

ORAM Training on

Sexual and Gender Minorities: What Refugee Professionals Need to Know and Do

A Sampling of Presentation Slides



ORAM

**Organization for Refuge,
Asylum & Migration**

www.oraminternational.org

About This Publication

This publication contains select representative slides from ORAM's training program on sexual and gender minority (SGM) refugees and asylum seekers. The training consists of the following six sequential modules:

- Introduction
- Sensitization and Identification
- Protecting SGM Refugees
- Working with SGM Refugees
- Credibility Assessment
- Resettlement and Integration

Developed over the course of three years and 35 training sessions, these modules reflect decades of refugee protection and adjudication experience coupled with extensive social science and legal research. In addition, the modules and their delivery were informed by scientific measurement and observation, conducted in partnership with Columbia University Teachers College, a world leader in the field of humanitarian pedagogy.

ORAM's research constitutes **the first ever empirical study of training impact on any topic in the refugee sector**. The researchers undertook to record and analyze the effects of ORAM's two-day training program. They focused on a host of factors and indicators within the traditional adult learning framework of knowledge, attitude and skills. Particular attention was paid to the learning environment and teaching methodology. As the training focused on the particularly sensitive and contentious area of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and SOGI-based asylum and refugee claims, it was expected that knowledge gained from the research would be applicable to other sensitive and socially contentious areas, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Feedback was collected by way of surveys administered to over 1,200 trainees in 14 counties, representing a rich diversity of cultures and operating environments. The trainees included professionals from government asylum and refugee offices, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and tens of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They represented a wide variety of job functions within the refugee sector from directors and managers to interpreters and guards. (A complete list of training locations and agencies where ORAM's program was tested appears at the end of this publication.)

As presented in detail in the research findings and training guide issued concurrently with this publication, the **scientific testing proved unequivocally that ORAM's training program has a significant impact on knowledge, attitudes and practical skills**. The research results showed with equal certitude that regardless how informative or well designed, the slide presentations alone were neither favored by trainees nor particularly effective.

The success of ORAM's training lies in several highly personal and contextual factors only tangentially related to the substantive material presented. Key among these are the sense of trust and candor prevailing at the training; the extent to which participants experience meaningful and positive interaction with openly SGM trainers; and the extent to which the training is tailored to the trainees' specific cultural context and professional needs. The empirical results of this research – as well as the pedagogical literature on the subject – indicate that **one-size-fits-all training is likely to be ineffective**. Moreover, "standardized" training in highly sensitive areas such as SOGI and SGBV can even be harmful.

Refugee agencies seeking to hone their ability to work with SGM refugee claimants are urged to carefully develop and tailor their training programs in accordance with these findings.

Introduction

Sexual and Gender Minorities:

What Refugee Professionals Need to Know and Do

Introduction Module:

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION

Sample Training Slides

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In This Module

- Overview of training and learning modules
- Legal and procedural instruments
- Core definitions
- Conditions of sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) worldwide
- Persecution of SGM individuals
- Forced migration of SGM individuals

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Introduction

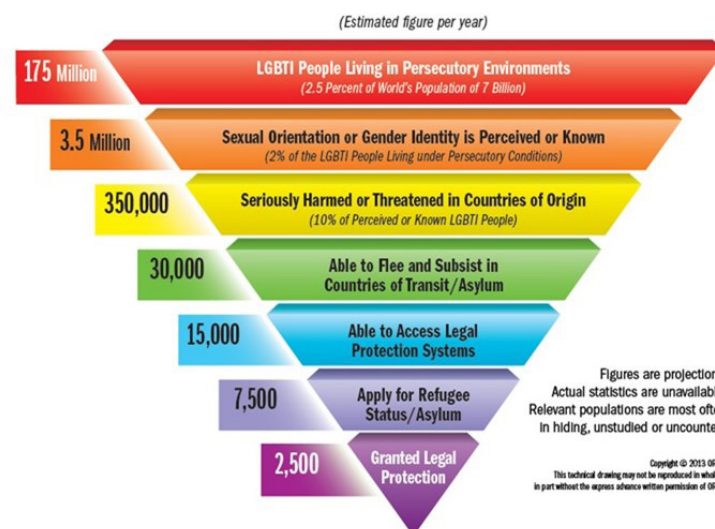
Conditions of SGM Individuals Worldwide

- *80 countries:*
Same-sex relations criminalized
- *8 countries:*
Death penalty for same-sex relations
- *10s more countries:*
Abuse by private actors
- *All countries:*
Discrimination and marginalization
- *Perpetrators:*
Non-state and state actors, including family, community, other authorities

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SGM Refugees: Peril, Protection and Resettlement



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Sexual and Gender Minorities:

What Refugee Professionals Need to Know and Do

Module 1:

SENSITIZATION AND IDENTIFICATION

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In This Module

- Sex and gender identity
- Gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Life experiences of SGMs
- Stereotypes about SGMs
- Genesis of sexual and gender diversity: nature and nurture

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Sensitization and Identification

Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Biological Sex and Sexual Orientation

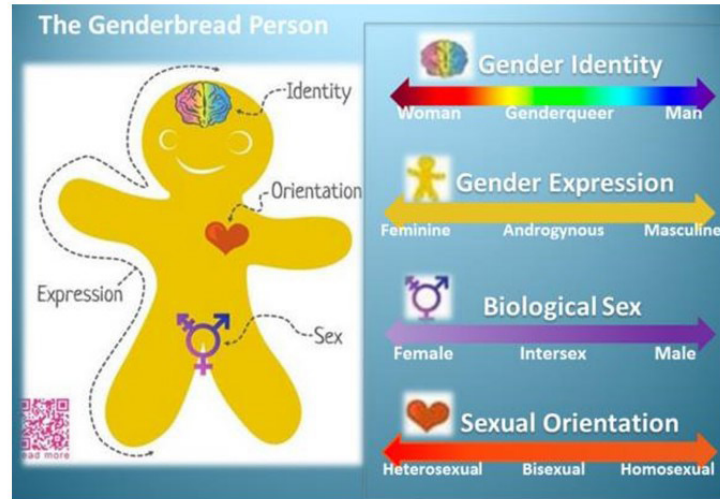


Image Source: www.itpronouncedmetrossexual.com
A Warm ThankYou!

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Life Experiences of Sexual and Gender Minorities

High rates of:

Violent physical, sexual abuse, verbal abuse,
discrimination, alienation

Where:

At home, at school, at work, in public places,
anywhere

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Sexual and Gender Minorities:

What Refugee Professionals Need to Know and Do

Module 2:

PROTECTING SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITY REFUGEES

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In This Module

- Assessing protection environments for SGM refugees
- Social attitudes and treatment of SGM refugees
- Specific protection needs of SGM refugees
- Overcoming barriers to accessing protection systems
- Multiple marginalization and its effects
- Improving SGM refugee protection

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Protecting SGM Refugees

SGM Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Difficulty Accessing RSD

SGM refugees and asylum seekers:

- Assume that the staff will be hostile or discriminatory
- Feel shame and internalized homophobia and/or transphobia
- Fear exposure
- Do not trust confidentiality promises

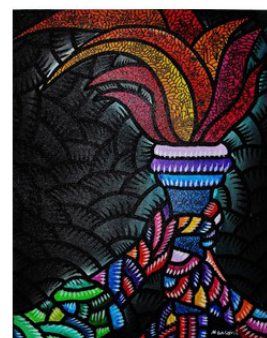
These fears can lead to concealment of *bona fide* claims.

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Reducing Social Isolation

- Encourage and facilitate support groups
- Establish partnerships with local SGM organizations
- Build community networks:
 - Cultivate tolerant refugee leaders
 - Foster acceptance within communities of origin
 - Identify welcoming faith-based organizations



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Sexual and Gender Minorities:

What Refugee Professionals Need to Know and Do

Module 3:

WORKING WITH SGM REFUGEES

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In This Module

- Challenges for SGMs in opening up to others
- Approaches to creating an SGM-safe physical environment
- SGM-inclusive forms and questionnaires
- Respectful and inclusive verbal communication
- Welcoming non-verbal communication
- SGM-inclusive organizational documents

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Working with SGM Refugees

SGM-Safe Environmental Cues

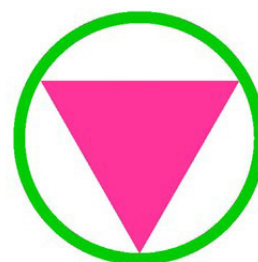


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Verbal Communication

- Use SGM-specific examples in routine speech
- Use respectful and appropriate terminology
- Foster open discussion of SGM questions and topics
- Ask refugee for preferred pronoun (masculine, feminine or other)
- Use applicant's own terms and self-identifying language
- Use non-gendered language, especially when discussing partners



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Sexual and Gender Minorities:

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Module 4:

ASSESSING CREDIBILITY IN SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION BASED CLAIMS

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In This Module

- Scope of credibility inquiry in SOGI claims
- Pre-interview and assessment considerations
- Evidentiary issues
- Country of origin information in SGM claims
- Conducting the interview and techniques
- Questions to avoid
- Topics and areas to probe

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Best Practices: Beginning the Interview

- Stress confidentiality
- Explain assessment criteria and purpose of interview
- Explain applicants' rights
- Conduct interview in native language, if possible
- Use SGM-sensitive intake forms
- Use verbal and non-verbal communication to convey acceptance and safety

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Interviewing Techniques

[F]or gender identity claimants, *“the interview structure may be problematic when questions about identity ... are raised before the questions in relation to the asylum claim, thus making it more difficult to create a trustful atmosphere.”*

- Hana Cheikh Ali *et al.*, European Commission & European Refugee Fund

- Begin with simple, non-sensitive topics to establish rapport
- Delay questions that prematurely pierce the heart of the claim and/or raise sensitive subjects
- Pose open-ended questions first, focused questions later

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Sexual and Gender Minorities:

What Refugee Professionals Need to Know and Do

Module 5:

RESETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

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In This Module

- Durable solutions for SGMs
- Resettlement needs
- Sensitive integration
- Family, community and life partners
- Identifying vulnerable resettlement candidates
- Appropriate resettlement locations
- Preparing SGM refugees for resettlement

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Assisting SGM Partners and Dependents

- Enquire about partnership/relationship status
- Integrate and resettle SGM partners in the same location:
 - May non-refugee partners be included to maintain unity?
 - May cases be cross-referenced for joint resettlement?
- Assume SGM refugees wish to be resettled with their children
- If immediate joint resettlement is not possible in the first available country, consult with the refugee

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Specific Considerations When Preparing SGM Refugees for Resettlement

- Weigh options of family reunification or joint resettlement with partners or close friends
- Identify SGM resources in resettlement countries
- Include SGM community analyses in country profiles
- Assess prospects for employment of openly SGM refugees
- Educate *all* refugees about SGM rights and communities in resettlement country

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Training Sites and Participating Organizations

Between 2013 and 2015, ORAM delivered 35 training sessions to refugee professionals at tens of agencies and organizations in 14 countries around the world. The training environments were culturally, religiously and politically diverse. Training sessions were coupled with a rigorous scientific study of the impact of the training on trainee knowledge, skills and attitudes. Following are the key locations and organizations where training was conducted:

Country	Location	Organization(s) Trained
Australia	Melbourne	NGOs
Australia	Sydney	UNHCR, NGOs
India	New Delhi	UNHCR, NGO
Israel	Ramla	Government (Population Directorate)
Israel	Tel Aviv	UNHCR, NGOs
Jordan	Amman	UNHCR, UNRWA, NGOs
Kenya	Dadaab Refugee Camp	UNHCR, NGOs
Kenya	Kakuma Refugee Camp	Government, UNHCR, NGOs,
Kenya	Nairobi	Government, US Department of State Resettlement Support Center (RSC/CWS), UNHCR, NGOs
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	US Department of State Resettlement Support Center (RSC/The IRC), NGOs
Malta	Floriana	Government (AWAS), UNHCR, NGOs,
New Zealand	Auckland	Government (Refugee Status Branch), NGOs
Senegal	Dakar	UNHCR, NGOs
Switzerland	Geneva	UN Agencies, IGOs, NGOs
Turkey	Ankara	UNHCR, NGOs
Turkey	Istanbul	US Department of State Resettlement Support Center (RSC/ICMC), UNHCR, NGOs
USA	Berkeley	NGOs (resettlement agencies)

In addition to delivering highly impactful training, ORAM offers empirical testing and analysis of training program efficacy. ORAM also provides refugee agencies with working tools and expert consultation on claims assessment and protection. More information is available on ORAM's website.

www.oraminternational.org

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