

Understanding the State of Global LGBTQI+ Persecution

2020 Annual Report



RAINBOW
RAILROAD



A Message From the Executive Director

Same-sex intimacy is illegal in 69 countries around the world; and in 14 countries, transgender peoples' gender identity and expression are criminalized.

If you've been following our work, you've probably heard us mention these statistics or similar ones. But what do they actually mean for the millions of LGBTQI+ people living in countries that, in some measure, criminalize their very existence? And more importantly, what do they mean for Rainbow Railroad and those who come to us for help?

One of the questions I'm most frequently asked is, "how do we choose who we help?" It's a good question that depends on numerous factors. However, central to the question is making sure we have rigorous methods to identify, track and respond to those who come to us for help so we can make crucial decisions with limited resources. This has provided Rainbow Railroad with something desperately lacking in understanding the state of global LGBTQI+ persecution – data.

This year, thanks to your ongoing support, I'm pleased to share more details about the types of persecution LGBTQI+ people face globally, through the limited lense of those who reach out to us for help.

Last year was an exceptionally difficult one for LGBTQI+ people globally. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and deepened the precarious economic, health and safety inequalities of LGBTQI+ people everywhere. We even saw governments using the pandemic to initiate state-driven anti-LGBTQI+ crackdowns. **We responded to 2773 requests for help last year, from 3451 people.** With your support, and despite increased barriers to travel, we were able to relocate 75 people to safety across international borders during the pandemic. We also helped an additional 426 people through complementary methods of support.

Our work is nowhere near done. This year's annual report will provide you with a deeper understanding of the problems we face and the work that we do. And I hope understanding our work in 2020 leaves you feeling as determined as I am to continue the fight for global LGBTQI+ equality.

One last thing – COVID-19 has threatened and disrupted parts of the global LGBTQI+ movement, and the not-for-profit sector. **I'm so proud of my exceptional colleagues who despite challenges gave everything they had this past year.**

Their efforts coupled with our brave partners on the ground, a supportive Board of Directors and your support allowed us to not only survive this past year, but come out of it ready to keep doing the work.

And for that I'm grateful.

Kimahli Powell, L.L.D (Hons)
Executive Director

Understanding the State of Global LGBTQI+ Persecution

We track our requests for help in order to provide more assistance to more people and improve how we work. We hope sharing this information will provide our donors, supporters and stakeholders around the world more insight into the state of LGBTQI+ persecution globally – seen through the lens of those who seek to flee.

Our data is subject to a few specific limitations, which should be kept in mind when reading.

- 1:** Much of the data presented here comes from initial assessments of the people who reach out to us. Typically, more concerns are uncovered as we work with the person to find means of support. Because we have limited resources, we cannot always assist each person who reaches out to us, meaning some people are most likely experiencing more safety or health and wellness concerns than they initially tell us. This means that any trends we identify in this report from our data might actually be understated.
- 2:** Rainbow Railroad receives requests for help from people around the world. However, requests for help aren't equally distributed across regions and genders. This year, we received the most requests from people in the Middle East / North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and South-Central Asia. And among these requests, the majority came from cisgender identifying people. The data on page 11 presents a fuller picture of our requests for help by region and gender.
- 3:** Rainbow Railroad's work is by nature limited in scope, both in terms of who we interact with and where they are located. Additionally, factors such as what people feel they can safely disclose to us, perceptions about who Rainbow Railroad helps and who has the ability to access our services cannot be fully accounted for in our data.

If you are interested in accessing the anonymized data that was used to produce this report, you can submit a request to info@rainbowrailroad.org.



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I: The Global Persecution of LGBTQI+ People

Homophobia, transphobia, lesbophobia and biphobia are present in some form or degree in every country of the world, yet the situation varies widely from country to country and from region to region.

According to the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), as of December 2020, at least 69 United Nations member states currently criminalize homosexuality.¹ Additionally, same-sex intimacy is legally punishable by death in six countries.² Regionally speaking, the majority of states in Africa and Asia criminalize LGBTQI+ people. The Caribbean is another area of concern, with eight states doing so.³ In some cases, the law is quite explicit, while others use vague charges like “acts against nature”, “indecentcy” and “immoral acts.”⁴

Legal discrimination against trans persons is also widespread across the globe. Thirteen countries criminalize trans people through what are known as “anti-cross-dressing laws,” which target people who dress in clothes of their apparent opposite sex.⁵ States often persecute trans, gender non-conforming and sex variant people through selective interpretations and enforcement of vague “morality”-related offences.⁶

Countries that criminalize same-sex intimacy and/or the gender identity and expression of trans people

¹ Lucas Ramón Mendos et al., *State Sponsored Homophobia: Global Legislation Overview Update*, (Geneva: ILGA World, 2020) ² Lucas Ramón Mendos et al., *State Sponsored*. ³ Lucas Ramón Mendos et al., *State Sponsored*. ⁴ Lucas Ramón Mendos et al., *State Sponsored*. ⁵ These countries are Brunei, The Gambia, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malawi, Malaysia, Nigeria, Oman, South Sudan, Tonga and the United Arab Emirates. See Alok Gupta et al., *This Alien Legacy: The Origin of “Sodomy” Laws in British Colonialism* (India: Human Rights Watch, 2008) ⁶ Zhan Chiam et al., *Trans Legal mapping Report: Recognition Before the Law*, (Geneva: ILGA World, 2019) ⁷ Alok Gupta et al., *This Alien Legacy: The Origin of “Sodomy” Laws in British Colonialism*, (India: Human Rights Watch, 2008)

It would be simplistic to paint a picture of the relative safety of trans persons in one country or another based solely on whether they experience legal discrimination. This is because transphobia (like homophobia) is rooted in communities, families and faith institutions. For example, while no states in Central or Latin America legally criminalize trans people, the Organization of American States (OAS) cites the Americas as “the most violent region in the world” for trans people, with trans women and trans feminine people disproportionately impacted by this violence.¹

In addition to maintaining homophobic and transphobic legislation, 51 countries have implemented legal barriers to block or greatly restrict Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that help LGBTQI+ people.²

Beginning in the 1970s, LGBTQI+ people in countries in North America and Europe made major gains towards legal and social equality for LGBTQI+ people. This has led to important legal and social changes in some countries. However, it would be an oversimplification to characterize these countries as “safe” while others remain “unsafe.”

Why are these laws common across the world?

Many of the legal regimes that criminalize same-sex activity in countries where Rainbow Railroad operates were first instituted by European colonizers.⁷

Rather, countries fall on a spectrum from least to most safe; Rainbow Railroad uses destination points like Canada, Germany and the United States for resettlement because these countries ensure legal protections for LGBTQI+ persons and provide safe haven for refugees. However, even in these safer countries, there have been recent instances of homophobic and transphobic legislation – not to mention persistently high rates of violence committed against LGBTQI+ people. For example, over the last year, state legislators in the United States filed a record number of anti-trans bills.³

¹ Álvaro Botero Navarro et al., *Practical Guide to Inclusive and Rights Based Responses to Covid-19 In the Americas*, (USA: Organization of American States Secretariat for access to rights and equity Department of social inclusion, 2020) ² Lucas Ramón Mendos et al., *State Sponsored*. ³ ACLU, *Trans Rights Under Attack in 2020*, (USA: ACLU, 2021)

Map source: [Human Dignity Trust](#). Note that this map is limited to states that explicitly criminalize gay sex and trans identities – it does not include states like Russia and Hungary which have recently instituted anti gay “propaganda” laws.

2020: COVID-19 and LGBTQI+ People

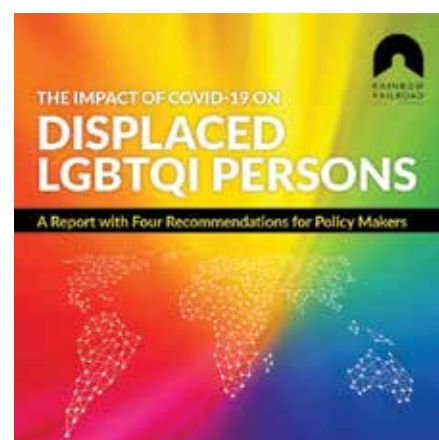
The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the pervasive lack of human rights that LGBTQI+ people experience the world over. Most essentially, for the populations we serve, border closures and lockdowns have made it difficult for people to escape across international borders.

The pandemic has disrupted essential health services for LGBTQI+ people. One impact on trans persons has been lesser access to hormone therapy and gender-affirming care. And for people who are HIV-positive, in some countries, the pandemic has created a shortage of antiretroviral medications.

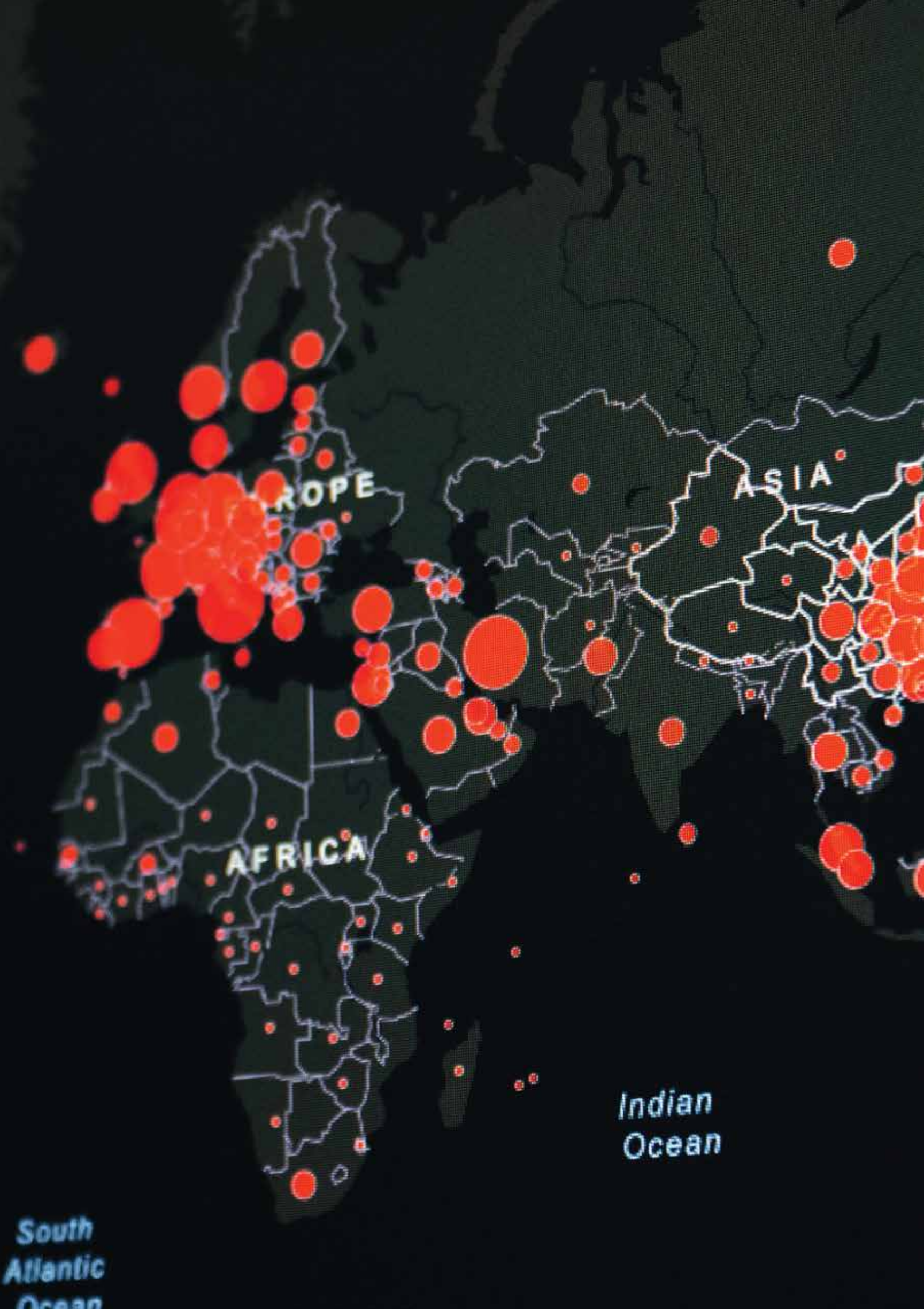
Early in 2020 we published a report called ["The Impact of COVID-19 on Displaced LGBTQI+ Persons."](#) Drawing on research work from our partner organizations and interviews with human rights defenders around the world, this report included four recommendations to policymakers.

COVID-19 has also generated an increase in state-sponsored violence and persecution in the form of anti-LGBTQI+ crackdowns, with some falsely accusing LGBTQI+ people of spreading the virus or being generative of it.

While lockdown measures have generally been effective at curbing the spread of COVID-19, an unintended consequence has been increasing LGBTQI+ peoples' exposure to prejudiced family and community environments. For instance, over 50 percent of respondents to a survey of LGBTQI+ people in Iran said they had experienced increased violence during the pandemic because of lockdowns meant to curb the spread of the virus.¹



¹ [The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Human Rights of LGBT Persons](#), (New York, United Nations, 2020).



EUROPE

ASIA

AFRICA

Indian
Ocean

South
Atlantic
Ocean

The Unique Safety, Health and Wellness Concerns Faced by LGBTQI+ People

Rainbow Railroad tracks the specific threats to safety, health and welfare that people reaching out to us face with as much detail and rigor as possible. We do so under two main headings: Safety Concerns and Health and Welfare Concerns.

Safety Concerns = direct threats the individual faces stemming from their family, community or the state.

We identify 26 Safety Concerns.

Health and Welfare Concerns = underlying factors relating to physical, mental health or welfare that also put people at risk.

We identify 10 Health and Welfare Concerns.

This allows us to understand the persecution faced by LGBTQI+ people in specific countries or regions, or among those who identify as a specific gender. **We use this information to develop our programming priorities.**

A summary of our requests for help

2773

Requests for help
(from a total of
3451 people)

4009

Total Safety
Concerns reported
among those
requesting help

1749

Total Health and
Welfare concerns
reported among those
requesting help

130

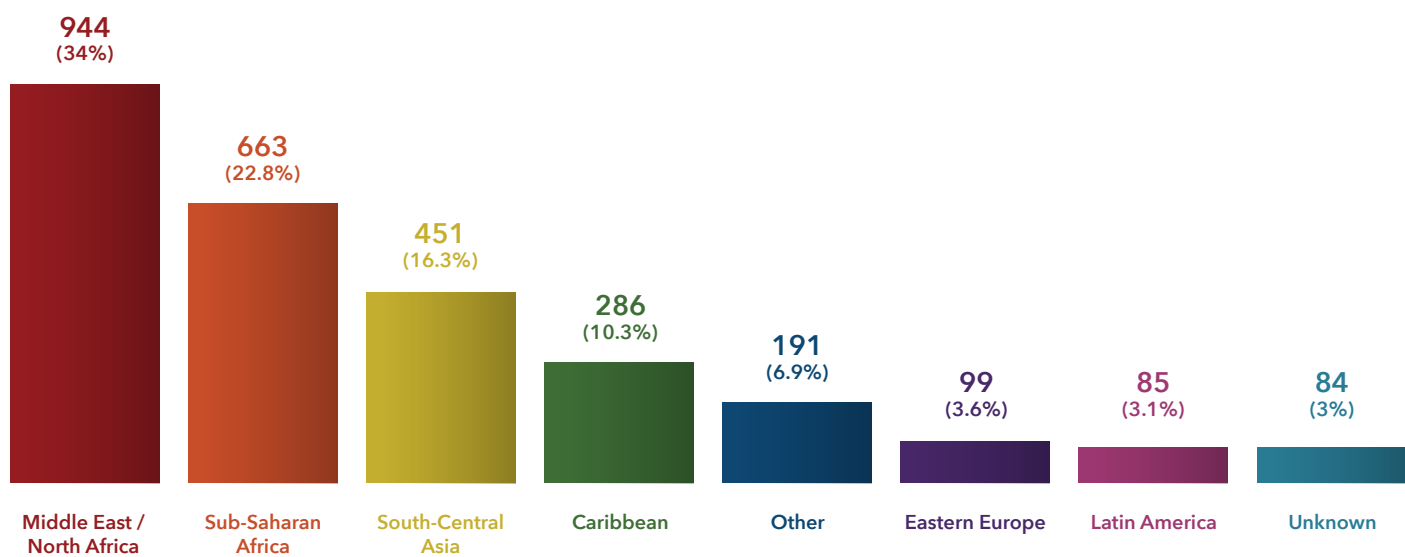
Number of countries from
which Rainbow Railroad
received at least one request
for help in 2020



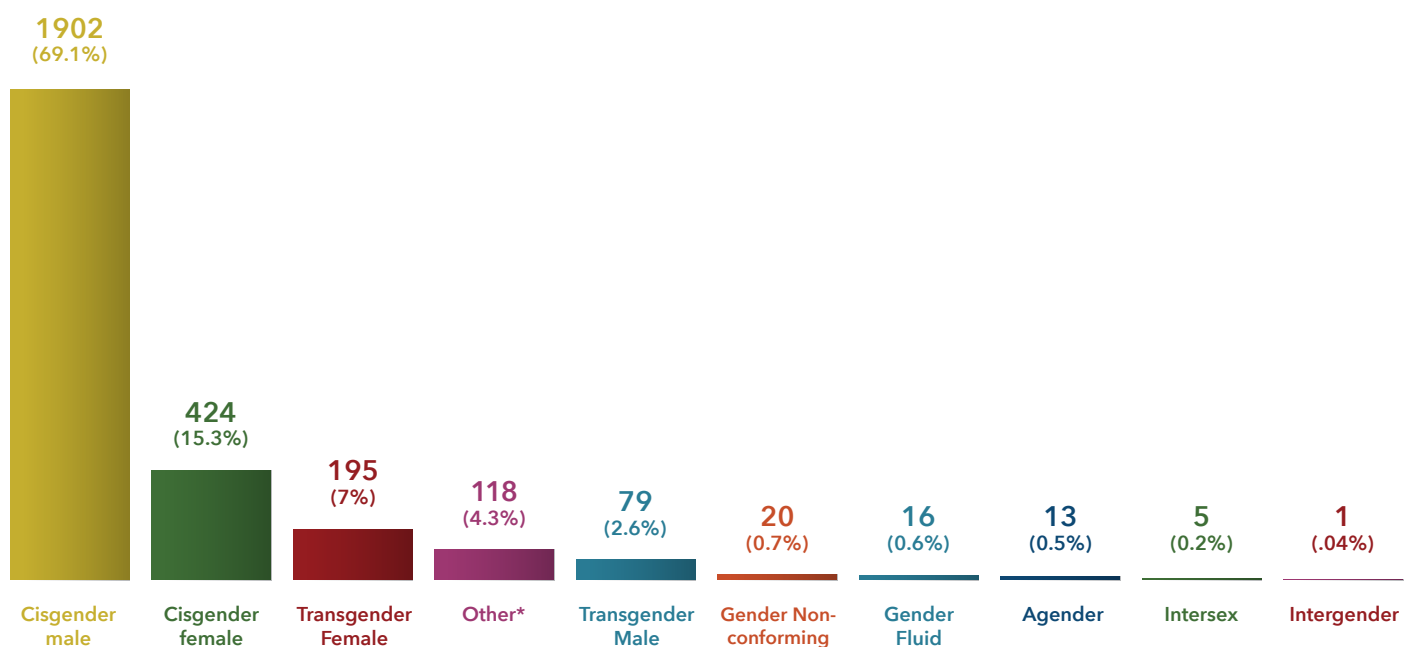
2020 Requests for Help

The following shows the regional distribution, gender identities and sex characteristics of people who reached out to us for help in 2020.

2020 Requests for Help by Region



2020 Requests for Help by Gender Identity and Sex Characteristics

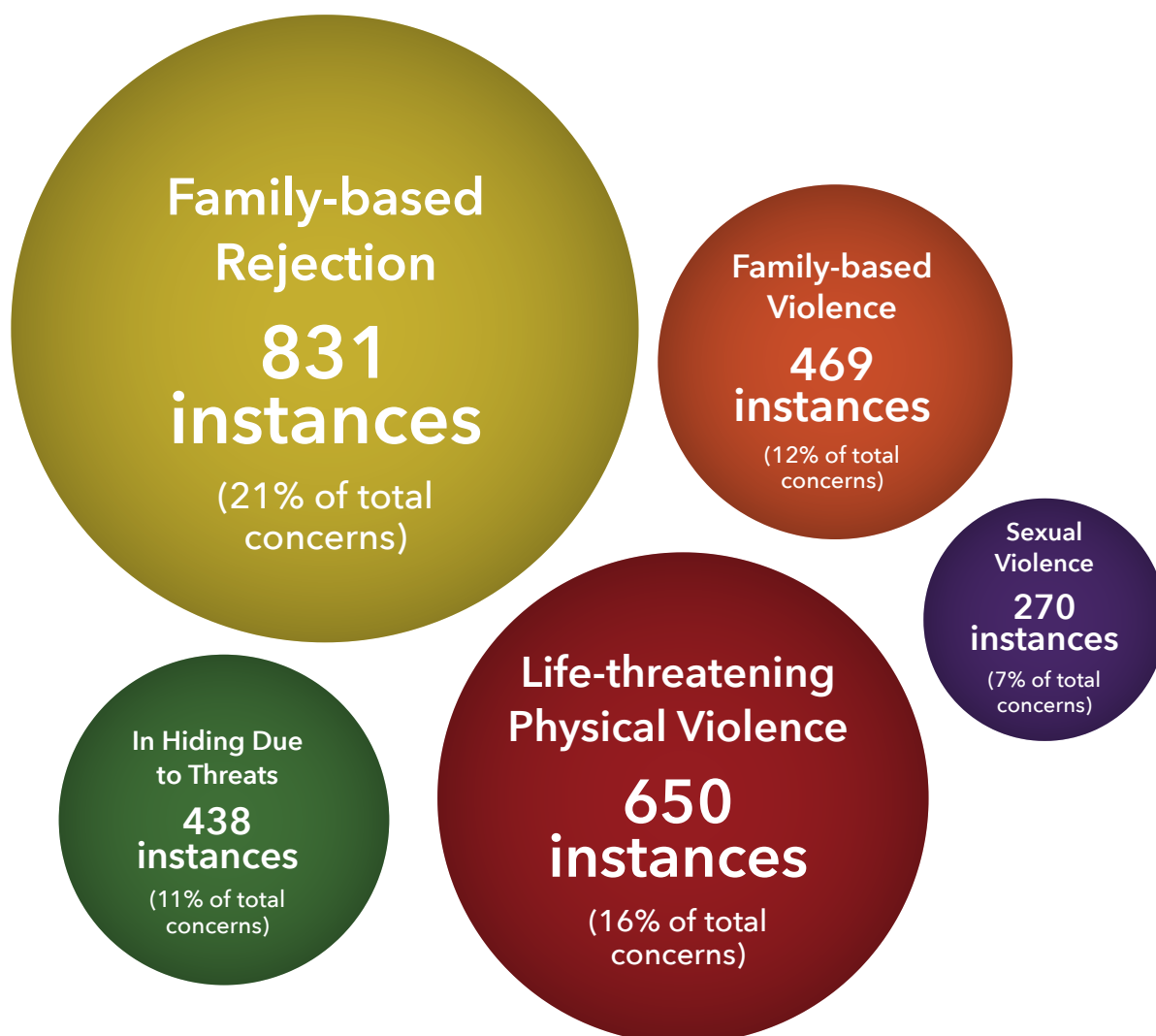


*Some individuals in the intake process choose to not disclose their gender identity.

Safety Concerns

In 2020, Rainbow Railroad tracked 26 safety concerns LGBTQI+ people faced around the world simply for being who they are or loving who they love.

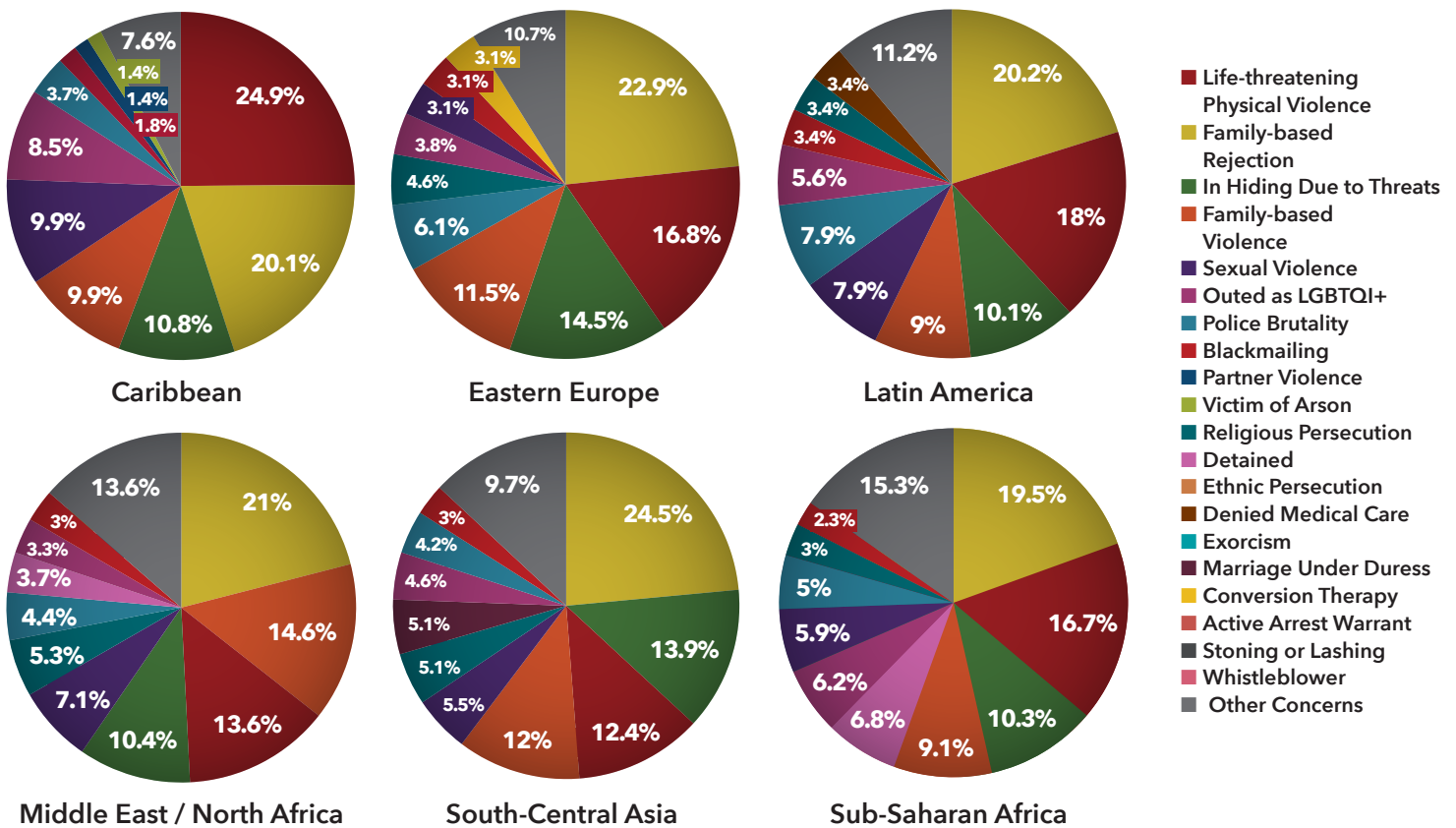
The Five Most Reported Safety Concerns Among People Who Reached Out to Rainbow Railroad for Help in 2020 (out of 4009 total safety concerns)



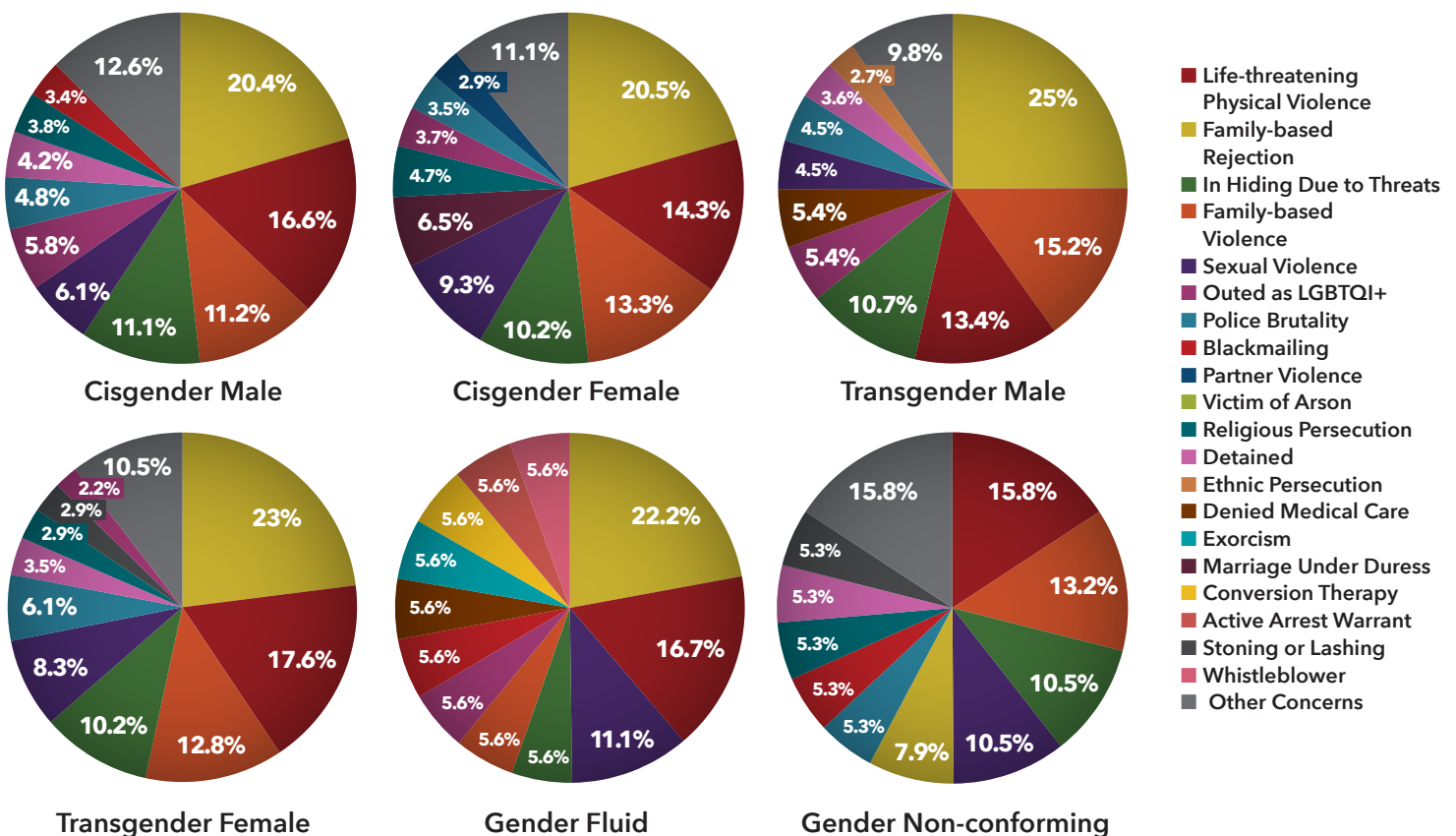
Other reported security concerns:

- Outed as LGBTQI+
- Police Brutality
- Blackmailing
- Partner Violence
- Victim of Arson
- Violence Related to Sex Work
- Religious Persecution
- Date-baiting (entrapment)
- Detained
- Ethnic Persecution
- Denied Medical Care
- Exorcism
- Marriage Under Duress
- Acid Attack
- Conversion Therapy
- Active Arrest Warrant
- Xenophobic Violence
- Victim of Human Trafficking
- Stoning or Lashing
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Whistleblower

Top Safety Concerns Reported to Rainbow Railroad in 2020 by Region (out of 4009 total safety concerns)



Safety Concerns Among People Who Reached Out to Rainbow Railroad for Help in 2020 by Gender Identity (out of 4009 total safety concerns)*



* Data for agender, aliagender, intersex and Intergender folks was not extensive enough to draw conclusions. Thus we have left it out of this chart.

Health and Welfare Concerns

In addition to the safety threats to their lives and livelihoods, LGBTQI+ people across the globe face numerous health and welfare concerns in countries where their existence is criminalized. We track 10 health and welfare concerns.

The Five Most Reported Health and Welfare Concerns Among People Who Reached Out to Rainbow Railroad for Help in 2020 (out of 1749 total Health and Welfare concerns)

**Lack of
Basic Needs**
**741
instances**
(41.5% of
total concerns)

Risk of Suicide
**351
instances**
(19.7% of
total concerns)

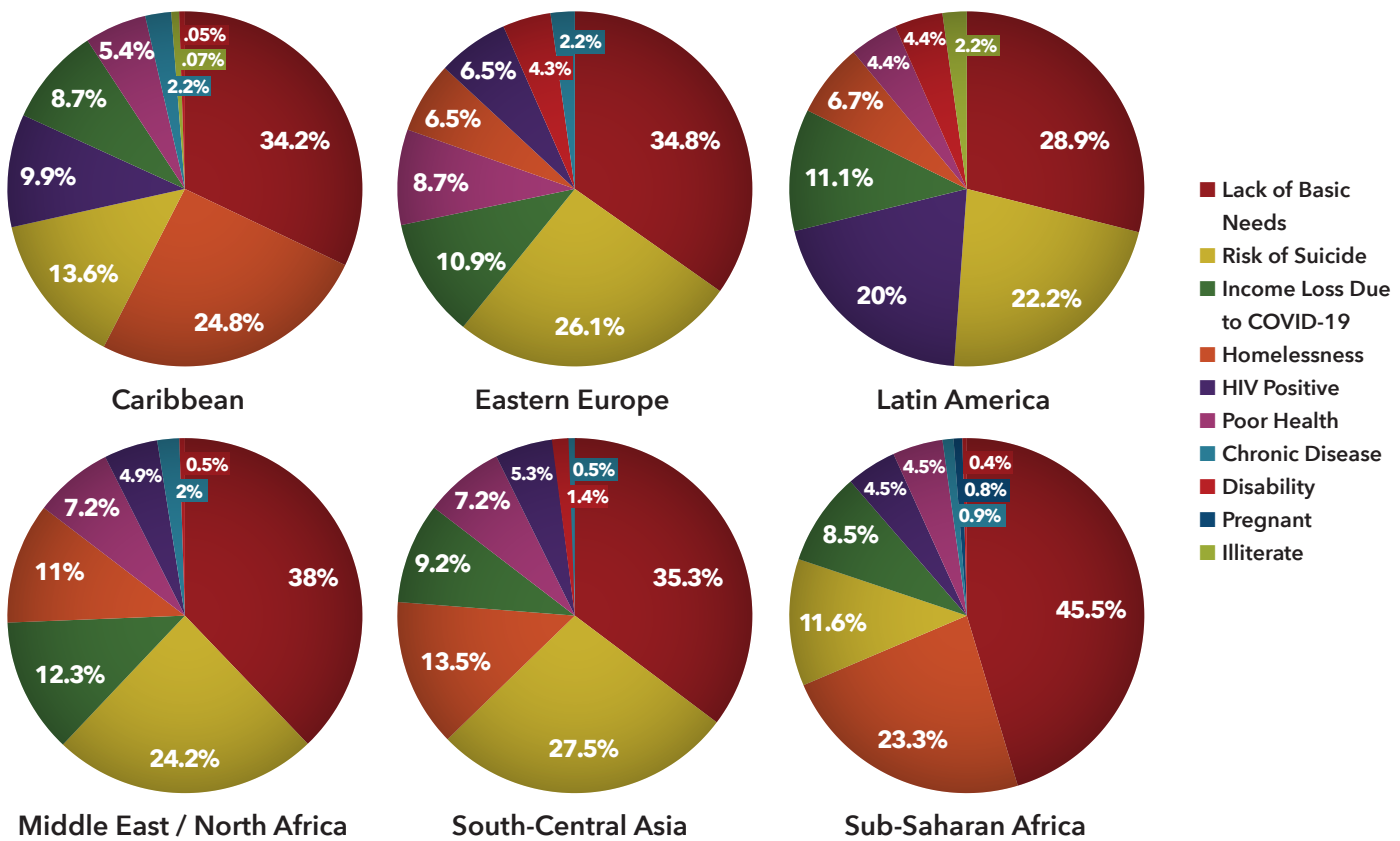
**HIV
Positive**
124 instances
(6.9% of total
concerns)

**Income Loss
Due to Covid-19**
198 instances
(11.1% of total
concerns)

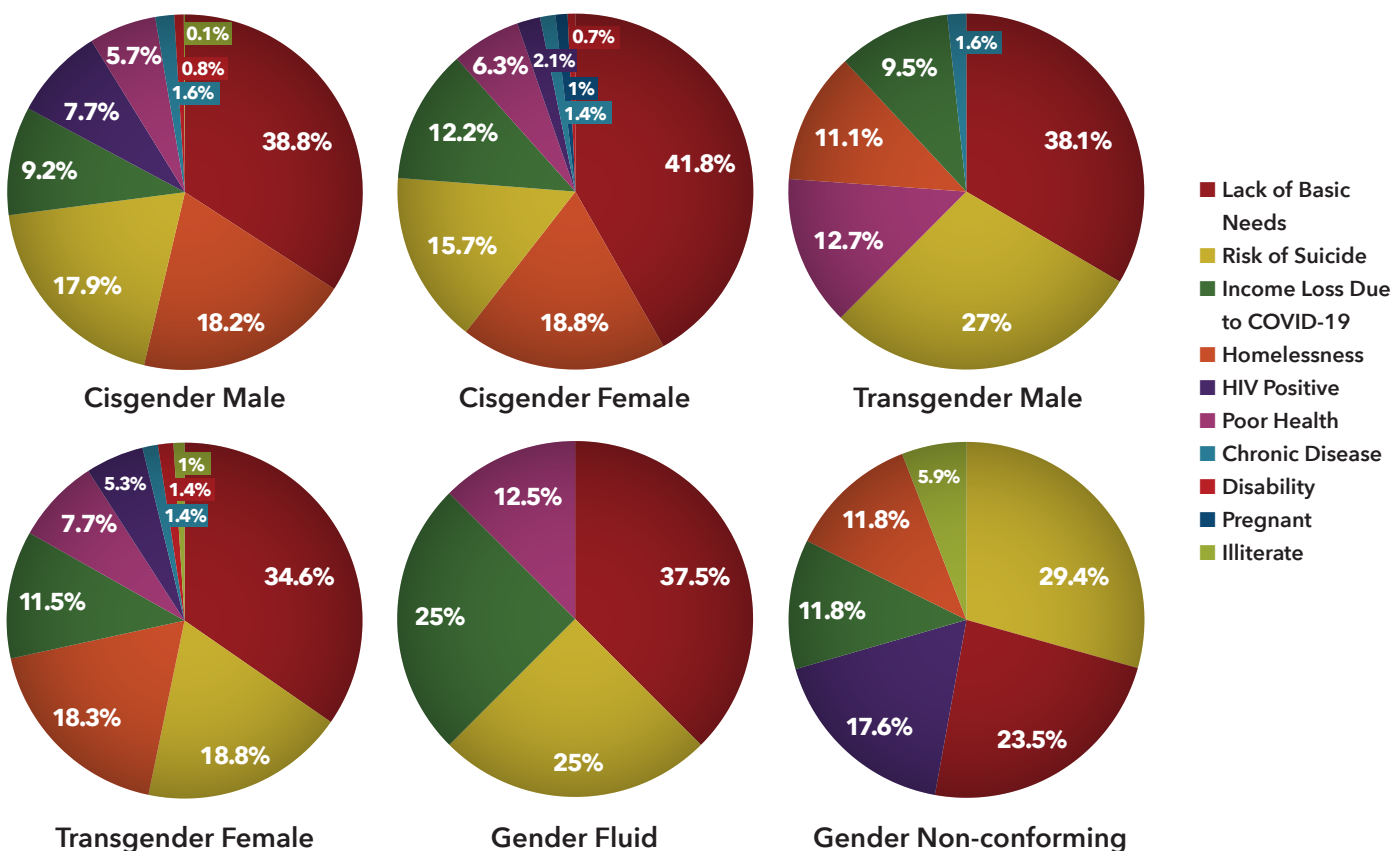
Homelessness
198 instances
(11.1% of total
concerns)



Top Health and Welfare Concerns Among People Who Reached Out to Rainbow Railroad for Help in 2020 by Region (out of 1749 total Health and Welfare Concerns)



Top Health and Welfare Concerns Among People Who Reached Out to Rainbow Railroad for Help in 2020 by Gender Identity (out of 1749 total Health and Welfare Concerns)*



* The number of intersex and other individuals identifying on the non-binary spectrum who reached out to us for help was too small for us to include in this chart. A sign that we need to do more to reach these populations.

II: Eight Key Trends Observed in 2020

The information from our requests for help reinforce clear trends identified through our partners around the globe. We identified eight main trends from our case intake data in 2020.

- 1. LGBTQI+ People Face Epidemic Levels of Family-Based Rejection and Violence**
- 2. LGBTQI+ Women are Vulnerable to Forced Marriages**
- 3. Conversion Therapy is a Global Phenomenon**
- 4. Sexual Violence Severely Impacts LGBTQI+ Women**
- 5. Police and Paramilitary Forces Endanger LGBTQI+ People Globally**
- 6. Gay and Bisexual Men Are Often the Victims of Police Entrapment**
- 7. A Lack of Basic needs is Pervasive Amongst LGBTQI+ People Globally**
- 8. Trans Persons Face a Disproportionate Risk of Suicide**

1. LGBTQI+ People Face Epidemic Levels of Family-Based Rejection and Violence

It is an unfortunate fact that much of the violence LGBTQI+ people experience globally is perpetrated by family members. Legal regimes that discriminate against LGBTQI+ people are the foundation of this epidemic of violence.

Family-based rejection and family-based violence were among the top five security concerns reported by people across all regions who reached out to Rainbow Railroad in 2020, and family-based rejection was the top safety concern across all regions save for the Caribbean, where it was second. Family-based rejection was also among the top concerns reported by intersex, gender fluid, agender and intergender people.

Family-based rejection and violence often sets in motion a cascading set of negative consequences including homelessness, poverty and mental health issues. Safety concerns based on family violence and rejection comprise one-third of all security concerns logged by Rainbow Railroad in 2020.



Total Number of Safety Concerns Related to Family-based Rejection and Violence Received by Rainbow Railroad in 2020 (out of 4009 Safety Concerns)

**1300
reported
instances**

(33% of all 2020
Safety Concerns)

2. LGBTQI+ Women are Vulnerable to Forced Marriages

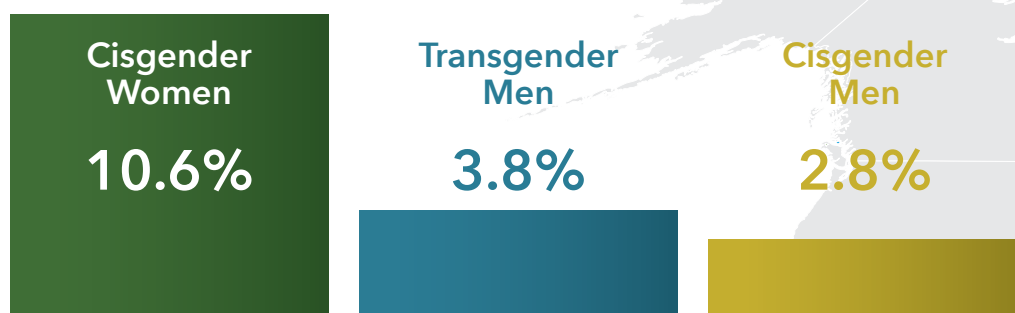
Forced marriage, also known as “marriage under duress,” is a human rights abuse whereby family members employ emotional, physical and financial abuse tactics to coerce individuals into a marriage against their consent.¹

Approximately 12 million girls are married against their will each year, and there are currently over 650 million women and girls who were forcibly married as children.²

Due to the sheer scale of the problem, marriage under duress is often exclusively associated with children and the forced marriage of young girls to adult men, but the practice is also used to target LGBTQI+ people and force them into heterosexual-appearing unions.

Forced marriage is a global phenomenon with instances reported in every region. However, in 2020, we received the most number of reports of forced marriage among LGBTQI+ people from the Middle East / North Africa. This was followed by South-Central Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (see map on page 19).

The Prevalence of Forced Marriage by Gender (105 instances out of 4009 Safety Concerns)



* One transgender woman also reported experiencing marriage under duress.

* One gender nonconforming person also reported experiencing marriage under duress.

¹ Forced Marriage Unit., [What is a Forced Marriage?](#), (United Kingdom: Forced Marriage Unit, 2021)

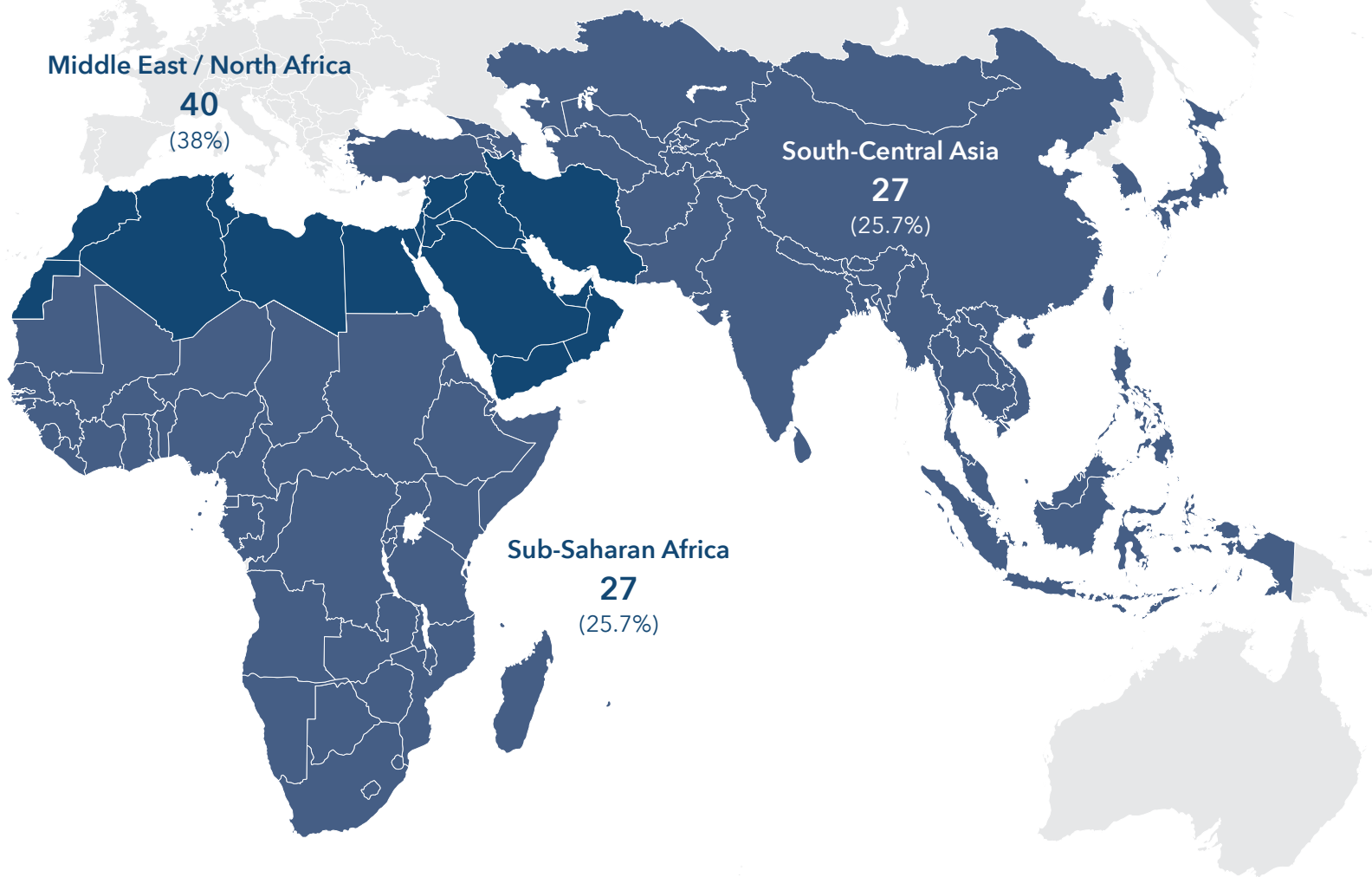
² Government of Canada., [Child, early and forced marriage](#), (Canada: Government of Canada, 2020)



The issue of forced marriage impacts cisgender women and girls more than any other demographic, with over one in 10 cisgender women who reached out to Rainbow Railroad in 2020 reporting marriage under duress. Despite comprising only 15 percent of the total cases handled by Rainbow Railroad in 2020, cisgender queer women account for over 40 percent of all instances of forced marriage.

Although forced marriage is concentrated among cisgender women, this issue has been reported by people of other genders we serve, affecting approximately 4 percent of transgender men, 3 percent of cisgender men and 1 percent of transgender women.

The Top Three Regions in Which People Reported Marriage Under Duress as a Concern when Reaching out to Rainbow Railroad in 2020 (out of 105 total reported instances)



3. Conversion Therapy is a Global Phenomenon

So-called “conversion therapy” is a term for a wide-ranging set of practices perpetrated by family, community and the state in an attempt to change the sexuality and/or gender identity of LGBTQI+ people or make them adhere to heterosexual and/or cisgender norms.¹ The practice is associated with severe long-term mental health implications for LGBTQI+ people, including depression, anxiety, drug use, homelessness and suicide.²

Conversion therapy varies widely from place to place in terms of its method and severity. In all cases it is harmful; in the worst cases, it involves torture or cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.³ Conversion therapy is a practice that is global in scope.⁴ It has been documented in at least 68 countries, and only four U.N. member states have nation-wide bans on the practice.^{5,6}

Overall, 38 people in 2020 reported having experienced conversion therapy to us. It was most prevalent among those reaching out to us from Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East / North Africa.

Safer countries where we resettle LGBTQI+ refugees also have an ongoing problem of conversion therapy. For instance, in the U.S.,

698,000 adults have experienced conversion therapy, with 13 percent of trans people reporting “that one or more professionals...tried to stop them from being transgender.”^{7,8} In May 2020, six out of 10 LGBTQI+ youth reported “that someone attempted to convince them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity.”⁹ These numbers increase for trans and non-binary individuals. In Canada, the federal government re-introduced legislation to criminalize conversion therapy related conduct in October 2020.¹⁰ Rainbow Railroad recently endorsed No Conversion Canada’s report, “[Conversion Therapy in Canada: A Guide for Legislative Action](#).”



¹ Human Rights Council., [Report on Conversion Therapy](#), (United Nations, 2020) ² Human Rights Campaign., [The Lies and Dangers of Efforts to Change Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity](#), (USA: Human Rights Campaign, 2021) ³ Graeme Reid., [Global Trends in LGBT Rights During The Covid-19 Pandemic](#), (USA, Human Rights Watch, 2021) ⁴ Human Rights Council., [Report on](#) ⁵ Human Rights Council., [Practices of So-called Conversion Therapy](#), (United Nations, 2020) ⁶ ILGA World., [Toolbox to Combat So-called “Conversion Therapies”](#), (Geneva: ILGA World, 2021) ⁷ Christy Mallory et al., [Conversion Therapy and LGBT Youth](#), (USA: UCLA, 2019) ⁸ Mark Lee et al., [Dismantling a Culture of Violence: Understanding Anti-Transgender Violence and Ending The Crisis](#), (USA: Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2020) ⁹ The Trevor Project., [The Trevor Project National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2020](#), (USA: The Trevor Project, 2020) ¹⁰ Department of Justice Canada., [Federal Government reintroduces legislation to criminalize conversion therapy-related conduct in Canada](#), (Canada, Government of Canada, 2020) ¹¹ Human Rights Council., [Practices of](#) ¹² ILGA World., [Toolbox to](#)

4. Sexual Violence Severely Impacts LGBTQI+ Women

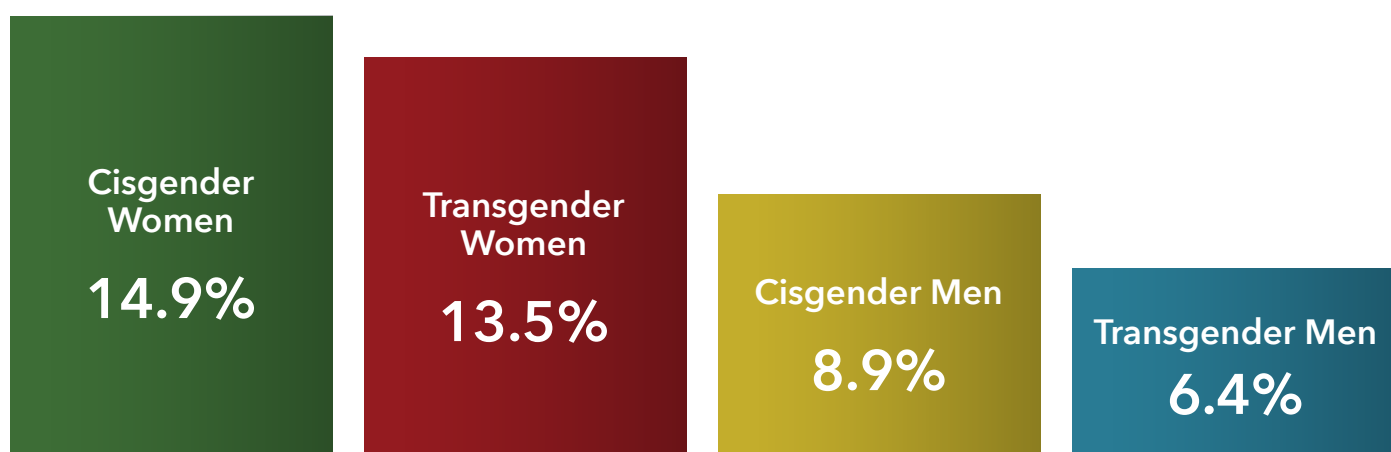
Registering in the top five security concerns overall, sexual violence and crime are a common experience among the people who reach out to us for help. Cisgender lesbian, bisexual and queer women appear to be particularly impacted. Cisgender women are significantly overrepresented in this area of concern; nearly 15% of all safety concerns logged by Rainbow Railroad among cisgender women are related to sexual violence.

Sexual violence is frequently used to target members of the LGBTQI+ community and force them to comply with heterosexual and cisgender norms, or simply to punish them for non-compliance. This type of violence disproportionately impacts lesbian, bisexual and queer cisgender women. Such crimes may be arranged and perpetrated by a victim's family, occur in street attacks at the hands of neighbours in the community or be executed by state and police forces.

Sexual violence perpetrated against LGBTQI+ people takes a number of forms. Many cisgender lesbians are subjected to forced pregnancy, female genital mutilation (FGM) and the use of hormones to "cure" lesbianism.

One of the most egregious examples of sexual violence is referred to as "corrective rape." Corrective rape is a sexual assault committed with the intent to supposedly "change" the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity. Although women are most frequently the victims of corrective rape, it is also routinely used against cisgender queer men and transgender women, and may also include forced anal examinations often at the hands of military or police forces.

The Prevalance of Sexual Violence by Gender (out of 4009 Security Concerns)

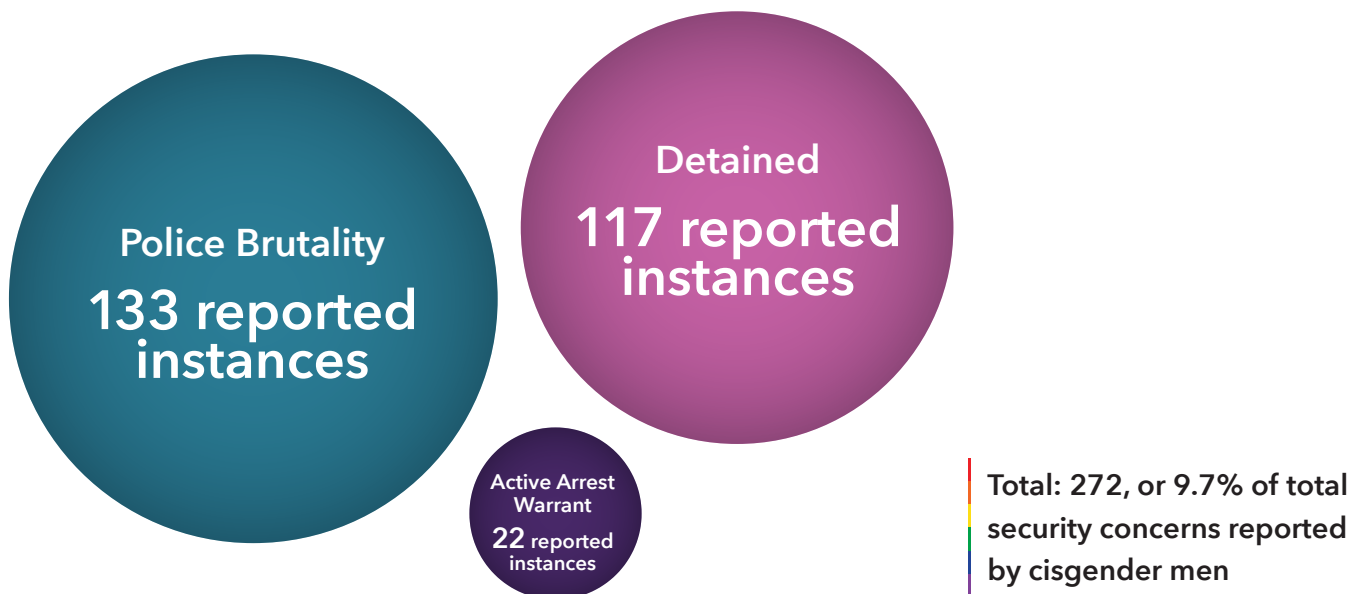


5. Police and Paramilitary Forces Endanger LGBTQI+ People Globally

In 2020, COVID-19 measures led to increased police powers and presence across the globe. Police abuse particularly impacted marginalized communities, including LGBTQI+ people, undocumented migrants, refugees, sex workers, people of colour and those facing intersecting vulnerabilities, especially sex workers who are trans women of colour.¹ Our own records reflected these trends. Notably, one in 10 transgender women who reached out to us in 2020 reported police brutality as a concern, making it the most frequent concern reported among this demographic.

Police and paramilitary forces remain one of the greatest threats to the safety of LGBTQI+ people globally. Among cisgender men – the demographic Rainbow Railroad interacted with the most in 2020 – nearly 10% reported having experienced a type of police based violence, whether that was an active arrest warrant, being detained or police brutality.

Most Common Police-Based Violence Concerns Among Cisgender Men



¹ Boglarka Fedorko et al., *Impact Assessment: Covid-19 and trans people in Europe and Central Asia*, (European Union: TGEU, 2021)

6. Gay and Bisexual Men Are Often the Victims of Police Entrapment

Entrapment also called “date-baiting” is when police officers pose as men seeking sex or relationships with other men, with the intention of outing them as gay or bisexual. The police officer will then arrest the man for being gay or bisexual and out them to the wider community. Police all over the world have a long history of using this tactic to out, shame, humiliate and punish LGBTQI+ people – especially cisgender gay men.¹ Based on Rainbow Railroad’s 2020 data, entrapment appears to be an issue affecting gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans women almost exclusively. **In 2020, over 50 people reported to us that they were victims of entrapment.**

Today, entrapment takes place almost exclusively in the online sphere. Police create fake online profiles on dating apps like Grindr to target gay and bisexual men with the intent of arranging a meeting to publicly

out, humiliate and, often, arrest and detain individuals. This has been particularly pronounced during COVID-19, as many gay men turned to dating apps to maintain romantic, social and community connections.² On the other hand, because these apps have become unsafe in many countries, gay men have been dissuaded from using them, which has further increased their isolation.

7: A Lack of Basic needs is Pervasive Amongst LGBTQI+ People Globally

A lack of basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing was the top Health and Welfare concern facing LGBTQI+ people who reached out to us in 2020 (741 instances). Given the lack of support experienced by LGBTQI+ people at state, community and family levels, poverty and homelessness are rampant. Wider research verifies that basic needs fulfillment is a top issue facing LGBTQI+ people globally, which has only been compounded by COVID-19.

When OutRight Action International launched a COVID-19 Global LGBTQI+ Emergency Fund in February of this year, over 80 percent of the applications they received were focused on meeting the basic needs of LGBTQI+ people.¹ Rainbow Railroad was proud to be one of the first partners in the fund. In April 2020, The Commonwealth Equality Network conducted rapid consultations with 34 member organizations and reported that income loss due to COVID-19 was a key concern.³

¹ George Chauncy., *The Forgotten History of Gay Entrapment*, (USA: The Atlantic, 2019) ² Hugo Greenhalgh., *LGBT+ people warned off casual sex go online during coronavirus*, (United Kingdom: Thomas Reuters Foundation News, 2020) ³ David Scamell et al., *Where Are The Global Covid-19 Resources for the LGBTI Communities?*, (USA: Global Philanthropy Project, 2020) ² David Scamell et al., *Where Are*

8. Trans Persons Face a Disproportionate Risk of Suicide

Risk of Suicide is a common concern among people who reach out to us for help.

In 2020, risk of suicide was the second most frequent Health and Welfare Concern reported by people seeking help from Rainbow Railroad from South-Central Asia, the Middle East / North Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. In Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, it was a close third.

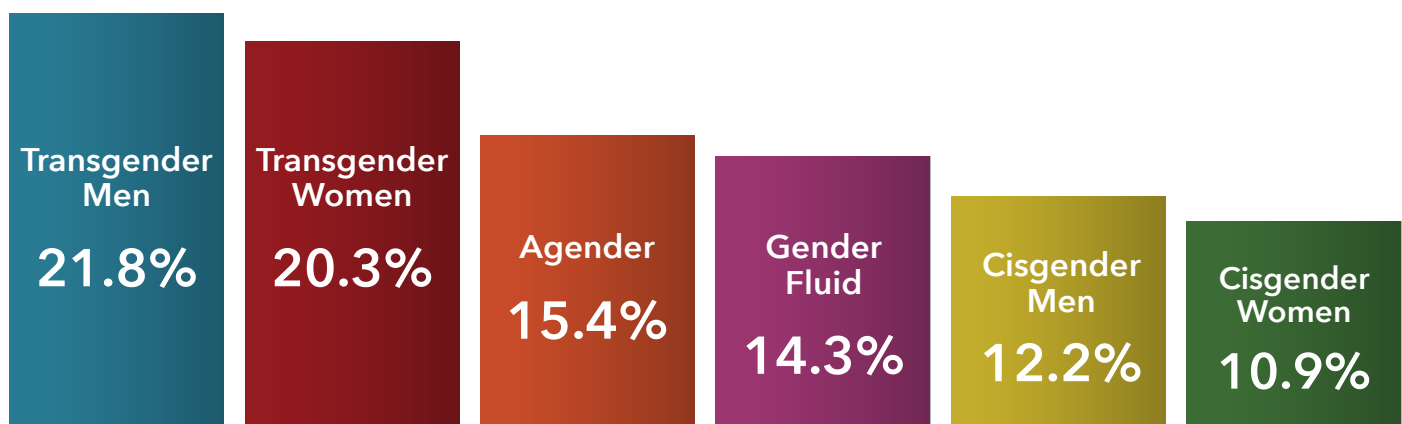
The risk of suicide from those who reach out to Rainbow Railroad for help is a clear manifestation of the direct human toll of safety concerns, poor health, lack of access to health care and economic insecurity.

Data from our 2020 requests for help indicates those at highest risk of suicide are trans men and women, at approximately 22 percent and 20 percent respectively.

Notably, the rates of suicide risk for trans men and women are nearly double those of their cisgender counterparts, with around 12 percent of cis men and 11 percent of cis women reporting suicide risk as a key health concern.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in profound mental health consequences, and nowhere are these issues more apparent than in vulnerable populations. One study on LGBTQI+ asylum seekers showed that 100 percent of respondents reported symptoms of depression and anxiety.¹

The Risk of Suicide by Gender Identity (out of 1749 Health and Wellness Concerns)



¹ Nadine Nakamura et al., [LGBTQ Asylum Seekers: How Clinicians Can Help](#), (USA: American Psychological Association, 2021)



III: Rainbow Railroad's Work in 2020

Rainbow Railroad's Theory of Change

The Problem:


At a time when there are more displaced people than ever before, LGBTQI+ people are uniquely vulnerable due to systemic, state-enabled homophobia and transphobia. These factors either displace them in their own country, or prevent them from escaping harm.

Desired social impact:

As a result of Rainbow Railroad's work, more LGBTQI+ individuals will be able to live free from persecution based on their sexual orientation, gender identity expression or sex characteristics. A key part of achieving this will be by providing multiple pathways to safety for LGBTQI+ migrants

What does this mean for our work?

Rainbow Railroad works closely with human rights defenders around the world and supports the global movement for LGBTQI+ rights. While we focus on providing opportunities to escape violence, our ultimate goal is safety by whatever means necessary. Our [2020-2022 Strategic Plan](#) guides this work.



In 2020 we provided life-saving support to 503 people including 75 people through emergency travel support. We relied on our mission, theory of change and our 2020-2022 strategic plan to attain these results.



EVEN
REFUGEES
ARE HUMAN
BEINGS

WE ARE
NOT
FIGHTING
UNHCR

ARE
REFU
NOT A
OF GIVIN
DOO

How We Work

Emergency Travel Support for LGBTQI+ folks at risk

Providing **emergency travel** to LGBTQI+ people facing imminent danger is our core method of work. This involves 3 key steps:

1. Verification: We verify each case, learn about the circumstances of the individual facing persecution and begin determining how we can help.

2. Research & Support: We research possible routes to safety and connect with local contacts who provide logistical support. This includes providing support to the individual facing persecution (e.g. safehouses).

3. Travel: We provide travel to a safer country where the person's basic rights and freedoms are upheld.

Providing Emergency Travel Support is always carried out in partnership with formal and informal networks of LGBTQI+ rights defenders within the country.



In addition to Emergency Travel Support, we also facilitate the **resettlement of refugees to a number of countries** through engagement with government programs.



Advocacy

Rainbow Railroad advocates to multiple governments in an effort to create more immediate pathways to safety for LGBTQI+ persons at risk. In doing so, we are also addressing the global migration crisis in which 80 million people around the world are displaced, the largest number since the Second World War.

Rainbow Railroad provides **additional support** to people facing violence through four additional programs, outlined below.

1: Lifesaving support to individuals in imminent danger:

A lack of basic needs is a common theme among LGBTQI+ people facing persecution. Through this program, we provide life-saving financial and other help to people in imminent danger with no on-the-ground support systems.

2: Direct support of LGBTQI+ partner organizations:

We support informal and formal partner organizations around the world that defend the human rights of LGBTQI+ people. These organizations provide direct support to LGBTQI+ people, and assist us in identifying people in need of relocation.

3: Emergency responses to crackdowns on LGBTQI+ people:

The sad reality is that governments around the world often undertake targeted anti-LGBTQI+ crackdowns. Recent examples include Chechnya in 2017, Egypt in 2019 and Ghana in 2021. We respond to these emergencies by supporting local human rights defenders on the ground and, where possible, assist in emergency relocation efforts.

4: Essential information to LGBTQI+ people at risk: We provide information and referral services to those at immediate risk of violence and persecution. Much of this work takes place informally.

Our Global Impact in 2020

In 2020 Rainbow Railroad responded to 2773 requests for help from a total of 3451 people across the globe. Here are a few examples of people we've helped in 2020:

We provided community and emotional support to a stranded gay Egyptian facing isolation given that he'd been in hiding alone for over four months as a result of COVID-19. We offered to connect him with local activists for further support which he declined due to paranoia, but by keeping in constant text contact with him, we provided his only safe outlet to voice his fears and challenges. Isolation and loneliness is something many LGBTQI+ people can understand – in this case it was extreme.

Total number of people helped by providing essential information in 2020: **60**

Celia, A woman from Honduras was attacked at the restaurant she worked at because she is trans. The attack was covered by the media, which meant that she was outed in a country where it is typically unsafe to be open about one's gender identity. As a result, Celia was no longer safe in her country, so we relocated her to Argentina.

Total number of people supported through Emergency Travel Support in 2020: **75**

A young gay man from Rwanda, a country where LGBTQI+ people face state persecution, was selected to be resettled in Canada via our refugee resettlement program. After being expelled from school and attempting suicide, he fled to India, where he is now living. In India, he lacks citizenship, has no source of income, is underhoused and is struggling to make ends meet. Eventually, we are aiming to resettle this man in a safer country, but until then, we are providing financial support as a stopgap measure to ensure his safety and well-being.

Total number of people provided life saving support in 2020: **90**

We are helping a transgender woman from Iran with the goal of eventually resettling through a government-sponsored refugee program. She has struggled with her gender all her life. After undergoing gender-affirming surgery, she faced increasing persecution. After her father threatened to kill her, she fled to Turkey. Life has been difficult there – she has lost many jobs due to workplace discrimination and COVID-19 has worsened her economic situation. She's also faced housing discrimination. We are in contact with this person frequently and providing financial support while we seek a viable option for her relocation.

The Russian LGBT Network is a non-governmental LGBTQI+ rights organization working for the social acceptance and protection of the rights of LGBTQI+ people in Russia. Rainbow Railroad provided funds to The Russian LGBT Network to support a legal human rights case in Europe.

Total number of people Rainbow Railroad assisted through our global partnerships in 2020: **246**

In March 2020, 20 people were arrested at an LGBTQI+ shelter near Kampala, Uganda, in an anti-LGBTQI+ crackdown perpetuated under the guise of enforcing COVID-19 restrictions. Rainbow Railroad assisted in the effort to free those arrested, raised international awareness about this injustice and contributed to the legal victory that saw all 20 victims released.

Total number of people assisted through anti-LGBTQI+ crackdown intervention in 2020: **20**



"In the aftermath of the raid, Rainbow Railroad supported us in relocating people to a safer location as well as providing basic needs for the 20 individuals after they were released from prison. We are grateful for this continued partnership with Rainbow Railroad" - Frank Mugisha, Executive Director, Sexual Minorities Uganda

Profiles: People We helped in 2020

While 2020 was a challenging year for everyone as we battled a global pandemic, it has severely impacted the people we help. Rainbow Railroad works as facilitators on the very personal and harrowing journeys of those we seek to help. Their journeys have always been difficult, but in 2020 they faced border closures, COVID-19 testing, immigration quarantine, profiling and questioning. We share a few of these individual stories here.

Krystal (they/them)

Krystal, a young Jamaican-born transgender woman, requested help from Rainbow Railroad in January of 2020. Growing up, Krystal faced seemingly endless harassment and discrimination in their community as a result of their gender expression and perceived sexual orientation by men who thought they were too “effeminate”. Krystal was living on the streets and couchsurfing in impoverished neighbourhoods in Jamaica as a result of this discrimination. While they were momentarily able to find work to help them support themselves, they were fired because they are LGBTQI+.

When Krystal was just 19 years old, they were attacked by a neighbour who, in a fit of rage, threw a pot of boiling water in their face. This attack left severe burns on Krystal's body, and when they went to the police for help, they failed to protect Krystal and did not file criminal charges against their attacker. Unfortunately, this was not the only attack of this nature that Krystal survived. Krystal was also attacked by a friend who, after finding out that Krystal was LGBTQI+, burned Krystal with hot oil – a painful reminder of the previous attack they survived.

Krystal's situation became only more precarious when someone began blackmailing them by sending pictures of them to community members and outing them as LGBTQI+. These pictures made their way to Krystal's family, and eventually to violent members of their community who threatened Krystal and their family. In 2020, these people stormed Krystal's godmother's home and murdered her as well as their brother. Krystal fled and hid in a guesthouse, but was found and narrowly survived being murdered.

Rainbow Railroad provided Krystal with finances and temporary safe shelter in the aftermath of these vicious attacks. Krystal's caseworker worked with them to create plans for evacuation. Despite the barriers related to travel during a global pandemic, we knew Krystal's only hope for survival was escape.

Krystal is now living safely in a country in Western Europe, and is being provided with support by local organizations who are leading them through the process of filing for protection and starting their new life. Krystal wants to further their education and find ways to give back to the LGBTQI+ community around the world.



“In my eyes, Rainbow Railroad is my guardian angel.” – Krystal

Mohammed (he/him)

For security reasons we can't use this person's real name or photo.

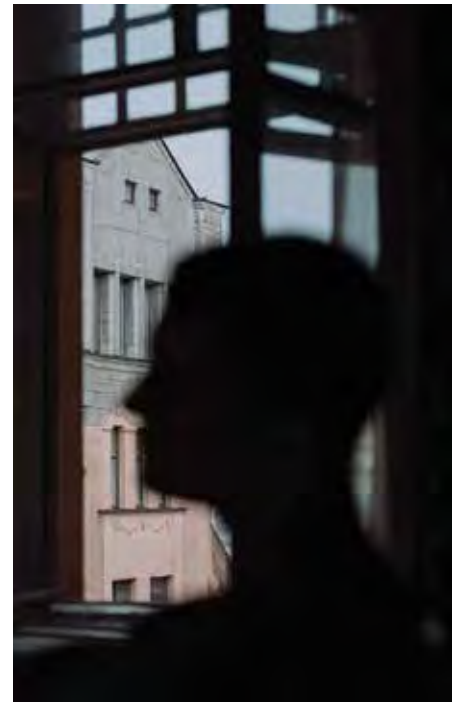
Mohammed is a bisexual cis-gendered Egyptian-born male. Mohammed's family raised him in a deeply homophobic environment. In Mohammed's youth, he realized he was bisexual. As he questioned his sexuality, he also questioned the religion he'd been raised with, and decided that he would be an atheist.

Mohammed recalls the time when his parents found out he was bisexual.

"They did everything in their ability to destroy me. I was tied to a tree and whipped badly all over my body for days. They took all the money I made and kicked me out of the house and then they talked to a relative of ours who is a police officer who had me arrested. I was tortured in prison for 25 days."

After being released from prison, Mohammed was forced to live under his parents supervision. In early 2020, Rainbow Railroad assessed Mohammed's situation and determined that he needed to immediately move away from his parents and find a place to hide out while options for resettlement were explored. After providing Mohammed with financial and logistical support, the team researched options for him. Eventually, after months of waiting for border closures to lift, Mohammed was finally approved for travel and was relocated to Germany where he claimed asylum.

In France, Mohammed is finally finding freedom.



"After I felt the pleasure of freedom, I no longer wanted anything from the world" - Mohammed

Miremba (they/them) and Kisakye (he/him, child)

Miremba is a queer, non-binary Ugandan who requested help for themselves and their genderqueer son, Kisakye.

Miremba is an LGBTQI+ activist and artist. They describe their art as being centred around “changing the narrative and normalizing our queer realities by promoting authenticity.” Because of this, in Uganda they were, in their own words, “vulnerable and subject to unprotected attacks.” Miremba faced many instances of harassment and police brutality; they were arrested numerous times as a result of their work, and the police threatened to add them to a national blacklist of LGBTQI+ activists.

Miremba fought for years to attempt to change their birth name in order to both affirm their identity and protect themselves from the online threats made against them as a result of their activism. Miremba was subjected to tremendous queerphobia and bureaucratic road-blocks in doing so.

Miremba has also faced harassment at the hands of their family. Miremba had their child with a man who was not involved in their life until finding out that Miremba is queer. When he found out, he threatened Miremba's life, and attempted to forcibly take Kisakye into his care; Kisakye's father is still unaware that he is gender queer.

In an effort to protect themselves and their son, Miremba reached out to Rainbow Railroad in February of 2020. Despite fighting for their rights and attempting to support their child, there was no way to do so safely in Uganda.

Rainbow Railroad worked with Miremba to develop a plan as there were no immediate options for permanent resettlement to a safer final destination for them at the time. Working together, we decided we would help facilitate relocation to South Africa, where they could avoid the violence of their child's father, the police and online harassers.

Miremba and their son are now in South Africa. They still face challenges and risks in South Africa, but are afforded more legal protections than at home in Uganda. South Africa has marriage equality, gender affirming policies and constitutional and statutory protections for LGBTQI+ people that are the most progressive on the continent. However, despite these protections, there is significant community level harassment and discrimination against the LGBTQI+ community, in particular against LGBTQI+ migrants who are increasingly fleeing to South Africa from countries in west and east Africa that criminalize LGBTQI+ people.



While waiting for future opportunities to potentially find a permanent and safer home, Miremba has been working hard to create a stable environment for Kisakye. They are both in school, and Miremba is supporting Kisakye's gender explorations as they navigate their youth.

Miremba is grateful that they are no longer in Uganda, and hopeful that they will find a future where they can both be fully themselves.



Advocating for Systemic Change

In addition to our direct life-saving work, we are working towards systemic change.

In 2020, Rainbow Railroad advocated on multiple fronts in Canada, the U.S. and globally to secure **more pathways to safety for LGBTQI+ people and abolish repressive laws that persecute LGBTQI+ individuals around the world**. Here are a few of our key advocacy activities from 2020.

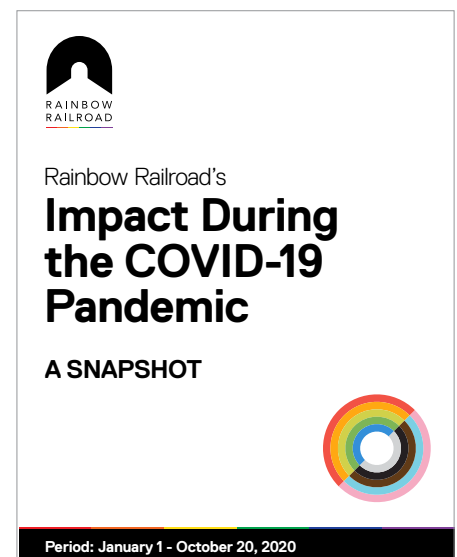
Ensuring the Refugee and Asylum System was Maintained Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, our ability to relocate people across borders was suddenly severely affected. At the same time, we saw how LGBTQI+ populations around the world were being disproportionately impacted. Through reviewing existing research, analyzing our own internal data and interviewing human rights defenders around the world, we developed **four key recommendations for policy-makers** to ensure that the refugee system remained intact throughout the pandemic:

1. Uphold the right of asylum;
2. Resume the resettlement of LGBTQI+ refugees;
3. Release LGBTQI+ asylum seekers being held in detention centres;
4. Increase resources dedicated to supporting LGBTQI+ refugees.

Supporting Increased International Development Assistance to Global LGBTQI+ Human Rights Defenders

In 2020, Rainbow Railroad continued our ongoing partnership with The Dignity Network—a coalition of civil society organizations across Canada supporting LGBTQI+ rights—in order to secure greater developmental assistance for human rights defenders globally fighting for LGBTQI+ equality. In 2020, the \$10 million **Act Together for Inclusion Fund** was made fully operational by the Government of Canada, with the goal of providing greater support for advancing the human rights of LGBTQI+ people internationally. In 2021, this money will be disbursed to Canadian organizations and global south partners to support the international movement for LGBTQI+ equality.





Advocating for a Policy for LGBTQI+ internally Displaced Persons

In 2020, we met with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to discuss developing a partnership to urgently resettle human rights defenders and other at-risk LGBTQI+ individuals facing imminent danger. Making progress on this front is important because often key LGBTQI+ human rights defenders are threatened with extreme risks to their person because of public stances they take. Ensuring their safety as key individuals in the international movement for LGBTQI+ equality is a strategic priority. Currently, we are in talks with IRCC to be designated as a referring partner for Canada's Urgent Protection Program, which provides rapid resettlement for refugees in urgent need of protection in cases of political or social crisis, such as high-profile human rights defenders, journalists or dissidents. We are continuing discussions with IRCC to formalize this relationship.



US Presidential Election

In 2020, the United States faced a Presidential election with far-ranging consequences for our work. Rainbow Railroad was prepared to continue our activities in the United States, whether Biden or Trump won. As a result of the groundwork we laid in 2020 building our network in the U.S. and preparing for the results of the election, we are now undertaking more advocacy than ever in the United States to find more pathways to safety for LGBTQI+ people.



Our Supporters, Volunteers and Financial Statements

Salah Bachir

Salah Bachir is a tireless champion for equality, philanthropy, charity, and the arts. His involvement and passion for Rainbow Railroad run deep and are personal.

As an immigrant from Lebanon who came to Canada in 1965, when he was just 10 years old, the mission of Rainbow Railroad personally resonates with him.

In 2019, Salah created 'The Gospel Brunch,' a fabulous annual weekend event that has resulted in almost \$200,000 raised for Rainbow Railroad's mission.

We could not do our work without supporters like Salah and his partner Jacob Yerex. Salah shared some thoughts with us about why he's involved with Rainbow Railroad:

Why do you support Rainbow Railroad?

I believe in human rights. It's that simple. Rainbow Railroad aligns with my values and principles and what I've stood for my whole life: to protect those who are vulnerable to persecution just because of who they are.

How did COVID-19 Impact your support of Rainbow Railroad?

It was a tough year for everybody. And COVID didn't mitigate the risk to marginalized communities – in fact, it increased it. In countries where LGBTQI+ people are denied basic rights – like access to healthcare – COVID only increases the threat that LGBTQI+ people are experiencing globally.

Continuing to support Rainbow Railroad and hosting the Gospel Brunch digitally in 2020 meant that we could quite literally help to save lives.

Why should others join you in supporting Rainbow Railroad?

It's a question of human rights – not just gay rights.



"It's a question of human rights – not just gay rights."

My partner Jacob and I support Rainbow Railroad, as we support other healthcare organizations, or support Human Rights Watch. For us, it's about principles.

Like us, Rainbow Railroad believes that nobody should experience violence or displacement simply by being who they are or loving who they love. But until such a day comes where this is a reality around the world, Rainbow Railroad's work is necessary – and we encourage others to support them as we have.

Canada's Drag Race

The support of Drag performers has been a fundamental and important part of Rainbow Railroad's organization, its mission, and our organization's supporter culture.

In 2020, Rainbow Railroad received a unique and special opportunity – our organization was profiled on *Canada's Drag Race* during the makeover challenge episode. Five newcomers were put in drag by the top five competitors on the season. The contestants shared their stories and raised important awareness about Rainbow Railroad's cause, leading to a spike in new followers and supporters from around the world.

Scarlett BoBo's Support

Scarlett participated in the *Canada's Drag Race* makeover challenge and placed top three in the season. They have helped raise tens of thousands of dollars for our mission through partnerships with Absolut Vodka and other organizations. Hear from Scarlett on why Rainbow Railroad matters to them:

Why do you support Rainbow Railroad?

Rainbow Railroad has been and will always be my charity of choice because of the work they do. The scariest thing in the world to me is not being able to be your authentic self; to be persecuted for loving who you love. I first became involved with Rainbow Railroad at a party. A friend of mine put on two fundraising events, and there were people there from Rainbow Railroad speaking. Listening to their stories, I became inspired to help.

Why should others join you in supporting Rainbow Railroad?

I think directly helping people is one of the most rewarding and incredible things anybody can do. If you want to do good, then put your money where your mouth is! While helping somebody escape persecution requires effort and funds, it's the least we can do to help LGBTQI+ people around the world live without fear and authentically.



"The scariest thing in the world to me is not being able to be your authentic self."

Canada

\$100,000+

Labatt
Estate of Donald Reid
The Lawrence Schafer Foundation
TD Bank Group

\$50,000-\$99,999

La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso
Love Good Fats
Shaw Communications &
Pride@Shaw*

\$25,000-\$49,999

Air Canada
Salah Bachir & Jacob Yerex
Andrew Beckerman
John King
Meredith Heron Design
Steven Spencer
Tweed Collective / Canopy
Growth Corp.

\$10,000-\$24,999

Aurora Cannabis
Bell Canada
Blaseball Cares
Robert Brews
Circle Acts
Corby Spirit and Wine
Andrew Delaware
Economical Insurance
Andrew Gillespie
Parimal Gosai & Hasheel Lodhia
H&M
Donald F. Hunter Charitable
Foundation
K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation
Kraft Heinz Canada
Jeffry Myers
New Century Charitable Foundation
Mark Pratt
The Pride and Remembrance
Foundation
Patricia Rozema
Melanie & Dr. Eric Semlacher
Simply Nailogical
Andrew Swart & Michael Sacke
Keith Brian Tomasson
Myron Wells & Michael Zaranyik*

\$5,000-\$9,999

Achievers PROUD*
Michael & Keith Battista
BMO
Scott Brown
Richard Calvert
Canadian Tire Corporation
Clench House Foundation
Collective Arts Brewing &
Tim Singleton
Fairweather Brewing Company
The Farmhouse Creative Labs
Adam Fernandes
Caleb Goodman
Hone Capital Corporation
Larry Hughsam
Karim Ladak
Bruce Lawson
Mantella Corporation
Martha McCain
John McNain
Jordan Merkur & Ivan Joya Gonzalez
Ian Nordheimer
Jamie & Dean Powers
Joel Rotstein & Frank Chester
Glenn L. Smith
Ross Slater & Wayne Smith, Reach
Capabilities Inc. †
Douglas Stollery Fund at Edmonton
Community Foundation
TELUS & Employees*
Toronto Gay Men's Literature &
Arts Salon (TGMLAS)*
Unifor Local 1285
Waratah Investments

\$1,000-\$4,999

180 Smoke
2414656 Ontario Inc.
Michelle Albert & Denis Roy
David Alexander & Paul McKinnon
Aloris Mercantile Corporation
Peggy Altherr
Connie & David Anderson
John Andru
Jamie Angell
Richard Arbeiter
Bar Reyna
Guy Beaudin
Antoine Belaieff
Bent Beauty Supreme
Trent Berry
Daniel Berube
Black Spoke Collective
S.M. Blair Family Foundation

Jonathon Borland
Alex Borovoy
Taylor Bos
John Brewster
Ray Brillinger & Cy Hack Fund
Michael & Patricia Bronskill
Ashley Burns
CAAT Pension Plan
The Cabinet Salon
Mike Callaghan
Camunda
Canaccord Genuity
Alberto Casses
Rachele Cavagna
Gunjan Chandok
Linda Chen
Rahim Chunara
CIBC
Cameron Clark
Brian Clarkin
Jamieson Cochrane
Jason Cochrane
Andrew Collins
Michael Collins
Erin Conway
Rachel Courey
Robert Cramer
David Crawford
Trevor Cull
David Da Silva
Ed & Margaret DaCosta
Michael Daniels & Al Ramsay
Richard Davidson
Randall Dawson & Rudy Ticzon
Erik Deneve
Vincent Deslandes
Jason Doolan
Downtown Soccer Toronto
Tim Dueck
Scott Duffy
Anthony Dunn
Victor Dwyer
Hayley Elsaesser Fas
The Edith & Bernard Ennis
Foundation
Ramon Estevez
Fairlawn Avenue United Church
John Farrell & François Leclair
Fasken & Employees*
Beth Fischer
Dan Flanagan & Stephen Calnen
Flavelle Family Foundation
Joseph Flessa
Frontrunners & Employees*
Romeo Gagnon

Berns Galloway	Matthew Morgan & Casey Roswell	Jason Stone
The Peter Gilgan Foundation	Gary Moriarty	Craig & Mark Stumpf-Allen
Golden Gate	Jarom Moriyama-Bondar	Dale Sturges
Daniel-Robert Gooch	Adam Morrison & James Owen	Gregory Taylor
A.J. Goulding	Curtis Murphy	James & Judith Thiessen
Peter Graham	Michael Murphy & Shane Small	June Thompson & Terri Holizki
Groundswell Group	Jana Mutch	Jill Tinmouth & Dianne Davis
Aidan Grove-White & Chad Story	Rosanna Nardi	Tory's LLP
Aaron Hall	Larry Nevard	John Tossell
George L. Hall	Katie O'Donovan	Tucows
Benjamin Hartung	Pablo's Mecenat	Ian Turner
Bennett Haynen	Devan Paillet	Unifor Local 2002
HeartStrong Tattoo	Greg Parsons	Marinus Van Vliet
Gareth Henry	Penguin Random House Canada	Robert Vanderheyden McKay
HGS	Perkins & Will	Anne-Marie Vanier
Eleanor Howell	Mélinda Pierre-Paul Cardinal	C. Veira
Peter Husar	Erin Pim	Frank Vetere
Steven Hutton	Barry Plant	Zachary Vito*
Andrew Innes & Donald Watson	Matthias Platz	Trinh Vu
Rick Innis	The Point Tent and Trailer Resort	Chris Walasek
James Insell	Kimahli Powell	Leroy Wall
Mark Irvine	Scott Powell & Kirk Hill Foundation	Edward Wang
Richard Isaac	Provincial Employees Community	Glen Watson
Thomas L. Jackson	Services Fund	Wealthsimple Toronto Office
Robert Juhasz	Brian Provini	David Webster
Justin Keddy	Shirley Pushelberg	Peter Weiss & Michael Sweeney
Douglas Kerr & Michael Went	Anthony Quintieri	Alexander Wichmann
Blair Kissack	Cecilia Ramos	Mark Wilson
Brent Knowles	Simon Raphael	Rodey Wing
Philip Kocev	Paul Ray	Sandra Wong
Dario Kosarac	RBC Foundation	WPS
Dr. Colin Kovacs	Jason Reynolds	Allen Yi & Marta Mussa-Calecas
La Senza Canada	Heather Richardson	Nora Young
R&M Lang Foundation	Rowena Ridout	Zdarsco, Inc.
League Inc.	Stephen & Geoffrey Robards	Hannah Zimmering
Doug Lee	Chad Roberts	Ryan Zimmerman
Tanya Lee & John Torrey	Ann Rosenfield	Zubas + Associates
Sender Liberman	Martine Rothblatt	Employment Lawyers
Frank Lowery	Royal City Tree Care	Anonymous (4)
Niklas Lubczynski	Anthony Ryan	
Richard Lyle	E. Ann Saddlemyer	
K. Jason MacIntyre	Joseph Salvador Ferrer & Juan Carlos	
Andrew Mahon Foundation Roy	Fernandez	
Male	Brian Sambourne & Richard Isaac	
Manulife	Peter Scargall	
Carole Marshall	Inacio Schiller	
Russell Mathew & Scott Ferguson	Kevin Schultz	
David Maxwell	Scotiabank	
Paul McFarlane	Rupen Seoni	
Keri McKittrick	Paul Sereda	
Richard McLellan	Ben Skelton	
Jennifer McNenly*	John Soer	
Rick Mercer & Gerald Lunz	Sour Puss	
Metrolinx	Bruce Edward Southcott	
David Moore	StackAdapt	
	Martin Sterling	

* = includes fundraised amounts

† = includes in-kind support

USA

\$50,000-\$99,999

The Lefkowsky Family Foundation

\$25,000-\$49,999

David Blatt & David Moore
GLBT Fund of America
Chris Melberger & Friends*

\$10,000-\$24,999

Lawrence Bennett
Body Electric Sacred Brothers' Circle*
Boucher Charitable Gift Fund
Anthony De Filippis*
Jonah Houts
A. Jackson Neighbor Foundation
David Lapham & Clark Mitchell
Elaine M. Lawson Fund
Reginald Lewis
Robin Lord Taylor & Richard DiBella
Daniel Mallory
Marti Morfitt & Michael Wright
Qatalyst Partners
The Trade Desk
Diana Young

\$5,000-\$9,999

ADP Foundation
Tone & Daniel Assjer Meisel
Andrew Beckerman
Berger Family Foundation, Inc.
Walter Cain & Paulo Ribeiro
Timothy Dosch
Eli Lilly and Company
Teresa Emans
John Flippen
Gray Franke
Charles Garrido Jr. & Jason Mark Roberts
Howard Hahn
Timothy Kirsch
Johannes Leonardo
Peter Mensch & Anita Britton
Clark Pellett & Robert Kohl
Norman Sand ield
The SnapPride & Ally Community at Snap Inc.
Stonewall Sports Chicago
Tie the Knot
Timex
Charles Tucker
John Tucker
Robert L. Tulini

Waukegan Friends Corporation
George Yabu & Glenn Pushelberg
Anonymous (1)

\$1,000-\$4,999

Donovan Akita
Qasim Ali
Jay Allen
Timothy Allen
Pamela Aquino*
Michael Arceneaux
Lisa Archer & Robert Pfister
Jesse Audet
Richard Ballard & Alexandra Dove
Family Fund
Mandy & Marty Barrack
Mabel Ann Baylon
Donald Bacigalupi & Dan Feder
Georgi Balinov
Stephen Bardfield
Kent Belden & Dr. Louis Re
Nick Braaten & Jason Kudrna
Erik & Jennifer Brady
Salome Brant
Jason Buranen
Kathryn Burlingham
Caleb Burson
Burton Avenue Music
Kevin Carney
Anthony Carter & Kris Wiley
Maxine & Irving Castle Foundation
Lukas Ceha
Centaur Motorcycle Club of Virginia
Jason Chan
Howard Clauser
Maurice & Tracy Clifton
Copper Hill Entertainment
Emily Coutts*
Crank Gameplays
Jason Crittenden
Kathryn Crutchfield
Jack Davis
Pasquale De Martino
Michael DeFilippis
Tony DeLano
The Doyle Dreiling and Jim Coakley Fund
Martin Duberman
Steven Eiseman
Elder California Foundation
Thea Ellis
Fantastic Fund of the Sacramento Region Community Foundation
Ricky & Tyler Faulk

Lawrence Flamholtz
Jason Fleming
Stephen Fletcher
Free Association
Gill Foundation
Raymond Goetz
Larry Gross & Scott Tucker
Richard Guidelli
Roy Hage
Patricia Harry
Sequoia Hartman
Telaireus Herrin
Michael Horvich
Sarah Hu
Jessica Ibbitson
David Jabs
Christopher Jenkinson
Joseph & Edna Josephson Institute of Ethics
Jaynor Kahal*
Aaron Kalb
Donald Katz & Leslie Larson
Brendan Kelly*
Brian Kelly
George David Kerlick
Bruce Koff & Mitchell Channon
Kolbe Corp.†
Victoria Kolbe
Fedor Korotkov
Donald Langworthy
Albert Lepage
The Loring Wolcott & Coolidge Charitable Trust, LLC
Kelly Lynch
Mollie Magnuson
Lazaro Mancilla
Ernest March
Travis Marquette
Jessica Marshall
William Matis
Stacey Mcculloch
Richard McCune
Yvette McDonald
The McEwen-Fial Family Fund
Craig Meadows-Stein
The MeherBaba Fund
MetLife Services and Solutions, LLC.
Microsoft & Employees*
John Miller
Justin Morgan
Todd Nash
Patrick North & North Travel Service Inc.
James Nutter & Philip Burgess
Brian O'Donnell
Thomas O'Toole

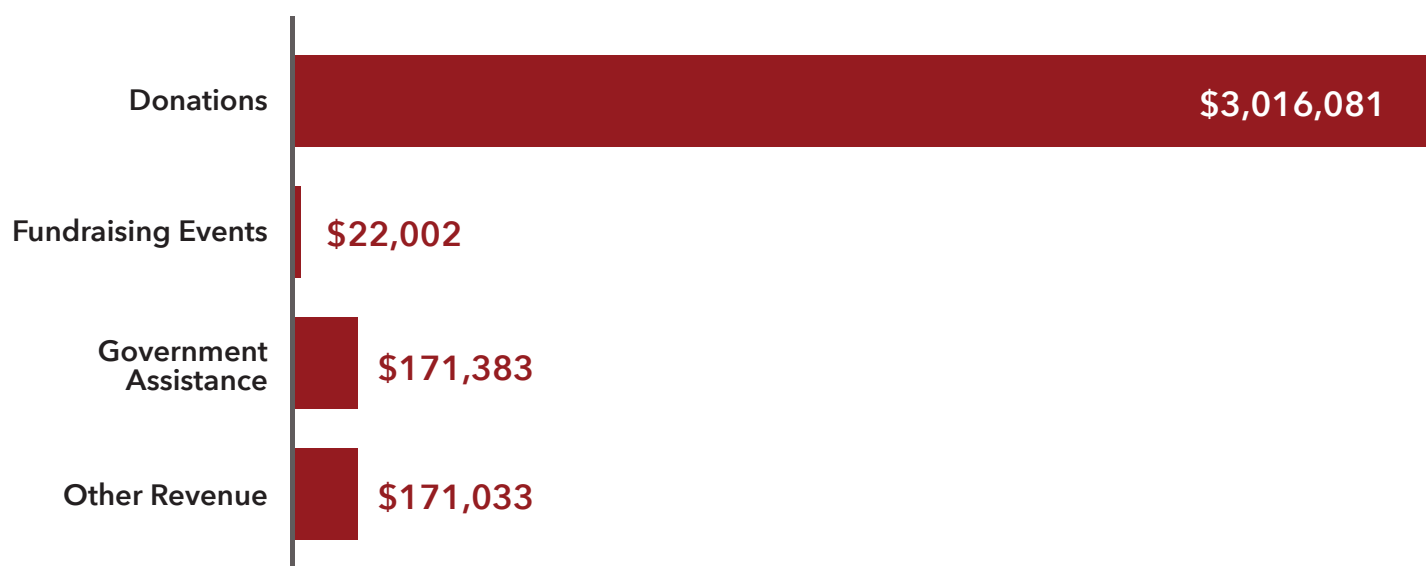
Joshua Paolini
 Paribas USA
 Justin Patton
 James Pelletier
 Plantronics & Employees*
 Greg Porter & James Townsend
 Red Hat's PRIDE Committee
 John Reed
 Reiss/King Family Fund
 Daniel Robbins
 The Robertson Powell Foundation
 Colton Saenz
 Christopher Schlesinger &
 Albert Bussink
 Donald Schmidgall
 Eric Schuman
 Bea Schutz
 Steve Schwartzberg
 Norman Scrivner
 Patrick Sessler
 Joan Shafran & Rob Haimes
 Tim Shea
 Shoujo Kageki Revue Starlight
 Debra Sikanas & Russell Radford
 Meggin Simon
 Pam Simpson
 David Skeist
 John Steffens
 Carl H. Stiehl
 Stockman Family Fund
 Gregory Sutphin
 James Sutton
 John Swaner
 Carl Taplin
 Steven Thompson
 John Throckmorton
 Ryan Uhlenkott
 Robert Ulrich
 Unwin Moore Children's Voice
 Fund of the Community
 Foundation of
 Broward
 Joe Vachon
 Thomas Valenti
 Johnny Valeriote
 David van Buskirk
 Jerre van den Bent
 Keaton Vaughn
 Village West Design
 Jeremy Vogel
 Andrew Wachtfogel
 Ray Wallach
 Michael Wasserman
 Mark Webster
 John H. (Doc) Willoughby &
 Stephen Brockman

Jonathan Yeo
 Christian Yoder & Jonathan Miller
 The Andrew D. Zacks Foundation
 Eli Zal
 Peter Zawel
 Nolan Zimmerman
 Anonymous (3)

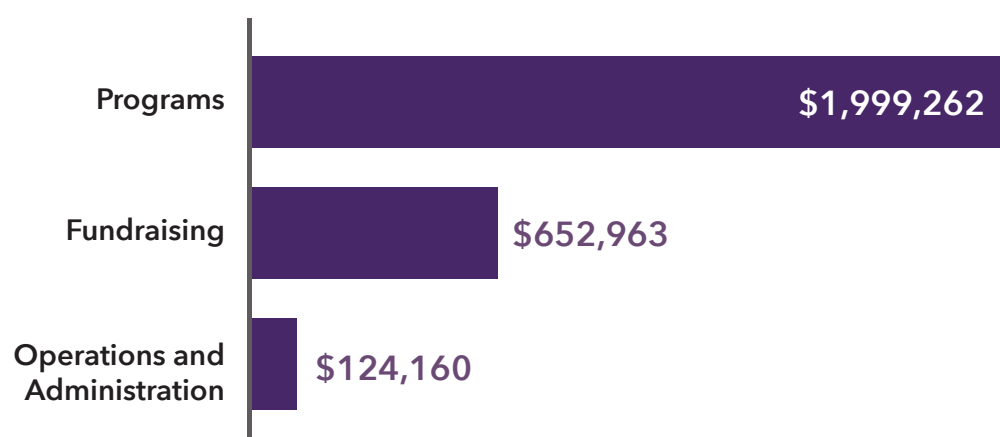


* = includes fundraised amounts
 † = includes in-kind support

Statement of Operations and Net Assets Canada



Revenue: \$3,380,499 CDN



Expenses - \$2,776,385 CDN

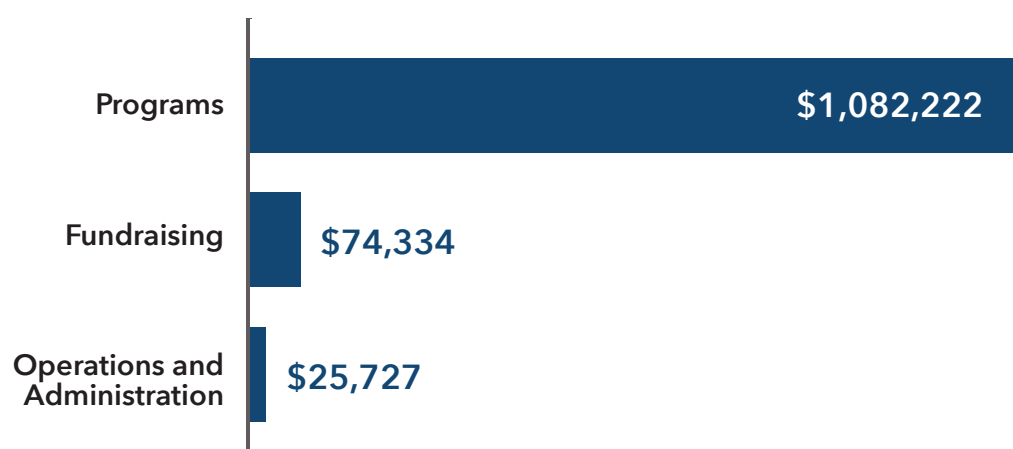
Excess in Revenue over Expenses: \$604,114 CDN

Year ended December 31, 2020

Statement of Operations and Net Assets USA



Revenue: \$1, 298,507 USD



Expenses - \$1,182,283 USD

Excess in Revenue over Expenses: \$116,224 USD

Year ended December 31, 2020

Our Staff and Board Thanks to our 2020 Volunteers

Rainbow Railroad Staff

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Devon Matthews, *Director of Programs*
Sandi Baker, *Manager of Finance*
Dane Bland, *Director of Philanthropy*
Kathryn Busch, *Development Officer*
Adriana Espinosa, *Program Officer*
Scott Ferguson, *Development Officer*
Ashton Giese, *Development Officer*
Jordan Harding, *Bookkeeper*
Gareth Henry, *Program Officer*
Hazim Ismail, *Program Officer*
Monique Sereneo, *Program Officer*
Eric Wright, *Communications Officer*
Lauren Young, *Program Officer*

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Ann Rosenfield, *Vice-Chair*
Anne-Marie Vanier, *Secretary*
Ian Gregoire, *Treasurer*
David Dubrovsky
Karen Haycox
Krista Hill
Bruce Koff
John McNain
Michael Murphy
Al Ramsay
Andrew Swart

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Alex Lapukhin

Middle East and North Africa Team

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Ehab Jaber
Youssef Kamar

South Central Asia Team

Haran Vijayanathan

Sub-saharan Africa Team

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Elliot Fonarev
Bernard Mumuluh
Josh Scheinert
Giancarlo Volpe
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Sid Sengupta
Barry Trentham
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Douglas Watkins
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Additional Volunteers

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Jennifer Coffey
Jordan Crocker
Amir Ghoreshi
Lisa Hipgrave
Paige Maclean
Alyssa Manning
Khaleed Mawji
May Tartoussy
Sophie Zhong

Settlement Teams

Day Settlement Team
Team Capital One

Team Glowing Hearts Team Indigo
Team Malaja
Team New Start
Team Rahim and Amir Team
Rainbow Routes
Team Sumayya
Team Three
Team Uhuru
Team Umoja
Team Welcome
Team York
Team YYZ

All Aboard USA Committee

Kent Belden
Anthony DeFilippis
Timothy Dosch
David Dubrovsky
Caleb Goodman
Cameron Clark
Karen Haycox
Krista Hill
Jessica Ibbitson
Jon Ilani & Mike Ryals
Stuart Keeler
Brian Kelly
Bruce Koff
Michael Murphy
Patrick Sessler
Adam Sherkin
Timothy Warmath
Doc Willoughby & Stephen Brockman

All Aboard Canada Committee

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Michael Battista
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Caleb Goodman
Ian Gregorie
Chad Hale
Krista Hill
Larry Hughsam
Peter Husar & Ken Lindsay
Mark Kelly
John McNain
Al Ramsey
Ann Rosenfield
Andrew Swart
Myron Wells & Mike Zaranyik

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 Caribbean)
 ILGA World (International Lesbian,
 Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex
 Association)
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 Mark Kelly & Winston Griffith
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 Mitch Young



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