

The background of the image is a vibrant rainbow with diagonal stripes of blue, green, yellow, and orange. A large white circle is positioned on the right side, containing the text for the annual report.

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

www.galz.org

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List of Acronyms

In order of Appearance

1. LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex
2. GALZ	Gay and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, now noun
3. CCC	Citizens Coalition for Change (Zimbabwean opposition party)
4. MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
5. PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (HIV prevention medication)
6. ART	Antiretroviral Therapy (HIV treatment)
7. HTS	HIV Testing Services
8. SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
9. MOHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care (Zimbabwe)
10. HCC	Health Centre Committees
11. AGYW	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
12. IMARAA	Inclusive Men's Advocacy and Rights Alliance in Africa
13. CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
14. UPR	Universal Periodic Review (UN human rights mechanism)
15. SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
16. ZNASP3	Zimbabwe National AIDS Strategic Plan III
17. COPAC	Constitutional Parliamentary Select Committee
18. ZLHR	Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights
19. SAIH	Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund
20. DMEL	Design, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
21. MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
22. SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics



Key Achievements

Reached 21,294 individuals with mental health support through the Taka Taka chatbot

Trained 10 LGBTI activists from 10 African countries via the Munhu Munhu Advocacy Academy.

Conducted a Client Mystery Survey identifying healthcare barriers and informing national advocacy work.

Launched IMARAA, a regional mechanism uniting African LGBTIQ+ movements

Improved HIV outcomes for MSM with expanded testing, PrEP, and peer-led support at GALZ centres.

Equipped 6 LGBTI entrepreneurs with practical income-generating skills for economic self-sufficiency

Averaged 173% Digital Growth

Strengthened public health partnerships in Harare, Masvingo, and Mutare, improving access for LGBTI people.

High-Level Advocacy to Lobby for recognition of Intersex by Civil Registry

About GALZ

GALZ is a 1990-established voluntary association of LGBTI People in Zimbabwe. The association works to protect and promote the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals through advocacy, education and direct support services.

Four key areas guide the association's work. Membership and Community Empowerment, Knowledge, Documentation and Ideas, Policy Law and Access to Justice and Lastly, Governance, Institutional Innovation, Systems Adaptation & Resources:

The organisation documents community experiences and maintains resources on gender and sexuality issues. It advocates for legal reforms and policy changes to protect LGBTI rights, while simultaneously strengthening its own operational capacity for sustainability.

Through these efforts, GALZ systematically challenges discriminatory laws and social attitudes. The organisation collaborates with allies and partner institutions to create meaningful change, working toward a society where all citizens can live with dignity regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. This dual approach allows GALZ to address both immediate community needs and long-term structural barriers through coordinated action.



Executive Summary

The year 2024 presented significant challenges for LGBTI rights in Zimbabwe amid political instability, including a parliamentary motion to ban foreign funding for LGBTIQ+ interventions and public hostility fueled by statements from high-ranking officials. Despite this, GALZ achieved critical milestones:

Over 21,000 LGBTI individuals accessed mental health support via the Taka Taka chatbot, while HIV services reached 670 MSM, with 188 initiated on PrEP and 41 linked to ART. Public-private health partnerships improved service access in Harare, Masvingo, and Mutare.

GALZ advanced intersex rights through commitments from the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) on birth certificates and documentation. A shadow report to the UN highlighted systemic exclusion from SDGs, creating new advocacy leverage. Leadership training for 10 African activists and the launch of IMARAA strengthened regional solidarity. Cross-movement collaboration with sex workers and women's rights groups countered anti-gender narratives.

Social media reach grew by 135–212%, and 25 editors adopted ethical LGBTI reporting after training.

Challenges persist, particularly for LBQ women and under-resourced rural outreach. However, GALZ's adaptive strategies, combining direct services, systemic advocacy, and strategic partnerships, continue to advance rights amid a hostile climate. Governance improvements, including new policies and board diversification, ensure organisational resilience for sustained impact.



Operational Context



In 2024, Zimbabwe experienced significant political and social upheaval that severely affected the environment for LGBTI advocacy. The recall of opposition MPs from the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) and shifts in party leadership created instability, making it difficult for civil society groups to rely on consistent engagement with elected officials. Later in the year, a parliamentary motion proposing a ban on foreign funding for LGBTI initiatives, though not debated, signalled rising hostility within government circles.

This period saw increased public opposition to the LGBTI community. The Vice President publicly criticised GALZ's Munhumunhu scholarship, citing conflicts with traditional and religious values, triggering widespread negative media coverage and forcing GALZ to temporarily adopt remote operations due to safety concerns. Public protests, including one by the United Methodist Church and another at GALZ's offices, further escalated risks and disrupted activities.

Misinformation, such as The Herald's report linking LGBTI groups to student recruitment under the guise of scholarships, fuelled public distrust and endangered community members. These developments reflect a deeply hostile context for LGBTI advocacy, shaped by political instability, religious opposition, and state-supported narratives.

Despite these challenges, GALZ strengthened its capacity by welcoming new team members across various regions and roles, including programming, counselling, monitoring, and administration. These additions enhanced the organisation's ability to implement programmes, support community safety, and maintain stakeholder engagement amid a volatile operating environment.



Membership & Community Empowerment

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GALZ builds an inclusive movement by equipping LGBTI people to challenge discrimination and claim their place in Zimbabwe's social, economic, and political life. GALZ provide direct support, mental health care, financial guidance, and safe spaces, to protect and sustain the LGBTI community. Here are key achievements;

Mental Health

21 294 people from across Zimbabwe accessed confidential and convenient mental health services through an non-AI mental health chatbot Taka Taka. The use of the chat bot adds to other convenient options available for LGBTI people to access mental health services at their convenience. Users have testified to the chatbot being commodious especially in the first instance addressing depression, anxiety and self stigma related to sexual orientation, identity and expression especially in a context such as Zimbabwe.



Wellness

Weekly clinics at Harare Drop-In Centre significantly boosted access to tailored HIV services, with 670 individuals tested, 188 initiated on PrEP and 41 starting ART, including 90 PrEP and 41 ART initiations among 20–24-year-olds with 100% retention, reducing new infections and improving health outcomes.

Talking to TakaTaka feels like talking to a friend, Now I walk with a lot of confidence because I understand myself better...

Tryphine, Member

[More Stories, Click Here](#)



PREP & ART

GALZ's Harare Drop-In Centre delivered critical HIV services to 670 MSM, with 188 (28%) starting PrEP and all 41 newly diagnosed individuals immediately linked to ART. The high-risk 20-24 age group showed particularly strong outcomes, with 90 on PrEP and 41 on ART, all retained in care. Peer support through Ordaa Advocates proved vital, improving adherence (as demonstrated by clients like Henry) and addressing psychosocial barriers. This community-clinic model not only advances Zimbabwe's 90-90-90 targets but demonstrates an effective, scalable approach to reducing HIV transmission and health inequities among MSM.

28%
PREP UPTAKE
RATE

90%
ART INITIATION
RATE



Capacity Building

In 2024, GALZ funded four LGBTI students' tuition and living costs, enabling them to continue their education despite financial exclusion and family rejection. One transgender scholar, abandoned by his religious family, said the support was his only lifeline to stay in university. All four students improved academically, with one earning first-class honours. These scholarships don't just cover expenses, they equip LGBTI individuals with qualifications for economic independence, breaking cycles of marginalisation. GALZ's targeted support transforms both immediate circumstances and long-term prospects for LGBTI Zimbabweans.

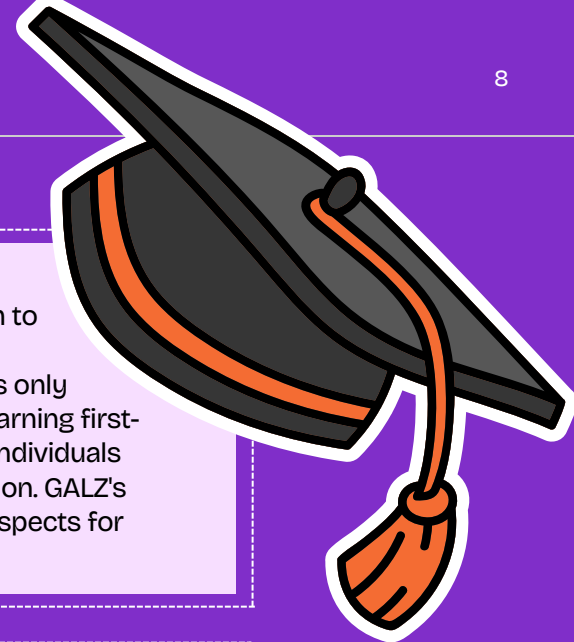
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After an HIV diagnosis left him isolated, Henry found hope through a friend's support, compassionate healthcare, and consistent counselling (including daily WhatsApp calls for two weeks and regular clinic visits). His adherence to ART and emotional recovery demonstrate the impact of peer and professional support in transforming lives.

Henry, Member

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GALZ trained 10 LGBTI activists from 10 African countries through the Munhu Munhu Advocacy Academy, equipping them with crucial skills in advocacy, digital campaigning, and security. Facing widespread criminalisation, violence and discrimination, these defenders now lead stronger movements, one participant successfully lobbied their government to include LGBTI rights in national human rights reporting. The academy's impact extends beyond individual training, creating a pan-African network challenging oppression and advancing fundamental rights for queer communities across the continent.



Socio-economic Empowerment

Socio-economic empowerment is one of the major thresholds that signify that LGBTI people are thriving in an economy that systemically excludes them. In 2024, through the GALZ skills development programme, six entrepreneurs were capacitated with income generating skills such as construction, counselling and locksmithing. These were not token gestures; they are practical skills that mean LGBTI Zimbabwean citizens can finally earn a decent living without resorting to dangerous survival tactics. This outcome exhibits GALZ's commitment to economic justice and empowerment by creating avenues for LGBTI individuals to build dignified, self-sustaining futures. As GALZ rolls out its next strategy, a stronger emphasis is being placed on resilience building and self-sustainability.

Public, Private Partnerships

GALZ improved LGBTI access to public healthcare in Harare, Masvingo, and Mutare by strengthening partnerships with the MOHCC and City Health Departments. Fear of discrimination often drives queer individuals to avoid public clinics, but GALZ's work with 8 health centre committees, including LGBTI representatives, helped increase service uptake. These committees, based in clinics like Mzilikazi, Mucheke, and Dangamvura, mobilised the community while providing critical feedback to health facilities. As a result, more LGBTI individuals now use permanent public health structures, reducing reliance on temporary donor-funded services and ensuring sustainable healthcare access.



Equipping LGBTI Movement Leaders

In 2024, GALZ trained five LGBTI leaders from Zimbabwean organisations ARMZ, GAY (God Adores You), TREAT, Purple Hand Africa and TIRZ through tailored coaching, enhancing their advocacy and organisational leadership skills. The programme yielded concrete results: participants launched new campaigns, with one TREAT leader now training others in policy engagement and a GAY representative expanding rural outreach. This investment in diverse, cross-generational leadership has strengthened the LGBTI movement's capacity for sustained advocacy.



PILLAR PERFORMANCE

The pillar achieved significant progress in building inclusive movements to combat discrimination against LGBTI communities. Compared to 2023, empowerment initiatives delivered stronger socio-economic outcomes, with verified increases in self-employment and vocational skills utilisation among participants. Mental health services showed positive psychosocial impacts, confirming progress toward member empowerment goals. While results were strong, LBQ women remained underserved, a gap being addressed through a new dedicated project in 2025.



Knowledge Documentation & Ideas



Through knowledge, documentation, and ideas, the GALZ team works towards building evidence to inform policy and generate media visibility to counter harmful narratives. The work undertaken involves building the capacities of LGBTI persons to tell their own stories and contribute to the knowledge base on gender and sexual diversity.

In 2024, GALZ's newsletter programme achieved remarkable growth, with subscriptions increasing by 194% from 85 to 250, demonstrating its effectiveness as a cost-efficient advocacy platform. The newsletter's success comes from its community-driven approach, with 30% of content contributed by LGBTI members sharing personal experiences, while coverage focused strategically on legal rights (25%), health advocacy (20%), youth empowerment (15%) and intersectional challenges (40%). The programme's organic reach was particularly notable, with 45% of new subscribers joining through peer referrals, reflecting strong community engagement. This growth establishes the newsletter as a powerful tool for amplifying marginalised voices while maximising impact through minimal resources, positioning it as a model for scalable digital advocacy.

Knowledge Generation



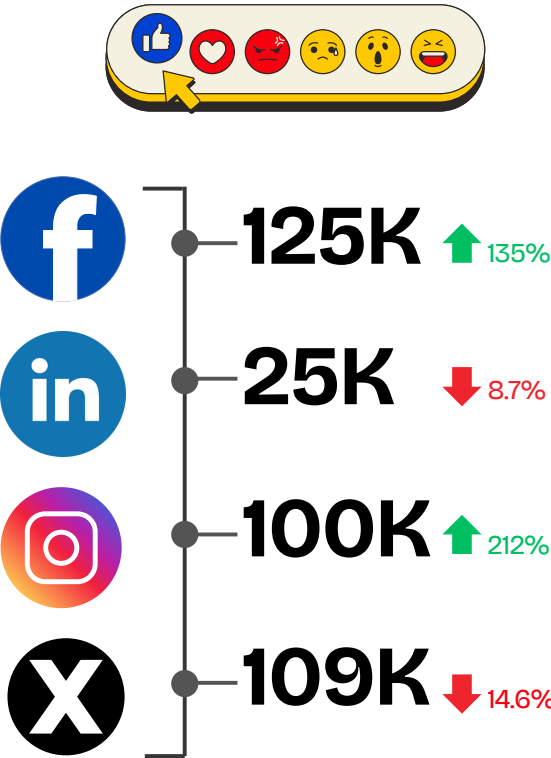
Click on month to read newsletter



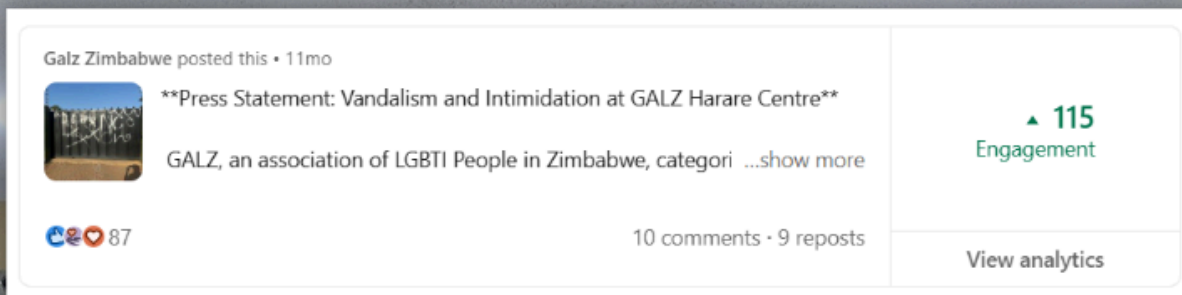
Documentation

In 2024, GALZ undertook the Mid-Term Review of GALZ's Leading with Love Strategic Plan (2021-2025), the evaluation's outcome shows tangible progress in shifting public perceptions and strengthening LGBTI community empowerment through strategic partnerships. This has been crucial to GALZ's overall vision because it has shed light on critical areas that GALZ will strengthen for the rest of the implementation period (insufficient inclusion of diverse community subgroups and persistent funding imbalances). The results validate GALZ's strategic approach while clearly identifying areas requiring focused intervention to ensure comprehensive success.

Social Media Engagement



GALZ achieved 135% Facebook and 212% Instagram growth in 2024 by capitalising on national controversies. Viral moments included raw documentation of resource centre vandalism in Harare and Masvingo, which sparked coverage in Newsday, ZimLive and other outlets, while strategic responses to Vice President Chiwenga's scholarship comments and UMC marriage debates amplified LGBTI visibility. The 25K Instagram reach reflected deliberate crisis communication, though X engagement declined due to platform saturation with sponsored development content. Moving forward, GALZ will prioritise sponsored content to extend reach beyond the LGBTI community and counter homophobic narratives during controversies.



Media Engagement

25 media editors now apply sensitive, responsible reporting on LGBTI issues. This transformation is a result of November 2024's intensive editors' training, which produced three exemplary articles free from harmful stereotypes and using accurate terminology. The impact extends beyond content; five editors have committed to future collaborations with GALZ and pledged to train their newsrooms in these principles. In addition, a vernacular glossary demystifying LGBTI terms for rural audiences is under development. This engagement has strengthened partnerships between GALZ and influential media stakeholders (Zimpapers, Alpha Media Holdings) that will amplify ethical coverage in mainstream discourse. This will play a major role in setting the agenda and controlling narratives around LGBTI issues in the Zimbabwean media landscape.

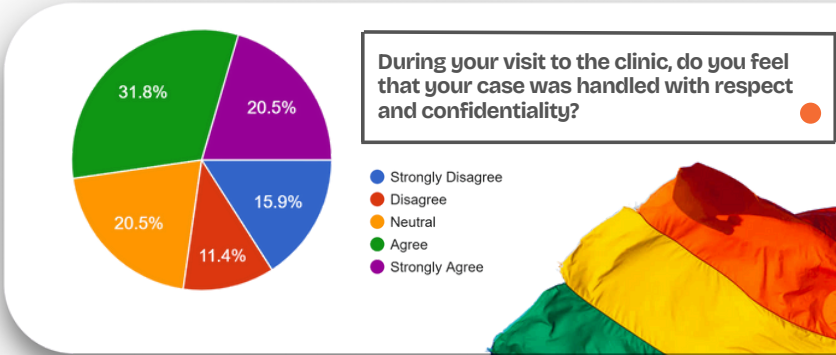
Press Statements

By publicly condemning injustices and demanding equality, GALZ amplified marginalized voices, pressured authorities for reform, and fostered solidarity among activists, making their press releases a vital tool for human rights advocacy in Zimbabwe.

- INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
- NATIONAL YOUTH DAY
- INDEPENDENCE DAY
- INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA
- 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GBV

Evidence Generation

2024 SRHR Access Survey Findings: GALZ's partnership with SAT revealed critical healthcare barriers for Zimbabwe's LGBTI community: 26% experienced confidentiality breaches, 45% were denied key population services or faced intrusive questioning, and 34% lacked adequate SRHR information. Geographic and financial obstacles compounded these issues, with many traveling over an hour only to find unaffordable or unavailable services. These findings have directly shaped GALZ's advocacy , driving demands for healthcare worker sensitivity training, expanded KP-friendly service points, and strengthened wellness centers to meet growing demand, advancing Zimbabwe's Universal Health Coverage goals.



PILLAR PERFORMANCE

The pillar delivered strong results, generating critical evidence to improve LGBTI healthcare quality in Zimbabwe. GALZ's strategic digital engagement effectively amplified community voices amid backlash, countering dehumanising narratives and maintaining visibility for the constituency and allies.





Policy, Law, Human Rights, and Access to Justice

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GALZ strengthens LGBTI access to justice through legal literacy programs, strategic advocacy with policymakers, and coalitions with national/international bodies.

GALZ's strategic partnership with intersex organisations achieved groundbreaking progress on legal recognition for intersex Zimbabweans. By supporting ICOZ and IAZ in high-level advocacy, GALZ facilitated a landmark meeting with the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC), the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, and the Civil Registry. This direct engagement secured concrete commitments: the ZHRC will now actively intervene to help parents obtain birth certificates for intersex children and push for proper documentation of intersex births in health facilities, crucial steps toward accurate population data and legal recognition. Critically, the Commission has officially classified intersex persons as a priority group in its work, creating an unprecedented institutional pathway toward eventual third-sex recognition. These outcomes represent the first systemic movement toward resolving decades of bureaucratic exclusion faced by Zimbabwe's intersex community.

Intersex Advocacy

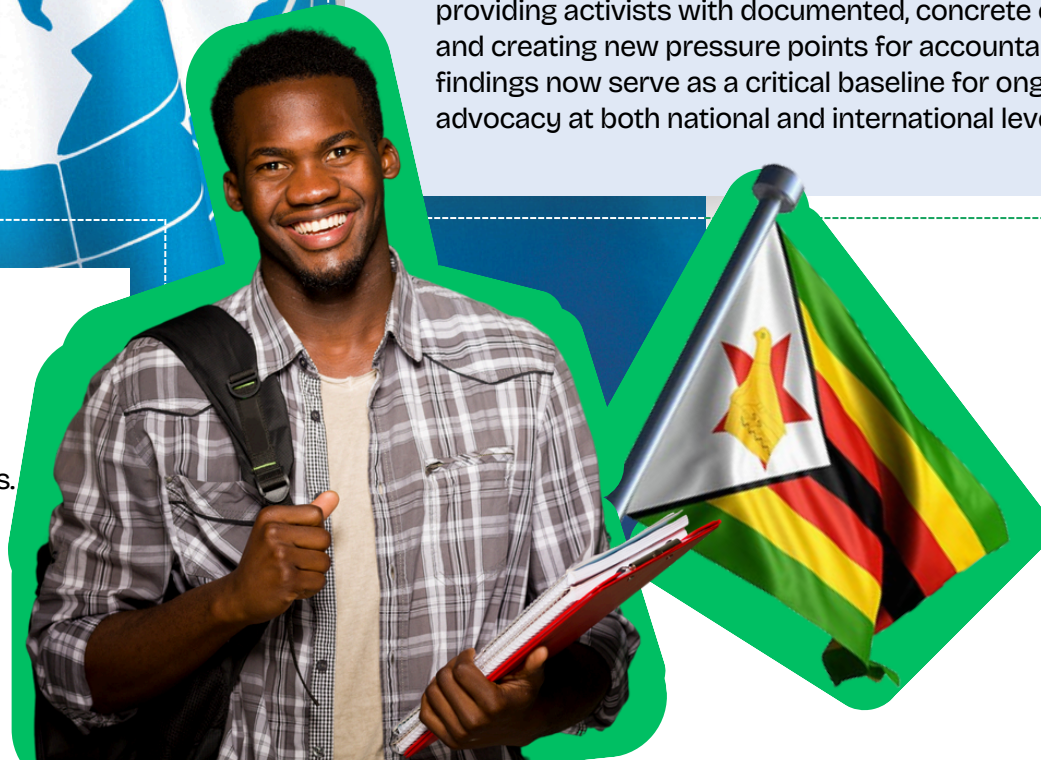


UN Shadow Report

GALZ's collectively with LGBTI partners, submitted a Shadow Report to the UN exposing Zimbabwe's systemic exclusion of LGBTI communities from SDG progress. Drawing on nationwide research, it revealed stark discrimination in employment, healthcare and justice, particularly regarding poverty reduction (SDG 1), food security (SDG 2) and access to justice (SDG 16). The report compels UN bodies to formally acknowledge these violations and recommend reforms to Zimbabwe's government. While policy adoption and changes remain slow, this intervention permanently shifts the narrative, providing activists with documented, concrete evidence and creating new pressure points for accountability. The findings now serve as a critical baseline for ongoing advocacy at both national and international levels.

Student Representation

GALZ's education advocacy has secured LGBTI inclusion in mainstream education dialogues, partnering with ECOZI to access previously closed advocacy spaces. In 2024, its SOGIESC Sensitisation Programme influenced institutional practices, advancing academic freedom for LGBTI students. The initiative trained nine SAIH partners on LGBTI rights, mobilising 30 lecturers for 2025 sensitisation sessions, expanding the network of allies committed to inclusive education. These efforts are driving systemic change, ensuring safer, more equitable learning environments.





DECRIM CONSULTATION

GALZ and Zimbabwe's LGBTI community have co-created a targeted decriminalization strategy addressing key barriers: anti-queer violence, judicial bias, and political resistance. The community-endorsed Samba Agreement provides interim protections while pursuing full legal reform, with initial focus on implementing Universal Periodic Review recommendations for intersex rights. This unified approach combines advocacy, litigation, and public campaigns to systematically dismantle discriminatory laws through both immediate safeguards and long-term structural change.

PILLAR PERFORMANCE

Considering the operating environment which was tense as a result of the broader political context, the pillar performed well. The follow up to ensure implementation of the Universal Periodic Review in Zimbabwe regarding the human rights of intersex persons and access to documentation. The collective engagement of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) and their immediate commitment to ensuring access to national identity documents by intersex persons demonstrates positive results that improve the quality of lives of members of the LGBTI community.





Governance, Institutional Innovation, Systems Adaptation & Resources:

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GALZ operates efficiently to deliver its strategy, innovating to meet LGBTI community needs. It prioritizes funding partnerships and resource mobilization to sustain and grow its impact.



GALZ POLICIES

GALZ
AN ASSOCIATION OF YOUTH PEOPLE IN CHARGE

Policy Development

To strengthen resource mobilisation and sustainability , GALZ developed key guiding policies that are expected to position the organisation for long-term sustainability. The developed policies and guidelines include the revision of the Central support cost policy, Resource mobilisation policy , Income and Unrestricted funds policy , Reserves Policy as well as a Financing Strategy which comes into effect in 2025 through to 2029.

GALZ Board

In 2024 GALZ complied with its governance requirements of ensuring Quarterly Board meetings for strategic guidance from the Board . The final quarter of the year saw the departure of 4 Board members who had completed their maximum two 3-year terms of service to the Board , retention of three Board members getting into their final 3-year term and welcoming of 4 new Board members with diverse expertise ranging from Law, Human Resources and Communications.

Security Upgrade

GALZ strengthened its onsite security infrastructure within its resource centres countrywide for increased safety and security for members, staff, and all other stakeholders of the organisation. (Details of improvements intentionally spared in the report.)



PILLAR PERFORMANCE

Regardless of the challenges experienced in the environment, the pillar faired well. Given that the pillar is more inward-focused, it supported the ultimate achievement realised throughout the year. The foresight to develop a financing strategy tops the achievement realised.

Promoting Protecting & Representing The Rights & Interests of LGBTI People in Zimbabwe

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END OF REPORT