

UNITED BELIZE ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

COHESION RETREAT:

BASELINE MOVEMENT BUILDING REPORT

24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2018



## Table of Contents

<b>Introductions</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Literature Review on LGBT Movement building in the Americas& UK.....	7
Unite Kingdom Movement Framework.....	10
<b>LGBT Movement Building in Latin America</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Data Analysis</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Political Environment.....	26
Economic environment.....	27
Social Environment .....	27
Technological Environment .....	28
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>33</b>
Annex One: Latino LGBT History in America.....	34
Annex Two: America LGBT Movement.....	38

## Section I: Introduction

The arrival of the gay rights movement in Belize could arguable have started with the United Belize Advocacy Movement receiving non-governmental status on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The subsequent launch of the constitutional challenge in 2010 to amend section 53, Belize's sodomy law, became the most important single event that formalised representation of an issue in the advancement of human rights in Belize.

However, deeper analysis reveals that the basic framework of a movement in Belize may have started much earlier with Alliance Against AIDS who organized to respond to the early epidemic of HIV which hit Belize in 1986. They did community trainings on HIV prevention, stigma and discrimination and male sexual health. In addition, it was, the OPEC Fund support for marginalised groups including sex workers and men who have sex with men through UNFPA, the Pan American Social Marketing Organization, prevention work with MSM, and the Ministry of Health desire to do a multi-centric study starting 2005 that combined to create the institutional ingredients for building a social framework that helped cultivate a larger vision for the LGBT community representation to 1). Engage policy and health spaces 2). Advance data structures and institutional representation and build relationships with international allies.

The results of that formation led to acquiring representation as a Commissioner on the National AIDS Commission, to become a member of The Women's Issues Network, to join an OAS LGBT Coalition to advance SOGI resolutions at the OAS since 2008, and partnering internationally with Heartland Alliance, the Synergia, The Commonwealth Equality Network, The Sexual Rights Initiative, Human Dignity Trust, Commonwealth Lawyers Association, International Commission of Jurists, CARIFLAGS, the University of the West Indies Rights Advocacy Project, among others.

UniBAM political engagement have used a leverage strategy to amplify its concerns through OAS systems, international treaty obligations processes, diplomatic communication, litigation, legal research, investment in a social infrastructure, national dialogue and policy engagement in health and rights to advance its message. It has succeeded in highlighting homophobia through media opposition, documenting, the anti- right rally between battlefield Park in 2011 and rallies in 2016 had an accumulated 6,000 people plus people overall. Our work has pulled out the closet opposition voices like Minister Boots Martinez, Julius Espat, Maria Zabaneh, Mayor Lopez, Pastor Scott Stirm, Louis Wade, Pastor Lance Luis. UniBAM's work has inspired or influenced the creation of social structures that have created virtual platforms for community education and in providing technical support; stirred political statements from both the leader of the opposition Francis Fonseca and Prime Minister Barrow respectively; led to engagements with the Foreign Minister; indirect engagement with the Council of Churches and the I.A.C.H.R and opened up a discussion on policy norming that follows the principle of respect for diversity. What our work has not done is shifted the political tone that have occurred in 2013 to substance in 2015. Substance that established the state commitment to legislation around discrimination and violence; rights enforcement and protection mechanisms that supports institutional accountability in civil court; advance institutional investment in building data structures that disaggregates data and human rights education for all citizens.

Leaping to substance in a country of 360,838<sup>1</sup> people with unknown quantifiable LGBT citizens remains a challenge as the recent Population Size Estimate Study reveals reveals speaks to an estimated 12,000 men who have sex with men plus in 2018 and over 1200 transgender

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sib.org.bz/>

Belizean, but the study's number, does not speak to lesbians in the country, nor the community collective civil, economic, cultural, social and political rights concerns.

It is in this light; the paper seeks to establish the history of mobilisation among civil society in the UK and the Americas to define institutional strategies for garnering political support and define mobilisation strategies that influenced sustained engagement and action. While Britain's and Latin America history might be different, we can learn and refine our political engagement work in Belize and among the 10 states in the Caribbean that have similar laws affecting same sex activity.

Our strategies of using social media, diplomatic engagement, local institutional intermediaries to advance talks with Faith Base Leaders, using international treaty obligations like the ICCPR and the Universal Periodic Review, UN High Level Meetings, OAS General Assembly to map out political mind set of Ambassadors in the region has been one layer of political communication and engagement. The next level of national engagement speaks to building a framework of community-leaders and mainstreaming our concerns with Women's Groups and traditional Sexual and Reproductive Rights groups. We have virtual champions, but remain challenge to develop a pool of political champions as part of our process of public communication.

In the UK, a list of champions developed that included MEP Lord Michael Cashman, Ruth Davidson an MP and Ben Bradshaw all politicians who helped to amplify LGBT policy issues, shows, that even politicians can claim the values of equality. In 2011, for example, there was a list of 100 persons that were identified as part of the pride power process<sup>2</sup>. Belize need not be different.

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<sup>2</sup> Pride List 2011: [http://www.lgbthistoryuk.org/wiki/index.php?title=Pride\\_Power\\_List\\_2011](http://www.lgbthistoryuk.org/wiki/index.php?title=Pride_Power_List_2011)

The question for us is, are we going into the right direction? We will do a comparative analysis of Latin America, British and American LGBT political strategies within Belize to establish patterns of strategies and challenges to inform UniBAM scaling up its Advocacy along with satellites organizations that are LGBT inclusive.



## Section II: Literature Review on LGBT Movement in the Americas &UK

In 1965, members of the LGBT community rallied in the American capital and gathered in front of the White House to stage the first LGBT rights demonstration in the United States. Before the landmark demonstration, there were already several organisations formed to address the concerns of gays and lesbians. The **Mattachine Society**, founded in 1950 in Los Angeles that became one of the first organisations to promote the rights of gay men while the **Daughters of Bilitis** was the first lesbian civil and political rights organisations formed in San Francisco in 1955<sup>3</sup>. Transsexuals in San Francisco formed C.O.G. (Conversion Our Goal) in 1967, which, after a series of internal schisms, became the National Transsexual Counseling Unit, and later the Transexual Counseling Service, both funded in part by the Erickson Educational Foundation.

A more visible American LGBT movement emerged as an offshoot of the **Stonewall Riots** that transpired in New York beginning 28 June 1969. Within a year of Stonewall, New York and San Francisco were hosting Gay Pride marches. Within a couple of years, there were out, elected public officials, national watchdog groups, and lobbying organizations. Led by a relatively small number of activists, organizations such as the Gay Liberation Front formed in small spaces immediately post-Stonewall.

In the early 1970s in Philadelphia, the Radical Queens Collective forged effective political links with gay liberation and lesbian feminist activism and were influenced by other movements on gender equality and feminism, African-American civil rights, and anti-war

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<sup>3</sup> [www.versiondaily.com/brief-history-of-the-lgbt-movement-in-the-united-states/](http://www.versiondaily.com/brief-history-of-the-lgbt-movement-in-the-united-states/)

sentiments In Southern California, activists such as Jude Patton and Joanna Clark spearheaded competent social, psychological, and medical support services for transgender people.

However, the concern of the American LGBT community largely centred on gay liberation—a concept that was focused less on civil rights and more on personal empowerment. The movement accomplished several breakthroughs beginning 1970. Among these included the declassification of homosexuality as a disease in 1974 by the American Psychiatric Association. The increasing visibility of specific LGBT communities in cities and states promoted gradual acceptance and better social integration. The Gay Liberation Front that emerged after the Stonewall Riots proliferated across colleges and universities in the early 1970s. Subsequently, the movement shifted from liberation to civil rights<sup>4</sup>.

The LGBT movement eventually evolved to become an established political ideology and social movement centred on full acceptance of LGBT people in society. In 1974 for instance, liberal lawmakers had started pushing for amendments in the Civil Rights Act to extend federal government protection against LGBT discrimination. Community members and supporters rallied to oppose discrimination or homophobia, challenge dominant constructs of masculinity and femininity, and promote equal rights. However, further attempts to advance during the latter part of the 1970s, saw **conservative politicians and religious leaders** rallied to have numerous LGBT-related legislations repealed and blocked. For years to come, the supporters and opponents of the LGBT movement marked one of the greatest divided in the American society<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex One for Latino LGBT History in America Pg33

<sup>5</sup> See Annex two for America LGBT timeline Pg 37

Gay organizations have since morphed into huge operations, such as the Human Rights Campaign, an internationally renowned lobbying organization, and the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), with its focus on changing the images of gays and lesbians in popular media.<sup>6</sup> Globally, LGBT activist's donors, specialised foundations, like GATES for trans organizations and REDLACTRANS in Latin America, The Commonwealth Equality Network, AMSHER in Africa, OAS/LGBT Network, CARIFLAGS, Global Equality, Equal Rights Coalition, UN and OAS LGBT Core group, ILGA among others have all evolved in the global fight for decriminalisation. Globally, resolutions at the Organizations of American States, the use of UN human Rights mechanisms have given life to outcomes that incorporate key population, diverse families into conclusion documents of how international human rights law apply to persons base on sexual orientation and gender identity are particular advancements in the fight. Global fund, United Nation Commission on the Status of Women, High Level Political Declaration on HIV, Astrea foundation complement global work with personal empowerment efforts in health and rights.

Mentioning, Global progress did not happen without national movements in the past. The LGBT movement saw the removal of sodomy laws in the U.S. Illinois was the first state to abolish sodomy law in 1961. Throughout the 20th century, the gradual liberalisation of American norms led to the elimination of sodomy laws in most states, but the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of several provisions. However, in 2003, the Supreme Court reversed earlier decisions in *Lawrence v. Texas*, thus striking down sodomy law in Texas and by extension, invalidating sodomy laws in 13 other states. **Same-sex sexual activity became legal** in every U.S. state and territory.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/rights/info-06-2009/what\\_the\\_stonewall\\_riots\\_mean\\_to\\_me.html](https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/rights/info-06-2009/what_the_stonewall_riots_mean_to_me.html)

### Section III: United Kingdom Movement Framework

Litigation and legislative reform has been a big part of the civil rights transformation to advance protections. In the UK Sex Discrimination Act was amended to include gender reassignment regulations in 1999. In a Strausburg case, in 2002, Christine Goodwin VS UK found that there was a violation of Act. 8(right to privacy and family life);act 12(right to marry and found a family); Act 14( free from discrimination); Act 13( right to effective remedy) at the European Court of Justice (app.28957/95). The ruling led to the Gender Recognition Act. The British history of gay liberation and civil rights movement were advanced by everyday citizens. In assessing the UK rights environment, it seems there were key strategies or events which push civil rights advancement forward. The 1<sup>st</sup> was the Wolfenden Report of 1954 which called for the decriminalisation of same sex activity between consenting adults. It was not until 1967 that the recommendation was implemented in Parliament. The 2<sup>nd</sup> strategy was the use of litigation at the E.C.H.R. The process was helped along with the litigation case Dudgeon vs UK (1981)<sup>7</sup> which received its decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, which declared, ‘criminalising consensual sexual acts between adult men in Northern Ireland was in breach of Convention, Article 8, which provides a right to a private life. The Court also confirmed that such legislation contradicted the right to a private life in the case of Norris v Ireland (1988) and Modinos v Cyprus (1993)<sup>8</sup>. In addition, in ADT vs UK (2000), the EHCR<sup>9</sup> confirmed there was a violation under article 8 and it did not need to review the case under article 14 while recalling its decision under Dudgeon. The 3<sup>rd</sup> was the centralisation of policy priorities when engaging the state by civil society and unions alike, 4<sup>th</sup> the physical and political visibility of politicians across party

<sup>7</sup> Dudgeon vs UK: [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-57473#{"itemid":\["001-57473"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-57473#{)

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.stonewall.org.uk/at\\_home/immigration\\_asylum\\_and\\_international/2681.asp#military\\_ban](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/at_home/immigration_asylum_and_international/2681.asp#military_ban)

<sup>9</sup> ADT vs UK: [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-58922#{"itemid":\["001-58922"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-58922#{)

lines, the 5<sup>th</sup> was the EU directive of 2000 and 6<sup>th</sup> there was a public shift in attitude through a socio-cultural events and investments in specialised social infrastructure like SOHO, for LGBT citizens.

Litigation acted as a catalyst for institutional transformation, for Darienne Flemington, immigration case, on 4 August 1994, the Home Office finally granted leave to remain in the UK. The couple, lobbied and appealed through the courts, founded the Stonewall Immigration Group – now the UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group.<sup>10</sup> It experienced many members deported, put in prison for false documents or false marriages.<sup>11</sup> The group reported that lobbying Labour while still in opposition resulted – after their election – in the “unmarried partner’s concession”. At the outset in 1997, 4 years of prior cohabitation was required to qualify, reducing to 2 years in 1999, with the concession becoming law in 2000. In November 2004, the Civil Partnership Bill was passed. Once this legislation came into use in December 2005, it ensured equal immigration rights for same sex couples.

Family law was evolving as well, the Portuguese case on child custody affected jurisprudence of the UK. *Salgueiro Da Silva Mouta v Portugal* case (1999), found there was in breach of Article 8 of the Convention, the right to a private life, violated Article 14 of the Convention which prohibits discrimination.

The impact of litigation cannot be undervalued as the E.C.H.R decisions around *Lustig-Prean and Beckett v UK* (1999), *Smith and Grady v UK* (1999) followed announcement in 2000 that the UK government would lift the ban on gay and lesbian military service officer. There

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<sup>10</sup>UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group: <http://uklgig.org.uk/>

<sup>11</sup> Immigration challenge: <https://www.unison.org.uk/upload/sharepoint/On%20line%20Catalogue/22983.pdf>

were other cases like *Smith and Grady v UK* (1999)<sup>12</sup>, *Perkin and R v UK* (2002) and *Beck, Copp and Bazeley v UK* (2002)<sup>13</sup>. Showing that LGBT individuals were not willing to accept the status quo of institutionalised discrimination. Legislation followed as well, for age of consent when in 2001 it was announced consent would be equalised to 16 years for gay men following a 1994 action that had reduced the age from 21 to 18. This action followed after *Sutherland v United Kingdom* (1996). Mr Euan Sutherland lodged a complaint to the European Commission of Human Rights that the fixing of the minimum age for lawful homosexual activities at 18 rather than 16 violated his right to respect for private life under Article 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom. In response to the commission's findings, the Applicant and the UK Government, on 13 October 1997, submitted an agreement that a Bill would be proposed to Parliament the summer of 1998 to reduce the age of consent for homosexual acts to 16.<sup>14</sup> As a result, the Bill was adopted under the Parliament Act at the end of the 2000 Parliamentary year and the Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2000, received royal assent on 30 November 2000 and was brought into force on 8 January 2001. Additional cases followed in *L. and V. v Austria* (2003) and *S.L. v Austria* (2003).

The second shift that highlights an important policy movement event was the European Directive of 2000, regarding employment and discrimination. The European Directive (2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000)<sup>15</sup> in regard to employment and discrimination spoke to religions belief, race, gender, disability, age and sexual orientation. A process, that recognised the intersectional issues of race, sexuality, gender, religion and disability, helped to advance the

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<sup>12</sup> *Smith & Grady v UK*: [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-58408#{"itemid":\["001-58408"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-58408#{)

<sup>13</sup> *Beck, Copp and Bazeley v UK*: [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-60697#{"itemid":\["001-60697"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-60697#{)

<sup>14</sup> *Sutherland v UK*: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutherland\\_v\\_United\\_Kingdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutherland_v_United_Kingdom)

<sup>15</sup> European Directive: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0078:en:HTML>

centralisation and prioritisation around policy and advocacy engagement in the political environment in p The Directive laid out in article one the categories of concern for addressing discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation as regards employment and occupation, with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment. The directive continued to outline the principle of equal treatment,

*" shall mean that there shall be no direct or indirect discrimination whatsoever on any of the grounds referred to in Article 1'. The directive continued in the following way:*

*2. For the purposes of paragraph 1:*

*(a) direct discrimination shall be taken to occur where one person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation, on any of the grounds referred to in Article 1;*

*(b) indirect discrimination shall be taken to occur where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put persons having a particular religion or belief, a particular disability, a particular age, or a particular sexual orientation at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons unless:*

*(i) that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary, or*

*(ii) as regards persons with a particular disability, the employer or any person or organisation to whom this Directive applies, is obliged, under national legislation, to take appropriate measures in line with the principles contained in Article 5 in order to eliminate disadvantages entailed by such provision, criterion or practice.*

*3. Harassment shall be deemed to be a form of discrimination within the meaning of paragraph 1, when unwanted conduct related to any of the grounds referred to in Article 1 takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. In this context, the concept of harassment may be defined in accordance with the national laws and practice of the Member States.*

*4. An instruction to discriminate against persons on any of the grounds referred to in Article 1 shall be deemed to be discrimination within the meaning of paragraph 1.*

*5. This Directive shall be without prejudice to measures laid down by national law which, in a democratic society, are necessary for public security, for the maintenance of public order and the prevention of criminal offences, for the protection of health and for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.*

As the European Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 carried legal obligations that led to parliament in 2002 granting same-sex couples equal rights to adopt children and the

development of The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations of 2003 which Stonewall fought hard for that came into force in 2008, strengthening, to address bullying from colleagues as well. The directive complemented with litigation case filed by individuals helped to give substantive life to improvement in quality of life for LGBT persons in the UK. It formed the basis of a policy frame that strengthens Civil Society engagement work within the political structures of the state to respond to its legal obligations. The now defunct regulations spoke of discrimination, by way of victimisation and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation. It opened the discussion on employment tribunals and remedies available. Progress continued in 2003 with the repeal of section 28, a process that that made it illegal to 'promote' homosexuality in schools which came into force in May 1988. In addition, the 2004, Civil Partnership Act passed that gave same sex couples the same legal rights as married straight couples. Hate crime was not taken serious until modification of the 2003 Criminal Justice Act which, in 2005, gave courts power to give tougher sentences for crimes motivated by homophobia.

Prior to 2005, a person could be attacked for being gay and the crime was treated like any other crime. The policy frame work of the directive gave life as well to 2007 legal amendments which made it illegal to discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation when providing them with goods or services. The 2008 Criminal Justice and Immigration Act added a new criminal offence of 'incitement to homophobic hatred.' The amendments spoke to behaviour or materials which stirred up hatred towards gay people. Reproductive rights were never far behind in the advancement of Civil rights issue for LGBT citizens as a 2009 law made it easier for same sex couples to both be recognised as the legal parent of their child. Push Forward 2010 and we have the Equality Act of 2010 which supersedes the regulations and sought to centralise

the issues of equality under one law<sup>16</sup>. The Equality Act 2010 was intended to replace over 100 acts of parliament, regulations and judicial clarifications.

The framework for equal rights protection in Britain can be traced back to the 1960's and 1970's and the Labour Government of Harold Wilson. Further traces of addressing equality can be found in the Representation of the People Act in 1928 – which finally gave equal voting rights to women. The legislative road began with the first Race Relations Act in 1965 which was updated in 1976 – followed by the Equal Pay Act in 1970-The Sex Discrimination Act in 1975. The efforts at reform followed similar forms of protection introduced in the United States a decade prior. Indeed these three Acts of Parliament (Pay, Sex, Race), plus a few accompanying regulations, were all you needed to know about Equality in the 1970's and for almost two more decades. With Britain becoming a member of the European Community in 1972 and which became the European Union in 1992 with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, the conservative government opted out of the social Chapter of the Treaty which includes references to anti-discrimination. Nevertheless, the conservative government did enact the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995. It was not until Tony Blair's "New Labour" government won the 1997 election that the UK opted in to the social provisions of EU law.

The Latin American analysis summaries the process of movement building aptly. The role of alliances between movements and political groups, degree of party competition, degree of federalism, and degree of court assertiveness and progressiveness, supplement structural variables, such as income in Latin America. *Latin America's progress on gay rights stems from a complex interplay of factors, including increased economic development, bold judiciaries, a*

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<sup>16</sup> The Equality Act of 2010:<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

*culture of human rights, decline of the Catholic Church and a torrent of creative and effective activism.*

#### Section IV: LGBT Movement Building in Latin America

In Latin America, homosexuals were sent to forced labour camps in 1960s Cuba and punished with prison time in Nicaragua under the Sandinistas in the 1980s. A shift began in the 1990s, as leftist leaders began to embrace some liberal ideals, “becoming more along the lines of the Western European New Left.

In Uruguay, that activism began in the 1980s when the nation was transitioning out of its 12-year military dictatorship, according to Federico Graña, member of the LGBT activist group Ovejas Negras or “Black Sheep.” An underground group called the Scorpios operated out of nightclub bathrooms and circulated writings on LGBT issues. In 1992, Homosexuales Unidos held Uruguay’s first public demonstration against homophobia. About 25 people rallied in Montevideo’s Plaza de la Libertad underneath the banner of “basta discriminación.”

In the 1990s, a member of Montevideo’s local parliament named Margarita Percovich began working with the LGBT community. She is now a senator in the Frente Amplio, Uruguay’s left-wing ruling coalition. “That was the start of a dialogue, or it could be said the origins of the dialogues with some political sectors, particularly the left,” Graña said. More Uruguayans began coming out of the closet, and marches began to draw hundreds of participants instead of dozens.

When the Frente Amplio took power in 2004, the coalition had “fewer militants than sympathizers” on gay rights, according to Graña. But since then, politicians and activists have been able to pass a host of gay rights measures. The Uruguayan experience is paralleled in many ways in Argentina, another broadly tolerant nation that approved gay marriage in 2010. The

administration of progressive President Néstor Kirchner announced a social agenda and reached out to the activist group Comunidad Homosexual Argentina to discuss gay rights.

Under Chavez, Venezuela revamped its constitution in 1999, guaranteeing all Venezuelans the right to employment, free education, health care, and a clean environment. It was an opportunity to integrate gay rights into Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution, an opportunity the Chavez government passed up. “When Venezuela rewrote the Bolivarian constitution in 1999, we may have anti-discrimination legislation in the constitution, but there is effectively a constitutional ban on gay people adopting children or same-sex unions,” Buxton said.

Other countries with more old-school leftist leaders like Bolivia and Nicaragua have seen little movement on LGBT issues. “It is no accident, by the way, that the most orthodox leftist countries in Latin America remain by and large the least developed” on gay rights, said Encarnación.

Venezuelan law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, but the Bolivarian revolution hasn't exactly cultivated a culture of tolerance. For instance, Chavista leaders have repeatedly tried to smear opposition leader Henrique Capriles by implying he is gay. Ecuador's constitutional assembly legalized civil unions in 2009, on par with LGBT champions like Uruguay and Argentina and— with a per capita GDP of about \$5,000—ahead of virtually all of its economic peers worldwide. However, that same constitution also defines marriage as “the union between man and woman,” and prohibits non-straight couples from adopting children.

In 1965 Fidel Castro declared that a homosexual Cuban didn't have what it took to be a “true revolutionary.” Cuba sent gay men to forced labour camps in the 1960s, and homosexuality wasn't decriminalized until 1979. In 2010 Castro finally called the nation's record a “great injustice” and took personal responsibility. Cuba's parliament has shot down same-sex unions in the past, but the island is a

leader on transgender issues: the state-run medical system offers sex-change operations as part of its free service to all Cubans, and Cubans elected their transgender public official in 2012<sup>17</sup>.

Strategies that developed was linked to the Argentine economy collapsed in 2001. Gay rights activists took the chance to “nail themselves into this broader social justice movement that is born out of that crisis,” according to Encarnación. A resulting set of reforms in 2002 included a domestic partnership law for same-sex couples.

Uruguay has benefited from strong links between civil society and party politics. Federico Graña is himself an example, as a member of both the Black Sheep activist group and a member of the central committee of the Uruguayan Communist Party. “It took me a lot of effort to make LGBT rights part of my party’s agenda,” Graña said. “We had an intense debate about how these subjects generated inequalities and how they would be related to a vision of socialism in the 21st century.”

Graña says a turning point in LGBT advocacy came around 2004, when activist groups decided they were taking too narrow an approach to their campaigns.

“In reality there exists a lot of discriminations that generate inequities and inequalities, so we believed that analysing only sexual orientation was an error,” Graña said. “We realized that it would be impossible to analyse Uruguayan society without taking into account social class, without taking into account gender, without taking into account sexual orientation, and also racial issues.”

Uruguay approved civil unions in 2008, and Ecuador did the same the next year. In 2009, Uruguay legalized adoption for gay couples and gender changes on official documents. In 2010, Argentina legalized gay marriage. Last year, Brazil’s National Council of Justice declared gay marriage legal nationwide, and Uruguay approved same-sex marriage. Sex reassignment surgery is covered by health insurance in Cuba and Argentina. Left-leaning governments have also approved a host of smaller measures, including anti-discrimination laws in Cuba, Bolivia, and Venezuela, and the decriminalization of homosexuality in Nicaragua and Panama.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.alternet.org/world/how-latin-america-became-haven-gay-rights>

After a half-century of war in Colombia, LGBT rights were advanced by the Court. The Court said, LGBT people have many of the same rights as the rest of the population, including the right to marry and adopt. “The court has made itself clear, especially when it comes to economic rights, constitutional rights ... that LGBT people are subject to special constitutional protections.”

In Colombia, 2,243 LGBT individuals registered with the government for assistance and reparations. Activists say the real number is much higher, and that Colombia’s history of institutional violence toward the LGBT community makes many too afraid to register. In 2005, Colombia began the process of demobilizing armed fighters and giving ex-paramilitaries lesser sentences for handing in their weapons and confessing their crimes. In 12 years of prosecuting former paramilitary fighters – up to 10 percent of the 30,000 demobilized fighters have been through the justice system so far – the courts have only ever handed down one sentence for crimes against LGBT people<sup>18</sup>.

La Unidad de Víctimas says it is doing its part to help the LGBT community get monetary assistance, legal support and psychological care. Sandra Angel, who is part of the organization’s advisory team on gender issues, says the government created her team in 2012 to identify LGBT victims of the conflict and the crimes they suffered.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.newsdeeply.com/womenandgirls/articles/2017/11/27/lgbt-community-the-forgotten-targets-of-colombias-civil-war>

## Section V: Data Analysis

### **Objectives:**

1. To explore psychological, managerial and self-care barriers impacting effective leadership.
2. To identify institutional barriers towards programmatic and political coordination.
3. To identify solutions for strengthening leadership and cohesion.

The agenda incorporated ziplining, massages, pedicure and mani-cure and group yoga into a self-care strategy. The zip-lining exercise offered the most technical observation about group dynamics and decision-making. It showed that individuals take social cues observing patterns of behaviour. When the instructors, for example, showed how to move from one line to the next without drama and use of the safety-harness, all participants calmly followed a social pattern. One noting that if she can make a conscious decision to do zip-line, a psychological risk, she can trust herself more in life. There was another, who expressed a desire to switch to the role of photographer, ensuring that all participants were documented as part of our process of institutional memory.

The action makes the point that in movement building ownership of a process require that we have a voluntary desire to lead in defining our contribution as individuals and indicates that we can adopt and adapt as a movement to the social and political environment as it arises. The social moment informs all, that social patterns of accountability are observed, protected and repeated in our operations, but we are unable to immediately recognise process and outcome indicators of change because we are using a feelings-based approach to manage, plan and organize that is not grounded in evidence nor analysis.

What was clear in the group challenge was that it allowed individuals to see social patterns of decision-making that allowed them to make an inform decision about the level of risk they were

taking. Interestingly, the painstaking process of providing personalised attention to each person provided assurance that their decisions to take a risk was an acceptable social investment in time and effort. The process alludes to the idea that an individual's we need to connect to risk-based actions, but it sometime requires someone to set the standard to pioneer social action.

When no standard of strategic institutional action exists or is informed through an operational lens that is limited in scope and deed, institutional action seems to derive a set of limitation about partnerships, cooperation and collaboration efforts. Initiative-based learning to build capacity to manage and mobilise collectively is informed by social tone rather than institutional substance.

The massages, group yoga, mani-cure and pedicure were about the basic need for us to take case of bodies and to discover our physical limitation. The masseuse observed that each massage was different as each body had a different need. What she raised in her observation was that we do not have infallible bodies. As human being, we all have health limitations that are both physical and psychological. As such, our mental well-being does impact how we engage each other as leaders, how we view and resolve difference in opinion and strategy.

In addition, group yoga, allowed everyone to discover their reaction to the environment and each other. For one person, he was extremely distrustful of the other partner, but they discovered that both were self-conscious, open to crossing privacy spaces which required individual to touch each other and observe each other level of discomfort. The distrust melted away into a moment of humanity that allowed a level of unannounced spiritual forgiveness to have taken place. It was clear that all, our human spirit has been under attack for several years, by opponents, each other, with self-imposed expectation that are high, social and general disappointments on the job, unfair demands we could not meet generally. We saw participants try to connect to each other for an

hour, letting go of pre-conceive notions of personality and each other short-comings. What is clear is that our lack of attention to personal well-being has helped to cultivates limitation of operational good faith, trust, partnership and expectations of collaborations. We saw each participant needs are different and our reaction dynamic. This opens the question; do we understand that our mandates are dynamic like our bodies and demanding on the small-base base of resources each organization have accessed in the year?

While we did not work on developing self-care plans, examine the hostile environment under which we operated nor stress-related to our work. We were introduced to options in the experience of being served with services of yoga, massages, mani-cure and pedi-cures. Establishing an overarching message that service to others require maintenance of ourselves. We did examine operational values, advocacy, decision-making and planning. Discussions alluded to planning and decision-making that are feelings-base processes that is informed by social experience in the community, not necessarily intersectional analysis or evidence. What we discovered is that our operational framework is limited by money, leadership skills and management experience, collective agreement on a multi-layer strategy. Our advocacy framework in practice, demands, a gay liberation process of empowerment, not necessarily, that we need, a complement to advancing systemic advocacy through investments in legal and policy reform. In simply terms, we do not recognize that we are operating under a complementary framework which is impacting our cohesion as a movement.

Upon analysis our advocacy framework was led by a civil rights strategy that was later complemented with communal recognition that gay liberation is necessary and involves creating sustained social support system, not matter how temporary, was a priority. The reverse has taken place in our movement with recognition that there are limitations about human and financial

resources to advance a civil rights framework. In simply terms, a Civil rights Strategy is too abstract and long-term for the needs of our population. The result is a piecemeal approach to advocacy and mobilisations of resources. What is clear in our planning and decision-making process, as a collective, is adhoc and driven by demand rather than deliberate institutional strategy.

One example that arises is with COC, which offers the movement the option of multi-year grants, but operationally, its sub-granting is too small to maintain functioning offices. Synergies for fiscal management, proposal writing, and strategic planning have not been a collective value. The result is a fragmented response that promotes a silos-approach to mobilisation of resources and strategy which affects collective operational cohesion.

We saw as well, how access to research, management skills and personal values and style of leadership supported divisions in our operations, encourage a movement to self-sabotaging outcome for collective change, collaboration and partnership. We are challenged to use negotiations skills to navigate our disagreements constructively. The result is adhoc cooperation and partnerships that is skewed towards one organization. Added to advancing cohesion as a movement core leader have set standards of communication that are based on assumption, reactions, confrontation rather than information. The outcome as a movement is while we desire good-faith, respect and commitment to act, consultation and a sense of fairness, we struggle to incorporate these basic principles in how we engage each other. Again, advancing a practice of silos-based approaches that has no organized order to sustain a gay liberation strategy which complements our desire for advancing civil rights concerns. In simple terms, we are busy advancing institutional tone, but provide no analysis to address the substantive work which needs to advance social and legal change. The substance!

The National Report of 2017 said it best, we, "Always come together and leave the same way we came in with nothing settled and nothing done, spending time on in-house personal issues not relevant to constructively moving forward." In the Theory of Change, we collectively recognised what need to get done and establish a gaps analysis in the following way:

1. Develop of a Communication, Strategic& Human Rights Plan
2. Develop a research agenda
3. Political engagement plan/strategy
4. Collective resource mobilization strategy
5. Strong international strategy – that include donors and human rights bodies
6. Advocacy priorities (Collectively) – the national movement needs to be clearly defined
7. Alliance strategy (other CSOs and CBOs) – there is insufficient collective activism among LGBTI and their possible allies; limited communication and organized efforts
8. Maintaining a Central repository of studies and assessment: on violence and discrimination
9. Shadow reports as accountability tool to advance human rights
10. Monitoring mechanism to examine GOB response to its LGBT citizens
11. Clear economic empowerment plan

Outcome documents points outs that while PETAL, EYBM and BYEC has managerial experience and a history of resource mobilisation TIA Belize is challenged to identify a base of leaders exposed to the same level of skills. Additionally, efforts to address IDAHOT, PRIDE Week, Legal Guide Handbook for Families, HIV testing and prevention, valentine events, Conversations and LGBT Camps offer spaces of gay liberation. While UNIBAM is a policy and advocacy organization, which has evolved to advance a civil rights strategy addressing legal reform, research, maintaining a Human Rights Observatory complemented with a transnational strategy of political advocacy at the O.A.S, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings and United Nations among others.

Fundamentally, new organizations are competing for small pots of funds that limit their ideal operations with management, administrative and mobilisation resources are stretched to the limit. With the new Population Size estimate data of 2018 saying we have over 12,000 men who have sex with men and over 1200 transwomen in Belize, we collectively have discovered a high demand for service, but our organizational development is lacking behind in internal structure, resources to address demand driven needs from our community, that we recognised we can't meet immediately.

Our P.E.S.T analysis tells core leaders the following:

#### **Section V1: Political Environment**

While Section 53 advance our Civil rights concerns, it is requiring community mobilisation to advance socio-cultural and legal reforms that are not automatic processes in our governance structure. While we shifted political tone, the work to shift the substance to advance legal and economic reform is just beginning and it requires a strong institutional structure.

We have seen a shift in religious opposition to advancing the human rights of LGBT Belizeans with dialogue at regional and national spaces, but a strong political voice of our community wanes in a singular message of priorities that reflects our Gay Liberation and Civil rights concern. The situation has lead to a weakening of our political currency as leaders representing the needs of our community.

Before section 53, core visible and visionary leaders were absent from the public socio-cultural debate, during and after the decision, visible leadership assert themselves in many spaces like HIV, Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health issues, but was lacking in a collective understanding of a complementary civil rights strategy.

**Section VII: Economic Environment**

At an organizational level our silos-based approach to resource mobilization impacts our ability to expand our response towards addressing basic community needs. The general labor force unemployment rates for women stood at 13.6% for women vs 7.1% for men in September 2017 but when sexuality is added to the mix, we see an 18% unemployment figures for Lesbian and Bisexual women in an assessment done by PETAL in Belize and 20% who were unemployed as men who have sex with men and transwomen.

While the preliminary data of the Population Size estimate reveals an estimated collective purchasing power scenario of \$46,590,900us on the low end and \$88,023,996us on the high end for just the men who have sex with men population. It suggests that as organizations we have barely began to tap LGBT Belizeans as consumers, of housing, education, consumer goods and services. We have yet to conduct economic research as LGBT consumers, remain invisible to the private sector and that as a movement we have not explored any economic strategy in cultivating a culture of LGBT entrepreneurship, even though our per capita income, as a country stood at \$8300us in 2017 in general.

**Section VIII: Social Environment**

Organizationally, we don't have the resources to reach out to YLGBT individuals living in the rural areas, we can reach them by social media through raising awareness of messages and events.

With the declaration of PRIDE week in 2017, among other activities we saw over 443 persons join us for community events in Belize City and Belmopan. While a socio-cultural strategy is developing with IDAHOT, LGBT Conference, family day and LGBT camps our work have barely began to scratch the surface of addressing our community needs.

Violence through our human rights observatory show that a gay man in Belize has an equal chance of being killed in his home vs outside. Bias-motivated crimes do not exist in Belize despite experiencing 1,689 murders between 2000 and 2016 and 54 murders and attempted murders against the LGBT Belizeans between 1995-2017. The Behavioral Surveillance Survey of men who have sex with men in 2012 confirms violence concerns (92.6% verbal; 20.4% physical; extortion/assault/robbery 7.4%). What we don't have is the level of violence experience by Lesbian and Bi Sexual women. Of note, the PSE preliminary data points out that 20% report denial or protective or law enforcement service while only 3% reported being detained or arrested on charges related to their sexuality. While 18.6% experienced force sex, many did not report the incidence as they occurred within the last year.

While more young people are out and proud, we have not kept pace with the need to create safe social spaces for our community. The discussion that took place at the retreat points out the social burden that is placed on a small core group of leaders who have their own basic needs to address like housing, employment and health issues.

## Section XI: **Technology**

We have seen the power of social media which was able to generate over 15,000 views for one PRIDE event in 2017. We saw over 290 persons liking pictures posted and so have continually used social media to advertise on events and community pages. It has been the most efficient way to raise awareness, document our institutional history of operations and to support institutional analysis of actions taken in Belize.

What we lack is a social media strategy for generating demand and interest in our work by the LGBT community itself. Nor do we have an agreed unified message to sell to our community that sustains our gay liberation strategy that is evolving in practice. We post video ads, and blog

articles, but we don't drive traffic to our sites as a strategy. We use social media to conduct research, but we profile economic analysis reports as an output to inform our strategies on economic empowerment or political views. The result is an information gap in what we assume the community wants and needs.

So how do we build cohesion in our movement to address The Theory of Change?

**Section X: Conclusion**

Belize's movement operates a hybrid approach of gay liberation and civil rights strategies that is grounded in an urgency to make short-term investments for support services and empowerment programs immediately with limited resources. The limitation of accessible resources has amplified inter-organizational conflicts around strategy and mandate as new organizations recognize renewed annual funding is problematic for the stabilisation of internal operations.

A costing exercise to examine the operationalizing a secretariat that could address the administrative, human resources and community and legal mobilisation needs of each organization have not been conducted. An institutional assessment analysis of gaps in operation of each organizations has not been conducted, as a result, long-term strategic planning and cooperation's remain difficult to organize and sustain.

Looking at our hybrid approach that address gay liberation, investments made in PRIDE week, IDAHOT, LGBT camps, having conversations, HIV testing and prevention work, roundtable discussions that are about social empowerment and support, production of a legal handbook for LGBT families, general social assistance support as strategies of empowerment. The Civil Rights advancement of decriminalisation on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016, discussions of Anti-Discrimination Legislation in 2018, revising family law, conducting legal research and engaging policymakers as a collective are complementary actions, but requires a firm commitment to resource mobilisation and a long-term strategy. Community demands, however, are informing short-term investments in programs that stretches human and financial resources beyond capacity. Though leveraging annual project-based funding to address short-term issues in the community is an option in advancing both gay liberation and civil rights strategies, both, has not

been operationally understood as dynamic for organizations. The result is the unrecognised reality that mandates are dynamic.

We are process-oriented in our thinking and speak in terms of, “You should do” moments in collective planning. Establishing a form of institutional accountability in our movement, but not a personal sense of responsibility to make the sacrifice and lead by example. In simple terms, we desire leadership, but not the long-term burden of sacrifice or risk. As a movement we desire central leadership but cannot trust the effect of submitting to such a bureaucratic arrangement. An arrangement, which requires an organization and an individual with the technical and leadership savvy to manage, plan and administer the diverse approaches to decision-making. No one person, has been identified with all these skills.

As a collective, the movement is impacted by structural weaknesses that starts with internal leadership and operations of each organization who are at varying degrees of development for advancing community and resource mobilization, management, planning and strategic thinking skills. This has impacted collective operational stability, ownership of a movement process, fostered distrust, impacted good-faith values required to have a strong structure that legitimizes our political voice. We have cultivated adhoc responses towards positions of health, creating support services that are psychological and economic in nature and rights protection systems like The Human Rights Observatory. The result, impacting cohesion!

Diverse management styles and approaches to decision-making, impact our ability to operationalise our current hybrid approach to movement-building. This has shaped our pace of implementation and understanding that a gay liberation framework exists.

In simple terms, individual mandates are not seen as operating in a framework of fundamental challenges that are complementary, but institutional reactions that have become invasive and hard to predict that trust operational reliability. Affecting opportunities to share resources, collaborate and structure ourselves to stabilize our operations.

Belize built is movement on a civil rights strategy, but it requires a strongly led, CSO mechanism to advance rights defence, there is no local legal team funded for the long-term, not legal research team, examining case precedence in the commonwealth, no specialise legal training program which focuses on law in our school system. So how do we promote justice for the marginalised? Can we build a stronger local team and a more visible political voice that operates a collective community-cations strategy? We can find donors to support our hybrid strategy in our movement? As leaders, are we prepared for the long-haul and the sacrifices to build systems? Can we move from desire to cooperate to the substance of cooperation? In simple terms, it's a journey that we teach us all on the how!

**Section XI: Recommendations**

1. We need to conduct a costing exercise to examine what it would take to give life to fulling a gaps- analysis framework that was defined in the November 2017 national report.
2. We need an assessment report on how our mandates and the demands of the community is impacting good faith, opportunities to build partnerships.
3. We need to operationalise strategic planning framework that fuses gay liberation and civil rights strategy.
4. We need a lead organization to find the resources to address the gap analysis framework identified in the National Report of 2017.
5. We need to understand our operational boundaries and how internal operations are impacting, management, administration and planning as a movement.
6. We need to sustain self-care plans as a movement, if we are to manage conflicts and personal health and well-being.
7. We need a mechanism to access leadership training for our trans colleagues who are challenged in their management, administrative, reporting, financial, strategic planning and community mobilisation skills.
8. We need a social marking strategy that is focused on a socio-cultural transformation that draws the whole populations into a position of visible support.
9. We need to develop economic empowerment strategy that profiles the purchasing power of LGBT Belizeans, an entrepreneurial strategy for inspiring businesses people to visibly support our existence in the work place.
10. We need to define what our civil rights priorities are as a collective.
11. We need to define what our gay liberation strategies are as a movement.
12. We need a mechanism to build the skills of our leaders at the national and international level that is about a programmatic, operational, communal, policy and human rights focus.

## Section XII: Annex One

**LATINO LGBT HISTORY IN AMERICA****Latina/o LGBT History Brief Timeline: 1955-2013**

*Es hora de rescatar la historia para construir el futuro. Ha llegado el momento que las lesbianas y homosexuales latinos ocupen su lugar en la mesa. Sin duda se lo han ganado. --Gonzalo Aburto, June 1994*

1955 – Tony Segura, Cuban American, is a founder and leader of the Mattachine Society in New York

1955 - Daughters of Bilitis is founded in San Francisco by Del Lyon and Phyllis Martin along with three other lesbian couples that included a Filipina and a Chicana.

1961 - Jose Sarria, is a candidate for San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He was endorsed by the League for Civil Education. He did not win but got 5600 votes.

1965 –The Imperial Court System in the United States is founded by Jose Sarria. The ICS is a network of charitable organizations that uses drag events to raise funds for gay, lesbian, and other groups.

1970 - Silvia Rivera, of Puerto Rican and Venezuelan descent co-founded Street Transvestites for Gay Power (later Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries (STAR) with Marsha Johnson, African American.

Early 1970s - Gay Liberated Chicanos of Los Angeles

1972 – COHLA, Comite Homosexual Latinoamericano founded in New York attempted to march in the city's annual Puerto Rican Day Parade in 1979. They were denied participation, but succeeded in bringing attention to gay lives and politics in the Puerto Rican and broader Latino community. Published a 63-page pamphlet in Spanish, AFUERA , highlighting the political dimension of coming out, Third World liberation, Marxist thought, and patriarchy.

1973-1981 –Alianza de Mujeres, Comunidad de Orgullo Gay, Mujer Integrada de Puerto Rico, Comite Latino de Lesbianas y Homosexuales in Massachusetts; Latinos por Derechos Humanos, Florida; Gay Alliance of Latin Americans, Gay Latino Alliance, Latina Lesbian Alliance, Latin American Lesbians and Lesbianas Latina Americanas in California.

1975 - Gay and lesbian Chicanos and Latinos founded the Gay Latino Alliance (GALA) in the San Francisco Bay Area and San José regions. GALA combined political activism and socializing as it attempted to challenge the assumptions of gay and lesbian whites about Latinos and of Latina/o heterosexuals about lesbians and gay men in the city.

Late 1970s – Jeanne Cordova, becomes President of Los Angeles Chapter of Daughters of Bilitis. She later creates the successful Community Yellow Pages.

1979 – Gay and lesbian Latinos announce their presence nationally at the historic 1979 March on Washington. Coalitions from Texas, California, and the East Coast--together with representatives from Latin America--convened days before the March at Howard University to participate in the Third World Gay Conference.

1981 – Gay Chicano Caucus founded in Houston; Gay Latinos Unidos (later renamed Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos) founded in Los Angeles

1983 – Lesbianas Unidas forms as a subcommittee of GLU in Los Angeles

1984 - Denver was home to Ambiente Latino and Las Mujeres Alegres.

1985 - Austin's ALLGO (Austin Latino/Latina Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual & Transgender Organization) is founded to work toward social change through progressive community organizing, promoting queer Latina and Latino culture, and encouraging artistic expression. Today, it is the longest running queer Latino organization in the U.S.

1986 – Las Buenas Amigas is founded in New York City and at the International Lesbian and Gay People of Color Conference in Los Angeles, the Latina/o caucus discusses the need to network on a national level in order to better address the needs of local organizing efforts throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico

1987 - Mexico, Latin American and Caribbean lesbian feminists come together for their "Encuentros de Lesbianas Feministas de Latinoamérica y el Caribe" . These encuentros facilitated transnational dialogue and organizing to address the needs and challenges of lesbians throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

1987 – Primer Encuentro, March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Washington, D.C. Over 70 lesbian and gay Latina/o activists representing 13 states and 33 cities meet and decide to create a national network, National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Activists (NLLGA).

1988 – NLLGA activists meet in Los Angeles and change their name to LLEGÓ, The National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization to be based in Washington, D.C. LLEGÓ later modified its name to National Latino/a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Organization. It held regular international encuentros from the 1990s through 2004 during which time LLEGÓ was largely funded by multi-year grants for HIV/AIDs prevention from the federal Center for Disease Control.

1988-1992 - San Francisco's Mujerío, organized transnationally with glbtq activists in Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and elsewhere in Latin America.

1991 – Entre Hermanos comes into being in Seattle to address the need for social, educational, and health support services in their community

1993 – LLANY, Latinas and Latinos de Ambiente is founded in New York City, focuses on the social and cultural needs of glbtq Latina/o Americans in the city and the tri-state area.

1994 – June 24-28, 25th Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City. LLEGO organizes a LGBT Latino/a contingent. Anniversary program lists 60 Latina/o LGBT organizations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico in existence at that time.

1995 - Chicago, 10 Latinas form a support group, Amigas Latinas, for lesbian, bisexual, and questioning women that still exists today. Also in Chicago, for over a decade ALMA (the Association of Latino Men for Action) provided educational support and social services to queer Latinos.

2000 - Jose Gutierrez founded the Latino GLBT History Project in Washington, D.C.

2004 – LLEGO closes when financial and administrative difficulties cannot be overcome.

In 2004 – a group of over 80 people came together in Seattle (during what was scheduled to be LLEGÓ's Encuentro) to strategize about next steps following the closing of LLEGÓ, which led to the founding of Unid@s .

2007 – Unid@s, National Latino/a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Human Rights Organization meets in Washington, D.C. to lay groundwork for a new Latin@ LGBT organization.

2013 – Union=Fuerza Instituto Latino, January 24th, over 100 LGBTQ Latinas/os meet in Atlanta, Georgia in first ever day long Latino/a Institute at Task Force' Creating Change Conference.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.latinoglbthistory.org/lgbtq-latino-timeline>

## Section XIII: Annex Two

## AMERICAN LGBT MOVEMENT

**1924** - The [Society for Human Rights](#) is founded by Henry Gerber in Chicago. It is the first documented gay rights organization.

**1950** - The Mattachine Society is formed by activist Harry Hay and is one of the first sustained gay rights groups in the United States. The Society focuses on social acceptance and other support for homosexuals.

**April 1952** - The American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual lists homosexuality as a [sociopathic personality disturbance](#).

**April 27, 1953** - President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs an [executive order](#) that bans homosexuals from working for the federal government, saying they are a security risk.

**September 1955** - The first known lesbian rights organization in the United States forms in San Francisco. Daughters of Bilitis (DOB). They host private social functions, fearing police raids, threats of violence and discrimination in bars and clubs.

**July 1961** - Illinois becomes the first state to [decriminalize homosexuality](#) by repealing their sodomy laws.

**September 11, 1961** - The first [US-televised documentary about homosexuality](#) airs on a local station in California.

**June 28, 1969** - Police raid the [Stonewall Inn in New York City](#). Protests and demonstrations begin, and it later becomes known as the impetus for the gay civil rights movement in the United States.

**1969** - The "[Los Angeles Advocate](#)," founded in 1967, is renamed "The Advocate." It is considered the oldest continuing LGBT publication that began as a newsletter published by the activist group Personal Rights in Defense and Education (PRIDE).

**June 28, 1970** - Community members in New York City march through the local streets to recognize the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall riots. This event is named [Christopher Street Liberation Day](#), and is now considered the first gay pride parade.

**1973** - [Lambda Legal](#) becomes the first legal organization established to fight for the equal rights of gays and lesbians. Lambda also becomes their own first client after being denied non-profit status; the New York Supreme Court eventually rules that Lambda Legal can exist as a non-profit.

**January 1, 1973** - [Maryland](#) becomes the first state to statutorily ban [same-sex marriage](#).

**March 26, 1973** - First meeting of "[Parents and Friends of Gays](#)," which goes national as Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) in 1982.

**December 15, 1973** - By a vote of 5,854 to 3,810, [the American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality](#) from its list of mental disorders in the DSM-II Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

**1974** - [Kathy Kozachenko becomes the first openly LGBT American elected to any public office](#) when she wins a seat on the Ann Arbor, Michigan City Council.

**1974** - [Elaine Noble is the first openly gay candidate elected](#) to a state office when she is elected to the Massachusetts State legislature.

**January 14, 1975** - The [first federal gay rights bill](#) is introduced to address discrimination based on sexual orientation. The bill later goes to the Judiciary Committee but is never brought for consideration.

**March 1975** - Technical Sergeant Leonard P. Matlovich reveals his sexual orientation to his commanding officer and is forcibly discharged from the Air Force six months later. Matlovich is a [Vietnam War](#) veteran and was awarded both the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. In 1980, the Court of Appeals rules that the dismissal was improper. Matlovich is awarded his back pay and a retroactive promotion.

**1976** - After undergoing gender reassignment surgery in 1975, ophthalmologist and professional tennis player Renee Richards is banned from competing in the women's [US Open](#) because of a "women-born-women" rule. Richards challenges the decision and in 1977, the New York Supreme Court rules in her favor. Richards competes in the 1977 US Open but is defeated in the first round by Virginia Wade.

**1977-1981** - [Billy Crystal](#) plays one of the first openly gay characters in a recurring role on a prime time television show in "Soap."

**January 9, 1978** - [Harvey Milk is inaugurated as San Francisco city supervisor](#), and is the first openly gay man to be elected to a political office in California. In November [Milk and Mayor George Moscone are murdered](#) by Dan White, who had recently resigned from his San Francisco board position and wanted Moscone to reappoint him. White later serves just over five years in prison for voluntary manslaughter.

**1978** - Inspired by Milk to develop a symbol of pride and hope for the LGBT community, [Gilbert Baker designs and stitches together the first rainbow flag](#).

**October 14, 1979** - The first National [March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights](#) takes place. It draws an estimated 75,000 to 125,000 individuals marching for LGBT rights.

**March 2, 1982** - Wisconsin becomes the first state to outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation.

**1983** - [Lambda Legal](#) wins *People v. West 12 Tenants Corp.*, the first [HIV/AIDS](#) discrimination lawsuit. Neighbors attempted to evict Dr. Joseph Sonnabend from the building because he was treating HIV-positive patients.

**November 30, 1993** - [President Bill Clinton](#) signs a [military policy](#) directive that prohibits openly gay and lesbian Americans from serving in the military, but also prohibits the harassment of "closeted" homosexuals. The policy is known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

**November 1995** - The [Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act](#) goes into effect as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. The law allows a judge to impose harsher sentences if there is evidence showing that a victim was selected because of the "actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of any person."

**September 21, 1996** - President Clinton signs the [Defense of Marriage Act](#), banning federal recognition of same-sex marriage and defining marriage as "a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife."

**December 3, 1996** - [Hawaii's Judge Chang](#) rules that the state does not have a legal right to deprive same-sex couples of the right to marry, making Hawaii the first state to recognize that gay and lesbian couples are entitled to the same privileges as heterosexual married couples.

**April 1997** - Comedian [Ellen DeGeneres](#) comes out as a lesbian on the cover of Time magazine, stating, "Yep, I'm Gay."

**April 30, 1997** - DeGeneres' character, Ellen Morgan, on her self-titled TV series "Ellen," becomes the first leading character to come out on a prime time network television show.

**April 1, 1998** - [Martin Luther King Jr.'s](#) widow, [Coretta Scott King](#), asks the civil rights community to help in the effort to extinguish homophobia.

**October 6-7, 1998** - [Matthew Shepard](#) is tied to a fence and beaten near Laramie, Wyoming. He is eventually found by a cyclist, who initially mistakes him for a scarecrow. He later dies due to his injuries sustained in the beating.

**October 9, 1998** - Russell Henderson and Aaron McKinney from Laramie, Wyoming, make their first court appearance after being arrested for the attempted murder of Shepard. Eventually, they each receive two life sentences for killing Shepard.

**April 26, 2000** - Vermont becomes the first state to legalize civil-unions between same-sex couples.

**June 2003** - The [US Supreme Court](#) strikes down the "homosexual conduct" law, which decriminalizes same-sex sexual conduct, with their opinion in *Lawrence v. Texas*. The decision also reverses *Bowers v. Hardwick*, a 1986 US Supreme Court ruling that upheld Georgia's sodomy law.

**May 17, 2004** - The first legal same-sex marriage in the United States takes place in Massachusetts.

**September 6, 2005** - The California legislature becomes the first to pass a bill allowing marriage between same-sex couples. [Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger](#) vetoes the bill.

**October 25, 2006** - The [New Jersey Supreme Court](#) rules that state lawmakers must provide the rights and benefits of marriage to gay and lesbian couples.

**May 15, 2008** - The California Supreme Court rules in *re: Marriage Cases* that limiting marriage to opposite-sex couples is unconstitutional.

**November 4, 2008** - Voters approve Proposition 8 in California, which makes same-sex marriage illegal.

**August 12, 2009** - Milk is posthumously awarded the Medal of Freedom by [President Barack Obama](#).

**October 28, 2009** - President Obama signs the [Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act](#) into law.

**August 4, 2010** - Proposition 8 is found unconstitutional by a federal judge.

**September 20, 2011** - "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is repealed, ending a ban on gay men and lesbians from serving openly in the military.

**May 9, 2012** - In an ABC interview, Obama becomes the first sitting US president to publicly support the [freedom for LGBT couples to marry](#).

**September 4, 2012** - The Democratic Party becomes the first major US political party in history to publicly support same-sex marriage on a national platform at the Democratic National Convention.

**November 6, 2012** - [Tammy Baldwin](#) becomes the first openly gay politician and the first Wisconsin woman to be elected to the US Senate.

**June 26, 2013** - In [United States v. Windsor](#), the US Supreme Court strikes down section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act, ruling that legally married same-sex couples are entitled to federal benefits. The high court also dismisses a case involving California's proposition 8.

**October 6, 2014** - The [United States Supreme Court](#) denies review in five different [marriage cases](#), allowing lower court rulings to stand, and therefore allowing same-sex couples to marry in Utah, Oklahoma, Virginia, Indiana and Wisconsin. The decision opens the door for the right to marry in Colorado, Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia and Wyoming.

**June 9, 2015** - [Secretary of Defense Ash Carter](#) announces that the [Military Equal Opportunity policy](#) has been adjusted to include gay and lesbian military members.

**April 28, 2015** - The US Supreme Court hears oral arguments on the question of the [freedom to marry](#) in Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio and Michigan. On June 26 the Supreme Court rules that states cannot ban same-sex marriage. The 5-4 ruling had [Justice Anthony Kennedy](#) writing for the majority. Each of the four conservative justices writes their own dissent.

**July 27, 2015** - [Boy Scouts of America](#) President [Robert Gates](#) announces, "the national executive board ratified a resolution removing the national restriction on openly gay leaders and employees."

**May 17, 2016** - [The Senate confirms Eric Fanning to be secretary of the Army](#), making him the first openly gay secretary of a US military branch. Fanning previously served as Defense Secretary Carter's chief of staff, and also served as undersecretary of the Air Force and deputy undersecretary of the Navy.

**June 24, 2016** - [President Obama announces the designation of the first national monument to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender \(LGBT\) rights](#). The [Stonewall National Monument](#) will encompass Christopher Park, the Stonewall Inn and the surrounding streets and sidewalks that were the sites of the 1969 Stonewall uprising.

**June 30, 2016** - Secretary of Defense Carter announces that the Pentagon is [lifting the ban on transgender people serving openly in the US military](#).

**August 5-21, 2016** - [A record number of "out" athletes compete in the summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro](#). The Human Rights Campaign estimates that there are at least 41 openly lesbian, gay and bisexual Olympians -- up from 23 that participated in London 2012.

**November 9, 2016** - Kate Brown is sworn in as governor of Oregon, a day after she was officially elected to the office. Brown becomes the highest-ranking LGBT person elected to office in the United States. Brown took over the governorship in February 2016 (without an election), after Democrat John Kitzhaber resigned amidst a criminal investigation.

**April 4, 2017** - [The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals rules that the Civil Rights Act prohibits workplace discrimination against LGBT employees](#), after Kimberly Hively sues Ivy Tech Community College for violating Title VII of the act by denying her employment.

**June 27, 2017** - [District of Columbia residents can now choose a gender-neutral option of their driver's license](#). DC residents become the first people in the United States to be able to choose X as their gender marker instead of male or female on driver's licenses and identification cards. Similar policies exist in Canada, India, Bangladesh, Australia, New Zealand and Nepal.

**June 30, 2017** - [The US Department of Defense announces a six-month delay in allowing transgendered individuals to enlist in the United States military](#). [Defense Secretary Jim Mattis](#) writes that they "will use this additional time to evaluate more carefully the impact of such accessions on readiness and lethality."

**July 26, 2017** - [President Donald Trump announces via Twitter that "After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the US Military..."](#)

**October 4, 2017** - In a memo to all federal prosecutors, [Attorney General Jeff Sessions](#) says that a 1964 federal civil rights law does not protect transgender workers from employment

discrimination and the department will take this new position in all "pending and future matters." In February 2018, [the Second Circuit Court of Appeals releases an opinion that "sexual orientation discrimination constitutes a form of discrimination" and that it is a form of sex discrimination.](#)

**November 7, 2017** - [Virginia voters elect the state's first openly transgender candidate to the Virginia House of Delegates. Danica Roem unseats incumbent delegate Bob Marshall, who had been elected thirteen times over 26 years. Roem becomes the first openly transgender candidate elected to a state legislature in American history.](#)

**December 11, 2017** - [A second federal judge rules against Trump's prohibition on transgender individuals serving in the military. The Pentagon announces it will begin processing transgender applicants to the military on January first, while the Department of Justice continues to appeal the ruling.](#)

**February 26, 2018** - [The Pentagon confirms that the first transgender person has signed a contract to join the US military.](#)

**March 4, 2018** - [Daniela Vega, the star of Oscar-winning foreign film "A Fantastic Woman," becomes the first openly transgender presenter in Academy Awards history when she introduces a performance by Sufjan Stevens, whose song "Mystery of Love" from the "Call Me By Your Name" soundtrack, is nominated for best original song.](#)

**March 23, 2018** - [President Trump rescinds his previous policy to allow a new policy to take effect that will likely disqualify most transgender people from serving in the US military. The White House announces that the policy will say "transgender persons with a history or diagnosis of gender dysphoria -- individuals who the policies state may require substantial medical treatment, including medications and surgery -- are disqualified from military service except under certain limited circumstances<sup>20</sup>."](#)

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<sup>20</sup> <https://edition.cnn.com/2015/06/19/us/lgbt-rights-milestones-fast-facts/index.html>







