

WOMEN'S  
COMMITTEE

ilga  
world

# Women Moving Forward Together

MAGAZINE



**03 EDITION**  
OCTOBER 2021

## SECTION 1

Highlighting

# The women of ILGA World

### ILGA World Co-Secretaries General

Elected at the Wellington - New Zealand World Conference in March 2019.

**Luz Elena Aranda**

**ILGALAC**

She/her  
**Organization**  
*Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret y Derechos Humanos AC (Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret and Human Rights)*  
**Country:** Mexico

**Tuisina Ymania Brown**

**ILGA Oceania**

She/her  
**Organization**  
*Pacific Human Rights Initiative*  
**Country:** Samoa



### ILGA World Women's Committee

Since the 2019 ILGA World Conference in Wellington - New Zealand, the World Board includes five activists representing five new committees: bisexual, intersex, trans, youth and women. Each Committee consists of seven people: one committee coordinator and six activists from each region.

### THE MEMBERS OF ILGA WORLD WOMEN'S COMMITTEE ARE:



**Committee Coordination**

**Cristina González Hurtado**



**Pan Africa ILGA**

**Sandra Kwikiriza**



**ILGA Asia**

**Brenda Rodríguez Alegre**



**ILGALAC (Latin America and the Caribbean)**

**Teresa Fernández**



**ILGA North America and the Caribbean**

**Winnie Luk**



**ILGA Oceania**

**Maria Nailevu**



**ILGA Europe**

**Vacant**

### WOMEN IN ILGA WORLD'S TEAM



**Julia Ehart**

**Director of Programmes**



**Natalia Voltchkova**

**Director of Finance and Support Services**



**Kseniya Kirichenko**

**UN Programme Manager**



**Paula Klik**

**Membership and Events Senior Officer**



**Polyxeni Kallini**

**Senior Finance Officer, Grants and Reporting**



**Chamindra Weerawardhana**

**Consultant - Gender Identity & Expression and Sex Characteristics Programme**



**María Roques de Borda**

**Research Intern**



**Hazel T. Mokgathi**

**GIESC Programme Intern**



**Demet Gümüş**

**Conference support Intern**

## SECTION 2

Highlighting LGBTQI Women

# Who lead LGBTQI Organizations in ILGA World



[www.lasreinaschulasac.org](http://www.lasreinaschulasac.org)  
✉ [lasreinaschulasac@gmail.com](mailto:lasreinaschulasac@gmail.com)  
📱 @lasreinaschulas  
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**LAS REINAS CHULAS CABARET Y DERECHOS HUMANOS NGO**  
Mexico - ILGALAC

*Luz Elena Aranda Arroyo is the woman who leads the organization. She currently serves as one of the two World Co-Secretaries General of ILGA World.*

Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret y Derechos Humanos NGO is an organization comprised of feminist lesbian and bisexual cabaret dancers who, through activism, humor and pleasure, aim to bring about artistic, cultural, political and social changes. Its mission is to dismantle existing body-related, cultural and institutional patterns in order to create a more just, pleasurable and happy society. They want and need to break with all established norms that are not conducive to freeing society of machismo and violence. They dream of a world where human rights can be fully exercised, where the enormous wealth of diversity is appreciated, and where life is lived with pleasure.



[www.kscrc.org/](http://www.kscrc.org/)  
✉ [kscrcmember@naver.com](mailto:kscrcmember@naver.com)  
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**THE KOREAN SEXUAL MINORITY CULTURE AND RIGHTS CENTER (KSCRC)**

Republic of South Korea - ILGA ASIA

*The Korean Sexual Minority Culture and Rights Center (KSCRC) is the first center for sexual minorities, people living with HIV/AIDS, and advocates for sexual minority rights in Korea. Founded in 2002.*

KSCRC aims to provide a safe and creative space for people to experience their own sexualities and genders, as well as to empower their sexual and gender identities through a variety of activities including, cultural, research, educational, public policy, counseling, and publishing activities.



[www.rainbowrailroad.org](http://www.rainbowrailroad.org)  
✉ [info@rainbowrailroad.ca](mailto:info@rainbowrailroad.ca)  
📱 @rainbowrailroad  
📺 @rainbowrailroad



**RAINBOW RAILROAD**

Canada, ILGA NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

*Winnie Luk represents ILGA North America and the Caribbean for the ILGA World Women's Steering Committee and is a director for Rainbow Railroad*

Rainbow Railroad is a global non-profit organization aimed at helping LGBTQI+ people facing persecution as a result of their sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics. In an age where more people than ever are displaced, LGBTQI+ people are especially vulnerable because of state-sponsored systemic homophobia and transphobia. These factors result in the displacement of these people in their own country. But thanks to the work of Rainbow Railroad, more LGBTQI+ people have access to a life free from persecution.

Since it was founded, the organization has helped more than 1,600 LGBTQI+ people find safety through emergency relocation and other forms of assistance.

## SECTION 3

Highlighting the

# Advancement of LGBTQI Rights Driven by LGBTQI Women

## Maria Nailevu: The Activist Woman Who Takes a Stand Against Social Injustice in Fiji

I grew up in a remote rural community in Fiji<sup>1</sup> and my mother and father were peasants. Most of my childhood memories revolve around economic precarity, although we were fortunate enough to live in a village that had an abundance of natural land and sea resources which supported our livelihood.

I had no idea of the meaning or importance of human rights, just like my mother, my female relatives, and almost all the women on the island.

My childhood was marked by sad and painful memories. Since I was a little girl, I witnessed multiple forms of injustice, violence and human rights violations against the bodies of women, adolescent girls, and younger girls and boys, myself included. Our culture and religion also do not help challenge these realities for women, because the teachings of these powerful “institutions” permit and encourage men to dominate women and use violence as a disciplinary tool, as a method of problem solving, and as a symbol of protection of their property. Violence is so normal in Fiji that the beating of a woman is considered appropriate behavior; no one questions it, and people close to the event normalize it, considering it part of “normal” day-to-day life. On many occasions, I witnessed my own mother and other women close to me, with bruised and aching bodies, seek help from church pastors, other relatives, or the police, only to be told to go home and resolve “the discord” with their husband.

I was a teenager when I discovered that my identity was not the same as those of my classmates, but I had to keep the secret because I knew the shame it would bring on my family.

In 2015, I totally changed the course of my career and decided to follow my heart and passion in the field of gender justice. I joined **DIVA FOR EQUALITY**, a radical feminist collective led by LBTI women.

**DIVA FOR EQUALITY** is the only feminist organization in Fiji that works on issues related to the defense, promotion and recognition of the rights of Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans people. **DIVA FOR EQUALITY** embraces intersectional feminism, which is why the organization and I work in close contact with marginalized and vulnerable women living in remote rural communities, and in Fiji’s urban areas, and more broadly in this Pacific region.

These are some of the conclusions that I have come to in the past five years of my personal journey regarding the challenges that LBT women face:

- The existing heteronormative and patriarchal systems continue to exclude lesbian women when it comes to accessing support and general resources: this has become a bigger problem in the context of the climate and COVID crises. Most members of the LBTI communities work informally doing precarious jobs to earn a living, which is not enough given the high cost of living in Fiji. This institutional discrimination forces LBTI women further towards the poverty line as they struggle to overcome the crises.
- Lack of gender awareness in the health sector, especially in the areas of reproductive health and rights: many LBTI women, especially trans men and “butch” lesbians, do not have access to clinical services for cervical and breast cancer. Some of the challenges include a lack of LBTI-friendly staff, low awareness of SOGIE-SC realities (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expressions, and Sex Characteristics), and a lack of health services, counseling and mental health specific to LBTI women. The number of deaths from cervical and breast cancer in Fiji in LBTI people has been increasing every year, which is concerning.
- The lack of acceptance of LBTI women in their own homes, churches and communities is caused by a lack of awareness of gender and SOGIE-SC issues, resulting in social stigma. This exposes them to more finger pointing and discrimination. Many LBTI



<sup>1</sup> Officially, the Republic of Fiji is an island nation in Oceania, located in the Pacific Ocean and comprised of 333 islands.

women now live with male and female friends and in safe spaces made up of support networks within their communities, where they find affection, respect and care.

- Challenges in terms of access to justice. Most of the time, when LGBTI people report sexual and physical violence, even when their partners are the aggressor, they are subjected to further violence, and are referred to services that judge and further victimize them.
- Lack of support, resources and funding specific to the lesbian and the LGBTI movement from national bodies and a lack of international cooperation.

As I will now share some interesting findings from the research carried out by **DIVA FOR EQUALITY**: “DIVA 2019 LGBTI: Unjust, Unequal, Unstoppable”<sup>2</sup>:

- 88.8% of LGBTI women in Fiji were cast out or disowned by their families
- Only 2% of LGBTI women in Fiji had access to mammograms, and 10% to Pap tests
- 40% of LGBTI women in Fiji lack education, 22% of LGBTI women in Fiji do not have access to life skills due to stigma and 7% of LGBTI women in Fiji were expelled from work on the grounds of their SOGIE-SC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expressions, and Sexual Characteristics)
- 76.24% of LGBTI women in Fiji who have been sexually assaulted or beaten do not feel safe going to the police.

I recognize and acknowledge the ongoing work of **DIVA FOR EQUALITY** and other allies who have accompanied us in feminist strategies to help improve the situation of LGBTI women. As such, and in view of the increasing adverse impact of the climate crisis and the COVID-19 crisis, we women from Fiji:

- Will continue to call on our national, regional and global leaders to put human rights first in all their actions and responses.
- To include voices, especially grassroots voices, in decision-making processes, and to set aside the symbolic character of marginalized people.
- To recognize the political and social differences between the North and the South, especially regarding class and privileges, given that the contexts of the Pacific and those of the North cannot be lumped together. Our access to resources is different. If they truly want to invest in the marginalized people of the Pacific, development partners must stand by us and accompany us in times of crisis and not disappear into their bubbles of privilege when it is convenient for them.

In general, despite a variety of systemic challenges, there are local success stories of the liberation, survival and resilience of LGBTI women in Fiji in the face of humanitarian crises, adversity and darkness. We are now pushing our limits, raising awareness and challenging victim narratives in the pursuit of solutions in all our social and economic spheres of life. There are now LGBTI women who are becoming experts in the fields of carpentry, catering, sports and a variety of other fields. We are building social movements, connecting women and human rights defenders, learning among peers and advancing feminist methodologies in all areas that involve decision-making.

The work of the social movements in Fiji has been slow but careful. The work often comes at a great cost and has consequences for us and for our loved ones in terms of personal safety, mental health, and well-being. And in these difficult times of climate and Covid-19 crises, our problems have increased. We need to build careful and effective alliances with each other, especially in the regional and global spaces. We must find common ground, put egos aside and collectively find meaningful, genuine, and practical ways to advance the crucial work we are doing, TOGETHER!



Written by  
Maria Nailevu

Representing ILGA Oceania on the ILGA World Women's Steering Committee  
Pacific Sexual Gender Diversity Network  
Organization: Pacific Sexual Gender Diversity Network / Country: Tonga  
Elected at the Oceania Regional Conference held virtually in October of 2020.

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<sup>2</sup> Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality - May 2019 “Unjust, unequal, unstoppable: Fiji lesbians, bisexual women, transmen and gender non conforming people tipping the scales toward justice”  
Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yyuc2ueg>

## SECTION 4

Advocacy for

# LBTQI Women's Rights at ILGA World

## Transpinays<sup>1</sup> and Resilience

The Covid-19 virus pandemic has become a real challenge for all of humanity, and for LGBTQI+ people, the challenge has been even greater. For example, women working in sexual diversity sectors, including trans women, who often engage in sex work, have found it difficult to carry on with their day-to-day lives, because not all of them have access to the Internet. In developing countries in Asia, such as the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Laos and Bangladesh, among others, free networks and Wi-Fi signals are not always accessible for the entire population. Also, many Asian countries don't have laws that regulate and protect women who engage in sex work, like some trans women, and there are certainly no laws that recognize gender identity and gender self-determination. Most of these countries also hold conservative positions about trans identities, homosexuality and otherness. When all these factors are considered together, the Covid-19 health crisis has brought even more pain to our communities.

However, we can find inspiration and hope in the fact that various organizations in Asia continue working hard to promote human rights and develop protection policies. Not to mention the ongoing use of virtual platforms to hold conferences, seminars, workshops and research that will hopefully advance the LGBTQI+ community. For example, STRAP (the Society of Trans Women of the Philippines), has launched new activities and programs that highlight the resilience, evolution and empowerment of Asian trans women.

During the Pride celebrations in 2021, STRAP decided to launch a social network campaign called "Transpinays in real life", which involved a number of virtual posts. We are conscious of the "Zoom fatigue" effect that has been taking hold, given that almost everything is done through Zoom these days. We therefore decided to move away from the Zoom platform. The initial plan was to present fragments of "a day in the life" of an empowered transpinay (trans woman from the Philippines), but the leaders of STRAP realized that most of the time only one idealized model of transpinay emerged: a middle-class trans woman, successful in academia or the corporate world. And there is nothing wrong with this. However, now it is important – and it has been important for some time – to deliberately promote other more diverse representations of transgender women so that the world can see them, and see us, in all our diversity. It's time to highlight the diversity of images and origins of all trans women. We are especially motivated by an interest in reconnecting with our indigenous and native transpinay. The colonial past of the Philippines has resulted in the elimination and invisibility of LBTQ women, including the suppression of our powerful pre-colonial Babaylans, Asogs and Catalanans, who are female, trans, intersex and queer people who inherited the power of healing. Currently, the focus and purpose of STRAP is to remind communities that we want to represent all forms of trans identities and femininity, decolonize our ancestral identities, and embrace intersectional feminisms. We are proud to have embarked on this initiative which highlights transpinays who make remarkable contributions in their respective fields, because here at STRAP, we firmly believe that all transpinay voices deserve to be heard. We also believe that Pride should not be a once-a-year celebration; it should be part of our normal lives. It should remind us of the brave LGBTQI+ women and the BIPOCs<sup>2</sup> (Black, Indigenous and Persons Of Color) people who stood at the forefront of the movement as it began. Pride should not be a capitalist rainbow party or a political correctness fiesta where the color pink is used to distract from the real issues our communities face. Pride should inspire us to live our authentic truths every day, to live our lives, to fight for our rights and to hold the privileged accountable.

These recent projects coincide with other efforts by various organizations such as Lakanbini Advocates Pilipinas, Lagablab Network, Love Yourself and GANDA Filipinas, among many other organizations, who are creatively working to provide hope to trans and other LBQI+ women.

The prevailing political structure and the oppression on the part of religious institutions in the Philippines serve to restrict freedoms and deepen inequalities and discrimination among LGBTQI+ people. Therefore, STRAP is committed to strengthening women's groups, especially trans and LBQI+ women, because being strong and united is the only way to go on living and resisting.



Written by  
**Brenda Rodriguez Alegre**

Representative of ILGA Asia on the ILGA World  
Women's Steering Committee

Organization: Society of Transsexual Women  
of the Philippines (STRAP) // Country: Philippines  
Elected at the Asia Regional Conference held in  
November 2020

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**Rain Marie Villagonzalo**

Director of STRAP

<sup>1</sup> The term "transpinay" is a conceptual and political idea developed in 2008 by the Society of Transsexual Women of the Philippines (STRAP), to refer to trans women, with transpinoy being the term for trans men.

<sup>2</sup> BIPOCs: This acronym stands for "Black, indigenous and persons of color"

## SECTION 5

# Funding opportunities for LGBTQI organizations



Canada

### Government of Canada

*Canada finances development, gender, environmental and inclusion projects.*

On its Partners@International platform, the Government of Canada offers financing for projects in a variety of areas, and the call for development projects is currently open.

Organizations can submit an “unsolicited proposal”, that is, they can submit a proposal or project that will be evaluated in order to decide whether program funds will be awarded.

#### Areas of interest for this call are:

- Projects promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls
- Environmental projects
- Improvement projects for citizen participation
- Leadership and inclusion projects
- Projects for indigenous people

Global Affairs Canada has no specifications in terms of minimum or maximum amount of funding for unsolicited proposals. For each application, there is a field to indicate the budget in relation to the capacity of the organization and the needs of the proposed initiative.

**Deadline:** This call is ongoing.

**For more information:** Go to Global Affairs Canada [HERE](#)



### Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund

*Grants for local and national CSOs interested in improving the participation of women in a peace process*

Short-term grants represent an opportunity for civil society organizations to implement urgent projects addressing various obstacles to the meaningful participation of women in a formal peace process or in the implementation of a peace agreement. Grants of up to USD 100,000 are awarded for a maximum period of six months. The call is open to all ODA-eligible countries where formal peace processes or the implementation of peace agreements is taking place.

The grants will be implemented with the support of four international NGO partners, whose technical expertise and global reach will strengthen the impact of the RRW: Conciliation Resources, Cordaid, the Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Diplomacy (NIMD) and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

**There is no deadline for applications.**

**For more information, please see [HERE](#)**

## SECTION 6

LBTQI + women will meet in Los Angeles, USA at the

# ILGA World Conference of 2022

“LGBTIQ Youth: Present Future Change.”



**ilga 2022**  
world conference

LA • LONG BEACH

LGBTIQ YOUTH: FUTURE PRESENT CHANGE  
JUVENTUD LGBTIQ: CAMBIO FUTURO PRESENTE

ILGA World Conferences are face-to-face meetings during which more than 1,700 LGBTIQ+ organizations that are affiliated with ILGA meet to connect, learn, collaborate, coordinate, discuss and agree on future strategies for the global LGBTIQ+ movement. These are meetings where the organizations that form the great global network that makes up ILGA meet with activists from other allied organizations as well as from other social movements. ILGA conferences are diverse and engaging because much of the content is designed and led by LGBTIQ+ organizations from around the world, and the exchange and learning sessions take a variety of formats including panel discussions, workshops, and other discussion spaces.

Our conferences are the world's largest gathering of LGBTIQ + changemakers. This 31st edition of the ILGA World Conference will take place May 2-6, 2022 in Long Beach, California, USA. It is co-organized by the “It Gets Better Project” under the banner, “LGBTIQ Youth: Present Future Change.”

ILGA World has created a website dedicated to the conference in three languages, where you can find updated information on the ILGA World Global Conference of 2022. Be sure to visit <https://worldconference.ilga.org/en/> to learn more about the conference events, see practical information and much more.

To get you started, we'd like to remind you of some numbers from the previous ILGA World Conference in Wellington New Zealand in March of 2019

### What to expect at the 2022 Conference:

Here are some figures from the last time we met up in 2019.

594 participants and 108 academics and activists from 93 countries and territories, 120 workshops, panels, and conferences.

Follow [this link](#) to access the new ILGA World Conference website.

**All the information about the event is just one click away!**



# Women Moving Forward Together

## MAGAZINE

Thank you for receiving the third version of the ILGA World Women's Committee magazine. This magazine will be published bimonthly in the year 2021.

You can send your contributions to the following email addresses:  
[lapochi@corporacion-femm.org](mailto:lapochi@corporacion-femm.org) and [women@board.ilga.org](mailto:women@board.ilga.org)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Women of the ILGA World Committee of Women:  
*Brenda, Teresa, Winnie, María and Sandra.*

Women who were part of the World Committee of Women:  
*Olena Shevchenko - ILGA Europa y Bess Hepworth - ILGA Oceania*  
*Tuisina Ymania Brown, Co-Secretary General.*

*Luz Elena Aranda, Co-Secretary General.*

*Daniele Paletta, Communications Manager.*

*Kseniya Kirichenko, UN Programme Manager.*

*Polyxeni Kallini, Senior Finance Officer - Grants  
and Reporting.*

*André du Plessis, Executive Director.*

**And to all LGBTQI women!**