

A graphic of a spotlight with a yellow beam shining down from the top left corner onto the title area.

SOAR SPOTLIGHT

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

An Organization in Uganda

The NGO Act of 2016, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Sexual Offences Bill of 2021 all contributed to shrinking civil society space and increasing persecution and violence against LGBTQI+ communities in Uganda. The Sexual Offences Bill of 2021 reinforced anti-gender, religious fundamentalist, and homophobic sentiments in Uganda, which led to unprecedented violence against and persecution of LGBTQI+ communities. In late 2021, Uganda's NGO Bureau announced the closure of 50 organizations for failure to comply with the NGO Act, which requires organizations to share information about where their funds come from and what they use for. The NGO Act has been used by the Ugandan government to censor civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly those working on human rights, social justice, democracy, or political freedom who challenge the government. An organization in Uganda used SOAR funding to reflect on milestones and challenges in LGBTQI+ organizing in the country, map out the capacity of organizations to comply with the NGO Act's regulatory framework, and demystify the registration process. With this strengthened legal capacity, some organizations are more confident to engage the registration process and challenge the NGO Bureau thanks to cooperation and learnings across LGBTQI+ communities and organizations.

An Organization in Tanzania

In 2021, LGBTQI+ communities in Tanzania faced increasing human rights violations, stigma, and discrimination, including arbitrary arrests and targeted violence based on perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity. An organization in Tanzania used SOAR funding to convene an annual meeting that brought together key stakeholders, including 13 LGBTQI+ organizations. Participants discussed LGBTQI+ safety and security and developed a road map for addressing stigma and discrimination through security response mechanisms, including training on documenting human rights violations. They also walked through the Tanzanian Constitution and its Human Rights and Criminal Law provisions, working with a paralegal to better understand legal issues. The meeting fostered greater cohesion, communication, trust, and visibility among LGBTQI+ HRDs and CSOs in Tanzania.

An Organization in Kenya

Kenya's General Elections in August 2022 precipitated increased violence, stigma, and discrimination against LGBTQI+ communities. An organization in Kenya used SOAR support to hold a four-day convening. In this activity, they coordinated safety and security responses at regional and grassroots levels through monitoring of and response to incident reports and mapping threat zones for LGBTQI+ communities. Participants in the meeting then disseminated their knowledge, skills, and information across grassroots LGBTQI+ organizations to ensure that communities across the country were well-informed, connected, and prepared for the general elections.

To learn more about SOAR Grants and the Dignity for All Program, visit <https://www.dignitylgbti.org/> or contact us at info@dignitylgbti.org