

## Welcome to Out & Equal's International Town Call Series

### Organization for Refuge Asylum & Migration (ORAM) Webinar On LGBTI Asylum Seekers & Refugees

Be sure to dial into the  
audio portion of the conference

1-866-740-1260 (U.S. & Canada)

Participant Access code: 6946500

Welcome! Your line will be muted and this session will  
be recorded for our archives!



## Out & Equal International Town Call *LGBT Refugees*



**Presenters:** ORAM – Organization for Refuge, Asylum & Migration  
Neil Grungras, J.D., Executive Director  
Rachel Levitan - Director of Advocacy

*Moderator: Kevin Jones, Deputy Director, Out & Equal*



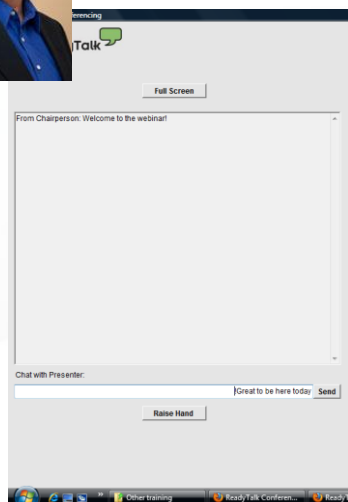
## Announcements



- **July 26** – Empowering Allies Tour with David Hall (Houston RA)
- **July 28** – Empowering Allies Tour with David Hall (Chicagoland RA)
- **July 28** – Monthly Town Call – The Business Case for Marriage Equality
- **August 25** – Empowering Allies Tour with David Hall (LA RA)
- **September 7 & 14 (1:00pm PDT)** – Out & Equal University - Taking Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender equality from Theory to Reality: Insights from Brian McNaught on where we came from, where we are today and where do we need to go to advance our global human rights movement
- **Oct 25-28** – Annual Workplace Summit, Dallas (Registration & hotel booking now open!)
- Check [www.outandequal.org](http://www.outandequal.org) for more info on:
  - Upcoming & Archive Training - <http://www.outandequal.org/training-programs>
  - Regional Affiliates - <http://www.outandequal.org/regional-affiliates>
  - Employee Resource Groups - <http://www.outandequal.org/resources/groups>
  - CareerLink - <http://lgbtcareerlink.com/>
  - Summit 2011 - <http://outandequal.org/summit-2011>



## ReadyTalk Features



- Phone lines are muted
- Ask questions or make comments by using the chat feature
- Chat is seen by the all the presenters
- Technical problems, raise your hand and check the chat box!
- Cut & Paste links from chat
- Polling – select an answer, submit and see results



# Out & Equal International Town Call **LGBT Refugees**



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## **ORAM's Mission, Purpose & Intended Impact**



## **ORAM'S Mission & Impact**

**Advocate on behalf of Refugees  
Fleeing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

**Fill Enormous Protection Void for  
LGBTI Persons Fleeing Human Rights Abuse  
Worldwide**

**Help Secure Safety for 5,000 LGBTIs Fleeing Peril  
in 5 Years**



## **What ORAM Does:**

**Representation, Advocacy,  
Research Education &  
Resettlement**



## Programs & Services

### Client Services

- Legal Consultation & Representation in key locations
- Subsistence Aid through “Protect-a-Refugee” program
- US Resettlement & Canadian Case Referral

### Advocacy

- US – refugee & asylum law and policy
- International refugee policy and practices

### Research & Publications

### Education & Capacity Building

- UNHCR
- NGOs
- Governments
- Refugee Communities
- Civic and LGBTI communities



## Prevalent Forms of Persecution LGBTI Refugees Escape



- Judicial & extra-judicial execution
- “Honor” killing by family, community
- Torture & wrongful imprisonment
- “Corrective” rape, “punitive” rape & other targeted sexual abuse
- Sustained violence & harassment
- Consistent withholding of protection by authorities due to sexual orientation or gender identity
- Systemic deprivation of employment
- Medical abuses
- Pervasive forced homelessness
- Forced marriage
- Violence-based bars to education

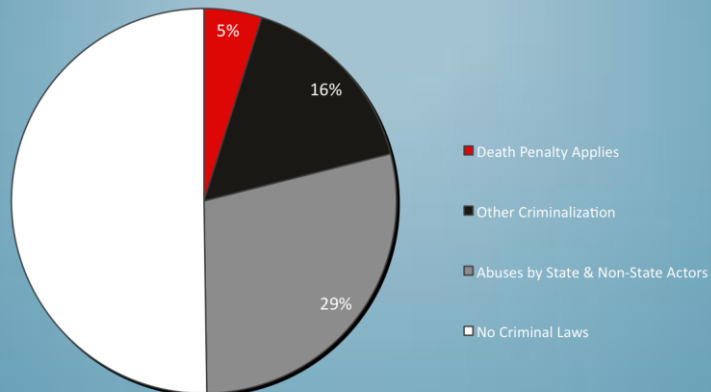


## State & Non-State Actors of Persecution



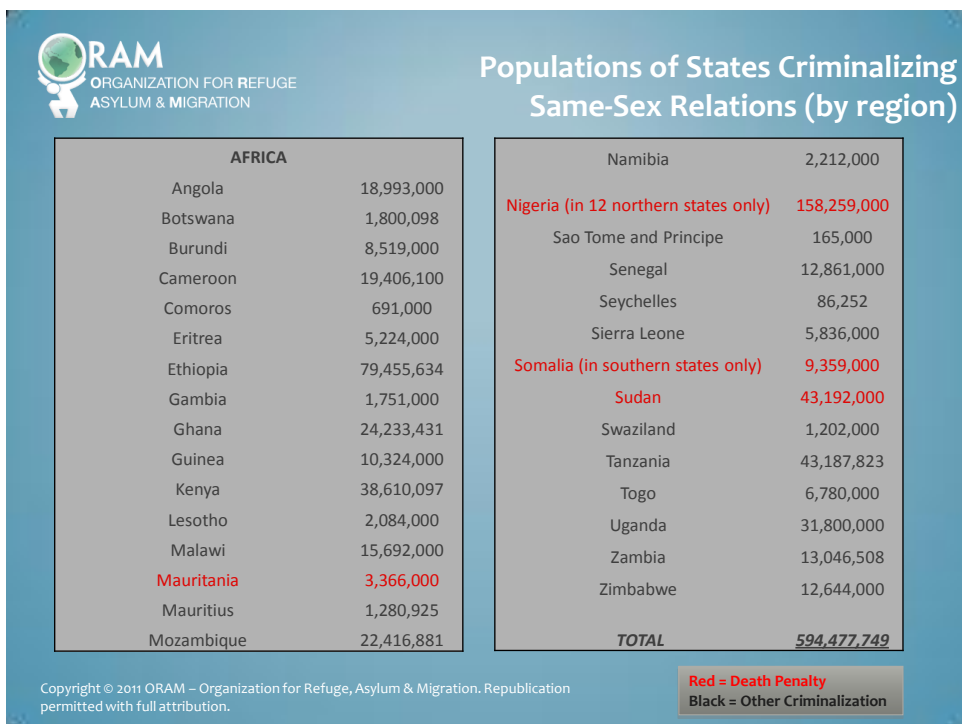
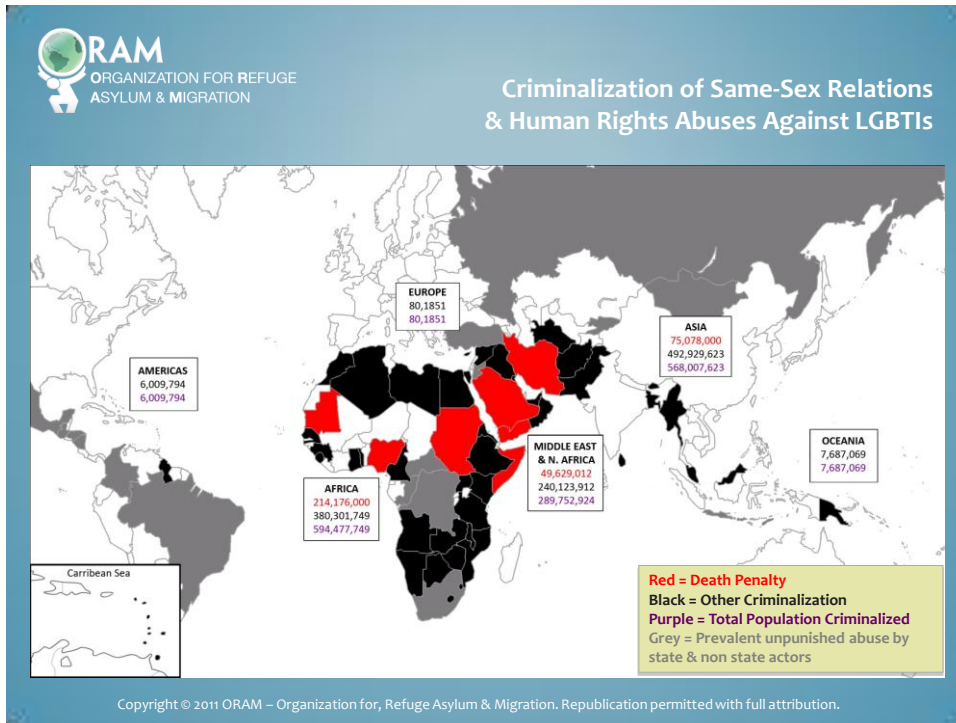
Actors of LGBTI persecution can include family, neighbors, community members, religious factions, doctors, militia groups, and authorities.

### PERCENTAGE OF HUMAN POPULATION LIVING UNDER LAWS CRIMINALIZING SAME-SEX RELATIONS AND ABUSES BY STATE & NON-STATE ACTORS



Over 1.4 Billion people – 21% of the human population in countries where same-sex relations are criminalized. Over 2 billion more live where abuse of LGBTI persons is widespread and unpunished.

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## Populations of States Criminalizing Same-Sex Relations (by region)

### MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

Algeria	36,300,000
Egypt	80,008,000
Gaza	1,657,155
Iraq	31,467,000
Lebanon	4,255,000
Liberia	4,102,000
Libya	6,546,000
Kuwait	3,051,000
Oman	2,694,094
Morocco	32,102,000
Qatar	1,696,563
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	<b>27,136,977</b>
Syria	20,989,000
Tunisia	10,549,100
United Arab Emirates	4,707,000
<b>Yemen</b>	<b>22,492,035</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>289,752,924</u></b>

### ASIA

Afghanistan	29,117,000
Bangladesh	150,302,000
Bhutan	695,822
Brunei	407,000
<b>Iran</b>	<b>75,078,000</b>
Malaysia	27,565,821
Maldives	317,280
Myanmar	50,496,000
Pakistan	175,571,000
Singapore	5,076,700
Sri Lanka	20,410,000
Turkmesistan	5,177,000
Uzbekistan	27,794,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>568,007,623</u></b>

Red = Death Penalty  
Black = Other Criminalization

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## Populations of States Criminalizing Same-Sex Relations (by region)

### OCEANIA

Cook Islands	23,400
Kiribati	100,000
Palau	21,000
Papua New Guinea	6,888,000
Nauru	10,000
Solomon Islands	530,669
Tonga	104,000
Tuvalu	10,000
Western Samoa	187,032
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>7,687,069</u></b>

### EUROPE

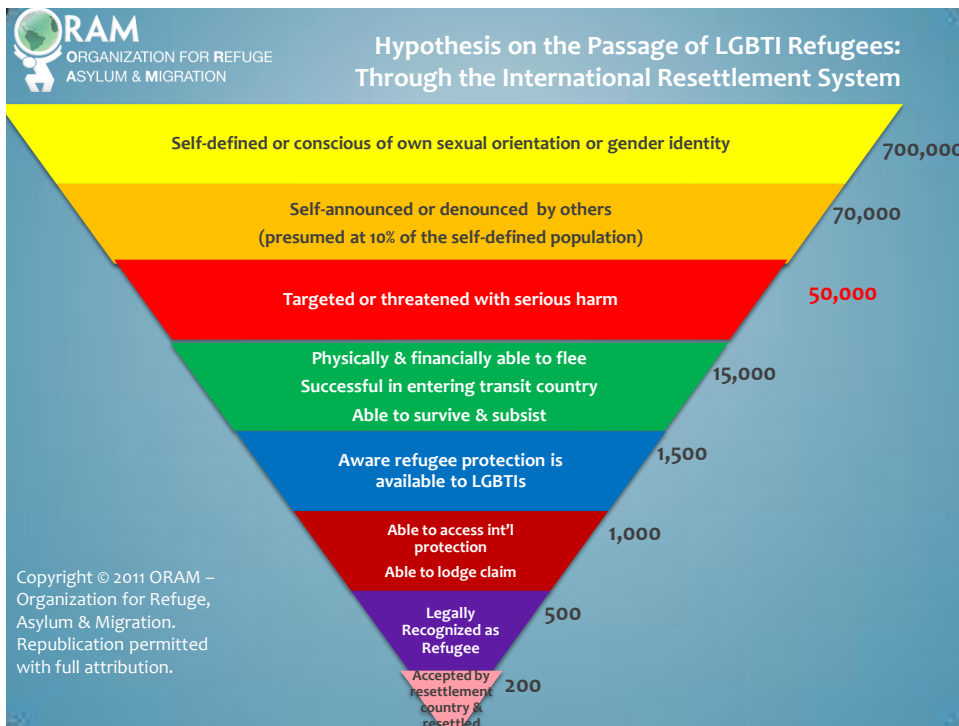
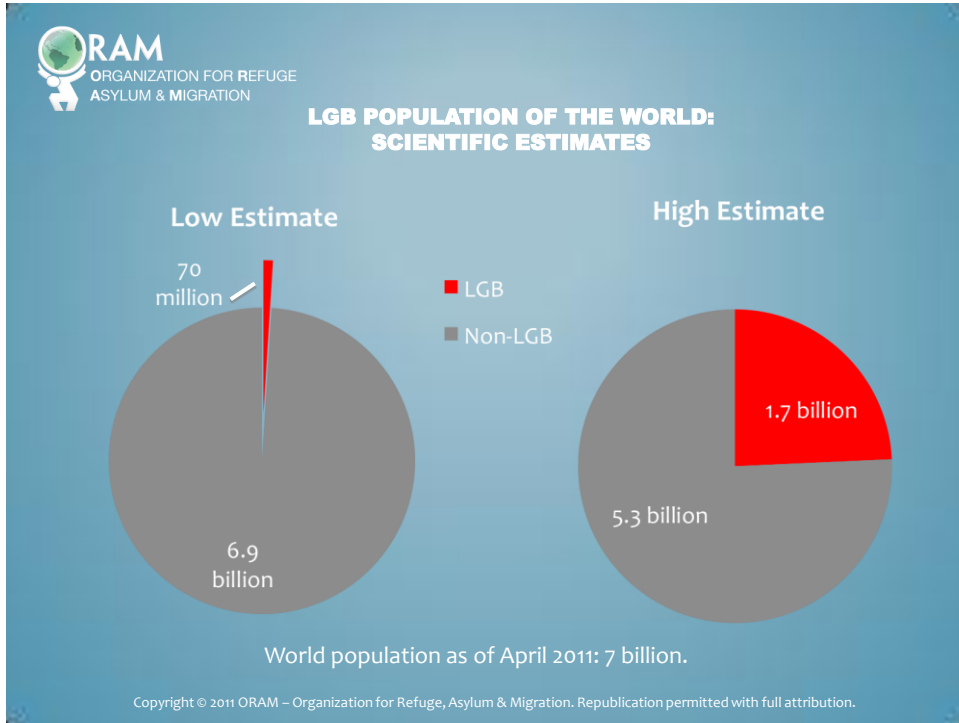
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	80,1851
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>80,1851</u></b>

### AMERICAS

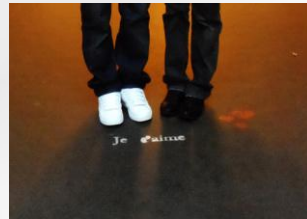
Antigua and Barbuda	89,000
Barbados	257,000
Belize	333,200
Dominica	67,000
Grenada	104,000
Guyana	784,894
Jamaica	2,730,000
Saint Kitts and Nevis	52,000
Saint Lucia	166,526
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	109,000
Trinidad and Tobago	1,317,174
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>6,009,794</u></b>

Red = Death Penalty  
Black = Other Criminalization

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# ORAM's Current Programs



## ORAM's Client Services

### Legal Services

- Turkey: Partner with local NGO to provide legal assistance to mostly Iranian LGBTI refugees
  - Facilitate access to social, financial, medical and mental health support
- Israel: Partner with leading university and NGO to support legal aid to LGBTI refugees
- Resettlement eligibility & referral from NGOs worldwide
- Actively developing other international legal services locations

### Financial Subsistence

- "Protect-a-Refugee" Program brings together donors with financially strapped refugees overseas awaiting resettlement
- Community-based financial support

### US Resettlement Pilot Program

- Provides LGBTI refugees supported community in the Bay Area for successful integration
- Community-based financial, housing, vocational & other support



# Advocacy

## Domestic US Advocacy

- Legislative: Reaching out to Senators and Representatives
- Administrative: Advocacy with Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration; Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement
- Partnership with refugee & LGBTI organizations and networks

## International Advocacy

- Ground-breaking partnership with UNHCR to increase international protection of LGBTI refugees through policy change, training, research and community outreach
- Partnership with international refugee and LGBTI organizations and networks



# Research & Publications

## Recent Publications

- **Testing Sexual Orientation: A Scientific and Legal Analysis of Plethysmography in Asylum and Refugee Status Proceedings**

## Upcoming Publications

- **Assessing Protection: the NGO Sector and LGBTI Refugees**
- **Rights and Protection of LGBTI Refugees and Asylum Seekers Under the Yogyakarta Principles**

## Current & Pending Research

- Same-sex **Partnership Rights** in Resettlement Countries
- Protection of LGBTI refugees in **Uganda, South Africa & Mexico**
- **Training Guide** for Adjudicators on LGBTI Refugee Claims
- LGBTI refugee claims arising after departure from countries of origin ("**Sur Place**")



## Education & Capacity Building

### UNHCR

- Sensitivity Training of Field Staff
- Adjudication Training
- Global Policy Development

### NGOs

- Staff Sensitivity Training
- Community Outreach

### Governments

- Sensitivity Training
- Adjudication Training
- Policy Development

### Refugee Communities

- Community Outreach
- Public Legal Information



## Focus: Conditions for LGBTI Refugees in Turkey & the ORAM "Protect-a-Refugee" Program



## Survival and protection Challenges of LGBT Refugees & Asylum seekers



*“Many of us left everything behind. We have been cut off from our communities, our families in our countries and have no one to turn to.”*

- Consistent, often violent harassment from the local community and refugee population
- Authorities in many countries do not respond seriously or effectively to LGBTI persons' complaints of abuse
- Wholesale barriers to employment or violence in the workplace
- Inability to secure safe housing , medical intervention or other survival services



## Protect-A-Refugee

- Know an LGBTI Refugee
- Provide Financial Sustenance
- Give Emotional Support
- Project a sense of Future



# Focus:

## Resettlement Needs & the Pilot San Francisco Resettlement Program



### **LGBT Pre-Arrival considerations**

- English Language Crucial for survival
- LGBTI-friendly Resettlement Site
- What about the Refugee's Partner?
- Adequate Health Care
- Family members at resettlement site
- Capacity of the Local LGBT community

## **Psychosocial Issues & LGBTI Refugees**

- Severe Isolation
- Inability to Accept Oneself
- Fear of Own Family
- Distance from Community of Origin
- Untreated Deep-Seated Psychological Issues
- PTSD Complicated by Childhood Sexual Abuse



## **Designing Support Systems for LGBTI Refugees**

- Positive Messaging on LGBTI Identity & Rights
- Supportive Domestically-Born LGBTI Community
- Local LGBTI Community with Religious, national, Ethnic or Linguistic Affinity to Refugee
- Supportive non-LGBTI Groups & Professionals
- Psychotherapy & Rehabilitating Activities



## **ORAM San Francisco Pilot Resettlement Program**

- Unique, Historic Program
- Focus on LGBTI Refugees only
- Relies on LGBTI Community
- Supported Self-Reliance
- Goal: Independence in <1 Year



## **Aims of the Pilot San Francisco Resettlement Program**

- Access to information systems
- Securing community in lieu of family (if needed)
- Resettling in LGBTI-safe neighborhoods
- Finding Safe & accepting housing
- Locating LGBTI-friendly medical & psychological professionals
- Securing LGBTI-accepting education & vocational training
- Finding LGBTI-accepting employment



## What *You* can do

### Support a Refugee

- Give to Protect-a-Refugee
- Support the San Francisco Resettlement Program

### Support ORAM's Work

- Volunteer your professional services in communications, accounting, law, translation
- Make a tax-deductible donation to ORAM
- Give an in-kind donation

[www.oraminternational.org](http://www.oraminternational.org)



## Questions & Answers Discussion

You can chat your questions or  
raise your hand to ask a question!



## Summary/Closing



Thank you for your participation!



*Please complete the short survey at the end of the call!*

Consider a donation to Out & Equal:  
<http://www.outandequal.org/about/Donations.asp>

Join us for our next Town Call On August 28 on  
 The Business Case for Marriage Equality

More questions? Contact Pat Baillie, Associate Director of Training  
 pbaillie@outandequal.org - 415-694-6521

