Driving Inclusion
Addressing legal barriers for sexual and gender minorities

+ Remarks from Kenichi Yokoyama, Director General, South Asia Department, ADB; and Manuela Ferro, Regional Vice President for East Asia and Pacific, World Bank

+ Real life accounts from South Asia about exclusion and vulnerability as well as hopeful stories about inclusion

+ CSOs from Southeast Asia as well as Central and West Asia on how legal barriers affect communities

The ADB event for International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOBTB) as part of ADB and World Bank Group Joint Coordinated Event

Title: Driving Inclusion – Addressing legal barriers for sexual and gender minorities
Date: Wednesday, 18 May 2022, 4:00 p.m. GMT+8
Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes
Location: Zoom platform
Format: Virtual
Lead: Oliver Chapman
Comms Lead: Toni Leyble

Purpose: To commemorate the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOBTB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank Group (WBG) will host virtual, high-level events to draw the attention of policymakers, opinion leaders, social movements, the public, and the media to the violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) people in Asia and the Pacific, and around the world. These events will build on the collaboration between the two multilateral development banks (MDBs) on researching the legal barriers to Sexual and Gender Minorities (SOGI) inclusion in development contexts.

Objectives:

- To announce the partnership between the ADB and the World Bank on expanding the Equality of Opportunities for Sexual and Gender Minorities (EQOSOGI) initiative\(^1\).

\(^1\) The WB-ADB partnership includes:

- “The Legal Barriers to Equality of Opportunity for Sexual and Gender Minorities” will be an ADB-led regional study of 20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The next iteration of the “Equality of Opportunity for Sexual and Gender Minorities” is a joint WB-ADB report, containing the 16 initial countries, the 20 Asia-Pacific countries, and a set of 30 new countries, making a total of 66 countries.
To share knowledge from LGBTQI community members and CSOs, academics and the legal profession, who are advocating for inclusive laws and policies, and expanding civic space for sexual and gender minorities in the global south.

Focus of the events
- Discrimination and violence faced by LGBTQI people and legal barriers to their inclusion
- Progress and status of the ADB-WBG EQOSOGI study
- Provide a platform for stories of LGBTQI people and the impact of legislation/rights on their everyday lives

Background
May 17 has been the single most important date for LGBTQI communities and allies to mobilize on a global scale in support of equality and inclusion. This is the fourth consecutive ADB commemoration of IDAHOTB and the sixth consecutive for the WBG. This year’s global theme for IDAHOTB is Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Rights. LGBTQI people have made tremendous progress globally in claiming rights and promoting inclusive societies. However, they continue to face immense challenges and barriers, including legal barriers, which hinder their participation in society. Currently, 69 countries globally (including 19 ADB Developing Member Countries) criminalize homosexuality or some forms of gender identity. Further, some governments are using the response to COVID-19 to roll back rights of vulnerable populations, including specifically targeting LGBTQI people.

First launched by WBG in September 2021, the Equality of Opportunity for Sexual and Gender Minorities (EQOSOGI) report is a first-of-its-kind analysis of laws and regulations that affect the lives of sexual and gender minorities. EQOSOGI assesses LGBTQI-related laws and regulations in 16 geographically and socioeconomically diverse countries. The report covers six thematic domains to identify differences in the legal treatment of sexual and gender minorities, including criminalization, political and civil inclusion, protection from hate crimes, access to inclusive education, the labor market, and social protection.

The next steps in the expansion of the EQOSOGI initiative include a partnership between WBG and ADB which will be formally announced during IDAHOTB. ADB will lead on a 14-country report that will focus on the Asia-Pacific region. The WBG and ADB will use the data from the ADB report, collect data for a new set of countries (tentatively 30 new countries), and update the data from the original 16 countries to produce a joint report that will also feature economic analysis and correlations of SOGI inclusive legal frameworks with economic indicators.

Joint WB-ADB Events on EQOSOGI Research

Dates:  
WBG – 18 May 2022, 8:30 a.m. EST  
ADB - 18 May 2022, 4:00 p.m. PST

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2 Stories from community members help increase awareness of the role of legal rights and regulatory reforms in achieving equality of opportunity for LGBTQI people.
3 14 countries are currently confirmed – additional countries are in the process of concurrence
**Audience:**
- Government representatives, MDB staff, civil society, academics, think tanks, and other stakeholders.

**Agenda for ADB-led event**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 – 4:01 pm/PST</td>
<td>Welcome by the moderator, Oliver Chapman, Senior Social Development Specialist, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, NGO and Civil Society Center, ADB—2 minutes</td>
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<td>4:02 – 4:07 pm/PST</td>
<td>Opening remarks, Kenichi Yokoyama, Director General, South Asia Department, ADB—5 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:07 – 4:12 pm/PST</td>
<td>Seconding opening remarks, Manuela Ferro, Regional Vice President, East Asia and Pacific, WBG—5 minutes</td>
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| 4:13 – 4:33 pm/PST | Stories from the pandemic and wider experiences of inclusion and exclusion in South Asia amongst LGBTQI populations:  
  Individual stories of beneficiaries working with:  
  i. Bandhu Social Welfare Society, Bangladesh,  
  ii. Pride Bhutan, Bhutan, @pridebhutanadmin  
  iii. Mitini Nepal, Nepal, @mitini.nepal  
| 4:34 – 4:40 pm/PST | Brief overview by Research Team Leader and Consultant, World Bank and ADB Legal Barriers to SOGI inclusion research, which covers six thematic focus areas:  
  - Criminalization; Education; Public services and social protection (which includes health); Access to labor market; Civil and political inclusion; and Protection from hate crimes |
| 4:40 – 4:55 pm/PST | Examination of how specific legal barriers relate to exclusion and vulnerability in selected thematic focus areas:  
  - Public Services and Social Protection, Mamikon Hovsepyan, Pink Armenia, Armenia (@pinkarmenia)  
  - Access to the Labor Market, Yara Kong, Micro Rainbow International Foundation, Cambodia (@MicroRainbowInternational)  
  - Protection from Hate Crimes, Anri Abuladze, Tbilisi Pride, Georgia (@TilisPride) |
| 4:56 – 5:10 pm/PST | Q&A, facilitated by Oliver Chapman |
| 5:11 – 5:13 pm/PST | Closing remarks  
  Xiaohong Yang, Chief Thematic Officer, SDCC, ADB |
| 5:14 – 5:15 pm/PST | Wrap up, moderator. |