



Lesotho
Joint Stakeholder Report for the United Nations Universal Periodic Review: LGBTQ+ Rights

Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights,
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1996

The Master of Healing Foundation

and

Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho

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The Advocates for Human Rights (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law since its founding in 1983. The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publication. The Advocates is the primary provider of legal services to low-income asylum seekers in the Upper Midwest region of the United States, including LGBTQ+ individuals who have experienced discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

The Master of Healing Foundation is a humanitarian institution that promotes equality and human rights by protecting and empowering the rights of the LGBTQ+ community in Lesotho. Our key objective is to create a conducive environment for LGBTQ+ community in Lesotho through a well-coordinated system that has been mapped. The said environment includes but not limited to Human rights, Access to Health and Education Services, Freedom of Expression and acceptance of individual's SOGIESC within communities. The key element is to change the landscape in family and community set-ups to curb discrimination, rape and assaults against being LGBTQ+ through advocacy.

Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho is a Non-Profit Organization founded on the 15th March 2018 to greatly improve the livelihoods of the LGBTI community in terms of sexual reproductive and mental health, spirituality and establish sustainable Center's and facilities that afford LGBTI community with access to the basic human needs. Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho is the key-population led and focused organization working with and for the LGBTI community (Lesbian,

Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex) in 10 districts of Lesotho. We are working with relevant line ministries which are key stakeholders on issues of LGBTI and also the local authorities. The organization is aimed to promote services rendered to the “general” community to be rendered to the LGBTI community in a humane and professional manner, access to general medical services and mental health services, as such, engagement of multi-stakeholders is required and therefore we are also working with healthcare service providers and community as a whole.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This joint stakeholder report addresses human rights violations against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other sexual and gender minorities (LGBTQ+) in Lesotho since Lesotho's last Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2020.
2. Lesotho fails to adequately prevent violence, harassment, and discrimination by State and non-State actors against people based on their perceived and actual sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE). Despite some promising developments, such as Lesotho's efforts to make healthcare more accessible to LGBTQ+ individuals and public statements by Chief Justice S. P. Sakoane calling for the "cultivation of an LGBTIQ sensitive culture,"¹ LGBTQ+ individuals do not enjoy the same rights and freedoms as non-LGBTQ+ individuals in Lesotho.
3. LGBTQ+ individuals in Lesotho are subjected to discrimination by both State and non-State actors, including with regard to their right to health, access to justice, and legal gender recognition.
4. The Constitution of Lesotho does not explicitly include "sexual orientation", "gender identity", or "gender expression" as protected grounds of discrimination.
5. Lesotho has not enacted any laws to protect LGBTQ+ individuals from discrimination, harassment, or violence on the basis of SOGIE.
6. In this report, we use the acronym LGBTQ+ to refer to individuals who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and/or other sexual and gender minorities. These terms necessarily do not include everyone who may experience violations of their human rights on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression status, which is why we included a "+" with the acronym. Any use of a different acronym is intention and reflects only those constituent communities listed. Although this report does not contain any information on the intersex community, some sources reference intersex individuals and, in those instances, we will use some variation of LGBTIQ+ as an acronym with the "I" standing for "intersex."
7. Information in this report includes published information and first-hand material collected by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and human rights defenders in Lesotho that work on LGBTQ+ issues.

I. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

Themes: Equality & Non-discrimination; Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI)

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Partially Implemented

8. Lesotho received ten recommendations during the last UPR related to prohibiting discrimination against and providing protection for members of the LGBTQ+ community, eight which were noted and two of which were accepted by Lesotho.² Lesotho did not accept any of the recommendations to decriminalize consensual same-sex sexual activity between adults.

9. Lesotho accepted the recommendation from Argentina to “[a]dopt norms that will guarantee to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons the full enjoyment of their rights on the basis of equality in all spheres, combating discrimination and negative stereotypes that still exist in the society,” as well as the recommendation from Costa Rica to “[t]ake the necessary steps to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and discrimination against persons with disabilities.”³
10. Since Lesotho’s last UPR, the Government of Lesotho has reported that it has begun to implement some of the recommendations it accepted by implementing its Gender and Development Policy 2018-30 and including LGBTQ+ issues into the Policy, and working with LGBTQ+ civil society organizations to host trainings on sexual minorities for officials of the Ministry of Gender.⁴ Some prominent individuals, such as Lesotho’s Chief Justice S.P. Sakoane have also publicly called for the “cultivation of an LGBTQ+ sensitive culture.”⁵
11. In Lesotho, however, “discrimination against LGBTIQ+ persons manifests in various forms including: violence and abuse against the LGBTIQ+ individuals, such as killings, forced initiations to purportedly ‘convert’ a person from their real or imputed same-sex sexual orientation to a heterosexual one or ‘restore’ transgender persons to a cisgender identity; rape and other forms of sexual assault, intimidation and harassment; bullying; denial of access to healthcare services, such as gender affirming care; and other forms of social exclusion, such as rejection of LGBTIQ+ children by family members.”⁶
12. Historically, many people in Lesotho have denied the existence of LGBTQ+ individuals in the country.⁷ Due to the historical lack of understanding of sexual and gender diversity, many people do not understand or accept LGBTQ+ individuals and believe that being LGBTQ+ is not “natural”.⁸
13. There have been reports of physical or verbal abuse by non-State actors towards LGBTQ+ individuals in Lesotho and there is currently no law criminalizing discrimination against or violence towards LGBTQ+ individuals.⁹
14. Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho reports that there was a 2024 case of a transgender woman who was shot to death and was dumped near her home. While the alleged killer was arrested and is being held until his hearing on 10 October 2024, it is likely that there were at least two other men involved in the killing who have not been arrested and do not currently face prosecution.¹⁰
15. Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho further reports that there is a pending case of a police officer who verbally assaulted a lesbian on public transport. This incident is not isolated, however, as Rainbow Alliance has collected several credible reports of law enforcement officers harassing and assaulting LGBTQ+ people, often with impunity. Many of the LGBTQ+ people who reported these assaults have later found that the police station has misplaced or lost their dockets and case files.¹¹

Themes: Right to health; Access to health-care (general)

Status of Implementation: Fully Accepted; Partially Implemented

16. In its 2020 third-cycle UPR, Lesotho received two recommendations related to curbing the HIV and AIDS pandemic, both of which were accepted by Lesotho.¹²
17. Lesotho has undertaken steps to curb the HIV and AIDS epidemic, including expanding HIV self-testing, index testing, and partner notification services.¹³ The Government of Lesotho also reports that, with the help of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), “providing health care, HIV prevention, and treatment services to the population by expanding access to quality PMTCT [prevention from mother to child transmission] and pediatric care and treatment as well as strengthening partnerships to improve coordination and coverage of HIV prevention intervention for young people, prioritizing hard to reach locations.”¹⁴
18. Despite efforts taken by the Government of Lesotho, Lesotho has one of the highest percentages of HIV infections in the world.¹⁵ It is estimated that 23.6% of Basotho (people from Lesotho) adults are estimated to be living with HIV.¹⁶ The HIV pandemic in Lesotho disproportionately affects gay, bisexual, other men who have sex with men, and transgender women, with HIV prevalence in those populations being estimated to be 32.9% and 59.2%, respectively.¹⁷
19. Chief Justice S. P. Sakoane has noted that the HIV pandemic in Lesotho is exacerbated by the stigmatization of LGBTQ+ individuals because individuals with HIV or AIDS are reluctant to disclose because they are afraid that it will result in stigmatization for being part of, or being perceived as being part of, the LGBTQ+ community.¹⁸
20. In addition to high rates of HIV and AIDS in the Lesotho LGBTQ+ community, LGBTQ+ individuals also disproportionately face adverse mental health conditions compared to heterosexual, cisgender individuals.¹⁹ The stigma experienced by members of the LGBTQ+ community in Lesotho impacts the ability of LGBTQ+ Basotho to obtain adequate healthcare, including, both mental and physical healthcare.²⁰
21. Violence against and stigmatization of LGBTQ+ Basotho has shown to lead to depression and substance abuse by LGBTQ+ Basotho.²¹
22. Transgender individuals in Lesotho have reported experiencing signs and symptoms of depression and moderate to severe anxiety.²² According to studies, one in three transgender women, one in six transgender men, and three in five gender non-conforming individuals in Lesotho have attempted suicide.²³
23. Research completed both in Lesotho and internationally, “suggests that not being able to change one’s gender marker has an impact on access to healthcare and mental health and wellbeing.”²⁴
24. One study found that approximately 27% of transgender individuals in Lesotho have hidden health concerns from healthcare providers out of fear of disclosing their gender identity.²⁵
25. Gender affirming care is not easily accessible to transgender Basotho.²⁶

Themes: Rights related to marriage & family; Right to be recognized as a person before the law

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

26. During Lesotho's last UPR, Germany recommended that Lesotho "[i]mplement legal reforms to protect the human rights of all persons irrespective of their sexual orientation and gender identity" and Argentina recommended that Lesotho adopt norms that will guarantee to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons the full enjoyment of their rights on the basis of equality in all spheres, combating discrimination and negative stereotypes that still exist in society."²⁷ Lesotho noted Germany's recommendation and accepted Argentina's recommendation.²⁸ Iceland also recommended that Lesotho amend the Marriage Act of 1974 to be inclusive of same-sex couples, which was noted by Lesotho.²⁹
27. Lesotho's current legal framework allows for legal gender recognition.³⁰ The laws that permit legal gender recognition, however, include outdated terminology, lack guidelines, and contain inconsistencies, which make it difficult for transgender individuals in Lesotho to successfully apply for legal gender recognition.³¹
28. Without easy access to legal gender recognition, transgender individuals in Lesotho experience difficulties that cisgender individuals do not face, including, difficulty accessing healthcare; stigma associated with certain types of healthcare; and difficulty with travel, opening bank accounts, and the full enjoyment of other civil and political rights.³²
29. Lesotho does not currently recognize non-binary identities.³³
30. Currently, same-sex marriage is not recognized in Lesotho. The common law definition of marriage is "a union of one man with one woman, to the exclusion, while it lasts, of all others."³⁴

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

31. The authors of this joint stakeholder report suggest the following recommendations for the Government of Lesotho:
 - Expand access to HIV education, treatment, and prevention, especially to individuals in the LGBTQ+ community.
 - Eliminate all sodomy laws to advance the universal vision of human rights, and work alongside LGBTQ+ activists to eradicate stigma and discrimination.
 - Criminalize discrimination of and violence against LGBTQ+ individuals and prosecute individuals perpetrating any such offenses.
 - In collaboration with LGBTQ+ civil society organizations, undertake and fully fund public education campaigns about LGBTQ+ issues and LGBTQ+ people's full enjoyment of human rights so as to better combat anti-LGBTQ+ stigma.
 - Provide training to healthcare individuals, police officers, and other public officials to help understand unique experiences faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Lesotho to help ensure

access to healthcare and justice for LGBTQ+ individuals without stigmatization associated with a person being part of the LGBTQ+ community.

- Incorporate questions on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics into the National Census so that the national database has the correct numbers for purposes of planning and allocating resources to the LGBTQ+ community.
- Fund the creation of mental health centers for psychosocial support services for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Create a specialized government department to address the issues of the LGBTQ+ community.
- Create and implement standard guidelines and procedures within the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, and all other governmental ministries and departments to allow individuals to select their gender identity (including, non-binary), and recognize the same under the law.

¹ International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), “Lesotho: Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane calls for the ‘cultivation of an LGBTIQ sensitive culture’ in Lesotho,” accessed Oct. 4, 2024, <https://www.icj.org/lesotho-chief-justice-sakoane-sakoane-calls-for-the-cultivation-of-an-lgbtiq-sensitive-culture-in-lesotho/>.

² Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lesotho, (Mar. 18, 2020), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/44/8. ¶ 110.53 Adopt norms that will guarantee to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex person the full enjoyment of their rights on the basis of equality in all spheres, combating discrimination and negative stereotypes that still exist in the society (Argentina); ¶ 110.166 Take the necessary steps to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and discrimination against persons with disabilities (Costa Rica); ¶ 111.24 Criminalize homophobia and transphobia to prevent violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Honduras); ¶ 111.25 Decriminalize consensual sexual relations between adults of the same sex and expand its ant-discrimination legislation to include a prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (Iceland); ¶ 111.26 Amend section 3 of the Marriage Act of 1974 for it to be inclusive of same-sex couples (Iceland); ¶ 111.27 Include in the legislation a provision prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and reform laws that criminalize consensual sexual relations between same-sex persons, such as the Penal Code of 2010, and the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, section 187(5) (Mexico); ¶ 111.28 Review and amend the legislative framework to ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity are included as protected grounds for non-discrimination (Netherlands); ¶ 111.29 Decriminalize consensual same-sex relationships between adults, and introduce comprehensive anti-discrimination laws that include sexual orientation and gender identity (New Zealand); ¶ 111.30 Repeal provisions in the Penal Code that criminalize same-sex relations between consenting adults, and amend relevant legislation to ensure discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is explicitly prohibited (Australia); ¶ 111.31 Implement legal reforms to protect the human rights of all persons irrespective of their sexual orientation and gender identity (Germany)

³ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lesotho, (Mar. 18, 2020), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/44/8. ¶ 110.53 Adopt norms that will guarantee to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex person the full enjoyment of their rights on the basis of equality in all spheres, combating discrimination and negative stereotypes that still exist in the society (Argentina); ¶ 110.166 Take the necessary steps to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and discrimination against persons with disabilities (Costa Rica); ¶ 111.24 Criminalize homophobia and transphobia to prevent violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Honduras); ¶ 111.25 Decriminalize consensual sexual relations between adults of the same sex and expand its ant-discrimination legislation to include a prohibition

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⁴ The Government of Lesotho, Mid-term progress Report by the Kingdom of Lesotho on its implementation of recommendations made on 22 January 2020 (2023), accessed Aug. 7, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/upr-implementation>.

⁵ Press Release, International Commission of Jurists, “Lesotho: Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane calls for the ‘cultivation of an LGBTIQ sensitive culture’ in Lesotho”, (Oct. 18, 2022). Also available online at <https://www.icj.org/lesotho-chief-justice-sakoane-sakoane-calls-for-the-cultivation-of-an-lgbtqi-sensitive-culture-in-lesotho/>.

⁶ Press Release, International Commission of Jurists, “Lesotho: activists call for increased sensitization of key stakeholders on human rights of LGBTQ+ people”, (Apr. 21, 2023). Also available online at <https://www.icj.org/lesotho-activists-call-for-increased-sensitization-of-key-stakeholders-on-human-rights-of-lgbtqi-people/>.

⁷ Dipane Hlalele & Keneuoe Matsumunyane, “Sexual Diversity: Peer and Family Rejection or Acceptance in Lesotho,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 57(4) 635-649 (2022), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00219096211024674>.

⁸ Dipane Hlalele & Keneuoe Matsumunyane, “Sexual Diversity: Peer and Family Rejection or Acceptance in Lesotho,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 57(4) 635-649 (2022), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00219096211024674>. (“A vast majority of participants in this study did not perceive being LGBTQI+ as natural, hence recommendations for therapies, counseling, prayers, and many more intervention strategies, with a hope that their supposedly positive suggestions would curb LGBTQI identities.”).

⁹ ILGA World Database, “Jurisdictions – Lesotho – Legal frameworks”, accessed Aug. 25, 2024, <https://database.ilga.org/lesotho-lgbti> (“To the best of ILGA World’s knowledge, laws in force in Lesotho do not offer protection against discrimination based on ‘sexual orientation’, ‘gender identity’, ‘gender expression’ or ‘sex characteristics’ in housing”); (“To the best of ILGA World’s knowledge, laws in force in Lesotho do not prohibit incitement to hatred, violence or discrimination on the basis of ‘sexual orientation’, ‘gender identity’, ‘gender expression’ or ‘sex characteristics.’”).

¹⁰ Email from Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho to The Advocates for Human Rights (Oct. 6, 2024) (on file with authors).

¹¹ Email from Rainbow Alliance of Lesotho to The Advocates for Human Rights (Oct. 6, 2024) (on file with authors).

¹² Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lesotho*, (Mar. 18, 2020), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/44/8. ¶ 110.99 Continue measures to curb the spread of AIDS in its efforts to improve access to health services (Nepal); ¶ 110.107 Take effective steps to curb the HIV pandemic (Ukraine).

¹³ Be in the Know, “At a glance: HIV in Lesotho—The first African country to introduce ‘test and treat’,” accessed July 30, 2024, <https://www.beintheknow.org/understanding-hiv-epidemic/data/glance-hiv-lesotho>.

¹⁴ The Government of Lesotho, Mid-term progress Report by the Kingdom of Lesotho on its implementation of recommendations made on 22 January 2020 (2023), accessed Aug. 7, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/upr-implementation>.

¹⁵ Carmen H. Logie, Amaya Perez-Brumer, Tampose Mothopeng, Maya Latif, Amelia Ranotsi & Stefan D. Baral, Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho, *AIDS and Behavior*, 24 3462–3472 (2020), Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho - PMC (nih.gov) (Pages 36422-3464).

¹⁶ Be in the Know, “At a glance: HIV in Lesotho - The first African country to introduce ‘test and treat’,” accessed July 30, 2024, <https://www.beintheknow.org/understanding-hiv-epidemic/data/glance-hiv-lesotho>.

¹⁷ Be in the Know, “At a glance: HIV in Lesotho - The first African country to introduce ‘test and treat’,” accessed July 30, 2024, <https://www.beintheknow.org/understanding-hiv-epidemic/data/glance-hiv-lesotho>.

¹⁸ International Commission of Jurists, “Remarks by the honourable Chief Justice S.P. Sakoane at the ICJ Judicial Workshops: Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities in Lesotho & LGBTI Rights. 11th – 12th October 2022,” accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/International-Commission-of-Jurists-Workshop-10-October-2022.pdf>.

¹⁹ Carmen H. Logie, Amaya Perez-Brumer, Tampose Mothopeng, Maya Latif, Amelia Ranotsi & Stefan D. Baral, Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho, *AIDS and Behavior*, 24 3462–3472 (2020), Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho - PMC (nih.gov) (Pages 36422-3464) (“Emergent literature highlights co-morbidity between HIV and adverse mental health conditions among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Basotho adults.”).

²⁰ Carmen H. Logie, Amaya Perez-Brumer, Tampose Mothopeng, Maya Latif, Amelia Ranotsi & Stefan D. Baral, Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho, *AIDS and Behavior*, 24 3462–3472 (2020), Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho - PMC (nih.gov) (“LGBT persons’ mistreatment and exclusion in healthcare, including HIV prevention, were significant barriers to accessing healthcare, in turn exacerbating HIV vulnerabilities.”).

²¹ Carmen H. Logie, Amaya Perez-Brumer, Tampose Mothopeng, Maya Latif, Amelia Ranotsi & Stefan D. Baral, Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho, *AIDS and Behavior*, 24 3470 (2020), Conceptualizing LGBT Stigma and Associated HIV Vulnerabilities Among LGBT Persons in Lesotho - PMC (nih.gov)

²² The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, The People’s Matrix Association, & Women and Law Southern Africa – Lesotho, Legal Gender Recognition in Lesotho. An Analysis of Law and Policy in the Context of International Best Practice, by Alex Müller (Johannesburg: The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, October 2020), accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lesotho-Gender-Marker-report.pdf>. (“[M]ental health concerns were high among transgender and gender non-conforming people in Lesotho. Between half and two-thirds showed signs of depression (67% among transgender women, 48% among transgender men, and 60% among gender non-conforming people). Between 20% and 60% showed signs of moderate or severe anxiety (20% among transgender women, 27% among transgender men and 60% among gender non-conforming people).

²³ The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, The People’s Matrix Association, & Women and Law Southern Africa – Lesotho, Legal Gender Recognition in Lesotho. An Analysis of Law and Policy in the Context of International Best Practice, by Alex Müller (Johannesburg: The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, October 2020), accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lesotho-Gender-Marker-report.pdf>. (“[M]ental health concerns were high among transgender and gender non-conforming people in Lesotho. Between half and two-thirds showed signs of depression (67% among transgender women, 48% among transgender men, and 60% among gender non-conforming people). Between 20% and 60% showed signs of moderate or severe anxiety (20% among transgender women, 27% among transgender men and 60% among gender non-conforming people).

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²⁵ The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, The People’s Matrix Association, & Women and Law Southern Africa – Lesotho, *Legal Gender Recognition in Lesotho. An Analysis of Law and Policy in the Context of International Best Practice*, by Alex Müller (Johannesburg: The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, October 2020), accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lesotho-Gender-Marker-report.pdf>. (“[M]ental health concerns were high among transgender and gender non-conforming people in Lesotho. Between half and two-thirds showed signs of depression (67% among transgender women, 48% among transgender men, and 60% among gender non-conforming people). Between 20% and 60% showed signs of moderate or severe anxiety (20% among transgender women, 27% among transgender men and 60% among gender non-conforming people).”)

²⁶ Press Release, International Commission of Jurists, “Lesotho: activists call for increased sensitization of key stakeholders on human rights of LGBTQ+ people”, (Apr. 21, 2023). Also available online at <https://www.icj.org/lesotho-activists-call-for-increased-sensitization-of-key-stakeholders-on-human-rights-of-lgbtq-people/>.

²⁷ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lesotho*, (Mar. 18, 2020), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/44/8. ¶ 111.31; ¶ 110.53.

²⁸ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lesotho*, (Mar. 18, 2020), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/44/8. ¶ 111.31; ¶ 110.53.

²⁹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lesotho*, (Mar. 18, 2020), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/44/8. ¶ 111.26 Amend section 3 of the Marriage Act of 1974 for it to be inclusive of same-sex couples (Iceland).

³⁰ The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, The People’s Matrix Association, & Women and Law Southern Africa – Lesotho, *Legal Gender Recognition in Lesotho. An analysis of law and policy in the context of international best practice*, by Alex Müller (Johannesburg: The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, October 2020), accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lesotho-Gender-Marker-report.pdf>.

³¹ The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, The People’s Matrix Association, & Women and Law Southern Africa – Lesotho, *Legal Gender Recognition in Lesotho. An analysis of law and policy in the context of international best practice*, by Alex Müller (Johannesburg: The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, October 2020), accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lesotho-Gender-Marker-report.pdf>.

³² The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, The People’s Matrix Association, & Women and Law Southern Africa – Lesotho, *Legal Gender Recognition in Lesotho. An analysis of law and policy in the context of international best practice*, by Alex Müller (Johannesburg: The Southern Africa Litigation Centre, October 2020), accessed July 23, 2024, <https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lesotho-Gender-Marker-report.pdf>.

³³ Equaldex, “Regions – Africa – LGBT Rights in Lesotho,” accessed Aug. 25, 2024, <https://www.equaldex.com/region/lesotho>.

³⁴ Equaldex, “Regions – Africa – LGBT Rights in Lesotho,” accessed Aug. 25, 2024, <https://www.equaldex.com/region/lesotho>.