



Hivos
people unlimited

AMBITION
APPROACH
THEORY
OF CHANGE

**GENDER EQUALITY
DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION**

ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY,
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO
ACHIEVE EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

This white paper outlines the ambition, approach and Theory of Change of one of Hivos’ three impact areas: **Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI)**

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01

HIVOS' AMBITION
ON GENDER
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY,
AND INCLUSION

SUMMARY

Globally, we are witnessing increasing marginalization, shrinking civic space, and the widening gap between rich and poor. As Covid-19 and climate change continue to affect lives and livelihoods worldwide, it is evident that women¹, LGBTIQ+, and other marginalized communities are more likely to bear the social, health, and economic consequences. More so, widespread discrimination continues to impact the lives of women and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (from now on referred to as rightsholders). This interferes with their full enjoyment of all human rights and hampers their participation in processes that tackle the root causes of such discrimination.

To counter this, we want to co-create new solutions that catalyze broad social and structural transformation to advance gender equality, diversity, and inclusion (GEDI) and achieve equality for all. We aim to strengthen and position rightsholders so they have the power, agency, and leadership to drive change. We put intersectionality at the center of our approaches, recognizing that there are multiple forms of systemic discrimination. Inclusivity in policy and practice is key to providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded.

Hivos' vision is that of a more just, fair, dignified, and prosperous society, where all people have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities. A world where gender equality, inclusive economies, and governance practices

become the principle for organizing and building just societies. To achieve this vision, our overall goal is to build the political power and influence of rightsholder movements led by women, youth, and LGBTIQ+ people and ensure they have the capacity and resources to achieve transformative social change. In particular, the GEDI impact area aims to realize rightsholders' sexual and reproductive health and rights, bodily autonomy, and participation in political and economic development.

In the coming years, we aim to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Laws, policies, and agreements that tackle discrimination and protect women's and LGBTIQ+ people's rights are adopted and implemented at the local, national, and international levels.
- Transformative GEDI narratives positively influence public and political discourse to counter discrimination, and inspire behavior changes and systemic transformations that support sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), bodily autonomy, women's empowerment, and the rights of LGBTIQ+ people.
- Closer collaboration between rightsholders and relevant actors and the use of (intersectional) evidence instill broader social, legal, and policy change.

These outcomes are linked to the social transformation we envision as connected to the human rights and feminist movements- working on gender justice, women's and LGBTIQ rights in which Hivos' work is complementary to that of our partners.

We use the term **women** as **an inclusive category** to include **cisgender**, **transgender** and **intersex women** and *women of all ages including girls*.

02

THE
CONTEXT

Over the last decades, the world has witnessed several positive developments in gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. Rightsholders and activists worldwide have built communities, taken to the streets, filed lawsuits, and advocated for their rights. Their efforts have put sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) firmly on the international agenda. There are also growing demands to end violence against women based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). A significant achievement is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It affirms the crucial importance of gender equality and women's empowerment, integrating them into all other development goals.

Despite these developments, the potential of women, LGBTIQ+ people, and other marginalized groups remains woefully untapped. Globally, these groups remain under-represented in decision-making spaces, face economic hardship due to discrimination and exclusion, and continue to be targets of physical and sexual abuse.

CHALLENGES

Over 70 countries criminalize homosexuality. Conservative forces are becoming increasingly assertive and vocal in their concerted effort to spread anti-abortion, anti-LGBTIQ+, and anti-SRHR messages globally. This renders people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities particularly vulnerable to discriminatory laws, policies, and practices and has a considerable impact on their human rights, public health, and economic development.

Disproportionate economic hardship is one of the most tangible consequences of the discrimination and exclusion of women, LGBTIQ+, and other marginalized communities. During economic downturns, they are more liable to lose their jobs. Even in countries with policies supportive of working women, they earn less than their male counterparts performing the same job. This harsh economic inequality has gone unaddressed

as socio-economic development agendas, including the SDGs, fail to consider LGBTIQ+ inclusion in a meaningful way.

In terms of health, women, girls, and people of diverse SOGIESCs have much less access to SRHR services and information than men and mainstream sexual groups. Where there are (improved) SRHR programs and policies, they remain hetero-normative, leading to poor health care for LGBTIQ+ people and placing them at particular risk of HIV and other STIs¹. Lack of access to such resources is exacerbated by criminalized same-sex relations² or laws that hinder access to safe abortion, as well as by pervasive traditional norms regarding gender

OPPORTUNITIES

To achieve lasting change towards a more inclusive and fair society, public discourse around women, LGBTIQ+ people and other marginalized groups must change fundamentally. Building on the work of activists and rightsholders over the last decades, we see an opportunity to influence people to change harmful or dominant norms, attitudes, and patterns of inequality that prevent women and girls, LGBTIQ+, and other marginalized communities from achieving their full potential. Our programmatic experience has shown that rightsholders and allies can amplify new and transformative GEDI narratives through carefully crafted strategies. The underlying principle is that change occurs when individuals perceive change within their reference group or social midst. By focusing on the "movable middle of society" to, for example, actively abandon harmful norms, advocate for inclusion, and thus influence others, a more significant part of society will shift to support full inclusion and equality. It is thus necessary to ensure that rightsholders have the capacity and resources needed to shift public discourse.

In addition to changing narratives it is necessary to ensure LGBTIQ+ people and women are adequately included in socio-economic development and have the necessary skills and resources to improve their social and

1. Starrs AM, Ezeh AC, Barker G et al., Accelerate progress—sexual and reproductive health and rights for all: report of the Guttmacher–Lancet Commission, The Lancet, 2018.

2. Still prevalent in around 70 countries, in some cases with the death penalty.

economic status. Hivos is opportunely situated to work with rightsholders on this, having decades of experience strengthening and building effective movements, and with a programmatic portfolio that builds on extensive activist and workers networks.

Strong support for and leadership by rightsholders is needed to achieve the envisioned change in narratives and socio-economic policies and practices. Hivos sees

the opportunity to work with rightsholders and allies across different sectors such as health, politics, education, artists, and religious leaders. Our aim is that the public, governments, businesses, duty bearers, and other relevant institutions do not just acknowledge and respect the voices and rights of rightsholders, but actively recognize the need for equal inclusion of and leadership by these groups in decision-making processes.

Data raising our concern

1. Sexual Reproductive Health Rights - Bearak et al. (2020)¹ and Guttmacher Institute.

- 214 million women of reproductive age in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy are not using contraceptives. This is often because of limited choice of methods, poor quality of available services, and gender-based barriers.
- Guttmacher report of 2020 further acknowledges the neglect and exclusion of SRHR needs for LGBTI people – partly due to pervasive stigma and discrimination of LGBTI people, including among health workers.
- Roughly 121 million unintended pregnancies occurred each year between 2015 and 2019. Of these unintended pregnancies, 61% ended in abortion.
- More than one-third (35%) of women worldwide have experienced physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence by a non-partner at some time in their lives.

2. HIV and Aids – Data from UNAIDS, 2021 Global Report²

- In 2020, there were 37.7 million [30.2 million–45.1 million] people living with HIV.
- 53% of all people living with HIV were women and girls.
- Young women aged 15–24 years are twice as likely to be living with HIV than men.
- The risk of acquiring HIV is: 34 times higher for transgender women.
- Every week, around 5000 young women aged 15–24 years become infected with HIV.
- Six in seven new HIV infections among adolescents aged 15–19 years are among girls in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Gay and bisexual men, and transgender women are overrepresented among persons living with HIV. For example, in 2020, key populations (sex workers and

their clients, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, transgender people) and their sexual partners accounted for 65% of HIV infections globally.

3. Economic Rights and Justice - Stonewall, (2020)³, Badgett et al. (2019)⁴, Mbote, D, et al. (2019)⁵ and OECD data⁶

- Globally women do two to three times more informal care work than men.
- Total aid integrating a gender equality perspective in economic and productive sectors reached USD 18 billion on average per year in 2018–19, representing 47% of DAC members' total bilateral aid in these sectors. However, as little as a 2% of this ODA was dedicated to gender equality as a primary objective.
- There's a clear connection between discrimination against LGBTQ+ communities and lack of access to decent work. This includes unemployment, as well as work that may be insecure, informal, unsafe, and/or poorly paid.

4. Leadership and Political Participation – UN Women (2020)⁷, Global Gender Gap Report, (2021)⁸

- Women make up 50% of the population, but only 25% of the leadership.
- According to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report, 2021- the gender gap in Political Empowerment remains the largest. Across the 156 countries covered by the index, women represent only 26.1% of some 35,500 parliament seats and just 22.6% of over 3,400 ministers worldwide. At the current rate of progress, the World Economic Forum estimates that it will take 145.5 years to attain gender parity in politics.

1 Bearak et al. (2020). Unintended pregnancy and abortion by income, region, and the legal status of abortion estimates from a comprehensive model for 1990–2019. *The Lancet Global Health*, 8(9), e1152–e1161.

2 UNAIDS, 2021

3 Stonewall (2020). Out of the Margins: LBT + Exclusion through the Lens of the SDGs.

4 Badgett, M. V. L., Waaldijk, K., & Rodgers, Y. van der M. (2019). The

relationship between LGBT inclusion and economic development: Macro-level evidence. *World Development*, 120, 1–14.

5 Mbote, D, et al. (2019) *The Economic Case for LGBT+ Inclusion in Kenya*

6 <https://www.oecd.org/development/gender-development/>

7 Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Women (2020). Women in Politics Map.

8 World Economic Forum, 2021. Global Gender Gap Report.

03 OUR GEDI APPROACH

The [Gender Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion \(GEDI\) Strategy](#) guides our programmatic work, ensuring that we implement programs that consistently address gender inequalities and prioritize those furthest left behind. This strategy goes beyond the GEDI impact area portfolio, covering all Hivos programs and guiding our internal functioning.

Our GEDI work actively involves women, young people, sexual and gender diverse/LGBTIQ+ communities, ethnic minorities, people living with HIV, and those with disabilities. Importantly, we recognize intersectionality within and among these groups. Hivos has committed 50 percent of our institutional budget to support GEDI efforts by investing in women's and LGBTIQ+ organizations as critical partners.

In our work, we consider ourselves part of much broader human rights and gender justice movements, at the forefront of which our partners operate in their respective national and international contexts. Our role in the movement is complementary: creating linkages, enabling learning between partners, carrying out joint international advocacy and lobbying, and ensuring that rightsholders and their lived realities lead our work.

Using a feminist lens helps us analyze and look at the world from a perspective that includes the place and history of women (in all their diversities) and strives for human rights-based and inclusive equality. Our strategies and programmatic efforts focus on addressing fundamental structural barriers that prevent gender equality, bearing in mind the needs of those most affected by multiple forms of discrimination.

To achieve our GEDI objectives, we pay attention to the unequal power relations and opportunities between different groups of women, men, and gender-diverse individuals. To address the complexity of inequalities that rightsholders face:

- We use an intersectional framework to analyze and act upon rightsholders' concerns, overlapping identities, and experiences.
- We recognize the interconnections within and among rightsholder groups and the issues we seek to address.

Feminist principles guiding Hivos' work and partnerships

- **Championing GEDI as a prerequisite to achieving more just, fair, dignified, and prosperous societies**
- **Human rights and dignity for all free from harm, violence, and exploitation**
- **Self-determination: bodily autonomy, voice, agency and resilient rightsholders movements and societies**
- **Intersectionality: recognizing the impacts of different forms of systemic discrimination and that every person has multiple identity factors that impact their participation, their agency, and who they are**
- **Community-led and owned partnerships and accountability, in other words, "Nothing about us without us!"**
- **Safeguarding integrity: do no harm, zero tolerance for discrimination and abuse of power, responsible citizenship, sustainable use of our planet's resources, well-being, self-care, safety and security for oneself and others**

Hivos employs an **intersectional approach** recognizing that **every person** has multiple **identity factors** that impact their *participation, their agency, and who they are.*

We implement a dual-track approach that embraces the spirit of inclusion, working in partnership with like-minded institutions and unusual allies to develop and invest in:

- **GEDI-specific programs** in which *equality and gender justice are the principal or primary objective* of an initiative. GEDI-specific programs will pay attention to rightsholders furthest left behind and their intersecting inequalities. Our focus is to support initiatives that are community-owned and led by those directly impacted.

- **A mainstreaming (integrated)** approach in which GEDI is a significant element or a deliberate objective, although not the principal reason, for undertaking the project/program. This approach allows us to connect efforts with the other two impact areas of Climate Justice and Civic Rights in a Digital Age, making the gendered aspects of inequality visible in all the three impact areas and our assumptions, processes, and outcomes.

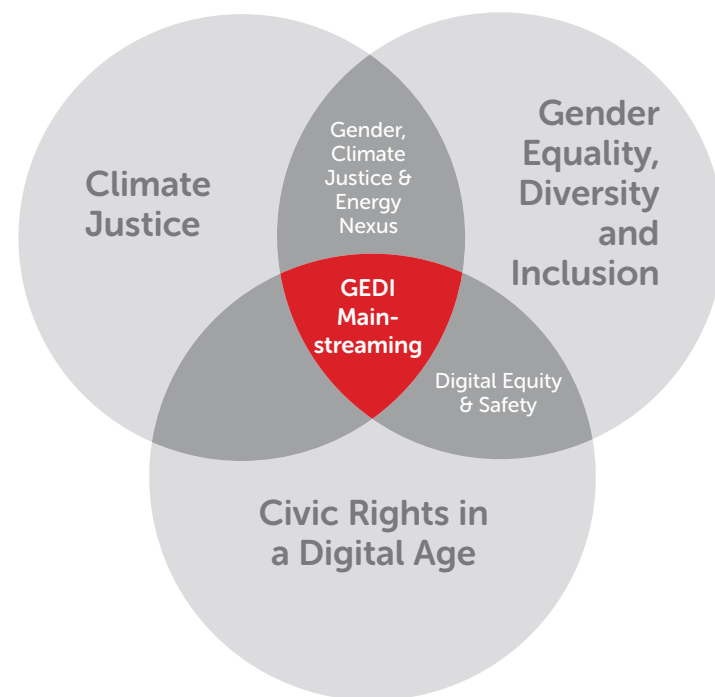


Fig. 1 *GEDI in Relation to Hivos' Other Impact Areas*

WALKING THE TALK

Part of our approach is to ensure that our organizational culture and partnerships align with our GEDI vision, prioritizing intersectionality and GEDI awareness at all levels of the organization. We engage in ongoing critical reflection to ensure that GEDI principles are adequately reflected in our programs, staff, and management, and we address structural inequalities and discrimination in our partnerships and workplace. We take every opportunities to develop knowledge and competencies of Hivos staff, rightsholders, and partners who want to engage or implement GEDI trajectories in their work or organizations. In this approach, we actively foster interlinkages with other Hivos impact areas of Climate Justice, Civic Rights in a Digital Age.

Climate Justice provides clear opportunities for embedding GEDI objectives around leadership and economic empowerment. For a just climate transition, women

and other marginalized groups must have a say in what happens, as they – the smallest polluters – are also the ones disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. Through our programs working on a gender and energy nexus, they gain more access to and control over clean energy resources and can meaningfully participate in the renewable energy sector.

The link with our work on Civic Rights in a Digital Age lies in the potential for digitalization to advance participation, equality, and accountability. Online sexual abuse and disinformation overwhelmingly targets women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ communities, who increasingly use social media and the internet personally and professionally. So we aim to generate new insights on the intersection of gender and digitalization by building on Hivos' robust portfolio, such as the Digital Defender's Program, so women and minority groups can truly benefit from the digital transition.

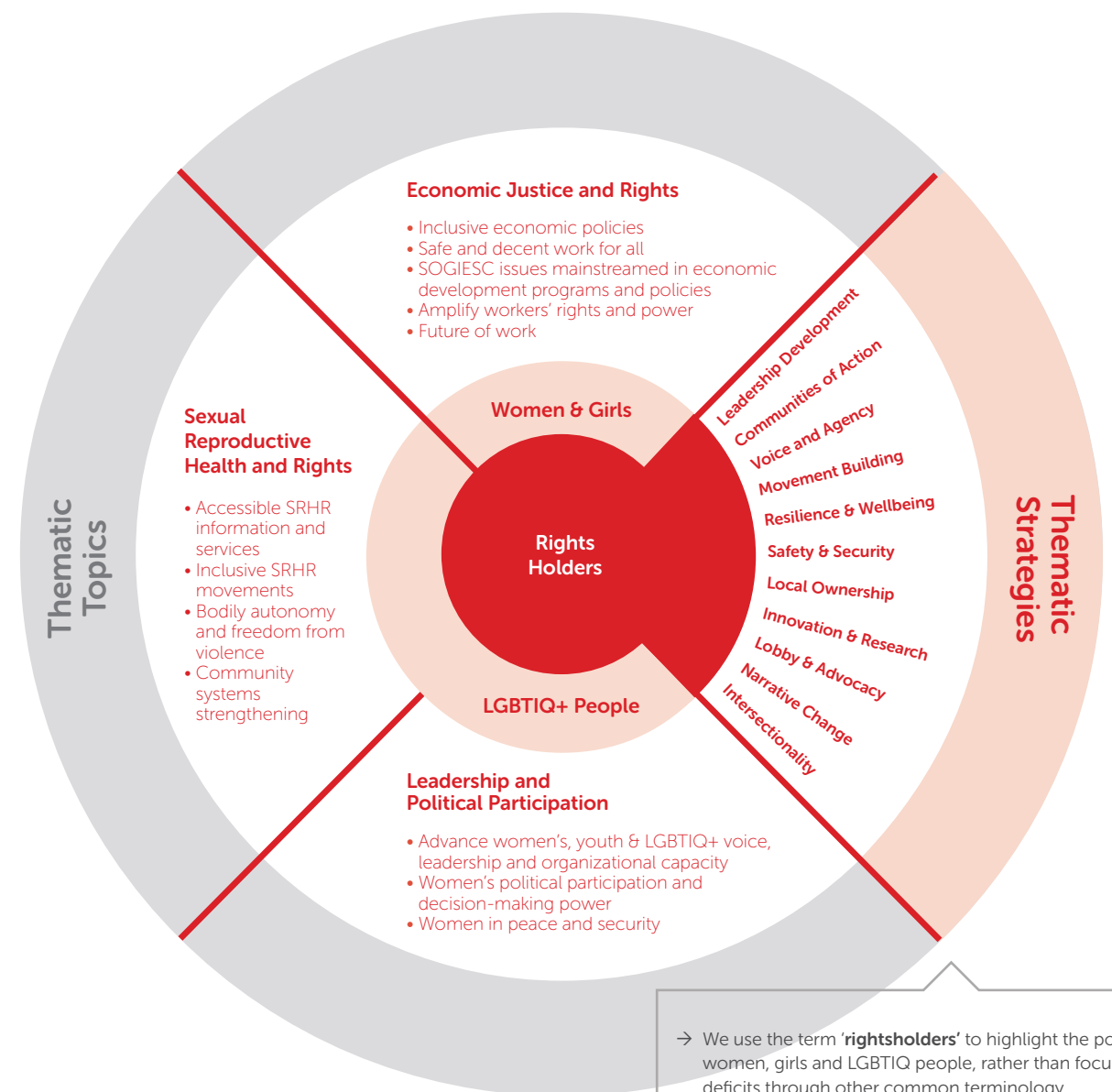
GEDI TRANSFORMATIVE WORK

We recognize that our joint GEDI transformative work is long-term, often generational, requires sustained investments, and needs to be guided by rightsholders' lived realities. Therefore we have identified three thematic topics where Hivos can make a significant contribution based on its track record:

1. **Strengthen access to inclusive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)** by shifting norms and barriers to ensure women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ people have control over and can freely and responsibly decide on matters related to their bodies and sexuality, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.

2. **Advocate for economic justice and rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people to influence and participate in economic decision-making.** This entails improving women's access to and control over resources and decent work, and strengthening LGBTIQ+ communities to demand a fair share in economic development programs. Simultaneously, we will address endemic unemployment and use research to demonstrate the economic consequences of exclusion.

3. **Facilitate equal participation, greater inclusion, and representation of women and LGBTIQ+ people in political and societal decision-making processes** through strengthening their leadership skills and providing the resources necessary to lead and take their place at the decision-making table.



→ We use the term '**rightsholders**' to highlight the power of women, girls and LGBTIQ people, rather than focus on their deficits through other common terminology.

→ **LGBTIQ+** stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer people; the '+' indicates that these terms have a limited scope, and not all people who are marginalized because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC) self-identify with these terms.

Fig. 2 *GEDI Thematic Topics*

04 OUR GEDI THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change (ToC) in this paper defines pathways of change and shows how and where we believe we can contribute to achieving this change. It further provides a framework for learning both within and between programming cycles and lays out our position based on our assumptions, vision, strategies, and pathways for how change can occur. The GEDI ToC reinforces the delivery of the 2021-2024 Hivos Strategic Compass³ and Hivos’ vision of every person’s right to live in freedom and dignity, enjoy equal opportunities, and influence decisions that affect them. The pathways of change and the three main strategic pillars of this ToC overlap and reinforce each other.

The GEDI ToC sets out a vision for a more just, fair, dignified, and prosperous society, where all people have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities. A world where gender equality, inclusive economies, and governance practices become the principle for organizing and building just societies.

Our vision is connected to three strategic pillars that embrace a unified approach to programming, partnerships, and investments to achieve change. One is to ensure that rightsholders have sustained political power and influence to *drive change*. The second is to *build political and public support towards sustainable development and inclusive societies based on transformative GEDI*

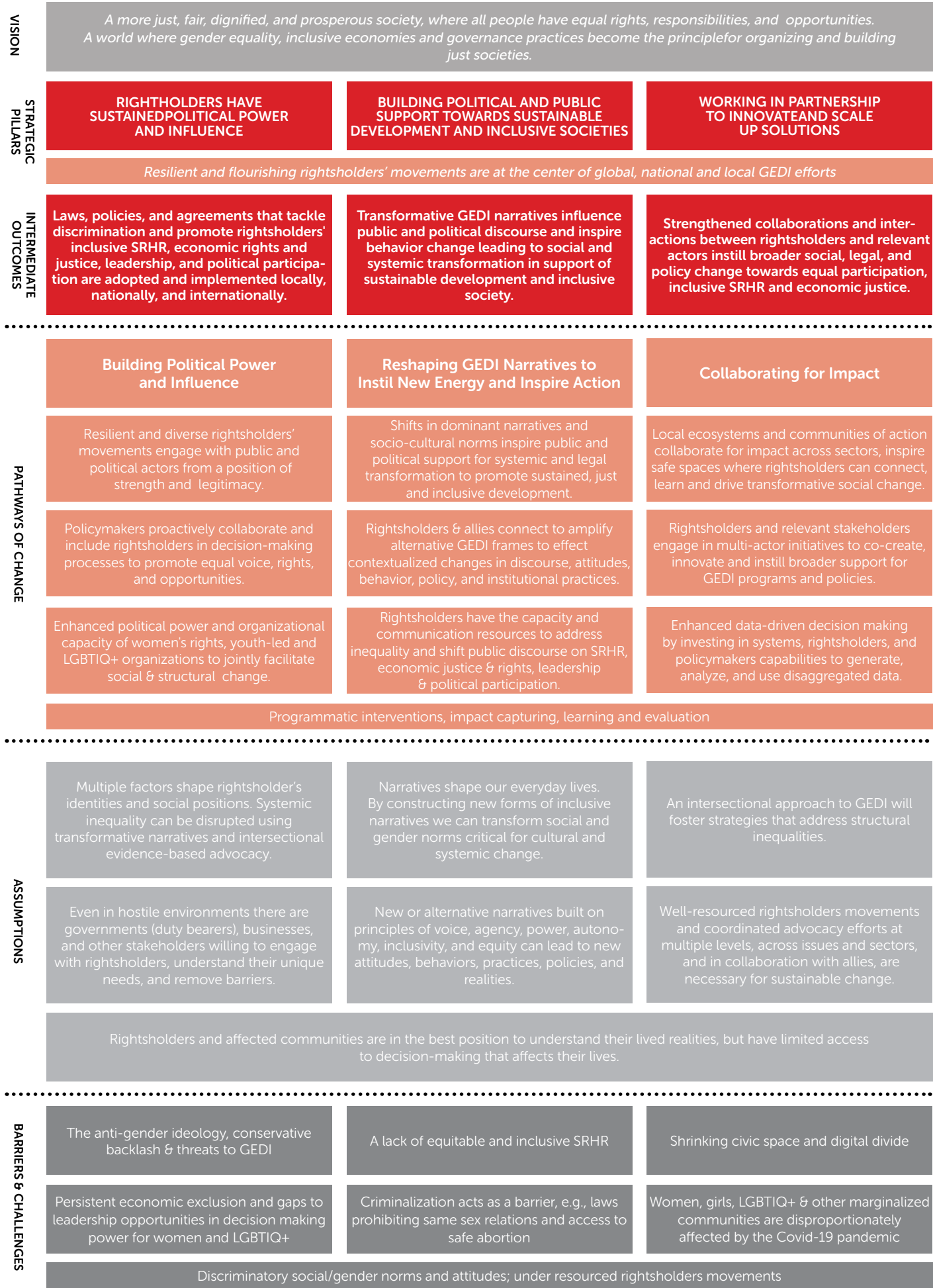
narratives. Thirdly, we aim to work in partnership to innovate and scale-up solutions.

Interconnected with the three strategic pillars are pathways of change that relate to sustained changes produced by a combination of interventions by Hivos and our partners that result in the following outcomes:

- Laws, policies, and agreements that tackle discrimination and protect women’s and LGBTIQ+ people’s rights are adopted and implemented locally, nationally, and internationally.
- A shift in social norms where transformative GEDI narratives positively influence public and political discourse to counter discrimination, inspire behavior change, and systemic transformation in support of SRHR, women’s empowerment, and the rights of LGBTIQ+ people.
- Strengthened collaborations and interactions between rightsholders and relevant actors and enhanced use of intersectional evidence instill broader social, legal, and policy change.

To achieve **lasting change** towards a more **inclusive** and **fair society**, **public discourse** around **the rights of women, LGBTIQ+ people** and other **marginalized groups must change fundamentally** by centering them as experts and key decision-makers at all levels.

3. <https://hivos.org/document/strategic-compass-2021-2024/>.



HOW WE DO IT

1. Building Political Power and Influence: Hivos supports and accompanies rightsholders to ensure they have the sustained political power and influence needed to challenge social and political systems and practices that fuel discrimination and exclusion. Our interventions are designed to ensure women and LGBTIQ+ people assert their rights and spark change in their communities and internationally. Well-resourced diverse movements, collective power, and action are necessary for the sustained change we envision. So Hivos invests in building, connecting, and sustaining resilient and flourishing rightsholders movements to advance their work and priorities. Under the umbrella of Communities of Action, we inspire safe spaces where rightsholders can connect, learn, and develop joint strategies to improve their lives and well-being.

2. Reshaping GEDI Narratives to Inspire Action: We aim to build political and public support for new narratives that foster transformative dialogue on GEDI and disrupt dominant narratives and patterns of inequality. We invest in rightsholders' capacity and communication resources to spur shifts in public discourse using their strengthened links and capacity to mobilize action. Our narrative change work is part of the larger struggle to shift power in society, is context-specific, and is informed by rightsholders' needs. Together with rightsholders, we develop context-specific narratives that advance transformative GEDI frames and shift narratives through arts and culture, strategic communication, campaigns, and storytelling to drive long-term social and systemic change. We also use intersectional evidence to instill broader social, legal, and policy change.

3. Collaborating for Impact: Hivos works in partnerships to increase shared knowledge, join like-minded initiatives, and build (intersectional) connections where rightsholders movements and their allies collaboratively work on creating, implementing, and scaling (new) solutions. This enables rightsholders, allies, and donors to apply their resources collectively in reaching those furthest left behind.

We envision rightsholders using these connections to work with duty bears across sectors to identify and respond strategically to priority issues jointly. Leveraging our track record of implementing and coordinating impact, knowledge, innovation, and learning hubs, we bring together different stakeholders to develop innovative approaches or scale new or proven approaches to realize GEDI outcomes. We use our position to convene and facilitate collaborations between rightsholders and relevant actors to share and build the skills needed to effect desired changes. For example, through peer linking and learning efforts or Communities of Action and Communities of Practice.

As part of this process, we encourage greater use of intersectional evidence to drive meaningful change. A deeper understanding of the intersecting identities, characteristics, and overlapping discriminatory systems that shape rightsholders' lived experiences is needed to better inform policy development and interventions. We gain this by engaging in collaborative research and learning to build a body of evidence on relevant promising practices that can scale solutions.

Fifty percent of Hivos' programmatic work and budget are linked to **GEDI objectives** that support human rights, gender justice, LGBTIQ, and feminist movements in which Hivos' work is complementary to that of our partners.

05 GEDI MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

In the coming years, we aim to expand our own and our partners' knowledge of intersectional evidence. This will create an understanding of lived experiences and help build further narratives that address individual, systemic, and structural inequality and improve GEDI decision-making. We will encourage more inclusive and diverse data collection methodologies and forms of evidence in our reporting and foster co-learning and capacity building internally and in our partnerships. This may include methods such as feminist participatory action research or narrative assessment. Still, our data collection and utilization will also consider the politics of power and how it exercised or experienced. With regards to society, we aim to track changes in narratives, norms, attitudes, and beliefs and see how they are reflected in policies and public discourse. Within Hivos, we will develop organizational KPIs for the proportion of Hivos funding that goes to women, youth, and LGBTIQ+ groups, analyze and set targets for our internal performance on GEDI, and demonstrate an active investment in a diverse workforce at all levels.

Hivos is in the process of finalizing a set of global indicators and setting up an M&E system, allowing projects and programs to report on and monitor their progress both at the program level and at Hivos global level. The following data will be collected according to Hivos Strategic Compass five change strategies:

1) Boosting local ownership

- a. # and type of governance structures within Hivos projects involving rightsholders and local partners
- b. % overall Hivos funds that go directly to partners
- c. # women's rights and LGBTIQ organizations receiving Hivos (core) funding

2) Moving the middle

- a. # and type of strategies used to 'move the middle,' with an indication (supported by research) of most & least effective measures
- b. # of key individuals or organizations directly involved in shared narrative change intervention or campaign (increased collaboration between partners)
- c. #policy debates and outcomes that reflect the changed narrative

3) Forging multi-actor initiatives

- a. # Consortia led by Hivos (with qualitative specification of the role of Hivos) or Hivos engagement in other collaborative efforts/ partnerships
- b. Type and quality of representation of GEDI rightsholders/ marginalized groups in consortia/MALs across Hivos

4) Influencing policies and practices

- a. # outcomes contributing towards impact area ToC that can be labeled as agenda-setting, policy change, or practice change in which Hivos/partners have played a plausible role (with a qualitative description of role Hivos)

5) Supporting frontrunners

- a. # individual and organizational frontrunners (with qualitative specification of why they are frontrunners in the project context)
- b. # non-GEDI projects with a GEDI-related objective as part of their M&E and ToC

Other internal indicators relevant for the GEDI impact area

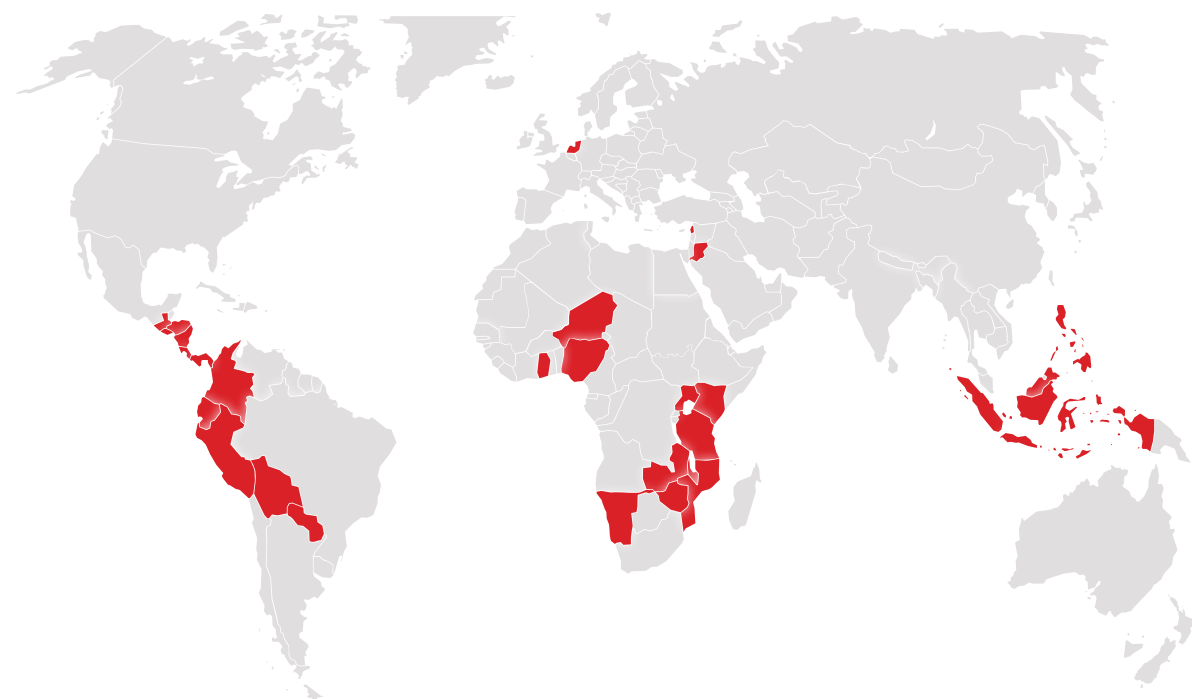
- a. Examples of capacity building and resource allocation for GEDI implementation within Hivos
- b. Progress towards more inclusive and diverse leadership and staff within Hivos
- c. Availability of gender-disaggregated data within Hivos as an organization and its projects/programs
- d. Capacity and use of feminist participatory action research, and other inclusive forms of evidence, and policy outcomes

06 OUR TRACK RECORD

Our track record is based on current programs whose strategies reinforce our Theory of Change. They offer opportunities to scale up, expand or replicate the

innovative ideas they are built on. Furthermore, we plan to utilize results and lessons from them to inform new program ideas and partnerships.

WHERE WE WORK



For the latest news, opinion articles and stories of change from around the world about our Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work, please visit our website. There, you will also find an overview of current and finalized programs that collectively make up our track record.

CURRENT PROGRAMS

Voice

Scope 2016-2023: Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania (Hivos: Kenya, Tanzania, Indonesia, and the Philippines).

Key partners: Oxfam Novib, The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and rightsholder groups and organizations

Program snapshot: Voice is synonymous with inclusion, explicitly targeting those left furthest behind whom Hivos wants to reach first. Voice has four types of grants: empowerment, influencing, innovation and learning, and sudden opportunity grants. The added value of Voice lies in its demonstrated ability to give practical meaning to the notion of “nothing about us, without us” by creating and managing an easily accessible grant funding mechanism. Voice offers grants to grassroots groups and organizations less likely to access funding from other sources. This includes allowing grant submissions in local languages, audio or video, to accommodate different skills and capacity levels. Voice has supported over 100 projects to amplify the voices of women and girls to increase gender equality⁵. The program specifically focuses on people who face intersecting discrimination and promotes a key role for women and youth in all its work.

Free to be Me

Scope 2021-2025: Fourteen countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia

Key partners: Consortium partners are: Positive Vibes, ILGA World, and Hivos as lead party. Global Interfaith Network (GIN), Workplace Pride and Sogicampaigns are technical partners.

Program snapshot: The program provides funds, coaching, and accompaniment for LGBTIQ+ groups to influence norms and attitudes, generate (public) support, and promote laws, policies, and regulations that recognize, respect, and protect LGBTIQ+ people's rights. Furthermore, since LGBTIQ+ people are often excluded from socio-economic development agendas, targeted economic empowerment policies and programming are lacking. Hivos and our alliance partners aim to fill this gap by combining national-level approaches and foundational work at the global level. We invest in community engagement efforts and are piloting new ideas that are critical in reshaping how LGBTIQ+ individuals engage and benefit equally from inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

We Lead

Scope 2021-2025: Nine countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central America

Key partners: Hivos leads a consortium of Positive Vibes, Restless Development, Marsa, FEMNET and the Central American Women's Fund. M&C Saatchi World Services is our technical partner.

Program snapshot: The program focuses on young women and adolescent girls who: live with HIV; identify as lesbian, bisexual, trans, or intersex (LBTI); live with a disability, and are affected by displacement. It puts young women rightsholders in the driver's seat, connecting them in Communities of Action. In these spaces, they share knowledge, experiences, and ideas, and learn from one another while also developing joint strategies to improve their SRH-R. We accompany and coach them as they work towards achieving the legal and policy changes they have targeted. The program also empowers these young women to participate in movements and develop and lead campaigns to change the perceptions of policymakers and the public on rightsholders' SRHR. Finally, an innovative participatory grantmaking mechanism provides financial support to realize their plans and build and strengthen their organizations. Throughout the program, there is continuous attention for rightsholders' safety and security and their psychosocial well-being.

Hivos Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Fund

Scope 2016-2021: East and Southern Africa

Key Partners: Community Initiative for Social Empowerment (CISE Malawi), Panos Institute for Southern Africa, Gateway Health Institute (GHI), Rozaria Memorial Trust (RMT), The Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI), Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCOZ), Girls Empowerment Network (GENET) Malawi, Grass Root Soccer (GRS) Zambia, Sex Rights Africa Network, Real Open Opportunities for Transformation Support (ROOTS) Africa, Bridges of Hope, Restless Development.

Program snapshot: The Regional SRHR Fund has adopted an approach that is interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Evidence-informed grantmaking processes are at the core of the Fund's activities. This strategy is supported by a range of other actions to ensure a comprehensive approach, including capacity strengthening of partner organizations, advocacy and influencing policies for improved access to services, and strategic convening of key stakeholders for a more coordinated regional SRHR response. The Fund's interventions align with SDGs 3 and 5 as the priority SRHR areas in facilitating voice, agency, and collaboration amongst youth-focused SRHR organizations in East and Southern Africa.

She Leads

Program snapshot: She Leads promotes women and girls' full and effective participation and leadership in political and societal decision-making in Zimbabwe. The program also responds to the gendered dimensions of Covid 19 and amplifies women's voice and leadership during and beyond the Covid- 19 pandemic in Zimbabwe. Women leaders and women's organizations are the catalyzing force of this program, ensuring that they have equal opportunities to participate as leaders and agents of change. The project incorporates a strong focus on working at the sub-national and grassroots levels, supporting Hivos's work with young people and women from marginalized communities.

The program aims to achieve the following results:

- increased women's representation and leadership positions in civic and political institutions
- strengthened platforms for more diverse voices in public debate that challenge discriminatory narratives, norms, and practices that undermine women's participation and leadership
- increased effectiveness of women's rights platforms, networks, and alliances in influencing the development and implementation of policies on women's participation and leadership at local, national, and regional levels

Women's Voice and Leadership

Program snapshot: The Women's Voice and Leadership program in Indonesia is implemented in partnership with Just Associates Southeast Asia (JASS SEA). It aims to directly fund five national Indonesian women's rights organizations (WROs) focused on inclusive religious discourse to ensure space for women's social, political, and legal rights. In turn, these five WROs are working through and across their memberships to support at least 69 local WROs in 58 districts of at least seven provinces across Java, and in Sulawesi and Kalimantan.

The expected outcomes for this project include:

- improved management and sustainability of local women's rights organizations in Indonesia representing vulnerable or marginalized women and girls
- enhanced performance of women's rights organizations' programming and advocacy to advance gender equality and empower women and girls in Indonesia
- increased effectiveness of national and sub-national women's rights platforms, networks and alliances in advocating for gender equality and addressing discriminatory beliefs and harmful practices to affect policy, legal and social change in Indonesia

Alianza Liderazgo en Positivo (ALEP)

Scope 2019-2022: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru

Program snapshot: Alianza Liderazgo en Positivo (HIV Positive Leadership) and Poblaciones Clave (Key Populations) aim to strengthen the advocacy work of social organizations and communities considered key populations to improve their quality of life and achieve full human rights for all key people living with HIV in Latin America. This innovative effort combines the leadership, vision, capacities, and strengths of different regional networks of people living with HIV and key populations.

Libre de Ser (Free to be Me)

Scope 2019-2022: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

Partners: Visibles, ASPIDH Arco Iris Trans, Colectivo Unidad Color Rosa, Mesa Nacional LGBTIQ & the RDS Nicaraguan social network, Transvida, MESART, Accede, Gafadis, and the Presidential Commissioner for LGBTI affairs, among others, as allies in Costa Rica.

Program snapshot: Libre de Ser (Free to be Me) seeks to safeguard the life and integrity and advance the rights of LGBTIQ+ people in Central America, particularly trans people. It is implemented by Hivos in alliance with LGBTIQ+ activists, media, journalists, data specialists, and artists, among others. The program supports and expands civil society activists' alliances with public institutions to improve data for effective and comprehensive security measures that protect LGBTIQ+ people. The project also trains LGBTIQ+ activists to communicate their own stories and reach unconventional audiences online and offline. The aim is to create and position new narratives that combat the culture of hatred and uphold LGBTIQ+ rights. For example, dialogues between trans people and people of faith, families, youth groups, and business people, among others, are essential in this process.

OUR GEDI WORK IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY:



Global Affairs Canada
Ford Foundation
Irish Aid



07 KEY TERMINOLOGIES - GEDI IN PRACTICE

Our **understanding and practice of gender equality** is based on all people's equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, ethnicity, ability, religion, age, among other grounds.

We use the term **diversity** when discussing equal rights and opportunities because **people (rightsholders) differ**. It refers to the practice and quality of including or involving people/rightsholders from different social, political, and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, social-economic class, amongst other determinants.

The term **inclusion** describes our **active, intentional, and ongoing engagement** with diversity as described above. And the degree to which we meaningfully engage with people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, ensuring they have equal access and resources to participate fully in society.

Intersectionality is an analytical framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege, as expressed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989). The idea is that when it comes to thinking about how inequalities persist, categories like gender, race, and class are best understood as overlapping and mutually constitutive rather than isolated and distinct.

At Hivos, we employ an **intersectional approach** because:

- Our interventions and partnerships recognize that every person has multiple identity factors that impact their participation, their agency, and who they are.
- We recognize the interconnections within and between rightsholder groups and the issues we seek to address, ensuring they have a voice and resources necessary to address the complexity of inequalities they face if actual social change is expected.
- We employ the principles of intersectional knowledge where lived experiences are a valid form of evidence, ensuring that our data collection and utilization con-

siders the politics of power and how power is exercised or experienced.

We understand **transformative change** as a process that addresses root causes of inequality, challenges power dynamics, and leads to a shift in social norms, behaviors, laws, and policies.

- To achieve GEDI objectives, we work on transforming gender norms and addressing power relations, notably addressing patriarchy. Our analysis and work also examine the underlying norms that limit the broader interpretations of gender by including other identities, expressions, and sexual orientations.
- We recognize transformational work is long term and often generational, and requires sustained investments.

Hivos employs a **dual-track approach** to ensure GEDI is a cross-cutting (mainstreamed) theme in Hivos' work and the focus of targeted (stand-alone/specific) programming, research, and advocacy. Programmatic distinctions are made based on the project/program's objective(s).

- **Principle objective** implies that GEDI is the main objective of the project/program and is fundamental in its design and expected results.
- **Significant objective** means that gender equality or GEDI is an essential and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the project/program.

A more just, **fair, dignified, and prosperous society**, where all people *have equal rights*, responsibilities, **and opportunities**. *A world where gender equality, inclusive economies and governance practices become the principle for organizing* and building just **societies**.

