



**IDAHO COMMITTEE
MID TERM PERSPECTIVES
2016 2020**



**INTERNATIONAL DAY
AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA,
TRANSPHOBIA & BIPHOBIA**

A Worldwide Celebration of
Sexual and Gender Diversities

MAY 17



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Introduction

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How the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia can respond to the gaps and needs of organisations working in the field so as to advance the rights of sexual and gender minorities

2

How the IDAHO Committee's work thus far has been useful in making the Day an effective tool for activists worldwide

3

How the IDAHO Committee should develop its work over the coming 5 years

The IDAHO Committee was founded in 2005 by the international group of activists who initiated the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. Its aim has been to have the Day evolve into an indispensable landmark moment for activism in favour of sexual and gender diversities, and to support all stakeholders to use it as a strategic tool for action.

This mid term plan has been developed from the results of an assessment of the IDAHO Committee's 10 years of operation at the service of the global movement for sexual and gender diversities. It also reflects on-going discussions with a network of over 700 activists, as well as formal consultations and workshops with experts on sexual orientation and gender identity from all world regions.

Since 2005, May 17 has been dedicated to the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, marking the day in 1990 when the World Health Organisation removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders.

The Day represents an annual landmark to draw the attention of decision makers, the media, the public, opinion leaders and local authorities to the alarming situation faced by lesbian, gay, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people and all those who do not conform to majority sexual and gender norms.

May 17 is now celebrated in more than 130 countries, including 37 where same-sex acts are illegal, with 1600 events reported from 1280 organisations in 2014. These mobilisations unite millions of people in support of the recognition of human rights for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is breaking records for global mobilisation and outreach, with 200,000 unique posts referring to the Day on social media during May 2014 alone, representing a 100% increase over the average monthly activity on LGBTI rights on social media¹.

The IDAHOT has now been officially recognised by the EU Parliament, Spain, Belgium, Brazil, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, and the UK. It is also recognised by numerous local authorities across the world, for example the province of Quebec and the Parliament of Buenos Aires, amongst others, as well as by countless cities. In many other countries, national civil society coalitions are calling upon their respective authorities to give the Day official recognition.

¹ For details on this, see our study on the presence of the Day on social media dayagainsthomophobia.org

At a Glance





Why action takes place in 130 countries worldwide

The main rationale behind the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia is to constitute a moment that is visible at a global level without needing to be bound to any specific advocacy message nor type of action. The sheer diversity of social, religious, cultural and political contexts within which the rights to express one's gender and to engage in same-sex relationships needs to be addressed makes it impossible for a global campaigning movement to take one specific form of expression or to have one central policy agenda.



The Day provides ...

A specific moment for visibility, especially through the media, which escapes censorship.

A tool for action which can be tailored to local contexts.

A vehicle for strengthening the internal unity of the sexual and gender minorities movement.

“Opposing homo/transphobia can form a common denominator for a large spectrum of stakeholders. Hardly anyone, including religious authorities, will want to appear to support homophobia and transphobia, even if they refuse to support any concrete progressive measure to fight them.”

France

“As well as raising visibility and awareness of the implications of homophobia and transphobia, the day provides an opportunity to create an alternative self-composed narrative of LGBT people in Africa.”

“The regularity and predictability of the Day allow organisations to plan their mobilization even when the topic is not ‘hot’. Also, by centring the debates on the ‘phobia’, it allows the paradigm shift that the problem is not the diversity in human sexualities and gender expressions, but the irrational rejection they provoke in some people.”

“The Day is not dragged down by a Northern or Western identity and seen as somewhat neutral, without a political agenda that is owned by one geopolitical interest. It has sidestepped the geopolitics.”

Kenya

Indonesia

Botswana

The Day provides ...

A representation of sexual and gender diversities which balances out the dominant “Western” representations.

A specific vehicle with a “low entry point” for broad alliance building.

An entry point for advocacy, even in hostile contexts.

“When we hold a discussion with our medical profession, we always bring in the content of similar discussions held on the same day, on the same issue, in much more progressive contexts. The fact that the discussions happen at the same time strongly helps to make our case.”

Costa Rica

“The IDAHOT is a unique opportunity to see what happens elsewhere, to learn from what others do, to launch joint actions with others who work in similar contexts– it breaks the feeling of isolation we so often experience.”

Algeria

“The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia represents a moment when different groups coexist and come together under a same agenda, which gives a necessary complement to more specific dates that allow particular visibilities and empowerments, for example of Trans people”

Peru

Brazil

“By addressing both homophobia and transphobia, the Day encourages people to keep thinking about the commonalities of these two aspects of hetero and cisnormativities. It also provides an entry point to questioning the transphobia within LG and B communities.”

The Day provides ...

A platform for developing skills, exchanging inspiration, creating momentum for action, attracting new members and broaden supporter bases.

An entry point for analyzing local and global trends in stigma, homo/transphobia and social activism.

“The fact that the Day is officially recognized by almost 20 States, countless local authorities and several international institutions like the EU provides a strong argument for the legitimacy of our action in hostile contexts.”

“May 17 represents the only annual moment when we work together with organisations from other countries, on the same issues. We have other moments to talk about doing something, but May 17 is the moment when we actually do it.”

“There’s very little coverage about homosexuality or HIV/AIDS in Egypt, even negative. But authorities cannot censor international coverage of IDAHOT by the BBC or Al Arabiya. Some forms of visibility have to come from outside.”

China

Cambodia

Sri Lanka

“The wide official recognition which the Day gets, allows organisations to leverage policy support. We used the recognition that the Day gets from Western governments to get all their Embassies to raise the rainbow flag on their building on May 17th every year.”

“The fact that we know thousands of other activists are taking action on the same day is an incredible booster of our self confidence. We actually see that the global community somehow exists.”

Albania

Egypt



The IDAHO Committee

Our vision

is that of a world where all human beings can enjoy their full human rights. A world free of violence and stigmatisation against minority groups, where all expressions of one's sexuality, gender and sex are regarded as fundamental freedoms.

Our main mission,

for the past 10 years, has been to contribute to the global fight for the advancement of Human Rights for all, irrespective of sexuality and gender expression, by developing the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia as a key tool for action.

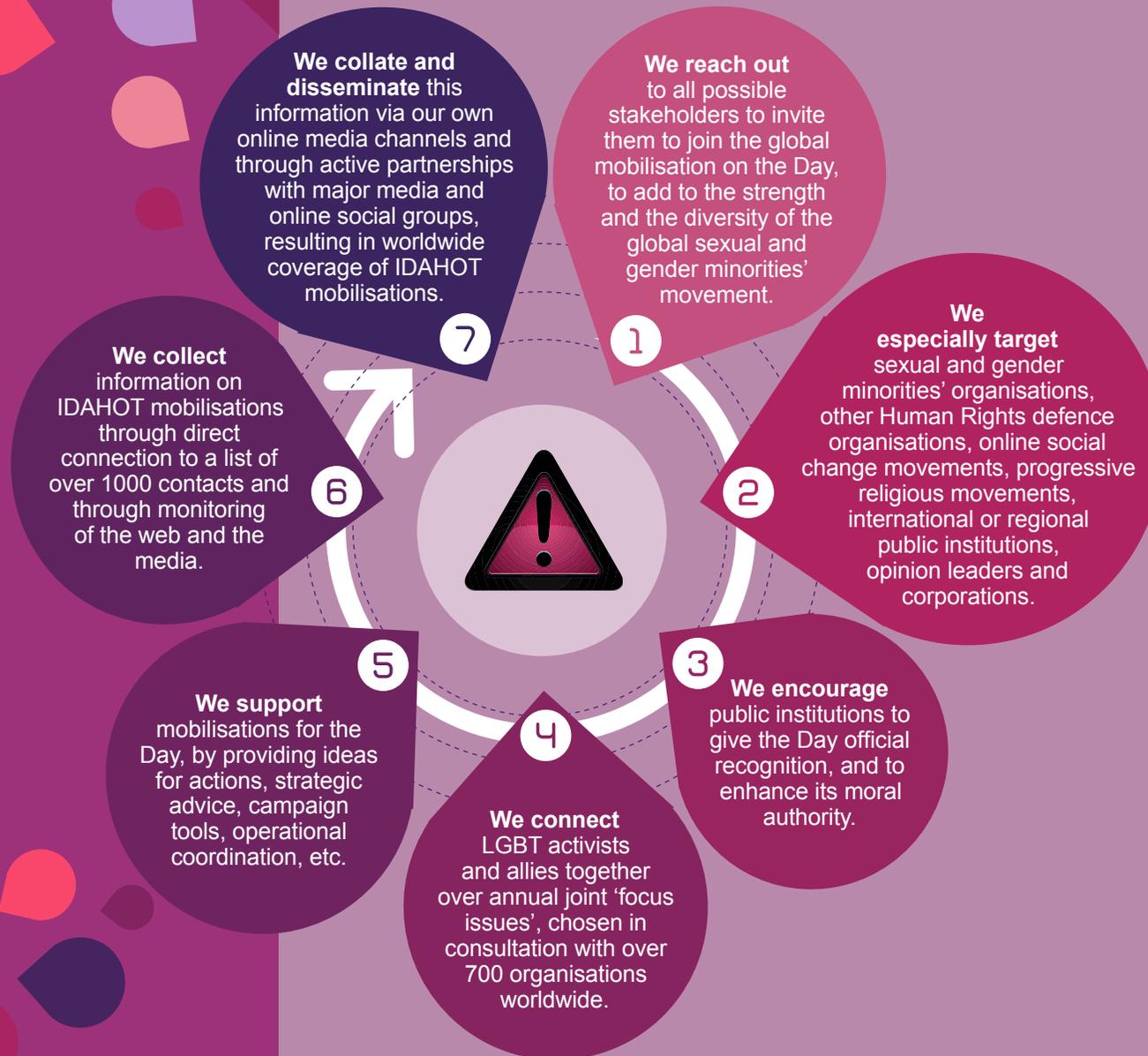
The IDAHO Committee was set up in 2005 by the founders of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Our values

reflect our belief in:

- The universality and indivisibility of Human Rights, including the right to freely define and enjoy one's sexuality and gender,
- The diversity of expressions of human sexuality, gender and sex, which cannot be limited to a binary division between male/female, heterosexual/homosexual, man/woman,
- The interconnectedness and intersectionality of many social change issues with the rights of sexual and gender minorities, amongst which violence against women, racial injustice, intergenerational violence, economical and political oppression have a strong interplay.

Core Current Strategies



Examples of Activities



Freedom of Expression

In 2014, our international network of activists chose the annual global focus issue to be “Respecting Freedom of Expression on Sexual and Gender Diversities”. We developed a core partnership with the international federation of organisations working on freedom of expression (IFEX), which resulted in activities being developed on this theme in at least 66 countries for May 17.

With IFEX, we jointly developed specific advocacy tools for use by activists at local level. This included a campaign kit, an “International Appeal to World Leaders” co-signed by hundreds of organisations, a joint declaration by all UN special procedures on Freedom of Expression, a “thunderclap” campaign which reached 1.5 million people online, and more.

➔ dayagainsthomophobia.org/freedom-of-expression

Regional Campaigns

In 2010-2011, we coordinated a regional campaign in Latin American, aimed at combatting 'reparative therapies'. The campaign spread over 13 countries and resulted in improved public awareness on the issue in all participating countries and in a series of national policy measures, including crackdowns on clinics.

Education

In 2012, the global focus issue was "Fighting homophobic bullying IN and THROUGH education". It created the backdrop for UNESCO to organise the first international UN conference on this issue on May 17 2012, and to develop guidelines to national Ministries of Education on tackling homophobic violence in schools.

We developed for UNESCO a special 'IDAHO lesson plan' designed for teachers to promote non-discrimination towards sexual and gender minorities in the classroom. This official UNESCO document has been promoted worldwide by the agency and has been translated into several languages.

 dayagainsthomophobia.org/resources-themes-education

Approach

We ensure the broadest possible ownership, by making sure the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia remains a neutral public space, for all to use. We work in regular consultation with a large network of contacts, so that the Day remains broadly accountable to the field, free of vested interests.

We position ourselves as a service organisation to the field, and keep a very low public profile, so as not to interfere with the ownership and visibility of other organisations. We engage in direct action only upon request from other organisations.

Flashmobs and Events

As part of the 2013 global focus issue, we coordinated the 'Global Rainbow Flashmob' event, which saw participation from groups from 100 cities worldwide. In 2014, we coordinated a 'Global Sing-in', uniting LGBT choirs from around the world.



dayagainsthomophobia.org

Check out the 'Global Rainbow Flashmob'

Watch the 'Global Sing-in'

International Conference

We lobbied the OECD and the World Bank to encourage them to launch investigations on the economic cost of homophobia for developing countries, in order to provide a complementary approach to a Human Rights based approach. This resulted in the first international conference on the subject held on IDAHOT 2012, where several initiatives in this field were announced.

Regional Reports

We have developed a series of regional reports on good practice and challenges around the Day, in order to help organisations make best strategic use of it.

Furthermore, we regularly disseminate strategic information from IDAHOT at major gatherings of Human Rights defenders, with the help of our 30 advisors and other activists dedicated to promoting the Day.



dayagainsthomophobia.org/idahot-reports

Networks

We continuously document innovative creative campaigning taking place around the Day and facilitate an online group of 800+ activists, aimed at exchanging strategic information and developing skills for advocacy and campaigning around the Day.



dayagainsthomophobia.org/ideas-for-action
www.facebook.com/groups/IDAHOTcreative.protest

Outreach Tools

We have developed outreach tools to encourage corporations to engage with LGBTI solidarity around IDAHOT and we directly distributed these at core global gatherings of corporate LGBT groups.



dayagainsthomophobia.org
Download the 2014 IDAHOT Brochure

HIV Prevention

We have analysed how organisations in the global South working on HIV prevention have integrated the fight against homo/transphobia within their action plans. This is part of a longer-term strategy to improve awareness within

HIV-focused organisations of the dependencies and connections between homo/transphobia and HIV transmission, and to develop their strategic capacity to address this structural dimension.



dayagainsthomophobia.org
Download the report

Current Organisational Setup

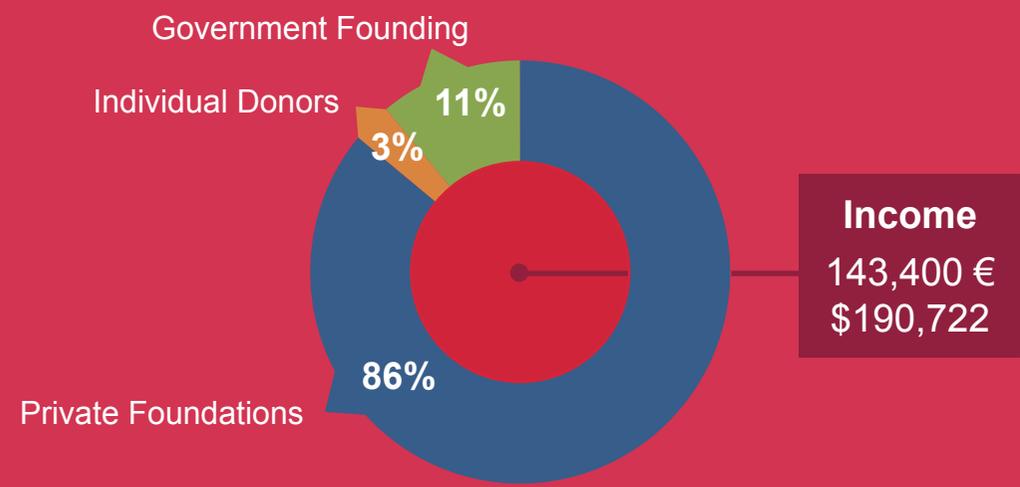
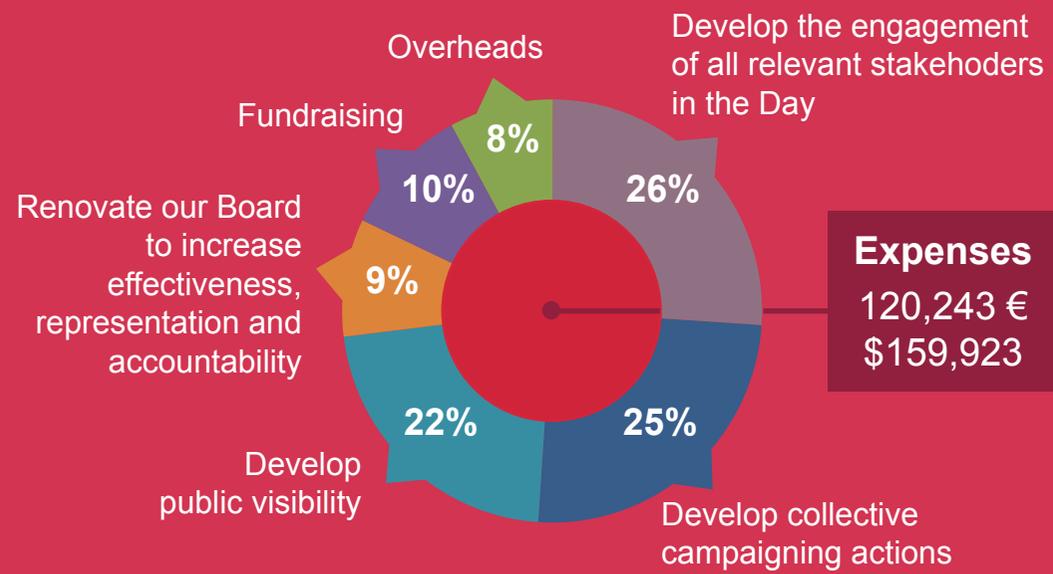
Members of the IDAHO Committee are elected by their peers on the basis of their expertise and commitment to serving the mission of the Day, and to preserving its neutrality. The committee is directed by a board of trustees of 8 experts, essentially from the global South with a balance of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual composition, and a geographical balance with representation from Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Europe.

We are supported by an advisory board of 30 people from 25 countries from all world regions.

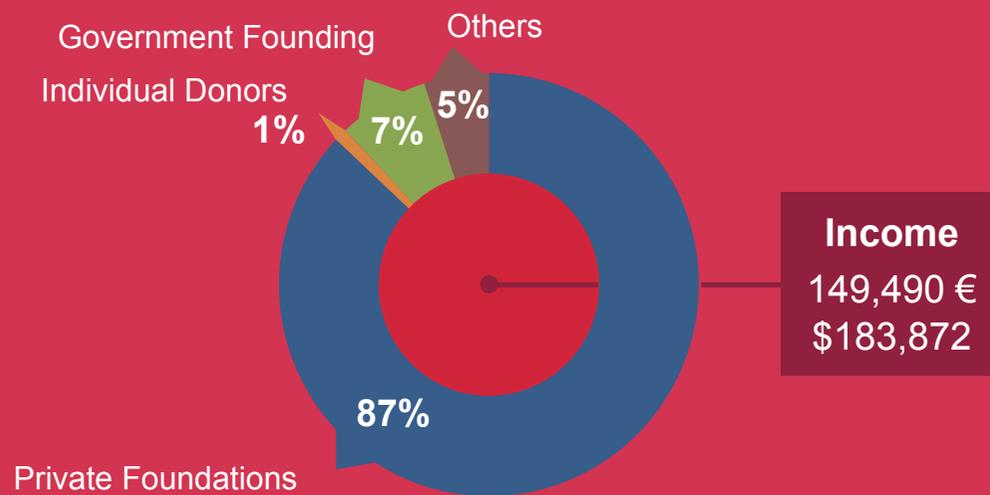
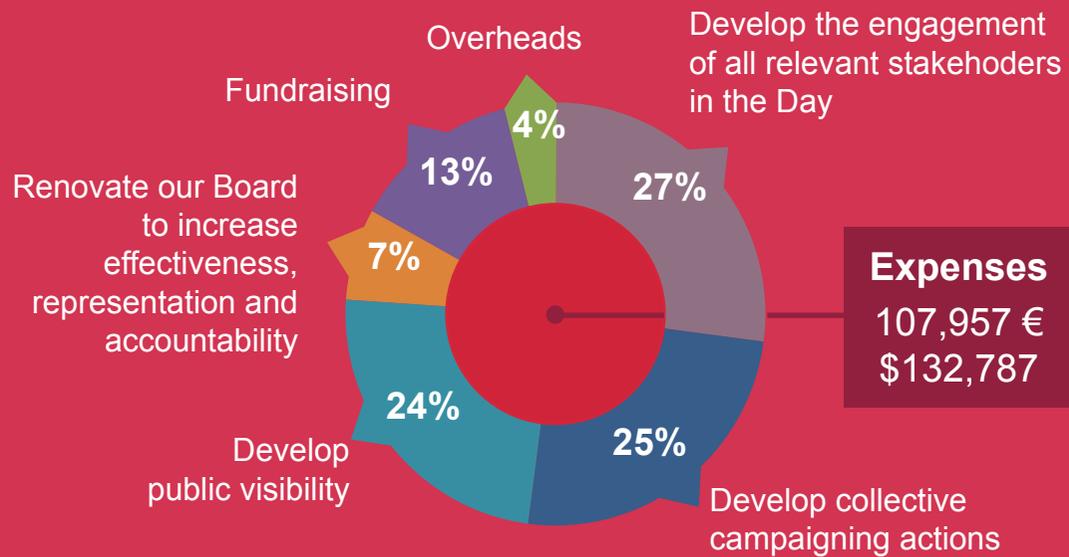
For historical reasons we are registered in France but are considering moving this registration to the global South as early as 2015.



Funding



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Strategic Plan 2016-2020

The mid-term plan elaboration process² has identified that the current activities and processes are to a large extent useful to the field and should be continued. It has recommended that the IDAHO Committee over the next five years particularly focuses its activities on:

1

Continuing to make the Day as diverse, visible and authoritative as possible.

2

Deepening alliances with other social change movements.

3

Supporting the capacity of organisations to strategically invest the IDAHOT, with a special focus on creative public campaigning.

² A comprehensive overview of the outcomes of the process is available upon request.

1

Enhance visibility, diversity, and authority of the Day

Our objective over the next 5 years is to keep the visibility of the Day growing, and to confirm its position as biggest key annual landmark in the promotion of sexual and gender diversities.

One of the main added values of the Day is that it represents a powerfully visible moment of the global strength and diversity of the sexual and gender minorities' movement.

The IDAHO Committee has always been in a unique position to channel this visibility.

In order to achieve this, we will continue to increase our partnerships with influential channels of visibility, including online and offline media, major online social activism groups, opinion leaders and celebrities, etc.

We aim at increasing the visibility of the diversity of forms and expressions of sexual and gender diversities by giving more visibility to minority groups, especially to groups which express sexualities and gender in ways that are rooted in local cultures.

We will also continue to give specific visibility to trans, bisexual and Intersex groups, in order to challenge the binary representations of sexes, sexualities and gender expressions.

2

Deepen alliances with other social change movements

Our objective over the next 5 years is to increase the mutual support between sexual and gender minorities and other social change movements.

Change for those people persecuted on the ground of their sexual orientation and gender identity or expression will come through larger social changes, including on gender violence, freedom of assembly, protection of the individual, freedom of expression, etc. Sexual and gender minorities therefore need to participate in wider social transformation dynamics.

In addition, the sexual and gender minorities' movement is not strong enough to achieve long lasting significant change by itself alone. The mobilisation of wider social change movements will contribute to amplify the global wave of support for the rights of sexual and gender minorities.

This will be achieved by reaching out continuously to a large range of stakeholders, with a particular focus on religious progressive movements, and highlighting the interconnection between causes, so as to mobilise them towards the rights of sexual and gender minorities.

This will also be achieved by facilitating the mobilisation of the sexual and gender minorities community on other social change struggles. Other thematic celebration and commemoration days provide a natural channel for the IDAHO Committee to promote this and give it a concrete expression.

3

Support organisations to take action

Our objective over the next 5 years is to upscale and improve the support we provide to organisations on developing and implementing campaigns and advocacy initiatives.

Isolation, lack of resources, lack of targeted support, and the continuous need to focus on operational tasks all contribute to weaken organisations' capacities to invest in improving their strategic approach to effective campaigning.

We will primarily work from the expertise and experience gained from IDAHOT-focused actions around the world, but will also tap into the wider knowledge and expertise on social change processes. Promoting synergies over global focus issues will remain a central approach.

We will use our knowledge of the stakeholders in the field to generate ideas for actions, produce campaigning tools and manuals, develop guidelines on how to assess social change, develop capacities of CBOs in media relations and other relevant fields.

Methodology and approaches

We will keep promoting the broadest possible ownership, by ensuring the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia remains a neutral public space, for all to use.

We will keep working in regular consultation with a large network of contacts, so that the Day remains broadly accountable to the field, free from vested interests.

We will continue to expand our advisory board to increase its representation of the global sexual and gender minorities' movement.

We will increase our capacity to provide strategic analysis by calling on a large range of experts from the field.

We will increase the collaborations with organisations at all levels to develop joint strategies to achieve our objectives.

We will develop mechanisms to facilitate peer learning and support, accessing and leveraging existing expertise and knowledge in global campaigning.

A Final Word

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extract of the external assessment report
commissioned by the IDAHO Committee in 2013

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia provides something important and unique in the global LGBT rights movement: a low-barrier, high-impact way for activists to organize, identify their own issues, and mobilize in solidarity and amplification with global allies.

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia provides a “big-tent” for diverse participants across the globe to publicly demonstrate against homophobia and discrimination. It offers a compelling, unifying, accessible entry point for those who are new to LGBTI activism and those otherwise isolated from the movement.

The day is indeed seen as contributing to a growing, ambient change in the public discourse and understanding of the lives of sexual and gender minorities and the violence faced by LGBTI people around the world.

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contact@dayagainsthomophobia.org



www.dayagainsthomophobia.org



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