



FREE & EQUAL
UNITED NATIONS FOR LGBT EQUALITY

UN Free & Equal Campaign Progress Report 2015



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

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Introduction

UN Free & Equal is a worldwide United Nations public education campaign for lesbian, gay, bi, trans (LGBT) and intersex equality. The campaign, launched in July 2013 and led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), aims to raise awareness of sexual, gender and bodily diversity and promote equal rights and fair treatment for LGBT and intersex people everywhere. Campaign materials – including videos, factsheets and infographic materials – have been widely shared on social media, helping to dispel

negative stereotypes of LGBT and intersex people. Celebrities have been engaged to help carry campaign messages to the widest possible audience through both social and traditional media, and the campaign has provided a platform for high-profile events at UNHQ and on the ground in countries around the world. Today, Free & Equal stands as one of the UN's most popular ever human rights campaigns, helping provoke and sustain the kinds of conversations needed if social attitudes towards LGBT and intersex people are to evolve.

UN Free & Equal

Launched: 26 July 2013

Overall aim: To raise awareness of sexual, gender and bodily diversity, and promote equal rights and fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bi, trans and intersex people everywhere.

Objectives:

- To project United Nations' messages of LGBT and intersex equality and acceptance in traditional and social media.
- To support country-level United Nations advocacy for the human rights of LGBT and intersex people, including through distribution of public information materials and tools.
- To lend support and legitimacy to the work carried out by civil society organizations to counter prejudice and harmful stereotypes directed at LGBT and intersex people.

Implementation:

Led by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with support from the UN Department of Public Information, the UN Department of Management and UN Country Teams (incl. UN Resident Coordinators, the UN Development Programme, UNICEF, UN Women, UNAIDS and the International Labour Organization).

Highlights of 2015

In 2015, UN Free & Equal:

- Continued to create a stream of new content, including seven original videos, 35 electronic postcards, and fact sheets in all UN languages - all made available via a dedicated campaign website at www.unfe.org.
- Generated more than 10.3 billion impressions¹ via social and traditional media – bringing to 28.2 billion the total number of impressions since the campaign's launch in 2013.
- Reached a further 10 million people with Free & Equal campaign videos via social media – and many millions more through TV and other off-line channels.
- Continued to support national Free & Equal campaigns and initiatives in some 20 countries, including launching new campaigns in 2015 in Cape Verde, West Africa and the Pacific Islands.



Launch of Free & Equal campaign video in Times Square

UN Free & Equal marked the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia on 17 May with a new campaign video, "Faces", challenging audiences to see the people behind the labels 'lesbian', 'gay', 'bisexual', 'transgender' and 'intersex'. The new video was launched on giant screens in New York City's Times Square, where it played repeatedly throughout the day on its day of release. The Times Square launch generated extensive press interest in both mainstream and LGBT community media, and the video generated more than 10 million views on YouTube, Facebook and Weibo.

¹ The number of impressions is the number of times a post is displayed on social media plus the number of articles in traditional media multiplied by circulation figures.

- Hosted and/or supported high-level panel debates and cultural events at UN Headquarters in New York, including a Ministerial-level event in September, a video launch and panel discussion in November and a Human Rights Day event in December – all organized in conjunction with a consortium of UN Member States. The campaign also staged a high-profile video launch in New York City's Times Square in May, and, together with the UN Foundation, an LGBT Leaders' Luncheon with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in San Francisco in June – part of celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter in San Francisco in July 2015.
- Continued to engage the campaign's nine Equality Champions in support of the campaign, including on social media. (Equality Champions are Puerto Rican pop star Ricky Martin, South African musician

Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Brazilian singer Daniela Mercury, Bollywood actress Celina Jaitley, U.S. rap duo Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, and the U.S. band "fun.")



UN Equality Champion and Bollywood star Celina Jaitley leads the Toronto Pride parade through the streets of Canada's largest city, June 2015.

- Was awarded several prizes for impact and innovation – including the Harvey Milk Medal and the UN Foundation Global Leadership Award.

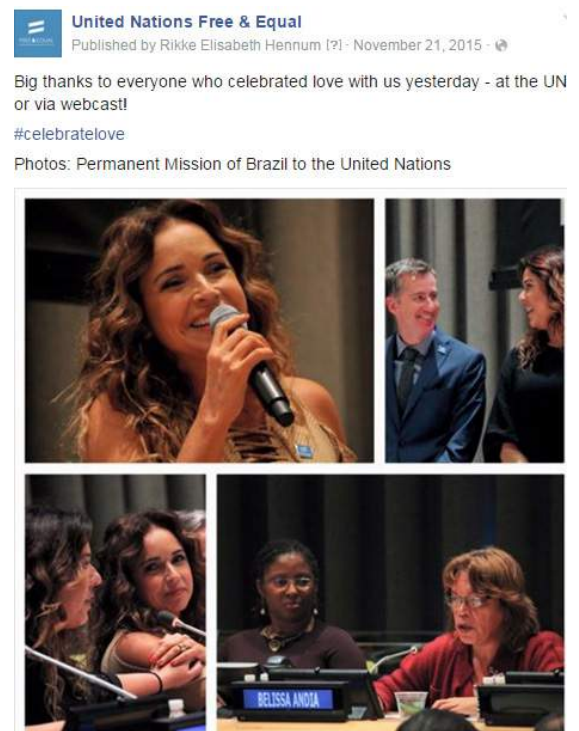
UN Free & Equal on the web

Social media

By the end of 2015, the campaign had garnered more than 60,000 followers on Facebook and Twitter. Campaign posts were liked, shared or commented on almost 125,000 times in 2015 alone.

In addition, Free & Equal videos and other materials were shared on the main UN social media accounts (with a combined following of more than 10 million), as well as by UN Equality Champions.

Facebook



Twitter

From South African musician and Equality Champion Yvonne Chaka Chaka



From Bollywood star and Equality Champion Celina Jaitly



From Prime Minister of Malta, Joseph Muscat



From actor Zachary Quinto



From singer-songwriter Sara Bareilles



From international superstar and Equality Champion Ricky Martin



From US Ambassador to Human Rights Council, Keith Harper



Videos

As of March 2016, UN Free & Equal had published 35 original campaign videos, which had been watched more than 15 million times on social media. Seven of these were produced in 2015, garnering more than 10 million views.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN VIDEOS

FACES



This video celebrates the contributions that millions of LGBT and intersex people make to families and local communities around the world. There are no actors in this video, only real people filmed in their workplaces and homes.

THE PRICE OF EXCLUSION



This infographic video - narrated by movie star Zachary Quinto - uses animation to expose the true cost - personal, social and economic - of LGBT exclusion and discrimination.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE INTERSEX?



Intersex activist Hida Viloria sheds some light on what it means to be intersex.

NATIONAL OR REGIONAL CAMPAIGN VIDEOS

CELEBRATE LOVE!



A celebration of love from Livres & Iguais Brazil, featuring music from UN Equality Champion Daniela Mercury's 2016 album and never-before-seen footage from Daniela's wedding to Malu Verçosa Mercury.

FOR A FREE & EQUAL CAPE VERDE



Cape Verdean musician and human rights champion Mayra Andrade calls on her compatriots to celebrate love and respect one another in this video created to help introduce the Free & Equal campaign in Cape Verde.

I'M A PROUD PACIFIC ISLANDER



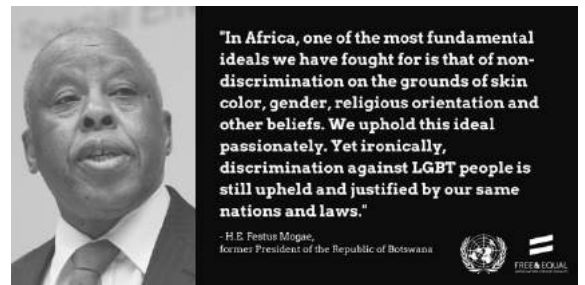
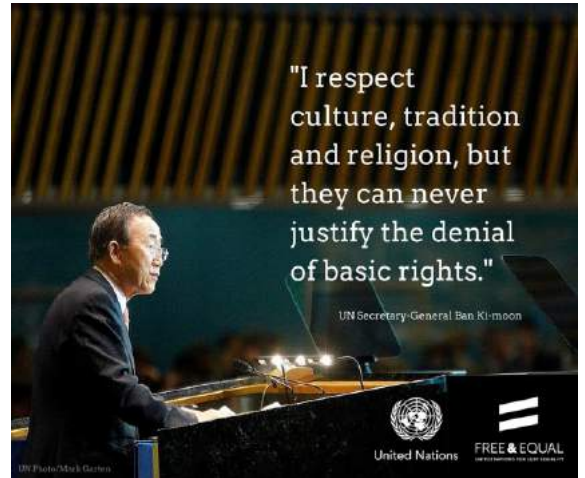
The video "I'm a Proud Pacific Islander" is one of two videos created by the Pacific UN Free & Equal campaign for equal rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. It features the faces and voices of LGBTI people and their allies from across the Pacific, calling for everyone to take a stand for LGBTI equality.

Website

In 2015, the campaign's home page, www.unfe.org, was visited by more than 400,000 people, generating over almost 940,000 page views. On average, visitors spent almost 15 minutes exploring the site. Almost 24,000 people have signed up for the Free & Equal e-mailing list.

Macros/e-postcards

In 2015, the campaign created 37 electronic postcards, or macros – branded images with text superimposed, designed for easy-sharing on social media. These convey critical facts and campaign messages in a clear and appealing way. Macros have featured facts about human rights law, messages about the detrimental effects of homophobia and transphobia, supportive statements by the campaign's celebrity Equality Champions and senior UN officials, and ways to honor key dates, such as Human Rights Day on 10 December and International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia on 17 May.



Fact sheets

The campaign has created a popular series of short fact sheets – most of which focus on particular types of human rights violations experienced by LGBT and intersex people. Eight factsheets have been produced to date – including on violence, criminalization, discrimination, sex characteristics, refuge and asylum, LGBT rights in international law, and Frequently Asked Questions about sexual orientation and gender identity. All factsheets are available in all UN languages, easily accessible on the campaign website and formatted for easy printing by OHCHR and other

UN field offices, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

In 2015, the campaign produced two new factsheets: one on [the human rights concerns of intersex people](#), developed in close cooperation with intersex activists; and a second summarizing the findings of [the High Commissioner's historic June 2015 report to the UN Human Rights Council](#), which documented discrimination and violence against LGBT and intersex people.

UN Free & Equal in the news

News stories and blog posts about UN Free & Equal have been written and produced by outlets in every part of the world – including in AllAfrica.com (pan-Africa), BuzzFeed (U.S.), *Empresa Brasil de Comunicaçã* (Brazil), Fiji Times, *Globo* (Brazil), *The Guardian* (UK), *Hindustan Times* (India), The Huffington Post (global), *Hurriyet Daily News* (Turkey), *El Mundo* (Spain), Slate.com (U.S.) and Radio Australia. UN Free & Equal campaign director Charles Radcliffe also published a regular blog in *The Huffington Post*, highlighting key moments in the campaign.

Distribution on the world map by results



UN Free & Equal at the country level

The global campaign was launched on 26 July 2013 at a press conference in Cape Town, South Africa, featuring then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and South African Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron.

Since then, national and regional launches and events have taken place in 20 countries in every part of the world. OHCHR has worked closely with UN country teams, national authorities and activists to contextualize the global campaign and spreading the campaign's messages at the national level with nuanced, local messages – creating, in effect, spin-off national-level campaigns.

In addition to providing content and programmatic support, the campaign has made

available a range of advocacy and promotional materials for dissemination at national launches, including Free & Equal posters, booklets, tote bags, pins and bracelets. National and regional campaigns have been created to date in Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Cambodia, Chile, China, Ecuador, India, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Pacific Islands and West Africa with plans to extend the campaign into several more countries in 2016.

In 2015, new national and regional campaigns were launched in Cape Verde, Fiji and the Pacific Islands and West Africa, with the activities continuing in a number of other countries where national Free & Equal campaigns had previously been launched.

PACIFIC ISLANDS

The OHCHR office in Fiji launched Free & Equal Pacific in August 2015 in Suva, Fiji, with support from UN partners, local civil society and national authorities.

Government representatives, human rights activists, national human rights institutions, UN officials and other stakeholders from across the region attended the half-day event, which was opened by the President of Fiji. The event featured performances by local artists, as well as the premiere of two short videos produced specifically for the campaign. A Free & Equal choir, formed to promote the campaign, sang at the launch ceremony and has since performed at multiple other events across Fiji.



Photo from Pacific Islands Regional campaign launch.

CAPE VERDE

The UN team in Cape Verde launched Livres & Iguais Cabo Verde on Human Rights Day (10 December 2015). The campaign was launched with the support of Cape Verdean musician and singer Mayra Andrade, who created a [campaign video](#) to promote acceptance of LGBT and intersex people. The launch and video attracted extensive local press coverage.

Continuing in 2016, Livres & Iguais Cabo Verde was featured in the Liberty Parade commemorating the National Day of Democracy and Freedom. Close to 50 participants, including The First Lady of Cabo Verde, the UN Resident Coordinator and other UN staff, ran through the streets of the capital sporting jerseys bearing the Free & Equal logo and message. The campaign also hosts regular Free & Equal football matches together with a local alliance of gay and straight players to raise awareness and eliminate prejudice against LGBTI people.



Photo from the Cape Verde Liberty Parade

WEST AFRICA

In May 2015, OHCHR's Regional Office marked the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia with a film screening and panel debate on the human rights challenges of LGBT people in Senegal and the region. The event was co-hosted with the Embassy of the Netherlands. During the second half of 2015, the Regional Office organized several more film-debates as well as a 3-day UNFE Human Rights Training for 25 Senegalese human rights defenders.

BRAZIL

Livres & Iguais Brasil, launched in April 2014, continued in 2015. The UN country team created a campaign video, "Celebrate Love", featuring Brazilian Equality Champion and superstar Daniela Mercury, which was launched at a high-level event at UN headquarters in New York in November – generating extensive media coverage in Brazil and across Latin America. The team also strengthened advocacy and cooperation with local civil society organizations.



UN Secretary-General with Free & Equal Equality Champions Daniela Mercury and Malu Vercosa

PERU

Libres e Iguales Peru was launched at a June 2014 event organized by the OHCHR Regional Office, the UN Country Team and Lima City Hall. Campaign activities continued in 2015, including a film screening and panel discussion on human rights challenges facing LGBT people with more than 70 people in attendance hosted by the UN Information Centre in Lima, and a photo exhibition set up in a popular public park near the center of Peru’s capital, Lima.



"I Have Rights": Free & Equal photo exhibition in Lima

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In addition to events at UNHQ, a UN Free & Equal event was organized in San Francisco in June as part of the celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of the UN Charter. The event, which was supported by the UN Foundation, featured remarks by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and was attended by some 200 political and civil society leaders, including U.S. Representative Nancy Pelosi. California Governor Jerry Brown, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee and Stuart Milk, nephew of slain U.S. gay rights leader Harvey Milk. The Secretary-General was presented with the Harvey Milk medal for the Free & Equal campaign, and, accepting the honour, spoke of his pride at being the first UN head to speak up for the rights of LGBT people."

HONDURAS

The UN country team in Honduras launched Libres e Iguales Honduras in May 2015 at the National Autonomous University of Honduras in the Valle de Sula. More than 800 students activists and dignitaries attended the event. The country team, through UNDP Human Rights Project, has since developed a [series of videos](#) to promote LGBT and intersex equality, called "Defend the rights of LGBTI people". The videos features UN staff, local activists and public figures speaking out against violence and discrimination.



Photo from Libres e Iguales Honduras launch



Thanks to our amazing co-hosts and to UN Secretary-General for a great @free_equal event in San Francisco today!



UN Free & Equal at UNHQ

The campaign promoted and supported three LGBT-related panel events at UNHQ in 2015, in each case organized in conjunction with members of the cross-regional LGBT Core Group:

- In September, during the high-level opening week of the General Assembly, Free & Equal supported a Ministerial-level event featuring UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Botswana's former president Festus Mogae and Pakistani human rights lawyer and former UN special rapporteur Hina Jilani. A campaign video was created for and screened at the event, and a series of macros created to promote key messages on social media.
- In November, the campaign worked with a group of Latin American States to create a high-profile event focused on progress and challenges in the the fight for LGBT and intersex equality in Latin America. The event featured Brazilian superstar Daniela Mercury and her wife Malu Vercosa Mercury and the launch of their new video, created for the campaign in Brazil, "Celebrate Love".



Free & Equal Equality Champions Daniela Mercury and Malu Vercosa at UNHQ

- In December, the campaign supported the annual LGBT Core Group Human Rights Day event, which this year looked at the cost – human, social and economic – of discrimination against the LGBT community. A new campaign video, "The Cost of Exclusion" was screened and the campaign arranged for a livestream of the event to be carried on several UN Facebook accounts.

UN Free & Equal Global Film Series

In partnership with the UN Department of Public Information and with support from Film Independent, the campaign launched the Free & Equal Global Film Series in July 2015. The Global Film Series features short documentary and narrative films that address various issues facing LGBT and intersex people around

the world. Screenings and post-screening debates have been organized to date by UN Information Centres, OHCHR field offices and other UN offices in Austria, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Madagascar, Peru, Senegal and the USA, with more screenings scheduled for 2016.