

Ethical Guidelines for an Inclusive and Affirmative Approach for Social Work Practice with LGBT+ Individuals

As part of the project

*Enhancing the Inclusivity of the LGBTI Community in Workplaces in
Lebanon*

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Introduction

Ethics is about how human beings treat each other and the ecosystem, and cover matters of rights, responsibilities and well-being (Banks, 2015). Professional ethics consists of principles that govern the behavior of an individual or a group of people in a specified setting or discipline (Immigration Advisers Authority (IAA), 2021). Social work ethics is considered to be a discipline-specific version of professional ethics that includes ethical considerations in addressing the attitudes, conduct, and responsibilities of social workers dealing with vulnerable populations. In this regard, and with the absence of a clear-cut contextualized code of conduct that guides social work practice with the LGBT+ individuals in Lebanon, the below set of guidelines were developed.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA) LGBT is an initialism that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (APA, 2015). The “LGB” refers to sexual orientation which is defined as an often-enduring pattern of emotional, romantic and/or sexual attractions that are either heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual (Bailey et al., 2016; APA, 2015). The “T” in LGBT stands for transgender or gender non-conforming, a term used for people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from the sex to which they were assigned at birth (APA, 2015; WordSense Dictionary, 2021a).

The term LGBT, as well as some of its common variants, does not exclusively refer to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. It acts as an umbrella term to cover all gender identities and sexual orientations (Shankle, 2006). The term LGBT may refer to people who are non-heterosexual or non-cisgender. To recognize this inclusion, a common variant, LGBTQ, adds the letter Q for those who identify as queer or are still questioning their gender or sexual identity. In some contexts, the extended initialism LGBTI is used to add intersex people (Maurice and Bowman, 1999). These two initialisms, LGBTQ and LGBTI, are sometimes combined to form the acronyms LGBTIQ or LGBT+ which encompass a wider spectrum of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) (WordSense Dictionary, 2021b). Thus, for the sake of consistency and inclusivity, the term LGBT+ individuals will be used throughout this guide to refer to all individuals belonging to this particular group.

Attitudes toward LGBT+ individuals vary depending on the cultural and social context in which those individuals live (Ayhan et al., 2019). In some societies and communities, non-heterosexual orientations have been met with some degree of tolerance. For example, in the United States and Western Europe in the 1970s, significant changes took place in the public sphere with the beginning of the gay and lesbian movement. As a result, homosexuality was removed from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) classification of mental disorders in 1973 (Drescher, 2015; Ayhan et al., 2019). Additionally, since the early 1990s, concerns about LGBT+ and related human rights violations have been repeatedly expressed by the United Nations human rights mechanisms (OHCHR, 2021a). Consequently, treaty bodies have been established, and special

rapporteurs and experts have been appointed to monitor states' compliance with international human rights treaties concerning sexual orientation and gender identity (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2018; 2021a)

Conversely, in many Middle Eastern societies, including Lebanon, LGBT+ individuals have been discredited and perceived as unhealthy compared to other persons (Ayhan et al., 2019). Negative attitudes toward these individuals stem from cultural and social norms (Ayhan et al., 2019). In some contexts, LGBT+ individuals face appalling human rights violations due to deeply instilled homophobic and transphobic attitudes exacerbated with the absence of adequate legal protection against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (OHCHR), 2021a).

Accordingly, the individuals belonging to this group are discriminated against and experience numerous barriers and limitations with regards to accessing healthcare services, employment, education, and legal protection (Dessel and Rodenberg, 2017; Kates et al., 2018; Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2020; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2012). Inequitable access to healthcare along with stigmatization and denial of care, puts members of the LGBT+ community at an increased risk of experiencing poor health outcomes (Kates et al., 2018; ODPHP, 2020; AHRQ, 2012). Furthermore, the lack of comprehensive, inclusive and protective labor legislations seriously exposes LGBT+ individuals to discrimination in the workplace (Bailinson, Decherd, Ellsworth & Guttman, 2020). In educational settings, LGBT+ individuals experience stigma and discrimination by means of bullying, harassment, and exclusion. Such hostile environments negatively affect their career growth as well as their personal and professional development (Human Rights Watch, 2016; OHCHR, 2021b; Johns, Poteat, Horn and Kosciw, 2019).

Hence, combating discrimination, violence, and marginalization against LGBT+ individuals requires protective policies especially laws based on an integrated and comprehensive approach. This in turn guarantees the respect of their human dignity and rights and ensures their access to education, employment, healthcare, and social services.

Social workers can play a significant role in advancing this goal as key allies in the vital efforts to ensure wellness, safety, and equity for all LGBT+ individuals (Dessel and Rodenberg, 2017; Miller et al., 2017). Indeed, the mission of the social work profession emanates from a set of core values focused on social justice, dignity and worth of the individual, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence (Deering, 2020). In this order, and according to the social work code of ethics, one of the primary objectives of this mission is to “enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the [...] empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (NASW, 2018, p.1). Therefore, social workers are held responsible for challenging social injustice, being aware and respectful of diversity and pursuing social change on behalf of oppressed populations such as

LGBT+ individuals (Dessel and Rodenberg, 2017; Logie, Bridge and Bridge, 2007; NASW, 2018; Van Soest, 1996). In respect of the mission of social work, the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) practice standards require social workers to practice without discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Dessel and Rodenberg, 2017).

On the other hand, emphasizing the profession's ethical standards and values of social justice constitutes a core obligation for social work educators, putting them in a unique position to equip and prepare future social workers with the essential skills and approach to address LGBT+ issues (Arney, 2012; Winkler, 2018). This crucial role necessitates the integration of LGBT+ perspectives and experiences into the curriculum. Additionally, social work academics are responsible for promoting a safe place for the LGBT+ community in the educational institutions. These initiatives and efforts can serve to increase consideration, visibility, and representation of LGBT+ individuals and groups in social work education and practice (Winkler, 2018).

However, the practice approach of certain social work students and practitioners towards LGBT+ individuals does not seem to be consistent with the principles and values of their profession. In fact, biases and discrimination against LGBT+ individuals exist ~~within the social work profession~~ due to different levels of homophobic perceptions (Logie, Bridge and Bridge, 2007). These attitudes and beliefs combined with limited knowledge of LGBT+ issues could have serious limitations and hindrances on social workers' ability to intervene with LGBT+ beneficiaries (Logie, Bridge and Bridge, 2007; (Hylton, 2005; Gezinski, 2009). Consequently, it could prevent high quality service delivery and lead to detrimental effects on the health and wellbeing of the concerned groups (Morrison and L'heureux, 2001; Logie, Bridge and Bridge, 2007).

Based on the above-mentioned risks and limitations, it is imperative that social work practitioners and academics address their different biases in order to prevent perpetuating the oppression and further marginalizing the LGBT+ individuals (Berkman and Zinberg, 1997). Having a real concern about this issue, the Social Workers' Syndicate in Lebanon (SWSL), in collaboration with SIDC found it necessary to develop a guide for inclusive and affirmative practice with LGBT+ individuals, and make it available to all actors involved in social work education and practice.

In fact, the Social Workers' Syndicate in Lebanon (SWSL) published in 2018 the first edition of the '*Code of Ethics of Social Workers in Lebanon*', which sets forth values and principles to guide social workers' professional conduct in Lebanon (Social Workers' Syndicate in Lebanon, 2018). The aim of the Code of Ethics serves four main purposes which consist of the following: 1- defining the guidelines of social work practice from an ethical perspective; 2- contributing to the adjustment and development of social workers' professional conduct based on ethical principles; 3- consolidating social workers' professional identity; 4- acting as an ethical reference for social workers in Lebanon. In addition, the code focuses on five core social work values (V): V.1- respect for inherent dignity and worth of persons; V.2- pursuit of social justice; V.3-integrity of

professional practice; V.4- confidentiality in professional practice; V.5- competence in professional practice. Overall, the *Code of Ethics of Social Workers in Lebanon* emphasizes the importance of providing services and attending to the needs of marginalized, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups.

The '*Code of Ethics of Social Workers in Lebanon*' represents a general code of conduct for social workers. However, it does not elaborate on specific guidelines concerning social work practice with vulnerable groups. Sections 3.1.1 Priority of beneficiaries' interest and section 3.8.2 Social action fall under the ethical duties and obligations of social workers; this code of ethics urges Lebanese social workers not to discriminate based on the beneficiaries' "sexual orientation" (Social Workers' Syndicate in Lebanon, 2018). Apart from the afore-mentioned sections, there are still no comprehensive ethical guidelines for affirmative and inclusive social work practice with LGBT+ individuals. Nonetheless, to be able to support members of this group in Lebanon, social workers need a specific set of knowledge, skills and ethical directives that enable them to adopt an inclusive methodology (SIDC KIP STUDY). Therefore, in accordance with the '*Code of Ethics of Social Workers in Lebanon*' and with the goal of developing an ethical dimension, the present guide aims to equip social work practitioners and academics with a tool to help them adopt an affirmative ethical approach towards the LGBT+ individuals.

This guide is developed in relation to the attitudes, perceptions and experiences of social workers using a participatory methodological approach based on qualitative data collected from various stakeholders, in combination with a review of international and local literature.

The international literature review was based on five global guidelines that addressed social work practice with LGBT+ individuals (Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) & Lambda Legal, 2015; Craig et al., 2016; National Association of Social Workers (NASW), 2014,; National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016, Poirier et al., 2014). Locally, only one study conducted in 2017 by SIDC was found which addresses the attitudes and perceptions of social workers with regards to LGBT+ individuals and community (SIDC, 2017). This scarcity of local literature led to address the gap by conducting qualitative data collection to explore the experiences and opinions of Lebanese social workers and educators about the challenges faced by LGBT+ individuals in Lebanon, the ethical concerns that need to be addressed, and the relevant content to integrate into the present guide.

The aforementioned qualitative data collection took place during July and August 2021, and consisted of two focus group discussions (FGD) that were conducted with two main stakeholders concerned by the subject: 1- social work practitioners working in NGOs, CSOs, ministries and at educational institutions (schools and universities); 2- academics and educators such as professors in social work practice. Six participants attended the FGD with practitioners, while six participants took part in the FGD with academics. The focus group guide consisted of a set of questions exploring the knowledge and perceptions of social workers towards the LGBT+ individuals, as

well as the barriers and challenges faced while providing services to this population in Lebanon. Furthermore, the focus group guide aimed at examining the perceived needed knowledge and skills of social workers to better support LGBT+ individuals with an ethical approach. The FGDs were recorded and transcribed to set the floor for thematic analysis. After coding, a qualitative matrix was developed comprising all main themes that emerged and was summarized and reported in the appropriate sections in this guide. The findings from this data collection will be referred to as: SIDC, 2021.

Based on the prementioned method of work, this guide is intended for Lebanese social workers as a contextualized reference that is relevant to the reality of LGBT+ individuals in Lebanon and the specificity of the practice of social work with this population, in this specific context. The present document is divided into three main sections: (I) The situation of LGBT+ individuals and ethical concerns of social workers in Lebanon, (II) Guidelines for an inclusive social work practice with LGBT+, and (III) Guidelines for an LGBT+ Affirmative Practice and Approach in Academic Institutions. In addition, and to respond to the needs expressed by social workers during the data collection, a set of related resources were annexed to this guide.

I- Situation of LGBT+ individuals and Ethical Concerns of Social Workers in Lebanon

Despite promising developments globally, LGBT+ individuals in Lebanon continue to endure stigma, discrimination, and persecution in various areas, relevant to healthcare, employment, legal, and educational settings (Nasr & Zeidan, 2015; Naal, Abboud, Harfoush & Mahmoud, 2019). This section will explore the attitudes and concerns of social workers towards the LGBT+ community.

The Impact of Discrimination on LGBT+ individuals in Lebanon

The existing literature on the Lebanese context sheds light on diverse challenges and struggles experienced by LGBT+ individuals.

Concerning the healthcare system in Lebanon, it is still functioning with a predominance of a heteronormative framework, leading to discrimination against LGBT+ individuals or those who do not identify as heterosexual (El-Kak, F 2010). According to a recent study aiming to examine the experiences of LGBT+ individuals within this system (Abboud et al., 2020), results revealed negative encounters witnessed by this population when accessing the needed services. These constraints are reflected by denial of care, unaffordable healthcare, harassment, stigma and discrimination. Similarly, the same study revealed LGBT+ patients' difficult experiences with healthcare, including discrimination, rejection, and breach of confidentiality. Additionally, other studies disclosed that healthcare providers' attitudes and perceptions towards LGBT+ patients

were more likely to be negative when compared to mental health providers who were more likely to show favorable attitudes and behaviors toward LGBT+ individuals (Naal H., et al 2019).

As for employment, arbitrary expulsion without compensation is the most common kind of violation experienced by homosexual men (Helem, 2017). Furthermore, due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, members of the LGBT+ community are sexually assaulted, mocked and denied employment opportunities (Wagner et al. 2013). Transgender women, for instance, face and continue to experience the highest levels of workplace discrimination as a result of discrepancies between their official documentation and gender self-presentation (Human Rights Watch, 2019).

Legally, Article 534 of the Lebanese Penal Code prohibits and criminalizes “any sexual relations that contradict the laws of nature” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2007; AFE and SRI, 2015). By its existence, such a legal text impedes the acceptance of this community within the larger society and the democratization path of Lebanon. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that this legal approach is accountable for blatant discrimination towards LGBT+ individuals by violating their basic human rights and legal principles related to investigative and criminal procedures (AFE and SRI, 2015). In fact, according to Article 534, LGBT+ individuals face two types of discrimination: first, the inability to file complaints about social harassment and seek protection as it results in the denunciation of their sexual orientation or gender identity which is criminalized by law, and second, harassment and discrimination by public law enforcement officers themselves.

Equally, educational and academic institutions witnessed marginalization of LGBT+ individuals (Helem, 2017). In particular, trans individuals struggle the most with bullying as in most cases they express their trans-identity in early teenage years (Helem, 2017). The lack of sexual education along with the presence of prejudices and misconceptions within the Lebanese educational curriculum aggravates LGBT+ individuals’ situation (LebMASH, 2016). The absence of anti-bullying and protective mechanisms at educational institutions leads to high rates of dropouts which might be the only security exit (Helem, 2017).

Attitudes and concerns of social workers

According to a study exploring the attitudes of social workers towards LGBT+ individuals conducted by SIDC in 2017 and the findings of recently implemented FGDs (SIDC, 2021), a number of social workers openly declared their complete understanding and acceptance of LGBT+ individuals. In fact, they reaffirm their belief that these individuals, like any other human being, have the right to choose their course in life. As such, they are opposed to all forms of discrimination and openly reach out to sexual minorities in need of social support.

However, and despite their respect and their adherence to the ethical code of conduct, some other social workers continue to experience conflict and ambivalence between their professional values

and their personal beliefs and convictions. Accordingly, SIDC (2017) shows that social workers held a negative opinion and unfavorable attitudes towards LGBT+ individuals, which prevented them from providing services to sexual minorities.

This same study and the recent qualitative data collection (SIDC, 2021) revealed that several factors play an important role in affecting social workers' perceptions, attitudes and readiness towards working with LGBT+ individuals. These factors are related to the cultural context, societal values, religious beliefs, educational background, lack of exposure to LGBT+ issues, and personal convictions. These concerns prevent social workers from providing LGBT+ individuals with their services out of fear for inadvertently stigmatizing and harming such individuals, leading to undesirable outcomes (SIDC, 2017; SIDC, 2021).

In fact, religion is considered to be one of the main factors in shaping both social workers' attitudes and perceptions towards LGBT+ individuals and impacting the legislation of civil laws in Lebanon (SIDC, 2017; Strenski, 2020; SIDC, 2021). According to literature, it became evident that cultural background has a direct effect on altering social workers' perspectives, willingness and ability to work with and support the LGBT+ community. The impact of cultural and religious beliefs has been highlighted, especially concerning the aforementioned Article 534 of the Lebanese Penal Code which is influenced by religious theologies (SIDC, 2017; Strenski, 2020). Therefore, since LGBT+ individuals are stigmatized and marginalized, social workers might be vigilant to work with them to avoid being stigmatized themselves (Kohut et al., 2013; Mohamed, 2015).

On the other hand, working with these groups in a tolerant environment plays a crucial role in their acceptance (SIDC, 2017). Indeed, social workers have acknowledged that their work experience has shaped their attitudes, beliefs and perceptions towards the LGBT+ community and has reflected on the professional principles (SIDC, 2017). As such, social workers who participated in the recent data collection claimed that working with LGBT+ individuals has helped them overcome misconceptions towards such individuals (SIDC, 2021). They also reported that having a welcoming and open work environment by itself was supportive and helpful in building a positive space in working with LGBT+ individuals, which in turn helps them adjust their preset beliefs and perceptions about this community (SIDC, 2017).

In the same vein and in spite of social workers' supportive personal convictions towards LGBT+ individuals, their level of knowledge can strongly influence their readiness and competence in intervening with such individuals. In fact, global evidence reveals that social workers who consider the training they have received as insufficient claimed to be moderately competent to serve LGBT+ people and their families (Logie, Bridge, & Bridge, 2007). Lebanese social workers interviewed by SIDC in 2017 and in 2021 also perceived educational programs as limited and inadequate in addressing LGBT+ individuals related issues. According to these respondents, no specific types of learning or trainings were offered to help social work students build and enhance their capacities to properly deal with the concerned individuals. As a result, they believed they were incompetent,

and they felt they lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to approach them (SIDC, 2017; SIDC, 2021).

Additionally, and in accordance with findings from the recent data collection, social workers expressed various needs to enable them to deliver inclusive and effective social work interventions with members of the LGBT+ community (SIDC, 2021). These include:

- Obtaining accurate and scientific LGBT+ related information through education and training which will equip social workers to become intellectually competent to address the multifaceted lives of LGBT+ individuals.
- Becoming more culturally and emotionally competent by being conscious of their attitudes and feelings about LGBT+ individuals, as well as recognizing the socially rooted personal biases toward this community. This also requires addressing homophobic and heterosexist belief systems, as well as understanding the coming out process and identity construction of LGBT+ persons.
- Understanding the social determinants of the LGBT+ community and receiving knowledge on legal matters and issues (article 534) will enable social workers to promote social justice and advocate for LGBT+ human rights by challenging injustice, oppression and discrimination

II- Guidelines for an inclusive social work practice with LGBT+ individuals

Guideline 1. Gaining a Better Understanding of LGBT+ Individuals

1.1. Social workers affirm and recognize that homosexual and bisexual orientations and non-gender conforming identities are not mental illnesses and that same-sex attractions, feelings, and behavior are normal variants of human sexuality.

Asserting and understanding that homosexuality has been declassified and de-pathologized as a mental health disorder by the Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Health Disorders (DSM) per the American Psychiatric Association (APA) is a key aspect for affirmative social work practice with the LGBT+ individuals.

1.2. Social workers recognize that efforts to change sexual orientation have been shown to be extremely harmful and are considered a form of oppression.

Sexual orientation change efforts on LGBT+ individuals violate the very tenets of social work profession and human rights. Respect, understanding, and empathy are integral traits in social work practice to help LGBT+ individuals achieve self-actualization. That is why, pressuring them to adjust to the existing social order is not advised.

1.3. Social workers strive to recognize the unique experiences of LGBT+ individuals.

LGBT+ beneficiaries have a specific culture that includes among other considerations, historical experiences, spiritual belief systems, individual and group oppression, adjustment styles, socioeconomic backgrounds, life processes, learning styles, worldviews and specific cultural customs and practices, definitions of and beliefs about wellness and illness or normality.

1.4. Social workers strive to differentiate between issues of sexual orientation and those of gender identity when working with LGBT+ beneficiaries.

Understanding the differences between gender identity, gender-related behavior, and sexual orientation is of utmost importance for social workers. In order to tailor interventions and services accordingly, it is imperative to acknowledge the varying issues that non-heteronormative individuals and gender non-conforming individuals face.

1.5. Social workers strive to understand how a person's homosexual or bisexual orientation and non-gender conforming identities may have an impact on his or her family of origin and the relationship with that family of origin.

Affirmative social work practice with LGBT+ requires a family-focused approach. This entails exploring and assessing LGBT+ families' beliefs, values and attitudes in order to deliver tailored psychosocial interventions to foster acceptance.

1.6. Social workers strive to understand the effects of stigma (i.e., prejudice, discrimination, and violence) and its various contextual manifestations in the lives of LGBT+ individuals.

Recognizing and acknowledging the negative experiences and biases that LGBT+ individuals endure are key to delivering effective interventions. Indeed, such experiences will contribute to various mental health challenges and have long lasting implications on the health and well-being of LGBT+ individuals.

1.7. Social workers are encouraged to enrich their knowledge and be specifically informed about homosexuality and bisexuality through continuing education, training, supervision, and consultation.

A broad range of knowledge and skills is called for in order to work effectively with LGBT+ beneficiaries. Relevant areas should be considered. They include but are not limited to multidimensional models of sexual orientation, mental health issues, LGBT+ identity development in a heteronormative society, effects of stigmatization, intersections of multiple personal, sexual and social identities, and unique career development for LGBT+ individuals.

Guideline 2. Conforming to an Inclusive and Non-Oppressive Practice and Welcoming Environment

2.1. Social workers should strive to assist LGBT+ individuals with empathy, objectivity, and impartiality.

By demonstrating cultural humility and continuously working on expanding their cultural knowledge and expertise, social workers will be able to provide effective social work interventions with the LGBT+ community.

2.2. Social workers must make sure to address or refer to LGBT+ individuals with pronouns that are consistent with their preferred gender identity without causing any form of stigma and discrimination.

Possessing and using specific knowledge about the LGBT+ individuals including inclusive language, terms and concepts that are used to address them is integral to making the concerned person feel respected and valued.

2.3. Social workers acknowledge that LGBT+ individuals have equal rights to healthcare, employment, education, and legal protection.

Recognizing that gross inequality combined with poverty constitute threats to human development. Social workers should always assess the various impact of external stressors and elements that influence LGBT+ lives in order to provide them with the necessary support and interventions.

2.4. Social workers are encouraged to create safe and friendly spaces free from stigma and discrimination.

It is necessary to establish a welcoming practice environment with positive written acknowledgments of LGBT+ individuals, such as non-discriminatory policies, information and resources that address their needs and concerns, and display visible logos and signs that communicate to the beneficiary that the practice environment is a safe place.

2.5. Social workers should strive to establish clear cut institutional protocols that would guide their decisions when it comes to providing necessary interventions with LGBT+ individuals.

Having clearly established rules and regulations in place for social work practice and interventions with LGBT+ individuals will facilitate the work of social workers. It is imperative to constantly revise these protocols.

Guideline 3. Promoting the Right to Self-Determination with Respect to Diversity

3.1. Social workers recognize that LGBT+ individuals have the right to be different

Understanding personal affinities and appreciating differing cultural practices, such as those practiced by LGBT+ community, facilitates social worker's commitment to an inclusive approach towards LGBT+ individuals.

3.2. Social workers strive to promote and protect LGBT+ rights to freely make decisions about their lives and express themselves without fear of retribution.

Social workers can work on rejecting and fighting practices and policies that violate the basic human rights of the LGBT+ community by fostering and building trusting relationships with the LGBT+ community.

3.3. Social workers recognize that their respect and promotion of the LGBT+ individuals' rights choices and decisions does not threaten the rights and interests of others.

Respecting and advancing the right of LGBT+ people to self-determination, as well as assisting them in identifying and clarifying their goals, is crucial

in social work practice. Promoting this principle does not threaten the rights and interest of others.

3.4. Social workers strive to raise awareness among LGBT+ individuals about their rights which empowers them to fully exercise these rights and prevent violations.

Enabling and empowering LGBT+ individuals to pursue the highest standards, choices and opportunities in life is an integral constitute of social advocacy and social action.

3.5. Social workers empower LGBT+ individuals to live in dignity to divert them from engaging in risky behaviors, which increase their susceptibility to stigma and discrimination.

Educating and equipping LGBT+ individuals with their rights is fundamental in order to preserve the community's human rights and dignity while also identifying and preventing behaviors or potential actions that pose a significant, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves.

3.6. Social workers encourage the personal growth of LGBT+ individuals by focusing on enhancing their strengths and abilities.

Social workers can help LGBT+ individuals reach personal growth using various means and methods which consist of creating support groups and capacity-building programs. This will reinforce LGBT+ individuals' skills, abilities, and lead to continuous progress.

3.7. Social workers recognize that the families of LGBT+ individuals may include people who are not legally or biologically related.

LGBT+ individuals may experience a profound stress when their alternative family structure is not recognized. Valuing these structures when working with LGBT+ beneficiaries could be helpful to provide them with a sense of solidarity and social support, and to promote psychological well-being and the development of a positive identity.

Guideline 4. Conforming to a Reflexive Practice

4.1. Social workers are encouraged to recognize how their attitudes and knowledge about LGBT+ issues may affect the quality of the service provided.

Examining one's cultural backgrounds, values and biases regarding sex, gender, and sexual orientation while seeking the necessary knowledge, skills and professional values can enhance service delivery to LGBT+ individuals

4.2. Social workers demonstrate the ability to identify and resolve areas of conflict and incongruity between their personal and professional values.

It is just as important for social workers to be conscious of their own cultural values as it is to make informed assumptions about the cultural backgrounds of their beneficiaries. Understanding their personal misconceptions and biases and developing strategies to address any harmful attitudes and beliefs will positively influence their connections with the beneficiaries.

4.3. Social workers strive to reflect on their ability to respect the code of conduct while implementing interventions with LGBT+ individuals.

Social workers should refer to and respect the social work code of ethics as well as articulate its basic values, ethical principles and standards, all of which are the foundation for inclusive and affirmative social work interventions with the LGBT+ community.

Guideline 5: Building Solidarity and Promoting Access to Equitable and Inclusive Resources

5.1. Social workers are urged to increase their knowledge about available resources and the way to access them to efficiently support LGBT+ individuals.

By acquiring and obtaining sufficient information about relevant services and programs and working on adapting them to meet the needs of the LGBT+ individuals, social workers can facilitate the concerned beneficiaries' access to care.

5.2. Social workers are urged to identify and connect LGBT+ individuals with support networks and resources, as well as with local and national career resources to make it easier for them to find a job.

These resources might include national lesbian and gay networks of professionals, local gay/lesbian community resources, special programs by lesbian/gay professionals, career shadowing opportunities with gay/lesbian professionals, internships or cooperative education placements in gay/lesbian owned or operated businesses, and LGBT+ mentoring programs.

5.3. Social workers should be well aware of NGOs that work with and provide services to LGBT+ individuals to make appropriate referrals when needed.

Carrying out culturally appropriate referrals and being cognizant of, and working to address, service gaps affecting LGBT+ groups, is an integral element of social workers' ethical responsibilities.

5.4. Social workers should seek to collaborate with other social workers to implement effective and efficient interventions with LGBT+ individuals.

Cooperating with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions serves the well-being of LGBT+ beneficiaries as it can holistically address various issues on the health, social, legal and employment levels.

Guideline 6. Promoting Social Justice and Challenging Unjust Practices and Policies

6.1. Social workers should strive to challenge social norms and prejudice against LGBT+ individuals and to address them by raising awareness at the community level.

Addressing common misconceptions and prejudgments towards the LGBT+ community is key to bring about acceptance and tolerance. By doing so, social workers will help the larger community overcome taboos and discrimination and take part in creating an enabling environment for LGBT+ individuals/community.

6.2. Social workers advocate and strive towards accessible and equitable distribution of resources and wealth.

By engaging in social and political action, social workers seek to ensure that LGBT+ individuals have equal access to the resources, employment,

services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully.

6.3. Social workers should be knowledgeable about the presence or absence of policies, legislations, and laws that protect LGBT+ rights and lobbying for change in the legal system using evidence-based information

Being well-informed about the structural statutes and systems that govern the lives of the LGBT+ community allows social workers to proactively advocate and lobby for laws and policies that alleviate social injustice faced by the community and that respect and empower them.

6.4. Social workers should be well-versed with Article 534 of the Lebanese Penal Code which prohibits having sexual relations that are "contradicting the laws of nature".

Article 534 in itself is a violation of LGBT+ individuals' human rights. It is thus important for social workers to advocate for the amendment of such laws to contribute to the creation of a fair society where LGBT+ individuals can freely exercise their rights.

III- Guidelines for an LGBT+ Affirmative Practice and Approach in Academic Institutions

Guideline 1: Promoting Institutional Equity

1.1. Social workers in academic institutions seek to promote an inclusive and empowering academic environment for LGBT+ students and to work against institutionalized discrimination in all its forms.

Promoting institutional equality necessitates social workers to advocate for policies and processes that promote diversity and inclusion within academic institutions by ensuring that these rules, procedures, and practices address discrimination on the basis of gender and sexual orientation.

1.2. Social workers in academic institutions affirm to support and speak up for the rights of LGBT+ students and faculty members

Social workers can foster cultural norms of openness, respect, and acceptance as well as intolerance of discrimination and prejudice within the institution by forbidding LGBT+ students from being "outed" by other students and educators. In this order, it could be relevant to allow LGBT+ students to form LGBT+ alliances/clubs.

1.3. Social work educators seek to promote the respect of the LGBT+ students

Social work educators should showcase respect towards the LGBT+ community, act with a non-discriminatory approach, and not exclude them within society.

Guideline 2: Stand as a Reference to Establish Inclusive Social Work Practice

2.1. Social work educational institutions integrate inclusive and affirming curriculum to address the absence of LGBT+ related material and studies in social work practice.

It is fundamental to prepare social work students to effectively intervene with LGBT+ individuals by modeling LGBT+ affirming practice and incorporating LGBT+ affirming content and evidence-based practices with sexual minorities in the curriculum (readings, case studies, assignments, role plays and class discussions using inclusive language).

2.2. Social work educational institutions strive to develop continuous training and extracurricular activities that enhance the social worker's commitment towards LGBT+ individuals.

Developing and offering trainings, workshops and programs on a regular basis allows social workers facing cultural, religious and social challenges while working with the community to become more able to tailor their interventions accordingly and to enhance their ability to foster and promote the rights of the LGBT+ individuals.

2.3. Social work educators promote a reflexive approach among social work students and discuss culturally competent practice with the LGBT+ community

Discuss and unpack social work students' beliefs, attitudes, and skills enable these future social workers to understand the importance of monitoring their homophobic and heterosexist bias to ensure that it does not interfere with the intervention.

2.4. Social work educators seek to involve students in LGBT+ related field work and to integrate inclusive and affirming field education.

To improve social workers' exposure and skills with the LGBT+ population, it is critical to integrate organizations and associations that engage with the LGBT+ community into social work field education. The availability of such training locations will equip social workers with the necessary skills to properly intervene effectively and properly in LGBT+ issues.

Guidelines 3: Conducting Results-Oriented Research for the Inclusion of LGBT+ Individuals

3.1. Social work educators strive to produce LGBT+ related contextual scientific material to address the scarcity of research regarding the LGBT+ community in Lebanon.

It is critical for social work educators to conduct relevant research in order to produce evidence-based data allowing a better understanding of the ongoing needs, concerns, challenges, as well as effective interventions and services that LGBT+ people particularly require in the Lebanese setting.

5.2. Social work educators seek to engage students and LGBT+ individuals in research projects and processes.

Producing scientific material to promote cultural competence amongst social workers with the LGBT+ community requires engaging students and particularly members of the LGBT+ community in research through a participatory approach since it will allow them to make informed decisions on priority issues.

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Annex I – Key Concepts, Terms and Definitions

English	Arabic
Sex	الجنس
Sex is biological and is determined in the male body by the presence of a penis, testes, testosterone and male specific genetic makeup. In the female body, sex is determined by the presence of breasts, a vagina, estrogen, progesterone and female specific genetic makeup	هو الجنس البيولوجي الذي يتم تحديده في جسم الرجل من خلال وجود القضيب والخصيتين، هرمون التستوستيرون والجينات الوراثية لمحدّد للذكور. في الجسد الأنثوي، يتم تحديد الجنس من خلال وجود الثديين، المهبل، هرمون الاستروجين والبروجسترون والجينات الوراثية المحددة للإناث
Sexuality	الجنسانية
How people experience and express themselves as sexual beings, within the concepts of biological sex, gender identity and presentation, attractions and practices. Culture and religion have a huge impact on how individuals see themselves as sexual beings, especially within relations of power	كيف يختبر ويعبّر الافراد عن أنفسهم ككائنات جنسية ضمن مفاهيم الجنس البيولوجي والهوية الجندرية وتقديم النفس والانجذابات والممارسات. للثقافة والدين تأثير كبير على كيف يرى الأفراد أنفسهم ككائنات جنسية، ولا سيما في علاقات السلطة.
Sexual Identity	الهوية الجنسية
The overall sexual self-identity which includes how the person identifies as male, female, masculine, feminine or some combination, and the person's sexual orientation.	هي الهوية الذاتية الشاملة الجنسية التي تضم كيف يحدد الفرد نفسه كذكر أو أنثى، أو بصيغة المذكر أو المؤنث أو الجمع بينها بالإضافة الى الميل الجنسي للفرد.
Sexual practices	الممارسات الجنسية
All behaviors that create sexual pleasure, practiced by one or more persons, individually or together	جميع السلوكيات التي تخلق المتعة الجنسية، تُمارس من قبل شخص واحد أو أكثر، إما فردياً أو جماعياً.
Sexual Orientation	الهوية الجنسية
Refers to the identity of a person related to the sex(es), gender(s) of those to whom they are sexually and romantically attracted to.	هي الهوية الذاتية الشاملة الجنسية التي تضم كيف يحدد الفرد نفسه كذكر أو أنثى، أو بصيغة المذكر أو المؤنث أو الجمع بينها بالإضافة الى الميل الجنسي للفرد.
Gender	النوع الاجتماعي/الجندر
Gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity.	هي مجموعة من الخصائص المتعلقة بمفاهيم الذكورة والأنوثة والتي تفرّق بين الاثنين.
Gender fluid	المرن الجندر
Refers to a person that does not have a fixed gender identity.	شخص ليس لديه هوية جندرية ثابتة
Androgyny	الاندروجيني
Not having only clear masculine or only feminine physical characteristics or appearance. A modern understanding of someone who is androgynous is that they can access their "feminine" qualities at appropriate moments, as well as their more "masculine" characteristics in situations where these are needed.	عدم وجود الخصائص الفيزيائية أو المظاهر الواضحة للفرد لتحديده كرجل و امرأة. أما التعريف الحديث لشخص اندروجيني هو أن بإمكانهم التواصل مع صفاتهم "الأنثوية" في اللحظات المناسبة، والأمر كذلك بالنسبة لخصائصهم "الذكورية" والتي يستطيعون الاعتماد عليها في الحالات التي يكونون بحاجة إليها.
Asexual	اللاجنسي

A person not sexually attracted to either men or women. This person has no desire to engage in sexual activity with a partner.	شخص لا يختبر الانجذاب الجنسي للرجال أو النساء. كما ليس له رغبة في الانخراط بالممارسات الجنسية مع شريك.
Bisexual	ثنائي / ثنائية الميول الجنسي
A sexual orientation and identity. Bisexual people have an attraction to people of the same and opposite sex on various levels (emotionally, physically, intellectually, spiritually and sexually). Not necessarily at the same time and not necessarily an equal amount of attraction	كتوجه جنسي وكهوية. ثنائيو وثنائيات الميل الجنسي ينجذبون / ينجذبون الى أشخاص من نفس الجنس أو من الجنس الآخر على مختلف المستويات (عاطفياً وجسدياً وفكرياً وروحياً وجنسياً). ليس بالضرورة في نفس الوقت وليس بالضرورة بنفس المستوى من الانجذاب.
Cisgender	الهوية الجندرية المعيارية
Cisgender people are those whose gender identity matches their sex at birth, e.g. a cis-man is born male and presents himself as masculine, and a cis-woman is born female and presents herself as feminine. This has a more positive connotation than "normal" or "non-transgender".	تنطبق على الافراد الذين تتوافق هويتهم الجنسية مع جنسهم عند الولادة. أي، الرجل ذو الهوية الجندرية المعيارية هو الشخص وُلد كذكر ويقدم نفسه بصيغة المذكر والمرأة ذات الهوية الجندرية المعيارية هي الشخص وُلدت كأنتى وتقدم نفسها بصيغة المؤنث. وقد تم استخدام هذا المصطلح منذ أوائل التسعينيات للاعتباره أكثر إيجابية من كلمة "طبيعي" أو "غير متحول جنسياً".
MTF/Trans woman	عابرة الجنس من ذكر الى أنثى
A Trans woman or male-to-female starts her life with a male body, but her gender identity is female. Always use female pronouns in reference.	فرد عابر من ذكر الى أنثى بدأت حياتها بجسد رجل غير أن هويتها الجندرية هي مؤنث. تذكر أن تستخدم ضمير المؤنث دوماً مع هؤلاء الافراد.
FTM/Trans man	عابر الجنس من أنثى الى ذكر
A Trans man or female-to-man starts his life with a female body, but his gender identity is male. Always use male pronouns in reference.	فرد عابر من أنثى الى ذكر بدأ حياته بجسد امرأة غير أن هويته الجندرية هي ذكر. تذكر أن تستخدم ضمير المذكر دوماً مع هؤلاء الافراد.
Gay	مثلي الجنس او رجل مثلي
Usually a male but the term can also be used to refer to both male and female, same sex identity and orientation. Attraction between two males on various levels (emotionally, physically, intellectually, spiritually and sexually). Homosexuals and the homosexual community at large.	ذكر ذو هوية جنسية مثلية وميول جنسي مثلي. وهو إنجذاب بين رجلين على مختلف المستويات (عاطفياً وجسدياً وفكرياً وروحياً وجنسياً).
Lesbian	مثلية الجنس امرأة مثلية
A female sexual identity and orientation which is an attraction between two females on various levels (emotionally, physically, intellectually, spiritually and sexually).	أنثى الهوية الجندرية والميل الجنسي والذي هو عامل إنجذاب بين أنثيتين على مختلف المستويات (عاطفياً وجسدياً وفكرياً وروحياً وجنسياً).
Heteronormative/heterosexual norm	المعيارية على أساس الغيرية الجنسية
A social construct that views all human beings as either male or female, with the associated behavior and gender roles assigned, both in sex and gender, and that considers sexual and romantic thoughts and relations are normal only	هي مفهوم اجتماعي يقوم على أن البشر إما ذكور أو أناث ويظهرون سلوكيات جنسهم ونوعهم الاجتماعي، في الجنس البيولوجي والنوع الاجتماعي (الجندر)، معتقدين أن جميع الأفكار والعلاقات الجنسية والرومانسية "الطبيعية" هي تلك

between people of opposite sexes and all other behavior is viewed as "abnormal".	القائمة بين شخصين من الجنس الآخر. أي سلوك آخر يُنظر على أنه "غير طبيعي".
Heterosexuality	مغايرة الجنس
A sexual orientation in which a person feels physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex	الميول الجنسي لشخص يشعر جسدياً وعاطفياً وفكرياً وروحياً وجنسياً بالانجذاب إلى شخص من الجنس الآخر.
Homosexual	المتلية
Attraction between two people of the same sex on various levels (emotionally, physically, intellectually, spiritually and sexually) where the sex of the attracted person is the key to the attraction.	الانجذاب بين شخصين من نفس الجنس على مختلف المستويات (عاطفياً وجسدياً وفكرياً وروحياً وجنسياً) حيث جنس الشخص هو أساس الانجذاب.
Intersex	ازدواجي الجنس او متبادلي الجنس
Refers to people who are born with both genitals, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.	شخص ولد مع اعضاء تناسلية غير واضحة أو الأعضاء التناسلية التي لا يمكن تمييزها بوضوح كذكر أو أنثى.
Lady boy	لايدي بوي
A person from the Trans community, usually from the Far-East, may also refer to androgynous boys with feminine features or behaviors.	شخص من مجتمع الترانس ، عادةً من الشرق الأقصى ، شاب اندروجيني ذو سلوكيات الأنثوية.
MSM- Men who have sex with men	رجال يعاشرون رجالاً
This sexual practice is irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity. An MSM can be heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual or transsexual. This term is more technical and is not necessarily an identity	الرجال الذين يمارسون الجنس مع الرجال. هذه الممارسة الجنسية هي بغض النظر عن الميل الجنسي أو هوية الجندرية. يمكن لهؤلاء الأشخاص أن يكونوا مغايري الجنس، مثلي الجنس أو متحولين جنسياً. هذا المصطلح هو أكثر تقنية ولا يعبر بالضرورة عن هوية.
WSW- Women who have sex with women	نساء يعاشرن نساءً
This sexual practice is irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity. A WSW can be heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual or transsexual. This term is more technical and is not necessarily an identity.	النساء اللواتي يمارسن الجنس مع نساء. هذه الممارسة الجنسية هي بغض النظر عن الميل الجنسي أو هوية الجندرية. يمكن لهؤلاء الأشخاص أن يكونوا مغايرات الجنس، مثليات الجنس أو متحولات جنسياً. هذا المصطلح هو أكثر تقنية ولا يعبر بالضرورة عن هوية.
Pansexual	شمولي الجنس
A person who prefers not to be limited by biological sex, gender, or sexual choices.	ميول جنسي حيث الشخص يفضل عدم التقييد بالجنس البيولوجي أو الجندر أو الخيارات الجنسية
Queer	كوير
Can be related to gender identity or sexual orientation; can be associated with people who prefer not to be gendered or their sexual orientation too specifically identified since it is too limiting	يمكن أن يكون مرتبطاً بالهوية الجندرية أو الميول الجنسي ، ويمكن أن يرتبط بالأشخاص الذين يفضلون عدم التمييز بين الجنسين أو تحديد ميولهم الجنسية.
Questioning	المتسائل
Describes a person who is still questioning their identity or sexual orientation.	يصف الشخص الذي لا يزال يشكك في هويته أو ميوله الجنسي.

She-males	الشمائل
Another name for Transgender Women but mostly used in the pornographic industry	اسم آخر للعابرات جنسياً ولكنه يستخدم في الغالب في الأفلام الإباحية.
Transgender	عابر / عابرة النوع الاجتماعي
People who identify as transgender or transsexual are usually born with typical male or female anatomies but feel as though they are living in the “wrong body.” For example, a person who identifies as transgender or transsexual may have typical female anatomy but feels like a male and seeks to become male by taking hormones or choosing to have sex reassignment surgeries.	مصطلح شامل الذي غالباً ما يُستخدم لوصف مجموعة واسعة من الهويات والخبرات، ويشمل في العابرين والعابرات جنسياً، و مغايري التعبير الجندري ، وملوك وملكات التنكر، والكوير وغيرهم.
Transsexual	عابر / عابرة جنسياً
A transgender person in the process of seeking or undergoing some form of medical treatment to bring the body and gender identity into closer alignment. Not all transgender people undergo reassignment surgery.	شخص عابر / عابرة جنسياً إما يرغب / ترغب بتلقي أو يتلقى / تتلقى شكلاً من أشكال العلاج الطبي للتقريب بين جنسهم وهويتهم الجنسية. لا يخضع كل المتحولين والمتحولات جنسياً لعملية جراحية لتغيير أعضائهم التناسلية.
Transitioning	العبور
The process of changing one’s gender presentation to align with one’s internal sense of one’s gender. For transgender people this may sometimes include sexual reassignment surgery, but not always. It could include hormonal therapy	عملية لتغيير النوع الاجتماعي ليتماشى مع الاحساس الداخلي للنوع الاجتماعي. للمتحولين والمتحولات جنسياً، قد تشمل هذه جراحة تغيير الجنس، ولكن ليس دائماً. إذ قد تقتصر العملية على العلاج الهرموني.
Transvestite	المغايري التعبير الجندري
An individual who dresses in the clothing of the opposite sex for a variety of reasons and who has no desire to change or modify their body	فرد الذي يرتدي ملابس الجنس الآخر لأسبابٍ مختلفة ، لكنه لا يرغب بتغيير أو تعديل جسده.
Two-spirits	ذو روحيين
Refers to a person who considers they have both masculine and feminine spirits; the term Two-Spirits was first used by some Indigenous North American tribes	الشخص الذي يعتبر أن لديهم روحاً ذكورية وأنثوية ، وقد استخدم مصطلح ذو روحيين لأول مرة من قبل بعض قبائل أمريكا الشمالية.

The “Boxes” Framework

SEX (BIOLOGICAL)	GENDER (IDENTITY)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MALE • FEMALE • INTERSEX (OLD TERM WAS HERMAPHRODITE) – ENDOCRINOLOGISTS DETERMINE WHAT SEX IS MORE DEVELOPED, BASED ON HORMONE BALANCES <p style="text-align: center;"> MALE ↔ INTERSEX ↔ FEMALE </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masculine Identity • Feminine Identity • Androgynous • Non binary and agender, prefers not to be either/or • Gender Queer / Pangender / Gender fluid, prefers not to be gendered (pronoun They, Their, Them) • Bigender and Two-Spirits

TRANS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transgender Woman M to F • Transgender Man F to M • Transsexual Woman M to F • Transsexual Man F to M • She-males • Ladyboys • Drag queens • Transvestite • Transitioning • Intersex or Gender ambiguous from birth or in transition

SEXUAL ORIENTATION (Who we are attracted to)	SEXUAL PRACTICES (How we like to receive or give pleasure)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heterosexual • Homosexual (Gay man, Gay woman or lesbian) • Bisexual • Asexual • Queer (prefers not to be assigned) • Pansexual • Questioning • ... (autosexual, bicurious, cupiosexual, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kissing • Soft sex • Oral sex • Vaginal penetration • Anal penetration • BDSM • Fetishes • Fisting • Orgies or group sex • Etc.

الهوية الجندرية	الجنس البيولوجي
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • الهوية الذكورية • الهوية الانثوية • الأندروجيني • غير معياري • كوير او شموليو الجندر او مرن الجندر • ثنائي الجندر او ذو روحين 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ذكر • انثى • ازدواجي الجنس او متبادلي الجنس <p>ذكر ↔ ازدواجي الجنس او متبادلي الجنس ↔ انثى</p>

العابرين
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • عابرة الهوية الجندرية ذكر الى انثى • عابر الهوية الجندرية انثى الى ذكر • عابرة الجنس ذكر الى انثى • عابر الجنس انثى الى ذكر • شيمابلز • لايدي بوي • ملوك وملكات التنكر • مغايري التعبير الجندري • شخص في مرحلة العبور • ازدواجي الجنس او متبادلي الجنس

الممارسات الجنسية	الميول الجنسي
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • تقبيل • علاقة الفموية • علاقة مهبلية • علاقة شرجية • سادية مازوخية او الهيمنة الجنسية • والخضوع • فتشية • علاقة جنسية بمجموعة • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • مغاير الجنس (امرأة او رجل) • مثلي الجنس (امرأة او رجل) • ثنائي الجنس (امرأة او رجل) • لا جنسي • كوير • شموليو الجنس • متسائل • ...

LGBTQQIP2sAA+

مجتمع ال LGBTQ+ او مجتمع الميم عين

- مثلية الجنس Lesbian
- مثلي الجنس Gay
- ثنائي الميول الجنسي Bisexual
- مجتمع العابرين Trans community
- متسائل Questioning
- كوير Queer
- ازدواجي الجنس او متبادلي الجنس Intersex
- شموليو الجنس Pansexual
- ذو الروحين Two-spirits
- أندروجيني Androgynous
- اللا جنسي Asexual
- ++++++