**Violence in Food Systems: LGBTIQ Food Insecurity in Crisis**

Outright International (“Outright”) works with partners around the globe to strengthen the capacity of the LGBTIQ[[1]](#footnote-1) human rights movement, document and amplify human rights violations against LGBTIQ people, and advocate for inclusion and equality. Outright works with the United Nations, regional human rights monitoring bodies and civil society partners. Outright holds consultative status at the United Nations where it serves as the secretariat of the UN LGBTI Core Group. We are pleased to present this submission to inform the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food on the nature, degree, and cause of violence present in food systems.

1. **Describe the nature and degree of violence prevalent in different parts of a food system in your country or community-based organization.**

The Special Rapporteur defines violence as the result of one party forcing another into an unequal relationship based on domination, humiliation, or exploitation.[[2]](#footnote-2) The Special Rapporteur highlighted forms violence takes, including erasure and discrimination. Erasure of people through laws, policies, beliefs, and processes stems from the assumption those people should not exist.[[3]](#footnote-3) Discrimination targets populations who deviate from a constructed notion of normality.[[4]](#footnote-4)

LGBTIQ people experience erasure through exclusionary laws and policies which imply they should not exist.[[5]](#footnote-5) Discrimination against LGBTIQ people for not aligning with gender norms can manifest in harassment and exclusion.[[6]](#footnote-6) Violence LGBTIQ people experience during peace is amplified in crisis through a process the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity describes as “the weaponization of prejudice.”[[7]](#footnote-7) Through the weaponization of prejudice, pre-existing discrimination is “deepened by the lack of State responses and community support” during crisis.[[8]](#footnote-8) The exacerbation of pre-existing prejudices against LGBTIQ people can lead to food insecurity, described below.

1. **Provide examples of laws, policies, or campaigns that have successfully prevented or reduced violence in a food system, held perpetrators accountable, or provided reparation.**

Outright conducted interviews with LGBTIQ individuals across 5 regions during COVID-19. These interviews revealed that LGBTIQ people were not receiving adequate assistance. [[9]](#footnote-9) Outright mobilized to make support available for LGBTIQ people by launching the COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund, which provided grants for LGBTIQ individuals and communities. When Outright began receiving applications, 55% of applicants requested food assistance.[[10]](#footnote-10) A year later, 21% of applicants requested funds for food.[[11]](#footnote-11) By delivering monetary assistance directly to LGBTIQ people, Outright was able to reduce hunger experienced by this population.[[12]](#footnote-12) Support for LGBTIQ people from local governments can also reduce violence in food systems, such as when the health minister in Kerala, India, sent food kits to 1000 transgender people during COVID-19.[[13]](#footnote-13)

1. **Indicate and describe what population groups and peoples are targets of this violence?**

During COVID-19, access to food was hampered by discriminatory policies. In Panama, Colombia, and Peru, officials mandated separate food shopping days for men and women.[[14]](#footnote-14) These policies led to abuse and arrest of transgender and non-binary people perceived to be violating mandates.[[15]](#footnote-15)

In the Philippines, two lesbian interviewees said that Barangay (district) officials denied them food assistance because their relationships did not fit a narrow definition of “family.” One was told she and her partner were ineligible to receive food packs unlike similarly situated heterosexual couples.[[16]](#footnote-16) The other was told she could not have food because she did not have a husband or child.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Due to workplace discrimination and social exclusion, LGBTIQ people are disproportionately represented in the informal work sector and experience high rates of poverty.[[18]](#footnote-18) Therefore, the economic impact of COVID-19 led to food insecurity among many LGBTIQ people. One applicant to Outright’s COVID-19 fund said ongoing hunger experienced by LGBTIQ people was leading to a rise in suicide rates.[[19]](#footnote-19) A St. Lucia-based grantee told Outright about a beneficiary living with HIV who was unable to afford both food and HIV medicine, and had gone hungry.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Discrimination in service delivery contributes to food insecurity. According to UNAIDS, Sanggar Swara, an Indonesian organization for transgender women, reported that in some cases transgender women were denied food aid due to their gender identity.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Provision of aid from locations that have historically been unsafe for LGBTIQ people further restricts food access. An activist from Sri Lanka described how police stations were giving out food rations. However, some LGBTIQ people did not feel safe going to the police, so could not access food.[[22]](#footnote-22)

1. **How have authorities and people created spaces of sanctuary or protection from violence within food systems?**

Outright is unaware of spaces that offer protection from violence within food systems. However, we advocate working with LGBTIQ-led organizations and individuals in order to understand and adequately respond to their needs for food and nutrition assistance.

1. OutRight International uses the acronym LGBTIQ to denote lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer people. We believe this acronym is inclusive of a broad range of people. It is not exhaustive, nor is it universally accepted or used. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Special Rapporteur on the right to food, *Call for Input: Violence and the Right to Food*, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2022/call-input-violence-and-right-food>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *See,* Graeme Reid, *“Traditional Values”: A Potent Weapon Against LGBT Rights*, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/11/06/traditional-values-potent-weapon-against-lgbt-rights> (reporting on global “propaganda” laws framing LGBTIQ people’s existence in opposition to “normal” ways of life.) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UN Women, *Identifying Gender Persecution in Conflict and Atrocities*, <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Identifying-gender-persecution-in-conflict-and-atrocities-en.pdf> at 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. UN General Assembly, Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity Victor Madrigal-Borloz, A/75/235, at ¶43. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Id.* at ¶44. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Outright Action International, *Vulnerability Amplified: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBTIQ People* (*Vulnerability Amplified*) <https://outrightinternational.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/COVIDsReportDesign_FINAL_LR_0.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. OutRight Action International, *Responding to a Crisis: Meet the Grantees of OutRight’s COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund* (*Meet the Grantees)*, <https://outrightinternational.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/BriefingPaperNov2020WDonors.pdf> at 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Vulnerability Amplified* at 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Id.* at 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Id.* at 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *Id.* at 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. OutRight Action International, *Responding to a Crisis: Insights from OutRight’s COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund 2021*, <https://outrightinternational.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/BriefingPaper_0821.pdf> at 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *Meet the Grantees* at 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. UNAIDS, Supporting Transgender People During the COVID-19 Pandemic, <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2020/april/20200406_transgender_covid19> [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Vulnerability Amplified* at 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)