



REALITIES AND NEEDS OF **LGBTQ+** INDIVIDUALS IN RWANDA

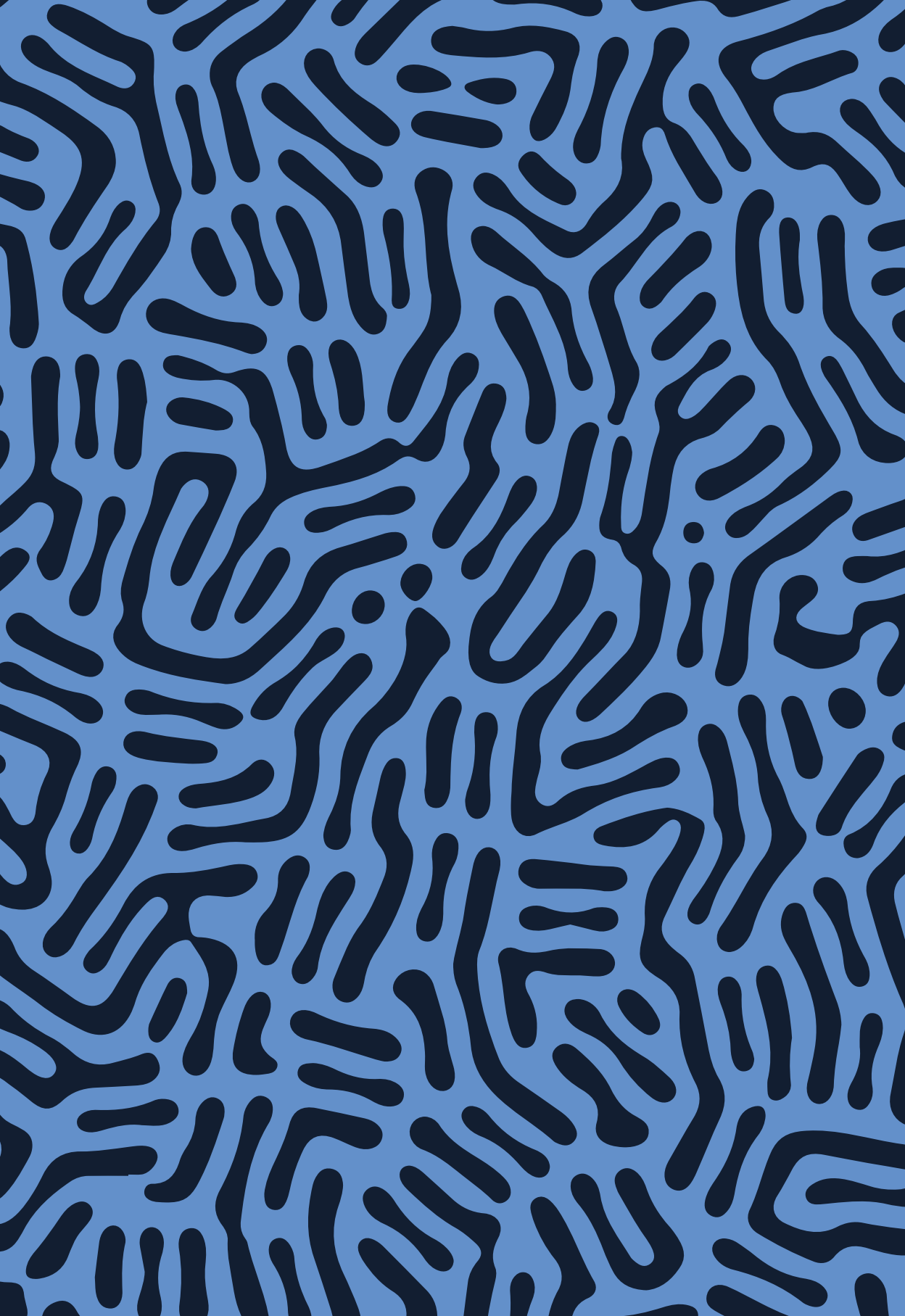
Diagnostic Report



medicusmundi
bizkaia







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Title

**REALITIES AND NEEDS OF LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS IN RWANDA,
Diagnostic Report**

Prepared by

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EUSKAL AGENTZIA
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REALITIES AND NEEDS OF LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS IN RWANDA

Diagnostic Report

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01

INTRODUCTION

Rwanda faces significant challenges in the realm of rights and equality for the LGTBIQ+ community. Despite the Penal Code not prescribing penalties for same-sex acts, constitutional support for gender equality, prohibition of discrimination, and the country's endorsement of international declarations protecting LGTBIQ+ rights, the community still lacks considerable social acceptance and legal protection in the "Land of a Thousand Hills."

Rwanda boasts high population density and a distinct division between rural and urban life. Family unity is a fundamental cultural value, and it is in this domain that the LGTBIQ+ community experiences the most substantial discrimination. In the predominantly Christian religious landscape, religious beliefs and leaders influence public opinion, contributing to the generation of attitudes that reject LGTBIQ+ individuals. While the country maintains high levels of education, the perpetuation of rejection and marginalization dynamics against the community persists.

In this context, this diagnostic report provides a brief analysis of the situation of the LGBTBIQ+ community in Rwanda. It is part of the project titled "Creation of a Social Transformation of Symbolic Violence and Sexual and Gender Diversity in the Fields of Education, Health, and University, from a Local and Global Perspective. Phase II," led by medicusmundi Bizkaia and funded by the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation. The project aims to promote social transformation by fostering a critical attitude in education, university, health, and social domains. The project's objectives are to address symbolic violence and phobia toward the LGBTBIQ+ community from a feminist, intersectional, and human rights perspective, based on three axes:

1. Consolidate critical knowledge about symbolic violence and sexual diversity in schools and universities, challenging stereotypes, and promoting inclusive education.
2. Consolidate critical knowledge about symbolic violence and sexual diversity in the health sector through the implementation of non-regulatory capacities and mechanisms.
3. Create spaces to generate knowledge, awareness, and exchanges on sexual diversity and gender-based violence, involving entities from the Global North and South to foster the emergence of networks and alliances.

In applying this perspective, medicusmundi Bizkaia aims to promote social transformation based on critical reflection, respect for human rights, and consideration of feminist and intersectional perspectives. In this action framework, the examination of the reality of the LGBTBIQ+ community in Rwanda seeks to contribute to the articulation of proposals capable of influencing policy, denouncing discrimination, and creating networks that promote a more inclusive society respecting sexual and gender diversity.

Fieldwork was conducted in Rwanda to establish the diagnostic report presented in the following pages. The methodology employed involved the use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews with focus groups conducted by the local partner ARDE/KUBAHO, in collaboration with ALDARTE, medicusmundi Bizkaia, and medicusmundi Araba.

This diagnostic report provides a preliminary overview of the situation

of the LGBTBIQ+ community in the country by describing the main issues and situations they face. The LGBTBIQ+ community in Rwanda experiences significant discrimination, lacks effective protection, and sees its rights to a healthy and dignified life violated. Invisibility and a lack of social and familial support are concerning aspects affecting these individuals, many of whom prefer to remain anonymous due to fear of discrimination or violence, hindering the creation of organizations and unity within the community. The report also reveals the existence of entrenched negative prejudices and stereotypes in Rwandan society, particularly linked to cultural and religious factors, fueling rejection attitudes toward the community. All of this has resulted in high levels of discrimination and violence in family, community, and workplace settings.

Finally, this diagnostic report emphasizes the importance of understanding sexual and gender diversity in the Rwandan context without imposing Western cultural codes, promoting a local and global approach based on the protection of human rights to foster social transformation. The report includes voices and recommendations put forth by the Rwandan community to improve its quality of life through the respect of its rights, the creation of associations for advocacy and political influence, and the sensitization of Rwandan society to sexual and gender diversity, symbolic violence, and phobia towards the LGBTBIQ+ community.

02

PRESENTATION

This analysis is part of the project titled "Creation of a Social Transformation of Symbolic Violence and Sexual and Gender Diversity in the Fields of Education, Health, and University, from a Local and Global Perspective." It is an Education for Social Transformation project funded by the Basque Cooperation Agency, aiming to promote a process of social transformation through a critical approach in the fields of education, university, health, and social sectors. The project focuses on preventing

symbolic violence and integrating sexual and gender diversity from a feminist, local, and global perspective, respecting Human Rights, and based on three intervention axes:

- Consolidate critical knowledge on symbolic violence and sexual and gender diversity in education and university settings, implementing prevention measures from a feminist, intersectional, and non-regulatory approach.
- Consolidate critical knowledge on symbolic violence and sexual and gender diversity, and acquire prevention skills and tools in the health sector from a feminist, intersectional, and non-regulatory approach.
- Build spaces for awareness, reflection, and learning exchanges among entities from the Global North and South on sexual and gender diversity and macho violence, from a feminist, intersectional, and non-regulatory approach.

It is within the framework of the third intervention axis that the analysis conducted in Rwanda was designed, and we present the preliminary conclusions here. This analysis was carried out by the Rwandan NGO ARDE/KUBAHO in collaboration with medicusmundi Bizkaia, medicusmundi Araba, and ALDARTE.

We thank all individuals, organizations, and entities that participated in this process for their time and interest. Without them, this diagnosis would not have been possible.



03

RWANDAN CONTEXT

Rwanda is a country located in the African Great Lakes region, with Kigali as its capital. It is one of the most densely populated countries in the African region.

While the history of Rwanda is often solely referred to in the context of the 1994 genocide against Tutsi, the Rwandan population lived in harmony before colonization, divided into three ethnic groups according to their economic category (Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa). Colonial powers divided the Rwandan population into three classes, assigning different levels of power, creating political and ethnic tensions that persisted through the first Republic (1961–1973), the second Republic (1973–1994), and during the genocide against Tutsi.

The 1994 Rwandan genocide against Tutsi resulted in the extermination of a significant portion of the population, with estimates of over a million people being killed.

POLITICAL ASPECTS

The current politics of Rwanda are heavily influenced by the consequences of the 1994 genocide against Tutsi and the instability in the Great Lakes region. In the last presidential elections in 2017, President Paul Kagame of the "Rwandan Patriotic Front" was re-elected for a third seven-year term. He has been leading the country since his initial election in 2003. Notably, Rwanda's constitution advocates for gender equality in politics, with 61% of parliamentarians being women.

In 2016, during President Paul Kagame's visit to the United States, he was asked about the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals in Rwanda. He stated, *"It has never been a problem for us, and we have no intention of making it an issue. Currently, we are working on solving several problems. And as I said, we want everyone to participate. This means we would like to support each other. This will help us so that everyone can live in harmony."*

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Serious social inequality exists due to neoliberal economic policies adopted by the Rwandan government. The average annual income in the country was €704 per capita in 2021.² Women's estimated overall income represents 61% of that of men³. Additionally, 38.2% of the population lives below the poverty⁴ line. Most Rwandans depend on agriculture and livestock, primarily for subsistence.

LEGAL ASPECTS

Rwanda's penal code does not prescribe any penalties for consensual sexual acts between individuals of the same sex. The country is governed by the 2003 Constitution (revised in 2015), emphasizing the equality of Rwandan citizens before the law and prohibiting all forms of

1. [Homosexuality is not the concern of the mandate", according to President Paul Kagame - Association STOP HOMOPHOBY | Information - Prevention - Assistance to victims.](#)

2. [Rwanda : Économie and et demography](#)

3. [Rwanda-Rentes femmes](#)

4. [World Bank-Rwanda Country Profile 2021](#)

discrimination based on various factors.

In 2011, the Rwandan government signed the joint UN declaration condemning violence against LGBTIQ+ individuals and also endorsed the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ASPECTS

Rwanda has one of the highest population densities in Africa, leading to overexploitation of agriculture and a significant lack of cultivable land. This affects food security and deteriorates hygiene, sanitation, and water quality.

The society is largely rural, with 82.7% of the population living in the countryside. Women in rural areas face more machismo and discrimination, even if the government is putting efforts into equal rights between woman and man to the family properties such as land properties and greater difficulty achieving financial independence compared to urban⁵ women.

The Rwandan society is deeply marked by colonial processes, including neocolonialism, the expansion of different churches, and the 1994 genocide against Tutsi.

Family unity, or "*inzu*," is a fundamental value in the country's culture, starting with marriage as the foundation of the family. Having descendants is considered a significant social duty, still influenced by colonialism and religion.

Rwanda has a high enrollment rate in schools since primary education and the early years of secondary education are free and mandatory.⁶ However, there is an education gap between rural and urban areas, exacerbated for women. 64.7% of women aged 15 and older can read and write compared to 76.3% of men⁷.

While Rwanda has become a global reference in passing laws promoting gender equality, in practice, the society remains tormentor and pa-

5 <http://www.pensamientocritico.org/ruanda-una-utopia-feminista/>

6 [World bank-Rwanda Country Profile 2021](https://data.worldbank.org/country/rw)

7 <https://es.frwiki.wiki/wiki/Rwanda#Femmes>



triarchal.

RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

Christianity is deeply rooted in Rwandan beliefs, with the majority practicing Catholicism (56%), followed by Protestants (37.7%), Adventists (11.8%), and a smaller percentage practicing Islam, being Jehovah's Witnesses, or having no religion.

Religious fundamentalism, as expressed by public opinion, fuels human rights violations in social and political life in Rwanda. In 2007, the Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of Rwanda referred to homosexuality as a "moral genocide against Rwandan culture, as sexuality should only exist within the bounds of marriage between a man and a woman."⁸ Such statements further vulnerabilize the situation of LGBTQ+ individuals, often accused of attracting misfortunes and having no morals or connection to Rwandan culture.

04

THEORETICAL APPROACH: LGTBIQ+ Individuals in Rwanda

This diagnostic process conducted in Rwanda represented a significant opportunity to establish a connection between two organizations, one indigenous (ARDE/KUBAHO) and the other from Bilbao (ALDARTE), which would not have existed without their common interest in diagnosing the reality of sexual and gender diversity in the country. It is essential to highlight that this process would not have been possible without the support of medicusmundi Bizkaia and Araba.

ALDARTE is an entity dedicated to sexual and gender diversity (hereinafter "SGD"). Most of its members belong to the LGTBIQ+ community. As for ARDE/KUBAHO, its primary objective is to promote human rights through access to water, food security, sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, women's empowerment within cooperatives, community leadership, research, and education. When considering undertaking this diagnostic, this organization had never collaborated on a project with the LGTBIQ+ community, and its understanding of this reality was practically nonexistent.

As the team from ARDE/KUBAHO began organizing fieldwork for the diagnostic, they encountered difficulties in understanding what they referred to as "THE ISSUE," which is the euphemism used by the organization to describe what is known in Bilbao as the LGTBIQ+ reality and its definitions.

Since this was the first time the "issue" was addressed within the team, they realized that different perceptions coexisted regarding the meaning of this reality, presenting several challenges

Participants in this diagnostic process found that their personal experience was not sufficient to reach the necessary level of understanding. They had to shift their personal perception towards a more collective vision to work as a team on this experience. The team had to overcome their own taboos and prejudices. Overall, they observed a lack of understanding of the reality and the need to comprehend it collectively to diagnose it. For this, they engaged in several conversations to understand exactly what the "issue" referred to and also gathered information by reading various documents on the LGTBIQ+ reality they intended to address.

The term frequently used in Rwanda by LGTBQ+ individuals is *Umu-sangirangendo*, which could be translated into French as "travel companions" or "colleagues on the journey." However, the "issue" is the euphemism chosen by the ARDE/KUBAHO team to talk about a reality that was challenging to address, of which they are aware, and still find difficult to discuss. The use of this term can be understood in different ways, which are not necessarily contradictory:

AS A MORALIZING AND CONSERVATIVE ATTITUDE:

Referring to this reality as the "issue" could reflect the discomfort when directly uttering acronyms that define LGTBQ+ individuals. It might be an evasion to avoid saying out loud words such as lesbian, homosexual, gay, queer, etc., or terms related to sex or sexuality.

This discomfort aligns with moralistic and conservative attitudes present in Rwandan society. These attitudes result from colonization processes in Africa, which forcefully and authoritatively implanted a life organized around new beliefs based on Judeo-Christian religion. The consequences of this imposition include the destabilization and destruction of ancestral values of African peoples, the construction of forbidden desires, and the imposition of a heteronormative and patriarchal order. European colonizers imposed their laws on sodomy and unnatural offenses in African colonies, which are still in effect today in some African countries.

Hatred towards homosexuality has a long history, and, with some cultural nuances aside, it can be considered a European historical narrative (Rubio Llona, 2017⁹). According to this author, the roots of institutionalized homophobia in Africa, particularly in Rwanda, can be traced back to this colonial condemnation of sexual diversity, its subsequent legitimization process, and the main actors fostering and channeling hateful and rejecting behaviors towards LGTBQ+ individuals in Rwanda—namely, state institutions, religious fundamentalist leaders, and the media.

9 Rubio Llona, Aimar, (2017) *Homophobie d'État et diversité sexuelle en Afrique Histoire d'un combat*, Institut d'Études sur le Développement et la Coopération Internationale, Cahiers de travail / Lan-Koadernoak • Hegoa, n_73.

To discuss homophobia in Africa, one must delve into the past and, consequently, emphasize the responsibility of European colonies in its propagation and legitimization (Rubio Llona, 2017). The moral colonization of Africa regarding sexual diversity persists to this day.

The social condemnation of sexual diversity in Rwanda compels the majority of the population to identify as heterosexual since homosexuality is a significant taboo associated with Western decadence, depravity, and subject to fierce stigmatization. Individuals engaging in same-sex relationships are despised and/or criticized, and their behavior is deemed criminal and inconsistent with Rwandan cultural values.

AS A WAY TO ESTABLISH DIALOGUE AND CHALLENGE WESTERN CODES ON SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY:

After establishing a horizontal dynamic for exchanging information, conversations about the "issue" emerged within the ARDE/KUBAHO team. The team members reached a common stance on the theme of sexual and gender diversity, enabling them to be more resilient when interacting with others who would play a crucial role in the diagnostic they aimed to conduct and initiating fieldwork.

As a Northern organization, ALDARTE maintained a supportive position toward ARDE/KUBAHO throughout the process, avoiding the imposition of Western codes on sexual and gender experiences.



The globalization of identities and struggles for LGTBIQ+ rights has spread forcefully but often from a Western, universal, and homogenizing perspective. Consequently, many sexual and gender realities existing in specific social, cultural, and political contexts have attempted to adapt to Western LGTBIQ+ codifications, which are generally extremely binary and fail to capture alternative worldviews on bodies, sexuality, and genders.

L. Picq's essay demonstrates that sexual colonization suppresses indigenous sexualities by regulating sexual and gender experiences, forcing indigenous peoples to exist within the confines of Western heteronormative codes—either by adopting heterosexual Christian principles or by imposing LGBT codes (Manuela L. Picq, 2020¹⁰). Using the term "issue" to refer to and describe a reality called LGTBIQ+ in Bilbao can be understood as an attempt to establish dialogue and question Western codes on sexual and gender diversity, not only to weave specific networks of responses against a political, religious, and cultural system oppressing and condemning sexual and gender diversity but also to construct codes that best represent this diversity.

05

THE APPLIED METHODOLOGY

We want to highlight certain questions that were fundamental in establishing the working methodology used for conducting this diagnosis:

- ALDARTE and ARDE/KUBAHO are entities working together for the first time, and it was, therefore, very important, especially at the beginning, to establish and create a space of mutual knowledge and trust between them.
- The local entity ARDE/KUBAHO brought its extensive knowledge of the Rwandan context. Similarly, communication be-

10 L. Picq, Manuela, (2020) La colonisation des sexualités indigènes : entre spoliation et résistance, v. 10, n. 1 p. 13-34, Contemporánea, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4322/2316-1329.126>

tween the four entities, namely medicusmundi Bizkaia and Araba, ALDARTE, and ARDE/KUBAHO, had to be fluid and constant, allowing for the adaptation of the working method and the collective definition of the tools used in the field, as well as the manner of conducting in-depth interviews.

- Communication between the entities was carried out through online meetings (Zoom platform), emails, and WhatsApp. In total, 11 online meetings were organized.

The methodology used was divided into three phases:

PHASE 1: PREPARATION FOR FIELDWORK

Several meetings took place through the Zoom platform to agree on the theme and focus of the fieldwork: the objectives, content, and tools for collecting information.

These initial meetings served to give time and space to ARDE/KUBAHO to describe the reality of the Rwandan context regarding sexual and gender diversity, in order to adjust and specify the instruments and tools to be used during fieldwork. It was fundamental to listen to the local entity's experience and reflections on the theme, any difficulties, and the entity's capacity to carry out the work in the field (personal, material, technical means, etc.).

The tools used during this phase were as follows:

Online questionnaire. (See Annex 1: Online Questionnaire)

The entities agreed that the primary source of information collection would be the administration of online questionnaires sent to the mobile numbers of known individuals and ARDE/KUBAHO contacts. A project/proposal was developed by ALDARTE and sent by email to **medicusmundi Bizkaia**, **medicusmundi Araba**, and ARDE/KUBAHO. It was translated into French and refined until the final text was obtained. Following the local entity's recommendation, the final questionnaire was published in Kinyarwanda for wider dissemination.

The questionnaire was answered by 30 people. Their responses con-

stituted the first source of information for this diagnosis. (See Annex 2: Online Questionnaire Results).

In-depth interviews

Another tool used to obtain information was conducting **in-depth interviews** with individuals from sexual and gender diversity, individuals not belonging to the collective, and with human rights entities and/or associations ("DH") likely to be knowledgeable on the subject and cover diverse areas such as religious or police domains. (See Annexes 3, 4, 5, and 6, which contain the various scenarios used in the interviews).

Prior to this, ARDE/KUBAHO conducted an identification process of individuals and entities in Kigali and Gisenyi, collecting data from 43 individuals and 5 entities. It is important to note that all project participants preferred to remain anonymous. Therefore, personal data of participants was not collected, only their geographical location and age. Some individuals provided "nicknames" or "code names."

In a Zoom meeting, the four entities involved in this diagnosis validated the questionnaire and decided to establish two control groups, one in Kigali and the other in Gisenyi.

Training workshop for ARDE/KUBAHO

On June 30, 2022, a training workshop was held to conduct interviews, attended by two women from ALDARTE, one woman from **medicusmundi Bizkaia**, one woman from **medicusmundi Araba**, and seven people from ARDE/KUBAHO responsible for conducting interviews (six men and one woman, including a psychologist and a nurse). This workshop was conducted on the Zoom platform.

Various topics were addressed during the workshop, such as confidentiality, obtaining images of participants, ensuring their safety to avoid identification, recording videos and/or audios about them, and the process (individual or group, duration of recordings, etc.).

Similarly, other important aspects were addressed during interviews:

- Creating a space of trust and empathy with the person(s) being interviewed,



- Respecting the freedom to answer or not answer all questions or some of them, what to do if someone has difficulty talking about this subject, and how to conduct the interview in case of a problem.
- Flexibility during the questionnaire: it guides the interview but is not crucial if the person does not want to answer certain questions or if it is not possible to complete it.
- It is important to give the person time to talk about challenging topics, especially for those belonging to the sexual and gender diversity collective.
- Exposing the fears and uncertainties of those conducting the interviews as it is work they have never done.

PHASE 2: FIELDWORK

The team from the local entity ARDE/KUBAHO conducted interviews and facilitated the control groups.

An online survey was conducted, with a total of 30 individuals and 4 control groups responding anonymously, distributed as follows: 2 in Kigali, 2 in Gisenyi, and 15 individual interviews.



A relationship of trust was established, allowing all individuals to participate freely. Initially, communication was not smooth, but a secure and trusting space was gradually created, where participants could express themselves normally.

All questions asked in the groups focused on the experiences, needs, and demands of the LGBTQ+ collective in Rwanda, the situation it faces, specific and potential violence, and recommendations to improve various living conditions.

The fieldwork allowed for the collection of opinions from individuals belonging to the collective in Kigali, Gisenyi, and three organizations working with the collective (with national coverage), as well as from individuals not belonging to the collective, organizations, and institutions, with no connection to the collective in Kigali and Gisenyi.

PHASE 3: ANALYSIS OF OBTAINED INFORMATION AND PREPARATION OF THE DIAGNOSTIC REPORT

This phase was conducted jointly with the entities. Initially, ARDE/KU-BAHO sent the material obtained from the fieldwork to the other entities: videos of interviews with various individuals (from sexual and gender diversity and in the religious and health domains), as well as the

transcriptions of testimonies collected from LGBTQ+ individuals.

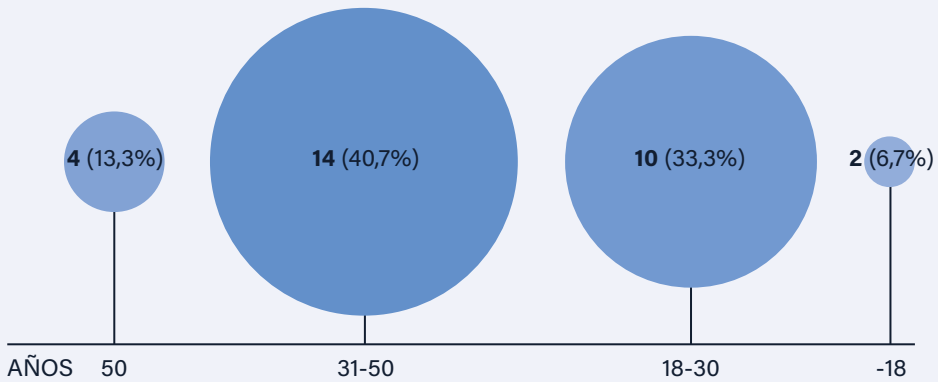
In October, ARDE/KUBAHO produced an initial document containing preliminary conclusions that served as the basis for the first diagnostic project prepared by ALDARTE. It was then sent back to the local entity for evaluation and verification.

In December, the four entities reviewed the project and provided their final clarifications. ALDARTE rewrote the diagnostic report, incorporating the results of the verification and discussions.

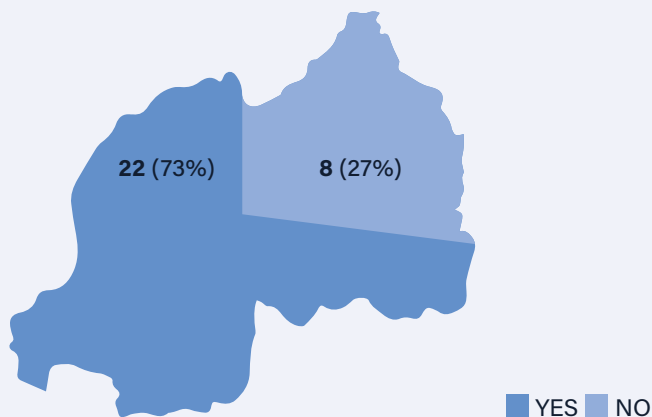
PROFILE OF PEOPLE BEING PART OF DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS

1. LGBTIQ PEOPLE RESPONDING TO ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Age

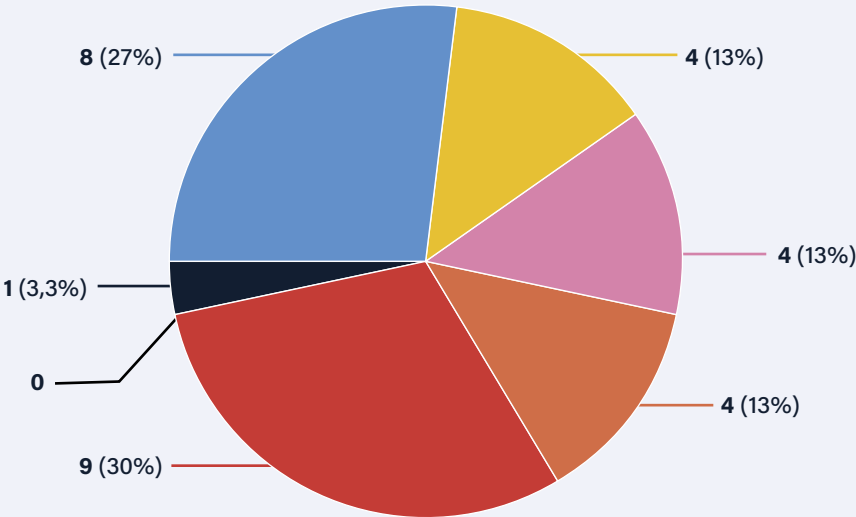


Are you a member of LGBTIQ collective?



If yes, how do you identify yourself?

L G T B I Q others



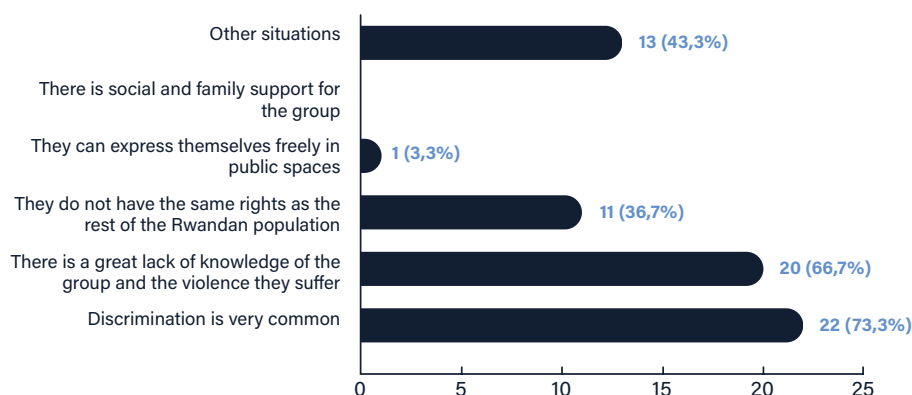
2. ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS:

GROUP / PLACE OF ORIGIN	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	F/M/A	AGE IN AVERAGE
Individuals belonging to the LGTBIQ+ Collective/Gisenyi	5	4 females 1 male	26 years
Individuals belonging to the LGTBIQ+ Collective/Kigali	4	2 females 2 males	28,7 years
Organizations working with the LGTBIQ+ Collective (nationwide coverage)	5	2 females 3 males	42,5 years
ndividuals not belonging to the LGTBIQ+ Collective/Gisenyi Organizations and institutions unrelated to the LGTBIQ+ Collective	6	2 females 4 males	51,6 years
Individuals not belonging to the LGTBIQ+ Collective/Kigali Organizations and institutions unrelated to the LGTBIQ+ Collective	5	1 female 4 males	38,2 years

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND NEEDS OF LGTBIQ+ INDIVIDUALS IN RWANDA

GENERAL SITUATION OF LGTBIQ+ INDIVIDUALS

This section provides a general overview of the situation of individuals belonging to the LGTBIQ+ community in Rwanda. The online questionnaire revealed a challenging and difficult situation, as reflected in Graph 1.



Graph 1.

In response to the question, *"What is the situation of the LGTBIQ+ Community in the Rwandan context?"* participants described the challenging circumstances they face, confirming the existence of hostility and insecurity. Key findings include:

They are victims of Discrimination

73.3% of people believe that discrimination is very prevalent. Sexual and gender diversity is a taboo topic in Rwandan culture, and LGBTQ+ individuals face significant discrimination. Even though the Rwandan Constitution prohibits any form of discrimination, regardless of its origin, and guarantees equality for all citizens before the law, these provisions are not applied in reality as respect for diversity is lacking. Constitutional norms are not accompanied by legal texts that would effectively protect, support and prevent this discrimination.

In Rwanda, there are no institutional awareness campaigns that could expose and deconstruct social stereotypes and prejudices. These factors contribute to the stigmatization of LGBTQ+ individuals, who are constantly accused by the population of being responsible for all the societal problems."

Moral rules and entrenched homophobia in society create a climate of unpredictable violence and discrimination for all individuals who do not conform to heteronormativity.

There is a significant misrecognizing of LGBTQ+ individuals and the violence they experience

As it will be explained further below, the individuals and groups consulted recount numerous episodes of violence they have endured in silence, in invisibility, while enduring society's ignorance. 66.7% of people believe that Rwandan society is completely unaware of LGBTQ+ individuals and the violence they suffer.

This misrecognizing which:

- Makes individuals who, due to their sexuality or gender, do not fit within established norms extremely vulnerable, exposing them to a multitude of forms of violence.
- Conceals and does not publicly acknowledge the existence of these aggressions, even though this step is essential to begin recognizing and stopping them.
- Prevents understanding the context in which these acts of violence occur, where they originate, and how many people experience them.

- Isolates individuals who are victims of these acts of violence, preventing them from coming together and collectively responding to the violence they endure.
- Contributes to the impunity of groups committing violence against LGBTQ+ individuals.

These individuals do not have the same rights as the rest of the Rwandan population

36.7% of the individuals participating in the online questionnaire report that they do not have the same rights as the Rwandan population. Indeed, the absence of legislation condemning the LGBTQ+ population in Rwanda or special recommendations limiting access to a specific right for these individuals does not guarantee that they can exercise the same rights as the rest of society. Currently, rights such as the right to marry, form a family, or adopt are denied to non-heteronormative individuals.

It is common for the exercise of rights to not result from explicit recognition in the law. It is important to understand that having a right is one thing, but being able to exercise that right is another, meaning the ability to use that right.

In this report, when we refer to rights, it can be understood in two ways: from a purely legal perspective, which includes rights already legally recognized but not granted to LGBTQ+ individuals (marriage, adoption, etc.), and other rights related to the possibility of living and expressing oneself freely about sexual and gender diversity.

Where could the perception and belief that these individuals do not enjoy the same rights come from? It comes from the mentioned differences. LGBTQ+ individuals have almost the same rights as the rest of the citizens - we are convinced of that. However, if no measures prohibit discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community or guarantee their protection against harassment, arbitrary detentions, and mistreatment by their surroundings, these rights remain mere words because they cannot be exercised under the same conditions as the rest of the Rwandan population, due to the biases and discriminatory practices that result from it.

In many places around the world, including Rwanda, the denial of the exercise of rights to non-heteronormative individuals is a "social" denial rather than a legal one, which has direct consequences on how they can live their sexuality or gender. We think, for example, of the impossibility of expressing themselves freely in public spaces or with their own neighbors:

Being able to express oneself freely in public spaces

Public space refers to those shared common areas: the streets we walk and stroll on, the squares, the places where we go shopping (indoor or outdoor markets), recreational places that also function as public spaces, and even the spaces constantly configured on social networks. We spend a significant portion of our time in public spaces, which are often our workplaces as well.

Public spaces can be assessed by the intensity and quality of the social relationships they can generate and their ability to provide people with the opportunity to intermix, meet, and express themselves. From a cultural perspective, public spaces are essential for the integration of individuals.

These are privileged places for the exercise of citizenship and the expression of civil rights, and that is why it is particularly concerning that only 3.3% of the people participating in the survey responded that they can express themselves freely in public spaces. Nearly 97% of those surveyed cannot do so, as public spaces are predominantly heterosexual spaces where everyone is expected to adopt normative behaviors.

Without social or family support

100% of the individuals surveyed say they have no social or family support. This is a terrible revelation that reflects the hardships faced by these individuals and their inability to escape discriminatory and violent practices, both in private and public domains.

Unlike the public sphere, the lack of support in the private domain is more challenging and complex to detect and address. Given the cultural significance of family or "inzu," as mentioned earlier, it is possible to encompass the economic and social harm resulting from being expelled from this network and community, as well as the psychological suffering experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals who are victims of this



situation.

Likewise, considering the secondary roles assigned to women (always related to reproduction, domestic chores, and caregiving), one can understand the difficulty of avoiding forced marriages or corrective violations.

Other Experienced Situations

43% of people have reported experiencing other situations without providing further details.

INVISIBILITY OF LGTBIQ+ INDIVIDUALS

First, it's important to note that many LGTBIQ+ individuals participated under a false name to avoid being identified and ensure their anonymity, which gives us an initial insight into their situation.

The interviews would not have been possible without the work carried out by ARDE/KUBAHO, which ensured the confidentiality and safety of the people participating in the assessment. This gives us an idea of the challenges they may face after being identified as part of the sexual and gender diversity, and the risk and fear of being seen as such.

The ARDE/KUBAHO team paid careful attention to how they contacted people, the choice of locations for conducting interviews and recording videos, and the process of identifying individuals, as their identities were protected through the use of false names and the distortion of their facial image.

As mentioned earlier, only 3.3% of the people who responded to the

online questionnaire say they can freely express themselves in public spaces. It's evident that there is a lack of visibility in the daily life of their diversity, and the context of discrimination that we have observed in various areas of Rwandan society means that LGBTBIQ+ individuals do not openly express themselves in public and even within their closest circles. Nevertheless, it's important to note that this varies depending on individual circumstances, as one of the interviewees during the field-work stated, *"I'm not afraid to show who I am, no! I don't hide."*

Based on the testimonials collected during our fieldwork, we can conclude that invisibility serves as a form of self-protection to avoid the problems and consequences associated with discrimination. One of the interviewed individuals expressed it as follows: *"If we don't acknowledge our differences, we can be at peace. This way, those who commit acts of violence stop doing so, and we can continue our path."*

However, this invisibility brings a high risk, such as the difficulty in finding each other, recognizing one another, and coming together. *"Creating LGBTBIQ+ organizations is not easy because many of us are hiding,"* said one person.

LGBTBIQ+ individuals do not publicly present themselves to avoid ostracism. They employ strategies such as pretending to be friends when living together or resorting to concealment techniques. One of the interviewed individuals noted that the LGBTBIQ+ people they know hide, and when they live together, they claim to be part of the same family to conceal the true nature of their relationship. She also added, *"In my opinion, living in secrecy involves risks."*

All same-sex couples we spoke with in Rwanda confirm that they are not the only ones, that there are others, but many of them are afraid to speak and show their faces in public.

This need to hide is also observed by other social agents who were interviewed and do not belong to the LGBTBIQ+ community: *"They are here, but they hide because they know they are not accepted by society. I know a few people, but I cannot mention their names."*

EXISTENCIA DE PREJUICIOS Y ESTEREOTIPOS NEGATIVOS: LA

EXISTENCE OF PREJUDICE AND NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES: SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY AS A TABOO

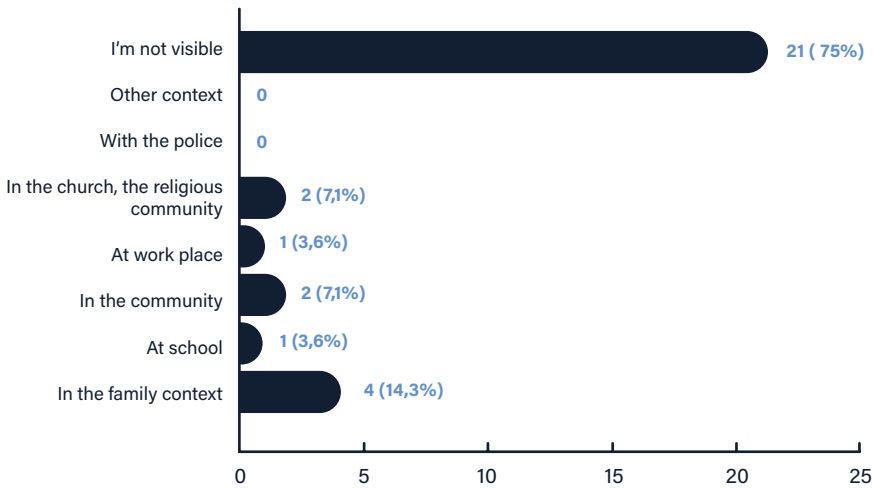
There are numerous prejudices and negative stereotypes regarding sexual and gender diversity present in all sectors of Rwandan society, directly related to cultural and religious issues.

We will highlight a few that have emerged through fieldwork:

- Falling in love with a person of the same sex is not considered a part of Rwandan culture and is seen as a taboo, even a source of shame. This is why the most significant discrimination occurs within the family.
- Derogatory labels and insults: Those who have participated in the assessment report being called offensive terms like "PÉDÉ" and sodomist "d'UMUTINGANYI" when they walk through their neighborhoods. They express that they are not accepted in Rwandan society.
- Prejudices rooted in Rwandan culture itself. Interviewees describe it as follows: "Their rights are not respected because, in culture and religion, the sexual orientation of these individuals continues to be a taboo."
- LGBTIQ+ individuals are perceived as wanting to destroy the family since they may not have offspring, which is seen as contrary to Rwandan culture.
- Prejudices with a religious aspect are the most deeply entrenched. In many churches, these individuals are believed to attract misfortune, lose their morality, and become disconnected from Rwandan culture. It's common to hear that same-sex couples are an abomination before God, which hinders any support from the community.

DISCRIMINATION - VIOLENCE

One of the questions in the online questionnaire asked if they had experienced a type of discrimination and/or violence or if they knew someone who had been in such a situation due to their affiliation with the collective, and if so, what type of discrimination or violence. The majority of respondents answered in the affirmative (75% stated that discrimination existed). The individuals surveyed then specified the areas and spaces where this violence occurs, as indicated in Figure 2:



Graph 2

Regarding the location where they experienced violence or discrimination due to their LGBTQ+ affiliation, 14.3% of respondents identified the family context, 3.6% the school, 7.1% the community, 3.6% the workplace, 7.1% the church, 0% the police, 0% other places, and 75% stated they were not visible.

Family Domain

As mentioned in the paragraph on broader issues, the family is one of the environments in which individuals challenging the dominant heteronormative system face rejection and discrimination often justified by religious and/or cultural prejudices. They bring shame and dishonor

to their family. It is worth noting the information revealed by the online questionnaire shown in Graph 1: the 30 individuals who answered this question said they had no family support.

The testimonials collected during interviews articulate the complete lack of support from the closest circle. One person recounts that: "One day, my mother and I visited my sister and went to see a movie about homosexual couples. At the end of the movie, my mother said that if these children were like that, she would burn them." Faced with this reaction, she felt "sad" and left, as her mother did not know about her homosexual relationship.

The pressure from the family circle can be very strong to force a person to follow the heteronormative pattern: "As a woman, they forced me to marry a boy I didn't like, and I had to leave to be in a relationship with someone I like." 30% of respondents living with their families prevent them from expressing themselves and living their sexual and gender diversity freely, as they must adhere to social acceptance standards. The prevailing perception in society that having a gay, lesbian, or trans family member is shameful leads to rejection and social ostracism, turning the family circle into a hostile place for diverse individuals.

Community and Neighborhood

71% of individuals surveyed about their workplace report having been victims of discrimination in their closest circles, community, or neighborhood.

There are places where they cannot enter when they are known, such as wedding ceremonies, certain events, or churches. Transgender individuals are subjected to mockery and contempt. One testimony describes this reality: *"One day, at the stadium, during a football match, a trans person arrived, and most people laughed at her and even shouted at her"*.

This social isolation and ostracism are recurring themes in the interviews conducted. In addition to this, as mentioned earlier, there is a strategy of invisibility to avoid being identified as LGBTQ+ individuals due to the negative consequences that follow. Some respondents who do not belong to the LGBTQ+ community, such as groups from Rwandan civil society, say the following about LGBTQ+ individuals: *"I can't even invite them to ceremonies because of their sexual orientation."*



An LGBTQ+ person who participated in interviews recounts that she was once discriminated against while being part of a traditional dance group and was accused of exhibiting feminine behaviors.

Health Domain

Although the health sector does not appear in the online questionnaire as one of the spaces of discrimination, it is a theme that has been emphasized several times in the interviews. A doctor interviewed in this diagnostic stated, "They are not victims of discrimination since we treat them like everyone else." However, LGBTQ+ individuals recount experiences of rejection in this field. One of them, interviewed in *The Conversation*, explained: *"I faced discrimination in accessing care, and I no longer have access to the family medical plan I had before my mother deprived me of it. Every time I went to the hospital and explained to the doctor the pain I was experiencing since I suffered from an anal and rectal sexually transmitted infection, they judged me. It was very stressful; I fell into depression and even contemplated suicide."*¹²

Regarding healthcare services, a nurse who participated in one of the focus groups explained, *"What I can add is that when we think it's an LGBTQ+ person, we have a superficial prejudice against that 'status.' However, these prejudices have no impact on reception since the service is the same for everyone."*

School and Work

3.6% of people who filled out the online questionnaire in the second graph reported experiencing violence and/or discrimination in the school environment, and 3.6% in the workplace.

¹² Entretien avec une personne LGTBIQ+ du Rwanda dans le Journal *The conversation* <https://theconversation.com/rwanda-lgbt-rights-are-protected-on-paper-but-discrimination-and-homophobia-persist-182949>

In the field of education, it is an area where sexual and gender diversity is neither addressed nor worked on as such. As a teacher from a school center who participated in one of our focus groups indicated, *"In school, we discuss themes of sexual reproduction and disease transmission, but not homosexuality."*

We want to emphasize the importance of discrimination in the workplace. Indeed, this domain generally holds a fundamental place because LGBTQ+ individuals fear losing their jobs due to their sexuality. In general, they are not supported by their families, knowing that family often provides emotional support, a secure environment, and financial assistance. If, in addition to lacking a familial social network for emotional and financial support, LGBTQ+ individuals face violence and/or discrimination at work, they end up living in extreme vulnerability.

Religious Domain

Religious Domain

71% of respondents to the online questionnaire reported experiencing religious rejection. One respondent disclosed being rejected not only by their family but also by religious leaders in various churches. *"When they realized my gender identity, the church excommunicated me,"* the individual stated.

A parishioner participating in the survey explained, *"When they come to pray (at the temple), we welcome them because God hates sin and frees the sinner,"* thus labeling these individuals as sinners.

The significant influence and social anchoring of these churches have direct consequences on the level of discrimination and rejection faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, as their discourse deeply convinces the population, and the moral authority of those delivering these messages (bishops, pastors, etc.) is highly respected in society.

An example illustrating this is provided by one of the respondents. A religious representative once declared, *"Most churches do not support this behavior."* This statement was confirmed by respondents in the religious domain who echo the religious prejudices heard in churches, becoming fertile ground for the emergence of hate speech against LGBTQ+ individuals. A couple expressed, *"God created man and woman to procreate. Thus, it is not good for a man to live with another man, nor a woman with*

another woman. I think it's dirty." Another respondent stated, *"When we read the word of God, homosexuality does not appear anywhere. Now, they call it 'progress,' but I cannot support it."* Additionally, a third woman interviewed by ARDE/KUBAHO reiterated one of the most repeated ideas: *"God created man and woman and demands that man belong to only one woman and woman to only one man."* This reasoning naturally leads to the non-acceptance and social disapproval of relationships between people of the same sex.

It is essential to note that there are positions and opinions favorable to sexual and gender diversity in the religious domain. Some express respect and understanding in the face of prejudice and rejection, such as a religious representative interviewed during fieldwork who, despite acknowledging that many churches view the practices of LGBTQ+ individuals as taboo and satanic, believes, *"It's not true. We consider everyone; we welcome LGBTQ+ individuals into our church as divine creatures."*

EXPLICIT VIOLENCE

As we will see later, invisibility is a form of self-protection adopted by non-heteronormative individuals to avoid personally experiencing the violence of those who reject diversity and manifest their prejudices through explicit violence.

There are situations of explicit violence, which can be verbal (as seen earlier in the form of derogatory insults) and physical. Some respondents reported suffering various types of violence, including insults, shouts, and physical attacks. One person explained receiving blows because they behaved like a girl despite being biologically male. Another person shared losing their apartment lease when their same-sex relationship became known. Some individuals were forced to leave their families and neighborhoods after receiving threats.

This explicit violence often compels victims to flee from this hostile environment and harassment, leading to severe personal and emotional consequences, especially when such situations occur in close-to-home environments. *"I was threatened, and I had to leave to live in Nyamiram-*

bo¹³," stated one interviewed victim.

THE POLICE: "DOESN'T KNOW, HAS NO OPINION"

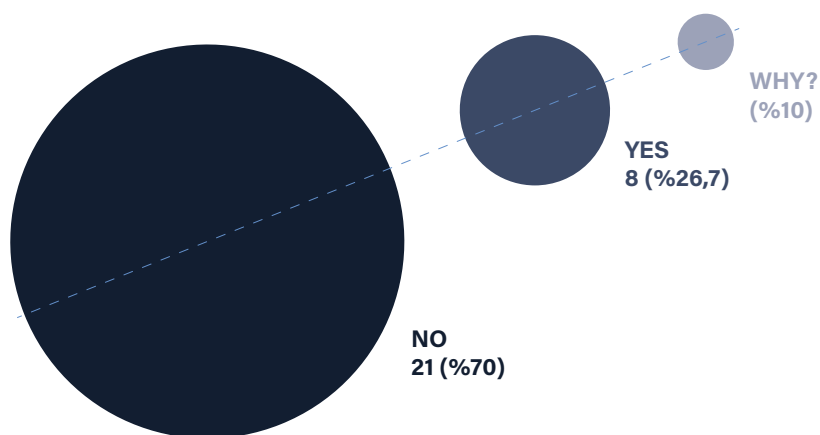
It can be concluded based on the questionnaire results and interviews conducted during fieldwork that the police is not a safe space where these individuals can seek help in cases of explicit discrimination and/or violence. As indicated in Figure 3, 70% of LGBTQ+ individuals would not go to the police to report an assault.

If a person experiences violence and/or discrimination due to their affiliation with the LGBTQ+ community, can they file a complaint with the police?

The response given by a police officer when ARDE/KUBAHO asked for his opinion on same-sex couples should be highlighted: "This is new information you're giving me, I have nothing to add on this matter." This vague response and lack of a clear stance coincide with the results obtained through the online questionnaire, where participants stated that they did not experience discrimination from the police. However, it's essential to connect this information with the fact that 70% of victims did

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It is the open mind hot spot of Kigali





not dare to file complaints when they experienced violence. This reveals a lack of trust in the police state—since they don't feel protected by this authority—and explains the response that they did not face discrimination from the police.

COLLECTIVE APPROACH / ABSENCE OF LGTBIQ+ ASSOCIATIONS

Participants in the assessment agree that they need their rights to be respected and to be treated like the rest of the Rwandan population. *"Our feelings must be respected because we feel this way and did not choose this situation."* These individuals also face the issue of the absence of LGTBIQ+ associations that could welcome them and advocate for their collective rights.

The ILGA 2020 report notes that local activists in Rwanda have stated that *"organizations attempting to register legally with the government generally do not indicate the work they do with the LGTBIQ+ community for fear of rejection."* Those openly stating their priorities identify as human rights organizations. This *"apparent name difference"* may be crucial for an organization to gain legal recognition in a social context where there is a high level of rejection, prejudice, and stereotypes at all levels.

Respondents declare belonging to other collectives working on health



and human rights issues, such as *"Mission Inclusive for Health and Hope," "Other Sheep Rwanda,"* etc. Initially, this might be perceived as a challenge since they lack a dedicated space to meet freely and organize to denounce the violence and violation of rights they face due to their sexuality and/or gender. However, this invisibility allows them to take actions and/or create spaces for meeting and flourishing that would otherwise be impossible.

Some individuals express a desire to have all possible means to know the entire collective, but most individuals are not known and hide due to fear resulting from various types of discrimination they have experienced. Only the most daring individuals request public presence: *"The union of all individuals in the collective would allow the involvement of everyone in creating projects, for example, to improve our development, and can also lead to acceptance and improvement of our self-esteem."* Furthermore, they state, *"For our survival, we would like to undertake projects, generate income, be able to live on it to cover our daily needs, and have our groups legalized."* Some dream not only of mobilization and acceptance by Rwandan society of sexual and gender diversity but also of obtaining rights, such as the right to marriage. *"We demand continuous mobilization to be accepted in society and for a law to be approved to legalize our marriage."*

One person adds, *"As a representative of the organization called Mission Inclusive, I tell you that we accept everyone when we carry out activities."*

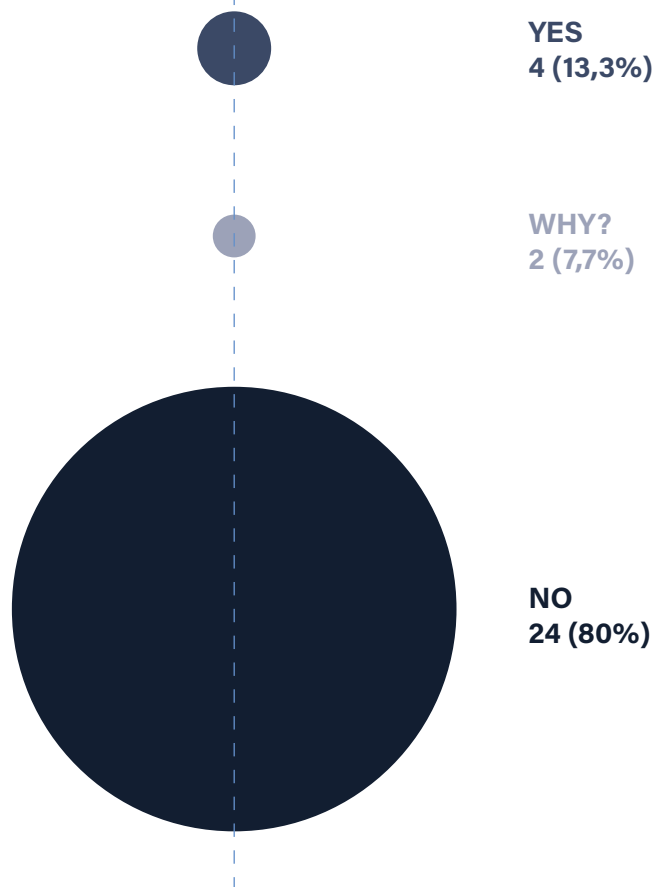
Many members of the LGTBIQ+ community belong to our organization, and therefore, we are committed to making our demands public in favor of their rights and improving their living conditions."

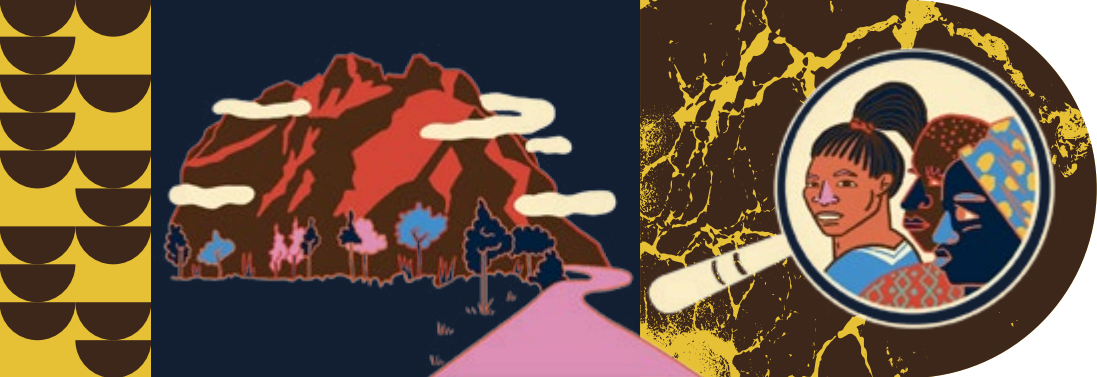
HATE SPEECH: THOSE WHO ENCOURAGE IT

Prejudices and negative stereotypes towards sexual and gender diversity are amplified and reinforced by two fundamental elements that serve as their megaphones and are deeply rooted in society. On the one hand, the role of religious authorities, which exert considerable influence at all levels socially and politically, and on the other hand, the role of the media, which promotes hate speech against LGTBIQ+ individuals.

Regarding the latter, in response to the question of whether information about LGTBIQ+ individuals is correct, as indicated in Figure 4, 80% of respondents to the questionnaire said no. This information is crucial as it highlights that the media contributes to the spread of prejudices and negative stereotypes towards this collective by disseminating information that can be deemed "incorrect".

Is the media treatment towards the collective correct?"





08

THE FUTURE

A crucial aspect of this assessment is the potential to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life for LGBTIQ+ individuals. This initial action allows us to understand and engage with the situation of sexual and gender diversity in Rwanda. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to create a tool for change and progress in the exercise of their rights.

That is why we have gathered requests and recommendations from the collective addressed to Rwandan society:

- Participants agree that they need their rights to be respected and to be treated like the rest of the Rwandan population: "Our feelings must be respected because we feel this way, and we did not choose this situation," say those participating in the assessment.
- They have requested Rwandan society to accept them as they are.
- To unite in non-governmental development organizations with the objective of implementing national laws protecting LGBTIQ+ individuals.
- It is essential to integrate LGBTIQ+ individuals into community projects to make the value they bring to Rwandan society visible.

CONCLUSIONS IN THE FORM OF SHARED REFLECTIONS

CONCERNING LGTBIQ+ INDIVIDUALS:

- The overall context in Rwanda is hostile towards sexual and gender diversity. Anything related to this theme carries very negative connotations, questions specific values of Rwandan culture, and puts individuals at risk. A shared rejection is thus born across society.
- While it is true that no penalties are stipulated for condemning sexual and gender diversity in legal norms, there is no specific recognition of equal rights for LGTBIQ+ individuals, either legally or socially.
- Cultural and religious prejudices are deeply rooted and exert significant influence on the entire social fabric of the country, creating an environment of absolute rejection towards sexual and gender diversity and LGTBIQ+ individuals, further amplified by the media.
- LGTBIQ+ individuals suffer from stigmatization and rejection at all levels (family, social, community, professional, etc.) and are often victims of explicit discrimination and violence (assaults, insults, etc.) in spaces and contexts where they are identified as such. This situation condemns them to ostracism and social isolation.
- Invisibility and concealment are survival strategies that LGTBIQ+ individuals employ to maintain their safety and integrity and to escape rejection and discrimination. They fear, isolate themselves, are unable to develop their life projects, and ultimately experience a lower quality of life.

REGARDING SOCIAL ORGANIZATION:

- There are no mechanisms or social structures to address the discrimination and violence faced by LGBTQ+ individuals.
- While it is true that there is no organized movement specifically defending sexual diversity, LGBTQ+ individuals are combining their efforts and creating spaces through general organizations in the fields of health and human rights to work on issues related to sexual and gender diversity. It should be noted that this theme is not yet addressed in Rwanda.
- It is through civil society organizations that participated in the diagnosis that it would be possible to jointly build projects to help break stereotypes and prejudices against LGBTQ+ individuals in schools, hospitals, churches, etc.
- The organizations and individuals involved in the diagnosis could transform into a reference driving group to influence society and politics in favor of equal rights, regardless of their sexuality and gender.
- There is a need to initiate reflections and dialogues with leaders of religious and political communities regarding rights, access to education, health, and justice, and to address new paradigms for coexistence in Rwandan society and to break down stigmas and stereotypes against individuals based on their sexuality and gender

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ANNEX 1**ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

PROFILE:

- Age:
- Do you belong to the KEY POPULATION OF LGBTI collective?
- If yes, specify: L-G-T-B others.

1.- What is the situation of the LGBTI COLLECTIVE KEY POPULATION in the Rwandan context? (You can indicate more than one option, up to 3).

- Discrimination is very common.
- There is a great lack of awareness about the collective and the violence it faces.
- These individuals do not have the same rights as the rest of the Rwandan population.
- They can express themselves freely in public spaces.
- There is social and familial support for the collective.
- OTHERS... .

2.- Have you experienced or are you experiencing violence and/or discrimination due to your affiliation with the collective, or do you know someone who has? Specify the domain: (You can indicate more than one option)

- Family (from a family member)
- School
- Community/neighborhood
- At work
- In church, within the religious community.
- Police
- OTHERS: ..

3.- If a person experiences violence and/or discrimination due to

their affiliation with the LGBTIQ+ collective, can they take the complaint to the police?

-YES -NO -Why?

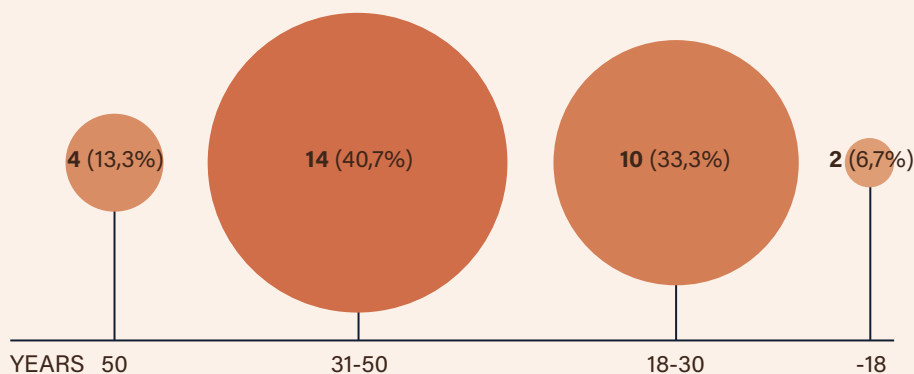
4.- Is the media's treatment of the collective correct?

-YES -NO -Why?

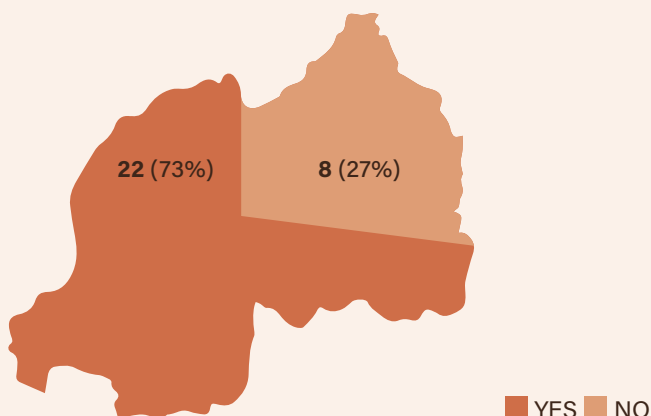
ANNEX 2

ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Age

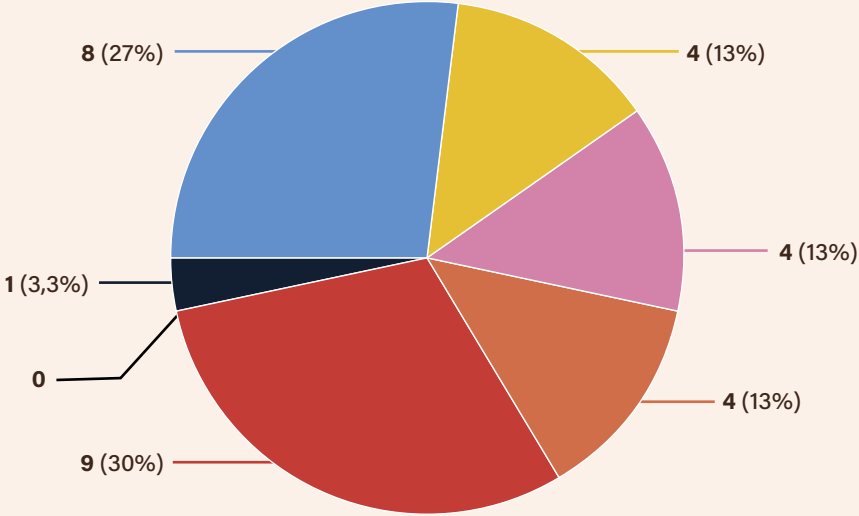


Are you a LGTBIQ collective member?

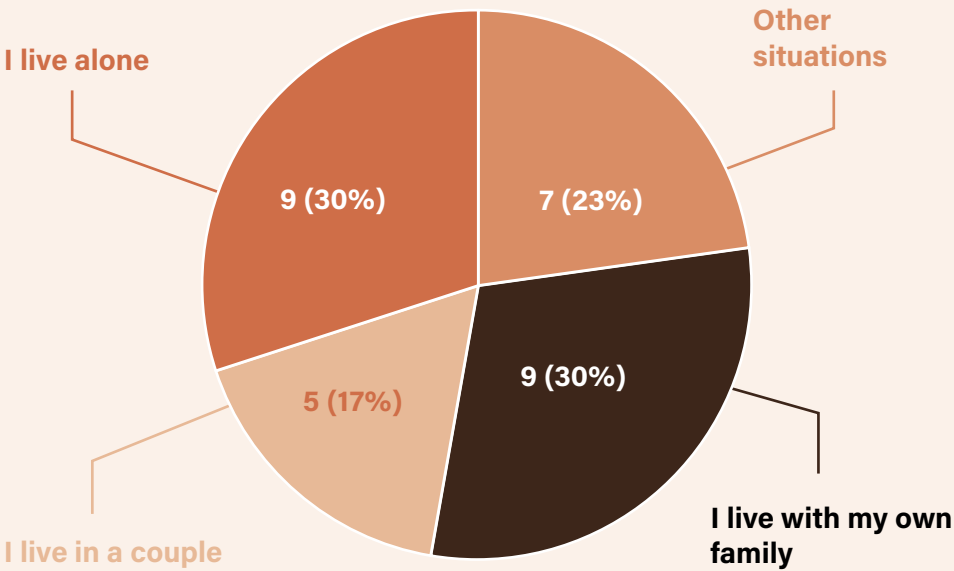


If yes how do you identify yourself?

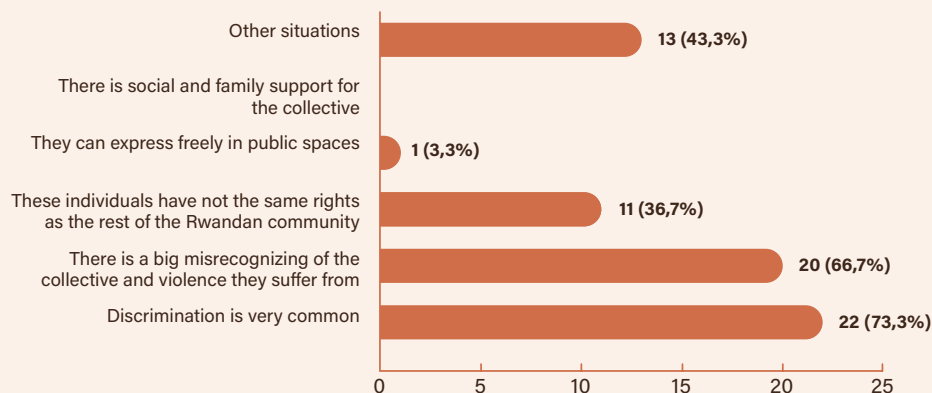
L G T B I Q others



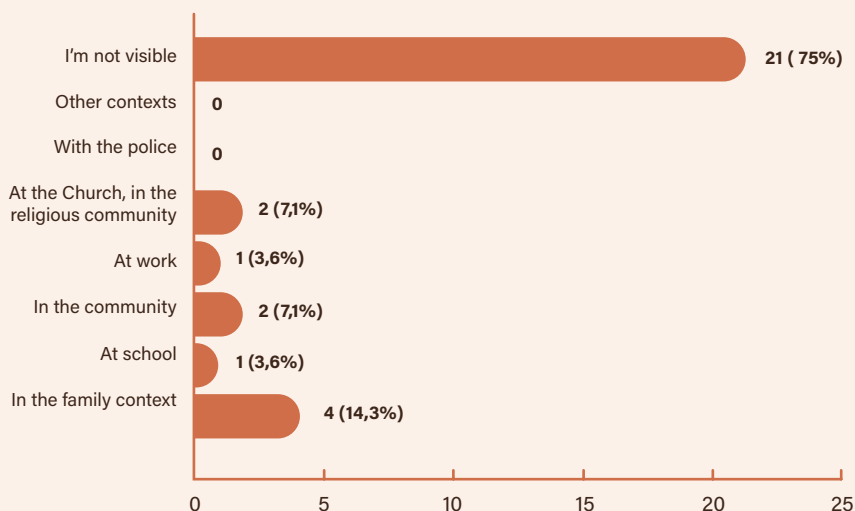
Who do you live with?



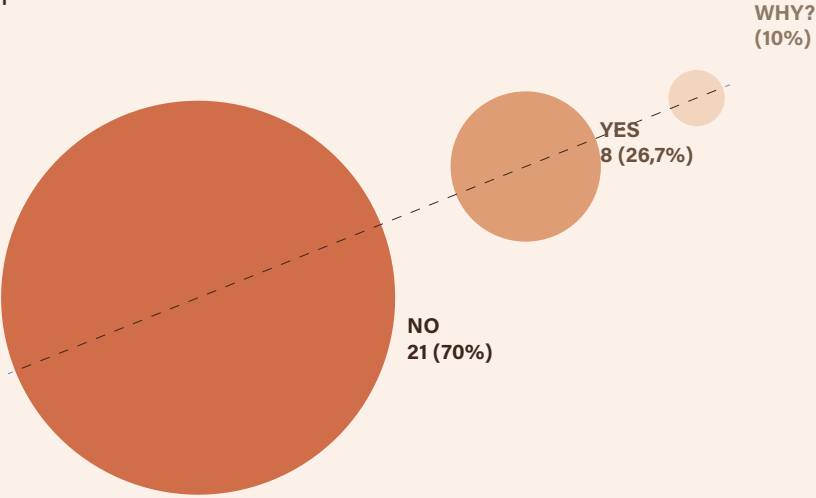
What is the prevailing situation of LGBTQ in the Rwandan context?



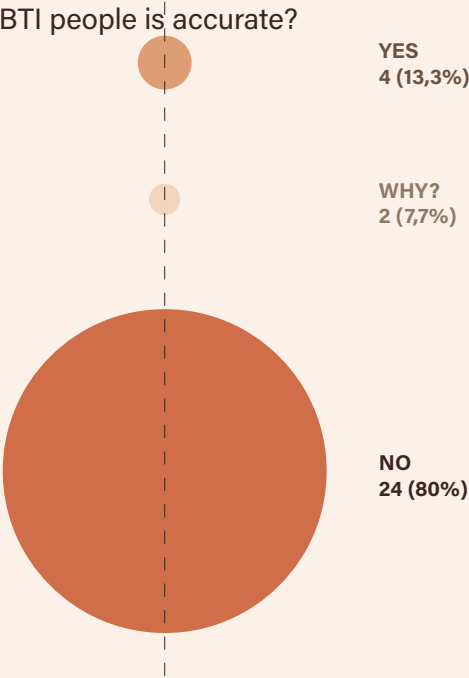
Have you ever experienced any violence and /or discrimination for being affiliated to LGTBQI collective or do you know anyone who was victim of violence and discrimination?



A person experiencing violence and/or discrimination due to their belonging to the LGBTQ+ community, can they take the complaint to the police?



Do you believe that the information and news disseminated in the media about LGBTI people is accurate?



INTRODUCTION

- Name
- Age
- Background: where they live, if they were born elsewhere, if they were forced to migrate within the country, etc.
- Definition: orientation/gender
- Marital status
- Education

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**BEING AN LGTBI+ PERSON IN RWANDA, WHAT DOES IT IMPLY?**

- Describe your experience as an LGTBI+ person.
- What are the main problems you have had to face in your daily life?
- Process:
 - * Family
 - * Friendships
 - * School
 - * Work
 - * Neighborhood, community
 - * Church

VISIBILITY: Is it possible to be visible in Rwanda?

- If you are not visible, how do you live in invisibility?
- Where and how do you meet other LGTBI+ individuals?
- Do you think there are prejudices and/or discrimination against individuals of sexual and gender diversity in your surroundings?
- Do you experience them yourself?
- How do you protect yourself in these situations? What strategies have you used to combat these situations? (both personally and those LGTBI+ individuals you know)

VIOLENCE

- Have you been a victim of any type of violence and/or discrimination?

- * If yes, explain what it was and in what it consisted.

NEEDS

- What are your personal needs and those of your surroundings as an LGBTBI+ person?
- On a collective level, what would you ask from society as an LGBTBI+ person?
- What needs to change for the situation of LGBTBI+ individuals to improve in Rwanda?

BELONGING TO A COLLECTIVE

- Are there LGBTBI+ collectives in Rwanda?
- Do you belong to an LGBTBI+ collective?
- If yes, what do you do, what are your goals, who do you work with, etc.?
- For what reasons did you join a collective?
- Being an LGBTBI+ person in Rwanda, what does that imply?
 - * What has it brought to you?
 - * Difficulties
- Discrimination within the collective
- Difficulties/challenges of associative life
- What is the reality of associative life currently?
- What are the needs? Please indicate 2 or 3.
- How do you organize yourself in the face of violence?
- Networks and relationships between LGBTBI+ collectives:
 - * Is it possible to create working networks?
 - * What networks exist and how is the work done?
- Relations with social movements: What relationships do you have with NGOs, feminist organizations, etc.?

ANNEX 4

INTERVIEW SCENARIO WITH INDIVIDUALS NOT BELONGING TO THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY

Introduction:

- Name
- Age
- Context: Where the person lives, their profession, educational background
- Relationship with the LGBTI+ community, explanation
- Type of relationship: Family, professional, activism, others (specify)

SITUATION OF THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY IN RWANDA

- General overview of the reality of LGBTI+ individuals in Rwanda
- What, in your opinion, are the main challenges these individuals face in their daily lives?
- Prejudices in society against LGBTI+ people:
 - * Laws
 - * Politics
 - * Media
 - * Religion
 - * Societal prejudices and the image of the community
- Has this resulted in increased violence towards LGBTI+ individuals?
- Do you know of any cases of violence and/or discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals?
- If yes, please explain.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SITUATION FOR LGBTI+ INDIVIDUALS IN RWANDA?

ANNEX 5

INTERVIEW SCENARIO WITH INDIVIDUALS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR ENTITIES

INTRODUCTION

- Name
- Age
- Context: Where the person lives, their profession, educational background
- If part of an organization: Name and brief description (type of association, sector of work)
- Relationship with the LGBTI+ community, explanation
- Type of relationship: Professional, activism in social movements, etc.
- Why does the person think it's important to work for the Human Rights of the LGBTI+ community?

SITUATION OF THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY IN RWANDA

- General overview of the reality of LGBTI+ individuals in Rwanda
- What, in your opinion, are the main challenges these individuals face in their daily lives?
- Prejudices in society against LGBTI+ people:
 - * Laws
 - * Politics
 - * Media
 - * Religion
 - * Societal prejudices and the image of the community
- Has this resulted in increased violence towards LGBTI+ individuals?

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SITUATION FOR LGBTI+ INDIVIDUALS IN RWANDA?

HOW CAN WE WORK TOWARDS HUMAN RIGHTS FOR LGBTI+ INDIVIDUALS?

ANNEX 6

SPECIFIC DOMAIN QUESTIONS BASED ON INDIVIDUALS' PROFILES OR ENTITIES

Observation: Additional specific questions can be asked based on the profile of individuals or entities.

CHURCH:

- What is the stance of churches regarding LGBTI+ individuals?
- Are there religious prejudices in Rwanda? If yes, which ones?

POLICE:

- What is the position and response of the police towards LGBTI+ individuals?
- Can an LGBTI+ person facing violence report it to the police? Is there police protection for LGBTI+ individuals facing violence?
- Is there a police intervention protocol?
- In your opinion, what actions should the police take regarding violence against LGBTI+ individuals in Rwanda?

HEALTH:

- Is there discrimination in healthcare towards LGBTI+ individuals? Are you aware of it?
- Do you know of or have you witnessed a case of denial of healthcare to an LGBTI+ person? For example, related to HIV.

EDUCATION:

- Is the theme of sexual and gender diversity addressed in the education sector?

JUSTICE:

- Is violence against LGBTI+ individuals prosecuted by the justice system?



