



Voice and Choice ***Summit 2026***-Marang Media LGBTIQ Category

Exploring the Overlapping Realities of the LGBTIQ+ persons with Disabilities in Botswana



Synopsis– brief overview what this is about

Name	Lame Lucas
Designation	Journalist
Organisation	YTV
Country	Botswana
Category	Media
Summary	In Botswana, members of the LGBTIQ + persons with disabilities often face double layers of stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion. When these identities intersect, the challenges become even more complex. From lack of inclusive health services to limited representation in policy discussions, many continue to navigate a society that overlooks their lived realities.

Background(problem, actions, change, evidence)

Give some background. Briefly describe the context or problem.

- What was the specific LGBTIQ-related issue, gap, or challenge addressed in your media work?
- This story aimed to shed light on the often-overlooked intersection between people living with disabilities and those within the LGBTIQ community in Botswana. As a journalist, I will explore how these two vulnerable groups experience discrimination, access to rights, mental health challenges, and social acceptance both individually and where their identities intersect.

Key Interviews i did:

- Botswana Council for People Living with Disabilities – To understand existing rights, support systems, and policy gaps affecting persons with disabilities of LGBTIQ community.

The Intended Change:

- - Raised awareness about the double discrimination faced by LGBTIQ persons with disabilities.
- - As i Highlight the mental health needs of these groups.
- There is little media coverage or public discourse around the intersection of disability and sexual or gender identity in Botswana. This story will amplified unheard voices, promote inclusion, and encourage policymakers, NGOs, and society to adopt a more holistic approach to human rights and social justice.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Background(problem, actions, change, evidence)

- What actions have you taken to address the problem?
- What change has happened because of your interventions?

ACTION

- I interviewed a Mental Health Expert – To explore the emotional and psychological challenges faced by LGBTIQ persons living with disabilities, including stigma, isolation, and lack of mental health support.
- I also interviewed Success Capital, which is a leading LGBTIQ advocacy organisation, to hear their observations, interventions, and the lived experiences of their members who may also be living with disabilities.

CHANGE

- The story broadened awareness by introducing an intersectional perspective that is rarely explored in Botswana's media. By highlighting how disability and sexual orientation or gender identity intersect, the story challenged the tendency to view these identities in isolation. Many readers and listeners were exposed, often for the first time, to the compounded stigma, exclusion, and vulnerability faced by LGBTIQ persons living with disabilities.
- The story also sparked dialogue among civil society organisations and advocates, encouraging collaboration between disability rights groups and LGBTIQ organisations. It revealed gaps in service provision, where programmes designed for people with disabilities often exclude SOGIE considerations, while LGBTIQ-focused services may not be accessible to people with disabilities.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Synopsis – The Media Contribution (LGBTIQ Focus)

Give some background.

- What type of media work did you produce? (e.g. print article, radio programme, TV feature, online story, photo essay, investigative report)

TV Feature

- What was the central message or narrative you sought to advance regarding LGBTIQ issues?

MESSAGE

- As a journalist, the central narrative I sought to advance around LGBTIQ issues people with disability ,was one of human dignity, inclusion, and lived reality. My work aimed to move LGBTIQ stories beyond controversy or abstraction and instead centre them as everyday human experiences shaped by real social, legal, and economic conditions.
- I sought to highlight that LGBTIQ people with disabilities are not a “special interest group,” but citizens whose rights, safety, health, education, and family lives are directly affected by policies and societal attitudes. By foregrounding lived experiences whether in healthcare, education, the workplace, or family settings I aimed to show how discrimination and exclusion manifest in practical ways, and how silence often deepens harm.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Synopsis – The Media Contribution (LGBTIQ Focus)

- Who was the primary audience for this work?

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

I interviewed service providers, civil society organisations, those engaged in human rights. The story was also intentionally directed at advocacy groups working with either LGBTIQ communities or people living with disabilities, encouraging them to recognise and address overlapping vulnerabilities. Importantly, the work also spoke directly to LGBTIQ persons with disabilities themselves, affirming their visibility and validating experiences that are often excluded from public discourse.

- What perspective, approach, or ethical consideration (e.g. consent, anonymity, safety) made your coverage distinctive or responsible?

APPROACH

- What made the coverage distinctive was its intersectional SOGIE lens, which examined how discrimination is compounded when sexual orientation or gender identity intersects with disability. Rather than treating these identities separately, the story foregrounded how exclusion operates across multiple systems simultaneously.
- Ethically, the reporting prioritised informed consent, anonymity, and safety. Interviewees were fully briefed on the purpose of the story and potential risks, with pseudonyms used where disclosure could lead to stigma, family rejection, or harm. Extra care was taken to ensure accessibility and dignity for sources with disabilities, including allowing interviewees to set the pace and format of engagement.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Change

How did your article/production contribute to change?

- What role did your media work play in bringing attention to this issue?
- My article/production contributed to change primarily by making an invisible issue visible and reframing how it is understood in public discourse. By focusing on the overlapping realities of LGBTIQ people and persons living with disabilities, the story introduced an intersectional perspective that is rarely covered in Botswana's media. This helped audiences, including policymakers and service providers, recognise that exclusion and discrimination are often compounded, not experienced in isolation.
- The media work played a key role in bringing attention to systemic gaps in healthcare, education, social services, and advocacy programmes that often overlook people who exist at the intersection of disability and sexual orientation or gender identity. By centring lived experiences, the story humanised the issue and moved it beyond abstract policy discussions, encouraging empathy and understanding.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



YTV Botswana

Nov 11, 2025 • 🌐



SPECIAL REPORT: Exploring the Overlapping Realities of the LGBTIQ+ persons with disa...

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Members of the LGBTIQ+ persons living with disabilities in Botswana face double layers of stigma, discrimination and social exclusion. When these identities intersect, the challenges become even more complex. From lack of inclusive health services to limited representation in policy discussions, many continue to navigate a society that overlooks their lived realities.



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Change

- What specific actions (e.g., reporting, investigations, campaigns, interviews, features) contributed to creating awareness or prompting change?
- How do you know your coverage influenced the conversation, attitudes, or decision-making?
- I conducted in-depth interviews with LGBTIQ persons living with disabilities, ensuring their lived experiences were placed at the centre of the story. These testimonies were complemented by expert interviews with human rights advocates, disability rights organisations, and civil society leaders to provide context and credibility. The story was produced as a feature, allowing space for intersectional analysis, and ethical storytelling rather than surface-level reporting. I also applied a SOGIE-informed approach, intentionally framing the issue within human rights and inclusion rather than morality or sensationalism. By linking personal experiences to systemic gaps in policy and service delivery, the story functioned as both reporting and quiet advocacy for inclusive reform.

Evidence of influence on conversation and attitudes

- The influence of the coverage was evident through increased engagement and feedback from civil society organisations, activists, and viewers who acknowledged that the story highlighted a rarely discussed issue. Disability and LGBTIQ advocates referenced the story in discussions and meetings, using it to support calls for more inclusive programming and collaboration. The story also prompted follow-up conversations with service providers who reflected on accessibility and inclusivity within their own institutions.
- Additionally, the coverage contributed to a shift in tone within public discourse, encouraging more respectful and informed conversations around intersectionality. The story helped lay groundwork by influencing how stakeholders think about inclusion and by validating experiences that had previously been marginalised or ignored.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



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The change/ Impact

Describe the change that has occurred?

- Describe the change or impact your media work contributed to.

IMPACT

The impact of the story was primarily discursive and social. It reframed conversations among audiences, civil society organisations, and service providers, encouraging them to think beyond single-issue approaches to human rights. By connecting lived experiences to systemic gaps in healthcare, education, and social services, the story contributed to more informed and nuanced dialogue on inclusion.

- Who benefited from this coverage and in what way?

WHO BENEFITED

LGBTIQ persons living with disabilities benefited by gaining visibility and validation. Seeing their experiences represented helped affirm that their challenges are real and worthy of attention. Civil society organisations and advocates benefited by gaining evidence and narratives that support intersectional advocacy and programme design. Service providers also benefited by gaining insight into gaps within existing systems, helping inform more inclusive decision-making.

- Was the change positive or negative?

CHANGE

The change was overwhelmingly positive. While it did not immediately result in policy reform, it strengthened awareness, empathy, and accountability. The coverage helped challenge silence and marginalisation, laying groundwork for longer-term social and institutional change toward inclusion and equity.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



How do you score yourself?

	1-10
The story explicitly centres LGBTIQ communities, rights, lived realities, or meaningfully mainstreams sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (LGBTIQSC).	9-10
The story meaningfully includes and fairly represents diverse LGBTIQ voices and lived experiences, giving appropriate weight to those most affected by the issue.	10-10
The story reflects perspectives from both decision-makers and LGBTIQ people directly affected, clearly illustrating power dynamics and differential impact.	9-10
All sources and subjects in the story are represented with dignity, respect, and agency, avoiding sensationalism, misrepresentation, or harm.	10-10
The story challenges harmful stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, and affirms diversity.	10-10

How do you score yourself?

	1-10
The story contributes to informed public dialogue on LGBTIQ issues, rights, and social justice through education, advocacy, or critical reflection.	9-10
Where data or statistics are used, they are accurate, contextualised, and appropriately disaggregated, or the limitations and gaps in available data are clearly acknowledged.	8-10
The story takes a clear human right–based approach grounded in equality, non-discrimination, bodily autonomy, and dignity.	10-10
The story demonstrates strong attention to privacy, safety, and security, including risk mitigation for participants and communities in restrictive or hostile environments.	9-10
The story offers fresh, original, or under-represented perspectives on LGBTIQ issues and demonstrates editorial courage without exposing individuals or communities to undue risks.	10-10

Challenges & Lessons learnt

Challenges & mitigation

- One of the main challenges was access and safety of sources. LGBTIQ persons living with disabilities face heightened vulnerability, and many were hesitant to speak openly due to fear of stigma, family rejection, or retaliation. This was mitigated by prioritising informed consent, anonymity, and trust-building, allowing sources to share their experiences on their own terms and at their own pace.
- Another challenge was navigating intersectional complexity. Capturing both disability and SOGIE-related issues without oversimplifying either required careful framing and consultation with civil society organisations and advocates. This was addressed through background research, expert interviews, and inclusive language, ensuring accuracy and sensitivity.
- There was also the challenge of limited data and documentation on LGBTIQ persons with disabilities in Botswana. To mitigate this, the story relied on first-person narratives, qualitative insights, and civil society reports, which helped humanise the issue while highlighting systemic gaps.

Lessons learnt

- The key lesson learned was the importance of intersectional journalism that people's experiences cannot be fully understood through a single-issue lens. Reporting at the intersections reveals deeper inequalities that are often missed in mainstream coverage.
- Another lesson was that ethical reporting is not a limitation but a strength. Prioritising safety, consent, and dignity enhanced the credibility and impact of the story.
- Finally, the work reinforced the role of journalism as a catalyst for dialogue. Even without immediate policy change, responsible storytelling can challenge invisibility, influence attitudes, and create space for marginalised voices to be heard.

Sustainability

- Are there plans to continue reporting on this issue, follow up with stakeholders, or scale up coverage?

Plans for continued reporting and follow-up

- Yes, there are plans to continue reporting on this issue and to follow up with both the LGBTIQ and disability rights communities. Future coverage will aim to track whether policymakers, service providers, and civil society organisations implement recommendations or adapt programmes to address the gaps highlighted in the story. This may include profiling advocacy efforts, monitoring access to education, healthcare, and social services, and documenting any changes in legal or policy frameworks affecting LGBTIQ persons with disabilities. Scaling up coverage could involve producing multimedia stories, radio segments, or community dialogues to reach wider audiences and maintain sustained attention on the intersectional challenges faced by this group.
- How might your work inspire or enable further action for gender equality at local or national level?

Inspiring further action for gender equality

- The story has the potential to inspire action for gender equality at both local and national levels by highlighting how intersecting forms of discrimination related to gender, sexual orientation, and disability affect real people. By presenting lived experiences alongside systemic barriers, the coverage provides evidence that can inform policymaking, guide NGO programming, and shape inclusive service delivery. Moreover, it encourages communities and institutions to recognise diversity, promote tolerance, and implement inclusive practices, reinforcing the principle that gender equality must include all marginalized identities. Ultimately, the work serves as a catalyst for dialogue, advocacy, and structural change, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive society.

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Next Steps

What are your plans?

- My plans are to continue reporting on intersectional human rights issues, with a specific focus on the lived experiences of LGBTIQ people who face multiple layers of marginalisation, including disability, gender, and socio-economic exclusion. Building on this story, I intend to follow up with key stakeholders such as civil society organisations, service providers, and policymakers to assess whether there are concrete changes in policies, practices, or attitudes.
- I also plan to expand the coverage through in-depth features and interviews, giving more space to voices that are often excluded from mainstream media. This includes tracking access to healthcare, social protection, employment, and education for LGBTIQ persons with disabilities, and highlighting both gaps and best practices.
- In addition, I aim to use the story as a foundation for advocacy-focused journalism, collaborating with rights organisations to inform public dialogue while maintaining editorial independence. Where possible, I plan to engage audiences through community conversations, radio discussions, and digital platforms to sustain awareness and encourage informed debate.
- Overall, my goal is to ensure continued visibility, accountability, and impact, using journalism to contribute to inclusion, gender equality, and respect for human rights in Botswana.