



# CARIBBEAN REGION

## BEING LGBTI IN THE CARIBBEAN

### OBJECTIVE

To advance the rights and inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI+) individuals in four target Caribbean countries: Barbados, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Jamaica.

### REGIONAL CONTEXT

Human rights and social protections for the LGBTQI+ persons are limited in the Caribbean, underscored by stigma, discrimination, and violence toward individuals and advocates of the community. The 2020 Human Rights Watch Report highlighted that LGBTQI+ people in Latin America and Caribbean countries face high levels of violence and have limited protections under national law. Furthermore, eleven Caribbean countries have laws against same-sex sexual acts and criminalize same sex relations, most with a penalty of imprisonment for at least ten years. Although these laws tend not to be enforced, their existence is sometimes used as a tool to threaten LGBTQI+ people, and reinforce an environment that continues to condone discrimination, stigma, and violence.

### OUR WORK

USAID strengthens the professional and institutional capacities of civil society organizations and individual activists dedicated to LGBTQI+ equality within the Caribbean to advocate effectively for social change to exercise their rights as equal members of society. This activity establishes connections and works to improve advocacy skills amongst LGBTQI+ individuals and LGBTQI+ civil society organizations dedicated to equality throughout the Caribbean. The activity also promotes LGBTQI+ persons to exercise their human rights and advocate for improved social change and long term sustainability. Furthermore, the activity includes a component promoting the economic empowerment of trans women in the Caribbean region.

## RESULTS ACHIEVED

- Since the start of the program, more than 700 human rights defenders across the region have benefitted from training sessions implemented through the Being LGBTI In the Caribbean activity.
- Since 2017, 30 organizations across the region have benefited from small grants (total value of \$230,000) that support LGBTQI+ civil society organizations.
- In 2022, governments and civil society organizations organized forums for select countries in the region and held a regional dialogue on LGBTQI+ issues virtually, which aired live on a local news channel and reached 400 viewers per day.
- In 2020, 148 individuals from both the Ministry of Women and the Ministry of Youth in the Dominican Republic were given virtual trainings on LGBTQI+ human rights.
- In the Dominican Republic, the activity helped promote inclusive public policies related to gender and youth. Public servants are also being trained on human rights of the LGBTQI+ community.
- In 2021, the activity launched the results of the first ever national LGBTQI+ survey in the Dominican Republic to gain a better understanding of societal stigmas that impact the LGBTQI+ community. The survey highlighted the social and economic costs as a result of exclusion and discrimination in the country.
- In 2021, in Haiti, USAID helped design and support the implementation of a training module on discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender-based violence in judiciary institutions offered to judges nationwide.
- In 2021, in Guyana, a public awareness campaign on LGBTQI+ human rights, gender, and sexuality led to increased visibility of empowering messages in public spaces like the mural at the Georgetown Seawall - a major landmark in the country. A video capturing this activity was aired on national television and reached an estimate of 500 viewers for increased visibility.

**Duration:** September 2017 - February 2025

**Budget:** US \$4.1 million

**Implementing Partner:** United Nations Development Program

## CONTACT

USAID/Dominican Republic

Email: [drinfo@usaid.gov](mailto:drinfo@usaid.gov)