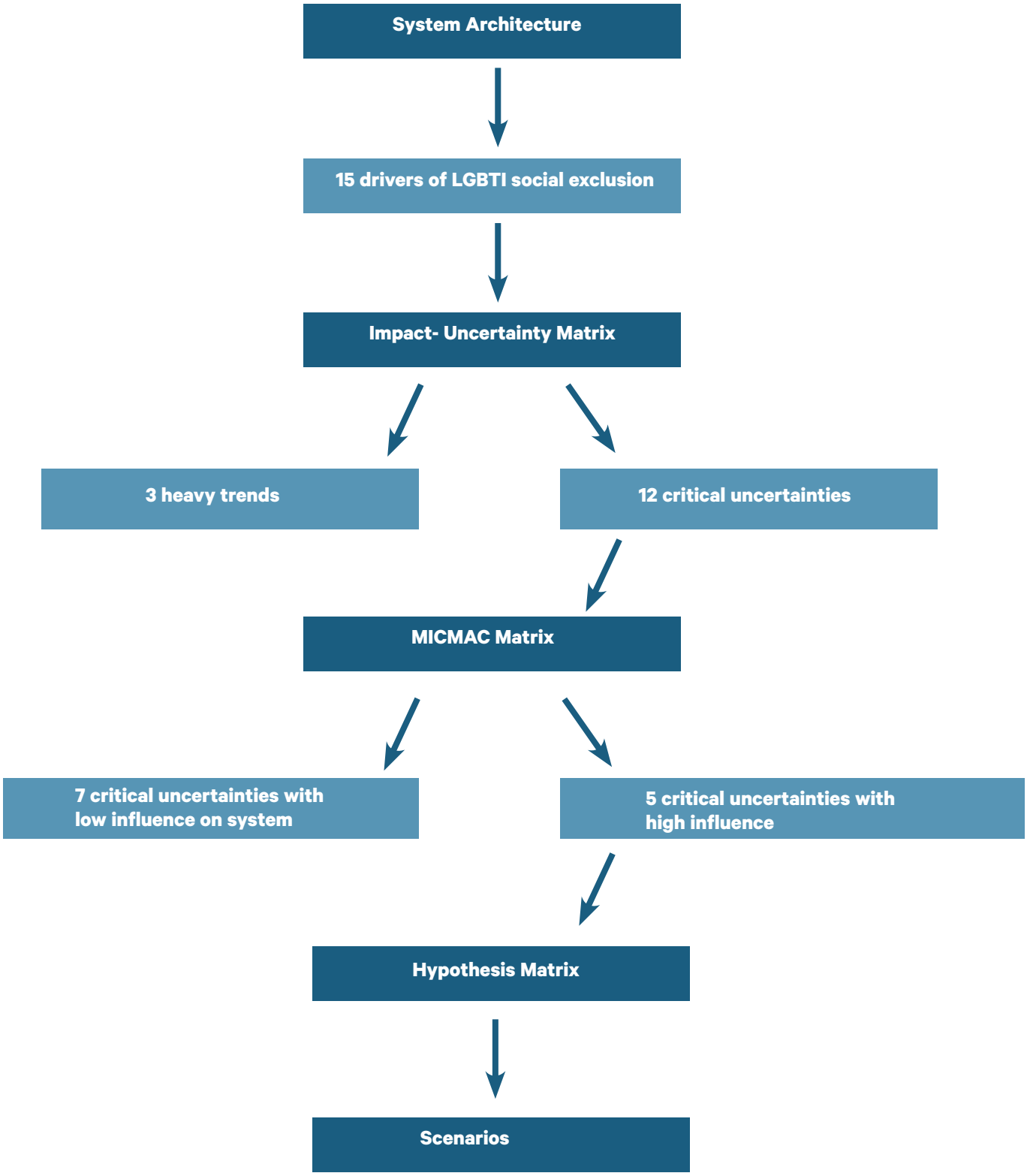

Figure 7. Diagram of the scenario analysis methods.

Scenario analysis methods

The report uses scenario analysis to present an outlook on LGBTI social exclusion through 2030. A scenario is a narrative description of one of many possible futures. They are used to break our assumption of what the future will look like. They also serve to help manage uncertainty about the future and thereby support informed decision-making and strategic planning. The scenarios are developed by using a series of structured analytical techniques to identify what the major drivers of change are, and the different ways in which they could shape the future. The IARAN has developed the following analytical framework for use in the humanitarian sector. The following section describes its use in this report.

Step 1: System architecture

The architecture is a conceptual representation of the system being studied. It is used to determine what elements are to be included in the analysis. Drivers of LGBTI social exclusion were selected based on a literature review. Techniques were used to encourage a comprehensive selection. A PESTEL framework was used to consider drivers from the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal spheres. Additional scales were considered from the individual to the systemic. Using these approaches, 15 drivers were included in the analysis.

Step 2: Impact-uncertainty matrix

The Impact-Uncertainty Matrix is a central tool for scenario planning. It entails ranking each driver based on its impact on the research topic and the uncertainty of its development through the reference period. **Impact** refers to how strong the effect (positive or negative) of this driver is on LGBTI social exclusion. **Uncertainty** refers to how predictable the development of this factor will be through 2030. That is to say, can we anticipate with confidence its trend and impact over the coming years? For example, over the next twelve years it is fairly certain that most people around the world will still define sex as a binary between men and women. Alternatively, media representations of LGBTI individuals could change in several different ways over that period.

After each driver is ranked, the results are graphed to create the matrix shown below. Based on the location of the driver in the matrix, the drivers are divided into two categories. The first is **Heavy Trends** (blue). These are the drivers that will strongly influence LGBTI social exclusion and that had a clear trajectory over the outlook period. These typically have held a consistent trend for decades and so will presumably continue to maintain their course in the coming years barring a major systemic change. These heavy trends are described in detail on pages 18-19. The other category is **Critical Uncertainties** (orange). These are the drivers impacting LGBTI social exclusion whose trajectory over time is not clearly defined. These critical uncertainties will be used in the following step.

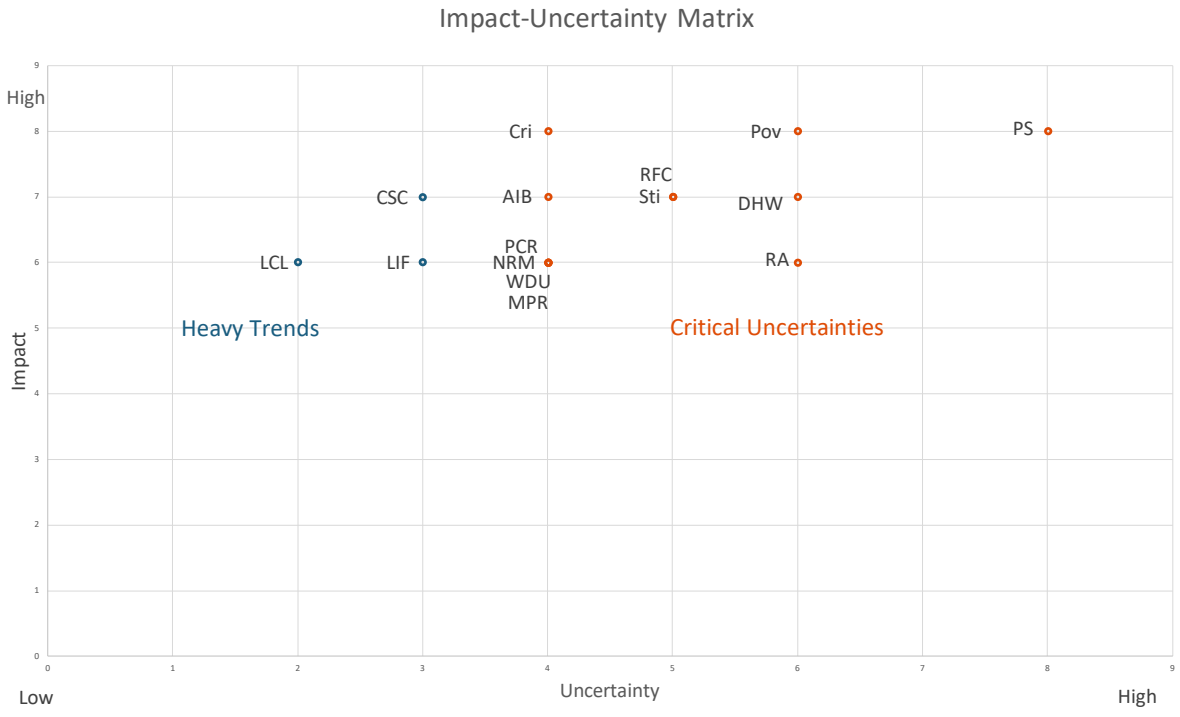

Figure 8. Impact-Uncertainty Matrix.

Table 3. Ranking used in the Impact-Uncertainty Matrix and resulting classification.

	Driver	Code	Uncertainty	Impact
Heavy trends	Construction of sexual classifications	CSC	3	7
	Legacy of colonialism	LCL	2	6
	Level of interaction and familiarity	LIF	3	6
Critical uncertainties	Association with illegal or immoral behavior	AIB	4	7
	Media representation	MR	4	6
	Workplace discrimination and unemployment	WDU	4	6
	Criminalization	Cri	4	8
	Marriage and parental rights	MPR	4	6
	Perception of cause/ responsibility	PCR	4	6
	Stigmatization	Sti	5	7
	Rejection by family/community	RFC	5	7
	Poverty	Pov	6	8
	Discrimination by or against healthcare workers	DHW	6	7
	Religious acceptance	RA	6	6
	Political scapegoating	PS	8	8

Step 3: MICMAC

The MICMAC (Impact Matrix Cross-Reference Multiplication Applied to a Classification) is an analysis technique to understand the relational influence of drivers with one another. Here it has been used to assess the critical uncertainties. These drivers are entered into a double input chart where they were listed along both the x- and y-axes. The degree of influence each driver has on every other is then ranked (from 0-3). The resulting table of values can then be used to classify each driver based on its net influence (the sum of its influence on all other drivers) and dependence (the sum of all other drivers' influence on it). The results are then presented as an influence-dependence matrix. Based on the quadrant it fell into, each driver was classified as one of the four following: determinant, relay, dependent or autonomous.

Determinant drivers are inputs to the system as they have a high level of influence over and a low level of dependence on the other drivers. They are often entry points to the system, whose direction will shape the rest of the system and as such, they are crucial elements in determining its dynamics. These drivers have a strong impact on the other drivers but are not influenced much in return. As such, they are important to watch for as they will have a considerable direct and indirect impact on the system surrounding LGBTI social exclusion. They have a high degree of inertia and so often represent longer-term program goals rather than short-term objectives.

- Stigmatization
- Religious acceptance
- Political scapegoating

Relay drivers have a high degree of influence and dependence on the other drivers. As a result, actions on them are transmitted throughout the system. This makes them sources of instability, but also areas to target to influence the system as a whole, including determinant drivers. These are recommended as areas to target for intervention because they are susceptible to change and will in turn have a cascading effect through the system, affecting both drivers up and downstream.

- Media representation
- Criminalization

Dependent drivers are outputs of the system as they have a high level of dependence and low level of influence and as such are sensitive to changes in the system. As a result, these are not recommended as targets for actors but can be useful indicators of the amelioration (or not) of the crisis.

- Association with illegal or immoral behavior
- Rejection by family/community
- Workplace discrimination and unemployment
- Marriage and parental rights
- Discrimination by or against healthcare workers

Autonomous drivers are largely outside the system as they have low influence and dependence. Acting on them will not influence the rest of the drivers, nor will changing the system significantly impact them.

- Perception of cause/responsibility
- Poverty

The Critical Uncertainties classified as Determinant or Relay are discussed in more depth in the following sections, as they are the most influential and at the heart of the system of interactions driving LGBTI social exclusion. They are also used as the basis of the scenarios, as described in the following steps. The remaining drivers, Dependent and Autonomous, are not explored further given the scope of the report, though they are important issues worthy of further consideration.

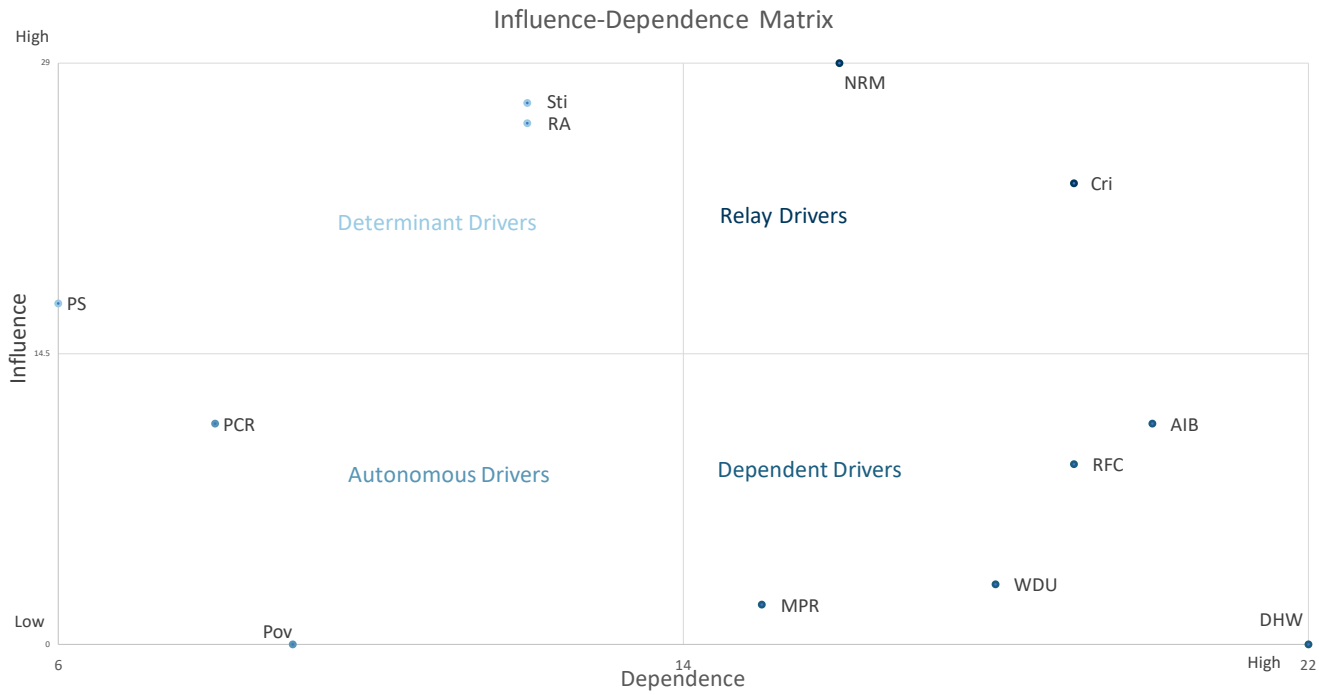

Figure 9. Influence-Dependence Matrix.

Table 4. Sum scores from the Influence-Dependence Matrix and resulting classification.

	Driver	Code	Dependence	Influence
Determinant drivers	Stigmatization	Sti	12	27
	Religious acceptance	RA	12	26
	Political scapegoating	PS	6	17
Relay drivers	Media representation	MR	16	29
	Criminalization	Cri	19	23
Dependent drivers	Association with illegal or immoral behaviour	AIB	20	11
	Rejection by family/community	RFC	19	9
	Workplace discrimination and unemployment	WDU	18	3
	Marriage and parental rights	MPR	15	2
	Discrimination by or against healthcare workers	DHW	22	0
Autonomous drivers	Perception of cause/ responsibility	PCR	8	11
	Poverty	Pov	9	0

Step 4: Hypothesis matrix

The five drivers classified as Determinant or Relay form the axes of the scenarios. These 5 drivers are described in detail on pages 20-26. As the future outcome of each is uncertain, there could be multiple possibilities. In the hypothesis matrix, the drivers are listed in a column and two probable future outcomes (hypotheses) are presented alongside in the row. With five drivers, each with two possible outcomes, there are then 32 possible combinations. A morphological analysis was then used to select four of these combinations based on logical consistency and to capture as diverse a range as possible. These four combinations then form the basis of the scenarios.

The scenarios all share common assumptions taken from the Heavy Trends.

- Sexuality, sex, and gender will largely be viewed as immutable dichotomies.
- Colonial legal legacy weakens; nations' decisions are their own.
- Greater familiarity with LGBTI individuals leads to decreased social exclusion

Table 5. Hypothesis matrix.

Driver	Hypothesis 1	Hypothesis 2
Media representation	**Positive stereotyping**	**Negative stereotyping**
Stigma	**Social stigma remains positive**	**Social stigma decreases**
Religion	**Religious acceptance**	**No change in religious acceptance**
Criminalization	**Criminalization**	**Decrease in criminalization**
Scapegoating	**Scapegoating**	**No scapegoating**

Step 5: Scenarios

The scenarios are intended to provide insight into the future of LGBTI social exclusion. Each represents a possible future. They should not be taken as definitive predictions, rather as archetypes to help illustrate how the issue could evolve in the coming years.

Each scenario is written in a narrative format from the perspective of 2030. The scenarios depict the context in a given country, rather than trying to depict global trends that would inevitably overlook local variations.

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