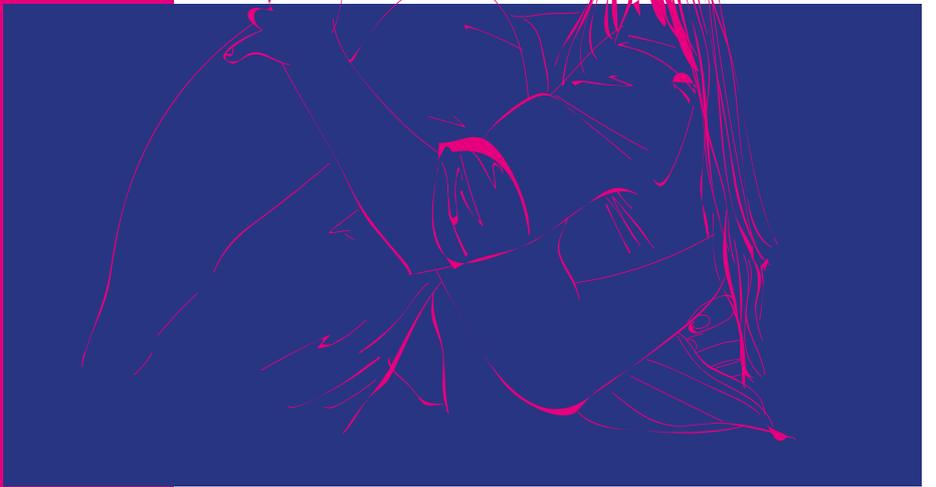


# CHANGING HEARTS & MINDS



**LGBTIQ+ Campaigns in Asia: Case Studies**



## Acknowledgements

The contents of this regional campaigning report are first and foremost the result of the sharp thinking of the organisations involved, and the networks supporting them. This is a collaborative effort that has arisen from the inspiring stories shared by the campaigners themselves. We would like to express our gratitude for all the people involved who have taken precious time to share their thoughts and ideas with us. These stories and experiences are those that the organisations wished to share with us.

**Joel Bedos, Sogicampaigns.org**

Justin Francis Bionat, Youth Voices Count



*The online version of this publication includes the hyperlinks to the original full article on the [sogicampaigns.org](http://sogicampaigns.org) website*

# FOREWORD

**Campaigning is both one of the most challenging and one of the most exhilarating tasks for a campaigner for sexual, gender and bodily diversities.**



It takes us “out there” to face the public, on what often seems like an impossible task to change hearts and minds.

It takes us into the extremely counter-intuitive field of the human psychology, exploring what makes people tick, and what makes societies change. And more often than not we scrabble about with our inspiration and courage, not knowing exactly what works, how it works, and the ways in which we could make things better.

And yet campaigning is the moment when our imagination heightens, when we unite to make it real, when we find the right messages to “crack the code” of people’s hearts, when we come together as a movement, with our friends and allies. Campaigning is when our own hearts beat faster.

This publication aims to provide you with some examples of these moments. It is a tribute to the work and the creativity of activists campaigning for sexual, gender and bodily diversities in Asia. Hopefully it to inspire you to draw on your own creativity.

**It hopes to inspire you to unfold your own creativity.**

It also aims to share with you some of the insights and the lessons

learnt through these campaigns. This is important because, in addition to inspiration, changing hearts and minds also requires some good knowledge of social psychology, campaigning methodologies and research.

All of the case studies summarized here are edited from in-depth interviews with campaigners who shared their learning with us. You can find the full articles and interviews on the [sogicampaigns.org](http://sogicampaigns.org) resource centre on campaigning. There you can access many more case studies, and vital articles on many aspects of campaigning, like how to develop online campaigns, how to tell a good story, how to stay safe, how to use art in campaigning, etc.

There you will also find a comprehensive online course on campaign communication, which provides you with the basic knowledge on how to build the right messages to win more people over to our vision of a world where sexual, gender and bodily diversities have become a valuable part of societies living in peace, respect and harmony.

We wish you a happy and inspiring reading

# TAIWAN

## a long road to equality



On May 24, more than 360 same-sex couples rushed to the marriage registration offices across the country in tearful celebrations of joy. Since May 17, coinciding with the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, Taiwan had officially become the first country in Asia to legalize marriage equality. The road to this historic moment was not easy and has been 30 years in the making, since Chi Chia-wei sparked a movement for marriage equality.

**The road to this historic moment was not easy and has been 30 years in the making**

The marriage equality bill was first introduced in 2013 but was met with such fierce public criticism that it didn't go forward before 2017, when the Constitutional Court ruled that the civil court had to recognise same-sex marriage and gave the legislature two years to pass a law that would grant Taiwan equal marriage.

But the perspective of Marriage Equality resolutely sparked an explosion of conservative opposition, which secured a referendum on this issue.

The referendum questions on gay rights were the subject of a well-funded and highly organized campaign led by conservative Christians and other groups. The

campaign was characterized by misinformation, the bulk of which was spread online, including messages warning of an AIDS epidemic and low birth rates, or that educating students about different sexual orientations would influence their sexual orientation. By and large, conservative attacks were mainly framed around the argument that same-sex marriage is un-Asian or that it violates long-held traditional family values, in



to influence politics »

But pro-marriage advocates were not going to be that easily defeated. In the run up to the vote on the various bills that were tabled in Parliament to either thwart or support marriage equality, campaigning exploded.

Signature campaigns, films and documentaries, photo exhibits, demonstrations, lobbying initiatives, pride parades, panel discussions, to name a few, were the amalgamation of a vibrant civil society that was determined to make love win.

Creative initiatives flourished, like an initiative by young Taiwanese boys who wore skirts to school for a week to break gender stereotypes and support Marriage Equality.

Creative campaigning has definitely been key in shifting attitudes in Taiwan: for the generation of 20-30 year olds, that has consistently been exposed to LGBTI visibility and campaigns, support to same-sex marriage reaches a staggering 80%. Clearly more progress and victories lie ahead in Taiwan.

Taiwan and beyond.



To counter this, Marriage Equality Coalition Taiwan, an alliance of pro-marriage civil society groups early on centred its messages on the power of love, and the argument that equal marriage would strengthen social harmony, a very powerful frame in the Asian context. The

pro-marriage coalition also sought support from traditional religions, for example by building a rainbow team to attend the Goddess Matsu Pilgrimage Procession one year. Matsu is a famous sea Goddess in Taiwan and her pilgrimage procession is a very big event in the middle and southern Taiwan. The rainbow team became big news.

In spite of all the efforts of the coalition, the

referendum returned a devastating 72 percent “no” vote. According to some observers in many cases, progressive activists have found themselves out-gunned on referendum issues because of the opposition’s superior resources, arguing that « perhaps referendum efforts simply return to some of the basic issues plaguing Taiwanese politics, to begin with—that those with significant resources at their disposal have a disproportionate ability

# HANDBAG TOSSING AND RIVER PRIDE

## Stories of Myanmar's LGBTQI Festival

The &PROUD Yangon Pride and LGBT Film Festival in early 2019 had a jam packed programme. For a country where a British colonial era section 377 contained in the national Penal Code subjects same-sex sexual acts to a term of imprisonment from ten years to life, this Pride Festival was truly a success story.

Working around drastic rules and laws while also staying safe required quite a bit of imagination from the organisers Colors Rainbow: "Since it is very difficult to get permission from the different city councils authorities to organize a parade in the streets, we took inspiration from Vietnam's first parade on bicycles, labelled as a "sport event". Our Boat Parade allowed us to bypass city laws."

Imagination also stayed on the menu for the rest of the festival's activities, which span-

ned over 3 days and reached out to 12,000 people.

The community's creativity and good humour was celebrated with the "Drag Olympics", featuring handbag-tossing competition and drag race. Film screenings and photo exhibitions catered for the artsy side. But a Pride festival must also remain political and organisers created special awards categories for "LGBT Heroes", "Media" and "Parents". A great way to celebrate essential players in Myanmar's LGBT road to equality.

Not so long ago in 2016, a young transgender woman named Chaw Su Khin was arrested and striped naked, her hair extensions removed and set on fire. This is clear evidence that the society in Myanmar's capital city of Yangon still remains



**The community's creativity and good humour was celebrated with the "Drag Olympics"**

**WE ARE VERY HOPEFUL THAT THIS WILL ULTIMATELY LEAD TO LEGAL REFORM**

on the conservative side.

However, the &PROUD organisers remain resolutely optimistic: "The concerted actions of LGBT activists, LGBT groups and NGOs, and champions supporting

the cause have the positive consequence of raising the visibility of the movement and opening the door to serious political debate. We are very hopeful that this will ultimately lead to legal reform".

# READY4REPEAL

## Singapore gets ready 4 its future

#Reasons4Repeal



In 2018, India, after a long political struggle, scrapped Section 377 of their Penal Code, which criminalized homosexual behaviour. [This inspired legal reform campaigns in other parts of Asia.](#) Notably in Singapore, also a former British colony. Although the law had not been enforced in a long time, activists still saw it as a moral stain for the country.

### **Ready4Repeal, an online movement calling for the repeal of Section 377A of Singapore's Penal Code, was established**

In September of 2018, an online petition was launched which garnered [44,650 signatures from Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents](#). Disappointingly the Ministries of Home Affairs and Law made it clear that there would be no plans to repeal that section.

However, the LGBTIQ community in Singapore has found support in other places. [The Buddhist Fellowship](#) announced that they support

the repeal of Section 377A on the grounds that Buddhist teaching espouses empathy, compassion and understanding. While support for other rights such as marriage equality is [gaining approval from younger Singaporeans](#). A recent [economic agreement on free trade and investments](#) between the European Union (EU) and Singapore also highlighted the need to abolish laws penalising same-sex sexual relationships and to achieve full protection for LGBTIQ and women's rights.

Like other campaigns, this one relies heavily on several strategies: First, [community-led actions through storytelling](#) of personal experiences which can be used as a political motivation to convince MPs of the need to repeal the law. Second,

[petition campaigns](#), which call on citizens of the country to sign an appeal. In this case the petition can be signed on the [GoPetitions](#) website with translations into several languages spoken by the various Singaporean communities.

The campaign has a strong social media presence as well, visible in the [Facebook page of Ready4Repeal](#). Another page called, ["Dear Straight People"](#), gained much needed social media traction for the campaign by organizing a photohoot called [#Reasons4Repeal](#), showing Singaporean citizens (both heterosexual and queer) supporting the repeal of the law.

For many observers, Singapore's future is only a few steps away from being brighter for LGBT citizens.

# #CHANGETHECLAP



## Clapping Transphobia Away in Pakistan



inspired the Pakistani public to post, on their social media account, the symbolic change from a transgender clap to an applause. Pakistan's parliament, in 2018, passed a law guaranteeing basic rights for transgender citizens and outlawing discrimination by both employers and private business owners. The passage of the law happened just months after #ChangeTheClap was launched. The #ChangeTheClap campaign has proved to us that there is power in a collective voice.

The campaign strategically banks on the familiarity and proximity of the messaging with strong potential for further engage-

ment with the general public. The initiative itself is cost efficient as it uses the sharable video format over social media to garner the support of the wider Pakistani public. Using this method, the video had great success and reached greater audiences.

How do you rid society of the vile systematic discrimination against transgender individuals? The answer: change existing notions wrongfully associated with transgender individuals and applaud the success of community members. The Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN), advertising company BBDO and Proximity Pakistan began this collaboration to raise awareness about the hardships faced by transgender people in Pakistan and to help fight transphobia and advocate equal opportunities for them.

The campaign helped to change the landscape of transgender rights in the subcontinent by changing the 'ridicule to applause'.

The campaign video features appearances by Pakistani transgender community members and their positive stories. Irha Parishej, Mani Aq, Neeli Rana,

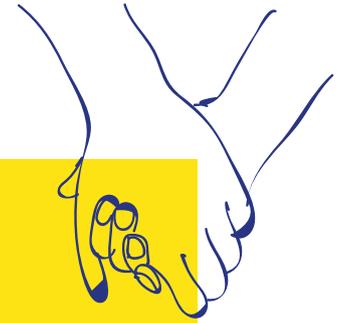
**The campaign helped to change the landscape of transgender rights in the subcontinent by changing the "ridicule to applause".**

and Kami Sid are some of the faces featured in the video championing transgender rights in their daily lives. The horizontal flat palms perpendicular to each

other is commonly associated as the "transgender clap" and while it is a culturally meaningful expression used within the community, people outside of the trans community mimick the "clap" to ridicule third gender people across the sub-continent. As the campaign shows us, it is time to change that clap into a celebratory applause for victories, big and small, in the lives of transgender community members. Even celebrities have joined in to support their transgender brothers and sisters.

The campaign did not stop there as the #ChangeTheClap movement, cascaded and

# RAINBOW LIFE MUSEUM



## Forging a community-led movement for acceptance in Cambodia

CamASEAN Youth's Future is a youth-led initiative that calls for inclusive communities through positive storytelling and community-led programs for marginalized groups including elderly LGBT persons and differently abled persons in rural villages in Cambodia.



The organisation's "Rainbow Life Museum" campaign aims at empowering elderly Khmer people with diverse gender identities or sexualities to organize within their communities and claim their narratives by openly telling their stories through organizing their own "Rainbow Village Exhibition".

The Rainbow Life Museum is a passion project by the organization that started with identifying their "champions". One of the first champions they identified was an elderly couple (one of

the individuals being transgender) who had been together for more than 40 years and had received the support and acceptance of their families, friends, village leaders and commune council (local government). The couple organised a community meeting in their house in the presence of neighbors and friends, commune leaders, Buddhist monks and Christian priests.

"Such positive stories have a great capacity to promote visibility, acceptance and understanding of LGBTQ

communities in Cambodia. They also provide young people with positive representations, which are still so rare. It is an effective way to build connections between social and age groups", founder of CamASEAN Youth's Future Srun Sorn explains.

Since these early days, the campaign has now extended to 25 villages in 12 provinces, gathering over 100 photographs of individuals and couples in rural Cambodia. The campaign brings to the villages the message "love the same".

But the campaign also has a digital reach as the village discussions are streamed live on Facebook and the testimonies and pictures are disseminated on social media.

The campaign now has reached a potential to be an advocacy tool that could change the law through evidence-based testimonies. CamASEAN Youth's Future takes pride in this bottom-up approach that allows community members to share their own story and ignite change from the grassroots, at almost zero cost.

# TESTXXX

## An HIV behaviour-change campaign across Asian countries



In large urban cities in Asia alarmingly high rates of new HIV cases among Men who have

**TestXXX exists to empower the existing community-based clinics to reach wider young MSM audiences**

Sex with Men (MSM) populations have fuelled [APCOM's](#) goal to initiate a [creative campaign](#) that would help increase the uptake of HIV testing, prevention, care and support among young gay men in several major cities in Asia – [Bangkok](#), [Hong Kong](#), [Jakarta](#), [Manila](#), [Saigon](#) and [Yogyakarta](#).

TestXXX exists to

empower the existing community-based clinics to reach wider young MSM audiences and to generate more promising behaviour

change by utilising the power of cutting-edge communications and creativity that resonates with today's culture of young people, such as the popular use of mobile sexual networking apps and other online platforms to regularly find new sexual partners. TestXXX tailors strong and [provocative messaging](#) to dissociate HIV testing from fear, stigma and/

or discrimination. TestXXX employs and integrates online and offline outreach strategies to ensure that young MSM sustainably access HIV prevention and treatment cascade.

[A recent assessment process](#) has delivered on key findings on this project.

One of the report's main take away is that the success of the campaign was linked to the use of gay-themed content, in the form of social media content and online advertising that are the niche of the audience. Recognizing the diversity within the gay community, the campaigns also considered content that would appeal to different sub-demographics of gay men, i.e. gay men in urban centres, gay men who use dating applications, or younger gay men in universities.

Here are some intriguing "take-away" from the report, which

might tease you into wanting to know more...

"Statistical and straight-up health information don't interest everyone within the target audience."

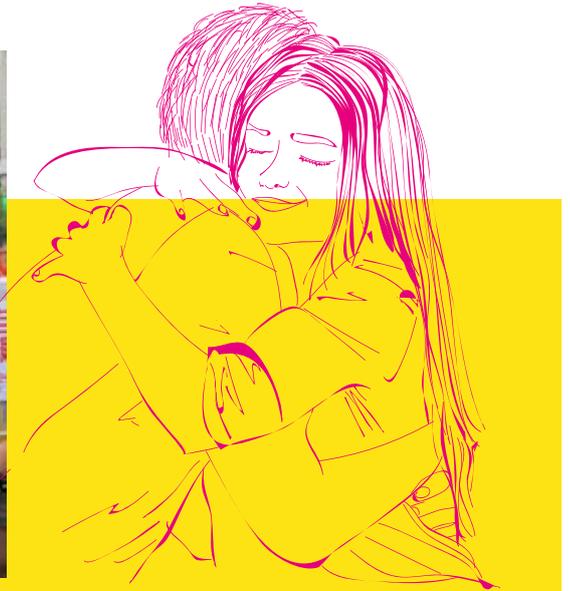
« Campaigners must provide a supportive companion to people who are hesitant, scared or feel intimidated to get a test »

« Campaigners should find a way to make the first few seconds of the video attention-grabbing. Convince the audience to keep watching by making the video local, funny and, perhaps, naughty.»

« People want to read about people. Campaigners should use human interest stories of volunteers and beneficiaries to drive media coverage of their activation events. »



# A HUG A DAY KEEPS HATE AWAY IN TAIWAN



Taiwanese Intersex Activist, Hiker Chiu, initiated this campaign in 2010 with the main idea of inviting

**avoid any form of surgery to intersex children below the age of 12**

people to show love to intersex people.

After eight years of

campaigning, success came when in October 2018, Taiwan's ministry of Healthcare and Welfare issued a recommendation directed to medical professionals to avoid any form of surgery to intersex children below the age of 12 unless there is a valid medical reason to do so, such as cancer risks or physical dysfunction.

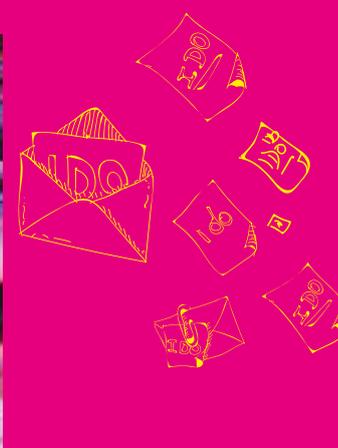
Hiker's story began with a public coming out during Taipei Pride Parade. As a tribute to the many hugs they had received during a trip to the USA, Hiker initiated a "Free Hugs" action.

Free hugs is one of the rare tactics where "the medium is the message": are you talking about love, courage and respect? Well then use a tactic that is about love, courage and respect. And that's what Free Hugs is: Standing there, alone and exposed, is definitely an act of courage. Hugging is a simple, non-threatening, sign of love that everyone can feel comfortable with. And by inviting people to act voluntarily, without proactively going for them, you show them the respect and the consideration that you ask in return.

This is why the Free Hugs tactic is so powerful! In addition to the Free Hugs actions which continue to this date, Hiker also tours schools and universities in Taiwan to share their personal life story. There has been an unwavering positive support for them across many platforms, even reaching the United States of America in 2016.

After thousands of pictures taken with people who support the movement (by giving a hug of support), the movement has raised intersex awareness and visibility in a positive way. According to Hiker, "I always said that intersex people are human beings as well, we need love and to be loved like everybody else. It brought me intersex contacts from all over the world, mostly from China. It empowers many intersex people and inspires the general public, opens their eyes to a new perspective of human sexuality".

# SAY "I DO" TO LOVE, EQUALITY, FREEDOM & ACCEPTANCE IN VIETNAM



Marriage equality for same-sex couples has been a touchy subject in Viet Nam for many years, but when in 2013 the Ministry of Justice signalled its intent to [reform the Marriage and Family Law](#) to provide some rights for cohabiting same-sex couples, Civil Society Organisations working for sexual and gender minorities considered that the time was ripe to campaign to change public attitudes on this issue. So the ["I DO" campaign was launched](#) in September 2013.

The campaign's strategy was developed on the go. The target was society at large but more specifically young people. The message was focused on finding universal frames, so it wasn't about "same-sex" marriage but "equal" marriage. The tone was non-confrontational, as in Vietnam confrontation is not culturally acceptable. This is why there

wasn't any public protest or march. The values of the campaign focused on love, equality, freedom and acceptance. Core messaging was around freedom of expression, happiness for all, and love without discrimination.

The "I DO" campaign used a variety of messaging strategies to deliver information by being engaging, credible, and relevant to the audience. Given that it targeted young people, celebrity influencers were an important part of the strategy. The use of "viral" effect through social media by Facebook avatars allowed young people to customize and create their call to actions.

But the campaign took it also off-line, especially with the "BUBU" (Be Unique-Be U) Festivals which attracted annually more than 4000

young people in Hanoi and 1000 in Ho Chi Minh City.

After months of campaigning, the campaign collected 70,000 signed I DO photos. 5000 letters of support to equal marriage were sent to the National Assembly, and the "I Do" Facebook page counted over 81,000 fans.

While the campaign didn't result in full marriage equality yet, the campaign was a win in terms of public education. Mainly, it changed the perception of sexual and gender diversities as diseases and contributed to reduce the levels of stigma.

# TIMOR LESTE

## Freedom fighters keep fighting

**STORIES OF ACCEPTANCE BY FAMILIES, BECAUSE FAMILIES ARE CENTRAL TO THE LIVES OF PEOPLE IN TIMOR LESTE.**



Timor Leste is a tiny, little country born at the turn of the 21st century. Hardly 15 years old today.

As in so many places around the world, LGBT people in the country were facing stigma and discrimination and times were hard, but this did not stop a handful of brave and convinced activists.

With many stereotypes and misconceptions prevailing, they knew they had to find ways to tell the real stories of LGBT people. Stories of hardship, but also success, solidarity and happiness.

And, most of all, stories of acceptance by families, because families are central to the lives of people in Timor Leste.

So with the support of filmmakers, they set out to find which stories to tell, and found exactly the right people: a successful dressmaker, the son of a famous freedom fighter, a transgender community worker, and a lesbian farm owner. Their moving stories and the testimonies of their families are at the heart of the film.

But the activists wanted to make their ac-

tions more political. With Timor Leste still recovering from the national liberation struggle, national cohesion and unity are extremely important values. So the activists made a strong case for this and appealed to the Prime Minister to support a call against division and discrimination.

**The arguments for national cohesion were so powerful, that the PM delivered an incredibly powerful declaration on national television. It was the sort of speech that will go down in history.**

It resonated so much across the country, that even Xanana Gusmão attended the premiere of the documentary in April 2018. Gusmao is one of the founding fathers of the country. He spent years in jail before becoming the first Head of State. As Timor Leste's "Mandela", Gusmão's presence was a watershed moment in the LGBT community's history.

A History with many more happy chapters to be written.

# LOUD & PROUD

## Youth-Led Video Series on the Impacts of Self-Stigma



Youth Voices Count (YVC), a regional network for young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex individuals, has been at the forefront of advocacies geared towards the human rights of sexual and gender minorities across Asia & the Pacific. The organizations has been actively working to find solutions to different social issues faced by young people.

**From 2013 to 2015, YVC filmed a series of campaigns called "Loud and Proud" to celebrate the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia and International Youth Day in 8 countries including Mongolia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Fiji, Sri Lanka, China and Myanmar.**

The campaign used two strategies in its implementation. First, a video is developed in the implementing countries featuring young MSM and young transgender people and their issues particularly related to self-stigma and broader stigma and discrimination. In a second pha-

se, the implementing countries organize events on the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia to celebrate the young MSM and young transgender people and their courage to stand against stigma and discrimination.

The mini documentaries that were created were designed to bring the message of self-stigma among young MSM and young Trans persons to the surface.

Some of the specific issues discussed in the campaign videos include, family and self-acceptance in

China, mental health support in Fiji, freedom of expression and pursuit of happiness in Mongolia.

Video campaigns are increasingly effective in this time and age as they have a wider reach over the internet. They are also very youth-friendly and engaging, and provide an easy method of tracking the engagement, though YouTube views, likes and comments.

This campaign contributed to raise awareness among the local communities on homophobia, transphobia and biphobia by providing an effective platform for young MSM and young Transgender people to powerfully and creatively bring out their issues.

# “LOVE MORE, GIVE MORE”: SAINT VALENTINE’S DAY

## oriented mobilisation effort for the Sixth Replenishment of the Global Fund



The “**Love More Give More**” campaign was a Global Fund Advocates Network Asia-Pacific (GFAN AP) Saint Valentine’s Day – oriented mobilisation effort to support a successful Global Fund Sixth Replenishment. This year, 2019, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria ([Global Fund](#)) embarked on its Sixth Replenishment process to raise at least US\$14 billion which will contribute towards saving 16 million lives, cutting the mortality rate of HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria in half, and contribute towards stronger health systems by 2023.

The Valentine’s Day campaign which was originally meant to be carried out by partners in the Asia-Pacific region endorsed by participants at the Communities & Civil Society Planning Meeting for the 6th Global Fund Replenishment Preparatory Meeting co-or-

ganised by GFAN AP and the India Working Group for Health Advocacy (IWG) on the 16th & 17th January 2019 in New Delhi, India, this action also gained the support of colleagues from GFAN Africa, GFAN Latin America, and the Eurasian Harm Reduction Association and Alliance for Public Health in counterpart rollouts in the African, Latin America and Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions, respectively.

On the Saint Valentine’s Day – 14th February 2019, communities and civil society organisations and advocates in over 45 countries sent “love letters” to embassies and high commissions of donor countries of the Global Fund and others to appreciate their continuous support for the fight against HIV, TB and Malaria since the establishment of the Global Fund in 2002

and to call for increased and early pledges to the global Fund Sixth Replenishment. While in some countries, actions were conducted with face-to-face meetings with representatives in donor embassies accompanied by Valentine’s day cards and flower bouquets, in others, letters were sent by email or post to the embassies of the donor countries. The campaign was implemented in 45 countries and over 550 letters were sent to the embassies of over 60 countries. 52 meetings were organized with embassies of 14 donor countries.

# NO CAMPAIGN – NO GAIN

## how campaigning in India paved the way for judiciary change



the Lucknow arrests of sexual health and queer activists in 2001, or broad-basing the legal battle through the formation of Voices Against 377 collective in 2006 and engagement of allies like parents of queer people and mental health professionals in 2010–11— these were all enabled through persistent bridge building.

On September 6, 2018, the Supreme Court of India irreversibly read down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, a British-era relic that carried 71 years into independent India. This was a much-anticipated victory for the queer movements in a socio-legal battle a quarter of a century old.

Key verdicts around transgender citizenship rights (in 2014) and the right to privacy (in 2017) by the same court, and earlier central government legislations on sexual assault issues also played a significant role in weakening the argument in retaining Section 377.

But however important these legal stepping stones, the queer movements' endeavours outside the courts of law were equally important in Section 377 finally being read out of queer lives in India. Campaigns and discourses around gender and sexuality influenced public opinion. Beginning with the publication of India's

first pink resource book "Less Than Gay" in 1991 and a protest demonstration against police harassment of queer people in Delhi in 1992, queer rights initiatives went on to encompass landmark conferences; crucial documentation and narration of queerness in Indian cultures through films, books and plays; rainbow pride marches; sensitization of healthcare and legal aid service providers; and open letter campaigns.

Building solidarity with women's, child rights and other movements strengthened the queer movements. Be it the nuance in demanding reading down of Section 377 rather than an outright repeal, protesting the ban on the film Fire in 1998–99, dealing with

The 'Global Day of Rage' campaign after the shocking reinstatement of Section 377 in 2013 was also facilitated by such intersectional collaborations.

If these years of campaigning have taught the movement one lesson, it is that the essential mantra for the way forward needs to be new solidarities with anti-class and anti-caste movements to fight for equity and non-discrimination in all spheres. For progress for one community can only be enshrined in broader social progress for all.

# LESSONS LEARNT



The many campaigns that have been documented and analysed in Asia, but also in other regions, offer valuable insights into what makes campaigning successful.

We wanted to share some important ones here, but it is only through accessing the full case studies that these really come to light. We hope that this page will make you curious to find out more.

## **A GOOD CAMPAIGN STARTS WITH A GOOD OBJECTIVE.**

And a good objective is made of a specific target group and a specific change goal.

No matter how good, a campaign can never change everything in everyone. A campaign can change how health care providers consider sexual and gender diversities as mental illnesses. It can change parents' attitudes towards their homosexual child. It can reduce violence in schools. It can not "reduce homophobia in the general population".

People's attitudes are informed by many factors, but one of the main ones are the

values they hold. A campaign cannot, and should not try, to "change" people. It should appeal to people's existing values and "channel" them to positive expressions. The value of "caring for children" should not be changed. A campaign should work on this value so that it generates an attitude of support to LGBTI children, instead of an attitude of fear that LGBTI people would get near children.

Change is not easy. People are often entrenched in their attitudes, which have become part of their identity, their social persona. People are unlikely to let go of this "comfort zone" because of a higher "moral order", or because they have been "blamed and shamed" into guilt.

But people are often conflicted between deeply held inner values: they have a strong sense of justice, yet oppose marriage equality; they care for their children, yet would reject gender diverse children. A campaign can help people change by providing ways for them to arbitrate these conflicts, and find more inner harmony and peace.



People seldom care for anything else but themselves and their close circles. People might not change out of care for LGBTI people, but because a campaign makes them feel they will access a future that is better for them too. Providing a vision of hope will carry people with you. Displaying doom and gloom might get you compassion but will not make people want to side you. Creativity and fun have better chances.

Stories of lived realities of LGBTI people are the single most effective factor to change people, if these stories create empathy, if they make the audience feel that they have something in common, that it's also about them.

People are mainly influenced by other people who are like them, so sometimes a campaign needs to use messengers and influencers from within the target group. In this instance, voices of the LGBTI community might need to come second.

Communication tactics are important to master: Campaigns should never repeat a negative argument as this risks to anchor it even more in people's unconscious minds.

Campaigns should consider coming "in hiding" and only reveal their aim after an initial process that will have prepared the target to absorb the message. There are many of these tactics, all well worth investigating.

Research and testing is a vital element of campaigning: no matter how much we know about our target, they will always know more about themselves: what they really think, what makes them tick, what could make them change. Even a little bit of social research can make a huge difference in the quality of a campaign.

Seeking out allies is one of the most powerful parts of campaigning. Campaigners have often found out that there is more support than was expected. From companies offering pro-bono services to civil society organisations joining in on a street action, there might be a lot of untapped resources out there.

Reaching our target group is becoming one of our major challenges: with social circles becoming tighter and tighter, we are more

and more speaking to our "choir" and not reaching beyond. This is reinforced by the fact that campaigns develop messages and expect people to come and listen. But campaigns that aim at changing hearts and minds have a better chance of success when they go where the target group already is, when they "infiltrate" existing spaces that are not specific to LGBTI campaigning. This is what happens when celebrities support a campaign. But there are many other creative ways to go where the target group already is, like creating a battalion of "online warriors".

To continue reading about good practice and lessons learnt, connect to [sogicampaigns.org](http://sogicampaigns.org) and join the Creative Campaigners Community on **Facebook** @[@creativecampaigners](https://www.facebook.com/creativecampaigners)



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