



**WORKING IN SOLIDARITY: BROADENING
CANADA'S OVERSEAS ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE OF
LGBTQI2S MINORITIES RIGHTS GLOBALLY**

A Submission paper to Canada's Overseas Assistance
Review by Egale Canada Human Rights Trust

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust (Egale), Canada's only organization working to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit, intersex, queer, and questioning (LGBTQI2S)¹ people in Canada through research, education and community engagement, thanks Global Affairs Canada for their invitation to submit a paper addressing the rights of LGBTQI2S people and communities on the international stage as well as discussing the current gaps within Canada's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) program.

Egale will provide an in-depth discussion here using both intersectional feminist and Global South approaches to address the current lack of designated funding for LGBTQI2S human rights within Canada's current ODA program.

Globally, LGBTQI2S human rights are becoming increasingly prominent due to the advocacy efforts of organizations, activists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA). Over the past decade, progressive shifts have been observed within LGBTQI2S international human rights, including:

- The 2006 signing of the Declaration of Montreal and the Yogyakarta principles, which recognizes both "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" as part of international human rights discourse;
- The UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner's (OHCHR; 2012) release of *Free and Equal: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in International Human Right Law*, a report which reiterates the rights and protections of "all people, irrespective of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity" (p. 10); and
- The UN Development Programme's (UNDP; 2015) release of its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) towards ending poverty and inequality by 2030, including key initiatives to measure global LGBT inclusion.

Ultimately, Egale's submission is timely and an additional important step towards global LGBTQI2S inclusion and safety. The objective of this submission is to highlight key considerations to address and close the gaps with the ODA's current program with respect to LGBTQI2S people and communities.

1.0 Broadening the Gender Analysis to be more inclusive of LGBTQI2S people

- Currently, Global Affairs Canada recognizes the importance of gender equality by adopting a Gender Analysis within its international assistance priorities and objectives.
- However, this present analysis of gender recognizes gender as a binary, in which only two categories exist men and women. Through this understanding, transgender and gender diverse

¹ The acronym 'LGBTQI2S' is used here to reference all people with diverse gender identities and experiences of attraction (sexual orientation), including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit, intersex, queer or questioning. The terms, LGBTQI2S, LGBTI, and queer, will be used interchangeably throughout this paper. However, the terms gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or Two Spirit people will be used to refer to specific identities and populations.

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people are not recognized, it is important to broaden the current understanding of gender, as spectrum to implement gender inclusive practices in Canada's international work. Globally, transgender and gender diverse people continue to experience deeply embedded forms of discrimination and lack safe access to medical services, employment, housing, and education.

- It is important to acknowledge multiple identities that represent people's lived experience when developing international assistance priorities, as these identities are constantly used to navigate the world. As part of its international development practices, Canada must extend its gender analysis by using an intersectional feminist approach to include queer people and multiple intersections of identities such as race, ethnicity, sexual attraction, gender, class, and ability within its framework of international assistance priorities.

2.0 Diffusion Model of Knowledge Production

- With regard to the state of international LGBTQI2S human rights, it must be acknowledged that homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and discrimination on the grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation is not exceptional to the Global South. As the recent Orlando massacre in the United States and the systemic marginalization of diverse gender identities and sexual attraction illustrates, these geographies still have much work to do domestically.
- The diffusion model, where knowledge production and norms are framed by the centre and then diffused to the periphery, is inherently problematic within international relations and international development. Utilizing this model projects, the Global North as more "progressive" due to assumptions that there is more "acceptance" of gay and lesbian identities. In doing so, this model continues to impose an asymmetrical "West is Best" approach instead of working in solidarity with nation states in the Global South (Browne & Nash, 2014). From this perspective, the Global North falsely revisions itself as having overcome the social disparities that continue to exist for LGBTQI2S populations in the West.
- Egale's national work is grounded in using public education, research, and policy as vehicles for national social change and cultural shifts towards meaningful inclusion of LGBTQI2S people. Specifically, Egale engages school boards, government, employers, policy makers, and researchers within Canada's civil society. Egale's work is a prime example that local advocacy efforts towards social and cultural change must work in tandem with national legislation.

3.0 Current Centrality of the Global North Perspectives

- Increasingly, the advocacy of mainstreaming LGBTQI2S identities has been met with serious and valid criticism stating such work advances Western-centric understandings of sexual attraction and gender identities (Bosia, 2015). The concept of mainstreaming LGBTQI2S identities has been propagated by diffusing "best practices" from Western Nations to Global South nations, as many nation states shift into legal recognition of queer and gender diverse people.
- However, for many researchers, activists, and NGOs, the use of these "best practices" within a Western frame does not work in the Global South. The "one size fits all" approach does not acknowledge the specific cultural histories as well as the plurality of queer identities. It is not only

critical to acknowledge the legacy of colonialization through the imposition of anti-sodomy laws that criminalized homosexuality (Baisley, 2015; Bosia, 2015), but also necessary to meaningfully engage in alternative methods of shifting the deeply embedded discrimination of queer people. Furthermore, these alternatives need to be explicitly distinct from again imposing Western narratives of modernization by embracing Western understandings and recognition of Gay and Lesbian rights in the Global South.

- Many Global South queer activists, researchers, and NGOs astutely articulate the centrality of the Global North perspective. For instance:
 - Research and knowledge production on LGBTI rights is predominantly published in English (Mattos & Xavier, 2016);
 - Many Global South researchers must translate their papers or work twice in order to publish in international journals, which present several limitations such as the use of idiom, context, and objects of research (Carvalho, 2014); and
 - International Conferences funded by Western nations are hosted in such a way that the majority of conference papers, expert panels, workshops, and attendees are focused on the Global North standpoint.
- The centrality of the Global North overshadows the advances made in the Global South (Baisley, 2015), which further marginalizes and devalues the advocacy efforts of queer researchers, organizations, and NGOs in the Global South. As a result, there is a lack of consideration of specific practices and cultural aspects within civil societies in Global South geographies and locales.

4.0 Bolstering of Global South Perspectives

- Currently, LGBTIQ2S communities globally face uncertain legal recognition and experience stigma, marginalization as well as precarious living conditions for their way of being.
- Global South cultural attitudes around LGBTIQ2S people need to shift in tandem with legislation, as a significant proportion of UN member nations states have degrees of legislation that decriminalize homosexuality. However, without public education and advocacy by local queer communities, state legislation will continue to be viewed as Western-centric values imposed by the Global North.
- Global South regional cases studies demonstrate that jointly engaged legislative reform and public education produces progressive and tangible outcomes. For instance:
 - In Latin America, Argentina provides a key example of how using both legislative change and the advocacy work of local queer communities has ushered significant social and cultural change on a national level, as many activists and national NGO networks engaged with the religious and cultural values of their society in order to foster greater acceptance of queer peoples' life in Argentina (Pousadela, 2013; D'Amico, 2015).

- In South Africa, both legislative changes and the campaigning of religious leaders such as Desmond Tutu have challenged the narrative of homosexuality and Transgender identities as “un-African”;
- In Ghana, many activists have propagated that homophobia and transphobia are “un-African” to highlight acceptance of difference, inclusion, and peace as continental values (Baisley, 2015; D’Amico, 2015);
- In Asia, India decriminalized homosexuality, as a result of men have who have sex with men (MSM) HIV/AIDS and Hedra (non-binary people) sex worker activism (Jolly, 2011); and
- In the Middle East, diasporic Islamic communities engage in dispelling the notion of Islam as a monolithic community. Instead, many queer immigrant Muslim activists have engaged in discussing the diversity within Islamic culture to create space in validating their LGBTI identities outside of the Western-centric standpoint of Gay and Lesbian human rights (Rohman, 2015).
- Using a Global South approach within international development practices not only recognizes but also prioritizes the expertise of regional work and practices that is specific to those geographies and within those local civil societies. In doing so, the Global North’s role is to act as facilitators in engaging in the needs and agenda development by the Global South in addressing the challenges specific to their regional and cultural context.

5.0 Leveraging Egale’s work with ILGA and its influence within UN bodies to support LGBTQI2S human rights globally

- It is imperative for Canada to engage in advancing queer rights both domestically and internationally. The introduction of the LGBT Inclusion Index by the UNDP will evaluate UN member states and rank their engagement in LGBTI inclusion from an evidence-based approach.
- These new developments offer Canada the key opportunity to leverage Egale’s national work and experience in engaging Canadian civil society within already established international governance structures such as ILGA.
- Presently, Egale’s Executive Director, Helen Kennedy, sits as an elected co-chair of ILGA, which is a worldwide federation of 1,200 member organizations from 125 countries campaigning for LGBTI rights. ILGA’s democratic governance structure strategically positions Canada within this international network, as a platform for knowledge sharing as well as facilitating regional LGBTI agenda setting and project implementation for member organizations.
- Accordingly, supporting Egale’s international work (see Appendix) with IGLA would not only recommit but also reinforce Canada’s position in supporting and working in solidarity with other nations in advancing LGBTI rights.

6.0 Supporting LGBTI Refugee Activism and Canada's diasporic communities

- Canada's notable diasporic populations are pivotal and is a strength on the international stage. With this acknowledgement, Egale seeks to empower queer refugees and activism from diasporic communities' knowledge to inform regional work and agenda setting.
- In using a Global South approach, Egale fully embraces UN's "do no harm" principles. It is imperative that both LGBTQI2S refugees and diasporic communities continue to be at the centre of Canada's international work. Egale envisions this work through building relationships with members of these communities and contributing to agenda setting as well as project implementation.
- Finally, it is important that these communities' knowledge be valued and acknowledge. International development work would benefit greatly by requiring employment, staffing, and volunteering opportunities to engage and reflect communities who belong to those regions of origin, as these populations are equip with linguistic, cultural, and networks that are integral in advancing LGBTQI2S rights in the Global South. It is imperative that communities that are experiencing these issues are reflected as much as possible in all stages of projects.

3. SUBMISSION QUESTIONS

1.0 Overview Questions

What are Canada's strengths in providing international assistance through our development, humanitarian, and security and stabilization efforts? How can we best align them with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Across political landscapes, Canada's key strength is its commitment to engaging civil society in calling on community leaders and empowering NGOs work internationally. Global Affairs Canada demonstrates its commitment to SDGs despite its challenges through the engagement of an International Assistance Review process in addressing current gaps within current International Development structures and practices.

SDGs commitment to "leave no one behind" in its goal to end poverty and inequity needs to be more explicit in its pledge to address international LGBTI human rights. According to Stonewall International, there are several goals in which LGBTI people are currently left behind by both national and international development initiatives (Dorey, 2016).

- **GOAL 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- **GOAL 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- **GOAL 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **GOAL 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- **GOAL 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- **GOAL 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- **GOAL 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (Dorey, 2016).

Canada's strengths are found in supporting SDG 5, 10, and 16. Thus, it is important to illustrate how the inclusion of LGBTI people within these SDG align with Canada's international development efforts.

For instance:

- **Goal 5:**
 - expand the definition of gender to include transgender and gender diverse peoples in international projects and programming;
 - incorporate programming to address issues specific to LGBTI girls and women;
 - create space for more nuanced understandings of gender and sexual attraction by addressing the specific issues of violence and discrimination against queer men.
- **Goal 10:**
 - use a Global South approach by empowering LGBTI refugees and diasporic communities to engage with regional queer rights activism and local civil societies;
 - work in solidarity with local LGBTI public education and campaigning efforts in nation states that have issued legislative reform in decriminalizing homosexuality.

- **Goal 16:**
- provide core funding to international governance networks such as ILGA in their engagement with UN treaty bodies and knowledge sharing among its members;
- provide support to publishing and promoting inclusive education and practices that focus on regional linguistic and cultural values.

Which priorities should guide Canada's development assistance policies? And which international assistance activities should Canada scale back or phase out?

Harm is perpetuated by international development agencies within local civil societies when international assistance programs operate in contradiction to Canada's national human rights values, policies, and priorities (Bergenfield & Miller, 2014).

In considering Canada's development assistance policies, Canada should thoroughly review its strategic commitments to funding organizations and projects that align with its values, national legislation, priorities as well as scale back on international projects and programs that have cross purposes and contributes to negative outcomes. For instance, Canada international assistance should scale back funding to organizations as well as develop explicit terms of reference in their policies that prohibits funded organizations to spread homophobia and transphobia in their values and project implementation in the Global South.

How can Canada best refocus its international assistance on helping the poorest and most vulnerable, and supporting fragile states? What can we learn from the experience of others in this regard?

As is discussed in points 1, 4, 5, and 6 of Egale's Executive Summary, Canada should refocus its international assistance efforts using both intersectional feminist and Global South approaches in supporting and working with vulnerable populations.

Canada should continue its commitment in engaging in civil society and critically reflect on its "West is Best" approach highlighted in sections 2 and 3 of Egale's Executive Summary. Canada's refocused efforts concerning LGBTQ2S rights would be amplified by supporting Egale in their international work (see Appendix) through public education efforts and engagement in democratic ways of governance. By shifting towards a democratic governance approach would employ Egale to work with local organizations in agenda setting offers significant ways in re-building fragile states' civil society.

Which organizations, institutions, and partners should Canada work with, and what is the most effective way to do so?

Canada has the opportunity to partner with several influential organizations and institutions to work with in supporting the advancement of international LGBTQ2S rights. Canada should engage in dialogue and partner with Egale, the national LGBTQ2S rights civil society organization (see Appendix) in agenda setting and information sharing on the status of LGBTQ2S inclusion within Canada's international assistance programming. In formalizing this partnership, Canada would effectively leverage Egale's role within ILGA,

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as the Executive Director currently serves as the co-chair of the international federal of 1,200 LGBTI civil society organizations from 125 countries campaigning against the discrimination of LGBTQI2s people.

How can Canada deliver its international assistance most efficiently and effectively, and better measure results?

The most meaningful ways to support international assistance most efficiently and effectively, and better measure results are:

- 1) Provide core funding to organizations that have equity practices and engage with marginalized communities, as their work demonstrates their ability to foster initiatives which prioritize the perspective of impacted communities. For instance, Eagle's scope of work is public education that aims to promote equity and awareness of LGBTQI2S people through an anti-racist and anti-oppression framework (see Appendix);
- 2) Leverage organizations that have experience working with multiple stakeholders and have demonstrated the ability to collaborate with religious organizations to promote inclusivity and diversity with the goal of social change in civil society. For example, Egale has experience working in public education and community engagement in Public Schools, Catholic Schools Boards, Colleges and Universities, Workplace, Sports, and Police Services (see Appendix); and
- 3) Provide evaluation and monitoring support to organizations by equipping them with the appropriate tools to ensure that indicators are relevant and meaningful to the impacted communities.

2.0 Health and Rights of Women and Children

Building on our commitment to a feminist approach and support for the gender equality goal of the 2030 Agenda, where should Canada focus its international assistance efforts in this area? Can Canada take advantage of specific opportunities to demonstrate new or continued leadership on women's empowerment and gender equality?

Canada would benefit greatly from using both intersectional feminist and Global South approaches in supporting the gender equality goal of SDG 5 by expanding Canada's current gender analysis framework as well as working with local and regional NGOs programs that support gender equality (see sections 1 and 4 of Egale's Executive Summary). Accordingly, Canada can follow through on this commitment by endorsing the expansion of current programming for women and girls to support LBT women as well as creating programs to support queer boys and men.

How can Canada's efforts to support well-being and empowerment better benefit children and youth, including in the education sector?

Egale's scope of work and experience in delivering inclusive public education in schools, universities and colleges (see Appendix) - including e-modules, workshops, educational resources, interactive learning, and

curriculum development -offers Canada a strategic opportunity to support the goals and program needs of local NGOs and communities in the education sector within the Global South.

What strategic role can Canada play in advancing health-related SDGs to improve the health of women and girls, including adolescents, in particular their sexual and reproductive health and rights?

Globally, LGBTQI2S people continue to experience deeply embedded forms of discrimination and stigma, particularly within the healthcare system. Within the Global North, queer and transgender people of colour and Two Spirit people and communities face additional barriers, as they are even more likely to be refused treatment (Nixon, 2013) or receive inadequate primary health care. The World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) has pointed to the lack of research on transgender people's reproductive health, especially in relation to transgender people who are receiving hormone therapy as a part their transition (Nixon, 2013).

As previously mentioned, incorporating both intersectional feminist and Global South approaches in supporting the health-related goals in SDG 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, and 16 would meaningfully improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights of sexual minorities by expanding Canada's current gender analysis framework as well as working with local and regional NGOs programs that support gender equality (see sections 1 and 4 of Egale's Executive Summary). With these efforts Canada would bolster Egale's LGBTQI2S health-related research and policy work (see Appendix) as well as our public education and facilitation work (see Appendix).

3.0 Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights

How can Canada best help implement Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all level?

SDG 16 highlights that inclusive institutions and accountable governance paired with respect for diversity and human rights are essential to peace and just societies.

As previously discussed in question 4.1, there are many ways that Canada can best implement SDG 16 through its support for sexual minorities and gender diverse peoples, as these populations experience severe acts of violence, discrimination and human rights violations.

It is crucial that international assistance practices embrace multi-pronged approaches in emulating respect for diversity and human rights by developing more inclusive approaches underscored in the Global South paradigm. It is also important to bolster and support already established international democratic governance institutions and networks like ILGA to illustrate the value in multilateral civil engagement on the international stage.

How can Canada promote inclusion, advance respect for diversity, and uphold human rights?

In order to promote inclusion, advance respect for diversity and uphold human rights, it is imperative that Canada acknowledge the work that needs to be done not only internationally but also domestically. Although there has been progress towards legislative reforms to extend rights to LGBTQI2S populations within Canada, including the introduction of Bill C-16 which will amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and Criminal Code to include gender identity or expression, there are still significant gaps with respect to protected grounds and access to healthcare and social supports between provinces and territories.

Another key opportunity for Canada to promote inclusion and diversity is to recognize the value of knowledge and experiences that exist within diasporic communities including LGBTQI refugees and newcomers to Canada and using this human capital to leverage and inform Canada's international work. In the equitable approach previously discussed in sections 2, 4, and 6 of Egale's Executive Summary, Canada can play a substantial role in creating employment, staffing, and volunteering opportunities for impacted communities in the Global South.

In what areas of governance can Canada's international assistance have the most impact?

There are a number of areas of governance where Canada's assistance can have the greatest impact, as there is a lack of leadership in recognizing LGBTQI2S rights within several influential organizations such as the Francophonie, and the Commonwealth Secretariat. For instance, the Francophonie has not identified LGBTQI2S rights as an urgent issue, while, the Commonwealth Secretariat has identified Inclusive Commonwealth as 2016's theme, yet, there is a lack of initiatives that explicitly address LGBTQI2S rights across the Commonwealth.

Although, the Organization of American States (OAS) has appointed a Special Rapporteur to the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex persons, much of the current work being performed is information gathering on understanding the pressing issues impacting LGBTQI2S people such as the Registry of Violence that records the reported hate crimes against LGBTQI2S people in the Americas.

In recognizing the current status of governance in the area of advancing LGBTQI2S rights, Canada would have the most impact by leveraging the membership and relationships to these organizations. These relationships offer Canada the crucial opportunity for leadership in fostering meaningful cultural shifts towards more social, economic, and political inclusion of LGBTQI2S people within civil societies across the Francophonie, the Commonwealth, and the Americas.

4.0 Peace and Security

What specific strengths should Canada build upon to respond to peace and security challenges?

Canada has been recognized in their role as a peacekeeper on the international stage. Canada can continue to influence other actors in times of peace and conflict by engaging as facilitators. It is critical that Canada embrace its role as facilitator by developing more strategic and nuanced diplomatic engagement and learn from the consequences of implementing diplomatic measures such as sanctions and unilateral decision-making without engaging impacted communities.

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Canada would benefit from developing more nuanced and multilateral strategies based on input from diasporic communities domestically (see sections 2, 4, 6 of Egale’s Executive Summary) as well as regional stakeholders when engaging countries that do not recognize LGBTI human rights.

5.0 Responding to Humanitarian Crises and the Needs of Displaced Populations

How can Canada better support the protection of vulnerable populations in crises and strengthen respect for humanitarian principles?

Egale commends Canada on the recent efforts in supporting Syrian Refugees and settlement programs and services. Although these efforts have made a significant impact on the international stage, supporting LGBTI refugees and newcomers continues to be an area that requires improvement.

In response to these concerns regarding LGBTI refugees and newcomers, it is crucial that Canada engages in the discussion points raised in sections 1, 4 and 6 of Egale’s Executive Summary. Some ways to better support LGBTI refugees and newcomers include:

- 1) Working collaboratively with domestic queer diasporic communities, LGBTQI2S organizations, and the Ministry of Refugees, Immigration, and Citizenship to develop more equitable and inclusive policies, guidelines, and practices for processing LGBTI refugee claims for asylum and expanding settlement services specifically for LGBTI newcomers;
- 2) Supporting the UN OHCHR’s implementation of awareness education and training regarding LGBTI people to staff, volunteers, and representatives working in relevant UN Treaty bodies, committees, and programs; as well as engage community members with lived experience on changes to the legislation impacted newcomers and refugees including the Interim Medical Plan for Refugees and Protected people.
- 3) Working in solidarity with local LGBTI organizations in the Global South on appropriate solutions to address impacted populations in conflict, crisis, and human migratory situations.

Delivering Results

What concrete steps could Canada take to make its international assistance delivery approaches and mechanisms more efficient, effective and innovative? How can we promote greater coherence between our development, trade and diplomacy efforts?

Canada would benefit greatly from using both intersectional feminist and Global South approaches in their international assistance delivery and practices (see sections 1 and 4 of Egale’s Executive Summary). To this end, Canada is well positioned to leverage and fully utilize the knowledge and experiences of NGOs like Egale as well as human capital from diasporic communities (see sections 5 and 6 of Egale’s Executive Summary).

Which organizations, communities, coalitions or partnerships should Canada work with? How best can we work with them to deliver our international assistance objectives?

In addition to Egale, ILGA, and Canadian diasporic communities, the newly established Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), an inter-governmental working group on advancing international LGBTI rights, provides Canada the ability to take a leading role in this work. ERC areas of focus including the advancement of LGBTI human rights in member and non-member countries as well as engagement of multi-level cooperation with international organizations such as the Francophonie, the Commonwealth, OAS, and the UN core groups. As a result, in recognizing the high level of public engagement of civil society actors and NGOs internationally regarding the advancement of LGBTQI2S rights offers Canada a vital mechanism to fund and deliver its international assistance objectives regarding gender equality, peace and security, responding to humanitarian need and displaced populations, and governance, plurality, diversity, and human rights.

How can we enhance boarder engagement of Canadians in our international assistance efforts?

Canada would benefit tremendously from actively implementing the current advancement in recognizing gender identity and expression by establishing a LGBTQI2S Secretariat within the federal government in engaging Canadians both national and internationally on the advancement of LGBTQI2S rights through promoting public education on LGBTQI2S issues and ensuring that Bill C-16 is meaningfully implemented.

The federal government would also enhance boarder public engagement in better recognizing civil society organizations and actors such as Egale and impacted communities including the diasporic, newcomer, and LGBTQI2S communities as full participants in this dialogue and are continuously engaged in shaping Canada's international assistance efforts through relationship building and establishing trust by semi-regular forums and/or mechanisms of communications.

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5. Appendix: About Egale

Mission

Egale works to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues.

Egale will achieve this by informing public policy, inspiring cultural change, and promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education and community engagement.

Vision

Egale's vision is a Canada, and ultimately a world, free of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and all other forms of oppression, so that every person can achieve their full potential, unencumbered by hatred and bias.

Values and Approach

Egale's work is grounded in anti-racist and anti-oppressive (ARAO) practice. While striving to compile, produce and communicate the best-available evidence to guide our work, we recognize that the production of knowledge is always intimately connected to power, privilege and oppression. Those with the least power and privilege are often not included in the production of knowledge, and as a result, fail to be represented in the knowledge that influences their lives. Often, it is those with the least power to produce and shape knowledge who are most in need of services, leaving them un/mis-represented, under-served, ill-served, or not served at all. To honour and address the experiences of the most marginal folks in our communities, Egale undertakes to balance both academic and experiential knowledge, privileging community-based participatory practices in conducting research; developing and reviewing policy, resources and curricula; and providing services to clients, community organizations and individuals. Furthermore, Egale recognizes the necessity of targeting intersectional oppression, while simultaneously examining the broader social contexts that sustain and legitimize various oppressions, in order to appropriately respond to the needs and experiences of the full diversity of LGBTQ communities.

In support of our mission and vision, Egale leads numerous national and international projects:

- **Safer and Accepting Schools:** Empowering students, parents and educators to form peer networks and establish LGBTQ safer spaces in schools, Egale has delivered professional development workshops to over 10,000 teachers and educators.
- **LGBTQ Youth Suicide Prevention:** Egale has twice hosted Canada's LGBTQ Youth Suicide Prevention Summit (2012, 2014), gathering experts and community members from across North America to talk about LGBTQ youth suicide, to share best practices and to advance strategies for the creation and implementation of concrete recommendations.
- **Training and Development:** Egale's internal subject matter experts provide in-person and online learning LGBTQI2S inclusion training and development solutions to policy makers, management,

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frontline employees and volunteers in a range of sectors including sport, schools, health, banking, hospitality, and construction.

- **Expert Consultation, Policy Review, and Research:** For nearly 30 years, Egale has engaged in policy review, consultation and development for external partners and clients, such as school boards, employers, legislators and public policy makers, both in Canada and abroad. Egale provided testimony to the Ontario legislature regarding Bill 77, an Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act (1991) regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity. Egale was also responsible for the first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadians schools.
- **Egale Youth OUTreach:** LGBTQ youth are overrepresented in the homeless population, with over 20% of youth experiencing homelessness identifying as LGBTQ, compared to 3.5% of the general population (Homeless Hub, 2015). Family rejection, violence, social inequities, ostracism and discrimination are some major factors that lead LGBTQ youth into experiences of homelessness. In addition, many LGBTQ youth report feeling unsafe or being re-victimized in the current shelter system, and receiving inappropriate and unhelpful suicide crisis and mental health crisis support in health institutions. Egale operates a same day counselling, crisis intervention and housing support centre for LGBTQ youth in order to help youth navigate these challenges and receive timely and positive mental health support. Approximately 45% of our clients identify as transgender or gender variant.
- **Egale's International Work:** Egale is active in a multi-pronged international engagement strategy in promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education and community engagement. Currently, Egale's Executive Director serves as the Co-Chair of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) as well as consults on LGBTI rights at various international governmental organizations including UN committees and groups. Notably, Egale's Executive Director is part of a working group to organize civil society organizations ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in the United Kingdom and Eagle is the only Canadian LGBTI civil society organization in North America to have official standing with the Association of American States (OAS).
- Egale's has used their inclusive training and education and development expertise to deliver its Police Education and Training Program to police forces in Balkans as well as other international inter-governmental bodies.