



Voice and Choice Summit 2026 -Story of Change Category

Access to SRHR for Trans and gender Diverse persons in Botswana

Botswana, Gaborone, 16/03/2026 : Sputla Mogorosi

Synopsis– brief overview what this is about



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Category	Stories of Change
Summary	<p>This story of change highlights how Botswana Trans Initiative (BTI) through the Marang Fund and other supporting partners , has contributed to the continuous advancement for inclusive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for transgender and gender diverse (TGD) persons in Botswana</p> <p>BTI continues to strengthen healthcare provider capacity. Amplify community voices and engage policy makers to address stigma, discrimination , and limited/non –existent access to specific and targeted gender affirming healthcare for trans and gender diverse persons in Botswana .</p> <p>The result has been increased dialogue, public education and awareness and growing</p>

Background(problem, actions, change, evidence)

Give some background. Briefly describe the context or problem.

The Problem

Although Botswana has made strides in recognizing diverse populations, transgender persons continue to face

1. Stigma and discrimination in public healthcare facilities
2. Misgendering and denial of respectful treatment
3. Limited provider knowledge on gender affirming healthcare
4. Exclusion from national SRHR and HIV programming
5. Avoidance of public health facilities due to fear

These barriers increase vulnerability to HIV, mental Health challenges , GBV and poor SRHR outcome

Actions to address the problem?

- Healthcare provider sensitization sessions
- Community led monitoring and documentation
- Policy engagement with national HIV and SRHR stakeholders
- Consultative and trans experiences sharing

What change has happened because of your interventions?

Growing dialogue, informal adoption of inclusive practices and increase trans community confidence in accessing care in public facilities

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Ministry of Health

Background

Briefly describe the context or problem the project set out to address.

key objectives of the project?

1. Strengthen healthcare provider competency
2. Increase trans community health literacy
3. Advocate for specific and targeted inclusive health
4. Build partnerships between TGD communities and public health institutions

The situation before the project?

- Limited awareness on trans health rights
- Healthcare providers and policy makers lacked exposure and knowledge to trans health care issues and rights
- Trans person avoiding clinics due to discrimination and stigma
- Lack of specific and targeted healthcare for TGD community

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Context

Who is the organization behind the project?

Botswana Trans Initiative Trust

Where are you based / Where is the project being implemented?

BTI is based in Gaborone, Botswana . The project is being implemented in Gaborone, with engagements in surrounding districts as needed

Who is most affected by the problem and how?

- Trans and gender diverse communities in Botswana are most affected
- Young trans persons accessing HIV and SRHR services
- Health care service providers
- **What issue(s) does the project address?**
- Healthcare stigma & discrimination
- Lack of specific and targeted gender affirming healthcare
- Limited inclusion in HIV and SRHR services
- Weak policy recognition of trans health needs

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Actions

How the change comes about? What activities or actions will bring about the change?

1. SOGIESC sensitization workshops for healthcare providers and policy makers
2. Policy advocacy: consultative meetings with MoH
3. Community participation: community consultations, peer engagement
4. Documentation and Accountability : using evidence to influence policy change

Who led and participated in bringing about the change.

BTI led the project with active participation from the trans community and health officials in their different capacities

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Community participation

The change – impact

Describe what the change has been, when and where it happened:

- We have seen a shift in some healthcare provider attitudes
- Some facilities informally affirming trans persons
- Increased confidence among trans folk to seek services and understand their rights

Has the change been positive or negative?. Who benefited, and in what way?

- Avoidance of public health care Vs increased awareness by the trans community
- Limited knowledge on trans issues VS growing dialogue between trans community and health sector

What is the situation now?

Since the start of the project we have noticed a slightly positive pathway in terms of how TGD persons are able to access services in public facilities as well as continue to gain knowledge about Human rights for service providers, policy makers and the TGD community , though systemic challenges still remain a huge challenge

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Significance of the Change

Please provide further information on what this change means for the movement and its goals

The shift represents:

- Recognition of TGD persons as significant group in Botswana healthcare system
- Strengthened credibility of trans led advocacy
- Increased visibility of trans health within national SRHR discussions

What effect this change may have on the next steps in this area of work.

- Health Equity: access to healthcare for ALL
- Body Autonomy : The principle of self-determination
- Human Rights
- Dignity

These lay a very strong foundation for :

- Institutionalized service provider training on Trans healthcare
- Explicit inclusion in national HIV and SRHR policies
- Expanded advocacy beyond just urban areas but rural inclusion as well

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



It gives TGD people **autonomy** over their bodies, relationships & futures, free from **coercion, discrimination and violence.**

Why SRHR?



Why SRHR?

It's important for the overall **wellbeing** of **Trans and gender diverse people.**

What is SRHR?

Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights refers to also the rights of individuals to make choices about their bodies and to have access to quality **sexual reproductive services , information & education.**



Beneficiaries

	Number of participants
Transwomen – Direct beneficiaries	15
Transmen– Direct beneficiaries	15
Non-Binary	6
Female – Indirect beneficiaries (e.g. through other networks)	52
Male – Indirect beneficiaries (e.g. through other networks)	20
Female – Online beneficiaries (e.g. website access, mailing lists, scholarly articles)	0
Male – Online beneficiaries (e.g. website access, mailing lists, scholarly articles)	0
Total	108

Challenges & Lessons learnt

Challenges & mitigation

- Lack of will for formal policy change
- Resource constraints
- Need for continuous sensitization and training
- Stigma and discrimination within the health care system (LGR)

MITIGATION

- Continuous engagements and refreshers sessions
- Evidence based advocacy
- Strengthen partnerships and collaborations

What lessons have you learnt?

- Change is gradual but possible
- Community voices are the voice , powerful advocacy
- Building relationships creates opening and progress towards sustainability
- Training must be continuous , not once -off
- Human Resources is an important aspect for project sustainability

Sustainability

What sustainability measures are put in place for the work?

- Continuous refresher sensitization workshops for service providers
- Strengthening trans peer educator and health advocates
- Have inclusive health policies
- Advocating for integration of gender diversity into health curricular
- Continued documentation and evidence generation
- Expanding engagement beyond urban areas

How do you intend to sustain the work or scale up?

- BTI's aim is to advocate and push for institutionalizing inclusive healthcare practices within Botswana's national healthcare system rather than keeping them project based . This will allow space for policy reform building into scaling up to rural areas

Evidence: Include Photos or videos



Next Steps

What are your plans?

- Scale sensitisation to rural and underserved districts
- Advocate for formal policy inclusion of trans specific healthcare
- Strengthen community-led monitoring mechanisms for evidence based advocacy
- Continue advocating for specific and targeted gender affirming healthcare
- Mobilise sustainable funding for long-term impact and sustainability
- Strengthen partnerships and collaborations with other stakeholders and civil society movements