



**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON
EFFECTIVE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
MEASURES BASED ON SEXUAL
ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY
(SOGI) IN
SOUTH AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN**

*Best practices to strengthen engagement
between parliamentarians, civil society
representatives and the private sector*

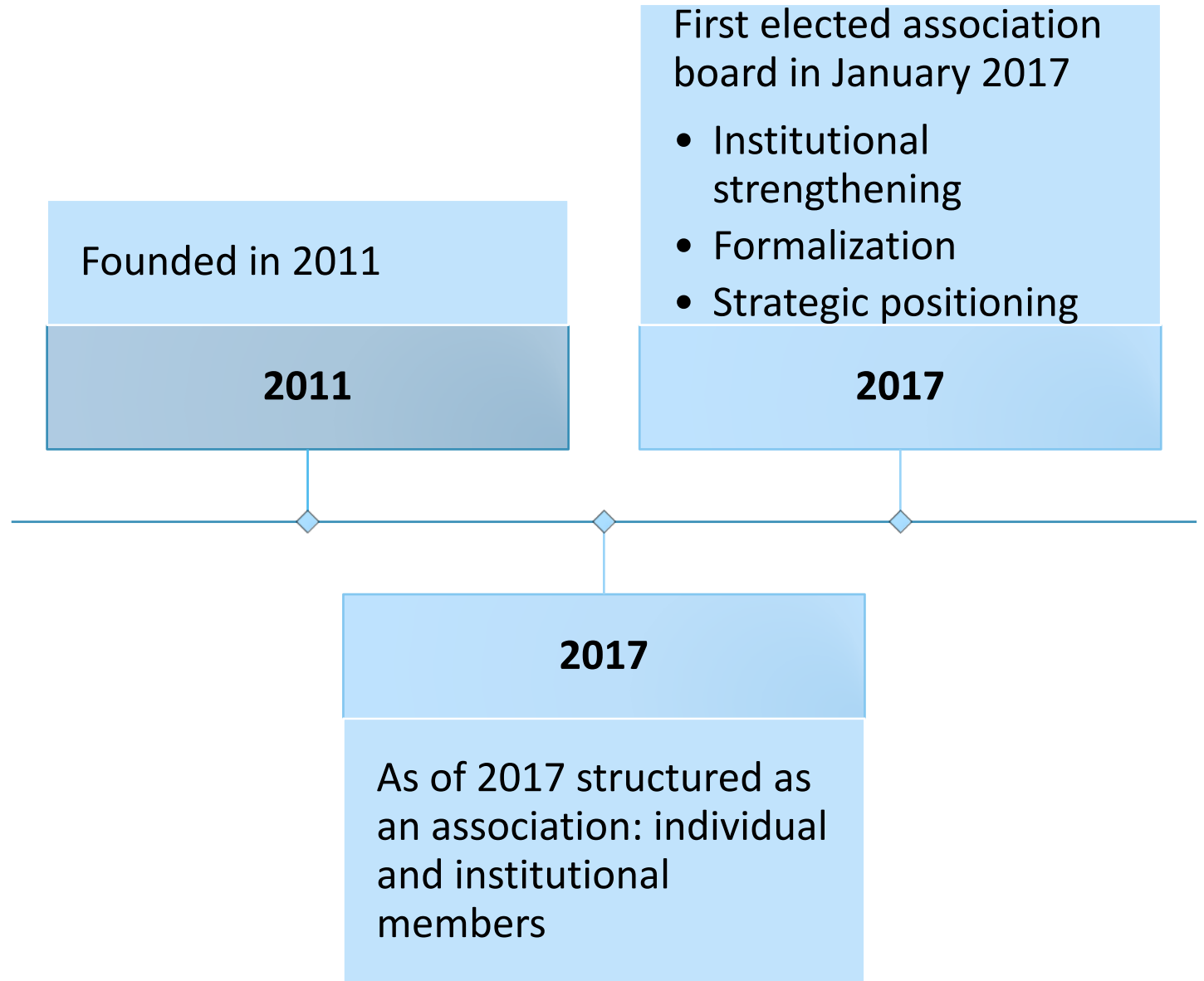
LGBT Platform Suriname

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Chair

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LGBT Platform Suriname



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Mission

The LGBT Platform Suriname is an association of LGBT-individuals and –organizations, that works towards improving the quality of life of LGBT-people in Suriname:

- Leading role in the LGBT movement in Suriname
- Being a national and international voice for LGBT issues in Suriname
- Striving for equal rights
- Advancing broad social change for equality regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity

Vision

A Surinamese society where LGBT-people feel free to be themselves, are equal in rights and opportunities, and are treated as such.

Policy

- Legal rights: advancing equality for LGBT people in legal sense and policy level
- Social change: advancing the acceptance of LGBT-people in all layers of the society

Engagement between government & civil society representatives

Committee Diversity & Inclusion

- UPR recommendations regarding SOGI supported by Suriname in may 2016
- Established in august 2016 by the Minister of Justice and Police Ms. Jennifer van Dijk-Silos for an initial 6 months and extended for another 6 months
- Structure: participants form the LGBT Platform Suriname (2) and Legal employees form the Ministry of Justice and Police (3)
- First priority was to conduct hearings with the civil society as the main target group.
 - To inform subsequent actions

Hearings scope

What is the perception and attitude of the Surinamese civil society regarding the human rights enjoyment of LGBTI people in Suriname?

- The level of resistance towards acceptance of LGBTI people?
- Which sub-sets of the civil society present the most resistance?
- What does the resistance look like?

Method

Written questionnaire and focus group discussion

Main subjects

- Knowledge
- Attitude
- Problems faced by LGBTI People
- Approach

Context: school, work, at home and in public spaces

Segmentation of civil society

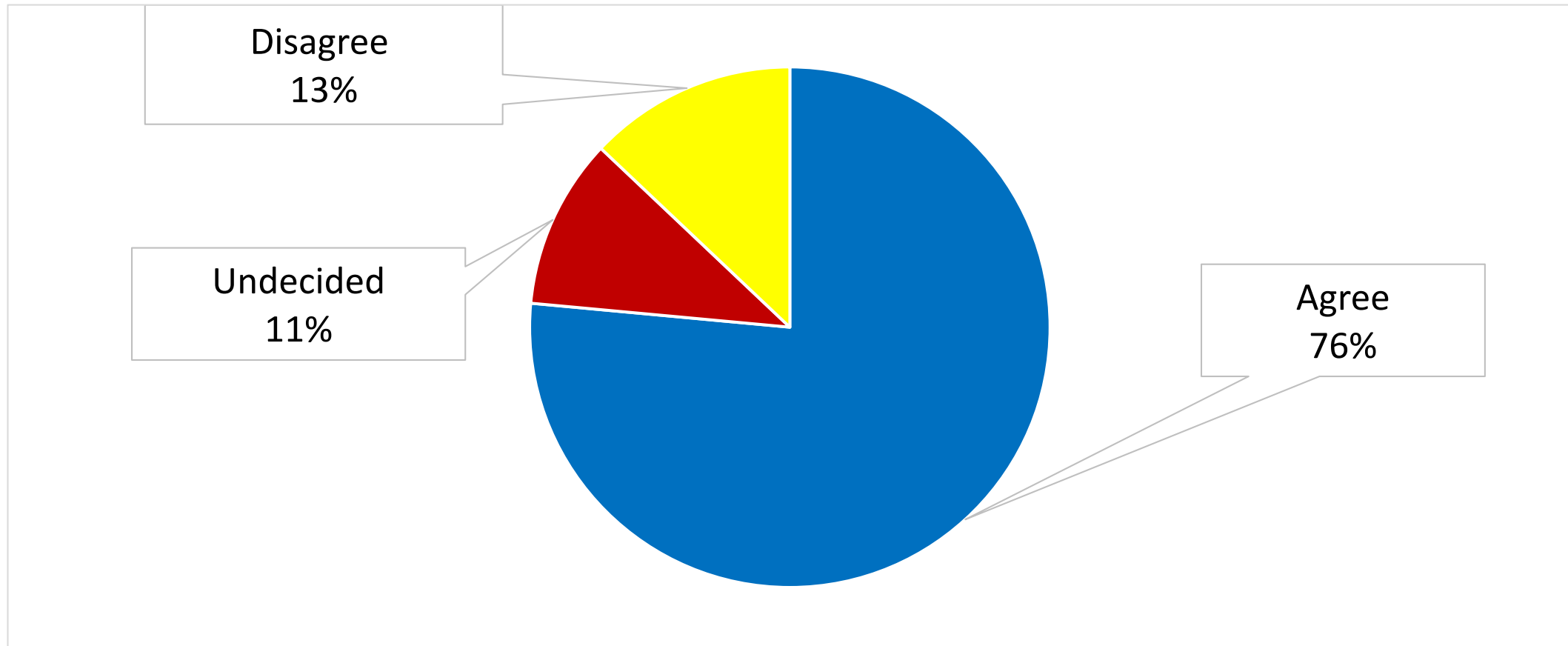
105 organizations were invited: Response 56 organizations, 85 participants

- Interest groups, unions, religious groups, government and government related, political parties, etc.

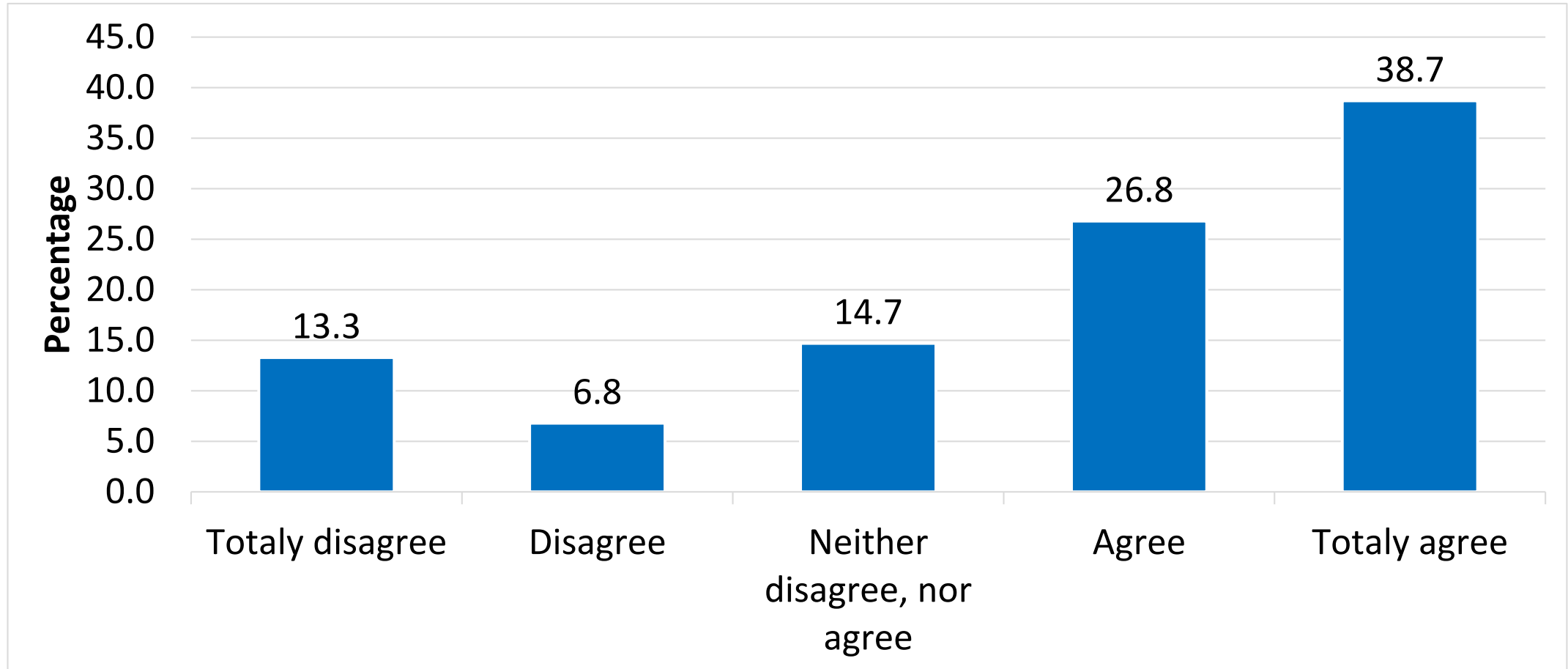
Results

Human rights concept

All people are born free and equal in rights and dignity.



LGBTI rights are human rights and vice versa!



Attitudes enabling or prohibiting acceptance of LGBTI people

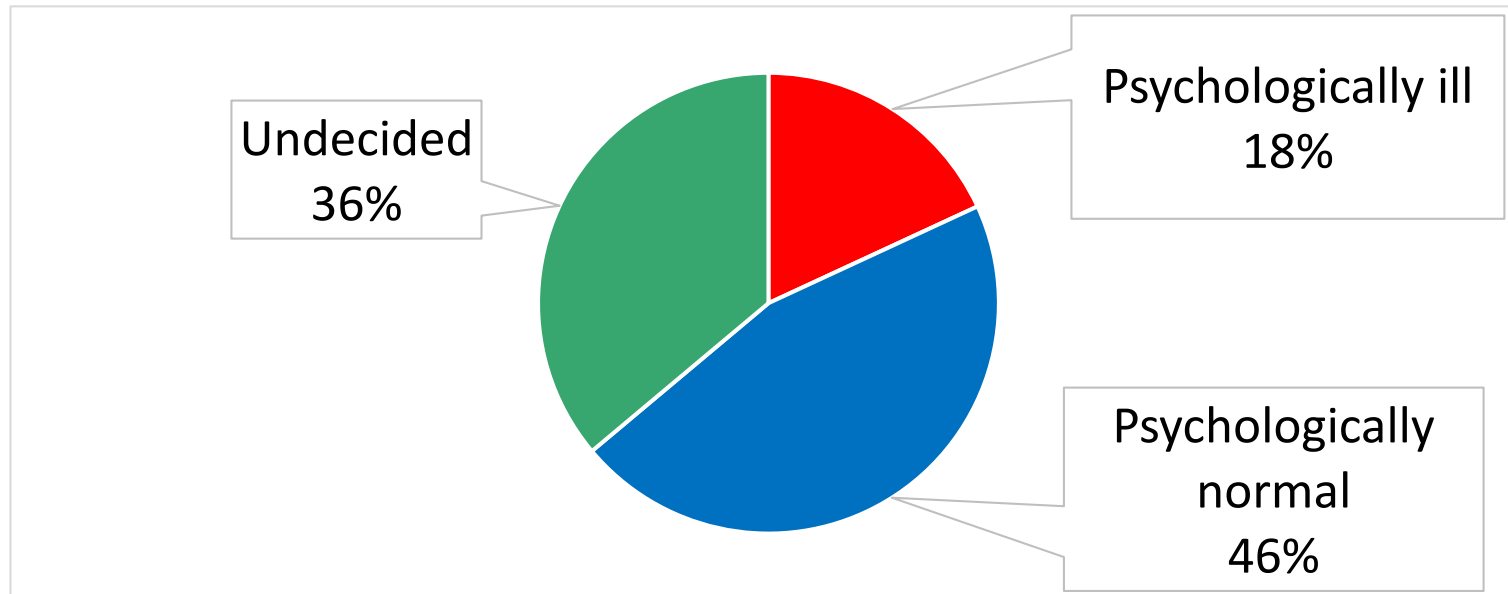


Opinions on:

- SOGI trait or choice
- Psychological state of LGBTI people
- A phase in life
- Standpoint on anti-LGBTI actions
- Support to LGBTI people

Enabling or prohibiting respondent's attitudes for acceptance of LGBTI people

- 50% of respondents agreed that LGBTI people are born that way: positive foundation for acceptance
- 30% respondents say that being LGBTI is a choice and are due to situational factors: hindrance for acceptance



Enabling or prohibiting respondent's attitudes for acceptance of LGBTI people

44% agreed that gay or lesbian sexual orientation is not a phase people grow out of, while 23% agreed that it is

93% agreed on positive support of LGBTI people

81% are against anti-LGBTI actions

86% agreed that LGBTI people should be treated as equal

77% agreed that they need to take action when the human rights of LGBTI people are violated

85% agreed that LGBTI people are an inherent part of the society

Freedom and social inequality

Respondents acknowledge the existence of stigma and discrimination in every day life

LGBTI people don't enjoy the same freedom as the rest of the society and social inequality does exists

Issues, context and negative effects

Issues include:

Exclusion

Rejection by parents

Bullying

Discrimination: work, social services, etc.

Predominantly experienced at home followed by the work environment

Negative effects

intra-personal level: hindering self-development, education, mental and physical pain

Damaging interpersonal / social development: consequences as suicide, waist of potential, poverty, economic consequences

Resistance

Respondents, assumed, participated from a **non-religious context** were predominantly **positive or neutral** towards the enjoyment of equal rights for LGBTI people.

From a **political context: neutral towards a supporting vision**

From a more **political-religious context**: selective enjoyment of equal rights. To some extent equal rights can be accepted.

Explicit resistance from participants in the **religious context**.

Conclusions

Discrimination of LGBTI people undoubtable exists in every day life.

The resistance against acceptance of LGBTI people is minimal, with the only clear resistance coming from religious groups.

Forms:

- **Denial**
- **Blame** (non-acceptance is the fault of LGBTI people who want to be themselves)
- **Deliberately counteracting** by calling upon the government to base legislation on religious viewpoints in stead of equal rights concepts.

Overall there is a positive attitude towards LGBTI people

Awareness, counseling, policy and legislation change are the main recommendations from the respondents to advance the equal human rights enjoyment of LGBTI people

Recommendations

- A follow-up activity to continue the discourse on LGBTI issues
- Start awareness programs by the Ministry on human rights of LGBT people—modeled to domestic violence approach
- LGBTI Sensitization training for religious leaders
- Ratifying the de American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND LGBTI INCLUSION

leave no one behind!

Leave no LGBTI person behind!

SDG: Leave no LGBTI person behind

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages in all its forms everywhere

Goal 4: ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote Lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

SDG: Leave no LGBT-person behind

Goal 10: reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11: make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe,
Resilient and sustainable

Goal 16: promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Additional recommendations by the LGBT Platform Suriname

- PGA support in parliament to continue the work on establishing the National Human Rights Institute
 - Initiated in December 2016 by the then Minister of Justice and Police
- Lobby for membership of Suriname in the Equal Rights Coalition
- Investing in research on LGBTI inclusion (LGBT Platform/Parea partnership research center):
 - Framework: LGBTI inclusion index (UNDP, 2015).
 - Operationalize the framework for Suriname for evidence based policy
- In the process of localizing the SDGs make sure the LGBTI perspective is included