ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
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WELCOME

Introduction Note

LGBTI asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons, internally displaced persons and migrants face a complex array of challenges and threats in their countries of origin and countries of migration or asylum, as well as throughout all stages of the displacement cycle. These challenges and threats include discrimination, prejudice, violence, difficulty accessing humanitarian services and barriers to articulating their protection needs during asylum procedures. Efforts to improve the protection of LGBTI people have recently gained increased attention and support from States and the broader humanitarian and human rights community.

At UNHCR, such efforts have included expert consultations, the development of guidelines, strategic messaging from the highest levels of UNHCR’s management, mainstreaming LGBTI issues in mandatory learning programmes and a global questionnaire to assess UNHCR’s capacity to address protection issues for LGBTI persons of concern. At IOM, such efforts have included training for staff members across the globe as well as safe space campaigns in Latin America, the Middle East and South Asia. Both UNHCR and IOM are committed to protecting the rights of LGBTI persons of concern, and intend to continue with a phased but deliberate approach to generating buy-in and building capacity.

Despite significant activity, discrimination against LGBTI people is still endemic. Their protection needs often go unmet. A serious knowledge gap remains regarding the specific needs and vulnerabilities of LGBTI people in countries of origin, transit and asylum. Furthermore, not all staff members are conscious of their own preconceptions or discriminatory attitudes about sexual orientation, gender identity and bodily diversity. Therefore, quality training is essential for all people involved in the delivery of protection and assistance and refugee status determination (RSD).

UNHCR and IOM have jointly developed this comprehensive training package on the protection of LGBTI persons of concern for staff members as well as the broader humanitarian community. The training’s modules cover a wide variety of topics, including terminology, international law, communication, operational protection, resettlement and RSD, all with a focus on practical guidance for UNHCR and IOM offices and partner organizations. We welcome you to the training, and hope it enriches and informs your work with LGBTI persons.

Intended Outcomes of the Training

• Assist staff members in organising and implementing effective and respectful interviews and other interactions with LGBTI people, and eliciting relevant information in an effective way that preserves dignity and humanity, by:
  o Encouraging the use of correct terminology in English as per international guidelines;
  o Discussing the unique protection challenges and vulnerabilities LGBTI people face, and identifying appropriate prevention, mitigation and response actions;
  o Reviewing potential scenarios specific to persons of concern in various host countries.
• Identify appropriate and sensitive interviewing techniques and lines of questioning.
• Identify problematic assumptions that may impact the provision of effective assistance.
• Ensure that RSD and resettlement staff members have the necessary knowledge and skills to assess the international protection needs of LGBTI people in accordance with international standards.

Anticipated Long-term Impacts of the Training

• UNHCR, IOM and partner offices are rendered LGBTI-safe and welcoming.
• Participants are aware of the rationale and responsibility to protect LGBTI persons of concern fleeing persecution on the basis of their bodily diversity, sexual orientation or gender identity.
• Participants are sensitized to the specific issues related to the protection of LGBTI persons of concern and are able to identify and address them in partnership with persons of concern.
• RSD adjudicators further develop their capacity to identify and assess LGBTI claims in accordance with UNHCR’s policies and guidelines, as well as other applicable international standards.
Overview

Welcome to Module Two of Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Persons in Forced Displacement and the Humanitarian Context. In Module One, training participants learned the basic skills and knowledge needed to work with LGBTI people, including key terms, tips for successful communication and how to create safe and welcoming spaces. Module Two builds upon these foundation topics by focusing on how to conduct respectful interviews.

The interview is a key aspect of our work. Interviews may be short, singular and focused on basic data or comprehensive and carried out over an extended period of time. They may take place in numerous locations, under a wide range of circumstances and by many different organizations and entities. Interviews may be related to registration, Refugee Status Determination (RSD), protection needs, durable solutions or other programmes.

Module Two explores how all interviewers can achieve their aim of gathering the necessary information and eliciting full and truthful testimony while ensuring the interview is a safe space for LGBTI persons of concern. Safe interview spaces have a well-defined purpose, ensure confidentiality and promote an atmosphere of trust and understanding.

UNIT ONE, INTERVIEW BASICS, asks participants to consider the questions that should and should not be asked during various types of interviews. Participants are taught the Difference, Stigma, Shame, Harm (DSSH) model. The premise of the DSSH model is that there are several characteristics that are nearly universal among LGBTI people, and that the vast majority of individuals we interview will be able to discuss them in some capacity. Those characteristics are difference and stigma. Many people will additionally have experienced shame and harm.

The reason this model is so useful is that it allows participants to conduct interviews in a way that is non-judgmental and employs non-intrusive and non-sexual questions. For RSD interviews, it is also an alternative means of assessing credibility for individuals who are not “out” or have not engaged in same-sex partnerships. The DSSH model is based upon open-ended questions and employs a non-adversarial approach.

UNIT TWO, INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES, teaches participants how to lead a successful interview and allows them to observe and critique a real time interview during a Group Role-Play. Participants then have the opportunity to practice conducting their own interviews during the Paired Role-Play. Each of these role-play exercises provides time for training participants to discuss what worked and what didn’t work in a safe and supportive training environment.

Module 02 includes two variations. The Standard Variation is for training participants who are not engaged in RSD or audiences that are a mix of RSD and non-RSD training participants. The RSD Variation is for an audience comprised entirely of training participants who conduct RSD interviews or supervise staff members who conduct RSD interviews. The RSD Variation allows more time for the Facilitator to address some of the topics that are relevant only to RSD interviews. Throughout the presentation and Facilitation Guide, the variations are noted when relevant. The Participant Workbook given to training participants is the same for both variations.

Note it is critical when facilitating the Standard Variation of Module 02 that the Facilitator ensure that the participants understand the limits of their interviews and the scope of questions that are appropriate to ask. This is especially important when referring to the DSSH model for guidance, as many of the questions, especially those about childhood and past persecution, may not be appropriate in many types of interviews.

Training Tip!

Remember to let the presentation be your guide. All objectives, teaching segments, discussion questions, videos, exercises and key learning points have slides in the presentation. Exercise slides instruct participants on the page to turn to in their workbooks, and the Notes section of each exercise slide refers the Facilitator to the relevant page in the Facilitation Guide for instructions and keys. For more training tips, see the Training Overview Guide for Facilitators.
Below is a guide to the length of each activity in Module Two. Module Two contains between five hours 15 minutes and seven hours of training material depending on the variation you present. See the Planning a Training Session section in the Training Overview Guide for Facilitators for assistance in planning an agenda comprised of material from Module Two. You can then fill in your corresponding agenda dates and times in the spaces provided below.

Note that the times allotted to the various segments of Module Two are suggested only. As a Facilitator, you should adjust each segment’s length according to the amount of time you believe discussion and elaboration on the presentation slides will take in your particular session.

### Module Two Timing Chart

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<th>Segment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Materials Needed</th>
<th>Length</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Variation</strong></td>
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<td>Module 02, Unit 01, Standard Variation: Interview Basics, 195 minutes (3 hours 15 minutes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Objectives &amp; Language</td>
<td>Slides 1-4</td>
<td>07m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Mock Interview Scripts</td>
<td>Slide 5; FG 4-15</td>
<td>80m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Working with Interpreters</td>
<td>Slides 6-9; FG 16</td>
<td>30m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Segment</td>
<td>The DSSH Model</td>
<td>Slides 10-28; FG 17</td>
<td>30m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Appropriate Lines of Questioning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Situational Awareness</td>
<td>Slide 30; FG 18-19; Team Number Table Cards</td>
<td>30m</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrap-Up</td>
<td>Key Learning Points</td>
<td>Slides 31-32</td>
<td>03m</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 02, Unit 02, Standard Variation: Interview Techniques, 120 minutes (2 hours)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Segment</td>
<td>Best Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Group Role-Play</td>
<td>Slide 42 [skip slides 37-41 in this variation if you have no participants who do RSD]; FG 20-25; Group Role-Play sheets</td>
<td>45m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrap-Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Objectives &amp; Language</td>
<td>Slides 1-4</td>
<td>07m</td>
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<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Mock Interview Scripts</td>
<td>Slide 5; FG 4-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Working with Interpreters</td>
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<td>The DSSH Model</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Situational Awareness</td>
<td>Slide 30; FG 18-19; Team Number Table Cards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrap-Up</td>
<td>Key Learning Points</td>
<td>Slides 31-32</td>
<td>03m</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Teaching Segment</td>
<td>Best Practices</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Group Role-Play</td>
<td>Slide 42; FG 20-25; Group Role-Play sheets</td>
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<td>Wrap-Up</td>
<td>Key Learning Points</td>
<td>Slides 44-47</td>
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*Compulsory segments are denoted with an “x”; FG = Facilitation Guide. Participant Workbook pages are denoted on slides.
INTERVIEW BASICS EXERCISE

Mock Interview Scripts

Overview
The Mock Interview Scripts exercise allows training participants to hear two hypothetical interviews between a staff member and a LGBTI person of concern and decide which questions the staff member asked were appropriate and which were inappropriate. By learning through observation and discussion, and debating the questions with one another, training participants will be better prepared to interview LGBTI persons of concern. This exercise also prepares participants to learn the DSSH model and carry out their own interviews in the Paired Role-Play exercise in Unit 02.

A Note on the Facilitation Key Colours

The facilitation notes for these scripts suggest whether a question is appropriate (green), inappropriate (red) or could have been phrased better (orange). This is based on the basic tenants of respectful communication contained in the Terminology and Successful Communication Units and the basic tenants of interviewing contained in the DSSH model and UNHCR’s Guidelines on International Protection No. 9. During the course of your discussions, however, training participants may feel that some words or phrases marked green in the Facilitator’s Key are actually inappropriate or judgmental, or that some words or phrases marked orange in the Facilitator’s Key are fine in certain contexts. This may thus bring the colours into question for you as you facilitate the discussions related to each script.

While it is important to ensure you keep the discussion in line with the basic tenants of respectful communication and the DSSH model, you should allow for flexibility in how training participants in different locations contextualize the text in English. For instance, in some locations, participants feel the word “difference” is offensive, while in others they feel “difference” is a respectful tool for discussing LGBTI issues. In some countries the word “relationship” has a sexual connotation and is inappropriate, while in others “relationship” is a respectful way to ask about dating, partnership or marriage. And in some places, the way a sentence is worded can sound judgmental, while in others it sounds friendly.

As long as the alterations the participants suggest aren’t in relation to a question or statement that appears in red in the facilitation notes – which means it is not appropriate under any circumstances and is not debatable – you should allow “green” statements or questions to be “orange” and, in limited circumstances approached with caution and thoughtful discussion and debate, “orange” statements or questions to be “green.” You should also work with the participants as needed to identify alternate and equally applicable respectful words and phrases they feel comfortable using, bringing their statements and questions as closely in line with the recommended standards as possible. It’s helpful to highlight the importance of local context to them so they understand why some words and phrases are debatable.

Exercise Length: 1 hour 20 minutes. 10 minutes to read each script; 30 minutes to discuss each script.

Variations: Before the training participants read each script, the Facilitator should define for them what kind of interview it is. The type of interview you choose will depend on what is of most use to the participants. If you are training a mixed audience, the first script should be RSD and the second script another type of interview, such as protection or resettlement. If you are training a RSD audience, both scripts should be RSD. If you are training a non-RSD audience that includes participants who work in the area of durable solutions, the first script should be durable solutions and the second script another type of interview, such as protection. If training a non-RSD audience without any participants working in durable solutions, both scripts should be related to protection or another area.

Materials Needed:

- Mock Scripts (in the Participant Workbook)
- Team Number Table Cards (optional; in Training Aides)
Facilitator’s Script – Exercise Description

- This exercise allows us to explore what questions we should and shouldn't ask in interviews with LGBTI people.
- For this exercise, we will read two short sample interview scripts.
- Please keep in mind that these mock interview scripts are not representative of actual interviews. An actual interview would be much longer and more comprehensive. In other words, we understand this interview is not realistic. It is meant to demonstrate the questions we should and should not ask only.
- These interview excerpts are intended to highlight some of the main topics you might want to explore with LGBTI people.
- Please turn to the first interview script. I need two volunteers to read – one to read for the staff member and one to read for the individual. Please come up front to read.
- As they read, please mark the things the staff member says that you think are inappropriate and the things the staff member says that you think are appropriate.
- After the discussion is conducted for Mock Interview Script One-
- Now please turn to the second interview script. I need two more volunteers to read – one to read for the staff member and one to read for the individual. Please come up front to read.
- As they read, you should again mark the things the staff member says that you think are inappropriate and the things the staff member says that you think are appropriate.

Facilitator’s Script – Discussion Introduction, Team Variation

- Excellent job reading – thank you. You can return to your seats.
- Now, let’s split into teams of three people each.
- Please count off by XX (the count-off number is the size of group divided by 3 and rounded down. Example: the group size is 25. 25 divided by 3 is 8.3, so the group count-off is by 8. Seven teams will have three people and one team will have four people).
- I’ve put team numbers on the tables in front of you. Please move to the table that has your team number on it.
- I want you to discuss your thoughts on each question or comment made by the staff member in the first script.
- Then I’ll go through them one by one and ask for your team input. You have 15 minutes to discuss the script.
- After the discussion is conducted for Mock Interview Script One:
- Please remain in your teams and again discuss your thoughts on each question or comment made by the staff member in the second script. Then we’ll go through them. You have 15 minutes to discuss this script.

Facilitator’s Script – Discussion Introduction, Group Variation

- Thank you for reading for us. You did an excellent job. You can return to your seats.
- Now, let’s go through the script line-by-line together and discuss whether we thought each question or statement was appropriate or inappropriate.
- After the discussion is conducted for Mock Interview Script One-
- Let’s again go through the script line-by-line and discuss whether we thought each question or statement was appropriate or inappropriate.
INTERVIEW BASICS EXERCISE
Mock Interview Scripts Facilitator’s Key – Script One

Color Key: Text in green or followed by a (G) is appropriate. Text in orange or followed by an (O) could be phrased better or should be asked with caution. Text in red or followed by a (R) is inappropriate. Q&A text in gray explains why a statement is appropriate, inappropriate or needs improvement and makes suggestions for questions and answers.

Listen while we read an excerpt of an interview between a staff member and a 23-year-old named Sam. After Sam’s initial interview was completed, and just before he left the interview room, he told the staff member he wanted to discuss an additional topic that had not been addressed. While the script is read, highlight points where the staff member could have phrased the question or statement better, or where the staff member said something inappropriate. Note why you feel this way for the group discussion that will follow. Keep in mind this example is for training purposes only and does not reflect a real interview.

Staff Member: If there is anything else you think could be important for me to know, please tell me now. (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate statement?
A1. The individual should be encouraged to share any information that could be relevant.

Sam: I wasn’t sure whether this was relevant, so I haven’t said anything about it today. And I have to be honest, I feel very nervous to share this information with you. But if I left without telling you I think it would be a big mistake, because it’s one of the reasons I’m not able to go home and am having so many problems here.

Staff Member: Yes, it is very important to learn about anything that caused you problems. Please don’t feel nervous. You can tell me anything you want. (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate statement?
A1. The staff member is right to reassure the individual that they can share any information they wish.

Sam: Then I want to tell you that I’m not the same as other men in my community. I’m gay.

Staff Member: Thank you for sharing that with me. I know it can be difficult to talk about. I appreciate you trusting me enough to tell me. I want to remind you that everything you tell me is confidential. I won’t share it with anyone in your family. Only our office and the organizations we refer you to for assistance will know this information. I’d also like to ask you some related questions. OK? (O)
Q1. What is missing from the staff member’s opening statement?
A1. Sam’s consent should be sought before any of his information is shared with any other organization.

Sam: OK. Thank you.

Staff Member: When did you first realize you were gay? (O)
Q1. Should we ask this question? In what context?
A1. This type of question should only be asked in certain types of interviews where you are detailing what happened to the individual in the past and wish to do so in a chronological way. Often when we’re establishing a claim, it is easiest to start “at the beginning” – or when the individual’s problems began. For LGBTI people, their problems often began around the time they knew they were different. Note if the individual details instances of persecution based on sexual orientation or gender identity, this question would not necessarily be needed. If you are doing a different type of interview, this question would be unnecessary. Instead, you could simply ask, “could you tell me more?”
Q2. Should the question be rephrased?
A2. Several asylum countries believe this question is acceptable to ask. For instance, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services lists this as the first recommended question to ask in the Refugee Affairs Division LGBTI training module. Under the model we will study, however, this question is discouraged when phrased in this way.
Q3. Why would this question be discouraged?
A3. Recall the moment when you knew what your sexual orientation or gender identity was. That’s difficult, isn’t it? Sexual orientation and gender identity can develop over many years. Pinpointing one point in time when you knew how to identify yourself can be hard. The risk in encouraging interviewers to ask this question is that people who cannot answer it clearly or definitively could be unfairly judged as having credibility issues.

Q4. What is a better question to ask?
A4. The model we’ll look at in the next unit – the Difference, Stigma, Shame, Harm (DSSH) Model – encourages us to ask the question, “When did you first know you were different?” The vast majority of LGBTI people express feeling different than others. While it can be difficult to pinpoint when you realized your sexual orientation or gender identity, it is easier to describe when you began to know you were different. In this interview, Sam also noted that he is “not the same” as other men in his community. This opens a window of opportunity to explore difference in Sam’s narrative.

Sam: I realized when I was very young, maybe around age eight or nine. I’m not sure.

Staff Member: How did you know for sure you were gay? (R)
Q1. Why is this an inappropriate question?
A1. Reflect on your own sexual orientation. How do you know what it is? We can recall that sexual orientation refers to our capacity for attraction to other people. We generally know what our sexual orientation is based on who we are attracted to. Asking questions about attraction can lead to answers that are sexual in nature, and we want to avoid any questions that are either about sex or elicit answers about sex.

Sam: Hmmm... Well, I just knew... I just knew.

Staff Member: What do you think happened to make you gay? (R)
Q1. Why is this an inappropriate question?
A1. This question reflects a stereotype that people are gay, lesbian or transgender because something happened to them in their childhood. Generally, the stereotype assumes something bad happened to them, such as sexual abuse or rape. This belief is pervasive in some places, but it is a myth. While you may work with LGBTI persons of concern who have been sexually abused or raped, it is critical to keep in mind that sexual orientation is an innate characteristic, not a response to an event. Individuals do not “become gay” because someone sexually abused or raped them.

Sam: What happened to make me gay? I don’t know. I don’t think anything happened.

Staff Member: Did you tell anyone you were gay? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is appropriate because it asks whether Sam felt he was able to share the information, or whether he feared sharing it. It could lead to information regarding past persecution.

Sam: When I was a teenager, I told my best friend.

Staff Member: You said you realized you were gay at age eight. Why did you wait so long to tell someone? (O)
Q1. Why is this question phrased poorly?
A1. This question sounds judgmental. The question, in essence, is important, because it could elicit information about stigma or harm. It may also provide context regarding conditions in the country and the atmosphere within Sam’s house or community that kept him from feeling comfortable sharing the information. However, it should be rephrased.

Q2. What is a better way to phrase this question?
A2. You might ask, “Is there a reason you waited until you were a teenager to share the information?”

Sam: I was afraid of what my friends would think, or that my family would find out. I knew that my family would not accept me being gay, and that there might be consequences. I knew they would be very angry.

Staff Member: What kind of consequences might there be? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question asks Sam to describe the reasons he was afraid to share the information. It could elicit information about stigma or harm or regarding past persecution or future fear.
Sam: It’s not acceptable to be gay in my community. I’ve heard people threatening to hurt people that are known to be gay. That made me afraid of what would happen if I told anyone. It’s considered very shameful.

Staff Member: How did your friend react when you told him? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is appropriate because it may elicit information about stigma or support networks.

Sam: He is also gay, so he accepted me, but we agreed to keep it secret.

Staff Member: Why did you keep it secret? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is appropriate because it may elicit information about stigma or harm.

Sam: We were afraid people would try to attack us or threaten us or our families if they found out.

Staff Member: Do you know other gay people in your home country? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is appropriate because it could elicit information about stigma, harm, support networks or country conditions.

Sam: Yes, a few.

Staff Member: How are they treated? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is appropriate because it could elicit information about stigma, harm or country conditions.

Sam: I’ve had gay friends who were beaten by their families or kicked out of their houses. You can be threatened just because someone suspects you’re gay. It’s very dangerous. You can be abused, harassed, or have to leave the community. You can also be blackmailed if someone finds out. I’ve heard of that happening.

Staff Member: Does anyone in your family know you’re gay? (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is appropriate because it could elicit information about stigma, harm or support networks.

Sam: I think my mother suspects I am, but she would never accept it. She would never talk about it. Being gay is against her beliefs. She would be very ashamed. I told my sister a few years ago. She advised me not to tell anyone else in the family, if I wanted to keep living at home. She thinks when I get married I’ll change my mind. She said I’d have to give up my family and my security if I wanted to be gay.

Staff Member: Are you going to get married? (O)
Q1. Is this an appropriate or inappropriate question?
A1. This question is asked here because Sam said his sister thinks when he gets married he will change his mind about being gay. In other circumstances, the interviewer should be cautious when asking this question. We may wish to elicit information regarding a potential forced marriage, but we want to avoid sounding judgmental or using this question to establish credibility. LGBTI people get married to different-sex partners for a wide variety of social, cultural and religious reasons. Marriage for these reasons does not undermine a sexual orientation claim. A better line of questioning might be, “You mentioned your sister thinks you will get married. Can you tell me more? In your country of origin, was there any pressure to get married?”

Sam: If I have to stay living with my family, yes, I’ll get married.

Staff Member: Why would you do that, if you’re gay? (O)
Q1. Why is wrong with this question?
A1. This question is judgmental. Marriage to a different-sex person does not prove or disprove someone has a particular sexual orientation. As explained in relation to the previous questions, we would want to explore, in a non-judgmental
manner, any reasons why Sam may feel forced to get married against his will, including if he was dependent on his family for economic survival.

Sam: I have to get married, it’s what my family wants.

**Staff Member:** Have you ever been in a relationship with a man? (G)

**Q1.** Why is this an appropriate question?

**A1.** This question is acceptable because it may establish whether Sam is able to meet people in his country of origin or asylum. It may also establish whether they can freely and openly be in a relationship or if, due to the country conditions, they must hide their relationship. Be cautious, however, not to ask any questions that could imply you wish to know about sexual relations. If conducting a RSD interview, you should avoid using this question to determine the credibility of the applicant’s claimed sexual orientation. The absence of a relationship does not indicate a lack of credibility. An individual does not need to have been in a same-sex relationship to prove they are of diverse sexual orientation. Just like heterosexuals, they may know their sexual orientation long before they have a relationship or sexual interaction with another person.

Sam: Yes, I am in a relationship with someone now.

**Staff Member:** How did you meet? (G)

**Q1.** Why is this an appropriate question?

**A1.** This question is acceptable because it may establish whether individuals in the country are able to meet openly, or in the same way heterosexual couples are able to meet.

Sam: We met through friends, at a mutual friend’s party

**Staff Member:** How do you spend time together? (G)

**Q1.** Why is this an appropriate question?

**A1.** This question is acceptable because it may establish whether individuals in the country are able to spend time together openly. Keep in mind that, if Sam had never had a relationship, it would have no negative bearing on his claim.

Sam: We meet at another friend’s house, where it’s safe to be together. His family doesn’t know he’s gay either, so we can’t spend time at our houses.

**Staff Member:** What do you do in bed together? (R)

**Q1.** Why is this an inappropriate question?

**A1.** It is never acceptable to ask questions about sex. Descriptions of sexual acts do not “prove” sexual orientation, and are not useful in establishing either past persecution or future fear.

Sam: ... no answer ...

**Staff Member:** Did you ever try dating a woman? (R)

**Q1.** Why is this an inappropriate question?

**A1.** This question is judgmental. It implies that Sam has not tried hard enough to be heterosexual, or that he cannot know his sexual orientation without having tried to date a woman in addition to men. Keep in mind that we do not expect heterosexual individuals to engage in same-sex relationships in order to know for sure they are heterosexual. The same standards should be applied to everyone. In other words, if you wouldn’t ask this question to a heterosexual person, do not ask it to a person of diverse sexual orientation. A better question is, “Have you been in relationships?”

Sam: Yes. I had to. It’s what is expected. It didn’t work out.

**Staff Member:** Have you been tested for HIV? (R)

**Q1.** Why is this an inappropriate question?

**A1.** This question is based on a stereotype that gay men are more likely to contract HIV. Being a person of diverse sexual orientation does not mean you have a higher likelihood of having HIV. In general, you should only discuss HIV status if the individual raises it. If you must ask this question because it is required as part of your interview, you should preface the question with, “We must ask everyone this question.”
Sam: No.

**Staff Member:** Are you involved in any organizations for LGBTI people in your home country? (O)

**Q1.** What is wrong with this question?

A1. **The essence of this question is appropriate.** The staff member wishes to know whether Sam has any affiliations with an organization because it could indicate a political claim or establish whether Sam has any support networks. However, the question is poorly worded. The term “LGBTI people” is not known to everyone, especially outside Western spheres. “Persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities” is also not used by people to describe themselves, or by organizations to describe the people they serve – rather, it is used by international organizations as an all-encompassing and descriptive term. Sam identified himself to the staff member as gay. The staff member should thus use the term “gay” in this question to ensure Sam understands it.

Sam: What kind of organizations?

**Staff Member:** Organizations that work to support and assist people who are gay, like you. (G)

**Q1.** Why is this statement appropriate?

A1. **This statement explains what the staff member meant when he referenced organizations for LGBTI people.**

Sam: No, we don’t have those kinds of organizations.

**Staff Member:** What about here, in this country? (G)

**Q1.** Why is this question appropriate?

A1. **This question is also related to support networks and potential protection concerns in the country of asylum.**

Sam: No, I’m not.

**Staff Member:** Have you ever been to the Black Cat Bar? (R)

**Q1.** Why is this question inappropriate?

A1. **Not all LGBTI people will know other LGBTI people, have established LGBTI networks, have the same social interests as other LGBTI people or spend time at locations frequented by other LGBTI people, such as bars or community centers. This question is based on stereotypes that all LGBTI people go to the same places. Not knowing other LGBTI people or popular LGBTI locations does not undermine a sexual orientation claim.**

**Q2.** What would be a better line of questioning?

A2. The interviewer could ask about religion, school or other positive thematic areas.

Sam: No, I don’t know that place.

**Staff Member:** But according to my information, this is a well-known gay bar. How could you not know it? (R)

**Q1.** Why is this question inappropriate?

A1. **This is judgmental and based on a stereotype.**

Sam: I don’t know. We don’t go out to bars. (R)

**Staff Member:** What are you afraid of happening if you return to your home country? (G)

**Q1.** Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. **This question is acceptable, as it establishes future fear.**

Sam: I’m afraid that people in my community there will find out that I’m gay, and abuse me verbally when I go outside, or that the police will catch us one day and we’ll be in big trouble.

**Staff Member:** How would the police catch you? (G)

**Q1.** Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. **This question is acceptable, as it establishes future fear.**
Sam: Sometimes people will tell the police names of suspected gay men, just because they don’t want you in the community. You never know what could happen.

**Staff Member:** Is there anything else you are afraid of if you return to your home country? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is acceptable, as it establishes future fear.

Sam: I’m afraid my family will find out as well. I’m afraid I’ll be forced to marry, or that if I refuse to marry I’ll be in big trouble. I’m very scared. Even if my family doesn’t do that, it would be shameful for them and they would be afraid the community would find out.

**Staff Member:** Can you go back to your home country and live in another city where no one knows you? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question is acceptable, as it explores the internal flight alternative.

Sam: No, I don’t think that’s an option. It’s not safe to be gay anywhere in my country. And I would have no support system, no network. I don’t know how I would even find a job.

**Staff Member:** What if you were careful to hide that you are gay? You could try not to act or look gay, right? You can avoid having any same-sex relationships or gay friends? (R)

Q1. Why is this an inappropriate question?
A1. This question is inappropriate, for several reasons.

First, the staff member is expressing a personal opinion that LGBTI people should be expected to hide who they are in order to avoid persecution. Personal opinions about sexual orientation should not be expressed during an interview.

Second, the staff member is suggesting Sam conceal his sexual orientation. In the past, this was described by adjudicators as “reasonable tolerance” – or the level of concealment a LGBTI person could “reasonably tolerate” in order to avoid persecution. Today, we recognize asking someone to conceal in order to avoid harm implies they are not entitled to basic human rights. We also understand that concealment causes serious psychological harm. It requires someone not only to hide who they are, but often to engage in a wide range of activities to “prove” they are heterosexual, including marrying someone of a different sex and entering into sexual relations with them. For some people, this can lead to marital rape. Staff can refer to the Guidelines on International Protection No. 9 for more information about the lack of a requirement for individuals to act discreetly in order to avoid harm upon return.

Third, this question suggests that Sam live a life of isolation. Concealment would require Sam to live his life without romantic, emotional or physical relationships or friends like him. This violates many human rights, including his right to freedom of expression and his right to form a family, and may constitute persecution.

Sam: I don’t want to live my life in hiding and in fear. I don’t want to always worry that someone will discover me. I don’t want to live without friends or a partner. I don’t think that’s any way to live.
INTerview Basics Exercise
Mock Interview Scripts Facilitator’s Key – Script Two

Color Key: Text in green or followed by a (G) is appropriate. Text in orange or followed by an (O) could be phrased better or should be asked with caution. Text in red or followed by a (R) is inappropriate. Q&A text in gray explains why a statement is appropriate, inappropriate or needs improvement and makes suggestions for questions and answers.

Listen while we read an excerpt of an interview between a staff member and 40-year-old named Sara. Sara has been to the office several times for protection counselling after her registration with UNHCR, during which she self-identified to staff members as transgender. While the script is read, highlight points where the staff member could have phrased the question or statement better, or said something inappropriate. Note why you feel this way. Keep in mind this example is for training purposes only and does not reflect a real interview.

Staff Member: I have just gone through an introduction with you. If you have any questions about the information I shared, please let me know. I’d also like to ask you if you have a preferred name and pronoun that I can use throughout our interview today. (O)

Q1. What else should the staff member have included in this opening statement?
A1. The staff member did well in asking if the individual has a preferred name, pronoun and gender before the interview began. See the Successful Communications unit in Module 01 for more information on how to discuss and record gender identity information. The staff member could also re-emphasize the safe space element of the interview and information related to the interpreter, if needed.

Sara: Yes, I prefer to be called Sara and I would like to be listed as a woman.

Staff Member: Thank you, I will refer to you as Sara and as a woman in my notes. I’d like to let you know that the sex as listed on your official ID will also be in your file. (G)

Q1. Is this information correct?
A1. Yes, this follows current guidelines.

Sara: Thank you.

Staff Member: I want to ask you a few questions related to you being transgender. Now, just to be clear, are you still a man, or did you have an operation on your body to change to a woman? (R)

Q1. Why is this question inappropriate?
A1. This question is invasive and unnecessary. The proper way to ask a question about transition is, “Have you taken any steps to transition, or do you plan to take any steps to transition in the future?” Keep in mind that gender identity is self-defined and should not be based upon an individual’s outward appearance. The interviewer would want to start by asking open-ended questions about Sara’s background experiences in her home country.

Sara: Well, I still have the body of a man. But that is not how I consider myself.

Staff Member: Can you please explain? (G)

Q1. Why is this question appropriate?
A1. When an individual makes a statement that you don’t understand, such as, “That is not how I consider myself,” it is appropriate to ask for further information. Another way to do so would be, “Can you tell me more about that?” or “Can you tell me what that means to you?”

Sara: I consider myself to be a woman. I feel like a woman inside, even if my body is not that of a woman outside. I thought you would respect that here.

Staff Member: Yes, we respect that here. (G)

Q1. Why is this statement appropriate?
A1. It is useful to reiterate this information when possible.
**Mock Interview Scripts Facilitator’s Key**

**Sara:** Thank you.

**Staff Member:** I asked because you don’t look like a woman to me. (R)

Q1. Why is this statement inappropriate?

A1. This statement is judgmental and offensive. Gender identity is determined by the individual and should not be judged by the staff member based on external appearances. It is also inappropriate for a staff member to express personal opinions about gender identity during an interview. Further note that Sara does not need to have a specific gender expression to “prove” her gender identity. In short, her identity is what she says it is. While you need to thoroughly explore the topic respectfully during the interview, using the same interview techniques you would use with other individuals, keep in mind that we accept gender identity on testimony.

**Sara:** When I go out, I have to dress as a man and look like a man. Otherwise I’d have problems or be in danger. But if I ever move to a place that is safe for people like me, I will be myself. I will live as a woman.

**Staff Member:** When did you first know you were transgender? (O)

Q1. Why is this question inappropriate?

A1. The staff member missed the opportunity to ask, “Why would you be in danger?” based on the previous question. Also, like sexual orientation, it can be difficult for an individual to answer this question with an exact time period. The interviewer might thus want to ask, “When did you know you were different,” or, “Can you tell me about your experience of being transgender?”

Q2. Should the staff member be asking this question in the context of this interview?

A2. Depending on the context of the interview, this question may or may not be appropriate.

**Sara:** I feel like I’ve always known. I never felt like I fit inside the body of a man.

**Staff Member:** When did you first realize you were gay? (R)

Q1. What is the staff member mixing up in this instance?


Q2. Recall that sexual orientation is our outward attraction to others. Gender identity is our internal sense of gender. Should we ask transgender people when they realized they had a diverse sexual orientation?

A2. No. We should not assume someone who is transgender also has a diverse sexual orientation. Persons of diverse gender identities may identify as gay, straight or in another way. Sexual orientation is irrelevant unless the individual specifically raises it. Again, you should also consider the context of the interview.

**Sara:** I’m not gay.

**Staff Member:** Hmmmm... You’re not gay? OK... You mentioned during registration that you are married. (R)

Q1. Why is the staff member making this statement?

A1. The staff member is again mixing up sexual orientation and gender identity. The statement also sounds judgmental – as if the fact that Sara was married undermines her testimony.

**Sara:** Yes, I am married.

**Staff Member:** Why did you get married? (O)

Q1. Why would we question the reason a person of diverse gender identity got married?

A1. The word “why” implies the staff member believes someone of a diverse gender identity would not get married, and that being married could bring Sara’s claim into question. Recall that gender identity is one’s internal sense of gender. One’s gender identity does not indicate one’s sexual orientation. Transgender people might identity as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual or in another way. Even if Sara did identify as gay, marriage would not necessarily undermine her claim, as people get married for many reasons unrelated to their sexual orientation, such as cultural, social and religious reasons. If conducting a RSD interview, the topic should be explored as it may be relevant to her claim to international protection. However, it must be explored in a non-judgmental manner that does not conflate gender identity with sexual orientation or employ stereotypes. In the context of other interviews, this question may not be relevant.

**Sara:** I wanted to marry my wife as soon as I met her. I love her very much.
**Staff Member:** Do you have carnal relations with your wife? (R)

Q1. Why is this an inappropriate question?

A1. *We do not ask questions about sex. Having sexual intercourse does not prove or disprove sexual orientation. Also, this is a gender identity claim.*

**Sara:** I don’t know what you mean.

**Staff Member:** That refers to sexual intercourse. (R)

*See above.*

**Sara:** *(embarrassed pause)* Yes, we do.

**Staff Member:** OK... Did you ever tell anyone you’re transgender? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. *This question asks whether Sara felt she was able to share the information, or whether she feared sharing it. It could lead to information regarding past persecution.*

**Sara:** I have told a couple friends. And one time I tried to talk to a doctor about it. That didn’t work out. But I read in the handout in your office that you accept us. So I wanted to tell you, in case you could help me.

**Staff Member:** Did the doctor try to treat your disorder? (R)

Q1. Why are the words inappropriate here?

A1. *“Treat” and “disorder.” Being a person of diverse gender identity, or transgender, is not a disorder.*

Q2. What should the staff member have asked instead?

A2. *“What did the doctor advise you? Did he or she offer counsel or assistance?”*

**Sara:** The doctor wouldn’t help me.

**Staff Member:** Does your wife know you are transgender? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. *This question about family knowledge of Sara’s gender identity is appropriate because it could elicit information about stigma, harm or support networks. Sara’s wife is one of her primary relationships.*

**Sara:** No.

**Staff Member:** Do you know other transgender people in your home country or here? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. *This question could elicit information about stigma, harm, support networks or country conditions.*

**Sara:** Not really. I just read about them online. And I know of some famous transgender people, mostly from Pakistan or India. I also heard there were some in Nepal, but I don’t know.

**Staff Member:** Does anyone in your family know you’re transgender? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. *This question could elicit information about stigma, harm or support networks.*

**Sara:** No. There’s no way I could possibly tell them. Not now.

**Staff Member:** What would they do if they knew? (G)

Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?

A1. *This question is appropriate because it could elicit information about stigma, harm or support networks.*

**Sara:** They would disown me for sure. My family is kind; I don’t think they would harm me. But on the level of society, it is considered very wrong, especially in terms of my religion. It is not acceptable. My family would not associate with me. It would be too shameful.
Staff Member: Did anyone ever suspect you’re transgender? Your family? Your friends? (O)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question could elicit information about stigma, harm or support networks, but should be asked carefully in a way that is non-judgmental sounding.
Sara: No, I don’t think so. I’ve been very careful to hide it well. I’ve been keeping it inside.

Staff Member: So you have never been treated badly by anyone because you are transgender? (R)
Q1. Why is this an inappropriate question?
A1. This question implies Sara never suffered harm due to her gender identity. It is a common assumption that a person of diverse sexual orientation or gender identity should have suffered brutal harm – especially that of a physical or sexual nature – in order to have a valid claim or valid protection needs.
Q2. What harm has Sara suffered?
A2. Sara has been forced to conceal a characteristic that is fundamental to her human dignity – her gender identity – throughout her life due to fear. This is concealment, which is a violation of Sara’s human rights.
Q3. What would a more appropriate question be?
A3. A more appropriate question might be, “How does it feel to have to keep your gender identity hidden?”

Sara: No, but I know people are treated badly. We’ve talked online, in chat rooms.

Staff Member: Have you taken any steps to transition? That means changing your appearance or documents. (G)
Q1. Why is this an appropriate question?
A1. This question could add to the individual’s narrative regarding past persecution or future fear in the context of RSD, and in other contexts could be important in terms of protection needs or comprehensive durable solutions. It could also provide information regarding services the individual may need in the future. The staff member was correct in explaining what the term transition meant in this context.
Sara: I couldn’t do it at home and I can’t do it here, but I would like to. I read that in other countries, you can.

Staff Member: So Raj, you would like to become a transsexual someday, if you can? (R)
Q1. What two things are wrong with this question?
A1. First, the staff member calls Sara “Raj.” When working with transgender people, it is not uncommon to accidentally reference the name on their official documents. Second, the staff member uses the word “transsexual,” which is inappropriate in the context of this interview. Third, the question is unnecessary.
A2. Apologize and correct yourself.
A3. Sara is not going to “become” anything – she already identifies as a woman. Sara may choose in the future to take steps to transition. However, if an individual does not wish to transition, it does not undermine their claim or negate their self-identified gender or related protection needs. Sara and the staff member have already discussed transition, so this question is unnecessary.

Sara: I would like to try to live as a woman, if I can get the assistance I need. And I want to be where there are others like me.
What impact could the gender, nationality, ethnicity or linguistic group of an interpreter have on an interview?

The gender of the interpreter could lead the individual to feel discomfort in disclosing certain information. Do not assume, however, that all LGBTI people will prefer a female interpreter. The preference will depend on the individual. We can try to ensure they are comfortable with their interpreter by offering an interpreter of another gender, when possible. Individuals may also feel uncomfortable disclosing information to an interpreter of the same nationality, ethnicity or linguistic group, particularly if that individual is from the local community. They may perceive that the interpreter will be biased against them, or that there will be a lack of confidentiality. When possible, it is recommended to use interpreters from outside the community to ensure LGBTI persons of concern feel safe and comfortable.

How can we confirm that interpreters are comfortable interpreting for LGBTI people? How can we provide adequate training?

We should speak to interpreters when they are hired. We should also offer interpreters training on a regular basis, when and where possible. If a full training is not possible, they should at least be briefed on the subject, given related handouts and asked to complete the interpretation exercise.

Should interpreters be allowed to “opt out” of interpreting for LGBTI people?

If an interpreter is a permanent staff member, they should be required to undergo training and then work with all persons of diversity. LGBTI people should be no exception. However, if an interpreter is not a staff member, you may wish to allow them to opt out and identify another interpreter. This will help ensure the individual has a respectful and dignified experience.

What alternatives are available if an individual will not interview with an interpreter from their community?

The answer to this question is dependent on the location. Sample answers are people from another community who speak the same language or telephonic interpretation. In extreme situations where you have a large number of cases, you might explore bringing in an interpreter from another location.

What are the challenges you’ve faced using interpreters and what are the best practices you’ve used to address those challenges?
Understanding the DSSH Model

The DSSH Model was developed by UK barrister S Chelvan as an alternative means of interviewing individuals and assessing credibility within the asylum context. Although the model is most applicable to RSD interviews, the themes it contains are useful for a wide range of interviews, including protection and resettlement interviews.

The key idea contained in the DSSH Model is that the vast majority of LGBTI people have experienced difference in their lives, generally beginning with the realization that they are difference than the majority of their peers and family members and eventually extending to the realization that they are different than the majority of society. Those realizations of difference may or may not be accompanied by stigma – whether from their peers or family, or from larger society – and the shame that is a result of stigma. It may also be accompanied by harm from a wide range of sources, including state and non-state actors.

The premise of the DSSH Model is that, by exploring difference in an individual’s life, including in a wide range of thematic areas such as childhood, family, school, religious institutions, the workplace and various facets of the society in which the individual lives, the interviewer can avoid asking questions of a sexual or invasive nature they might otherwise feel they need to ask in order to establish a claim and “prove” the individual is LGBTI.

The Term “Difference”

In this context, the term “difference” does not represent an individual being inferior to another person or other persons. Rather, the term acknowledges that everyone has characteristics of difference, whether they are related to gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability or other factors. In societies around the world, some differences are celebrated, some are treated neutrally and some become the target of stigma, marginalization and persecution. Approaches to difference may depend on a number of factors, such as whether the society is urban or rural, and may change over time.

It is important to note that the use of the word difference in this context is not intended to mark LGBTI people as inferior to or socially partitioned from the majority of individuals from whom they are different – keep in mind that being LGBTI is only one of numerous diversity characteristics that every individual human being possesses. Rather, it is meant to acknowledge that LGBTI persons have characteristics in relation to sexuality, gender identity and sex that are not always the same as others, and, that, in some cases, this difference could be regarded negatively and result in them being stigmatized, marginalized or targeted for harassment or persecution.

Alternatives to “Difference”

In some locations, the word difference has a negative connotation in English and training participants thus feel uncomfortable using it with persons of concern. If this is the case, explore the reasons for these connotations – including whether they apply only to LGBTI people, or if they apply to all instances of characteristics of difference in people – and determine whether there is an alternate word that can be used that will have the same positive outcome in relation to interviews but avoid causing discomfort to the interviewer or individual being interviewed. For instance, in many cases, the alternative question, “Can you tell me more about being ----?” or “Can you tell me how it feels being ---?” will suffice to elicit the information needed for that particular interview.

Remind participants that the DSSH Model is premised upon interviews with LGBTI individuals, and that difference is a common theme regardless of whether the interviewer asked questions using that particular term. In other words, whether or they use the term, they may find the individual they are interviewing addresses difference anyway.

The DSSH Model was created by S Chelvan. All DSSH material presented in this training has been adapted from his publicly available work. For more information about S Chelvan, see: http://www.no5.com/barristers/barrister-cvs/s-chelvan-immigration-asylum-and-nationality/.
The Situational Awareness exercise allows training participants to consider two potential scenarios they may encounter when interviewing LGBTI persons of concern and decide how they would address the situation if they experienced it during the course of their work. One scenario is for training participants who conduct RSD interviews and one is for training participants who engage in other types of interviews.

Exercise Length: 30 minutes. 15 minutes for description and team activity; 15 minutes for small group discussions.

Variations: If training a mixed audience, RSD participants should complete scenario one in two separate groups while the non-RSD participants complete scenario two in two separate groups. If training a RSD audience, all training participants should complete scenario one in four separate groups. If training a non-RSD audience, all training participants should complete scenario two in four separate groups.

Materials Needed:
- Situational Awareness worksheet (in the Participant Workbook)
- Team Number Table Cards (numbers 1-4; in Training Aides)

Facilitator’s Script – Exercise Description for a mixed audience (RSD and non-RSD together)
- This brief exercise will allow us to consider a potential scenario you may encounter when interviewing LGBTI persons of concern and decide how you would address the situation.
- For this exercise, we’ll split into four groups.
- Please raise your hand if you work in RSD (split them into two groups). You are groups one and two.
- Everyone else, please split into two groups. You are groups three and four.
- I’ve placed the numbers one through four on the tables. Please go to your number.
- Teams one and two, take scenario one. Three and four, take scenario two. You have fifteen minutes to discuss.
- After fifteen minutes, you will join the other team that is working on the same scenario and discuss as a group.

Facilitator’s Script – Exercise Description for a singular audience (RSD or non-RSD)
- This brief exercise will allow us to consider a potential scenario you may encounter when interviewing LGBTI persons of concern and decide how you would address the situation.
- Please count off by four. I’ve placed the numbers one through four on the tables. Please go to your number.
- You will all work on scenario [one (RSD) / two (non-RSD)]. You have fifteen minutes to discuss.
- After fifteen minutes, you will join the other team and discuss as a group.

Facilitator’s Script – Discussion Introduction
- After fifteen minutes- Please join together with another group [for mixed audiences: working on the same scenario] and discuss how you would address the situation.
- While the group(s) are discussing, the Facilitator should listen and moderate the discussion if needed.
Scenario One (for training participants working in Refugee Status Determination)

A woman schedules an urgent appointment. She has completed all interviews related to her refugee status determination and is pending a final decision. She tells you she has additional information she wishes to share. She says she identifies as a lesbian and that a new law has just passed in her country of origin that makes same-sex relationships punishable by 15 years in prison. She explains she did not previously share her sexual orientation because she did not feel it was relevant to her claim. She now feels she cannot return to her country of origin both due to the reasons she previously provided, and because of her sexual orientation.

*Do you take this information into consideration? *What additional questions will you need to ask her?

Sharing sexual orientation with UNHCR, a national government or a partner organization can provoke uncertainty, anxiety or fear in individuals. The fact that this individual did not share the information until she had a specific reason to — in this case, a fear of return to her country due the new law that has been passed — should not be held against her, and the information should be considered as part of her claim.

It is common for LGBTI people to wait to tell someone about their identity until there is a tangible need to do so. Note that this may be a *sur place* claim because circumstances have changed since she left her country of origin. However, the woman could also have had negative experiences in her country of origin due to her sexual orientation but did not feel compelled to disclose them until this new law prompted her to do so.

Another type of *sur place* claim for LGBTI cases would be when an individual comes out after arriving in the country of asylum and does not wish to return to their country of origin because they would have to conceal their diverse sex, sexual orientation or gender identity once again. In that type of case, what has changed since flight is that the individual ceased concealing and may have a well-founded fear of harm if they did not conceal at home.

In order to establish her identity as a lesbian, the interviewer would also need to ask a series of respectful questions regarding the applicant’s experiences as a lesbian using the DSSH module and the thematic areas discussed previously.

Scenario Two (for training participants not working in Refugee Status Determination)

During an interview, a single adult female mentions she has always known she is “not like other women.” She explains she is “not interested in marrying a man” and says, “My family has hurt me because of it.” You believe she is trying to tell you that she has a diverse sexual orientation, so you follow a line of questioning that you feel may prompt her to share the information explicitly with you. She is unable or unwilling to answer your questions.

*Why might that be? *How might you establish whether she has a diverse sexual orientation?

*If she continues to be unable or unwilling to answer your questions, what should you do?

The interviewer should consider whether they have made a false assumption that the individual has a diverse sexual orientation, used language the individual cannot understand, asked inappropriate or abrupt questions that caused discomfort or did not make the necessary efforts to create a safe and confidential space.

Recall that questions related to being LGBTI should not be focused on sex or specific terminology, but rather on identity, feelings of difference and the experience or fear of stigma or harm related to that difference. The interviewer may also wish to allow the woman to take a break.

The interviewer might then ask questions following the DSSH model, such as, “When did you know you were different than other women? What does that mean to you? What does it mean to your family? How has your family harmed you?” Keep in mind that individuals may experience issues if other people simply perceive them to be LGBTI. Additionally, this individual may have issues that have nothing to do with her sexual orientation.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE

Group Role-Play

Overview

The Group Role-Play exercise is an opportunity for the group to watch training participants demonstrate how to conduct an interview with a LGBTI person. One training participant plays the LGBTI person of concern and one training participant plays the interviewer in each unscripted role-play. The narratives and interview notes that follow these instructions are provided as the basis for the exercise, but training participants may wish to elaborate further.

Exercise Length, Standard Variation: 45 minutes. 05 minutes for description; 20 minutes for one role-play; 20 minutes for discussion.

Exercise Length, RSD Variation: 105 minutes (1 hour 45 minutes). 05 minutes for description; 50 minutes for one role-play; 50 minutes for discussion OR 05 minutes for description; 25 minutes for each for two role-plays; 25 minutes for each for two discussions (if using both role-plays.)

Materials Needed:

- Group Role-Play Narrative *(following these instructions)*
- Group Role-Play Interviewer Notes *(following these instructions)*

Assigning Roles and Managing the Exercise

The roles should be assigned, and the relevant material distributed to the training participants chosen, prior to the day the role-play exercise will take place. That way, the participants will have time to learn the material. You may also wish to choose alternate participants in case one of your role-players becomes unable to attend the training or fill the role.

The training participants chosen to participate in the role-play should ideally be senior level staff or have prior experience conducting role-plays. Select participants who can learn the information for the person of concern or interviewer and skillfully represent that role in front of the entire group.

Note that you should provide the participants who are representing the person of concern with the narrative but not the interviewer notes, and you should provide the participant who is representing the interviewer with the interviewer notes but not the narrative. That way, those playing the roles will not know what the other individual might say.

Be sure to tell the participants what kind of interview they are undertaking – for example, an interview related to protection, resettlement, a health assessment or another thematic area. The topic you choose should be based on the profiles of the training participants and what type of interview will be of most use to them.

Facilitator’s Script – Group Role-Play Introduction

- Before the training, I asked two [four – if doing two role-plays in the RSD variation] of our training participants to participate in this exercise. One will play the person of concern and one the interviewer.
- They have been provided with some basic information about their role. The participant playing the LGBTI person of concern has a detailed narrative. The interviewer has some basic background information.
- Note the interviewer has not seen the narrative and the person of concern has not seen the interviewer notes.
- Let’s have them come to the front and do the role-play. We’ll have 20 minutes [50 minutes / 25 minutes] to have them do the role-play, and then 20 minutes [50 minutes / 25 minutes] to discuss.
Facilitation Tips for a Successful Group Role-Play

As a Facilitator, there are several ways to ensure you have a successful group role-play:

- Ensure you **identify the role-play participants** by the day before the role-play and give them their sheets. Identifying participants early ensures they have time to prepare and can ask questions prior to the role-play.
- Ensure the participants and audience **understand the intention** of the interview – whether it is RSD, protection-related, for resettlement or another purpose.
- **Speak to the interviewers** prior to the role-play to gauge their level of readiness for the exercise. Ensure you have a common understanding of the approximate length of the role-play.
- **Speak with Fadi and Grace** to ensure they understand that, while they should take their time and only share information about being LGBTI when they feel comfortable doing so, the purpose of their role is not to challenge the interviewer by being uncooperative – unless the method of questioning the interviewer is using naturally makes the participant feel inclined to withhold information.
- During the role-play, **you may elect** to stop the participants to discuss what is happening in the interview, especially if the interview is not successful in terms of respectful questioning or the information being shared.
- You may also elect to allow the interview to **run its allotted time** without interruption, and then have the group engage in discussion. If this method is followed, ask the observers to make notes as the interview proceeds. They should note the questions they thought were appropriate and those they thought were inappropriate, made the person of concern uncomfortable or were confusing.

Facilitator’s Script – Group Role-Play Reminders

- Before we begin, I’d like to **highlight** several overarching goals.
- This role-play is intended to demonstrate the **types of questions that are appropriate to ask** and highlight any questions that are inappropriate or not relevant to the interview.
- It is also intended to demonstrate the **thematic areas that can be explored** during the course of an interview and to demonstrate **positive lines of questioning** that can be employed.
- Finally, the role-play will demonstrate how **sensitive topics** should be approached and how sensitive information can be **drawn out** over the course of an interview. Let’s begin.

Facilitator’s Script – Discussion

- Thank you to our participants. Let’s now **discuss** the role-play.
- Who would like to begin? Let’s talk about the **questions that worked**, questions that didn’t work, thematic topics that were useful and any other points you want to highlight.
- **Suggested questions** to engage participants in discussion:
  - How did you feel about the comfort level in the room?
  - What did you feel about the body language of the interviewer and person of concern?
  - What did the interviewer do to encourage Fadi/Grace to talk?
  - What other ways can you show the person of concern you are listening?
  - How can you be self-aware about your own personal actions during an interview?
  - What would you have done differently, had you been the interviewer?
  - Did the person of concern feel certain that the space was confidential?
  - What can you offer the individual in order to shift the dynamics (e.g. a break or a glass of water)?
  - How can you make the atmosphere more conversational?
  - What were the indicators during the course of the interview that you would have flagged to explore in more detail (e.g. responses, body language or silence)? How would you have explored them further?
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE

Group Role-Play Person of Concern Narrative – Fadi

Your role is Fadi, a 64-year-old male. You have been to the office once before and just shared basic biodata.

You plan to tell your interviewer about your sexual orientation and share the related challenges you have faced in the past. However, you are concerned the interviewer may be prejudiced and that their bias could negatively influence the outcome of the interview. You have thus considered telling the interviewer a different narrative related to political violence in your home country, but are unsure if that is wise. You told a similar political narrative to the immigration officers in Sweden and your asylum claim was denied.

At the beginning of your interview, you should tell the interviewer that you don’t feel well. When asked why, you should say that you were harassed by a security guard on your way into the office.

The following is your narrative:

Both my parents were very religious when I was growing up, but I never followed any particular religion. When I was a teenager, I already knew I was different than other boys. I knew when they talked about girls that I didn’t feel the same way they did. And I knew they wouldn’t understand. I made the mistake of telling my sister, who told my parents. They took me to a psychiatrist, who admitted me to an institution. This was a long time ago, when they liked to use electro-shock to try to cure people of all kinds of mental diseases. They used it on me, but it didn’t work.

After more than a month of this, they let me leave. The doctor told my parents that I was a “homosexual,” and that they were unable to cure me. It was as if I had a disability. My mother tried to be supportive.

Unfortunately, when I was in my twenties, my parents divorced. My mother moved away and my father kicked me out of his house. I moved in with a friend. By that time I had met many other men like me. Soon after that, a gay man I knew was killed. The police found my phone number in his pocket when they were investigating. They found me and arrested me and my friend. While we were at the police station, they treated us very badly. They abused us. They burnt me with cigarettes and poured cold water over me every day. I was kept in a dark cell and had no place to sleep. One of the officers told me I was lucky not to die.

After they released me, I quickly married a friend’s sister. They were from my country, but she had Swedish citizenship. I thought I could get her citizenship. The marriage was a disaster, and I couldn’t file the paperwork fast enough. We were divorced and I returned home. After I returned, I was detained again. One of my friends had been stabbed. They arrested people who knew him and tortured them to give up other names. I was one of the names. They did examinations to try and prove I was gay. They couldn’t prove it, so they let me go.

During that time there were many arrests of men like me. It went on for years. Sometimes they would discover parties and arrest everyone. They put them on trial and imprisoned them. They were treated terribly in jail. Others just disappeared. We never heard from them again. This got a lot of attention in the press.

After a number of years, I decided I should try to do something. I started an organization to help people who were arrested. That drew a lot of attention to me. The police raided my house a few times. They arrested and detained me regularly. I made connections with human rights organizations abroad, so each time they would let me go. Finally, it got to be too much. I fled back to Sweden. They rejected my asylum claim, so I came here. It was easy to get a visa. It’s not sustainable, though. I’m old and cannot find work or a good place to live. I’ve used most of my savings and exhausted the good will of my friends abroad. I need a better solution.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE

Group Role-Play Interviewer Notes – Fadi

Name: Fadi
Age: 64
Sex: Male
Legally Married? No. Divorced.
Partner / Common-law Spouse? Unknown.
Occupation: Unemployed and subsisting on savings.
Family: None in the country of asylum. Family remains in the country of origin. Fadi fled alone and lives alone in the country of asylum.

Interview Background

- You are conducting a routine interview with Fadi today. You plan to use a standard approach and standard line of questioning.
- You are unaware that sex, sexual orientation or gender identity has a role in Fadi’s experiences of harm in his country of origin.
- You are unaware that Fadi faces any challenges related to his sex, sexual orientation or gender identity at the current time.
- You have received training on working with persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation or gender identity but have not, to your knowledge, interviewed any LGBTI cases.
- However, you have your training materials to refer to when directing your line of questioning and are familiar with UNHCR guidance.
- At the start of the role-play, you have just finished giving Fadi your full standard introduction. You should plan to summarize that introduction to open the role-play.
- When Fadi registered, he told your organization that he had previously applied for, but was denied, asylum in Sweden and that he subsequently left Sweden and moved to your country without returning to his country of origin. He told the registration staff member that he was not able to provide any details regarding the potential reason for the denial of his asylum claim.

Country Facts

- Country of Origin (CoO): Same-sex acts are not technically criminalized, but persons of diverse sexual orientation are arrested, imprisoned, abused and murdered with the involvement or knowledge of the State.
- Current Country of Asylum (CoA): Diverse sexual orientation and gender identity is not criminalized, but it is inappropriate to discuss or display diverse sexual orientation publicly or to display diverse gender presentation.

Other Challenges

- Persons of concern have a difficult time accessing employment, housing, education and health care in the CoA.
- Due to his age, Fadi may face particular challenges accessing employment and other services.
- There is a slight possibility that, due to Fadi’s prior visibility as a human rights activist in his CoO, agents of that State could seek to locate and potentially harm him in the CoA.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE

Group Role-Play Person of Concern Narrative – Grace

Your role is Grace, a 30-year-old female. At the encouragement of a community center that works with persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, you have decided to tell your interviewer about your sexual orientation. You also plan to share the challenges you have faced in the past. You previously met with staff members of this organization, but did not disclose your sexual orientation.

You are nervous about sharing this information with a stranger. You are uncertain how they will react, despite assurances from the community-based organization that you should be treated with dignity and respect. You have particular difficulty discussing the sexual violence you have faced in relation to your sexual orientation.

At the beginning of your interview, you should tell the interviewer that you don’t feel well. When asked why, you should say that you were harassed by a security guard on your way into the office.

The following is your narrative:

I fled my home country when I was 17. I was with my family at that time. Before we left, I was abducted and raped by the military. They did this because my parents had been involved with a rebel group in our village. I became pregnant from this rape, but lost the baby while we were leaving the country.

I left my family in the camp and came to the city when I was 27 because my family and some of our neighbors were threatening me. My family is still behind in the camp. I thought it would be better to be on my own than to stay with them there. My family has threatened me since I was young. They always treated me badly because I was different. They thought I was too masculine acting. They saw the way I looked at other girls. I couldn’t help it. My family is very religious and they think that having feelings for people that are the same as you is a sin.

The worst were the boys. When I was 14, one of my schoolmates saw me kissing another girl on the face on our way home from school. He said he would tell everyone what he saw if I didn’t do what he asked. He made me do things to him that I didn’t want to do. I had to for him to stay silent.

When I was 16, my uncle wanted me to marry his son. Maybe my uncle knew about me, and maybe he didn’t. I’m not sure. But when I refused to marry his son, he got angry and said it was because I was like this. He forced himself on me and said it would fix me. It didn’t fix me. Luckily the war came and I got away from him.

After we left our country I tried to make a life in the camp with my family. I tried to go to school, but it was too hard. I tried to go to work, but I was getting a lot of pressure from my family to get married. My brothers were really harassing me. Then I heard that my uncle was on his way to that camp. So I left and came here.

I was homeless here for months. I slept on the streets and begged for food to eat. Some other people from my camp are here now and I’ve been avoiding them. I don’t want my family to find out where I am. I finally found a place to stay with a friend. It’s in a bad area of the city and it’s not very secure. There are many people living in a small room. I had all my things stolen a few months ago. But at least it’s a place to sleep. We sell things together – small things in the market – to make some money.

One day I met someone who worked with a community center that helps people like me. I found out through them that there is a lot of violence here against women like me and against the people who help us. Two people who tried to help us were killed last year. They were raped and their bodies left on the road. I also heard about someone the community tried to kill by burning down his home.

This center told me to tell you about what is going on with me and the issues I have faced. They are trying to help me get work. I need work very badly. I also need somewhere safer to live, but I don’t want to go back to my family. I heard they want to move to Canada. If I see them again, they may try to marry me or abuse me in some other way.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE

Group Role-Play Interviewer Notes – Grace

**Name:** Grace  
**Age:** 30  
**Sex:** Female  
**Legally Married?** No.  
**Partner / Common-law Spouse?** Unknown.  
**Occupation:** Informal work selling small items in the market.  
**Housing situation:** Grace lives with friends in housing that has been classified by colleagues who have met with her as insecure. She was previously homeless.  
**Family:** Grace’s family members are currently living in a camp while Grace is living in an urban environment. Grace informed the office that she believes her family is immigrating to Canada. She does not want to rejoin her family members or immigrate to Canada. She fled from her family due to an arranged marriage and the subsequent dispute when she refused the marriage.

**Interview Background**
- You are conducting a routine interview with Grace today. You plan to use a standard approach and standard line of questioning.  
- You are unaware that sex, sexual orientation or gender identity has a role in Grace’s experiences of harm in her country of origin.  
- You are unaware that Grace faces any challenges related to her sex, sexual orientation or gender identity at the current time.  
- You have received training on working with persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation or gender identity but have not, to your knowledge, interviewed any such cases.  
- However, you have your training materials to refer to when directing your line of questioning and are familiar with UNHCR guidance.  
- At the start of the role-play, you have just finished giving Grace your full standard introduction. You should plan to summarize that introduction to open the role-play.

**Country Facts**
- **Country of Origin (CoO):** It is extremely dangerous to discuss or display sexual orientation or diverse sex or gender identity publicly. Same-sex acts are criminalized.  
- **Current Country of Asylum (CoA):** Diverse sexual orientation is criminalized. Diverse gender identity is not accepted and individuals expressing such may be arrested and prosecuted under laws of general application.

**Other Challenges**
- Persons of concern have a difficult time accessing employment, housing, education and health care in the CoA.  
- As a young single woman, Grace faces particular challenges in accessing health care, housing, housing and employment.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE
Paired Role-Play

Overview

The Paired Role-Play exercise allows training participants to practice asking and answering the questions they have learned throughout Module 02 and to think about how to explore thematic topics during their own interviews. The Paired Role-Play also allows them to consider what types of questions would be appropriate in the context of the interview they are conducting. By practicing asking questions in a safe and secure training environment, we ensure that the first time training participants say the recommended questions aloud is not with a LGBTI person of concern.

Note: Be sure to tell the participants what kind of interview they are undertaking – for example, an interview related to protection, resettlement, a health assessment or another thematic area or programme. The topic you choose should be based on the profiles of the training participants and what type of interview will be of most use to them.

Exercise Length, Standard Variation: 60 minutes. 05 minutes for description; 20 minutes for role-play one; 20 minutes for role-play two; 15 minutes for group discussion.

Exercise Length, RSD Variation: 75 minutes (1 hour 15 minutes). 05 minutes for description; 25 minutes for role-play one; 25 minutes for role-play two; 20 minutes for group discussion.

Materials Needed:

- Person of Concern and Interviewer Sheets (in the Participant Workbook)

Facilitator’s Script – Exercise Description

- We will now do an exercise that allows you to practice asking interview questions. Please find a partner.
- We will do two separate role-plays. You will each get an opportunity to play the interviewer and you will each get an opportunity to play the person of concern.
- We will start with role-play number one. Decide who will play the person of concern and who will play the interviewer during role-play number one. Did everyone decide? (Confirm everyone has chosen their role.)
- If you are playing the person of concern, you will read the person of concern sheet on page 13. If you are playing the interviewer, you will read the interviewer sheet on page 14. Take five minutes to read your sheet.
- After five minutes - Your reading time is up. Please begin your session. I will alert you when your time is up.
- After fifteen [twenty] minutes - Your time for the first interview is up. We will now move to number two.
- If you played the interviewer in role-play number one, you should now play the person of concern. If you played the person of concern in role-play number one, you should now play the interviewer.
- If you are playing the person of concern, you will read the person of concern sheet on page 15. If you are playing the interviewer, you will read the interviewer sheet on page 16.
- Take five minutes to read your sheet. After five minutes - Please begin your session.

Facilitator’s Script – Discussion Introduction

- Now that you have completed your role-plays, let’s discuss as a group.
- How did it feel to play the interviewer? How did it feel to be the person of concern?
- As the person of concern, was it difficult offering information [testimony]?
- As the person of concern, which questions did you respond best to? Which did you not respond well to?
- As the interviewer, how did it feel to explore this topic? What questions did they respond best to?
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE
Paired Role-Play One – Person of Concern Sheet

Name: Hasti
Age / Sex: 31 / Female
Legally Married? No.
Occupation: Seamstress for an employment project.
Partner / Common-law Spouse? Yes, a female. They fled their country of origin (CoO) together and are living in the country of asylum (CoA) together.

Is her family aware of her sexual orientation? No.

When did she first know she was different? Since childhood, Hasti knew she was different from other girls. Hasti liked to play with boys, play football, climb trees and ride a bicycle – activities girls in her country didn’t usually do. She also did not enjoy talking to boys in the same way other girls did. She never wanted to flirt with them and never felt an attraction to them. For these reasons, people started talking about her. They said she dressed like a boy and that she acted strangely. Eventually, Hasti became aware that she had a diverse sexual orientation.

Did anyone else in the CoO (extended family, friends, community members, schoolmates, etc.) know about her sexual orientation? If so, how did they react? When Hasti was in her early 20s, she played football on a women’s team after university. Her partner was also on the team. After they met, they became inseparable. They ate together and often stayed at one another’s houses. Some suspected they had feelings for one another. Family members told her that, in their religion, being in a same-sex relationship was a grave sin. A neighbor said if the rumors about them were true, the girls should be killed. A local religious leader remarked that lesbians should be beheaded, because “ridding the world of such filth is a good deed.” Eventually, they felt the only way to be together safely was to leave.

At first, they tried moving to a large city where they could support themselves with basic jobs. However, as they became known in their new neighborhood, problems began. When Hasti’s partner left the house, the boys teased her by asking, “Where is your boyfriend?” When Hasti and her partner returned home at night, the neighbors said, “Look! The husband and wife have come home.” They thus decided to leave the country.

Does she know other people like her in her CoO? How are they treated? No. She did not and does not currently know anyone else from her country like her and her partner. Based on the threats people made, she assumes other women like them would not risk being exposed publicly.

Situation in the CoA? At the community center, women have started harassing them for not wearing the same clothing as other women in the community. They said they would be answerable “on the day of judgment” and their dress gave the community a bad name. Two weeks ago, several women teased them by whispering, “lesbians” and “eunuchs” and laughing when they walked by. As Hasti and her partner were leaving the center, a woman told Hasti her brother wanted to “make a real woman out of her.” She said if her husband caught them acting inappropriately he would beat them until they bled.

What would happen if she returned to her CoO? Hasti fears she and her partner would be killed by extended family or community members. She also fears being harmed by people at their local religious center.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE
Paired Role-Play One – Interviewer Sheet

Name: Hasti
Age / Sex: 31 / Female
Legally Married? No.
Partner / Common-law Spouse? Unknown.
Occupation: Seamstress for an employment project.

Interview Background

- You are conducting a routine interview with Hasti today. You plan to use a standard approach and standard line of questioning.
- You are unaware that sex, sexual orientation or gender identity has a role in Hasti’s experiences of harm in her country of origin.
- You are unaware that Hasti faces any challenges related to her sex, sexual orientation or gender identity at the current time.
- You have received training on working with persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation or gender identity but have not, to your knowledge, interviewed any such cases.
- However, you have your training materials to refer to when directing your line of questioning and are familiar with UNHCR guidance.
- At the start of the role-play, you have just finished giving Hasti your full standard introduction. You should plan to summarize that introduction to open the role-play.

Country Facts

- Country of Origin (CoO): A recent report from a reputable human rights organization notes that, while there are no laws in the penal code of Hasti’s country explicitly prohibiting same-sex conduct, LGBTI people are routinely attacked and killed with impunity.
- Country of Asylum (CoA): Diverse sexual orientation and gender identity is not criminalized, but it is inappropriate to discuss or display sexual orientation publicly or to display diverse gender presentation.

Other Challenges

- Persons of concern have a difficult time accessing employment, housing, education and health care in the CoA.
- Due to being a single young woman, Hasti may face particular challenges accessing employment and other services.
**INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE**

**Paired Role-Play Two – Person of Concern Sheet**

**Name:** Asad  
**Age / Sex:** 19 / Male  
**Legally Married?** No.  
**Partner / Common-law Spouse?** Unknown.  
**Occupation:** Informal labourer.

**Is his family aware of his sexual orientation?** Yes. Although he is not open about his sexual orientation with his family or the community, he has since childhood been perceived to be gay by both his family and community members in his country of origin and has suffered ongoing emotional and physical harm from his family and his community as a result.

**When did he first know he was different?** Asad began to know he was different around age 12 when his friends began liking girls. He didn’t like girls in the same way. Eventually he realized he had same-sex attraction. He also realized that this was why his family and community harassed him for being different as he grew up – because he was not like other boys.

**Did anyone else in his country of origin (CoO) (extended family, friends, community members, schoolmates, etc.) know about his sexual orientation? If so, how did they react?** Several years ago, Asad was doused with petrol and nearly set on fire by a crowd of youth near his school. He was saved due to the intervention of an older woman, who stepped in between him and the youth, giving him time to run away. Afterwards, he was forced to go into hiding in his family’s home. He and his family then began receiving death threats about his perceived sexual orientation.

Later that year, Asad was abducted by his uncle, who attempted to take him to a remote village where their extended family lived for either forced marriage or honor killing. Asad was able to escape on the way and return to the capital city. Once back in the city, he did not return to the area where his family was living. He instead sought refuge with friends in another area of the city.

Soon after, Asad and a friend were beaten and robbed while walking home after dark. Their attackers used anti-gay slurs while demanding money and beating them with sticks. Asad and his friend were unwilling to report the incident to the police due to experiences their friends had had related to police extortion and verbal abuse. They also avoided going to the hospital to have their injuries treated, as they didn’t want to draw attention to the attack. Eventually one friend’s family decided to flee the country and Asad went with them.

**Does he know other people like him in his CoO? How are they treated?** He does not currently know anyone else who is gay there. The friends he previously knew who are gay in his country of origin have all fled. He has heard what happens to people like him there, however (see below.)

**Situation in the country of asylum (CoA)?** Asad supports himself through infrequent menial labour and has dropped out of school. He avoids UNHCR and other organizations because he fears seeing others from his country who may tell his family where he is. The family he is staying with is sympathetic, but he feels that he is a burden on them since he cannot make much money.

**What would happen if he returned to his CoO?** Even if Asad could live apart from his family, he knows people like him face many threats, including imprisonment, physical punishment and even death.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES EXERCISE
Paired Role-Play Two – Interviewer Sheet

Name: Asad
Age / Sex: 19 / Male
Legally Married? No.
Partner / Common-law Spouse? Unknown.
Occupation: Informal labourer.

Interview Background

- You are conducting a routine interview with Asad today. You plan to use a standard approach and standard line of questioning.
- You are unaware that sex, sexual orientation or gender identity has a role in Asad’s experiences of harm in his country of origin.
- You are unaware that Asad faces any challenges related to his sex, sexual orientation or gender identity at the current time.
- You have received training on working with persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation or gender identity but have not, to your knowledge, interviewed any such cases.
- However, you have your training materials to refer to when directing your line of questioning, and are familiar with UNHCR guidance.
- At the start of the role-play, you have just finished giving Asad your full standard introduction. You should plan to summarize that introduction to open the role-play.

Country Facts

- **Country of Origin (CoO):** The UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Asad’s country explain that same-sex activity is criminalized in the penal code and that, if caught engaging in same-sex activity, he could be punished with imprisonment for up to five years. The guidance also notes that, while the penal code is not necessarily enforced throughout the country, the law creates an air of impunity surrounding non-state violence against LGBTI people. There are also areas of the country that operate under a set of religious laws that recommend lashes or the death penalty for “homosexual conduct.” There are reports of both men and women being executed under this law.
- **Country of Asylum (CoA):** Diverse sexual orientation and gender identity is not criminalized, but it is inappropriate to discuss or display sexual orientation publicly or to display diverse gender presentation.

Other Challenges

- Persons of concern have a difficult time accessing employment, housing, education and health care in the CoA.
- Due to being a single young man, Asad may face particular challenges accessing employment and other services.
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